



Sheboygan County News

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From the Desk of County Administrator

by Adam Payne



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Wisconsin and our nation continue to struggle with a weak economy. Sheboygan County, and all levels of government, are experiencing declining revenues, more pressure to provide tax relief, and increasing demands for services. It is a tremendous challenge that many of our friends and neighbors do not fully understand, and it is impossible to please everyone.

I want to THANK YOU for all your hard work over the past year. I truly appreciate your dedication, professionalism and work ethic. Sheboygan County is a very dynamic organization, and we are blessed to have a tremendous diversity of skill-sets. The recent snow storm brought out the best in our highway department and law enforcement officers—you helped thousands of adults and children get safely to and from home,

work, church, school, and in some cases, mothers to be to the hospital. Our Health and Human Services and Rocky Knoll employees provided excellent care to hundreds of infants, abused and neglected children, people suffering from a mental illness, those in financial hardship, and our elderly parents and grandparents. Your patience, persistence, and care-giving skills are remarkable.

The employees in our courthouse displayed strength, empathy and professionalism as they assisted victims and perpetrators of crime, helped family members, and made sure people of all walks of life are treated with dignity and respect. Whether you guard prisoners, enforce court-ordered child support collections, collect fines and forfeitures, have budget and accounting responsibilities, are

involved with labor relations, maintain our buildings and information systems infrastructure, record legal documents, manage an airport, collect tax bills, protect and enhance our natural resources, or serve those who have served our country, you have done your job well, and are a key to our organization's and community's success.

I hope you share my pride in being affiliated with Sheboygan County government. We all have important roles and responsibilities, and we all can and do make a difference.

Thank You, and Happy New Year.



Inserts

Featured Department & Featured Employee

Newsletter Preparation

Kay Lorenz
Kortnei Ames
Michael Collard
Adam Payne

United Way—Sheboygan County Cares

by Adam Payne, County Administrator

I'm pleased to announce that Sheboygan County Employees and County Board Supervisors generously donated \$28,945 to the Sheboygan and Plymouth Area United Way during our recent campaign, an increase of \$1,985 or a 7.4% increase over last year! 2010 marked our sixth consecutive year of increases in contribu-

tions to the United Way. Last year, the United Way funded 28 non-profit agencies that provided service to 56,679 individuals in need throughout Sheboygan County. 57% of those served were low income individuals or families. As you know, in this time of economic and

financial uncertainty, increasingly more people need a helping hand. Your generosity will go a long way to help our neighbors in need throughout the coming year. Thank You!



County Mutual Program Provides Scholarships

by Kay Lorenz, Assistant to the County Administrator

The Wisconsin County Mutual Insurance Corporation is dedicated to serving Wisconsin counties, local governments and the people they serve. Sheboygan County is a member of Wisconsin County Mutual Insurance.

County Mutual created the County Mutual Scholarship Program in 2007 in honor of the company's 20 year anniversary. Scholarships are awarded each year during the Wisconsin Counties

Association Annual Conference in the fall. In 2010, five \$2,000 scholarship recipients were selected by an independent panel of current and former educators based on scores received in the following categories: future goals and career plans, grade point average, community involvement, the quality of their writing and a letter of recommendation. The application deadline for 2010 was July 31st. A similar

program will be offered in 2011.

To qualify for the County Mutual scholarship, applicants must have enrolled in a full-time undergraduate course of study at an accredited two or four-year Wisconsin college or university no later than the fall of 2011, and the applicant or the applicant's parent, grandparent or guardian must be a County Board Supervisor or employee of Sheboygan County.



Watch for the announcement and application for the 2011 scholarship program in mid to late spring of 2011 at: www.wisconsincountymutual.org or www.wicounties.org

Employees Learn to Invest In Future

by Penny Buchanan-Elsner, Human Resources Analyst

In January and February, Veritas Financial Services will be offering three investment classes, and they are willing to offer other topics if employees voice interest. Classes will consist of "Investing for Dummies," "Myths and Truths of Investing" and

"Financing for Couples." The first class, "Investing for Dummies," will be held Thursday, January 6, 2011. The second class, "Myths & Truths of Investing," will be held on Thursday, January 27, and "Financing for Couples" will be held on Thursday, February 10. All

classes will be held at 12:00 p.m. in Room 302 at the Administration Building. Classes will last 45 minutes to an hour. Bring your Lunch!

Please contact the Human Resources Department at (920) 459-3105 to register.

"One kind word can warm three winter months"

Japanese Proverb

Casual Days Provide to the Community

by Kortnei Ames, Human Resources Secretary

October of 2009 marked the beginning of Sheboygan County's Italian charm bracelet fund raising initiative. This initiative was sparked by the thought that investing in our community and giving back to those who are less fortunate would be a great way to help make a difference, and we certainly have! Since October 2009, we have raised a total of \$5,329, donated to the

following local charities;

- October, 2009 ~ \$1,340 to Sheboygan County Cancer Care Fund;
- April, 2010 ~ \$875 to Child Abuse Prevention;
- May, 2010 ~ \$889 to Camp Y Koda Kids;
- July 2010 ~ \$1,018 to Sheboygan County Humane Society; and

- October, 2010 ~ \$1,207 to Sheboygan County Cancer Care Fund.

In February, 2011 we will be supporting the local American Heart Association, so please be sure to watch for further information and consider joining the cause.



Giving back. Providing a helping hand

Giving back to the community gives you a feeling of satisfaction by helping to make our community a better place.



Employees Show Kindness and Generosity

by Joan Ketterman, HHS Division Manager of Community Programs & Elder Services

The Health & Human Services Department staff would like to thank and recognize the good will of County employees who either individually or as departments/buildings generously contributed to help Health & Human Services consumers celebrate the holiday season:

Employees supporting Health & Human Services “Share the Spirit” program grant a special request for an elderly or disabled consumer of Health & Human Services.

The Clerk of Courts office leads a county-wide collection, “Share Your Blessings”, that provides gifts for families served by the Health & Human Services

Department. This season, the collection was very successful. A special thanks to the DA’s office for donating the proceeds from a department fundraiser to the “Share Your Blessings” collection.

The Register of Deeds office spearheads a collection of food and gifts from the employees in the Administration Building during the holidays.

Children and families enjoy the opportunity to “Shop with a Cop”, thanks to a wonderful event supported by our Sheriff’s Department and partner agencies.

It is this generosity that makes our community strong. Thank you, thank you, for all of the lives you touched during the holiday season—those in need in our community that are being served by the Sheboygan County Health & Human Services Department. It’s greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in participating next year, please feel free to contact either Jill Spielvogel (467-4020) at the Aging & Disability Resource Center or Patty Prigge (459-4047) from Social Services. Together, they coordinate the donations for Health & Human Services each year.



Contaminants in Sheboygan River/Harbor to be Removed

by Patrick Miles, County Conservationist

The Sheboygan River Contaminated Sediment Target Feasibility Study and Remedial Design Legacy Project is part of a multi-phase project coordinated by the Great Lakes National Program Office of the U.S. EPA. The Legacy Project is in addition to the current Superfund Project, and is a partnership between the WI DNR, U.S. EPA, Sheboygan County, City of Sheboygan, and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation.

These dredging projects are taking place to remove contaminants from the Sheboygan River. Various industries discharged contaminants into the Sheboygan River over the course of several dec-

ades, and as a result the EPA declared 14 miles of the Sheboygan River a hazardous waste site under the U.S. EPA Superfund legislation in 1986.

The dredging phase of the Superfund Project is scheduled to begin in April 2011 and last two years. Approximately 50,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment will be removed. Legacy Project dredging will follow Superfund dredging, and another 40,000 to 60,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment will be removed.

The new Superfund Project dredging will cost approximately \$15 million, while Legacy Project dredging work

will cost approximately \$22 million dollars. Total new project dredging costs are approximately \$37 million, while \$20 million has already been spent by Tecumseh and PRS on the Upper Sheboygan River Superfund section in 2006 and 2007.

The cost for the Legacy Project design work of the project is \$1,142,000. Sheboygan County, City of Sheboygan, DNR and WPS will each contribute \$100,000 as their respective local share. After 30 years, it will be great to finally restore the Sheboygan River, as well as improve economic development opportunities.

Network Change Provides Cost Advantage

by Michael Collard, Human Resources Director

The Strategic Benefits Planning Committee continues to look for ways to contain health costs. In order to keep premium rates low by using the best discounts available, Sheboygan County’s preferred provider network will change on January 1st from HealthEOS to Trilog.

This change will not affect the level of

our benefits, and should have very little impact for most employees. The change will add some health providers to our network, and eliminate a few others. One of the additions to the network will be MJ Care, Inc., which provides therapy services at Rocky Knoll.

The change will not affect our relationships with Prairie States or with Health

Payment Solutions (HPS). For additional assistance locating a provider check online at www.hps.md or call 1-888-477-7968. If you have additional questions contact Ruth Wilsing, Benefits Assistant, at 920-459-3578.



Human Resources Administers Diverse Programs

by Michael Collard, Human Resources Director

The Human Resources Department is one of the smaller offices of Sheboygan County, located on the third floor of the Administration Building. The department was originally established by ordinance in February 1978 with a table of organization calling for two people. Prior to that time, employee personnel issues were handled by the Corporation Counsel.

Our current department table of organization has four full time positions; Human Resources Director, Human Resources Analyst, Benefits Specialist and Human Resources Secretary. We serve nearly 900 employees.

Our mission is to create an environment which promotes positive employee relations, encourages equal opportunity, and provides quality customer service. We are responsible for establishing personnel policies and procedures, giving guidance on employee issues, recruitment, contract negotiations and administration, processing employee grievances, overseeing employee benefits, worker's compensation, Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), leaves of absence, and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) compliance.

One of the most rewarding accomplishments of the Human Resources Department was getting support of the employees in instituting the "InHealth Clinic" which became a reality the summer of 2008. We are proud to say that this has proved to be a very worthwhile adventure and a success. The Wellness Committee and Strategic Benefits Planning Committee also supported this initiative from the onset. The program has had a positive impact on reducing health insurance premiums. I'm encouraged to share that the City of Sheboygan is considering joining us as well.

With the challenges presented by today's economy, as well as changes to law and regulations, the Human Resources Department continues to promote a positive relationship between the County and its employees. The Human Resources Department continues to strive to be innovative, cost-effective, and help employees and tax payers alike.

Ames Offers Help with Compassion

by Michael Collard, Human Resources Director

Our featured employee for this issue is a kind, familiar face, or at least a familiar voice on the telephone, to many County employees. Kortnei Ames has been the Human Resources Secretary since August 2007. In addition to a wide variety of job duties including orienting new employees, tracking employee leaves, maintaining personnel records, and preparing this newsletter, Kortnei is often the first point of contact people have with the HR Department.



Ten years ago Kortnei, her husband Mike, and son Alexander (now 6 years old) moved from their home town of Rantoul, near Champaign, Illinois, to Appleton, where Kortnei worked in human resources departments for Anchor Foods and later Banta Corp. In 2007 Mike started with Johnsonville as Engineering Manager, and the family moved to Plymouth.

Although Kortnei has found that working for county government is quite a bit different from working for private sector corporations, she loves working in human resources because she just enjoys helping and working with people.

She also loves animals, especially her golden retriever named Chief, after Illinois' Chief Illini. She frequently travels back to Illinois to visit family and friends, and enjoys scrapbooking and spending time with her family. Softball is Kortnei's favorite sport, and she was the pitcher for her community college softball team. She is also a huge Bears fan, but the County decided that it could accommodate that disability under the ADA. She is not one to let her sympathies cloud her judgment, however, and predicts that the Bears will fall to the Packers.

The new hire announcements introducing new employees by email are one of the innovations brought to the County by Kortnei. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to introduce Kortnei to those employees who have not had the pleasure of visiting or calling the Human Resources Department lately.

Family CAREGIVER Supportive Workplace Partnership Offers Update

by Kathleen Manny, Aging & Disability Resource Center & Jane Jensen, UW-Extension, Family Living

Through the efforts of a recently established Family CAREGIVER Supportive Workplace Partnership, plans are being made to create and sustain a supportive workplace for Sheboygan County employees who are family caregivers. A supportive workplace will make it easier for you to gather information and research options so you can be a productive employee as well as an empowered family caregiver.

The county employees on the Partnership team are: **Joyce Schneider, IS**; **Charlene Cobb**, Veteran's Service Office; **Cory Roeseler**, Sheriff; **Libby Gilbertson** and **Kim Pagel**, Health & Human Services; **Penny Elsner**, Human Resources; **Lori Hanson**, Rocky Knoll; and **Kay Lorenz** representing Administration. Co-leaders are **Kathleen Manny**, Sheboygan County Aging & Disability Resource Center and **Jane Jensen**, UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living. **Todd Heinen**, Aurora EAP and **Bev Randall**, Mental Health America in Sheboygan County are non-Sheboygan County department representatives with the Partnership.

All county employees have received either a hard copy or e-mail version of the results of the Employed Family

Caregiver Survey. In addition, employees were recently surveyed via e-mail or hard copy to determine high areas of interest for onsite Lunch & Learn presentations. A plan has been developed for disseminating information as follows:

“Prepare to Care” Workshops:

These workshops help current and future family caregivers prepare and plan ahead for their adult caregiving responsibilities. The workshops are free and HIGHLY recommended for all family caregivers.

Lunch & Learn topics: Highest ranking choices were Employee Benefits, Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Services, Stress Reduction, and Protecting Assets and Wishes.

Special Workshops: Workshops about the A, B, C, & D of Medicare will be held at locations in the community.

Fact Sheets: Information covering a wide variety of family caregiving topics are currently being compiled and will be made available to employees electronically or as a hard copy for those without access to e-mail. The employee newsletter will also be utilized!

Options Counseling and Long Term Care Funding: Information &

Assistance staff from the ADRC will be available at various county locations (by appointment) to discuss options and possible Long Term Care Funding with individual family caregivers.

Be aware that your family members may also attend any of the workshops with you and receive ALL of the information listed. **Watch for future dates and locations.** These opportunities will be held at various locations and times for your convenience. Feel free to attend any of the sessions that work best for you, regardless of location.

As a family caregiver, there is help for you. The Family CAREGIVER Supportive Workplace Partnership is about providing support to you, a family caregiver, right where you are — at work!

Thank you to County Administrator Adam Payne for supporting the partnership and making a commitment to create a supportive workplace for employees who are family caregivers!



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