

SHEBOYGAN COUNTY NEWS

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All Employee Appreciation Picnic at Blue Harbor

by Adam Payne, County Administrator

Mark your calendar!! The 2016 All Employee Appreciation Picnic will be held at the Blue Harbor Resort on Thursday, August 18th from 4:30 to 9 PM. This will be a beautiful venue for our picnic with a lakeside view! This year we'll be **including an Air Jam Contest**—I challenge you to compete against my fearless team from last year and see what group has the best moves! Prizes will be awarded to the top three groups. More information will soon follow.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>An Employed Family Caregiver's Story</i>	2
<i>Who Do You Know Wants To Buy A Car</i>	2
<i>County Employees "Making A Difference"</i>	3
<i>Ramirez Enjoys Many Aspects at Work & Outdoors</i>	3
<i>Jury Management System An Important County Program</i>	4

INSERTS:

<i>State of the County</i>
<i>County Continues Focus On Safety</i>

National Work Zone Awareness Week ~ April 11-15, 2016

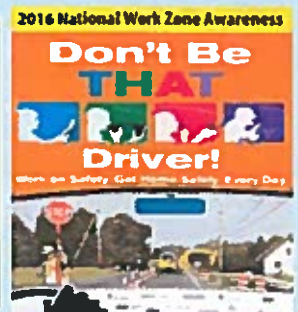
by Greg Schnell, Transportation Director

National Work Zone Awareness Week (NWZAW) is an annual spring campaign held at the start of construction season to encourage safe driving through highway work zones. The key message is for drivers to use extra caution in work zones.

This year, on Wednesday, April 13th, we are having a **"Go Orange Day"**. Please encourage coworkers, friends and families to wear orange on this day in support of our Highway Department employees and work zone safety across the country.



"Go Orange Day" April 13th
Don't Be THAT Driver: Work on Safety.
Get Home Safely. Every Day.





An Employed Family Caregiver's Story

by Liz Abler, Public Health Nurse

As our parents age, our roles take on new meaning. I work full-time as a Public Health Nurse for Sheboygan County and do other volunteer activities in our community for various organizations. In addition to these roles, I am a caregiver to my 93-year old mother who still lives in her own home.

I have become a family caregiver as my mother's needs have increased over the years. It starts with little things, such as buying her groceries, cooking meals for her, helping with medical appointments or picking up her medications at the pharmacy. Over time I realized that I needed help because it was difficult to manage caregiving, work, life, and family balance. We discussed it and my mother agreed to get some outside help two times per week. That has helped our family. My mother wants to remain in her own home as long as she can. Open communication about your family's needs is very important.



A Family Caregiver

Elderly parents may find it difficult to admit a problem or ask for help, but as I visited my mom daily I could see changes in habits.

Although I loved helping my mom, I recognized that the demands on my time were having a negative impact on me both physically and emotionally. Some of those signs were feeling exhausted, difficulty sleeping, withdrawal from other things I once enjoyed doing, and difficulty coping with a busy schedule.

Our local ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) offers a program called "Powerful Tools for Caregivers." I became aware of it through my job, but never realized how much it would help me achieve balance as a caregiver.

I took the six week class in the fall of 2015. I talked honestly with my supervisor about my caregiving demands at home and my desire to attend the training. She was receptive to the idea and allowed my schedule to be flexible to attend. She is also one of the 65 million Americans who care for a family member – her aging father.

Fortunately, our employer, Sheboygan County, understands that a worker/caregiver can be torn between both "jobs" and we are trying to perform well at each of them, which can cause stress and conflicts. Seeking out resources helped me take better care of myself and my loved ones.

Who Do You Know Wants To Buy A Car?

by Bernie Rammer, Purchasing Agent

Specifically a former squad car, that is. When the County and City of Sheboygan have vehicles, equipment and furnishings that are no longer needed the County auctions the items to the highest bidder.

Since 2010, most of the surplus vehicles and equipment the City and County have available have been auctioned off on a State sponsored online auction site called Wisconsin Surplus. The results are more impressive than the former method of "trading in" equipment when replacements are purchased. In most cases, the County has been able to recoup far higher residual values using this method. In addition, there is no auction or sales fee incurred.



What was the most unique item that has ever been sold on the auction to date? Hands down, it is—believe it or not—a set of Lear Jet Cockpit windows found in a storage room in the Sheriff's Department which had been there since the mid 1980's.

Virtually all items having any sort of value are listed on the auction site. Included is old abandoned evidence or found property, tools, jewelry, furnishings, electronics, cars, trucks, construction equipment and nearly anything else you can imagine. Some municipalities even sell real estate on the site.

The auction website is www.wisconsin surplus.com. On this website at any given time you will find auctions for merchandise from a wide array of City and County Governments, School Districts and the State of Wisconsin.

Auctions for the City and County run for two weeks and typically end on a Wednesday or Thursday. So you don't miss one of our auctions, simply make a point of logging on each weekend and you will never miss one.

The best part? Departments clear out valuable space in their storage areas and they receive the sale revenue to help offset their budgets!



County Employees “Making A Difference”

by Jean Gallimore, Human Resources Director



Expressing appreciation is essential in today’s workplace. Recognizing employees confirms their work is valued. It increases job satisfaction and productivity as well as motivates employees to maintain or improve their work. This is true for all levels of an organization.



Listed below are a few interesting points about Employee Recognition:

- The #1 reason most Americans leave their jobs is that they don’t feel appreciated.
- Managers view recognition programs as an investment rather than an expense.
- Recognizing employee performance increases employee engagement and raises employee performance.
- Having a recognition program in place tends to lower frustration/stress levels.

Effective July 1, 2015 the “Making a Difference” employee recognition program was implemented for all employees. *The “Making a Difference” Employee Recognition Program is designed to acknowledge, recognize and show appreciation for an employee’s level of commitment, sense of teamwork and overall achievements.*

The County Administrator, department heads, managers and supervisors complete a “Making a Difference” nomination summary for an employee to describe the consistent performance they believe deserves a “Making a Difference” nomination. When completing the form, the nominator provides a summary of specific examples and/or tangible results that explain how the employee has consistently exceeded expectations.

‘RIACT’ is an acronym the human resources team has referred to over the past few years to describe our expectations:

- Respect (basic human kindness)
- Integrity (honesty, passion, courage)
- Accountability (dependable, focus, follow through)
- Competence (effective, efficient, accurate)
- Teamwork (cooperation, communication, flexibility)

Once complete, the nominated employee receives the nomination form along with a “Making a Difference” candy bar from the nominator. The nominee’s department head is informed of the employee’s nomination and will also recognize the employee during a staff meeting for receiving the nomination. A copy of the nomination form is filed in the employee’s official personnel file and all county employees receive a monthly email that includes a list of those employees who have been recognized. On a quarterly basis, up to 18 names are drawn from the quarterly nominees to win \$25 Chamber Cash, allowing the winning employees to celebrate their success as well as give back to the community.

During the first six months of the program, 146 employees were nominated from across all 19 departments! We are fortunate to have dedicated and hardworking employees and hope to grow that number in 2016.

I strongly encourage managers to take a few minutes each month to complete a nomination form or two and express your thanks for our great team of employees. Although resources are limited this is a small, yet sweet, way to formally recognize and thank employees, the County’s most important assets, for going above and beyond and for truly “Making a Difference!”

Ramirez Enjoys Many Aspects At Work & Outdoors

by Tracy Ramirez, Jury Clerk

I have worked for Sheboygan County since 2003. Most of that time has been spent in the Clerk of Courts Office. I am currently the Jury Clerk. I help small claims run smoothly and have recently started going to court as a Court Secretary. I enjoy all of my co-workers and look forward to coming to work every day. The Clerk of Courts office has some amazing people to work for and with.



I enjoy going for bike rides and walks. My first long bike ride was the Salvation Ride 2015 as a member of the Bar Association’s team. I did the 50 mile ride. My daughter and I have been a part of the Cancer Crusade Walk for the past few years. I enjoy spending time with my family. Two years ago I started “saving lives” at Biolife in Sheboygan. I never really knew what they did in that building but since I started going I have learned a lot about it.

I was raised in Cedar Grove and moved to Sheboygan shortly before starting with Sheboygan County. I am a single mother of 3 children, one of whom I was appointed guardian of when he was 14 years old. He is now 24, my daughter is 23 and my son is 16. I am not quite an empty nester just yet because my youngest is still in high school and we have also been helping a friend with her 10-month old baby boy. I enjoy opening up my home to helping others. We also share our home with two red-nosed pit bulls, Bruzor (3 years) and Brunno (1 year). Our home is filled with lots of fun and love as we do this thing called life together.

Jury Management System An Important County Program

by Melody Lorge, Clerk of Circuit Courts

The importance of citizens serving as a juror cannot be emphasized enough.

Jury Management is one of the many statutory functions of the Clerk of Courts Department. The Department is responsible for qualifying, selecting, summoning and notifying potential jurors for service to the five Circuit Courts in Sheboygan County. In criminal cases, trial by jury of your peers is a constitutional right. It is the responsibility of the Clerk of Courts Department to fulfill that right. In civil actions and certain other case types a jury trial may be held upon request and payment of a jury fee.

Each year we request a random listing of 6,000 names from the Department of Transportation. The listing includes all drivers and those with identification cards living in Sheboygan County. From that list the Jury Clerk sends out questionnaires to these 6,000 potential jurors.

The Jury Clerk reviews the completed questionnaires, identifies non-qualified jurors, and removes them from the listing. Examples of a non-qualified juror may be a non-US citizen, someone no longer residing in Sheboygan County, or an individual with a medical issue accompanied by a doctor's excuse. In the end, there are approximately 3,500 of the initial 6,000 individuals who meet the qualifications to serve as a juror.

Of those qualified to serve, four panels are randomly formed per term. A term consists of four weeks of service for each juror. There are a total of 240 potential jurors per term except in June, July and August when there are 280. The number of jurors used each year varies greatly depending on the number of cases that actually go to jury trial and the length of the trial. In 2015, a total of 42 jury trials were held averaging a week and a half in length (many covering multiple days) at a total cost of \$52,130. In Wisconsin, jurors can be called only once every four years.

When jurors receive their summons, a jury handbook explaining the jury duty process is provided. Once a juror is notified to appear, the individual reports to the courtroom summoned to. Approximately 40 jurors randomly selected from a computer generated report are summoned for each trial. The first 20 names on the list are called into the jury box for questioning by the judge and attorneys about their backgrounds and potential biases before being chosen to sit on the jury. This process is referred to as "voir dire", the process by which attorneys select, or perhaps more appropriately reject, certain jurors to hear a case. Additional potential jurors from the remainder of the list of 40 are called into the box, if needed, for voir dire until the final jury of 12 plus two alternates (for criminal trials) has been selected. These individuals are then sworn to fairly and impartially decide the case.

Any person who fails to attend jury service may be summoned by the court to explain why he or she failed to appear and may have a fine imposed for not appearing. Serving as a juror can be a fascinating experience, and is our civil duty.

Thank you for your years of service. We wish you the best!



Annette Thomas

Nancy Riemer

Clarice Walczak

Lynette Sprengel

Karen Davis

Kathleen Manny

Thomas Benning

Julle Jekenewicz

Steve Siebenaler

Doug Tuttle

Kay Wilterdink



~State of the County~

by: Adam Payne, County Administrator

Sheboygan County is a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent bond rating, and a hard-working, caring staff providing quality services in a fiscally responsible manner.

The County has approximately 810 employees working in 19 Departments, administering over 200 programs and services, with an overall budget of \$128 million.

THE BIG FOUR: The Health and Human Services Department (\$33 million), Sheriff's Department (\$19 million), Transportation Department (\$15 million) and Rocky Knoll Health Care Center (\$13 million) are the largest departments and comprise nearly 2/3rds of the entire county budget.

The remaining Departments include: Building Services, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Planning and Conservation, Treasurer/Real Property Listing, County Clerk, Register of Deeds, Medical Examiner, Corporation Counsel, Clerk of Courts, District Attorney, Court Commissioner, UW-Extension, and Veterans Service.

We are one of the top ten employers in the county along with the Kohler Company, Bemis Manufacturing, Sheboygan Area School District, Sargento, Nematik, Aurora, Acuity, Johnsonville Sausage, and Rockline.

The most important public policy document developed is the annual budget. Out of the \$128 million budget, the county property tax levy is \$48 million. The balance is primarily state and federal revenue, private pay and fee or service charges.

~What Have You Done for Me Lately?~

Top 10 list of 2015 accomplishments, working our way to number one...

10 Wellness Initiative – YMCA/Planet Fitness Memberships through Sheboygan County - Improving long term health will reduce health risk exposures and the need for costly medical interventions. Regular exercise is crucial to overall health. In order to support employee efforts to be healthy, Sheboygan County provided a new wellness opportunity for employees to enhance their health and fitness. Fitness center reimbursements are now offered at the Sheboygan County YMCA facilities and the Sheboygan Planet Fitness, with up to 100% paid annual membership for employees who achieve monthly participation requirements. Studies have shown that work performance and quality of life improve significantly with regular exercise. In addition, controlling health care costs for the County is very important. This wellness initiative is a win/win for our employees and taxpayers.

9 Planning for a Drug Treatment Court is Launched - Building on the success of the County's Veteran's Court established in 2013, and in response to the growing heroin and other drug abuse epidemic being realized across the nation including Sheboygan County, planning was initiated for the establishment of a Drug Treatment Court to become operational in 2016. The effort reflects a close collaboration between the Courts, the District Attorney's Office, the State Public Defender's Office, Probation and Parole, private treatment providers and the Health and Human Services Department under Judge Ed Stengel's leadership. Drug courts offer an effective blend of treatment and justice and have been proven effective in reducing recidivism, promoting family unity, and achieving other positive outcomes for both participants and communities.

8 Land Purchase for Transportation Complex - After decades of discussion, in October of 2015 Sheboygan County purchased 37 acres in the Town of Plymouth in order to build a new Transportation Complex. The new facility will allow the County to consolidate three county sheds—Elkhart Lake, Plymouth, and Sheboygan—into one complex. Building this complex will address the problems and costs associated with aging infrastructure, allow us to enhance services, centralize operations, reduce our building footprint, and offer three prime pieces of property for sale. The new facility is planned to be built in two phases over the next several years.

7 Completion of Plastics Engineering Building at UW-Sheboygan - The County constructed a \$1.4 million addition at the University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan. The 7,225 square foot addition contains three labs: Mechanical, Electrical and Special Projects. The labs allow local residents to obtain a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering. This addition is an answer to local business leaders seeking engineers with local roots. The intent is to encourage existing employees seeking an engineering degree to do so here and stay in the area. The funding for this project is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when government and the private sector collaborates. Plenco, Curt Joa and the Braatz Foundation all contributed to share the cost of construction with the County.

6 Rocky Knoll Receives a Five Star Quality Rating - The state and national rating system features an overall quality rating of one to five stars based on the facility's performance in three areas: Health Inspections, Staffing, and Quality Measures. The goal of the rating system is to help consumers make informed decisions about the skilled nursing facilities they are considering. In addition, the quality rating system helps and encourages nursing homes to strive for continuous improvement. As a result of strong leadership and staff providing excellent quality care, Rocky Knoll has achieved a Five Star Rating, and is among the best health care centers in the state and country.

5 Partnership to Construct a Fiber Optic Network - In partnership with the City of Sheboygan and the Sheboygan Area School District, Sheboygan County is leading the construction of a 23 mile, \$2.5 million underground fiber optic network slated to be completed in early fall 2016. This network is being built to replace the aging and sometimes unreliable radio tower equipment that currently connects County facilities. The enhanced speed and reliability of the new network will support the construction of a disaster recovery and data backup site at the Detention Center, vastly improving the security of the County's data assets and its ability to recover from data loss. In addition, this network will form the communication backbone for collaborative projects between the County and City such as the Combined Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center. Owning this fiber optic network guards against price volatility, especially as the County's bandwidth needs increase over time.

4 Radio Upgrade and Combined Dispatch Project - The Combined Dispatch and Radio Upgrade Projects are steadily progressing. The housing for the new Combined Dispatch Center was completed on August 17, 2015. The new Motorola radio equipment will be installed and tested during the first two quarters of 2016 and fully operational by June, 2016. City of Sheboygan dispatchers became Sheboygan County employees on January 1, 2016. The merger of City and County Dispatch Centers provides a single point of contact for all citizens to access emergency and non-emergency services. It provides for a more efficient and effective level of service to meet the increasing emergency response needs of the community.

3 Compensation Study Complete and New Compensation Program Approved - Sheboygan County hired Arthur J. Gallagher & Company to conduct a Comprehensive Compensation Study that was fully implemented January 1, 2016. The main focus of the study was to compare and contrast the County's pay ranges to comparable private and public sector data with the goal of ensuring the County remains competitive and able to attract and retain excellent employees. The study provided for a comprehensive and streamlined salary structure for all positions with the exception of the two remaining collective bargaining units (Law Enforcement & Rocky Knoll), streamlined over 200 job titles into just under 100, rolled longevity into the employee's base pay (for those who received longevity pay), eliminated the across the board annual salary increases and step increases, and instituted a Pay-for-Performance compensation system wherein employees are required to meet minimum performance standards in order to qualify for an annual salary increase, with the flexibility to reward outstanding performance. The study confirmed that the vast majority of employees were in the appropriate pay range, though there were some employees below and above their assigned DBM (Decision Band Method) Salary Range that resulted in adjustments.

2 Strong Fiscal Track Record Continues - Sheboygan County has a solid financial track record, healthy fiscal reserves, an excellent Aa2 bond rating and a hard-working, caring staff who are effectively meeting the demands of providing high quality services in a fiscally responsible manner. We continue to invest in major capital improvements, including our emergency dispatch and radio system and transportation infrastructure. On October 20, 2015 the County Board enacted an ordinance that increased the self-imposed bonding limitation from \$4 million to \$5.5 million annually, the first time since 2001. On November 3, 2015 the County Board enacted a 2.87% levy increase, allowing the County to assume and maintain emergency dispatch services for the City of Sheboygan as well as for all other local units of government within Sheboygan County. On average, the property tax levy has increased less than 1% per year for the past 10 years. The County also received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the second consecutive year.

1 Amsterdam Dunes Wetland Mitigation Bank and Preservation Area - Sheboygan County acquired 333 acres in July, 2015. Amsterdam Dunes is located along Lake Michigan in the Town of Holland and is one of the last remaining undeveloped shorelines between Sheboygan and Chicago. It is comprised of rare sand dunes, forest and wetlands, bluffs, farmland, streams and diverse plants and wildlife. There is also a Wisconsin DNR Raptor Research Station directly contiguous to the property. Although the entire property will be a preservation area, 144 acres of the property will be designated a Wetland Mitigation Bank. To mitigate the destruction of wetlands during a public or private project, wetland mitigation credits may be used or purchased from a restored wetland. This positions Sheboygan County well for future infrastructure improvements and economic development, while preserving a pristine area. The sale of the future wetland mitigation credits and grant sources received to date will reimburse the County's \$4.2 million purchase price and fund restoration and enhancement of the property going forward.

~What is the State of the County?~

Strong. Though there is always room for improvement, ongoing challenges associated with State unfunded mandates, and escalating costs associated with providing services and maintaining our transportation infrastructure, Sheboygan County continues to be a leader of providing responsive and cost-effective local government. We have a team and track record we can take pride in.

~Challenges Ahead~

If the State continues to dictate rigid one-size-fits-all property tax levy caps and doesn't adequately fund state mandated programs, Sheboygan County will not be able to sustain its present level of programs, services and staffing. Although we will continue to establish priorities, streamline and become more efficient, addressing the community's transportation infrastructure needs alone with costs that have more than doubled the last decade will require additional resources. Though I share the County Board's pride that we have not yet implemented a 1/2% county sales tax (65 of 72 Counties have done so), if we are going to be fiscally responsible and meet the needs of the community, we must seriously consider alternative revenue streams. The State provided the county sales tax option decades ago to help alleviate the pressure on property taxpayers.

~County Continues Focus On Safety~

by: Jean Gallimore, Human Resources Director

Safe workplaces provide the consistency and reliability needed to build a community and grow an organization. Workplaces with active safety leadership have fewer injuries, are better places to work and have more satisfied and productive employees. Promoting safety in any organization, department, or office is key to minimizing negative effects and possible tragedies that come from hazards in the workplace.

Safety Recap:

In early 2013, the Human Resources team worked closely with Emergency Management Director Steve Steinhardt to review the County's overall employee safety related initiatives and policies. An essential component of this review was to enhance the formal safety committee comprised of employees from across the county. The initial charge was to update the existing departmental safety manuals and policies, such as the phone threat card and identifying the location of fire pulls, AEDs, eye wash stations, and wheelchairs in all county facilities - all of which were aimed at further educating our employees.

In the fall of 2013 and 2014, the County offered All Employee Safety Training at UW-Sheboygan with both internal and external speakers who addressed topics such as Active Shooter, Blood Borne Pathogens, GHS (Global Harmonized System for Hazard Communications), Work Place Safety and Work Place Violence, AED, CPR, Self Defense, Fire, Sovereign Citizen, and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Fire and Tornado drills continue to be conducted annually at all locations.

In 2015 County Department Heads were engaged to provide ideas for what the focus should be for ongoing safety planning and preparedness. To accomplish this, I accompanied Human Resources Generalist Michelle Roenitz, former Building Services Manager Nate Truax and Steve Steinhardt to visit and tour county locations and meet with department leadership teams. The main feedback received during this time involved the need for additional resources aimed toward active threats.

Following these department visits last fall, the Sheriff's Department worked with Human Resources to roll out "CRASE" (Civilian Response to Active Shooter) training. All department heads, managers and supervisors were invited to attend a 2.5 hour long presentation by Deputy Brent Multer. The program is designed to provide individuals with important information about how to react to an active shooter/threat event as well as assist in making personal choices about their role in emergency situations.

2016 Safety Planning and Beyond:

Safety plans for 2016 include our management team making the CRASE recording available to all employees to view no later than April of 2016.

As a follow up to our CRASE Training, the second quarter of 2016 will involve Steve Steinhardt and Building Services Manager Bruce Edwards touring all county locations with a more direct focus on detailed planning in the event of an active threat. All location planning will be documented and shared by way of departmental staff meetings to keep everyone informed and prepared in the event of an emergency.

The fourth quarter of 2016 will round out the year with the Sheriff's and Human Resources Departments organizing and communicating to all staff interactive active threat safety drills by location. Stay tuned for further details on this important event coming in fall.

Looking forward into 2017, we have partnered with County Mutual to share their valuable safety training library and overall resources with our employees. This effort will allow for a continued focus on further educating employees when it comes to various safety concerns.

As always, please contact your supervisor, manager, department head or any member of your Human Resources team or Safety Committee if you have any questions or suggestions. We will continue to keep safety a priority for Sheboygan County employees and guests.

Courthouse Security Ad-Hoc Committee:

As security concerns across the country escalate, so too grows the concern locally. In January 2016, the County Administrator appointed a Courthouse Security Ad Hoc Committee. The main focus of this Ad Hoc Committee is to identify and address security concerns for the County Courthouse. To date, initial research is underway including assessing a centralized secured Courthouse entrance, security cameras, parking lots, and duress alarms. A survey was distributed to employees at the Courthouse in March to help the Ad Hoc Committee understand and be aware of potential concerns. The committee is charged with evaluating concerns brought forward, comparing like size county initiatives, and presenting recommendations for improvement to the County Administrator by June 1, 2016.