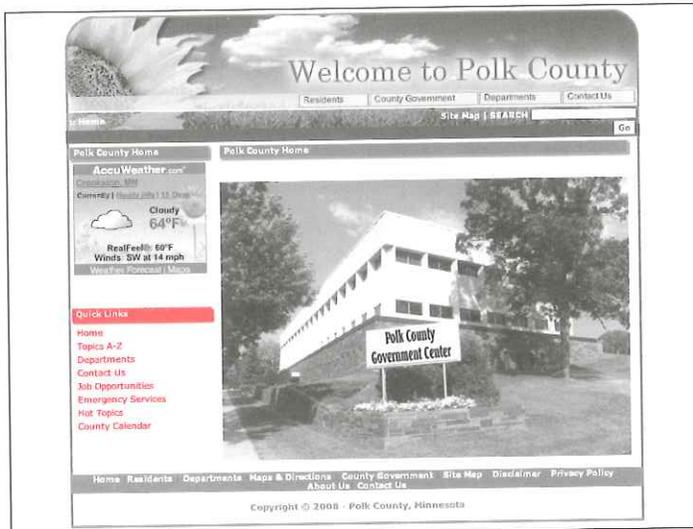


# Polk County Newsletter

Fall 2008



## New building is performing well

Operations in the new Northwest Regional Corrections Center and Polk County Justice Center complex in Crookston are being performed efficiently and effectively...just as they were intended.

That's the general assessment of department heads and staff members working in the new \$25.5 million facility that houses the new jail along with all facets of the justice system. The last of the remaining construction issues, which are normal in projects of this magnitude, are being addressed as the "settling in" process progresses, according to Polk County Coordinator John Schmalenberg.

### In total compliance

The Corrections Center jail received a glowing report from the Minnesota Department of Corrections following an on-site inspection of the facility in August. The inspection, which included a tour of the facility and interviews with corrections staff, received a 100 per-

cent compliance rating in all 214 areas of both the mandatory and essential rules for operations. At current staffing levels, the jail has been licensed for up to 185 prisoners.

Susan Mills, executive director of Tri-County Community Corrections (TCCC), which operates the jail, notes, "Things are going very well in the jail and our occupancy numbers are right on our projections for where we wanted to be at this time. We want to grow into the facility in an orderly and safe way for everyone and that's what is occurring."

### Paying customers

The average daily count of about 120 inmates in September was already including up to 23 prisoners from other institutions, who were generating revenue for jail operations. That situation is a direct turnabout about from a year ago when TCCC was paying other counties to house as many as 30 prisoners when it

See NEW BUILDING, Page 2

## Website upgrade underway

[www.co.polk.mn.us](http://www.co.polk.mn.us), the Polk County website, is undergoing a major upgrading that will make it into a great resource for residents and others seeking public information about county activities, records and services.

The work, which is being done under contract by Saturn Systems, Duluth, Minn., began in August 2007 and will be ongoing as information is digitized and published to the site. The Polk County Information Technology department is overseeing the project.

As the site is redeveloped, it will become interactive to allow persons to look up such information as property values, real estate taxes, possibly select from options to pay their taxes, learn about job opportunities, see highway work plans and projects, read county board minutes and access a host of other information.

As the project proceeds, county department employees will be trained to maintain and update the information to keep it current.

### As part of Mass Dispensing Exercise

## Flu Shot Clinics set Oct. 23rd at 3 county sites

The third annual Polk County Community Flu Shot Clinic will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 23, at three separate mass dispensing sites — the Lysaker Gym at University of Minnesota-Crookston, Northland Community & Technical College in East Grand Forks, and at the Win-E-Mac School in Erskine.

The events is being organized by Polk County Public Health, which is encourag-

ing families to get their annual flu shots before the holidays. This special day will be for ages 9 and above.

The flu shots are free to those who have Medicare Part B, medical assistance or MN Care. For others, the flu shot is \$25 per person. We are urging people to come out after work or school to get their annual influenza vaccination.

Having this exercise helps us to practice

and improve on our mass dispensing plans for administering medication or vaccine to large numbers of Polk County residents in a short amount of time.

Many community partners work closely with Public Health in this project including Polk County Emergency Management, Polk County Sheriff's Department, local law enforcement, Northwestern Mental

See FLU SHOTS, Page 3

## Close down of Pro Building planned

# Space conversion will move Social Service units into Government Center

A project to convert the upper floor of the Polk County Government Center for use by Social Services is expected to be started by mid-fall and be completed and ready for occupancy this winter.

The work involves space that was vacated when District Court and Court Administration moved to the new Polk County Justice Center earlier this year. When completed, all of the Crookston-based Social Services Department will operate from the Government Center and the 108-year-old Professional Building will be taken out of use and closed down.

Located in the block northeast of the Government Center, the "Pro Building" was purchased by the County in 1992 with the expectation that it would provide offices for the Income Maintenance and Child Support divisions and one social worker unit of the Social Services Department and also for the County Attorney's office, Minnesota Public Defenders office, Polk County Probation Services and Migrant Health Services for "about the next seven years."

### **Replacement decision**

In 2004, issues involving safety, fire and other building code regulations, its age, heating and cooling inefficiencies and its

overall general condition led the County Board to begin the process of replacing the building. "We just couldn't justify spending a lot of money to update a building that has such a limited future," then Board Chair Bill Montague had said at the time while noting that the building, which had been built as a hospital and later served as St. Vincent's Nursing Home, "had never been meant to serve as an office building in the first place and that the time had come for it to be replaced."

### **Alternatives considered**

Initially, the replacement process involved the possible conversion of the former Central High School into office space. But when the possibility of spending more than \$4.5 million to remodel that 50-year-old building proved unwise, an addition to the Polk County Courthouse was considered. That proposal was shelved, too, when it became obvious that the growing shortage of jail beds wasn't just a spike in the numbers that would go away. With that realization, a plan to construct the new Polk County Justice Center and Northwest Regional Corrections Center moved forward.

The Justice Center portion of the new

building was designed to house Polk County District Court and Court Administration from the courthouse and the Polk County Attorney's Office, the public defenders, and Polk County Probation from the Pro Building. The new Justice Center also houses the administrative offices of Tri-County Community Corrections, which operates the jail and effectively places all agencies involved in the court and corrections process in one highly efficient setting.

### **Only remaining occupants**

The second phase of the plan includes conversion of the space vacated by District Court and Court Administration in the Government Center for use by the 36 Social Service staff members who are still officed in the Pro Building.

"Moving all of Social Services into the Government Center where everybody will be under one roof will make us more efficient," Kent Johnson, Social Services director, says of the upcoming move.

The move will also allow the County to quit heating and cooling the Pro Building and, after its removal next year, make the land available for redevelopment.

## New building

Continued from Page 1

didn't have enough beds to keep them in the former facilities.

"Sure, we've had to fine-tune a few things," Mills says of the policies and procedures that were developed by the transition team of corrections officers in advance of the move, "but the staff has adjusted well to the new direct-supervision method of supervising prisoners.

"And having the District Court in the same building has really been good. The transportation provided by the Sheriff's Department to get prisoners from jail to the courtroom in previous arrangement is no longer needed. Things are so very efficient."

### **Secure elevator**

When inmates make their court appearances in the new setting, they are placed in a secure elevator that takes them from the jail to a holding area located between two of the courtrooms on the second floor of

the building. On arrival there, they are met by a bailiff or Sheriff's Department deputy, who then take over supervision and delivers them to the appropriate courtroom.

Also, when prisoners come into the building from another institution to make a court appearance, they are brought in through jail intake and delivered to the courtroom in the same way. This practice eliminates any prisoner traffic through the Justice Center.

### **More efficient**

Polk County Attorney Greg Widseth, whose office was one of the first to move into the new Justice Center, echoes the message of how well the new facilities are working. "It's been great for us. Between our four attorneys, I think we are saving at least eight hours a week by having the District Court in the same building as our office. This arrangement allows us to be more productive."

The same can be said for the Minnesota public defenders, whose offices in the building give them ready access to their clients as they prepare to represent them in court.

The new surroundings are also working well for Court Administration, according to Kathy Narlock, Polk County court administrator. "The judges are happy with the arrangements and we are getting used to and tweaking the electronics that can be used to present evidence during trials. It will take a little time to get it all just right.

"My staff really likes the space," she adds. "It's wonderful compared to the cramped quarters we had in the other building. And we appreciate the building security that we have now."

In addition to jail operations, TCCC has its administrative offices and the Probation Department in the Justice Center portion of the new building.

## Interesting facts

As determined by the Polk County assessor for the purpose of assessing property taxes that will be payable in 2009, the total valuation of real estate was determined to be \$2,898,437,200, or almost \$3 billion.

- Of that valuation total, residential properties in cities account for about 35 percent.
- About 33 percent is for tillable agricultural lands.
- Non-tillable lands account for 13 percent.
- Commercial and industrial properties account for about 9 percent.
- Building sites (homes and garages on 1 acre) account for about 5 percent of the total.
- Seasonal recreational properties account for about 5 percent.

## Grundyson on Pembina Trail Commission

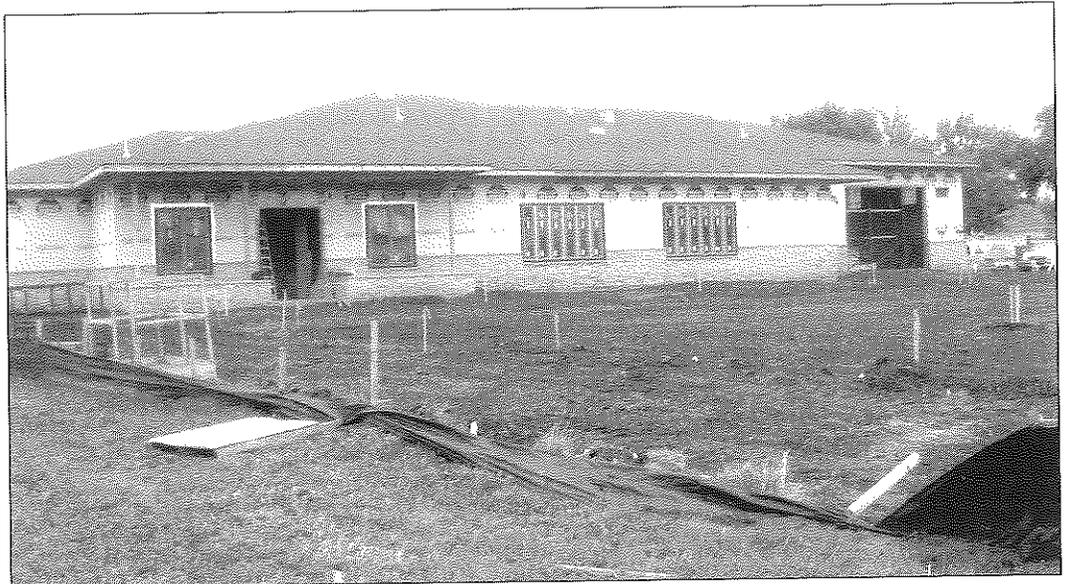
Diane Grundyson, rural McIntosh, has been appointed to represent Polk County as a member-at-large on the Board of Directors of the Pembina Trail Resource Conservation & Development Commission. She succeeds Ellen Leake, Crookston.

Polk County Commissioner Gerald Jacobson, Fertile, is chair of the seven-county commission. Headquarters are in Red Lake Falls. The county members are Kittson, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake and Roseau.

The organization provides leadership and assistance in the development of projects to support the human and natural resources in the region.

## Erickson reappointed

Jerome "Jerry" Erickson, Fertile, has been reappointed to another three-year term as Polk County's representative on the board of directors of Red River Valley Development Association.



The new Developmental Achievement Center is under construction in East Grand Forks

## DAC constructing new home in EGF

Polk County Developmental Achievement Center (DAC) of Crookston and East Grand Fork is constructing its own new operations facility in East Grand Forks. The \$1.3 million, 9,500-square-foot center, located on 10th Street NE just east of the Burger King restaurant, is to be completed in late October.

A non-profit organization, the DAC has been serving adults with developmental disabilities in West Polk County since 1964. It had bused about 25 individuals from the East Grand Forks area to facilities in Crookston prior to 1995 when it rented the first of two sites in East Grand Forks.

After expanding services in 2000, the center was moved to quarters at 1011 11th Street NE in a building that had been constructed adjacent to the East Grand Forks Industrial Park to serve as temporary location for the Sacred Heart Schools following the flood of 1997.

### Finances in place

The new building will be paid for in part from funds that have been accumulated by the DAC over a period of several years for the purpose of some day constructing its own facility in East Grand Forks, by the monies currently being spent to pay for rent and from a bond/loan, according to JoAn Bittner, executive director.

Features of the new building will include a

multi-sensory room in which clients can be treated in a successful new type of therapy that will completely inundate their senses. It will also include more traditional classrooms and garaging for three lift vehicles and two 15-passenger vans, along with a wash bay.

### Will own rather than lease

The DAC will own the building in East Grand Forks. In Crookston, the center building is owned by Polk County and leased to the DAC, which pays all costs to maintain it. DAC funds were recently used to construct a 4,200-square-foot garage and wash bay addition to the Crookston facility.

The East Grand Forks center currently serves 26 persons 18 years of age and older. Ardys Burley is the program coordinator in East Grand Forks with Bittner also there two days a week.

The East Grand Forks center has a 9-member staff that provides day programs for developmentally disabled adults in the areas of job training, social skills, recreation and leisure activities, sensory integration, communication, and community integration.

The services are designed to meet the individual needs of the clients. Transportation is provided to and from the center.

## Flu Shots

Continued from Page 1

Health, RSVP, Polk County Social Services, Riverview Hospital, First Care Hospital and Clinic, Win-E-Mac School, the county commissioners, and nursing students from Northland Community & Technical College, the University of Minnesota-Crookston, Minnesota State University-Moorhead and the University of North Dakota.

KROX and KKCQ radio stations, Crookston

Times, Erskine Echo, The Exponent, Fertile Journal, McIntosh Times, 13 Towns, and Valley Shopper assist in promoting the event. We are all in this together!

If you have questions about this mass dispensing exercise or other Public Health preparedness issues, please call us at 218-281-3385. — **Sheri Altepeter, PHN, Polk County Public Health director**

*With retirement, return, new hire...*

## Assessor's Office makes personnel changes

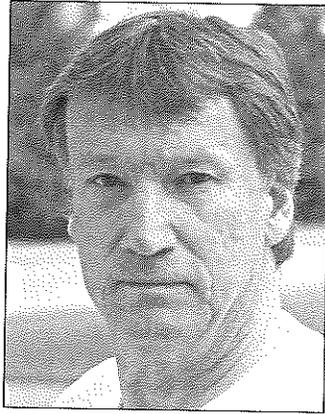
Staff changes in the Polk County Assessor's Office in recent weeks and months have involved the retirement of Rand Hughes, the return to the office by Beverly Johnson, and the employment of new appraiser James Haley.

Hughes, who was born in Escondido, Calif., first went to work for Polk County as a deputy/radio operator in the Sheriff's Department in June 1974. He was also an EMT-A with the Polk County Ambulance Service from 1975 to 1995.

### Nearly 35 years

He moved to the Assessor's Office as an appraiser in May 1988 and was going on 35 years of employment with the county before retiring to pursue other interests in late June.

Those interests include expanding on his part-time plat drawing business for banks and attorneys and teaching classes in photography for Crookston Community Education. He recently also went back part-time to the Sheriff's Department, thereby doing something not many people have ever done: having worked under four consecutive sheriffs — Paul Caouette, Earl Mosher, Doug Qualley



**Rand Hughes**

and currently, Mark LeTexier.

Rand and his wife, Vickie, who is the chief deputy in the Auditor-Treasurer's Office, have three grown sons: Nick, 25, who works at American Crystal Sugar Co., Crookston; Matt, 23, works at Dahlgren & Co., Crookston; and Andy, 22, who is a full-time student at the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

### Returned to office

Johnson returned to the Assessor's Office in March to serve as administrative assistant. She joined Polk County initially in May 1998 to work with the First Call for Help grant program and then spent six weeks in the Social



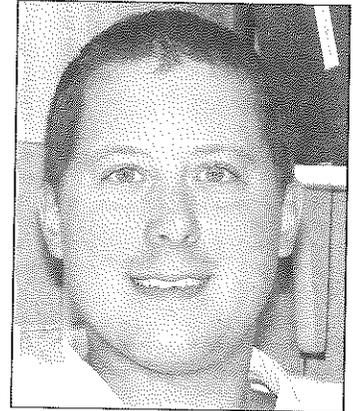
**Beverly Johnson**

Services Department as a receptionist before becoming a clerk in the Assessor's Office in June 1999.

After moving to the Sheriff's Department as a clerk beginning in October 2006, she returned to the Assessor's Office earlier this year.

Johnson and her husband, David, have a daughter, Anessa at Lake Park, Minn., and a son, Aaron in Warroad. She also has two stepsons, Jason in Crookston and Matthew in Grand Forks, and four grandchildren. Johnson replaced Colette Ketchum, who had left the office for a position with Norman County.

Haley, who grew up in Fargo



**James Haley**

and graduated from Fargo North High School in 2003, earned a degree in business administration with majors in marketing and entrepreneurship at the University of North Dakota in May 2008. Prior to being hired by Polk County, he had worked in construction in the areas of landscaping and irrigation, which provided a basic education in complying with building codes.

In the process of obtaining the certifications needed as an appraiser, Haley will attend education sessions this fall on the Basic Income Approach and on the Principles & Procedures of Appraisal. He began work for Polk County on Aug. 11.

## Vets clinic slated at Grand Forks

The latest word about the establishment of a new Veteran Administration Community Based Out-Patient Clinic (CBOC) in Grand Forks, according to Robert McDivitt Fargo Medical Center director, is that the next CBOC will be opened in Grand Forks.

It will not be located at Grand Forks Air Force Base since that site is considered too far for the veterans from the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks community to have to travel for their appointments.

Bid proposals for the development of various locations in Grand Forks are being reviewed. Once the location is decided, McDivitt stated that the new facility could be up

and running in a little less than a year.

The new Bemidji CBOC is operating with outstanding results. Equipped to handle 2,400 veterans with nearly 2,000 presently enrolled, the Bemidji CBOC has the ability to do hearing tests and, of course, the annual physicals required each year in order to obtain medications.

I will inform all veterans from West Polk County about the opening date for the Grand Forks CBOC as it approaches and assist them in transferring there from the Fargo or Grafton clinics. — **Les Goodwin, Polk County veterans service officer**

## Korynta becomes jail nurse

Angel Korynta, a registered nurse and member of the Polk County Public Health staff, has become the new nurse at the Northwest Regional Corrections Center in Crookston. She succeeds Rodney Wawryk, who left the agency during the summer to take a position at a nursing home in Grand Forks.

A native of East Grand Forks where she graduated from Senior High School in 1999, Korynta earned a B.S. degree in nursing at the University of North Dakota in December 2003. She had worked on the medical, surgical and psychiatric floors at



**Angel Korynta**

Altru Hospital, Grand Forks, before accepting the position with Polk County in June.

Korynta and her husband, Josh, have two children.

## Diedrich heads Social Services

Polk County Commissioner Don Diedrich, rural Warren, has been elected the new chair of the Polk County Social Service Board. He assumed the office on July 15 succeeding Commissioner Jerry Jacobson, Fertile.

The new vice chair of the board is Commissioner Warren Strandell, East Grand Forks.

Lay-Board Member Cathy Gutterud, Lengby, is the new secretary of the board. The secretary position has been alternating between Lay-Board Member Paula Waters, Crookston, and Gutterud, whose reappointment to the board for another two years was recently approved by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

The Social Services Board, which meets monthly, includes the five county commissioners and two at-large lay-board members.

### Polk County Attorney's Office Activity Summary Jan.-June, 2008

#### Felony & Gross

<b>Misdemeanors</b>	
Complaints prepared	185
Sentencing hearings	156
Committed to state prison	11
Probation violation hearings	248
Committed to state prison	13
Total committed to prison	24
Jury trials	6
Defendants convicted	2
<b>Misdemeanors</b>	
Guilty pleas	61
Trials	1
<b>Appeals</b>	
Polk County Attorney's Office	5
Minnesota Attorney's Gen. Office	0
<b>Juvenile Cases</b>	
Delinquency petitions	39
Child in need of protective services (CHIPS) petitions	33
Delinquency hearings	234
EJJ probation	0
CHIPS hearings	178
<b>County Welfare</b>	
Commitment petitions*	11
Commitment hearings	26
Guardianship petitions	5
Guardianship hearings	9
* Mentally ill and/or inebriate	
<b>Child Support</b>	
Child support hearings	87
Paternity hearings	129

### Provides chance for positive use of incarceration time

## Chemical dependency treatment program to be offered in the jail

An adult chemical dependency treatment program will soon become available to persons while they are serving time in the Northwest Regional Corrections Center.

"This will be a way for inmates, who qualify, to use their incarceration time in a positive way... to begin drug and alcohol treatment while they are in jail and not have to wait until they are released," according to Susan Mills, executive director of Tri-County Community Corrections (TCCC), which operates the jail for Norman, Polk and Red Lake counties.

#### Collaborative effort

The program, which is a collaborative effort between TCCC, Glenmore Recovery Center, Northwest Mental Health Center and the Polk, Norman and Red Lake county social service agencies, consists of three phases — pre-treatment, an outpatient program provided in the jail facility, and a community-based relapse prevention program.

In the pre-treatment phase, persons interested in the program will be introduced to therapy and screened through mental health, chemical use and motivational assessments to determine their sincerity and appropriateness for treatment — who's ready and who isn't ready.

#### Screening process

A professional treatment provider, a jail staff member, probation agent, county social worker and, if necessary, a mental health profes-

sional will be involved in the screening phase of treatment.

In the second phase, Glenmore Recovery Center will provide treatment programming in both group and individual sessions in the jail.

The third phase, in which the professional treatment begun in the jail setting will be continued, starts following the completion of incarceration. It includes relapse prevention, family education and continuing care.

#### Grant to pay salaries

TCCC has received a two-year, \$100,000 grant from the Minnesota State Department of Human Services to pay the salaries of 1.9 new staff positions for the program.

Besides assisting in the pre-treatment and treatment portions of the program in the jail setting, those staff persons will also be primary in helping the participants find jobs and places to live after they are released from jail.

A program evaluation component to the project will provide important information on the success of the programming during and after incarceration.

Expectations of the program include a reduction in recidivism, a reduction in relapse rates, a safer community and improved relationship skills and employability. Depending on the success of the program, the grant could be renewed for up to five years.

## Polk County's 100-year floodplain maps are being revised with LiDAR

Representatives of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently met with representatives of Polk County, Polk County townships and Polk County cities to review FEMA's plans for revising Polk County's Floodplain Maps and the determined 100-year floodplains.

Polk County is in the beginning stages of an approximate 2 to 3-year process to revise those Floodplain Maps and the 100-year floodplains.

The current maps were offi-

cially approved in 1983 and in some instances are now significantly obsolete. The revised floodplain maps will be much more detailed and accurate, and be accessible in a digital format on the internet.

The DNR is in the process of compiling this data through a technological process known as Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR). Simply put, LiDAR is a process of collecting vast quantities of high-definition, 3-dimensional aerial measurements and data from airplane fly-overs.

The resulting data will be accurate to the inch, rather than

the foot. Employing more accurate and up-to-date data should allow FEMA to create a more accurate floodplain map to more closely reflect the current condition of any given area of the county.

As the process moves forward, updates will be available. Polk County residents are urged to follow the progress of the FEMA remapping effort over the next few years to determine what, if any, impact this project may have on their properties. — **Jon Steiner, Polk County Environmental Services administrator**

## Ralph Montreuil retires

# 'Face of Transfer Station' ends 34-year career

After 34 years of service to Polk County, Ralph Montreuil retired from his position at the Polk County Transfer Station in Crookston on July 31st. Originally hired by Polk County in 1974 to work at the Polk County Landfill located

near Gentilly, Montreuil accepted the open position of transfer station operator in 1988 when outdoor operations were begun in an area behind the American Crystal Sugar Co. plant in Crookston.

He continued to be the primary operator of the facility when the program moved to the former Massey-Ferguson building in 1990 — its present location.

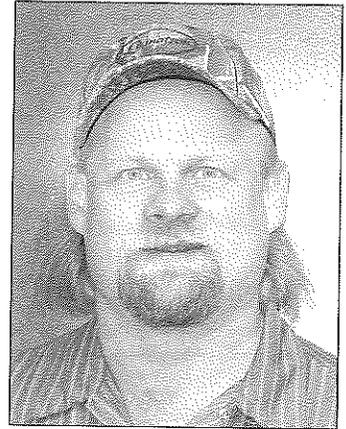
### Public contact

As "the face" people have come to associate with the Transfer Station over the years, Montreuil was the person most users of the facility asked their questions of, or who would assist them with their waste loads. His input, experience and dedication have helped to shape the programs and services currently offered at the Transfer Station.

With Montreuil's retirement, that vacancy has been filled by Erik Sandberg of rural Mentor.

### Transfer from incinerator

Sandberg transferred from the Polk County Incinerator in Fosston, where he had been



**Erik Sandberg**

employed since 1999. Prior to working for Polk County, Sandberg had extensive experience as a supervisor and part owner of a construction company in Illinois.

Erik looks forward to the diversity and challenges his new position that the Transfer Station brings and having an expanded role in assisting the public. — **Jon Steiner, Polk County Environmental Services administrator**



**Ralph Montreuil, left, who retired July 31st from his position as the Polk County Transfer Station operator, was recognized for his 34 years as a county employee by Jon Steiner, right, Polk County Environmental Services administrator.**

## As Maple Lake Improvement District representative

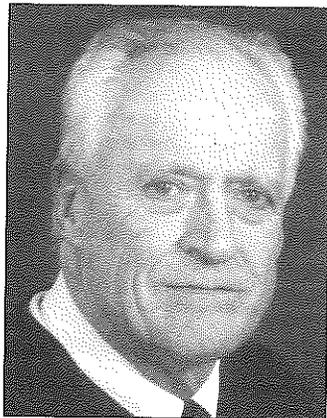
# Yell named to Planning & Zoning Commission

Dennis Yell has joined the Polk County Planning & Zoning Commission as the representative of the Maple Lake Improvement District. He succeeds Steve Swanson, who resigned for professional reasons.

Yell also serves on the Maple Lake Improvement District Board of Directors.

After acquiring a cabin and spending summers at the lake since 1972, he and his wife, Sue, built their year-round home on the same site there in 2003.

A native of Parkers Prairie, Minn., Yell earned a teaching degree at Moorhead State University and taught at Ada for five years before teaching in the Rochester, Minn., area schools for 23 years. Both he



**Dennis Yell**

and his wife are now retired from teaching and are fulltime residents on the lake.

Other members of the Planning Commission are:

- Don Wright, Mentor (representing Commissioner District 1);

representing Commissioner District 1);

- Earl Beiswenger, Fisher (District 2);

- Courtney Pulkrabek, Crookston (District 3);

- Kerry Winkleman, Fosston (District 4);

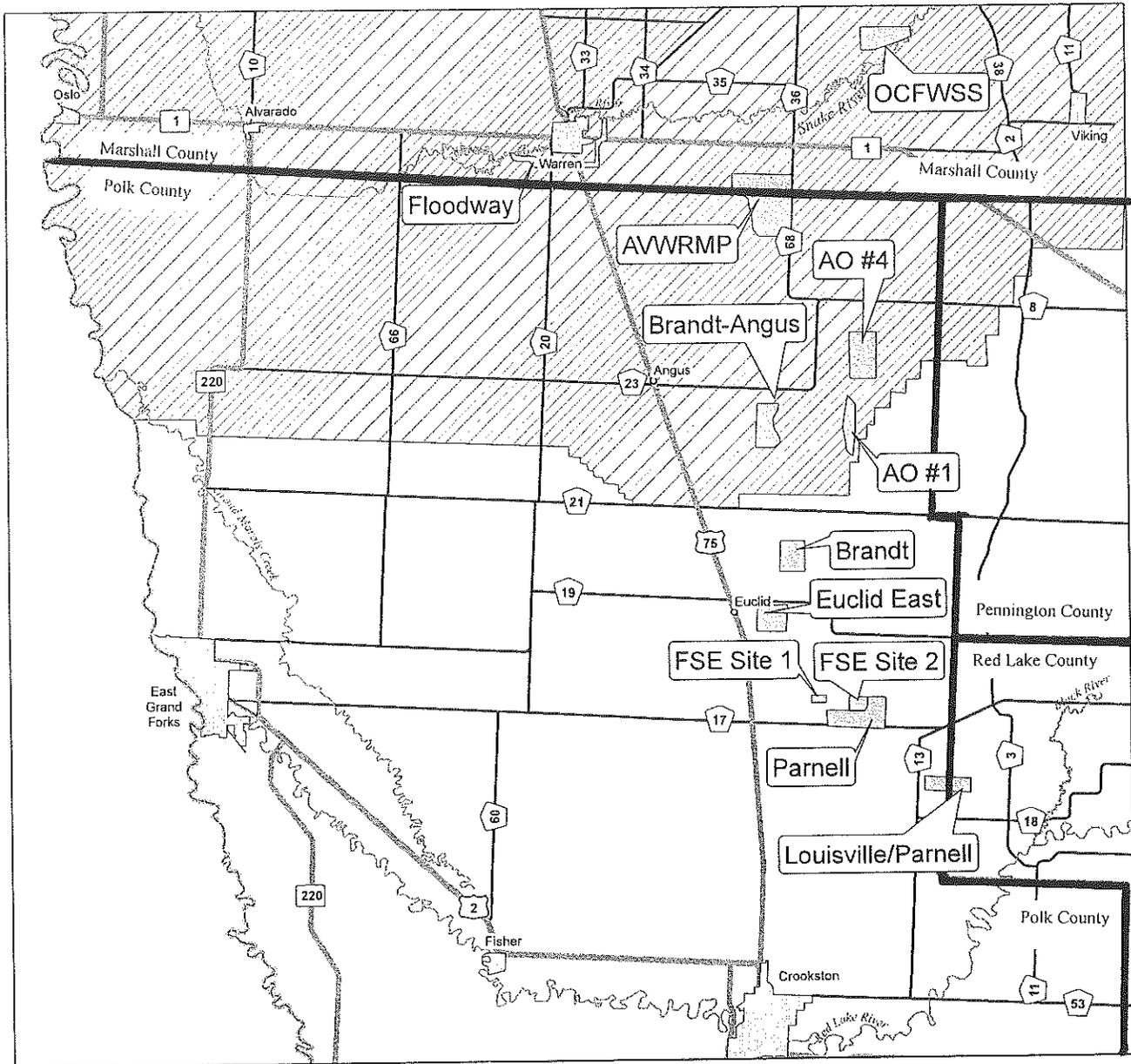
- Barb Hangsleben, East Grand Forks (District 5);

- Former Crookston Mayor Don Osborne (representing the City of Crookston);

- East Grand Forks Council President Dick Grassel (representing East Grand Forks);

- Roland Gagner, Erskine (representing Union Lake Sarah Improvement District); and

- Chuck Lariviere, Crookston (representing Polk County townships).



## Middle-Snake-Tamarac & Red Lake Watershed District projects

The Agassiz Valley Water Resource and Management Project (AVWRMP), on which construction was started in June at a site on the Polk-Marshall County line east of Warren, will become the seventh structure designed to control runoff from east of U.S. Highway 75 in northwestern Polk County.

Completion of the first phase of the \$10.5 million, 2,600-acre AVWRMP project is scheduled in 2009. With good weather, it could be accomplished sooner.

Phase 2, which involves the construction of inlet ditches leading to the impoundment, is to be completed in 2010.

Phase 3 will involve about 1,700 acres of native prairie grass restoration.

The flood damage control projects were designed and constructed over a period of years by the Red Lake Watershed District, which is based in Thief River Falls, and by the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District, based in Warren.

An eighth control structure — the proposed Brandt-Angus Impoundment — is currently in planning by the Middle-Snake-Tamarac Watershed District and, depending on the availability of funding, could become a reality as early as 2012.

The Red Lake Watershed District has completed several other flood damage control projects in the upper reaches of its district. Although not located in the immediate Red River Valley, they do serve as a benefit to the residents of Polk County as they store flows that ultimately outlet into the Red Lake River.

The Off Channel Floodwater Storage Site (OCFWSS), a retention project shown on the map on the Snake River east of Warren, and the Richard P. Nelson Floodway around the City of Warren were constructed as a part of that community's permanent flood protection project.

### Map Legend:

- OCFWSS** — Off Channel Floodwater Storage Site
- AVWRMP** — Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project
- AO #4** — Angus-Oslo Impoundment #4
- AO #1** — Angus-Oslo Impoundment #1
- Brandt** — Brandt Impoundment
- Euclid East** — Euclid East Impoundment
- Parnell** — Parnell Impoundment
- FSE Site 1** — Parnell Flood Storage Easement Site 1
- FSE Site 2** — Parnell Flood Storage Easement Site 2
- Louisville/Parnell** — Louisville/Parnell Impoundment

*HDR Engineering, Thief River Falls, developed this map*

# Ash projects keep proving their worth while saving valuable landfill space

Polk County has now completed three demonstration research projects (DRP) utilizing combustor ash from the waste to energy plant in Fosston as a partial replacement for aggregate in asphalt road paving projects.

These projects substituted from 12 to 15 percent combustor ash for natural aggregate during asphalt mix production. As a conservative measure, no ash was included in the wear course of these projects.

The results show little environmental impact and no worker health and safety issues. All three projects demonstrate improved structural performance and greater flexibility from the ash-amended asphalt as compared to conventional asphalt.

## Cost competitive

In total, these projects have consumed over 3,300 tons of waste combustor ash and saved valuable landfill space. The waste combustor generates over 6,000 tons of ash each year. Economically these projects show that ash-amended asphalt is competitive in cost to conventional asphalt on a per-ton basis.

Polk County has now submitted and received approval for a fourth ash utilization DRP. This one differs from the first three in that the ash will be used as an ingredient in Class 5 gravel mix used for a Polk County Highway Department road

construction project. The project involved the complete rebuilding and widening of a 7½-mile section of CSAH 41 beginning at State Highway 102 going east and ending 3½ miles east of Highway 32.

Last year, a trial run of Class 5 mix was performed adding screened combustor ash into a crusher while mixing Class 5 materials. Laboratory tests confirmed that an acceptable blend can be obtained with using up to 20 percent ash as a substitute for the clay binder material used in Class 5 mix.

For the CSAH 41 project, ash-amended Class 5 was used in the base course under the asphalt paving and also in the widening and shouldering sections of the road. The top two inches of the widening and shouldering areas was covered with virgin Class 5 so that all ash amended materials would be encapsulated. This has been the procedure followed in the previous demonstrations.

## Started in July

Work on CSAH 41 began in July when Polk County landfill personnel started screening and stockpiling ash within the lined cell at the Polk County landfill. Ash hauling and crusher operations for the project started July 17 and continued through Aug. 1.

Ash was added into the crusher with other aggregate materials at a rate of 20

percent. All told, approximately 15,380 tons of ash was mixed into Class 5 materials. This amount of ash represents well over two years of ash production at the waste combustor and adds significant disposal capacity to the landfill.

The ash-amended Class 5 mix has been placed and paving and widening is now complete. Worker health and safety issues were evaluated by having several employees wear air sample gathering devices during crusher and placement operations.

## Impacts to be reviewed

For comparative purposes, air samples were also taken during crushing and placement of virgin Class 5 materials. Ditch bottom water collectors have been installed to evaluate any surface water run-off impacts after two significant rainfall events.

Polk County Solid Waste, the Highway Department and the contractor will be evaluating the economics of this DRP for inclusion in a report to be submitted to the MPCA later this year. The initial response from the contractor and Highway Department personnel has been very positive.

It is our expectations that this project will pave (pardon the pun) the way for future applications of a similar design. — **Bill Wilson, Polk County Solid Waste and Rich Sanders, Polk County Highway Department**

# Olson joins Extension Committee

Stephanie Olson, rural Crookston, is a new member of the Polk County Extension Committee.

Olson, who represents Commissioner District 3, succeeds Judie Kanten, rural Crookston. Kanten had served the maximum number of terms (two three-year terms) on the committee.

The Extension Committee oversees Extension Service activities in the county and makes recommendations to the County Board concerning staffing and budgeting.

Chuck Vanyo, East Grand Forks (District 2), is the current chair of the board with Rick Roed, Fosston (District 4) as the vice chair. Other members

of the committee are: Curt Knutson, Fisher (at-large member); Patricia Erickson, Fertile (District 1); and James Pulkrabek Jr., Euclid (District 5). County commissioners Bill Montague and Don Diedrich are also serving on the committee in 2008. County Auditor-Treasurer Gerald Amiot is the committee secretary.

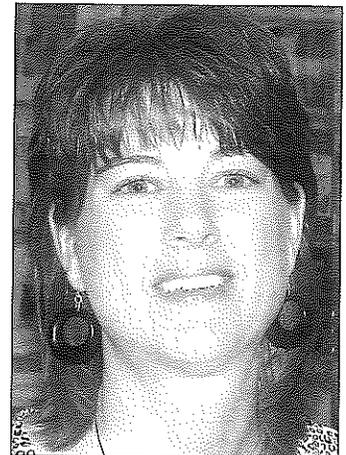
Olson, who grew up as the oldest of 13 children on a dairy farm near Kelliher, Minn., earned an associate degree in home economics at the University of Minnesota-Crookston in 1991 and a bachelor's degree in food and nutrition at North Dakota State University, Fargo, in 1994.

She is a registered dietitian

and is employed as the coordinator of the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program for Polk County Public Health.

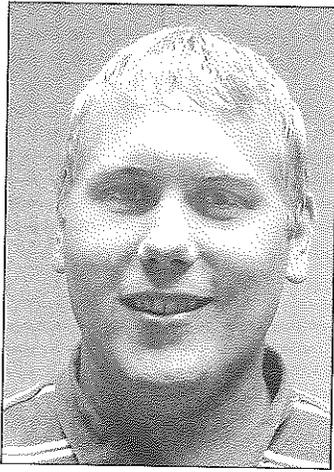
Professionally, Stephanie is the public relations committee co-chair for the Northwest District Dietetic Association and a member of the nominating committee for the Minnesota Dietetic Association. In the community, she is a member of Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Church, the Agassiz Study Club and serves on the Cathedral School Board.

Stephanie and her husband, Darrin, who farms wheat and soybeans near Crookston, were recently chosen to represent West Polk County as Agassiz



**Stephanie Olson**

Leaders in the Emerging Leadership Program. They have two children, Mitchell, 10, and Maria, 7.



Josh Johnston



Josh Holte



Jake Snyder

## Planning & Zoning Department replaces personnel who departed

For the second consecutive year, significant personnel changes have been made in 2008 in the Polk County Planning & Zoning Department.

The departures of Zoning Administrator Dan Johanneck (now with the City of Crookston) and Environmental Field Technician Dean Anderson (now with the City of Grand Forks) left the Zoning Department shorthanded.

Prior to their departures, the Zoning Department had filled a second environmental field technician position with the hire of Josh Holte and had also hired Jake Snyder as a summer intern.

Josh Johnston was later hired to fill the zoning administrator position vacated by Johanneck and Snyder was elevated to fill the environmental field technician position vacated by Anderson.

The hires bring the Zoning Department to full staff levels.

### Planning & Zoning administrator

Johnston comes to Polk County from Minnetonka, Minn. He had worked for Svoboda Ecological Resources in Excelsior, Minn.

Originally from Warren, where he graduated from Warren-Alvarado-Oslo High School, Johnston received a bachelors degree from Bemidji State University and a masters degree from the University of North Dakota.

For Josh and his wife, who is also from the area, this was an opportunity for them to advance their careers much closer to the place they call home.

### Grygla native

Holte comes to Polk County from Bemidji, where he worked for Cass County Environmental Services and the Beltrami County Highway Department.

Originally from Grygla where he graduated from Grygla High School, he received a bachelors degree from Bemidji State University. His first several weeks working for Polk County were spent traveling to all corners of the state to attain the certifications needed for the construction season.

Having finally attained his certifications and licensures, he is excited to be putting his considerable training and experience to work in assisting the public with their land development plans.

### Originally from Crookston

Snyder comes to Polk County from Thief River Falls and had previously worked for the West Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District. Originally from Crookston where he graduated from Crookston High School, he earned a bachelors degree from North Dakota State University.

Jake's first several weeks working for Polk County were spent logging significant highway miles for those same state certifications.

While originally hired as a seasonal intern, he was eager to fill the environmental field technician vacancy and looks forward to working for Polk County in a more permanent capacity. —

**Jon Steiner, Polk County Environmental Services administrator**

## Extra earnings credits could benefit Vets

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty (including active duty for training), you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings credits are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training.

If your active duty military service occurred:

- From 1957 through 1967, extra credits can be added to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits.

- From 1968 through 2001, you do not need to do anything to receive these extra credits. The credits were automatically added to your record.

After 2001, there are no special extra earnings credits for military service.

For military service earnings from 1957 through 1977, you can be credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

For every \$300 in active duty basic pay from 1978 through 2001, you can be credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year.

If you enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980 and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details. — **Les Goodwin, Polk County veteran service officer**

### County Board Meeting Times

8:30 a.m. on 1st Tuesday of each month  
1:20 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday  
8:30 a.m. on the 4th Tuesday

*All meetings are open to the public*

### Polk County Commissioners

Dist. 1 — Jerry Jacobson, vice chair  
Dist. 2 — Warren Strandell  
Dist. 3 — Bill Montague, chair  
Dist. 4 — Warren Affeldt  
Dist. 5 — Don Diedrich

# Law extends eligibility period of health care for combat vets

Public Law 110-Enhanced Eligibility for Health Care Benefits 181, titled the "National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, was signed into law on Jan. 28, 2008.

The law extends the period of eligibility for health care for veterans, who served in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998.

Under the "Combat Veteran" authority, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides cost-free health care services and nursing home care for conditions possibly related to military service.

Veterans and new enrollees, who were discharged from active duty on or after Jan. 28, 2003, are eligible for the enhanced benefits for 5 years after discharge. Veterans discharged from active duty before Jan. 28, 2003, who apply for enrollment after that date are eligible for the enhanced benefit until Jan. 27, 2011.

## Who's eligible

Veterans, including activated Reservists and members of the National Guard, are eligible if they served on active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

Health benefits under the "Combat Veteran" authority include cost-free care and medications provided for conditions potentially related to combat service.

Veterans who enroll with VA under this authority will continue to be enrolled even after their enhanced eligibility period ends.

For those combat veterans who do not enroll during their enhanced eligibility period, eligibility for enrollment and subsequent care is based on other factors such as a compensable service-connected disability, VA pension status, catastrophic dis-

ability determination, or the veteran's financial circumstances.

## Enrollment encouraged

For this reason, combat veterans are strongly encouraged to apply for enrollment within their enhanced eligibility period, even if no medical care is currently needed.

Veterans who qualify under this special eligibility are not subject to co-pays for conditions potentially related to their combat service.

However, unless otherwise exempted, combat veterans must either disclose their prior year's gross household income or decline to provide their financial information and agree to make applicable co-pays for care or services that the VA determines are unrelated to their military service.

## Disclosure may be benefit

While income disclosure by a recently discharged combat veteran is not a requirement, this disclosure may provide additional benefits such as eligibility for travel reimbursement, cost-free medication and/or medical care for services unrelated to combat.

VA dental care benefits are based on very specific guidelines and differs significantly from eligibility requirements for medical care.

Additional information is available at the nearest VA medical facility. VA facilities listing and telephone numbers can be found on the internet at [www.va.gov/directory](http://www.va.gov/directory), or in the local telephone directory under the "U.S. Government" listings.

Veterans can also call the Health Benefit Service Center toll free at 1-877-222-VETS (8387) or visit the VA health eligibility website at [www.va.gov/healtheligibility](http://www.va.gov/healtheligibility).

# Another good road work season marked

The only road construction project left to complete in another successful season is the grade widening and overlay of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 8, north of McIntosh. This work is to be completed by Oct. 15.

With a dry July and August, contractors were able to complete their work in a timely manner. Projects completed this year include:

**CSAH 1** from TH 32 (Fertile) to CSAH 10 — overlay

**CSAH 4** from south county line to Lengby — reconstruction

**CSAH 4** from Lengby to Trunk Highway (TH) 2 — overlay

**CSAH 23** from TH 75 at Angus to 4 miles east — overlay

**CSAH 41** from TH 102 to CSAH 12 — widen and overlay

**CSAH 44** from CSAH 1 to TH 102 — overlay

**CSAH 66** from CSAH 21 to north county line — bituminous surfacing

All of this work was able to be constructed because of the bonding that the County Board approved and also the \$2.2 million in federal dollars that were allocated.

We also completed seven township bridge replacements. These projects were in Fanny, Garden, Hubbard and Russia townships. The cost of these replacements was \$1.6 million dollars.

If a township has a bridge that is deteriorating and would like to get it replaced, please call our office at 218-281-3952 and talk to Darin Carlstrom or myself so we can get it on the replacement list. — **Richard Sanders, Polk County engineer**

## Report Welfare Fraud

People who give false information or withhold facts in order to receive Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) aid, food stamps, general assistance, childcare or medical assistance may be guilty of fraud.

**You may wish to report:** Persons not reporting income; Incorrect reporting of persons living in the home; Misuse of food stamps or Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards; Falsifying of information on application; Unreported property and assets; or Persons receiving dual benefits (from more than one state)

**What you should report:** **Who** — The name of the person; **What** — Fraud suspected; **When** — Date of occurrence; **Where** — Address of person

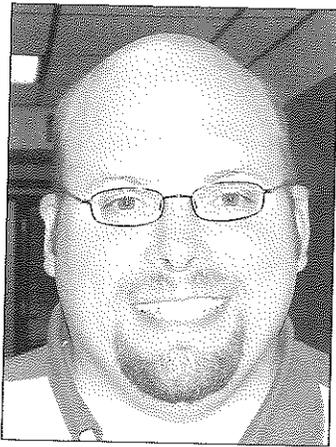
**Call the Polk County Sheriff's Office:**  
1-218-281-0431

or the toll free  
**Minnesota Welfare Fraud Hotline**  
1-800-627-9977

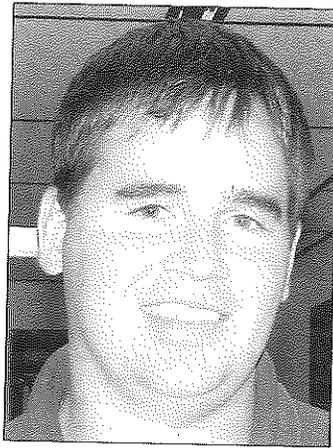
24 hours a day, 7 days a week

**You may remain anonymous**





Arron Harlow



Ryan Melsa

## Harlow, Melsa form County IT Department

Arron Harlow is the new administrator of the Polk County Information Technology (IT) Department.

Hired by the county to fill an open position as an information technology analyst on Sept. 24, 2007, Arron advanced to the administrator position in March when Jason King left county employment to take a position in private business.

A native of Drayton, N.D., where he graduated from high school in 1993, Arron attended North Dakota State University, Fargo, for two years and worked in construction before earning an associate degree in computer service networking at Northland Community & Technical College in East Grand Forks in the spring of 2007.

He and his wife, Mandy, are the parents of six children and live in Grand Forks.

## Mental Health Center cited

The Northwestern Mental Health Center, based in Crookston, is the recipient of a Quality of Place Award from the Northwest Minnesota Foundation for 2008.

Polk County Board chair Bill Montague, a member of the Northwest Mental Health Center board of directors, and Dan Wilson, center executive director, were present to receive the award.

Ryan Melsa then filled Arron's previous position as an information technology analyst in May. A native and resident of Crookston, Ryan graduated from Crookston Central High School in 1998. After a year at Bemidji State University and about two years at the University of Minnesota-Crookston (UMC), Ryan worked in construction before returning to UMC to earn a B.A. degree in information technology this spring.

He started work for Polk County on March 27. Ryan, who has a son, Blake, 2, is engaged to marry Ashley Persson, Crookston.

One position currently remains open in the IT Department. The department was created in 2003 to reduce employee down-time and the scope and cost of using outside contractors to address and service computer hardware and software issues.

The center, a private, non-profit corporation operated by Marshall, Mahnomen, Norman, Polk and Red Lake counties, provides mental health needs services to individuals and families in northwestern Minnesota in an effort to prevent the emergence of mental health problems, provide early intervention to limit the impact of problems and to treat serious mental health issues.

## Polk County Board assignments & positions

**Gerald Jacobson** — Polk County Board vice chair, Northwest Mental Health Board, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch Committee, Polk County Park Committee, Red Lake Watershed-Polk County Judicial Ditch 72 Committee, Lake Agassiz Regional Library Executive Board & Personnel Committee (chair), Polk County Public Safety Committee, Pembina Trails Resource Conservation & Development Commission (chair), Northwest Regional Development Commission (Enterprise Committee), Retired Senior Volunteer Program Board, AMC Environment & Natural Resources Committee, Northwest Agency on Aging, Northwest Regional Council on Aging, Minnesota Counties Insurance Trust (delegate), Agassiz Recreational Trails System (secretary).

**Warren Strandell** — AMC District 3 Board (chair), AMC General Government Policy Committee (past state chair), Tri-County Community Corrections Board (chair), Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus (alternate delegate), Polk County Social Services vice chair, Northwest Regional Development Commission Board of Directors (vice chair), NWRDC Transportation Advisory Committee (vice chair), NWRDC Bridge Committee (vice chair), NWRDC Area Transportation Partnership (delegate), Grand Forks-East Grand Forks Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Policy Board, East Grand Forks Community Marketing Task Force, Fisher Chamber of Commerce.

**Bill Montague** — Polk County Board (chair), State Community Health Advisory Board (past state chair), Tri-Valley Opportunity Council (past chair), AMC Health & Human Services Policy Committee, Northwest Re-

gional Radio Board (chair), Northwest Mental Health Board, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch Committee, Regional Solid Waste Advisory Board, Polk County Public Safety Committee, Northwest Regional Development Commission Enterprise Fund Committee, Polk County Law Library Board of Directors, Polk County Extension Service Committee, Judicial Ditch 60 Committee, Solid Waste Advisory Committee (alternate), Household Hazardous Waste Advisory Committee (alternate), Polk County Community Health Board.

**Warren Affeldt** — Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus (delegate and past state chair), Tri-County Community Corrections Board, AMC Environment & Natural Resources Policy Committee, Red Lake Watershed-Polk County Joint Ditch 72 Committee, Regional Solid Waste Advisory Board, 5-County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, Household Hazardous Waste Advisory Committee, Inter County Community Council Board (chair), East Polk County Development Achievement Center Board, Joint Beaver Advisory Board, Local Water Planning Board, Polk-Red Lake Joint Ditch 4 Committee.

**Don Diedrich** — Polk County Social Services chair, Polk County Extension Service Committee, Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, AMC Public Safety & Corrections Policy Committee, Joint Powers Board of the Red River Basin in Minnesota, Red Lake-Polk County Joint Ditch Committee, Red Lake Watershed-Polk County Judicial Ditch 72 Committee, Judicial Ditch 60 Committee, Middle-Snake-Tamarac Rivers Watershed District Citizens Advisory Committee.

14.85% of registered voters cast ballots in Primary

## Commissioner races set for General Election

The two Polk County Commissioner contests that will be decided in the General Election on Nov. 4 — those in Districts 1 and 3 — were determined when voters cast their votes in the Primary Election on Sept. 9. The Primary Election was required to reduce the field of candidates from three to two in each of the two districts.

In District 1, incumbent Commissioner Gerald "Jerry" Jacobson, Fertile, with 279 votes, and challenger Craig Bunes, Crookston, with 270 votes, won the right to advance to the General Election. The third candidate, Scott McFarlin, Erskine, received 154 votes.

In District 3, incumbent Commissioner Bill Montague, Crookston, with 380 votes, and challenger Gerald "Jerry" Reitmeier, Crookston, with 94 votes, will advance to the General Election ballot. Daniel J. Rud, Crookston, had 18 votes.

Incumbent District 5 Commissioner Don Diedrich, rural Warren, who does not have competition, will also be on the General Election ballot.

### **2,500 voted in Primary**

Countywide, only 2,500 voters out of 16,852 registered voters, or 14.84 percent, cast ballots in the Primary Election. Primary Election voting in 2002 brought out 3,676 voters, or 24.1 percent of 15,231 registered voters who narrowed a race for sheriff from three candidates to two. In 2004, 1,883 voters, or 11.9 percent of the registered voters, cast ballots. In 2006, 2,436 voters, or 14.3 percent, went to the polls for the Primary Election.

This year's Primary Election, which used the electronic equipment instituted two years ago as a result of HAVA (Help America Vote Act) requirements, went very well, according to Polk County

Auditor-Treasurer Gerald Amiot.

### **Counters worked well**

"The M100 precinct counters all worked well. These units record the actual voting on memory cards with the information then transmitted electronically to the Government Center from the outlying counting centers in McIntosh and East Grand Forks," he says.

"And with the exception of some minor problems with a very few of the 50 Automark units that assist voters in marking their ballots, those machines worked well, too. We were done counting 90 percent of the ballots by 9:30 p.m. on election night and done with all of the counting by about 10:30 p.m.

"The Primary Election," Amiot says, "provided another successful test of the equipment in advance of the General Election when we expect a much higher turnout of voters."

### Processing to take about 4 weeks

## Passport 'Cards' for persons who cross north, south borders

Beginning in June 2009, travelers will be required to present a single Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) compliant document denoting both citizenship and identity when entering the United States through a land or sea border.

The passport card is designed for the specific needs of the northern and southern border resident communities and is not a globally recognized travel document as is the traditional passport book.

While the passport card has limited use, the passport book remains the premier internationally accepted travel document.

### **Wallet-size card**

The passport card is a wallet-size card that can only be used for land and sea travel between the United States and Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda.

The card provides a less expensive, smaller and more convenient alternative to the passport book for those who travel frequently to these destinations by land or by sea.

To facilitate the frequent trav-

el of Americans living in border communities and to meet the Department of Homeland Security's operational needs along the land borders, the passport card will have a vicinity-read radio frequency identification (RFID) chip.

### **Advance access**

With this technology, Customs and Border Protection inspectors will be able to access photographs and other biographical information stored in secure government databases before the traveler reaches the inspection station.

There will be no personal information written on the electronic chip itself. The chip

will have only a unique number pointing to a stored record contained in secure government databases.

The U.S. Department of State has decided to use laser engraving and will include state-of-the-art security features to mitigate against the possibility of counterfeiting and forgery.

To mitigate any possibility that the card could be tracked, it will be issued with a protective sleeve that will prevent the card from being read when not in use.

### **350,000 requests**

The U.S. Department of State

## Hanson, Brekken returned to Sand Hill Watershed Board of Managers

Roger Hanson, Beltrami, and Robert "Bill" Brekke Jr., Nielsville, have been reappointed to three-year terms on the Board of Managers of the Sand Hill Watershed District.

Hanson, the current vice president of the board, has served as a manager for the district since 1978 while

Brekke has been on the board since 1999. Their reappointments were approved by the County Board on April 15.

Other members of the board of managers are Harold Vig, Fosston, and Gordon Sonstelie and Stuart Christian, both of Erskine.

began production of the U.S. Passport Card on July 14. More than 350,000 Americans have pre-ordered the U.S. Passport Cards since the State Department began taking orders on Feb. 1. Over 7,600 cards have already been mailed to advance customers and all pre-orders are expected to be filled by Sept. 30, 2008.

### **4 weeks for processing**

After the initial distribution, the expected processing time for passport cards is to be the same as for passport books — less than four weeks.

Customers were to be able to track the progress of their passport card application online beginning in mid-August.

For first time applicants, the passport card will cost \$45 for adults and \$35 for children under the age of 16, which includes the execution fee of \$25.

Adults with fully-valid passports issued within the last 15 years can apply for the card by mail using the Renewal Form (DS-82), at a cost of \$20. — **Michelle M. Cote, Polk County recorder**