

Summer 1997

Flood of '97 inundated downtown East Grand Forks — along with almost all of the city. Only 24 of the 2,300 single-family residences in the city were NOT damaged by water. Another 285 homes in the rural area had water damage.



Flood tops anything that's happened before

The flood fight of 1997 topped anything that's ever happened before in Polk County. "We've never before had an emergency operation of this magnitude," says Polk County Sheriff/Emergency Services Director Doug Qualley.

Complete damage totals will likely not be known for years but early estimates are in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

In East Grand Forks, only 24 of the 2,300 single family residences escaped damage; upwards of 500 homes were completely destroyed. Another 285 homes in rural areas, mostly along the Red River, sustained some degree of water damage. About 90 of them had extensive damage. There was extensive damage, too, to stores and commercial buildings in East Grand Forks and to farm buildings in the countryside.

Volunteers — friends, neighbors, relatives and even complete strangers — came from all over to first fill and place sandbags on the front lines and then provide acts of mercy for those who were made homeless for periods

that ranged from a few weeks to forever.

More than 8,500 people in East Grand Forks and from 150 to 200 more from rural areas had to leave their homes. Many of them had to be evacuated, even air-lifted out. Shelter was found in the homes of friends and relatives, or provided by churches in Crookston, Fisher, Fosston and other communities.

Coordination of many of the pre-flood and post-flood activities in the county was done from an emergency operations center (EOC) that was set up in the Northwest Regional Law Enforcement Center in Crookston. Qualley and Mark Fontaine, assistant director of the Polk County Emergency Services office, led the effort in conjunction with personnel from the Minnesota Department of Emergency Management (DEM). Involved in the communications center, too, were about 40 community volunteers and about 20 officers of the Minnesota National Guard.

"The effort was just fantastic," Sheriff Doug Qualley says. "You can't say enough about the effort... by everyone.

"It was the biggest disaster we've had in

terms of damage and the number of people that it affected, but it still could have been so much worse," he says. "It's a miracle that no one was killed or even seriously injured. And, Crookston came within an eyelash of being flooded, too."

Help for both the City of East Grand Forks and the rural areas came from throughout the state and region... companies and government agencies provided equipment along with the electricians, sewer and water personnel, communications people, and operators needed to use it. The Salvation Army and Red Cross were on the scene for several weeks.

"**And we had law enforcement** from all over... from the Twin Cities, from cities and counties, from just all over. We probably had up to 200 law enforcement officers come in to help us out with security and patrolling in both East Grand Forks and the county. Some came back several times. Hennepin County would have done anything we

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Appraisals determine if homes can be rebuilt

The damage appraisals of more than 90 substantially flood-damaged homes in rural areas, mostly along the Red River, will determine whether or not they can be repaired to pre-flood condition.

The key to what homeowners may pursue in their efforts to re-establish their homes is that a substantial damage determination be made. The determination is made by determining the percent of structural damage which occurred as a result of the spring flooding and comparing it with the pre-flood fair market value.

Failure to comply with these National Flood Insurance Program rules may disqualify Polk County residents from receiving future disaster assistance or obtaining flood insurance coverage. Without flood insurance, most lending institutions will not approve loans for homes located in the 100-year flood plain.

If the damage estimate is less than 50 percent of the pre-flood market value, the homeowner may repair the home to the pre-flood condition.

If the damage estimate is more than 50 percent of the

pre-flood market value, the homeowner has up to three alternatives from which to choose. Project availability is dependent upon government funding:

1. **Mitigate** — elevate lowest living floor to a minimum of one foot above the 100-year flood plain elevation.

2. **Relocate** — move the home from the 100-year flood plain to a site outside the 100-year flood plain.

3. **Buy out** — a voluntary program in which the county will apply on the homeowner's behalf to acquire the home at pre-flood fair market value with federal, state and local monies.

Bob Tuseh, Crookston, a local building codes inspector, has been hired by the Polk County Board of Commissioners to do these estimates. The estimates will be used by Polk County Planning & Zoning to determine substantial damage.

The homes being inspected for substantial damage represent about one-third of the 285 rural homes believed to have suffered some extent of flood damage. The 285 rural homes are in addition to those homes in the City of East Grand Forks which were damaged by flooding this spring.

Flood

Continued from Page 1

asked. The Department of Natural Resources and State Patrol helped a lot, too. At one time, we had about 800 National Guard troops in the county," Qualley says.

Most of the Guard members were housed at the Fisher School where classes were called off for two weeks to accommodate them. Others were housed in the Crookston National Guard Armory and some were moved into the East Grand Forks Civic Center.

Lessons learned from the disaster, Qualley says, include that preparation and communications are key to winning flood battles. "We need to evaluate our flood plans, especially looking at the human resources. We have to determine what is needed in the rural area," he says. "Rural people need to organize their townships to deal both with the preparations and actual flooding. It's not just a city issue," Qualley says.

"And because this has been deemed a 500-year flood, it doesn't mean that we can't have another flood of this magnitude or even greater during our lifetimes or even next year," he says.

Polk County Board of Commissioners

Dist. 1 — Don Bakken, Fertile

Dist. 2 — Warren Strandell, East Grand Forks

Dist. 3 — Lyle Eisert, Crookston

Dist. 4 — Rupert Syverson, McIntosh

Dist. 5 — Henry Vasek, Warren

The board meets three times each month: At 8:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday; at 1:20 p.m. on the third Tuesday; and at 8:30 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday. Meetings are open to the public. For special accommodations, call John Schmalenberg, county coordinator, 281-5408.

Sentence to Serve program

Prisoners contribute to flood preparation & recovery

Prisoner work crews have been working daily with East Grand Forks and county officials, originally on sandbagging crews and more recently on the recovery and clean-up efforts.

Three adult and one juvenile crew with as many as 12 workers per crew have worked throughout the disaster on a variety of projects ranging from city park clean-up to working with senior citizens cleaning up their homes.

At their May meeting, the Regional Corrections Board of County Commissioners gave approval to work crews' focus on disaster clean-up projects moving scheduled work projects for other areas in Polk, Norman, and Red Lake counties to later dates in order to accommodate the immediate need of the East Grand Forks city and rural area.

Prisoners earn credit toward fine payment and jail sentences in return for their labor. Citizens have provided meals and many notes of appreciation to the workers and their Crew Leaders, Steve Hunt, Dave Grubb, Kristi Magnuson, and Jan Szczech.

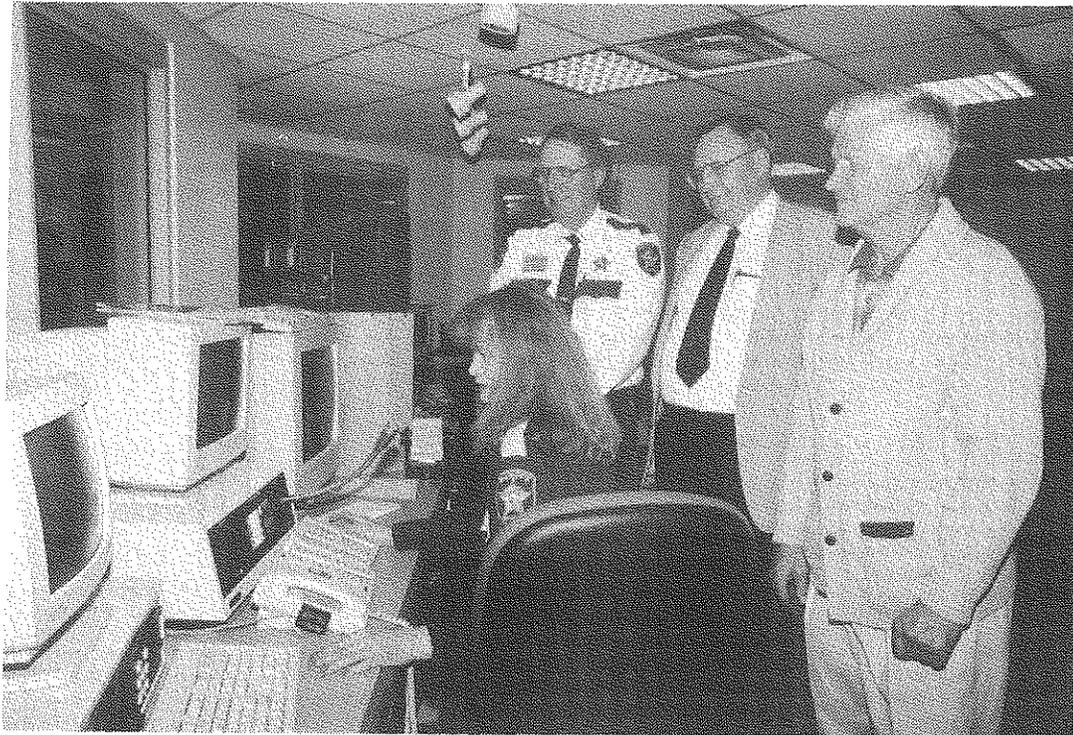
The work crews represent an important aspect of the restorative justice focus of our local corrections agency, Tri-County

Community Corrections. Offenders are expected to perform labor as restorative of the damage caused by their criminal behavior. In addition to the more obvious gains to our communities in free labor, this is also a specific benefit to the counties in that of the dollars paid in state required fines at sentencing only, a small percentage remain in the local area. The highest proportion of local fine collections being submitted as state revenue.

Additionally, offenders often express surprise at their own positive feelings following completion of hard labor on community projects as the "first time I've ever done anything like that for the town I live in."

Programming that brings a sense of being part of something positive for purposes other than self-gratification are also called "restorative" because they offer insight to offenders of actual life style choices and because they are confidence-building for future employment. Sentence to Service is a win-win program for communities, taxpayers and offenders.

Susan Mills, Director, Tri-County Community Corrections



Communications center

Sandra Schulz, dispatch supervisor for the Sheriff's Department, demonstrated how to use the new equipment as a part of an open house held in March. Watching from left were: Sheriff Doug

Qualley, Polk County Board chairman Lyle Eisert, and Eugene "Jeep" Mattson. Eisert and Mattson, a former county commissioner, were involved in planning for the facility.

Klinkhammer is environmental technician

Nancy Klinkhammer is the new environmental technician in the Polk County Environmental Services office. Nancy, who succeeds Jon Steiner in that position, started in May shortly after all of chaos related to the Red River flood this spring.

A resident of East Grand Forks, she was herself a flood victim.

Nancy comes to Polk County from Bismarck, ND, where she worked for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). A native of Valley City, ND, she graduated from high school there before earning a secondary education degree in biology and a B.S. degree in occupational safety and environmental health at the University of North Dakota.

Dispatchers learned new Communications Center equipment on fast-track schedule

March 17, 1997. A day like all days in Polk County... with one exception. It was moving day for the Polk County Sheriff's Department Communications/911 Center from the Northwest Regional Corrections Center where it had been located since 1975 to the new Juvenile Detention Center addition to that same building.

After almost a year of planning, consulting, negotiating, revising and preparing, the move was finally made. New space, new equipment, new procedures, new tricks for old (and not so old) dispatchers to learn. After approximately 15 hours, the center was operational, as old and new equipment was moved over, moved in, unplugged and or plugged in. By approximately 9 p.m., we were up and running in the new center and the last plug was pulled from the wall. Lee Gustafson turned off the lights on his way out the door of the old dispatch room.

This meant a great many changes for the communications officers, as well as the entire staff of the Sheriff's Department, Corrections Center and new Juvenile Center. There was a variety of new equipment for the officers to familiarize themselves with and not a lot of time to do so as the impending flood was almost a certainty and only weeks away according to the predictions.

There was much to absorb and learn about the security cameras and monitors for the juvenile facility as well as the new remote cameras and locks for the existing Corrections Center. Wisely, Corrections did not move the juvenile clientele into the new facility for about three weeks, so we had some time to

learn how to operate the doors and cameras for both buildings without any major incidents (or escapes).

Our 911 equipment is also new, providing many more options and "touch screen" capabilities. This makes transferring calls much easier and more efficient, but it still took some time to learn and feel comfortable with. The phone system was also new but had been installed about a month prior to the move and most employees were operating it with ease and pleased with all the additional features it provided, especially the voice mail capability and the paging features which help immensely from our remote location.

A third dispatch station was added in the new facility, giving us the capability of having three dispatchers working on a shift with identical work stations. During the flood, we put the third station to good use as we tried to keep three dispatchers on as many shifts as possible. We could not have done it without the help of Hennepin County, which sent up dispatchers as well as deputies to help out during the disaster. They were truly a god-send and amazingly quick at adapting themselves to a totally foreign environment.

We have been in the new center for four months now and I think we all agree that it no longer seems overwhelming or inhibiting. It still needs a little finishing work and fine-tuning, but it has turned out to be a very good place to work... a good space to be in.

— Sandra Schultz, Dispatch Supervisor

Post flood health concerns

Stress, mold & mildew are lingering problems

You have survived the flood and relocation, cleaned your home many times over, grieved over property and possessions lost and completed a marathon of meetings and phone calls with disaster officials, city officials and insurance agents.

And many of you still do not have all the answers you need to make decisions about your future. All of these circumstances have resulted in multiple stressors which may impact health both physically and mentally.

Signs of stress include: Upset stomach, fatigue, tight neck muscles, irritability, poor memory and headaches. Some people react to stress by eating or drinking too much, losing sleep, or smoking cigarettes.

The following are some ideas for coping with stress:

- Work off stress by walking or gardening.
- Talk out your worries with someone you trust and respect.
- Learn to accept what you cannot change.

- Avoid self-medication and limit alcohol consumption.

- Get enough sleep and rest

- Eat a well balanced diet.

- Do not be afraid to call for professional help if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Another potential health concern for people impacted by the flood involves mold and mildew. The mold that grows in damp parts of your home can cause health problems as the body reacts to mold particles which are airborne, spread and breathed into our lungs. The biggest health threat is from hypersensitive diseases, including asthma, bronchitis and chronic nasal drip. Various symptoms of mold exposure include: Eye irritation, shortness of breath, running nose or general malaise. You may notice that you suddenly get better when you leave an affected area.

People who are immune-suppressed are particularly susceptible to developing infections caused by airborne fungus. Additionally, there have been a number of young babies across the

United States who have coughed up blood due to bleeding in their lungs. Some have died from this bleeding which is called pulmonary hemorrhage.

Research is ongoing to uncover the causes of this rare, yet deadly disease. Environmental toxins from a particular mold called *Stachybotrys atra* in a baby's surroundings may be involved. *Stachybotrys* is a black or green-black and has a slimy appearance. Symptoms include coughing up blood and nosebleed. If you notice these symptoms in your infant, get medical attention immediately.

The best way to prevent mold-related illnesses is to stop mold at its source of growth, which means stopping moisture. Additionally the risk associated with molds and mildew can be addressed through careful cleaning, disinfection and drying of your home.

If you would like any further information on these health concerns or have questions, please call Polk County Nursing Service (218-281-3385) and ask for Diane Bachmeier or Brenda Menier.

— **Brenda Menier, Director, County Nursing Service**

County employees displaced by flood

Buildings & Grounds — Jan Skyberg.

Recorder — Sheryl Hanson-Cariveau.

Assessor — Rob Wagner, Terri Bangen.

Court Administration — Jana Hillestad, Bob Schauer, Dorothy McEnroe.

Environmental Services — Jon Steiner, Katherine Logan.

Highway Department — Gerald Kovar, Darin Carlstrom.

County Attorney — Peggy Love.

Sheriff's Department — Dan Chapa, Mark Johnson, Randy Sondrol, Mark Letexier.

Social Services — Jim Arneson, Brenda Anderson, Patty Herndon, Jackie Jeffrey, Paula Laudal-Moug, Joan Shulind, Karen Warmack, Carolyn Woehle, Eric Thorlacius, Kathy Wenzel, Arlene Barry, Marilyn Egeland, Jennifer Gustafson, Leeann Holte, Marlys Lovejoy, Carlos Martinez, Richardo Ramon.

Nursing Service — Kathy Johnson, Brenda Johnson, Sandy Neil, Carol Solberg, Gail Halverson, Cheryl Pitts, Mary Jo Baden, Jane Croeker, Margi Zavoral, June Bergh.

Auditor-Treasurer — Laurie Anderson.

Commissioner — Warren Strandell.

Recorder's Office will go 'electronic' in September

The Polk County Recorder's Office will start electronically recording real estate documents beginning in September.

A new computerized recording and storage system will eliminate the need for hand-writing entries for new transactions and will allow ready retrieval of the information.

"Over a period of about the next five years, we hope to be able to scan all real estate records back to 1966 and put them into the new system," County Recorder Sheryl Hanson Cariveau says. "Eventually, we'll be able to get away from all the large books and microfilm aperture cards that we have, although, by state law, we will have to keep these original books around. One computer disk in the new system will be able to hold all the real estate information that is normally recorded in a year."

Installation of the new scanning and optical imaging equipment along with servers, networking and software will be done in August by Information Systems, Inc., Fargo, ND.

Initially, the new system had been scheduled for installation and use by mid-summer. However, because of the rush to get information for buy-outs of flood-damaged homes in East Grand Forks and in rural areas, the implementation of the new system was delayed until September. "With the added activity because of the flood, we expect to do from 2,500 to 3,000 searches this year," Cariveau says.

Besides greatly improving efficiency and record storage for the Recorder's Office, the new system will be shared with the Assessor and Auditor-Treasurer offices. Both of these offices will have network access to the real estate records besides being able to record and store information in the system.

All records in the new system will be backed-up daily with the duplicate memory disks kept off-site. Security measures in the system will prevent unauthorized persons from accessing the records, or to change or update information.

Thrills & Chills at the Library

By Gretchen Gad-Fournier

LARL Public Information Officer

'Thrills and Chills' is pacing through the county this summer as the Lake Agassiz Regional Library (LARL) branches conducts its 1997 Summer Library Programs.

Climax, Crookston, Fertile, Fosston and McIntosh Public Libraries, as well as the Bookmobile, are delivering 'Thrills and Chills' into communities, offering events for children and families.



LARL logo

Summer library programs encourage children to continue reading, or be read to, during the summer months through storytimes, games, concerts and contests. The branches often plan family events, providing connections for children and families with reading and learning.

Fosston Public Library: "We can take it so many different directions."

In June, Fosston started with scary ghost

stories and things like that. We did the 'chills' in July — Eskimos, penguins, snowcones and homemade ice-cream. The 'Thrills' will be in August with carnival games and a treasure hunt," Gail Behm, librarian, says. Most of the libraries have planned similar events.

Crookston presented its traditional summer pet show in July. This year, Children's Storyteller Merry Ann Grove's message was that the Thrills and Chills would not bring penguins and ghosts, but instead involve an assortment of dogs and cats.

The Climax Public Library is settling into their new building and Librarian Jane Vigness likes the move. "One of the thrills for our kids this summer is the new computer and the fact that we are fully automated in the new building," Vigness says. The new location is wired to provide full internet access, as well as full graphics capabilities. The new multi-media computer was donated by the Climax Community Club last winter.

The McIntosh Public Library has expanded its evening hours, offering a more

flexible schedule for families.

Beginning in June, the evening hours also introduced an evening Children's Storytime.

"The summer is also a great time for parents to stop in with their children and get them their own library card," says Linda Black, Fertile's librarian. "A library card is a passport to the future, the past and anywhere else you may want to go," she says, and all of it is "free and at your library."

For more information about any area programs or other library services available in the community, contact the local public library anytime or call LARL's Regional Office in Moorhead toll-free at 1-800-247-0449.

LARL serves the residents of Becker, Clay, Clearwater, Mahanomen, Norman, Polk and Wilkin counties with local public libraries in Ada, Bagley, Barnesville, Breckenridge, Climax, Crookston, Detroit Lakes, Fertile, Fosston, Hawley, Mahanomen, McIntosh and Moorhead, along with the Bookmobile.

Bridge replacement projects slated

\$6.6 million in road improvements underway

The 1997 construction season of the Polk County Highway Department is very busy with \$6.6 million in work projected for the calendar year.

The season started with a bang in March when bids were opened on several bituminous surfacing projects. Two projects totaling 7.5 miles were awarded to Thorson, Inc., Bemidji, and two projects totaling 10.5 miles were awarded to Northern Paving, Inc., Crookston.

In April, bids were opened and contracts awarded on five grading projects totaling 27.2 miles. R.J. Zavoral & Sons, East Grand Forks, was awarded the contracts on all five of the projects.

The county also awarded bids on about 70 miles of seal coating in the east end of the county, plus contracts for maintenance gravel this spring.

The county plans to advertise and award bids on three additional projects this summer. One grading project is located in the east end of the county and is a joint project with Clearwater County. The other two projects involve municipal work in Winger and Nielsville.

We also have a number of bridge replacement projects scheduled for "letting" for 1997, involving township and county roads.

The grading contractor started work on May 15 and anticipates being done with all of the projects by mid-September. Northern Paving expects to be done by Sept. 1. Thorson, Inc. anticipates that its work will be completed by an early date.

— Roger Diesen, Highway Engineer

Other areas of county have problems, too

Flooding in Polk County has not been limited to East Grand Forks and the rural areas along the Red and Red Lake rivers.

Summer rains have raised the level of both Union Lake and Lake Sarah to five feet above the Department of Natural Resources' normal high water mark. A number of properties on the two lakes have been flooded.

The level of Maple Lake is also as high as it has been in modern history and the City of Mentor has cut through two roads to speed its outflow. The level of Cross Lake is also high with the Polk County boat dock at Tilberg Park there about a foot under water.

In the northeast area of the county, the Hill River has left its banks and over-

flowed into the Lost River. Crop damage from both heavy rains and disease is evident in many areas of the county.

Another loss occurred when a spring fire destroyed the Minnesota Dehydrated Vegetable (Mr. Carrot) plant in Fosston. Not only was the plant a large employer but it was also a major steam customer of the Polk County incinerator.



Jon Steiner

Steiner heads county planning & zoning office

Jon Steiner is wearing two hats these days... both of them quite new.

He's the new Polk County planning and zoning administrator replacing Kathleen "Kitty" Kennedy in that position. And he's the interim head of the Environmental Services Department, succeeding Katherine Logan, who left after the school term to join her husband at Rochester, MN.

A Polk County environmental technician the past two years, Steiner was chosen to succeed Kennedy when she left in late February to become zoning administrator for the City of Ely, MN. More recently, he was also given interim responsibility for operation of the Environmental Services Department when Logan left the county in late May.

A native of Coon Rapids, MN, Steiner earned a degree in environmental science at St. Cloud State University in 1994. Before coming to Polk County, he worked for the Anoka, MN, Park System; at a Twin Cities manufacturing plant; and at RECOMP, the City of St. Cloud solid waste transfer station and composting facility. Steiner's wife, Jodi, is assistant manager of Pier I Imports in Grand Forks and is an elementary education major at the University of North Dakota.

"I'm enjoying the new position," Steiner says, noting that "the office has been very busy, especially with flood matters. We're just in the infancy stage with many of those issues."

New 'up-front' separation unit working well, paying its way

The materials removal facility located in front of the Polk County waste-to-energy plant in Fosston continues to process all incoming solid waste from the five-county consortium. This facility is designed to remove problem/objectionable items from the waste stream prior to incineration, increase system processing capacity, facilitate compliance with air emission regulations, and supplement the five-county recycling programs.

This facility is functioning as well as, if not better than expected. Since start-up in late September 1996, over 1,500,000 pounds (775 tons) of recyclable materials have been extracted and sent to markets resulting in net revenues of more than \$150,000.

Numerous other objectionable items are also being removed. For example, over 2,000 automotive, farm or recreational vehicle type batteries have been

extracted. Batteries are a prohibited waste for the incinerator, but they continue to be discarded into the waste stream.

Glass, aluminum, scrap metals, and other nonburnable items are being removed successfully resulting in a much cleaner burning material for the incinerators. This will have a positive effect on the plant's maintenance costs.

In prior years, the processing capacity of the incinerators was limited to 600 tons per week. In the summer months, trash receipts approach 750 tons per week which results in materials being sent to landfills. So far this year, all incoming materials have been processed at the plant with no materials being bypassed to a landfill.

If market prices continue to hold and the anticipated system savings are realized, this facility will continue to provide many benefits for the five-county solid waste system.

— Willard Wilson, Solid Waste Director

Rural addressing rebounds with Census Bureau interest

The last newsletter contained an article about developments in the effort to establish a rural addressing system in Polk County and the adjoining three counties. The plan was to develop a system that would work with Marshall, Pennington, Polk and Red Lake counties.

The proposed system would have allowed Kittson, Norman and Mahnomen counties and possibly Roseau and Lake of the Woods counties to build on the system. Counties beyond the boundaries of the above mentioned nine counties have developed an independent addressing system and it is assumed that they would not be interested in a change-over.

The concept was taken to the annual county township meeting in March in Polk County and was not heartily endorsed. It was reported that the same response was received in Red Lake County. The initial reaction by the proponents of the concept was to drop the whole idea.

Time passed and early in May, the County Highway Department received a call from the Bureau of Census indicating that information had been received that we were proposing a rural addressing system. This call refueled some interest in the concept and consequently the County Board directed the County Highway Department to continue working on the project.

The trend to implement a rural addressing system that has some meaning is growing. When traveling in other parts of the country, one sees the signs and one surely must wonder about the benefits.

This writer, having recently moved to Polk County, can fully realize the benefits when asking and receiving directions to some rural location. An owner's names may change on a certain tract of land but the address will never change. Forever will it be unnecessary to remember where the red barn was that fell down 21 years ago last August. Or was it 23 years ago in June.

— Roger Diesen, Highway Engineer

The flood and taxes...

Despite the huge property losses from flooding this spring in the City of East Grand Forks and on farms and rural acreages in western Polk County, "first-half" property tax collections were very good.

Of the \$4,778,320 to be collected this year in East Grand Forks, \$2,262,331 (or 47.34 percent) has been received, according to Auditor-Treasurer Gerald Amiot. In all of Polk County, \$15,117,003 of the total of \$29,004,868 (or 52.12 percent) has been collected.

Second-half collections should be good, too, because "buy-out" procedures include provisions to ensure that property taxes are paid.

But what about 1998? And the years after that?

By then, many of the extensively-damaged homes and commercial properties will no longer be on the tax rolls. Government will own the property and government — as we all know — doesn't pay taxes.

The subject of property tax revenues, beginning in 1998 and continuing for years after that, is one that greatly concerns the Polk County Board. It also is of great concern to the East Grand Forks City Council, the Board of Education of School District 595, and officials in townships along the Red and Red Lake rivers where there was substantial damage. How will they pay for the services that residents require and have come to expect?

The property tax issue is of concern to all residents of Polk County regardless of where they live. With a reduced tax base along the Red River, the share of property taxes needed to support county operations could increase 15 to 20 percent or even more for all of us. And for those who live or own property in East Grand Forks, School District 595, and the townships along the river it would be much worse. Those governments units could be bankrupt.

State Legislators and department officials have been made aware of the problem. So has the Congressional delegation... the House and Senate leadership... even the President. All are very sympathetic and have pledged support, but until action is taken to cover the shortfalls, local governments are under the gun.

Statistics provided to the County Board by Assessor

Rob Wagner prove the seriousness of the problem. Based on an initial canvass of damaged property that was conducted for his office by assessors who came to the area from throughout the state, he reports that East Grand Forks alone has lost 38 percent of its market value. In dollars, the city's pre-flood valuation of residential properties of \$149,955,000 has been reduced by \$56,626,000. Of the city's 2,301 residential parcels, 687 had at least 80 percent damage. Only 27 had no damage... and that's a number that some believe to be high.

Apartment buildings in the city have sustained a loss of \$3,863,000 or 40 percent of their pre-flood value. The value of \$33,860,000 in pre-flood commercial property has been reduced by 19 percent.

In rural areas along the Red River from Nielsville to south of Oslo, 285 homes had damage. Of those, almost 100 had "substantial" damage. The pre-flood market value of those 285 rural homes was \$12,530,000, which now has been reduced by \$3,479,000 or 28 percent.

It doesn't take a sharp pencil to figure out the effect that this lost property value could have for all of us. Regardless of our pride and the desire to pay our way, we need help to get over this hurdle.

East Grand Forks, and all of Polk County can emerge stronger and better if state and federal government make a strong investment in our future. We have a chance now to form a new community... a new rural living situation to lead us into the next century. But to do that we need a jump-start to key our recovery... a recovery that in the years ahead can provide a significant return on the investment that state and federal government make in Polk County.

This is the message that Polk County will take to the special session of the Legislature called in August to consider the disaster issue.

We believe that state and federal government will do things to help us solve the problem. Anything that you as county residents can do to help make a case for assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Wish us well in St. Paul.

— **The Polk County Board**

County roads had varying degrees of damage

The county road system received varying degrees of damage from the flood of '97 depending on the location in the county. Very little damage was sustained by the roads located east of TH 75. However, roads located west of that line took major hits in some locations.

We met the FEMA criteria on 13 different sites. That is, the cost of repairing the damage at each site exceeds \$1,000. FEMA wrote DSRs on the County Road System totaling about \$215,000. The roads not on the Federal Aid System sustaining the most damage were Road Nos.

64 and 229 with several others suffering lesser amounts of damage.

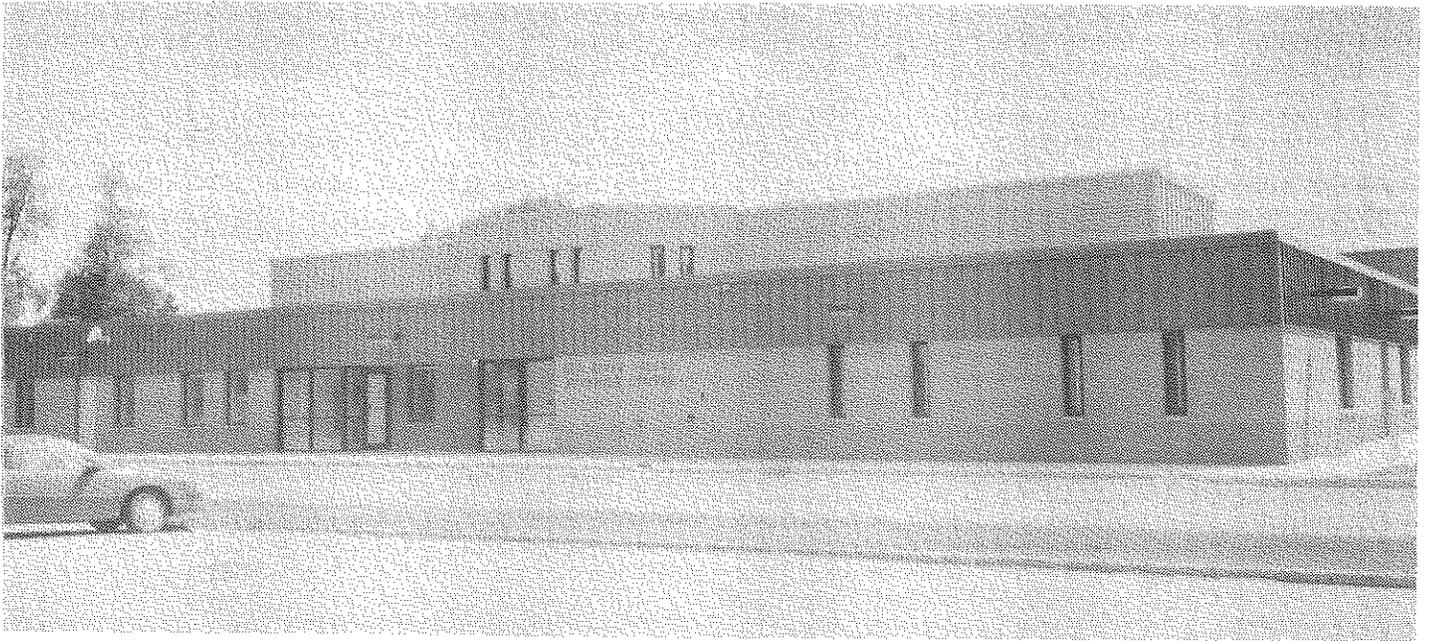
FEMA reimburses 75 percent of repair costs and the state will reimburse 15 percent of the costs with the remaining 10 percent borne by the local unit of government.

Polk County experienced severe damage on four of its Federal Aid Routes and a lesser amount of damage on two other routes. The funding source for repairing damage sites on this route category is different and the percentages of reimbursement is also different.

Repair costs on the Federal Aid System are reimbursed by the Federal Highway Administration and the percentage of reimbursement is either 100 percent for emergency repairs or 80 percent for permanent repairs. It appears at this time that all of our repairs will fall into the emergency repair category.

Our repair costs are estimated at \$543,000 for both classifications of highway routes. These amounts do not include any repair costs to the systems of East Grand Forks, Crookston or the townships.

— **Roger Diesen, Highway Engineer**



Red River Valley juvenile facility is part of Northwest Regional Law Enforcement Center complex

New Red River Valley Juvenile Center serves needs of 12 to 17-year-old youth offenders

The new Red River Valley Juvenile Center officially opened for referrals on April 8, completing a construction project initiated in August 1996.

In the months since its opening, the 16-bed facility has operated at 75 percent capacity, serving as the Polk County secure detention and treatment resource for court-ordered juveniles from 12 to 17 years of age.

Fulltime education programs are provided on-site by licensed teachers working in consortium with the Crookston School District and Tri-County Community Corrections. This is the first local program available to address local in-county residential needs of the juvenile justice and human service systems.

Keys to Innervisions, a program based on the practice of learning constructive thinking processes as tools in changing personal behavior, is the centerpiece of treatment in the new facility. Teens learn and practice positive thinking; changing their own attitudes toward their future; decision-making that brings them positive instead of negative reinforcement and other skills important to making life direction changes. The program has become the focus of a broad multi-communitywide effort by schools and human service agencies to bring consistency to the approach of working with at-risk juveniles.

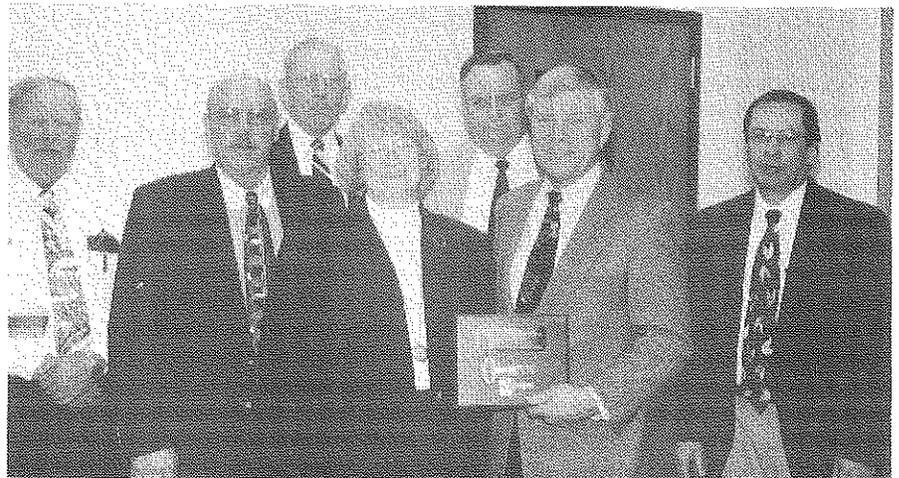
Keys, which was designed initially for juveniles in corrections settings, also

has a component for parents, which is the next step in developing the potential to prevent "at risk" behaviors in teens and to address already existing problem behavior at a local level.

While we celebrated the completion of a new resource for our area, during the

open house there were frequent comments that our work will now turn to the focus of containment of the growing need for detention facilities and celebration of successful prevention and intervention efforts.

— Sue Mills, Director, Tri-County Community Corrections



Moe cited

State Sen. Roger Moe, DFL-Erskine, (holding plaque) was cited for longtime support of corrections efforts in Polk, Red Lake and Norman counties during the dedication program for the new Red River Valley Juvenile Center. Members of the Tri-County Community Corrections Board, left to right, are: Edward G. Larson, Red Lake County; Lee Nielson (Red Lake County, chairman); Warren Olson, Norman County; Susan Mills, director; Lyle Eisert, Polk County; and Warren Strandell, Polk County. Not pictured: Don Anderson, Norman County.