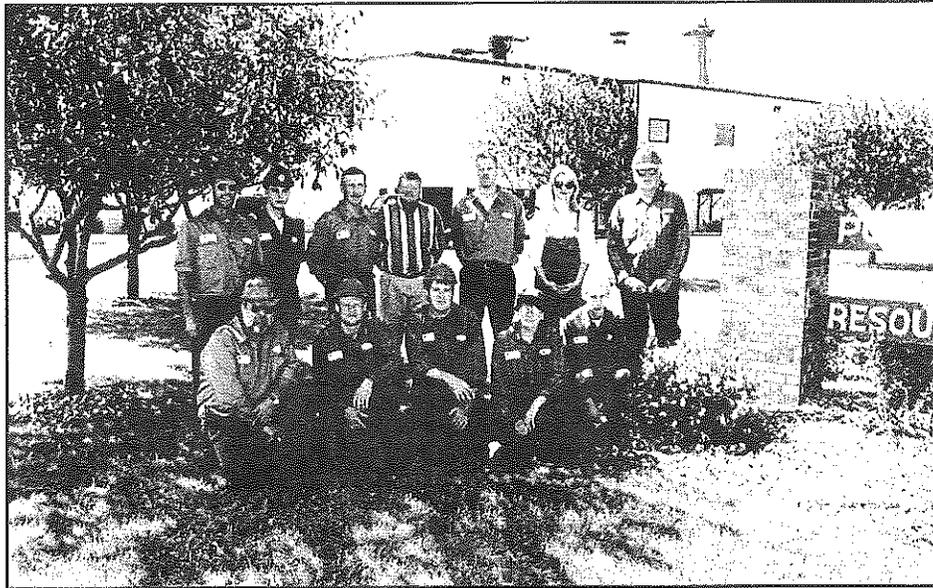


FREE
Take One

Polk County *Newsletter*

Fall 2001



Plant staff — Staff of the Polk County Waste Resource Recovery Plant include: Kneeling, left to right: Jay Rhone, Erik Sandberg, Rick Kappedal, Mary Winkler and Pat O'Neill. Standing: Shawn Sebenaler, Ryan Norberg, Ron Larson, County Commissioner Warren Affeldt, Todd Rue, Pam Spong and Roland Boucher. Not pictured: Julie Baumann, Bruce Hanson, Wade Burrack, Leslie Ball, Steve Faldet, Marvin Berg, Todd Trandby, Alan Erickson, Bryan Johnson, Joanne Martin, Renae Sistad, Todd Rue, Tim Lekan, Marc Hove, Robert Martin and Willard Wilson.

Resource Recovery Plant is No. 1 facility in U.S.

The Polk County Solid Waste Resource Recovery Plant in Fosston has been named the "Materials Recovery Facility of the Year" in the United States.

That honor came to the plant and its operating staff as a part of the annual North American Waste-to-Energy Conference held May 7-9 at Miami Beach, FL. The Solid Waste Processing Division of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, which had entertained nominations from throughout the country, determined the award.

The Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), combined with the Waste-to-Energy plant (incinerator), processes solid waste from a population base of 85,000 residents in Beltrami, Clearwater, Mahanomen, Norman and Polk counties. Owned by Polk County, its operations are overseen by an advisory board comprised of county commissioners from the five counties. Advisory board members are: Warren Affeldt, Polk; Ron Otterstad, Beltrami; Ken Solberg, Clearwater; Jerry Dahl, Mahanomen; and Richard Andring, Norman.

Polk County Commissioner Bill Montague is an alternate member.

The award was especially rewarding for Polk County Facilities Manager Willard "Bill" Wilson, who oversaw construction of the Waste-to-Energy plant in the late 1980s as a consulting engineer and then became the facility's first and only manager as a Polk County employee. Wilson credits the plant staff and the five county partners for winning the award. "We have some really good, really dedicated people and have had a very low turnover rate," he says. "And we have had excellent cooperation from the five county partners... and from the haulers, too. They have all worked with us and supported us from the local to the state level."

The plant's two municipal solid waste combustors, along with two recovery units that produce steam, became operational in 1988. Steam sales have generated more than \$3 million in revenue to offset operational costs. Also a part of the original construction were

See TOP PLANT, Page 7

Tilden tax preservation pact is near

The Tilden Farm properties in central Polk County will always pay real estate taxes, or an equivalent amount, as the result of a tax preservation plan that is moving closer and closer to reality.

A document that will guarantee those revenues for local government units in perpetuity has been presented to Polk County officials by The Nature Conservancy (TNC), which purchased the 24,142-acre farming and gravel mining property from a group of Missouri-based investors in August 2000. Written by the legal department of TNC, the tax preservation agreement is being reviewed by Polk County Attorney Wayne Swanson and other county officials.

Largest restoration project

TNC has been interested in restoring the property, located in Grove Park-Tilden, Onstad, Kertsonville and Gently towns, to its original state since the late 1970s, and calls the area "one of the most significant remaining prairie wetland complexes in the Upper Midwest." Given the name the Glacial Ridge Project, the endeavor is the largest tall grass prairie and wetland restoration effort in the country.

Besides TNC, other key players involved in the private-public partnership restoration effort include the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Locally, Polk County, Red Lake Watershed District, Sand Hill Watershed District, and the East Polk County Soil & Water Conservation District have provided input to assist the planning effort.

"Nature Conservancy and Ron Nargang, its assistant state director in Minnesota, have been very cooperative in developing this document," according to Polk County Commissioner Warren Affeldt, who has taken the lead role for the County Board in the tax

See TILDEN, Page 2

Out of Home Placement costs being reduced

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Co. Cost Share</u>
1991	\$1,320,718	
1992	1,305,510	
1993	1,216,930	
1994	1,289,133	
1995	1,611,049	
1996	2,260,549	
1997	2,404,232	65%
1998	1,816,161	57%
1999	2,012,686	59%
2000	1,600,929	59%
2001	*1,284,000	52%
Actual cost through June 30, 2001:		\$642,008
* Projected annual total for 2001		

The effort to address the high cost of "out of home placement" in Polk County is paying off as evidenced by the chart at left.

Such placement becomes necessary when a crisis develops with juveniles and/or when the home situation becomes unsafe.

A combination of approaches to deal with the problem were begun in earnest in mid-1997 with the effort increased in 1999 when the Polk County Board authorized the employment of five "para profession-

als" to work with Social Service staff in that area. The new positions, which added about \$150,000 to the cost of Social Services in the county, were filled and initial training was completed in 2000.

The program is directed at improving conditions in the home and family in order to make "out of home" placement less necessary. A return on the investment in the program shows in the expenditures for 2000 and in those that are projected for 2001.

Tilden

Continued from Page 1

preservation discussions. "The Conservancy is to be commended for its willingness to do this. It isn't something that they had to do. With the tax-exempt status that is available to them, they could have left our local government units with a big loss of tax revenue. Especially for some of the townships, that would have been disastrous."

Like Polk County officials, Nargang has been pleased with the productivity of the tax preservation discussions. "I think we'll end up with something that is a much more simple document than I ever expected, and I would hope that we will have it all wrapped up in the next 30 days," he says.

Good citizen

Affeldt believes that TNC will also benefit from the agreement. "It will show the public that this large international organization wants to be a good citizen and a good neighbor," he says. "The County Board has never questioned the right of landowners to sell property to the Conservancy or of that organization's right to acquire property. Our interest has been in preserving the tax base."

In the agreement, TNC is proposing to establish an endowment fund of about \$2.5 million. Earnings from the fund will be used to pay an amount equivalent to the real estate tax. The fund would be maintained by money from gravel sales, from rent for those lands that would continue to be farmed, and from the sale of several parcels that might not fit with the habitat restoration effort.

The agreement will directly benefit 12 local government units that share in the real estate taxes paid on the lands. In 2000, the total real estate tax bill was \$94,353 with another \$13,429 collected in special assessments for

ditch maintenance. Polk County received the largest portion of the tax, \$41,768. The five townships shared in \$11,143 of revenue with Grove Park-Tilden receiving the most at \$8,249. The Crookston, Fertile and Red Lake Falls school districts shared a total of \$15,040, while the Red Lake Watershed District received \$1,412. Sand Hill Watershed District and Northwest Regional Development Commission received lesser amounts.

To have the agreement continue in perpetuity, it will be recorded with the County Recorder before the lands are turned over to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for maintenance. As a federal agency, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife doesn't pay real estate taxes. The turnover is expected in a year or two. Attaching the agreement to the abstract will keep it from being altered at any time in the future.

Jump start

The Glacial Ridge project received a jump-start on June 28 when the Natural Resources Conservation Service delivered a \$1.6 million check through the USDA's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) to finance the first easement payment. Additional money from WRP, the nation's premier wetlands restoration program for private land, will fund the restoration of the first 2,800 acres of previously drained wetlands and 1,500 acres of tall grass prairie. The event involved conservation officials and local leaders who used "golden shovels" to turn over the soil. They also spread native prairie grass seed on the grounds.

Only seed from native varieties of grasses and herbs harvested from a 50 to 60-mile radius from Glacial Ridge will be used in the restoration effort.

Will help Crookston

Besides reconstructing about one percent of the 15 million acres of pre-settlement prairie that once existed in the state, the project is expected to improve groundwater quality. This will especially benefit the City of Crookston, which has wells in the area.

Downstream flooding is also expected to be reduced and wildlife habitat will be improved. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is considering the development of a new national wildlife refuge on the lands, which are home to the threatened western prairie fringed orchid along with dozens of waterfowl species and upland birds.

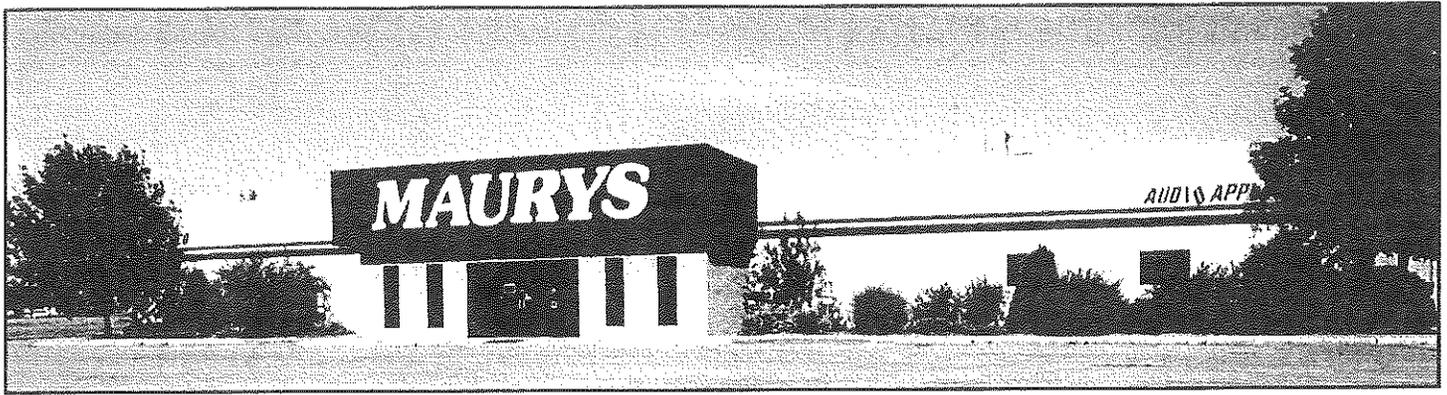
TNC project manager Rod Voss has offices on site in the former Tilden Farms headquarters building along TH 32.

Polk County Board Meeting Times

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

Meetings are open to the public. For special accommodations or to request a spot on the agenda, call John Schmalenberg, Polk County coordinator, 281-5408.

Commissioners: Dist. 1 — Jerry Jacobson; Dist. 2 — Warren Strandell; Dist. 3 — Bill Montague; Dist. 4 — Warren Affeldt; Dist. 5 — Eugene "Jeep" Mattson.



The former Maury's TV & Appliance store building on Highway 220 North will become government center.

County purchases Maury's building

The Polk County offices located in East Grand Forks will be moved into the former the Maury's TV & Appliance store building on Central Avenue in early 2002.

The 20,000-square-foot building will serve the Social Service, Public Health, Sheriff's Department and the Veterans Service satellite offices while also providing office space for the Northwest Mental Health Center, Tri-County Community Corrections and Tri-Valley Opportunity Council.

A one-time transfer of funds from operating reserves will be used to acquire the building and to pay for the cost of remodeling it into a government service center. The purchase price was \$500,000.

Under one roof

"The Maury's building will allow us to put all county offices under one roof and to house other agencies whose missions are compatible," Warren Strandell, chair of the Polk County Board of Commissioners, says. "It is a building that will satisfy our needs for many years to come. And it will come without incurring any debt and at a fraction of the cost for new construction."

Ownership of the building, along with the receipt of some rental income, will significantly reduce the cost of maintaining ser-

vices in East Grand Forks. The county has been spending about \$95,000 a year on rental office space.

Staff in EGF

Currently, 22 fulltime and 14 part-time social service workers are based in East Grand Forks. The Nursing Service has six staff members working in the community with other staff joining them as programs and special situations require. The office space to be provided for the Sheriff's Department will be used by deputies working in the East Grand Forks area to prepare reports and conduct other business. The Veterans Service office will be used as a place to meet with veterans and as a base for other work.

The firm of Widseth, Smith & Nolting has been engaged to determine space needs and to design the office space arrangement to capitalize on operating efficiencies such as a central service/reception desk and shared conference rooms.

Polk County first established a social service office in East Grand Forks in 1975 when a single social service worker was assigned to small quarters in the basement of the then East Grand Forks Federal Savings & Loan building downtown.

As needs and staffing increased, the

office moved first to the second floor of that building and then to the Burke Building (where OPTIONS is now located). After quarters in the Burke Building were remodeled once to accommodate increased programs and staffing needs, the office was outgrown and moved in 1990 to the current location on Central Avenue. That site has been expanded once, but has again become insufficient.

Building considered

The county considered constructing an office facility in East Grand Forks in 1995 when an architect was engaged to determine needs and to begin the design. That effort was terminated the next year because of budget concerns that made it impractical to construct the \$3.5 million, 25,000-square-foot county office building that was being proposed.

The Maury's building was constructed in 1973 as a super market. Maury Finney acquired and extensively remodeled it for his Maury's TV & Appliance store in 1990. "I'm really glad to see that the building will be put to this excellent use," Finney says. "I think it is a good fit for the area and will provide good accessibility for the county."



Kim Goering

Goering is mayor's rep on Planning Commission

Kim Goering has joined the Polk County Planning Commission as the representative of Crookston Mayor Don Osborne. A 13-year employee of the City of Crookston, Goering has been a secretary in the city's Planning & Zoning-Building Official's office for the past four years.

"I'm finding the position very interesting; the requests that come up are a lot like those that I deal with in my job for the city," she says. Goering and her husband, Chuck, live in Crook-

ston and have three children: Blaine, 17; Cooper, 8, and Ciara, 4.

Other members of the Planning Commission and the area they represent are: Chair Don Diedrich, rural Warren, Commissioner District 3; Vice Chair Helmer Homme, Winger, Commissioner Dist. 4; Barb Hangsleben, rural East Grand Forks, Commissioner Dist. 5; Barb Reitmeier, rural Crookston, Commissioner Dist. 2; Clayton Engelstad, Fertile, Commission-

er Dist. 1; Chuck Lariviere, rural Crookston, townships; Rolland Gagner, Erskine, Union Lake-Lake Sarah Improvement District; Scott McFarlin, Maple Lake Improvement District; and James Gander, East Grand Forks, representing the mayor of East Grand Forks.

Engelstad, Gander, Diedrich, Homme and Hangsleben, representing commissioner districts 1-5, respectively, are members of the Polk County Board of Adjustment.

Norman, Polk & Red Lake in Tri-County program

Corrections Center in 25th year

The Northwest Regional Corrections Center is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. Opened in 1976 to house the programs of the newly formed Tri-County Community Corrections program and as the office of the Polk County Sheriff's Department, the facility replaced a turn-of-the-century county jail located adjacent to the courthouse.

Tri-County Community Corrections, which provides jail space and probation services for Norman, Polk and Red Lake counties, had been established in September 1975. That action had been spurred by the threat in all three counties that their jails were about to be closed by Minnesota Department of Corrections.

Established under the Minnesota's Regional Jails and Community Corrections Act, Tri-County Community Corrections is governed by the Northwest Regional Corrections Board. That board is made up of two commissioners from each of the three partner counties.

On the board

Commissioners on the board when the center was dedicated were: Norman — Harold Olson and Richard Jamison; Polk — Alfon Hanson (chair) and Marvin Reitmeier; and Red Lake — Irving Beyer and Neil Prenevost. Current commissioners on the board are: Norman — Warren Olson (secretary-treasurer) and Don Anderson; Polk — Warren Strandell (vice chair) and Warren Affeldt; and Red Lake — Lee

Nielson (chair) and Edward Larson. The first corrections center director was Richard R. Jensen. Current director is Susan Mills.

8-County plan

Initially, a regional jail was envisioned to serve eight counties that would share personnel, facilities and resources in the development of a community corrections system and a corrections center. From that group, the three counties that decided to proceed with a regional program created a jail planning task force to design the corrections center. The task force was made up of county commissioners, law enforcement officials, county officials, social service and mental health agencies, and private citizens. Judges were involved in planning for a three-county corrections system for probation services.

Polk County, which owns the corrections center buildings, invested local dollars to develop a regional jail plan. Considerable grant funding was arranged through Sen. Roger Moe, then chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, to assist in construction of the \$1.68 million center.

The three partner counties pay proportionate operating costs determined by their percentage of use of the jail and probation programs. This governance and cost-sharing arrangement for combined jail and probation services was unique in 1976. In fact, today the three-county

Northwest Regional Corrections Center is the only full service jail in Minnesota that is directly governed by a board of composed of county commissioners.

The old jail

Lyle Eisert, who recently retired as a Polk County commissioner, remembers the old jail from his 28 prior years as a deputy sheriff. "It used to be quite a jail," he says of the old facility. "We housed some pretty tough characters. There were eight cells on the ground floor along with a shower area and a dark cell," he says. The dark cell, constructed of sheet steel, was used when solitary confinement was appropriate.

"Back then, the Polk County had one of the better jails in the region and we housed a lot of prisoners from around the area, including federal prisoners. We housed them two per cell. There was about the same layout upstairs where we had womens and juvenile areas, plus a cell with two-inch padding on the walls and a rubber floor. We didn't have the medications that they do now to protect a person that became violent," Eisert says of the padded cell.

As chief deputy under former Sheriff Paul Coquette, Eisert had an office on the second floor of the jail building. The sheriff had an office up there, too, plus living quarters on both floors at one end of the jail. The building also had smaller living quarters for a jailer-dispatcher and the county janitor lived in the building, too. "The sheriff's wife made all the meals for the prisoners. The sheriff's salary wasn't much back then but they did make some money on the meals," Eisert says.

First in new facility

Former Sheriff Earl Mosher, who joined the department in 1963 as a deputy under Coquette, became sheriff in 1975 just as the old jail building was being phased out and the new regional center was about to be opened. "I could have lived in the sheriff's quarters in the jail for part of my first year as sheriff when the new jail was going up. We elected instead to stay in our own house on Groveland, so I wasn't the last sheriff in the old building, but I was the first sheriff in the new one," he says.

Mosher, who retired in 1987, was also the first sheriff to fill the new jail. "We had 45 prisoners in there one night after a regional drug bust," he says of an action that included Grand Forks, East Grand Forks and Crookston. "I always tried to



Juvenile Center groundbreaking — Participating in groundbreaking ceremonies, left to right, were: Warren Olson and Henry Aaby, Norman County commissioners; Bill Brummer, Northwest Minnesota Multi-County Housing & Redevelopment Authority; Susan Mills, Tri-County Corrections Center administrator; Doug Qualley, Polk County sheriff; Lee Nielson, Red Lake County commissioner; Jack Schmalenberg, Polk County coordinator; Lyle Eisert, Polk County commissioner; Norvald Anderson, center security director; Don Bakken, Polk County commissioner; Bret Burkholder, deputy center administrator; Lisa Mangino, juvenile center director; Jeep Mattson, Polk County commissioner, and Steve Trudeau, Kraus-Anderson Construction Co.

See **CORRECTIONS**, Page 5



Distinguished group — Pictured as a part of the dedication of the Northwest Regional Corrections & Law Enforcement Center on Oct. 29, 1975 were: Front row, left to right — Corrections Center Director Richard Jensen; State Rep. Bill Kelly; Gov. Wendell Anderson; State Sen. Roger Moe; Commissioner of Corrections Kenneth F. Schoen. Standing — Sher-

iff Earl Mosher, Norman County commissioners Harold Olson and Richard Jamison; Red Lake County Commissioner Neil Prenevost, Polk County commissioners Alton Hanson and Marvin Reitmeier, State Rep. Donald Moe, State Rep. John Corbid, and Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention & Control Director Robert E. Crew Jr.

Corrections Center

Continued from Page 4

give people a couple of chances. Back then, we had a larger county population than now but our jail population was less," he says.

Jail Population

Built to house 24 adults and four juveniles, the Corrections Center population averaged in the low twenties until early in the 1980s when the numbers more than doubled and jail space again became a major concern.

A population high of 70 brought State Department of Corrections attention and demand that additional space be obtained for the straining jail population. In 1985, the Regional Corrections Board developed an agreement that resulted in Polk County's purchase of what was then called the Glenmore building, located across from the jail property. Originally, the building, constructed in the early 1920, had been a tuberculosis sanitarium for the region. Later, Glenmore Chemical Dependency Agency operated out of the building for a number of years.

Known now as the "Annex," it was initially licensed for 36 minimum-security residents but with added staffing has grown to 49 beds. With some re-alignment of beds in the Corrections Center building in 1998, the two buildings now

have a total of 81 beds.

First in state

As much as the Corrections Center itself was and still is unique, the renovation of the Annex building from its former usage to a minimum-security jail space was also a first in the state. The Minnesota Department of Corrections, Crow Wing County and other areas have followed the lead to adapt older buildings with considerable use remaining into minimum security, or work release jail facilities.

Population averages have grown from averages of 19 adults per day in 1976 to a new high in July this year of 88 per day. Both facilities usually operate at or above capacity.

In efforts to lower population and to provide opportunity for offenders to directly benefit their communities, the Sentence to Service program was started in 1990. This program now includes two full time crews averaging 8 to 10 adult offenders working on non-profit and government projects throughout the three-county area. Crews have handled everything from flood assistance during the 1997 flooding to building bike paths and painting park buildings. In 2000, work completed by the crews was valued at \$134,135. With the court's approval, pris-

oners on the crews can work off fines and community service sentences or jail time, but receive no personal compensation for work hours.

As much as the jail setting has changed over the past 25 years, there is considerable upward growth in probation population. New laws, stricter enforcement and greater mandated penalties have all contributed to changes in probation case-loads. Requirements for supervision and expectations for offender risk assessments and court reports have changed the operation of a program area that originally included an average less than 300 adults and juveniles to a current average of 1,200. New approaches to supervision have brought greater accountability and specialization in dealing with low to high-risk offenders.

RRV Juvenile Center

With the growth that has occurred in the need for adult prisoner jail space, beds originally designed for juveniles have been transferred into adult jail space. In 1992, space was developed for an eight-bed "holdover" facility within the jail Annex. The need for secure space for juvenile detention and longer-term resi-

See CORRECTIONS, Page 6

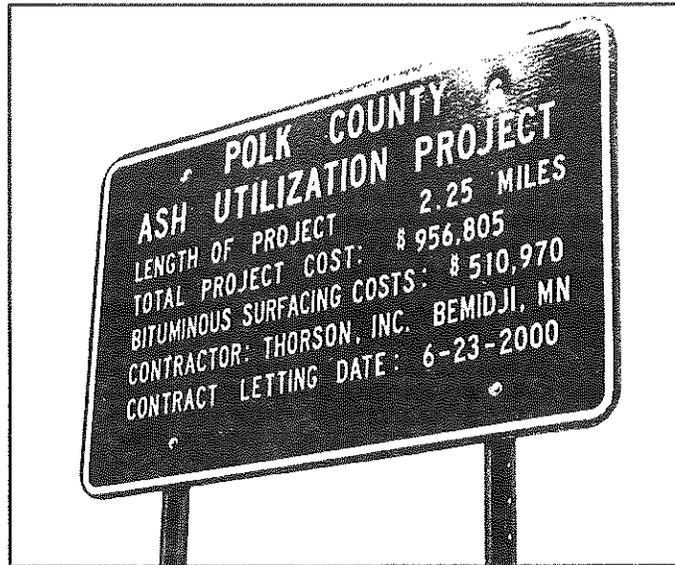
Ash utilization project to be monitored

The next time you drive on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13 north from CSAH 11 (beginning between Gentilly and Crookston), take notice of the new bituminous surface.

This is not just nice new pavement. Read the sign at the beginning of CSAH 13 and you'll discover that this is a demonstration project for a novel type of hard surface pavement.

The bituminous incorporates the use of previously discarded materials in place of some of the aggregate material used in traditional road paving mixes. One and one-half miles of this road has been paved with bituminous that has been amended with ash from the Polk County Incinerator at Fosston. The project is a combined effort of the Polk County Solid Waste and Highway Departments, with funding provided by the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance. The use of ash in road construction is common throughout Europe and has been investigated in other parts of the U.S. However, this is the first such demonstration of the use of this material in Minnesota.

Construction, which was completed in June 2001, included replacement of 10 percent of the aggregate in the lower bituminous layers with ash. The upper layer (wear course) does not con-



tain ash. The ash sources included "old ash," which was generated prior to the installation of the upfront material recovery facility, or MRF, at the Fosston incinerator plant and "new ash" that was generated after the installation of the MRF. Normally, the ash that remains after incineration is deposited in the Polk County Landfill where it takes up valuable space.

The "ash utilization" project, which included extensive environmental testing, was performed under the approval and inspection of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

All testing has shown that the process is safe. The bituminous contractor found that, while a certain learning curve was necessary, the production and placement of the ash-amended bituminous could be done using traditional methods in a cost-effective manner.

Remaining stages of the project include ongoing monitoring for environmental and structural performance. For more information on the project, contact the Polk County Solid Waste Resource Recovery Plant at Fosston, 218-281-6501. — **Bill Wilson, Polk County solid waste officer.**

Corrections

Continued from Page 5

dential programming for adolescents led to the construction of the Red River Valley Juvenile Center in 1997.

Legislative funding helped pay for part of the \$3.5 million center, which has eight secure detention beds and eight residential programming beds for adolescents ages 12 - 17. The Crookston School District provides education programming mandated in Minnesota in partnership with the Regional Corrections Board.

Moving to meet the needs for public safety in our communities and an ever-changing client base, Tri-County Community Corrections celebrates its 25th year by initiating new programming. The agency expects to begin an Adolescent Outpatient Chemical Dependency Program in the next 30 days, hoping to meet the needs of approximately 40 to 50 adolescents annually who require treatment and support in facing chemical abuse issues in our area.

The Restorative Justice Program has represented a new approach involving victims, community and family in mending harm created by youthful, low-risk

offenders. The program uses mediation and conflict resolution methods to reach resolution between victim and offender on reparations for harm caused and in offender commitment to personal skill building to avoid future trouble. The program has dealt with more than 70 cases so far in 2001. Referrals come from county attorneys offices.

As an outgrowth, Restorative Justice and Probation staff organized the first Victim Empathy Program this spring/summer. Group meetings over a period of several weeks ended with a Victim's Empathy Panel presentation to offenders, criminal justice professionals and community members. The panel of three mothers talked about the extreme losses they suffered thru death and permanent injury of their children in accidents involving drunken motorists. Assisting offenders to understand and have compassion for the victims harmed by their actions is the focus of the programming with the understanding that this ability to empathize is a cornerstone in motivating a change from risk-taking, harmful behavior.

Finally, the Probation Department has established a Productive Day Program, which is employment skill centered. In the first months of the program's activity, significant employment increases in offenders on probation were achieved. The goal is to hold offenders accountable for job getting and keeping through a variety of day reporting and group cognitive skill building programs. The department is receiving considerable notice in the state for its progress in implementing new research-based methods in supervision techniques as well.

Tri-County Community Corrections supervises daily approximately 1,422 offenders in all of its combined programming and services. "Clearly, the people who brought ingenuity to creating this working partnership in criminal justice could not have anticipated the outstanding growth in need over the past 25 years," Mills says. "There is no doubt that the willingness to use new and innovative methods to better serve the public was evident in their leadership."

County having busy highway construction season

The Polk County Highway Department is enjoying a busy construction season with several projects in progress at this time. Earlier this year bids were awarded on four major county projects involving grading and bituminous work.

There are two projects underway on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 66. The one project is seven miles long starting at CSAH 17 and ending at CSAH 21.

The major work on this project is regrading on the same alignment and installing several large culverts in the legal drainage ditches along with all new entrance culverts and lesser culverts. The cost of the project as bid was \$780,000. We were able to obtain about \$186,000 in bridge bonding funds for this

project.

The second project on CSAH 66 is four miles long beginning at CSAH 21 and ending at CSAH 23. Again the major work involved regrading and culvert work. The cost of the project as bid was about \$597,000. We were able to obtain approximately \$58,000 in bridge bonding funds for this project.

We also have a project underway on CSAH 17 and CSAH 13. The majority of the work is on CSAH 17 beginning at TH 75 and running easterly for approximately 6.3 miles. The work consists mostly of regrading and culverts. The total cost of the project is approximately \$1,188,000.

One other major project that is underway at this time is located in the Fosston area on

CSAH 6. This project involves grading, surfacing, storm sewer, drainage structures and curb and gutter.

The total cost of the project is approximately \$1,215,000. The funding involves federal funds (\$656,000), State Aid Regular (\$162,000), State Aid Municipal (\$299,000) and bridge bonding (\$97,000).

We also have several bridge replacement projects underway or scheduled for completion this fall. It is anticipated that these projects will have a total cost of approximately \$1 million.

The annual gravel contracts and seal coat projects have been completed at a total cost of approximately \$500,000. —Roger Diesen, Highway Engineer

Red Lake Watershed has interim administrator



Dale M. Nelson

The Board of Managers of the Red Lake Watershed District has taken the position that it would like to resolve some of its more controversial issues before looking for a new, fulltime administrator.

Board Chair Dale M. Nelson, the manager representing Pennington County, has been serving as interim director since the resignation of David C. Lanning in May after only eight months in the position.

A member of the RLWD board since January 1998, Nelson says, "We have a good, hardworking staff at the RLWD and with sev-

eral issues needing to be resolved on some of our projects, the board feels it is best to continue with the present arrangement."

Nelson, who sold his dairy herd in March but continues to run a hay and small grain operation on his farm southwest of Thief River Falls, says the job of administrator "is far more complicated than I thought when I was merely attending board meetings twice a month. In my three years on the board, many changes have occurred and there have been some controversial projects. I have tried to bring a straight-forward approach to the issues."

Representing Polk County as managers on the board are Dennis Nikolayson, Erskine, and Roger Love, East Grand Forks. Other managers are: Lowell Sineby, Grygla, representing Beltrami County; Vernon Johnson, Clearbrook, Clearwater County; Leonard Moe, Grygla, Marshall County; and Orville Knott, Red Lake Falls, Red Lake County.

Knott joined the board earlier this year as the successor to Ron Weiss, who resigned after being elected a Red Lake County commissioner. Johnson is the board vice chair, Nikolayson is secretary, and Moe is treasurer.

No. 1 plant

Continued from Page 1

two electrostatic precipitators for particulate emission control.

The MRF, sometimes called the "upfront" recycling unit, went on line in late 1996. Since then, all waste entering the plant from the five counties has been processed ahead of incineration to remove materials that could be recycled along with problem or objectionable items. Besides the \$1 million in revenues from the sale of recyclables removed from the waste stream, the result has been significantly reduced stack emissions, less plant maintenance and downtime, and less ash deposited in the Polk County Landfill near Gentilly.

With the potential for the re-use of ash — both that which could be recovered from the landfill and that which is now being generated — as a replacement for a percentage of the aggregate material used in bituminous road surface mixes, Wilson sees the possibility of greatly reduced demands for landfill space in the future. "We now have a demonstration road surfacing project that we hope will make this ash utilization a common practice.

With the ability to use ash in road surfacing materials, we could soon be re-using or recycling up to 95 percent of every ton of trash that comes through the plant," he says. (See story on the ash utilization road project).

Last year, the MRF removed and recycled 916 tons of corrugated, 168 tons of aluminum, 938 tons of scrap metal.

During construction of the \$1.8 million MRF, there were concerns by the five counties that the cost would force an increase in the tip fee and that recycling rates of the partner counties would decrease. Those concerns, however, have not occurred. Through the first four years of operation, the revenue created by the sale of recyclable materials has reduced all operational and debt service expenses of the plant while also reducing the cost of maintaining the combustors. In addition, all counties have been given credit for recyclables removed by the MRF based on the tonnage of waste delivered to the plant. In some cases, this credit has almost doubled their recycling rates.

Polk County and its four partner counties have an integrated solid waste management system that Wilson says is "a model in the state and nation." That system includes reduce/reuse programs, curbside recycling, composting, materials removal, waste-to-energy steam sales, landfill practices, household hazardous waste and appliance collection programs, and transfer stations.

Since it became operational in 1988, the plant has processed more than 400,000 tons of municipal solid waste. Without incineration, the Polk County Landfill would now be filled to its permitted capacity. Instead, it still has a life expectancy of another 30 years or more.

"There is strong support from the State of Minnesota for waste-to-energy plants such as ours," Wilson says. "Emissions have been dramatically reduced in recent years, — from 90 to 95 percent — and we'll reduce them even further when we retrofit to meet the new air rules which have just come out. And the recycling programs have been great. When trash goes to a landfill, it all goes to waste."

Public Health moves to temporary quarters

Central School is 'working out great'

Polk County Public Health is now temporarily located in what had been the locker bay-commons area of Crookston Central Junior High School. The entrance to the office is on the east side of the building with the reception desk just inside that door.

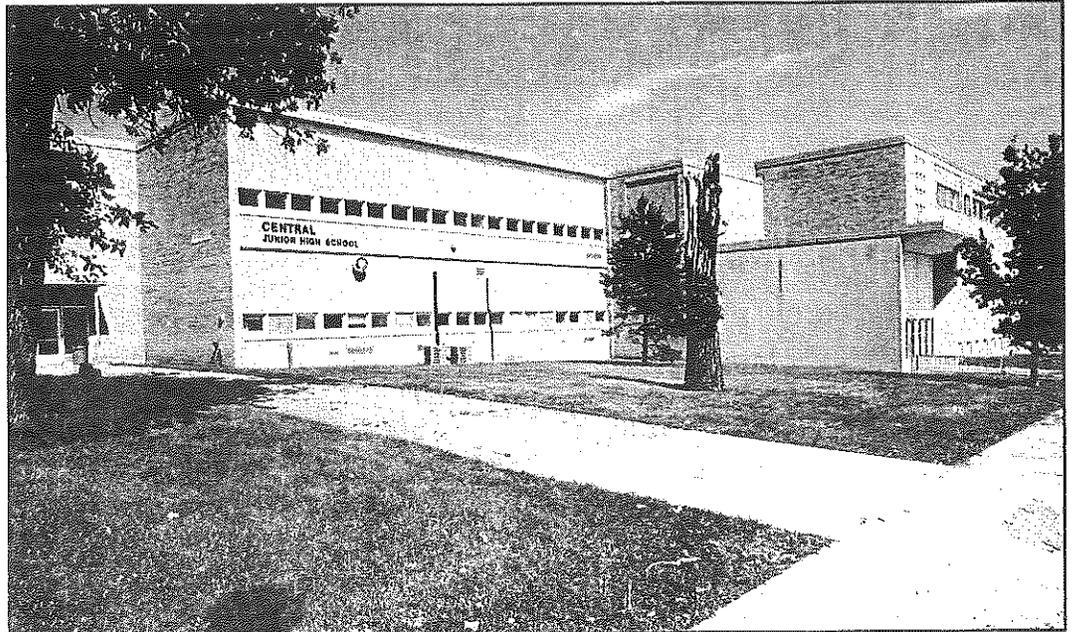
"It's been working out great," Public Health Director Brenda Menier reports. "There have been a few inconveniences, of course, like a lack of privacy, but overall everybody has been really flexible in adjusting to the move."

The move was made during the week of July 9-13 ahead of the end of the lease for the previous location at 1500 University Ave.

STS crew helped move

Involved in the move were Public Health staff, the County Maintenance staff, and crews from the Sentence to Service (STS) program of Tri-County Corrections. "We had an STS crew here for almost a week. They did most of the painting and a couple of them were really involved in the move," Menier says. "We really enjoyed having them around."

The new quarters are home for 24 fulltime nurses and staff, and serve as home base for the home health aides, who spend



Temporary quarters — Polk County Public Health has a temporary home in the locker bay-commons area of the former Central Junior High School in Crookston.

most of their time in the field, and for other part-time employees.

Painting and phones

"About all we had to do (to make the quarters usable) was a little painting and some rewiring to transfer our telephone system over here and get our computers connected and going," Menier says. "And the maintenance staff put in a new interior door to give us a little

more security from the rest of the building."

Menier would like to be able to stay in the former school and that will occur if Polk County is to purchase the building from the Crookston School District. A study is underway to investigate the feasibility of county use of the building, which was closed as a school last May. The results of that study will be a major factor in

whether or not the county proceeds with a proposal to acquire it. Other factors in a possible purchase will include the effect of the restraints set out in new state levy limits legislation and other limitations of county finances.

Social Services, too

If purchased by the county, the building would allow placing "under one roof" all Social Service programs and staff based in Crookston — both those located in the courthouse and those in the Professional Building (former St. Francis Nursing Home).

The school would also house the probation program in the county and possibly other government units and programs.

The School District would continue to use the gymnasium and locker rooms for school activities. Gym time could be made available for some Crookston Park and Recreation Department programs.

A joint powers board would be established to operate the building and to determine the share of energy and maintenance costs for each entity.



A county office building? — The former Central Junior High School in Crookston could become a county office building depending upon the results of a feasibility study and the county's ability to purchase it from the Crookston School District.