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Carlton County

County-wide newsletter brought to you by the County Coordinator's Office

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Carlton County Receives AMC County Achievement Award



Left to right: Carlton County Commissioner Tom Proulx, Carlton County Commissioner Dick Brenner, Carlton County Commissioner Susan Zmyslony, Carlton County Public Health & Human Services Director Dave Lee, Carlton County Commissioner Marv Bodie, Carlton County Commissioner Gary Peterson

The 2015 Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) Annual Conference Awards Committee has selected the Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis Counties, and the Bois Forte, Fond du Lac and Grand Portage Bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa's Birch Tree Center - Crisis Stabilization as a project worthy of recognition and has bestowed on it an AMC County Achievement Award.

The County Achievement Awards were presented at the Awards Banquet on Monday, December 7, 2015 at the Rivers Edge Convention Center in St. Cloud.

The previous crisis stabilization program in Northeastern Minnesota was closed by the State in 2012. Regional partners came together to develop a state-of-the-art, culturally welcoming facility to serve the growing mental health needs in the region. This public, private, tribal partnership went through two years of planning and a year of construction before opening in January of 2015. The counties of Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake & St. Louis, along with Bois Forte, Fond du Lac & Grand Portage Bands of the Lake Superior Chippewa partnered with the private agencies of Rule 36 of Duluth, Center City Housing and the MN Department of Human Services to make this a reality. The physical design of the space and program philosophy has created a healing environment for all people to feel welcome in a time of crisis. The facility has 12 single rooms that all have access to views of the natural environment, and also houses the regional mobile crisis team.

The program has served more people in crisis than had been initially anticipated with very positive comments from the regional hospital, law enforcement and mental health provider community. (Article credit: AMC, www.mncounties.org)

Carlton County Drug Court Members Participate in Jingle Bell Race

Several members of the Carlton County Drug Court laced up their running shoes and participated in the Jingle Bell 5K run for arthritis on December 5, 2015 in Duluth. The Carlton County Team was generously sponsored by Duluth Bethel. It was a great pro-social, healthy event for a great cause. A good time was had by all who participated.



Employee Service Awards



Teresa Swanson
(PH&HS)
30 Years

Paul Coughlin
(Sheriff's Office)
20 Years

Bridget Karp
(Sheriff's Office)
20 Years

Randy Roberts
(Sheriff's Office)
20 Years

James Koecher
(Transportation)
20 Years

Travis Warnygora
(Sheriff's Office)
10 Years

Clinton Horton
(Transportation)
10 Years

The Importance of Early Childhood in our Community

To quote Benjamin Franklin, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." That wisdom rings true today when we look at addressing challenges facing our communities; poverty, public health, crime rates, school success, and employment. These issues affect everyone in our communities; however there is a large body of research to show that investment in early childhood has a positive and lasting impact on all of these areas.

Early childhood is a unique and important time in a person's development. Ninety percent of brain development takes place before age 5 with new neural pathways formed at a rate of 700 every second. Rich experiences in early childhood support brain development, paving the road for future learning. If all areas of development are stimulated and supported (cognition, language, motor, social-emotional), kids are more likely to succeed in school and become productive citizens. Children whose first years of life are without such support often experience higher dropout rates, greater reliance on public welfare, higher criminal rates, and poorer health. These outcomes have been reported in study after study, some dating back to the 60's and 70's and tracking participants from preschool into adulthood.

The Carlton County Children's Mental Health and Family Services Collaborative is taking a proactive approach to supporting kids and early learning. Since 2010 the Jump Start 4 Kindergarten program (a collaboration of school readiness, preschool, and childcare programs throughout the county) has been working to ensure that all kids in our county have the skills and experiences they need to be ready for kindergarten. Partnering programs assess kids' skills in all learning areas, identify needs, and provide support through goal-setting, tailoring activities to learners and involving parents along the way.

The program provides training and facilitates the sharing of ideas and experiences by early education providers. By investing time and dollars at this critical stage in development, the Jump Start Program helps children start their school careers with confidence and a positive experience. At the start of the program approximately half of participating preschoolers were on track to be ready for kindergarten. With steady gains made each year, that number climbed to 87% on track last year.

In a report by Wilder Research it was determined that every year, "the cost to the K-12 system of those children not being ready is about \$113 million. School readiness prevents or reduces needless public spending, starting with K-12 special education and lasting through adulthood in the social welfare and criminal justice systems." A subsequent report stated that school readiness increases state revenue by lowering drop-out rates and ensuring a skilled workforce that then contributes to the tax base. And dollar for dollar, investment in early childhood has some of the greatest payback. Studies have shown that for every dollar invested in early childhood saves \$8 to \$10 down the road. In a paper published by economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, that rate increases to a 16% return when the focus is on disadvantaged kids. One of the authors, former Federal Reserve Chair Art Rolnick, has explained the returns as extraordinary, "not from just one longitudinal study, but four longitudinal studies. We came to the conclusion that for a public investment, you can't beat it." So while children certainly benefit from quality early childhood programs, so do our communities as a whole.

For more information, please contact Collaborative Director Donna Lekander at Donna.Lekander@co.carlton.mn.us.

On the Download . . . Tech Tips

Have you ever wanted to insert an Excel Worksheet into a Word Doc and have them linked so that when you update the main Excel worksheet, it automatically updates the values in the Word document? Here's one of many ways to do this . . .

Select the area in your Excel spreadsheet that you want to include in Word and then press **Ctrl + C** to copy the contents. Go back to your

Word document and press **Ctrl + V** to paste the contents. In order to link, click on the Paste Options button at the bottom right and choose either **Match Destination Table Style and Link to Excel** or **Keep Source Formatting and Link to Excel**. In newer Word versions, you may have to hover over options to find these.

Your table is now linked to the original Excel file and will update whenever changes are made to the original Excel file. If you have both files open at the same time, you will see the changes happen live.



Barb Bassa Retiring from the Transportation Department



After 35 years of county service, Barb Bassa has announced her retirement effective February 5, 2016. Barb's county career began with the Planning and Zoning Department in 1981. From there she went to the Auditor's Office

and was responsible for licenses. It was in 1986 when Barb began her long career with the Highway Department, which eventually was renamed the Transportation Department.

During her 30 years with Transportation, Barb has been involved with almost all of the administrative duties needed to operate the department. Some of the duties include customer billing, Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator, Dust Control Coordinator, contact person for all permits – access, utility, moving, special events, and also providing regular updates to the county map book and city and township elected officials book.

Barb, along with her coworkers in the front office, is the initial contact for citizens with questions or concerns. Her listening skills

and helpful ways are attributes that allow her to excel with providing customer service. Those skills were also evident when she was the steward for the Teamster Union. A union steward can be very challenging and takes a person with certain skills to make it work. Barb did it and was successful at it for many years.

In addition to all her regular responsibilities, Barb organizes the lunchroom vending, coffee fund, holiday decorating, and more. All these extra things that she does make the workplace seem like home away from home.

While getting ready for retirement, Barb bought a chain saw. "I need to do some trimming and clearing around the house. Also, I'll be able to spend more time on my art projects – painting, drawing and sculpting. These things are so relaxing for me, and now I'll have the time for them."

"Steve and I also want to travel, especially to Alaska and the Rocky Mountain states. Steelhead fishing on the Brule – we need to do more of that, too."

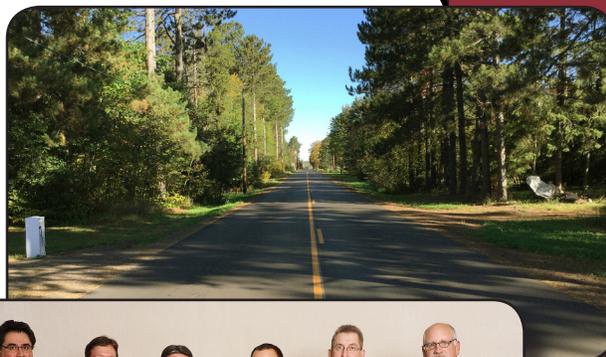
Thank you Barb, for all the years of outstanding service to the people of Carlton County, and best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

On Friday, January 29th, from 2:00 to 4:00, at the Transportation Building, there will be a cake and coffee open house to celebrate with Barb and wish her well in retirement.

County Highway Project Wins 2015 Merit Award for Bituminous Surfacing

Carlton County's Airport - Trettle - Pinewood road project was selected as the state's top pavement project in the County Road, Locally Funded Project category.

The County partnered with the Fond du Lac Band on improvements that included a new watermain pipe, road safety improvements and new asphalt pavement. The paving contractor was Northland Constructors of Duluth. The award was presented at the 62nd Annual Minnesota Asphalt Pavers Association Conference on December 9, 2015 at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in St. Louis Park, Minnesota.



2016 Carlton County Board of Commissioners



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*Board meetings are held at the Transportation Building on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8:30 a.m. and the 4th Monday of every month at 4:00 p.m.

TXT4Life Program Receives Innovations in American Government Semifinalist Award



The Innovations in American Government Awards program is a significant force in recognizing and promoting excellence and creativity in the public sector. Through its awards competition, the program provides concrete evidence that government can work

to improve the quality of life for citizens and that it deserves greater public trust.

Many award-winning programs have been replicated across jurisdictions and policy areas, and some have served as harbingers of today's reform strategies or as forerunners to state and federal legislation. By highlighting exemplary models of innovations in government, the program serves as a catalyst for continued progress in addressing the Nation's most pressing public concerns.

Winners of the Innovations Award receive national press attention, serve as examples of model programs worthy of replication, and spark research and teaching cases at Harvard University and other schools across the country. In January 2010, the program launched the Bright Ideas initiative to further recognize innovative pilot programs and promising practices.

TXT4Life is listed on the Harvard University Government Innovators Network website and received a seal for being a semifinalist for the Innovations in American Government Award. By opening up the Minnesota affiliate of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to text messaging, the TXT4Life program has been able to reach youth and young adults, using the mode of communication that they prefer. TXT4Life Coordinators also provide outreach, including school presentations, marketing, and trainings to key community stakeholders.

To learn more about the Innovations Awards and Bright Ideas, [click here](#).

Please Welcome New Carlton County Human Resources Specialist



The Human Resources Office is excited to introduce Carlton County's new Human Resources Specialist, Dannel Savage.

Tell us a little about yourself. My name is Dannel Savage

and I am the new Human Resources Specialist. I grew up in Northern Minnesota and moved to the Cloquet area in the early 90's. I have worked with employee benefits for 22 years and am excited to begin employment with Carlton County.

Who was the biggest influence in your career?

My biggest career influence would have to be my previous boss, Linda Bassett. As an inexperienced new mom, she took a chance on me and hired me as a clerk for payroll and benefits. I had no educational background in the department but she was very patient and

a great mentor. I eventually worked my way up to a supervisory position in the insurance services department and worked alongside Linda for 20 years. I'm very grateful for the opportunity she gave me and all the knowledge I gained from her over the years.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

I think my biggest accomplishment in life is being a mom. I have three amazing children, Clayton, Trey and Alexis. As a parent I think the best thing in the world is when you see your children become happy, productive adults and knowing that you raised them to be that way.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Now that I am an empty nester I have more time for myself. When I am home I like to bead (earrings, hats, pouches, moccasins, etc). I also enjoy being outdoors, going to new places/sight-seeing, traveling to powwows in the summer, camping, trying new restaurants and spending time with my family, friends and precious grandsons, Clay and Jax.

Carlton County Celebrated It's First Drug Court Program Graduate



Carlton County accepted its first Drug Court participant in late September 2014 and has since grown to a total of 29 offenders. Congratulations to Joe on being the first Drug Court Program participant to graduate. Here is Joe's story.

started to build new relationships which led to new activities to keep me occupied in my down time. I started playing disc golf, going to hockey games, and spending more time with family. These new people in my life also held me accountable for my actions and helped my decision making process at this delicate stage in my sobriety.

I have now been sober for over 14 months and I am extremely happy with where I am in my life. My debts are managed to the point where I am able to save money to spend on things like Christmas gifts. I have some awesome relationships in my life that still hold me accountable when necessary, but they also have fun with me and appreciate who I am today. I have also been doing what I can to help other drug addicts by mentoring a newly sober addict which is actually fun and very helpful for me to make comparisons. I have made very extreme positive changes in my life that I never thought I could achieve and I plan to make many more.

I would like to close by giving a special thanks to the Carlton County Drug Court Team, Thomas Proulx, Derek Randall, Barah Tribby, my parents, coworkers, and every participant in the Carlton County Drug Court Program. These people have been there for me in my worst times, and have helped me to be the person I am today. I plan to do what I can to help other addicts, and hope to be a part of other success stories.

The Growing Addict

My name is Joe. I am a drug addict from Carlton County and I spent a lot of time in St. Louis County. I have been sober for about 14 months and I have learned a lot about myself and drug addicts in general in the last few years. I am also a participant in the Carlton County Drug Court Program which I owe a lot of my success and achievements to. I would like to share some of my story in three parts: when I was using, early sobriety, and now.

When I was using I was a mess. I lied to people, cheated people, stole from people, and made just about every other stereotypical action that a drug addict makes. I also drained my own self esteem and self worth to nothing because of these actions. I used drugs, sold drugs, stole drugs, etc. I did just about whatever I could to get my fix. In the process of getting this endless fix, I completely ignored everything else in my life like relationships, jobs, family, and my own life goals. I ruined many important relationships, lost jobs, created huge debts, and dragged my family name through the mud. I basically ruined everything good in my life just to get high.

Early sobriety was definitely the hardest part of this whole ordeal, despite the devil's hell I went through while using. Early sobriety was much more difficult because I finally had to face everything in my life that was messed up, ruined, and what seemed to be, unsalvageable. I took slow and painful steps that didn't seem to amount to anything at the time, but in the end helped exponentially. I worked a lot, paying what I could on debts little by little. It started off seeming impossible because I had probation debts, restitution, and personal debts. But I focused on what needed to be paid immediately, and then paid for whatever else I could, and eventually I started to see progress. I also

Radon Tests Available at Carlton County Public Health and Human Services

Carlton County Public Health and Human Services is providing radon tests as January is radon awareness month. Radon is a colorless, odorless radioactive gas that comes up through the soil and when breathed in, the radioactive particles can damage the cells that line the lung. Long-term exposure to radon can lead to lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, and the leading cause in non-smokers. Are you interested in testing your home, or worried about a friend or family member? Stop by the front desk at the Carlton County Public Health and Human Services building to purchase a kit for \$2.00 (while supplies last)!

Carlton County Committee's

Building Committee -

2nd Tuesday of the month immediately following the County Board meeting (Transportation Building -TB)

Committee of the Whole -

1st Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. (TB)

Diversity Committee -

4th Thursday of the month at 8:30 a.m. (PH&HS)

Finance Committee -

1st Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. (TB)

HR Advisory Team -

3rd Tuesday of the month at 8:00 a.m. (PH&HS)

Policy Committee -

3rd Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m. (Law Enforcement Center - LEC)

Management Team -

1st Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. (TB)

Supervisors Committee -

3rd Thursday of the month at 2:00 p.m. (Varies)

Wellness Committee -

1st Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. (PH&HS)

For a more detailed Carlton County Committee list [click here](#).



Are you interested in submitting an article in the next Carlton County Newsletter? Email, mail or fax your articles and pictures by the February 22, 2016 deadline to:

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*Please note that all submissions are subject to editing, as needed.

"Let's Get Acquainted" with the Carlton County Emergency Management Coordinator



Peter Neumann is Carlton County's Emergency Management Coordinator.

What are the things you like most about your work?

I like the fact that I get to do a job I like that has a direct impact on the safety and security of the residents of the community I live in.

Tell us a little about yourself.

I was born and grew up in Cloquet, MN and graduated from Cloquet High School. After high school, I served in the Minnesota Air National Guard, United States Air Force and United States Navy. While in the Air National Guard and Air Force, I served in the Security Forces career field and worked as a Squad Leader, Program Security Manager and Antiterrorism Officer, mainly with the 148th Fighter Wing in Duluth, MN. While in the Navy, I served as a Parachute Rigger at Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, CA. After serving for nearly 25 years, I retired from the Air Force in September 2012 as an E-8, Senior Master Sergeant. After my military retirement, I worked in Emergency Management at the 148th Fighter Wing as a civilian contractor before being hired at the Carlton County Sheriff's office as the Carlton County Emergency Management Coordinator. My wife, Lisa, and I have been married for 21 years and have three children; Christine (18), Cassandra (14) and Cameron (10).

What are your hobbies?

Hunting, fishing, shooting, camping, kayaking, hiking, and family events.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

One of my most proud accomplishments was receiving the Meritorious Service Medal while in the Air Force by direction of the President for outstanding non-combat meritorious service/achievement.

What are the main lessons you have learned in life?

I have learned to live your life with integrity, strive for excellence and never give up! Believe none of what you hear and only half of what you see, within reason and depending on it's origination.

Carlton County Offers Comprehensive Services to Youth

The Carlton County Restorative Justice Program (CCRJP) in Minnesota excels in providing both a wide menu of services as well as maintaining strong collaborative relations with multiple agencies countywide. Moreover, their intervention processes are infused with preventative aspects that build community and socialize youth in positive directions. By helping youth go deeper into their own issues, the programming helps youth to reintegrate more deeply back into the community. Some of their services include:

- Sentencing Circles
- Restorative Conferencing
- Healing Circles
- Think First (educational component)
- Jail Talk (cognitive behavioral component)
- Healing and Bullying Circles for schools
- Truancy Prevention

(Article credit: National Association of Community and Restorative Justice, www.NACRJ.org)

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."