

Department Updates



Barron County, Wisconsin

Sheriff's Department

Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald

The week of Jan 11-15 is Wisconsin Adult School Crossing Guard Recognition Week. This is a time where we show our support to all the crossing guards by stopping for them when they are out helping the children of Barron County cross the streets each morning and afternoon in less than ideal weather conditions. If you know one of the many crossing guards across the county please tell them thank you for helping keep our kids safe.

The sheriff's dept continues to work together with Barron County Safe and Stable Families organization to help change the culture of underage drinking in Barron County by running a TV ad and several radio spots. Lets work together to reduce underage alcohol tragedies in Barron County, because they are preventable if we work together.

Over the past month the sheriff's dept worked on solving the animal shooting cases and the Christmas Snow storm cars in

the ditch with no serious accidents and is preparing for the murder trial that will be held in mid January.

End of the year stats for the jail, are that we booked in 2,163 people in 2009; compared to 2,186 in 2008. For dispatch we had: 40,515 calls in 2009 and 13,631 (37.3 p/day) 911 calls in 2009 compared to 14,933 in 2008:

As always buckle up, slow down and don't drink and drive.



Circuit Court

Judge James Babler

COURT SECURITY TRAINING
ZZZZZAPPP went the Taser; down went Fred! Incidents of violence in the courtroom are on the rise, so security training for court staff and personnel is critical. So far this year Court Security Officers have found 64 weapons on persons in the Justice Center. On December 3, 2009 Court staff, Clerk of Court staff, and Sheriff's Department personnel participated in court security training. The training included handouts, video and live demonstrations of various court security issues, and used Court staff and Clerk of Court staff in actual exercises of what to do when various situations arise.

The live demonstrations were arranged by Jail Administrator Mark Evans with use of his staff, and included the actual "tasing" of Corrections Officer Fred Cross. This training helps to maximize security in Justice Center which was built using state of the art security designs. This training is given annually to the staff members of the second floor of the Justice Center. Anyone wishing to volunteer for next year's tasing should contact Mark Evans!

BARRON DRUG COURT

The Barron County Drug Court continues to handle difficult drug and alcohol cases through the "Drug Court Model". Our

2008 statistics have just been compiled. (These are late due to our statistician leaving the Drug Court Team). 2008 began with eight participants and ended with eight participants, having four graduations and four failures. The average cost per participant was \$7,656.65 as compared to \$30,316.42 if the participant were sent to prison. It has been the Drug Court's policy to accept only those who would otherwise go to prison. Not only was the Drug Court cost effective, but other benefits included child support being paid by these participants, families reunited, 174 hours of community service work performed and clean and sober, tax-paying workers.

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Economic Development

Dave Miller, Director

A Brief Summary of Projects:

The total project count for 2009, was 357. This was up by 135 projects from 2008, due primarily to increased assistance requested of the Economic Development Department and the BCEDC by businesses struggling with the state of the economy. However, as 2009 came to an end, there were 69 new start-up projects in-process with 30 projects rolled-over from 2008, still active throughout the year. Ninety-nine remain active and will roll to 2010. Planned expansion projects leveled at 10 since the first of 2009 and there were seven that rolled over from 2008, so there will be 17 rolled over to 2010.

* There were eight national advertising placements and 3 regional advertising placements across all sectors. Two trade shows targeting tourism and 6 different industries were attended.

* There were 44 educational projects, seminars and conferences completed on behalf of the Economic Development Department and the Barron County Development Corporation, satisfying the annual requirements for the BCEDC's 501c3 non-profit educational chartable status.

* There were 15 Regional Business Fund Loans made in the following categories: Revolving Loan Fund (4); MicroLoans (9) and 2 Downtown Façade Program Loans. The 9 businesses that used the MicroLoan Fund totaled (\$175,000) with 5 new jobs expected; 2 businesses that used the Downtown Façade Program totaling (\$40,000) and there were 4 businesses with 19 new jobs expected and over 150 jobs retained, that accessed the Regional Revolving loan Fund, totaling (\$417,000).

In looking at all the loans, compared with 2008, at 3 MicroLoans (\$65,000), 5 Façade Loans (\$109,000) and three Revolving Loan Fund Projects (\$160,000) for a total of 9 new jobs planned and over 60 retained, 2009 was ahead (\$632,000) of 2008 (\$334,000) in spite of the turndown in the economy.

* Two major alternative energy projects, one import-export major project and 16 research, demographic and workforce development projects were completed, from requests from Businesses, municipalities and nonprofit organizations throughout the county.

* There were 30 tourism and county promotional projects completed by the Department. Of those, 12 were collaborations through the Northwest Wisconsin ITBEC Tourism Committee (8 counties) and 12 through the Governor's St. Croix Area Promotions Committee (4 counties). Five separate projects were completed for jurisdictions across the county. There were over 70 responses for tourism information completed through a program with our ITBEC Committee and the American Road Magazine, in a September and October magazine promotion.

* Nine site search activities were responded to over the year. There were 3 community alternative development projects completed. There were 24 General activity projects requested by municipalities and the county across varied topics.

*The countywide Business Retention and Expansion Surveys for 2009 were mailed in December. The Labor Market Study was also mailed at the same time. The survey data collection and analysis will be completed during Quarter 1 in 2010.

*With additional projects in advertising, marketing and promotions (80) of the county, the total project count for 2009, was 357. This was up by 135 projects from 2008, due primarily to increased assistance requested of the Department and the BCEDC by businesses struggling with the state of the economy.

Major Projects that rollover to 2010 include: The Vacant Land Rail Road marketing project is complete. There are now brochures that show available land adjacent to the seven rail corridors. I have also added the Rail Corridor brochures online as a PDF, available from the Home Page at www.barroncounty.com for your review. .

Everyone knows the economy has changed over the past year and it's not only important to know the future plans for our businesses, but also those businesses in the region. In an effort to compare the economies within our region, Polk and Rusk counties will be conducting the same studies at the same time. The results for each of the counties will be analyzed by the WI Department of Commerce on the Business Retention & Expansion side and through UW Extension on the Labor Market side of the studies. The results will then be combined to present a sub-region county view of the economy across the three counties. This project has been in the planning stage since June of this year and the results are expected to be final with public presentations planned for March of 2010.

Have a great year everyone!

UW Extension

Annette Bjorklund, Interim 4-H Youth Development Educator

Barron County 4-H Vision-to-Action: Moving Towards the Future Together

Barron County 4-H held its Vision-to-Action workshop on September 26, 2009. The goal of Vision-to-Action is to identify the strengths and areas of concern in the program, develop a vision for the future of Barron County 4-H and develop action plans that youth, volunteers and staff are working on together from now until 2014.

Four issues were identified for action: Communication, Record Books, Committees, and Promotion/Marketing. Goals for each issue were identified and plans of action were developed to work towards the goals. A written report of the process and the plans has been produced and was approved by the Barron County 4-H Association Council on November 17. To receive a copy of the report, visit the 4-H website at www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/barron/4h/index.html or pick one up at the Extension Office.

Participating in the Vision-to-Action workshop were 4-H adult volunteers Cindy Becker, Sonja Crotteau, Caroline Dostal, Robin Hanson, Brian Holten, Ken Kolzow, Lloyd Mark, Darlene Purinton, Cathy Solum and Jennifer Quinlan and 4-H members Brittany Crotteau, Melanie Guski, Katie Guski, Bailey Hanson and Sam Olson. If you have questions on the process, report or plans, please contact any of these folks, any Barron County 4-H Association Council member, or Annette Bjorklund at the Extension Office.

Clerk of Circuit Court

Judith W Espeseth
Clerk of Circuit Court

Clerk of Circuit Court Comparison Statistics		
	2007	2008
Family	336	354
Paternity	130	100
Criminal Traffic	365	369
Civil	690	732
Criminal Misdemeanor	579	547
Criminal Felony	324	329
Traffic	2926	2922
Forfeitures	645	614
Small Claims	1643	1743
Transcript of Judgment	40	37
Group Files	110	111
TOTALS	7788	7858

Small Claims Mediation Statistics

Scheduled	Settled	De-	Court Trials
242	50 percent	29 percent	21 percent

County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk

Unless there is a last minute surprise from the Government Accountability Board, we will not have to hold the February 16, 2010 Primary Election at the county level. As of right now, City of Rice Lake is the only municipality that will need a primary. No County Board Supervisor incumbents filed a Notification of Non-Candidacy and all have properly filed to be on the ballot for the April Election. There are several contested races that will be decided at the April 6, 2010 Spring Election. In District 2, John Hardin is challenged by Allen Nyhagen; in District 4, Lee Romsos is challenged by Terry Lee; in District 9 Ricky Wuorenma is challenged by Karla Nevin; in District 15, Keith Hardie is challenged by Ronald Strand Sr; in District 16, Ken Peterson is challenged by Russell Rindsig. In District 25 a challenger filed a Campaign Registration Statement but didn't submit nomination papers so their name will not appear on the ballot.

It is with mixed emotions that I announce that my deputy, Barbara Balts, has decided to retire. I am VERY happy for her but VERY sad to see her go. She has served this county faithfully for 21 years this stint and about a 14 year stint prior to that. She is a wonderful, dedicated employee and will be missed not only as a co-worker but as a friend. She leaves big shoes to fill. We will be having a party for her on her last "official" day at work in February. Watch for details.

Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Office / Department</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Date Filled</u>	<u>New / Replacement</u>
Social Service	Health & Human	Mary Matthys	1/4/10	Replacement
Economic Support	Health & Human	Recruiting		Replacement
Child Support Specialist	Child Support	Recruiting		Replacement
Assistant Corporation	Corporation Counsel	Recruiting		Replacement

- The Ad Hoc Recruitment Committee completed the first round of interviews for the County Administrator position on 12/17/09. a second interview will be held on 1/6/10 with the two finalists. A recommendation will then be brought to the County Board at the 1/11/10 meeting.
- The WPPA and NUE bargaining units have reached tentative agreements on the 2010—2011 contracts. Negotiations are still on-going with AFSCME Local 522, AFSCME Local 518 and Teamsters.

Register of Deeds

A TYPICAL DAY IN THE REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE

(Note: This was written by a Register of Deeds and shared with all of the other Registrars and made available for our use and adaptation for each specific county.)

REAL ESTATE

Throughout the day real estate documents are presented for recording. Prior to the slowed housing market, an average of 55 to 60 documents per day is a typical recorded document total. However, daily recorded documents have varied from 4 to 236 documents so organizational efficiency is critical. Documents are brought into the office via title companies, standard mail, and the general public. Prior to the recording process, a Register of Deeds (ROD) employee reviews the documents in order that they meet statutory recording requirements and required fees. Examples of these requirements include a standard document recording format, original signatures, a general location statement (legal description), and notarized signatures. It is important to note that the ROD office is solely a recording office and staff is required to record documents if they meet statutory recording requirements. ROD staff is not responsible to determine the validity or authenticity of the documents. Therefore, a situation may occur that then requires the court to determine a document's legal significance.

Once the document is deemed recordable by ROD staff, the document is receipted and partially indexed into iDoc, which is the enhanced software system implemented in 2004. Information such as Grantor/Grantee name (Buyer/Seller, Mortga-

gor/Mortgagee) is entered in the database and the document number, date and time of recording, fees paid, and page count are stamped electronically on the front of each document. As this information is receipted and partially indexed outside customers are able to search document information on Laredo and Tapestry which are the two programs available on the internet as the general public computer searching tools. The document is then stamped and scanned and is viewable by Grantor and Grantee information at this point. When the rest of the indexing is completed documents can be viewed by many alternative searching options which include legal description, parcel number, associated document number and return document information. As this information is added to the database, customers can use these additional options.

As documents are indexed, ROD staff, with the assistance of the software, verifies the indexed document information. This process ensures that indexed document data matches the recorded document such as spelling of names, legal descriptions, associated documents, and parcel numbers. Once reviewing, receipting, stamping, scanning, indexing and verification have occurred the documents are sent back to the designated recipient on the document. CDs are also created for two title companies.

VITAL RECORDS

Birth, non-marital birth, marriage, domestic partnership, termination of domestic partnership, and death certificates are recorded daily in the ROD office. Documents are brought into the office by Judges, Funeral Directors, Attorneys, Ministers, the general public and general mail.

Once required information is reviewed by ROD staff such as names, occurrence dates, place of birth, marriage or death, the document is signed, recorded and given a volume and page number. In addition, military discharges are also recorded with the authorization of the Veterans Service office. These documents are then indexed and verified in a manner similar to the real estate records. Birth, marriage, domestic partnership, termination of domestic partnership and death records are all viewable by the public. However, military discharges and non-marital birth records are neither viewable nor searchable by the general public. Once the vital records are recorded, customers are then able to obtain certified and non-certified copies of the documents in person or by standard mail.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

ROD staff provides assistance to title companies, attorneys, county employees, and the general public. An undetermined amount of time is dedicated to customer service by ROD staff daily. These duties include real estate document searching tutorials, retrieving customer real estate document copies, retrieving certified and non-certified copies of vital records and answering telephone questions.

The above described processes are performed daily and must be completed before any additional tasks are started.

Due to the need of document information accessibility and the importance of timely document recording for staff and customers, the real estate process is the main priority of ROD staff. The volume of real estate documents dictates the daily workflow of the ROD office.

Veterans Service Office

Scott Bachowski Veterans Service Officer

We have processed 125 new veterans through our office since we kicked off our campaign in July 2009 to find new veterans living in our county. We are very pleased to have found this many veterans who were not receiving benefits previously! Thank you to everyone who have helped us reach-out and touch the lives of these vet-

erans!

Our office will be participating with the redeployment of the 32nd at Fort McCoy from January 15th through January 19th. We are extremely honored to be part of Wisconsin's National Guard redeployment since World War II. We will be assisting returning service members file for health-care benefits as well as all state and federal benefits. We anticipate assisting over 3000

returnees over the 5 day period. Please say "thank you" for their service to all of the returning service men and women as they come home and rejoin our Barron County communities!

I would like to thank everyone who assisted us in over filling the "Toys-for-Tots" box again this year. There are a lot of happy children whose lives we touched with our generous donations. Thanks!

Health & Human Services

Judy Demers, Director

**With the Energy Assistance program beginning on 10-1-09, as of 12-30-2009, 1836 households have applied for the Energy Assistance program. Of that, 1683 households have received benefits totaling \$838,734. During the entire energy assistance season from 10-1-08 thru 9-30-09, 2207 households applied for energy assistance receiving benefits totaling \$1,180,060. The average benefit this season is \$389, while the average benefit last season was \$497.

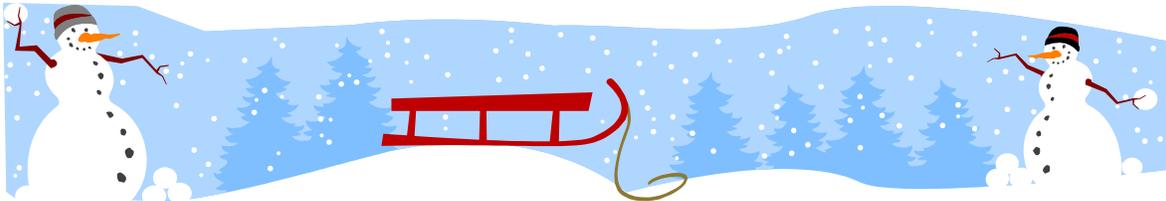
**Our Department has collaborated regionally with Chippewa, Eau Claire, LaCrosse, Pierce and St. Croix Counties to apply for a grant to participate in a pilot of an alternative response approach to child protective services. Nationally, there is increased concern that the traditional response to

child maltreatment reports is inflexible and often adversarial. The goal of alternative response is to take a less intrusive approach to responding to child maltreatment reports in lower to moderate risk cases. Alternative response is an approach to child protective services that is family-focused and strengths-based in supporting child and family well-being. It has been proven that a non-adversarial, non-threatening approach enhances parental engagement in receiving services that support the change process. Alternative response is an approach widely used in the State of Minnesota and other states, and its outcomes have been very successful. This pilot project will conclude in July, 2012, at which time an evaluation will be conducted. It is expected that alternative response will be implemented statewide within the next several years.

**To date, 547 Barron County residents are enrolled in the Badgercare Plus Core plan for childless adults. All new applicants at this point are being placed on a waiting list.

**In 2009, a total of 8710 calls were received requesting medical assistance transportation. From these calls, there were 2410 rides scheduled with volunteer drivers. This is slightly less than in 2008, with 9004 calls coming in and 2825 rides scheduled with volunteer drivers.

**As of 1-5-10, Public Health administered a total of 3743 vaccinations for H1N1 which included 2569 children and 1174 adults; on Wednesday, January 6, a clinic was held at Cedar Mall in Rice Lake at which about 400 vaccinations were administered. Vaccine availability is no longer a problem.



Highway

Mark Servi, Highway Commissioner

To date we have been involved in several winter storms that have involved extended hours and have lasted several days. The most recent one was over Christmas Weekend. The storm started on Christmas Eve, Dec 24, and cleanup lasted until Tuesday, December 29th. The unusual length of this event was caused by the rain, ice and snow that came Christmas night and lasted into December 26th. This portion of the event gave us a coating of ice under the snow, and couple that with the temperature drop that followed, made clean up an extended process. All together between the County and the State road systems, we estimate that over \$208,000 was spent. For one storm.

The crew did an exceptional job keeping

the heavy traffic of Christmas weekend moving. At the end of the clean-up, the roads that the Barron County Highway Department is responsible for were equal to or better than the surrounding counties. I have heard numerous compliments from the public regarding our response to this storm, and many Board Supervisors have told me that they received complimentary calls from their constituents also. These remarks are made possible due to the dedication of our crew. They worked Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the rest of the storm. They answered the call to service, leaving family behind on this Holiday. While we all understand that this is part of the job, I still would like to thank our crew for their dedication to the safety of our Highway System.

As you can imagine, much of our efforts this time of year involve plowing and daily inspection of our road system to insure that problem areas are addressed. When not performing these tasks, we are working on brushing, tree removals and other maintenance items that can be effectively undertaken during the winter.

I would be remiss if I did not mention our shop crew. We have had few breakdowns and those that we have had have been taken care of very timely. Our mechanics put great pride into insuring that our equipment is available and in good working order when it is needed. Under the conditions that we work our plow equipment, the fact that we have had great availability of equipment is due to their work efforts.

Aging / ADRC

Charlene Oftedahl, Director

The past eight months have been especially busy for ADRC staff who were dealing with the normal routine, plus the new responsibilities of enrolling people in managed long term care which became available to Barron County residents on May 1, 2009. The staff enrolled 57 frail elderly and adults with disabilities in Family Care, a managed care program provided through Northern Bridges. 17 persons were enrolled in the alternate choice called IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct). The latter is a self directed Medicaid waiver program where the participants are able to manage their own services and supports within an approved budget and care plan. To be eligible for

Family Care or IRIS, frail elderly and adults with disabilities must have a limited ability to function independently, and must have limited financial resources which qualify them for Medicaid. As the staff enroll people at the top of the waiting list for long term care services, they continue to add new eligible people to the bottom of the list, resulting in a waitlist of around 150 persons at this time. An additional 30 adults with developmental disabilities, who were DHHS clients served through a state pilot called Community Care Organization (CCO), were enrolled in Northern Bridges on January 1, 2010.

During this same 8 month period the ADRC staff responded to over 3000 inquires from people wanting information on resources for elderly and persons with disabilities. Topics included housing options, transportation, in-home care, health insurance, prescription drug plans, dementia, vision and hearing loss, caregiver support, and more. It is a goal of the ADRC to help people plan and make informed choices, and to use their private resources wisely, in order to delay or prevent the need for more costly services. We want people to call the ADRC before they have a crisis which limits their resource options, and before family caregivers become "burned out."

Administration

Jeff French, Interim Administrator

Property Committee:

- Approved the appointment of an ad-hoc committee to study signage at the Government Center.
- Approved increasing camping fees at Waldo Carlson and Southworth Parks from \$15 to \$23 including tax.
- Reviewed a proposed Building Use Policy as developed by Chippewa County.
- Approved a \$25,000 carryover request in the CICOP fund; \$13,000 Grant Park, close abandoned wells, \$2,500, 3 Porta Potties \$2,500 Museum Timber Cleanup and replanting \$ 7,000.
- Paulus encroachment issue has been resolved.
- Referred to Tim Jergenson and Mark Servi the leasing of County owned

property for farm use of land located adjacent to Cumberland gravel pit.

- Moved to a future agenda the distribution of information in County Buildings.
- Approved \$7,125 payment to Antzak Construction for engineering design of coffer dam and concrete reinforcement at Moon Lake Dam.
- Approved staff to make counter offer of \$150,000 for 80 acres of land located in Town of Doyle as land is adjacent to existing County Forest property.

LCC/Extension:

- This Committee did not meet in January.

Executive:

- Approved cancellation of delinquent taxes on Patrín Property in Town of Maple Plain, this is an abandoned

dump and liability by assuming this property for non-payment of taxes could be excessive.

- Discussed pay for performance, with information to be brought forward at a future time.
- Allowed re-issuance of cancelled check for \$40.00 to Loran Militor and Daniel Harker.
- Discussed designation of official newspaper, this item was tabled indefinitely.
- Voted not to pursue monetary damages against *Turtle Lake Times* for failure to publish legal notice of Incinerator Bond Sale.
- Approved County Clerk to issue car license tab renewals and title transfers.
- Staff reports were received with no official action.

Forestry

John Cisek, Forester

The frigid temperatures have provided frozen ground conditions and allowed the start-up of some harvesting operations on the county forest. Most of the activity is taking place in the Town of Maple Plain.

Barron/Polk Co. Line Rd. is the location of two active timber sales. Approximately 2400 cords of pulpwood and 120 MBF (thousand board feet) are being harvested on the two sales with a combined acreage of 160 acres in Sections 7 & 18. These har-

vests are combinations of single-tree selection and regeneration or clear-cut harvests in areas where aspen has reached maturity.

A third harvesting operation was recently completed in sections 5 & 6 of Maple Plain Township, removing approximately 460 cords of red & white pine, spruce, aspen and hardwood.

In the Town of Cedar Lake, Park Falls Hardwoods of Park Falls Wisconsin will be resuming an oak shelterwood harvest north of the Swamp Rd.

A timber harvest was recently completed at the Historical Museum on County Rd. W in the Town of Stanley. Part of the harvest involved a small clear-cut in the northwest portion of the property. That portion of the property is scheduled to be re-forested in the spring of 2010.

The timber tracking software, TimberBase © that was installed this past fall is up and operating, providing an accurate accounting of wood products sold and harvested from the county forest.