



Department Updates

Barron County

June 2015

Highway Department

Mark Servi
Highway Commissioner

Workers from the Calumet and Shawano County Highway Departments were killed in recent accidents involving vehicles traveling through the work zones.

In Calumet County, the operator of a road sweeper died when a vehicle crashed into the sweeper from behind. The driver of the car also died. In Shawano County, the flagger controlling the work zone was hit by a vehicle and died. These tragic accidents highlight how important it is to be aware of work zones and be alert for workers in the work zones.

“It is my understanding that these work zones were both correctly signed,” said Mark Servi, Barron County Highway Commissioner. “But it is so important that drivers use caution in work zones, as they are really the ones that control the safety of our workers. We are your friends and neighbors, performing the needed maintenance on the Barron County highway system. Please do all you can, in and around work zones, to keep us safe. Slow

down and expect to encounter work operations.”

In Barron County, there are generally three types of work zones that the Highway Department utilizes. They are flagger controlled zones, moving operation zones, and road closed zones.

Flagger controlled work zones are areas where the work activity requires that one lane of traffic be closed. In these situations, there will be flaggers present to direct traffic. Moving operation zones are activities such as mowing and pot-hole patching. These operations will not have flaggers present, as the work does not result in the closure of a lane of traffic. Road closed zones means that the road is closed to traffic and through travel is not permitted.

When you encounter a work zone, it is your responsibility to exercise caution. Your actions in a work zone directly affect your safety and the safety of the workers. In Wisconsin, there were 10 fatalities in work zones in 2013, including both workers and drivers, along with many more accidents and injuries.

“We work to provide a safe zone of work for the Barron County Highway workers,” said Servi. “Our crew is trained in correct signing and flagging techniques. But all the proper signing still does not fully protect our workers. It is a joint responsibility between drivers and workers in the work zone.

“We have discussed work zone safety with Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald,” said Servi. “The Sheriff’s Department will be placing an added focus on work zones in Barron County, to assist in ensuring the safety of everyone in the work zone. “

When you encounter a work zone, please slow down and be aware of what is happening around you. By working together, we can prevent the tragic accidents from happening in Barron County.



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Human Resources

Rachael Richie, HR Director

<u>New/Replacement Positions</u>				
<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Office/Department</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Date Filled</u>	<u>New/Replacement</u>
Economic Support Specialist	Health & Human Services	Sarah Antczak	5/25/15	Replacement
Economic Support Specialist	Health & Human Services	Sonja Schaaf	5/25/15	Replacement
Compliance Technician	Land Services	Marshall Black	5/11/15	Replacement

Wellness Team Update: 10 people enrolled in Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) worksite group
Fruit / Vegetable Challenge taking place during the month of June

Register of Deeds

Margo Katterhagen
Register of Deeds

Vital records are now paperless!!
With the marriages going online as of May 18, 2015.....we no longer will have to store the paper records in books!

Not only do we save on not having to physically store the marriage record, but the time that staff saves on making any necessary corrections is huge!

In other news, with the lending industry standards changing as of August 1st. (which is being said to be the biggest shift in lending in our lifetime) it is predicted that eRecordings will become the prominent choice of recording. eRecordings offer the ability to better track the documents that are submitted to us. Non-compliant lending transactions could be issued a fine by The Consumer Finance Protection Bureau (a Federal

agency). Some of the fines are going to be \$5,000 per day!!

Because being able to track your document is going to be such a huge player in the new standards, we just signed up for a product that Fidlar provides called SWIFT. With SWIFT, we will be able to track rejections and also electronically return recorded paper documents to our submitters, which will reduce our mailing expenses.

Finance Department

Jodi Busch
Finance Director

It is audit season in the Barron County Finance Department. Finance Staff had everything ready for CliftonLarsonAllen's arrival at the Government Center on April 27th to audit the Financials for 2014. CLA expects to complete their onsite fieldwork by May 22nd. During this period, they have also spent time at the Justice Center and Incinerator. Areas of focus include auditing various accounts in all Barron County Funds, Grant Testing, Fixed Assets, Payroll,

and Investments. In addition to audit processes, CLA also provides information and instruction as to new accounting rules coming down the pike. They are a great resource to the Finance Department and we look forward to their visit when we get this chance to work with them.

Over the last year, Barron County has been hosting quarterly meetings of the neighboring Counties' Finance Directors. Every few months, we meet for half a day to discuss various topics and processes that affect the financials. Our group continues to

grow. Currently, the counties of Barron, Burnett, Taylor, Pepin, Washburn, Bayfield, Sawyer, Rusk, Price, Polk, St Croix and Chippewa are participating in the group. These meetings prove to be very interesting, as one would expect that we would all do things in the same manner. However, because of differences in size and forms of county government, our processes can be very different. This group too, has proven to be a wealth of information and a great resource in the ever-changing environment that we work in.

County Clerk

DeeAnn Cook, County Clerk

On May 18, 2015 a new web based system for issuing marriage licenses began. All County Clerk offices will use the SVRIS system for couples to apply for their license then all Register of Deeds will complete the process once the marriage has taken place and gets filed. Vital Records provided hands-on training prior to implementation at several locations throughout the state; one of which was

WITC in Rice Lake. There were a few minor glitches in the beginning but, all in all, the transition from the old system to the new system went quite smoothly. Marriage licenses have picked up a great deal as we head toward summer.

We have taken advantage of this being an off election year by purging any old ballots and election supplies that are past their record retention to make room for the 4 large elections coming in 2016. We are required to keep ballots for 22

months for any election with a federal office on it and poll lists for 4 years. Those tend to be the larger elections so the amount of ballots we have to store is significant. Ballots from elections with only state, county or local offices need only be kept for 30 days after an election but those poll lists have a 2 year record retention.

Veterans Service Office

Scott Bachowski Veterans Service Officer

Dedicated Vietnam Veteran Memorial / Hallway – I would like to express a heartfelt “Thank You” to the County Board of Supervisors for their support to make the Vietnam Memorial Dedication a huge success. We dedicated the memorial on March 27, 2015 with about 150 people in attendance. The event was very touching with many of the fallen Barron County Vietnam Veteran families in attendance. We have had nothing but positive feedback from the public. The Veterans’ Memorial Auditorium and Hallway has never looked better! Again “**Thank You**”!

National Conference Training – Phil and I attended National County Veteran Service Officer Annual Training Conference in Appleton, WI from June 1 -5, 2015. Wisconsin was selected to host this event back in 2011 by the national delegation. Wisconsin last hosted the national conference in Milwaukee in June 2007. We received excellent training to help us maintain our national accreditations with all of the major national veteran service organizations. Some of the highlights from the training included: “Issues common in appeals at the Board of Veterans Appeals” by Judge Cheryl L. Mason. “Woman’s Mental Health & Military Sexual Trauma-Combat Trauma-Treatments” by Dr. Mark Marnocha. “Tricare” by Juliet Richey. “Debt Man-

agement” by Supervisor William Pierce. “Medicare Advantage & Part B” by Mike Jones, Veterans Executive at Humana. We were also very fortunate to receive outstanding training and case studies from Katrina Eagle and Amy Kretkowski, Veteran Law Attorneys from California. They provided us the best training that I have received in my 8 years of attending annual training. We are hopeful to have them attend our state conferences in the future.

Memorial Day – I spoke to a crowd of about 100 on a rainy Memorial Day in Turtle Lake. I was asked to speak about the history of Veteran Affairs benefits. When I was first asked to speak on this topic I was wondering how I was going to keep people awake. However, after researching the topic; I was pleasantly surprised at how interesting VA history could be and how far back benefits were received. Interestingly, the current VA can trace its roots back 1636, when the Pilgrims enacted a law that committed them to support soldiers disabled in defending the Plymouth Colony. I focused the speech on benefits that are still relevant today and how they evolved over time. I received very good feedback and people really enjoyed the journey through VA history. Phil attended and assisted with the Memorial Day service at the Northern Wisconsin Veteran’s Memorial Cemetery.

Armed Forces Day – Phil spoke to approximately 50 veterans and family

members on the topic of “Sacrifice of Veteran Service”. He focused on how service members and families sacrifice so much during their service and after as a veteran. He reminded us that Memorial Day is not the only time we should be thanking our service men and women. The event was organized by the Barron Veterans of Foreign Wars.

WI CVSOA Executive Committee – In October 2014, I was elected by my peers to the Wisconsin County Veteran Service Officers Association Executive Committee. I am honored to have been elected and now serve a 2-year term on this committee. Our Association faces some huge obstacles in the future and I am up for the challenges ahead.

