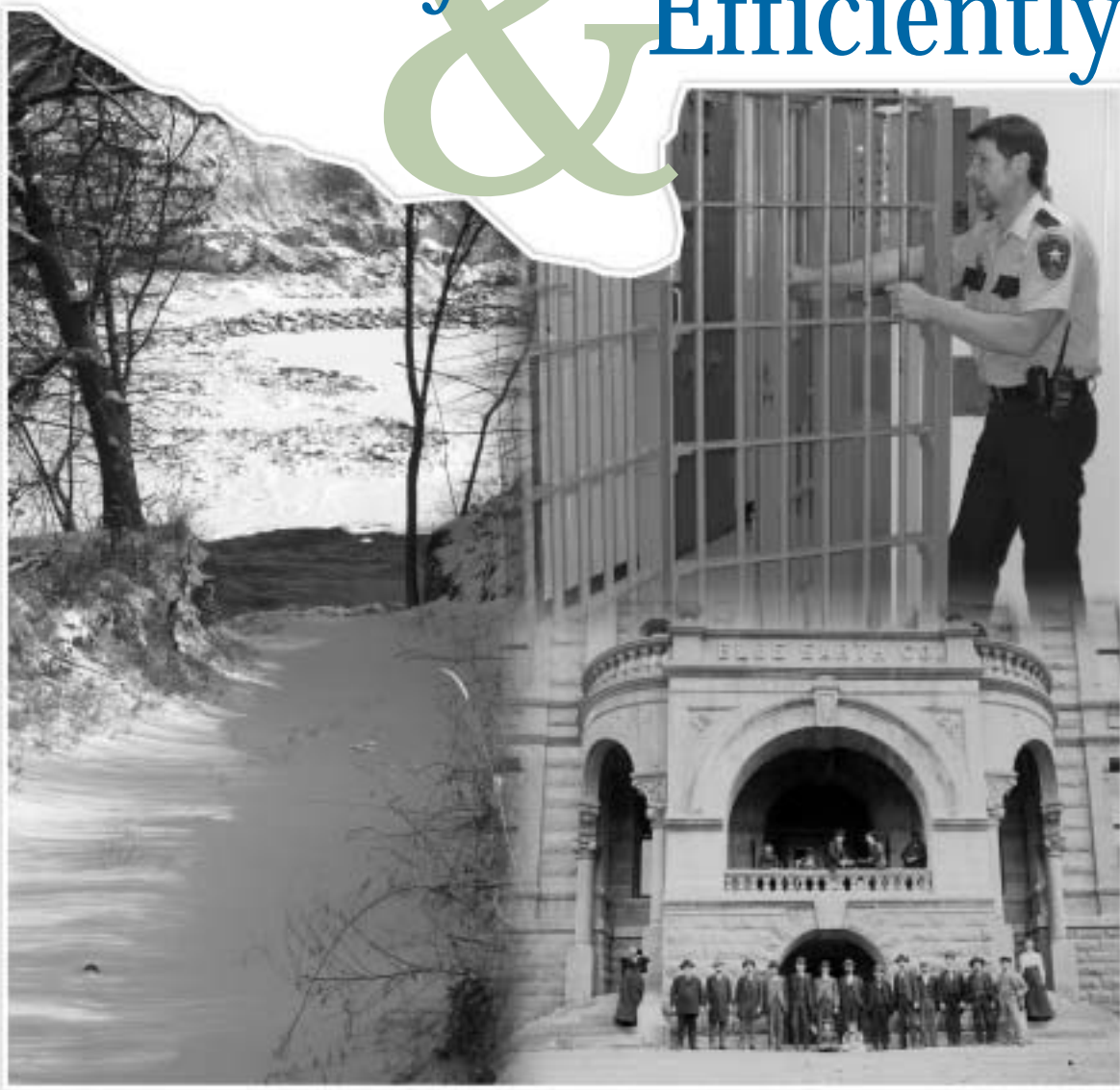


# BLUE EARTH COUNTY *Communicator*

## Effectively & Efficiently



## Delivering Essential Services

### ON THE COVER



BLUE EARTH COUNTY

*Left: If land along the Blue Earth River is acquired by the County for a new park, part of the land will be used as a canoe launch and the rest will remain as undeveloped conservation land. The access to the Blue Earth River will allow for fishing, hiking and primitive camping.*

*Top Right: Public officials are planning for the future of the County jail. The current facility is often overcrowded and presents safety concerns because of its antiquated design.*

*Bottom Right: Blue Earth County will celebrate its 150th Anniversary Year with a Commemoration Concert on the Courthouse Lawn, 6:00 p.m., July 1st.*



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**POSTAL PATRON**

## COUNTY CONTINUES IMPROVEMENTS IN *Property Valuations*

by Julie Roisen, Blue Earth County Assessor

In June of 2002, the Minnesota Department of Revenue requested that Blue Earth County make a series of improvements to its property assessment and taxation operations. Seven of the 11 improvements are now complete, and Blue Earth County has purchased new appraisal software to complete the final four improvements. In addition to the software implementation, Blue Earth County will use this opportunity to revalue land for urban and rural residential properties for the 2004 assessment. Vanguard, the software vendor, will assist the County with this process, which will involve sales analysis, lot review, and input into the new computer system. Specialized staff training is also included in Vanguard's contract with the County.

Blue Earth County's ultimate goal is to gain consistency through the use of similar units of measure for similar types of properties. For a complete "Report on Progress" for Blue Earth County's Taxpayer Services Department, go to [www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/dept/reportprogress.php3](http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/dept/reportprogress.php3)

Status	Impr.#	Improvement Description
IP	#1	Establish criteria for assigning land codes
IP	#2	Update land tables
IP	#3	Correlate land valuation methods within jurisdictions
C	#4	Remove additional costs for siding
C	#5	Include improvements that were not assessed
C	#6	Track appraisals to ensure one-fourth of parcels are appraised each year
C	#7	All staff appraisers review certificates of real estate
C	#8	Keep a record of each property owner that appears before the Board of Appeal and Equalization, along with any adjustments or actions taken
IP	#9	Review and modify method for splitting parcels and recalculate crop equivalency ratings
C	#10	Involve County assessor's office in the approval/denial of homestead applications
C	#11	Modify method for processing new plats

Key: IP=In Progress, C=Complete

## How the State Deficit Impacts County Government

By Katie Nerem Roth, Assistant to the Administrator

Counties were established as local governments that also serve as administrative arms of the state. Over 70 percent of what counties do is driven by state and federal mandates, most of which are already under funded. The loss of funding caused by the state's deficit will require county boards to consider reducing non-mandated services or raising the local property tax. Raising property taxes is county commissioners' least preferred option for solving the state's budget problems.

Since nearly one-third of county budgets are funded by state dollars, counties across the state will be required to cut or eliminate services. Cuts will arrive on the doorstep of county government through one or more of the following ways:

### 1. Reduction in HACA

Blue Earth County receives over \$1.8 million in Homestead & Agricultural Credit Aid (HACA) from the state, which provides funding across all County departments. HACA was introduced in 1971 "as a trade" for the elimination of personal property taxes that went to counties (i.e. when farm equipment and certain household items were taxed). For 2003, the Governor's proposed reduction in HACA to Blue Earth County is \$655,702, and in 2004, \$1,245,004.

### 2. Categorical reductions

Categorical reductions represent services designated in the Governor's budget where specific funding streams follow services to the County level. Some of the major state categorical funding streams to counties include:

- Criminal Justice Aid (CJA)
- Family Preservation Aid
- SCORE block grants (reduces the county levy for recycling)
- Natural Resources Block Grant
- Community Social Services Act (CSSA) Grants
- Community Health Services (CHS) Subsidy
- Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) (replaces a portion of property taxes on federal and state lands)
- County State Aid Highway (CSAH)

### 3. Cost shift of essential services and fee increases

The state will solve its budget problem by passing the responsibility for certain services onto counties or increasing fees to counties for services provided by the state. The Governor and other state offices are proposing to:

- Eliminate state funds for reducing high-risk youth behavior
- Eliminate state responsibility for wetland mitigation for all roads
- Eliminate state funds for local water plans
- Increase county cost for wetland banking
- Increase fees for county audits by state auditor (17 percent increase)
- Increase county share for large facilities for persons with mental retardation
- Reduce state funding for recycling
- Consolidate and reduce children/community service grants

- Reduce state funds for basic public health services
- Increase county costs for institutions for mentally disabled, regional treatment centers
- Reduce state funds for corrections and probation services
- Require counties to house state prisoners for six months

### 4. Limited mandate relief and no future growth

Proposed mandate relief is minimal compared to the large number of mandates counties are currently required to follow. Some state mandates are useful, while others create bureaucratic barriers for effective decision-making and prioritization at the local level. Compounding this issue, counties cannot expect inflationary increases in state funding for the 2004-2005 budget cycle, while service demands at the local level will continue to rise.

### 5. Levy limits

The Governor has proposed that county boards be bound by levy limits. This means that, even though state funding will be reduced/eliminated for numerous services provided at the county level, county boards will not have the option to increase levies to continue those services at current levels. County commissioners prefer not to solve the state's budget problems by raising taxes; however, the state is not providing any additional revenue sources to make up for the cost/service shifts and fee increases to counties. This creates a funding dilemma at the local level, and causes even deeper service cuts that wouldn't otherwise be affected.

Through a combination of the cuts described above, county service levels may change in the following areas:

- Road and park maintenance
- Recycling and waste management
- Services to persons with mental illness and developmental disabilities, including respite care, employment services, supportive living, and socialization opportunities
- Programs designed to make people less dependent on welfare
- Public health initiatives, including nutrition education, tobacco-use prevention programs, and other programs addressing at-risk behaviors in youth
- Library services
- Children's services, including chemical dependency coordination and case management
- Financial assistance for daycare
- Advocacy services to survivors of sexual assault
- Transportation for seniors
- Parenting support services
- Lake water patrol

Questions/comments can be directed to [info@co.blue-earth.mn.us](mailto:info@co.blue-earth.mn.us) or (507) 389-8286. More detailed information is available at [www.co.blue-earth.mn.us](http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us)

## Symposium is a Milestone in Criminal Justice Planning Effort

By Katie Nerem Roth, Assistant to the Administrator

Criminal justice system officials came together in March for an all-day symposium with criminal justice consultant, David Bennett. Blue Earth County staff has been working with Bennett over the last eight months to collect important information about its criminal justice system.

"Criminal justice officials today are facing different challenges than those that existed 30 years ago—challenges that require new approaches," says Commissioner Al Bennett who chairs Blue Earth County's Justice Planning Committee. "Greater numbers of individuals with mental illnesses, drug users, drunk drivers, and persons charged with or convicted of domestic violence are now being held in local jails."

Other developments, such as mandatory sentencing laws, victims' rights, and recent state mandates, force county officials to make the most efficient use of limited jail space.

David Bennett said the County jail, which opened in 1973, has outlived its useful life. "Most facilities are built for a 30-year life cycle, and Blue Earth County's jail has fulfilled that role," said Bennett. "In addition to the lack of program space, the jail has an antiquated design that prevents inmates from being supervised adequately. This poses significant safety issues for inmates and staff who work there."



Blue Earth County hosted a symposium with consultant David Bennett as part of the criminal justice planning process. Members of the audience included state legislators John Dorn and Tony Cornish, and city and county officials.

Part of Bennett's analysis involved following a sample population of 300 offenders through the system—from arrest to adjudication—to determine court process times, the frequency of offenders who fail to appear for court, and rearrest rates. Bennett presented his analysis along with recommendations on how to improve Blue Earth County's criminal justice system. Some of Bennett's recommendations were to:

- Implement a full-scale pretrial service program where offenders are supervised, tracked, and monitored upon release from jail.
- Implement offender case management plans that include a continuum of sanctions including electronic home monitoring. When a declining continuum of sanctions is established, offenders can be moved up and down based on behavior.

Bennett said electronic monitoring is an opportunity to step offenders down to a lower and less costly sanction than jail.

- Re-examine the paradigm of "punishment" and increase use of the Sentence to Serve work program in lieu of jail time.
- Establish an "early case resolution program" that allows prosecutors and defenders to come to the same justice sooner; and establish a "case management program" to shorten the time it takes to adjudicate offenders.
- Establish a drug court. According to Bennett, this is the most promising concept used in changing offender behavior, and is a concept that can be used for alcohol-related offenses, as well. Bennett says drug court works because the offender is held accountable for his or her behaviors by appearing regularly before the drug court judge. If the offender's behaviors do not meet expectations, a sanction is immediately handed down. Bennett says this is where the current system fails. "It isn't the length of sentence that matters; instead, it is the certainty, swiftness, and immediacy of sanctions that effects offender behavior," said Bennett. "This is another reason why it's important to have a continuum of sanctions where offenders can be stepped up and down."

improved criminal justice system. "In order to keep offenders from re-offending, you need supervision, punishment, and programs that successfully reintegrate offenders back into the community," says Bennett.

The symposium with David Bennett was one of several milestones in the County's planning process. As a result of persistent jail crowding, county officials attended a week-long seminar at the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in April of 2001. NIC staff followed up with a visit to Blue Earth County and made two important recommendations, including the formation of the Justice Planning Committee and the collection of key jail data. Blue Earth County's Justice Planning Committee has been meeting since May of last year, and will be responsible for initiating Bennett's recommendations.

David Bennett uses the three-legged stool analogy when he talks about an

## MEET YOUR NEW Commissioners

In January, Katy Wortel and Kip Bruender began serving Blue Earth County as County Commissioners.

### **Katy Wortel** Blue Earth County Commissioner, District 3

Katy Wortel and her husband, David, live on a small farm on Pohl Road in Mankato Township where they raise pumpkins, tomatoes and other vegetables for sale at home and Mankato Farmers Market. She has been an active volunteer with a variety of agricultural and environmental groups,

including Mankato Area Growers Association, South Central Sustainable Farmers Association, Mankato Area Environmentalists (originally Mankato Citizens Concerned with Preserving Environmental Quality) that she helped co-found, and the Minnesota Earth Sabbath Team, a group encouraging area churches to be more river-friendly. Wortel graduated from Mankato State University in 1974 with a degree in corrections and psychology.



### **Kip Bruender** Blue Earth County Commissioner, District 5

Kip Bruender, a lifelong Eagle Lake resident, is employed at Gene's Repair, a family-owned business in Eagle Lake. Bruender and his wife, Kim, have three children: Coty, Tyler and Brooke. He has been active in Relay for Life, a local fundraiser for cancer and Walk for Leukemia, held at the Mall of America. Prior to becoming County Commissioner, Bruender was the past mayor of Eagle Lake. As mayor, he was the President of Mayors and Clerks and was on the Region Nine Development Commission Board of Directors, along with the Planning and Zoning Board for Blue Earth County. Bruender was also a presenter at the League of Minnesota Cities on how to get community involvement in local government.



### **SHIRLEY DOERING NAMED MFBF EXTENSION EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR**

By Kent Theisse, Blue Earth County Extension Director

Shirley Doering, Regional Extension Educator for 4-H and Youth Development in Blue Earth and Faribault counties, was named Extension Educator of the Year by the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF).

"For years Shirley has shown her dedication to Extension through her hard work," said Blue Earth County Commissioner and Extension Committee Member Tom McLaughlin. "To say she is a deserving recipient of this recognition would be an understatement." Doering has worked for the University of Minnesota Extension Service for 17 years.

Citizens interested in 4-H or Extension Youth Development can contact Shirley Doering at the Blue Earth County Extension Office in the Government Center at 507-389-8325.



Shirley Doering, 2002 Extension Educator of the Year

**LANDFILL WILL RECEIVE TECHNOLOGY**

*Upgrade*

By Scott Fichtner, Environmental Services Director

Blue Earth County participates in an integrated waste management system to encourage best practices in waste reduction and disposal. The integrated system promotes waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and resource recovery. That means some of our trash is processed for use as a fuel to generate electricity. The residuals that are left must be placed in a landfill. Ideally, there would be no waste to manage, but until we get to that point, landfills are needed. Proper management of landfills is vital to protect the environment, and human health.

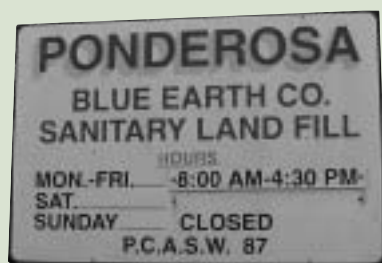
Every landfill produces gas as a bi-product of decomposition of garbage, potentially affecting the earth's atmosphere. Landfill gas (LFG) is half methane, and half carbon dioxide and other gases. Although small by industry standards, the Blue Earth County-owned Ponderosa Landfill is no different from other landfills when it comes to production of LFG.

Managing LFG properly is essential to minimizing the environmental impact of a landfill. Blue Earth County is implementing new technology at the Ponderosa this year to improve LFG management. The new system will not only increase protection of the environment, but will also raise the possibility that LFG can be captured for use as a fuel.

With this upgrade, called an "active LFG system," gas will be pulled from a closed section of the landfill with a vacuum. The current system, called a "passive LFG system," releases LFG through a cap where it is burned off by solar-operated flares.

When the active LFG system is operational, LFG production will be measured. If sufficient LFG is extracted, it may be used to power on-site equipment. As production is studied, it may also be found there is sufficient LFG to interest buyers who may use it as a resource.

Blue Earth County is determined to provide sufficient landfill space well into the future, using the most environmentally efficient methods possible. Installing an active gas management system is the next step in this process.



# The Effects of the 2001 Tax Bill on Property Taxes

By Katie Nerem Roth, Assistant to the Administrator

If all the usual variables affecting property taxes were held constant—a 0-percent levy increase, no market value changes, and no new construction in the County—residential property taxes would still increase in 2003 because of class-rate reductions implemented in the 2001 tax bill. In addition to class-rate reductions, other complex provisions enacted by the 2001 legislature are also in motion.

• **"Class" rate changes**

Class rates determine the percent of a property's value subject to the local tax rate. For comparable-valued properties subject to equivalent tax rates, the higher your class rate the more tax you pay. Currently, class rates range from .45 percent to 2 percent. Class-rate reductions included in the 2001 tax bill have 2 years of phase-in remaining. Apartment tax capacity rates were reduced from 1.8 percent to 1.5 percent for 2003—and will be further reduced to 1.25 percent in 2004—and duplexes/triplexes were reduced from 1.5 percent to 1.25 percent. For reasons not easily explained, the reduction of these rates "shifts" or increases the tax for other classes of property, such as owner-occupied residences or "homesteads."

• **Variable market value increases**

Compounding the class rate changes is the fact that homestead property appreciated at a greater rate than apartments, commercial-industrial property, and agricultural land. This further increased the tax burden for homesteads. Rising home values can be attributed to the record-low interest rates and increased market demand for residential property.

• **Limited market value ceiling phased out**

The phase-out of the limited market value ceiling or "cap" that previously restrained value increases is another provision of the 2001 tax bill that further compounds homestead property tax increases independent of any levy increases. The phase-out of the limited market value cap is demonstrated in the table below. The market value is held constant to demonstrate the effects of the phase-out on taxable value.

If the old limited market value cap remained in place the home's taxable value would have increased at a much slower rate, restraining tax increases caused by variable market value increases.

• **New Statewide Tax on Cabins and Business Property**

Also enacted in 2001, a new statewide tax on cabins and business property was tied to inflation and increased only slightly last year.

• **Shift in K-12 funding from the property tax to the state budget**

Part of the philosophy behind the 2001 tax change was to take the Legislature out of decisions about local property taxes, especially school taxes, and leave those choices to local officials and voters. In 2001, the state took over K-12 funding, so the K-12 portion of the property tax shrunk. However, local voters were allowed to decide for themselves if K-12 funding should increase through referendum, which several jurisdictions did, effectively adding K-12 operating levies back on the property tax.

• **Mechanics of new homestead credit**

The new homestead credit enacted by the 2001 Legislature was intended to offset the shift of the property tax burden on to homeowners. The homestead credit is a state-paid portion of your property tax bill and can be found on line 5a., "Credits paid by the state of Minnesota to reduce your property tax," of your property tax statement. The tax bill provided that the homestead credit declines for market values greater than \$76,000. The closer you get to a \$500,000 value, the more your credit diminishes.

For example, a \$76,000 home that increases in value to \$83,600 would see the follow homestead credit change:

2002	\$76,000	\$304 homestead credit
2003	\$83,600	\$297 homestead credit *

\* A \$7 credit reduction, which equates to a \$7 tax increase.

Year Taxes Payable	Market Value	Taxable Value	Taxable Value Increase
2002	\$100,000		
2003	\$135,000	\$110,000	10% taxable value increase is applied, or 15% of the difference (whichever is greater)
2004		\$121,000	12% taxable value increase is applied, or 20% of the difference (whichever is greater)
2005		\$133,100	15% taxable value increase is applied, or 25% of the difference (whichever is greater)
2006		\$135,000	15% taxable value increase is applied, or 33% of the difference (whichever is greater)
2007		\$135,000	15% taxable value increase is applied, or 50% of the difference (whichever is greater)
2008		\$135,000	Full increase in value is applied for taxable value.

## Park Project Dependent on State and Private Funding

By Christine Thompson, Public Information Specialist

Blue Earth County is pursuing both private and State funds to secure what some are calling a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity. The opportunity is the purchase of land along the Blue Earth River near the Rapidan Dam. The land would be used to develop a new County park on "some of the most natural and scenic land in southern Minnesota," says Al Forsberg, Public Works Director and County Engineer.



The purchase of land in Rapidan would provide county residents with new recreational opportunities and a preserved scenic corridor along the Blue Earth River.

Blue Earth County would use \$50,000 from its park reserve fund to purchase the property as long as the County is able to secure a Minnesota Department of Revenue Scenic Land Grant for \$100,000, and raise \$50,000 in private donations.

The land, located 10 miles south of Mankato, has tremendous natural resource and recreational potential, according to Forsberg. If the property is acquired by the County, part of the land will be

used as a canoe launch and the rest will remain as undeveloped conservation land. The access to the Blue Earth River will allow for fishing, hiking and primitive camping. Forsberg compares the land's potential to Schimek and Wildwood County parks.

"In the past, this land has been operated as a private facility, with an access fee," said Forsberg. "If the land is not acquired, the current owner plans on developing the land as two private rural residential sites. It would no longer be available for public use."

The park would provide a unique connection between the current Rapidan Dam County Park and the Red Jacket Trail. For more information contact Al Forsberg, Public Works Director, at 625-3281.

### NEW MINNESOTA LICENSE PLATE FOR VETERANS

By Gary Evenson, Director of Veterans Services

Minnesota veterans now have the opportunity to purchase a special license plate and donate to the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund at the same time. A special plate application is now available at the Blue Earth County License Center.

To be eligible to purchase the plates, interested persons must have participated in active military service in a branch of the United States Armed Forces and have received an honorable discharge. There is no restriction regarding dates of service.

Purchase of the new Veteran plates requires a

one-time \$30 contribution to the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund, a \$10 plate fee and a \$7 filing fee. Applicants need to provide a certified copy of discharge or DD 214 at the time of application.



When Veterans purchase the new license plate design, a donation is made to the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund.

## LANDKAMER RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC Leadership Award

Blue Earth County Commissioner Colleen Landkamer is the 2003 recipient of the Center for Transportation Studies Distinguished Public Leadership Award. The award was established in 1998 to recognize public leaders who have influenced innovative transportation policy directives that benefit society through vision, leadership and knowledge.

The CTS Executive Committee recognized Landkamer's long-time leadership in transportation, representing local government and outstate interests in both Minnesota and national initiatives. Landkamer has played a critical role in supporting transportation projects through her involvement on the AMC Board of Directors, MN Transportation Alliance Board of Directors, Highway 14 Partnership Committee, as past AMC President, and as past National Association of Counties Rural Action Caucus Chair.

Landkamer was presented with the award at the CTS Annual Meeting on April 15 at the Radisson Hotel Metrodome.

### ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

#### Recycling Center

741 Waseca Avenue, LeHillier  
(3 blocks south of US Highway 169)  
Phone: (507) 345-4255  
Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.;  
Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
24-hour drop-off collection site available

#### Compost Site

700 Summit Avenue, Mankato  
Phone: (507) 388-3122  
Summer Hours (April 1 – November 15):  
Mon.-Sat., 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sun. 1 to 6 p.m.

#### Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility

651 Summit Avenue, Mankato  
Phone: (507) 389-8381  
Open through October  
Tuesday – Noon to 6 p.m.  
Second Saturday of each month – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For a more detailed list of accepted materials go to [www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/dept/hhw.php3](http://www.co.blue-earth.mn.us/dept/hhw.php3) or call Blue Earth County Environmental Services at 389-8381.

**BLUE EARTH COUNTY**

*Fun facts*



*The County Board of Commissioners has met in the Blue Earth County Courthouse since its completion in 1889.*

- Grasshoppers plagued the county in the summer of 1873 and ate everything, especially wheat. People compared the sound of the swarming locust to a prairie fire. From 1873 to 1875 farmers tried everything to get rid of the grasshoppers. County Commissioners took action by paying a bounty for the grasshoppers. On June 3, 1875, the county board passed a resolution to pay 10 cents per quart of grasshoppers and within three days more than 4,000 bushels were turned in and the county had to pay \$14,000 in bounties. By June 11, the Commissioners had to revoke the bounty. An estimated 170,000 insects filled each bushel. It wasn't until August of 1877 that the locusts seemed to disappear. (Source: The Heritage of Blue Earth County, by Julie Schrader, Mankato.)
- The first Blue Earth County election was held in October of 1853, and resulted in the polling of 18 votes. J.S. Babcock, Ephriam Cole and Jacob Guenther were elected as county commissioners, comprising the first elective board. At the first meeting it was resolved that "the county seat for Blue Earth County be, and hereby is, located at Mankato." In 1855, 86 votes were cast; in 1856, 216, and in 1857, 1,131. The census for the year 1857 gave a population of 3,629. (Source: The Heritage of Blue Earth County, by Julie Schrader, Mankato.)
- According to the 1880 U.S. Census, the Blue Earth County jail held six prisoners; four were men and two were women. The men listed their occupations as a professional thief, a harness maker, a farmer and a carpenter. The women's occupations were listed as a prostitute and a housekeeper. The jailer, Peter Schweitzer, and his family lived at the jail, along with two servants and a deputy jailer. The jail was located on the Court House Square between Fourth and Fifth streets. (Source: Census reveals neighborhood settlement patterns, by Teresa McLaughlin, Mankato.)

**Commemoration Concert  
on the Courthouse Lawn**

**6 p.m., July 1, 2003**

**Blue Earth County Courthouse Lawn  
204 South 5th Street, Mankato**

**Mankato Community Band  
Performance at 7:30 p.m.**



**Bring the whole family for food, face painting, fun and festive music in commemoration of Blue Earth County's 150th Anniversary.**

As the year of the Mankato Area Sesquicentennial comes to an end, another important milestone is here. Soon after the settlement of Mankato, Blue Earth County's official lines were drawn and ratified by the Minnesota Legislature on March 5, 1853.

**Courthouse Controversy Lasted  
Over 35 Years**

The settlement of Blue Earth County dates from 1852, when P.K. Johnson and Henry Jackson located at Mankato. The act creating Blue Earth County was approved by the legislature on March 5th of 1853. Garden City residents felt the courthouse should be located in Garden City because of the town's central location; however, Mankato residents were successful in locating the courthouse in Mankato, since it was the first community settled in the County.



construction. At least two-thirds of outlying towns passed resolutions decrying the act. One group brought an injunction suit against the commissioners to stop construction. A judge ruled the county could contract a maximum \$23,000 of the work and pass smaller levies each year to complete the project.

Commissioners had to go to the Legislature again, and this time received approval to issue \$30,000 in bonds.

Since the courthouse was nearly complete, voters approved the bonds, but only by 53 votes.

By 1888, the outside of the courthouse was finished, but there weren't enough funds to complete the inside. Commissioners had used up their levy and their bonds.

The courthouse was finally completed in October of 1889--30 years after the land was initially surveyed. The \$123,000 that it took to construct the courthouse was \$50,000 over the original projection.

Officials decided to forgo the dedication ceremony of the courthouse because of the controversial process it took to complete its construction. The courthouse was finally dedicated in 1988, almost 100 hundred years after its completion.

Source: *The Great Courthouse Debate*, by Shelley Crowes, *Mankato Free Press*

Although the County was poor and sparsely populated, land was surveyed for a courthouse in 1854. The land sat untouched for two years, aside from some Mankato residents who used the space to pen their livestock. A small courthouse was eventually erected in 1857, but it didn't reach commissioners' expectations.

In 1867, the Legislature authorized commissioners to issue \$75,000 in bonds for a new courthouse, which required the approval of voters. Because of lingering disagreement over the courthouse's location, the bonds were defeated 1,907 to 1,799. Only two of the opposition votes were cast within the city of Mankato, and in Garden City, only five of 131 votes cast were for the project.

Instead of the bonds, the commissioners disregarded the opposition and passed a levy to move forward with

# Coughlan Companies Provides Support for Summer Reading Success

By Christine R. Thompson, Public Information Specialist

"Every child should have access to quality books. It's just the right thing to do." That's the humble attitude of Bill Coughlan, Senior Vice President of Coughlan Companies, Inc., when it comes to donating to the Blue Earth County Library.

Coughlan Companies is comprised of Capstone Press, Picture Window Books, Compass Point Books, Mankato Screw Products and Mankato-Kasota Stone, Inc. Every year Coughlan Companies donates a new set of books to the Blue Earth County Library from each of its publishing companies.

"It's a phenomenal gift. The collections of books we've received from Coughlan Companies range from resource books to fun fiction," said Kathie Kading, Assistant Director of the Blue Earth County Library. Since the organization of the Blue Earth County Library in 2000, Coughlan Companies has donated over \$40,000 in books to the Library. Coughlan Companies also donates books to every school in Mankato and North Mankato, the North Mankato Library, and the United Way. But Coughlan Companies doesn't just stop at books; it is the largest sponsor of the Blue Earth County Library Summer Reading Program.

Coughlan Companies' \$8,000 donation will help

fund "Explore Bright Ideas," this year's theme for the program. "Explore Bright Ideas," which runs June 9 through August 9, includes field trips, entertainment, and prizes to keep youth reading all summer long.



"Instilling a love of reading is something that can't be taught, it's the magic that happens when the right book reaches the hands of a reader," said Coughlan. "The Blue Earth County Library's reading program is a wonderful resource to keep children actively reading throughout the summer."

Donating books, money and time has proved to be a win-win situation for Coughlan Companies. Not only do they have the satisfaction of helping people read, they also get feedback about their products from librarians, and the most important customer of all—children.

Along with Coughlan Companies, several other businesses and organizations have stepped up to the plate, including, the Minnesota Twins, who donated 1,300 game tickets and a slew of hats, jerseys and bobble heads this year. For more information about this summer's reading program contact Kathie Kading at 387-1856, ext. 238.



## 2003 Bookmark Contest Winners

Over 800 area students, ages preschool through 12th grade, entered Blue Earth County Library's fourth-annual bookmark contest co-sponsored by Paragon Printing and Mailing and the Creative Company. First-place designs were professionally printed and are being distributed at all Blue Earth County libraries.

### Preschool & Kindergarten Category

- 1st Place** – Calvin Christianson (K), Hoover
- 2nd Place Tie** – Noah Bjork (K), Jefferson; Ella Barnes (K), Jefferson
- 3rd Place** – Jade Baker (Preschool), ECFE

### 1st-2nd Grade Category

- 1st Place** – Ben Larson (2nd Grade), Maple River Central
- 2nd Place Tie** – Matt Hughes (1st Grade), LCWM; Jake Bjork (2nd Grade), Jefferson
- 3rd Place Tie** – Tanner Thiesse (2nd Grade), Maple River East; Andrea Thomas (2nd Grade), Jefferson

### 3rd-5th Grade Category

- 1st Place** – Ted Staley (4th Grade), Maple River East
- 2nd Place Tie** – Cody Tibbetts (4th Grade), LCWM; Lexi Emery (5th Grade), Franklin; Ashley



Bookmark design by Megan Nesius, Mankato West

- Steinberg (5th Grade), Maple River West
- 3rd Place Tie** – Nick Kruger (4th Grade), Maple River East; Evy Claussen (4th Grade), Jefferson

### 6th-8th Grade Category

- 1st Place Tie** – Nicole Frisk (8th Grade), Dakota Meadows; Bethany Van Natta (8th Grade), Dakota Meadows
- 2nd Place Tie** – Laura Marti (7th Grade), Fitzgerald; Angela Frisk (7th Grade), Dakota Meadows; Christopher Marlatt (7th Grade), Mankato East
- 3rd Place Tie** – Laura Fitzsimmons (7th Grade), Maple River West; Lacy Standon (7th Grade), Mankato East

### 9th-12th Grade Category

- 1st Place Tie** – Megan Nesius (10th Grade), Mankato West; Allie Palmer (11th Grade), Mankato West
- 2nd Place Tie** – Charlotte Leitzman (9th Grade), Mankato West; Jon Eppard (10th Grade), Mankato West; Dinah Langsjoen (10th Grade), Mankato West
- 3rd Place Tie** – Teresa Stevens (12th Grade), Mankato West; Melissa Finch (10th Grade), Mankato West; Tracci Nelson, (11th Grade), Mankato West; Elysse Kunkel, (12th Grade), Mankato West

## IMPORTANT Library Info

**BLUE EARTH COUNTY LIBRARY**  
100 E. Main St., Mankato  
www.beclibrary.org  
Phone: (507) 387-1856

**HOURS**  
Mon. & Tues.: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.  
Wed.-Sat.: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
\*Sun.: 1-5 p.m.  
\*Closes June 8 & Reopens September 7

**STORY TIME**  
10 a.m. Tuesdays  
10 a.m. Wednesdays  
10 a.m. Thursdays

**LAKE CRYSTAL PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
100 Robinson St., Lake Crystal  
Phone: (507) 726-2726

**HOURS**  
Mon. & Thurs.: 1-5:30 p.m.  
Tues.: noon-5:30 p.m.  
Wed.: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.  
Fri.: 9:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.  
Sat.: 9:30 a.m.-noon p.m.

**MAPLETON PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
104 First Ave., Mapleton  
Phone: (507) 524-3513

**HOURS**  
Tues. & Thurs.: 1-5 p.m.  
Wed.: 10 a.m.-noon;  
1-5 p.m.; 6-8 p.m.  
Fri.: 1-5 p.m.; 6-8 p.m.  
Sat.: 10 a.m.-noon

**STORY TIME & CRAFTS**  
10:30 a.m. Saturdays

The Library does not provide supervision for children after closing time. For the safety of your child, please make arrangements to pick up your child from the Library by closing time. The Library appreciates your cooperation.

## DUST CONTROL NOTICE

The Blue Earth County Public Works Department will apply calcium chloride to gravel roads in the County for dust control this summer. One will be applied the last week of May, and one the first week of August. No guarantee is made for the performance of the material, but it has been used in past years with good success.

### To request calcium chloride applications:

1. Mail your request to Blue Earth County Public Works Department, PO Box 3083, Mankato, Minnesota, 56002-3083.
2. State the number of feet requested and location (i.e. County road number or section and township).
3. Include your telephone number.

### For soybean soap stock applications:

1. Contact the Blue Earth County Public Works Department for information on soybean oil distributors.

Call (507) 625-3281 with questions or for more information.



## 2003 SUMMER/FALL ROAD CONSTRUCTION

### Grading Projects

- CSAH 82 – Raintree Road to Adams Street
- CSAH 20 – TH 60 to TWP 184
- CSAH 43 – Intersection with TH 83 at St. Clair
- CSAH 26 – CSAH 12 to Madison Lake
- CR 114 – TH 60 to TH 68

### Maintenance Overlay Projects

- CSAH 13 – West County Line to TH 169
- CSAH 15 – St. Clair to East County Line
- CR 112 – TH 60 to CSAH 11
- CR 125 – CSAH 13 to CR 129
- CR 129 – TH 169 to CR 125 Lake George Parking Lot

### Bridge Projects

- CSAH 20 – Over Minneopa Creek
- CSAH 33 – Over Blue Earth River (Jones Ford Bridge)
- CSAH 33 – Over Red Jacket Trail
- CSAH 82 – Over Thompson Ravine

## Progress Continues on the Victory Drive Extension Project

By Alan Forsberg, Blue Earth County Public Works Director

The goal of the Victory Drive Extension project is to provide a minor arterial roadway between TH 14 at CSAH 3 to Victory Drive at Fair Street. The extension would provide a much-needed north/south arterial between TH 22 and Riverfront Drive; relieve traffic congestion in the River Hills Mall regional commercial area; and encourage planned "infill" economic growth in the area north of Madison East Shopping Center.

Because of the size and cost of the project, it is being constructed in three stages. The first stage, consisting of the interchange with TH 14 and connection to River Hills Mall, is complete and open to traffic. The second stage, including a new bridge across Thompson Ravine, will run south to Holly Lane on the east side of Madison East Shopping Center. This stage is scheduled for completion this fall. The third stage will link Holly Lane with Victory Drive at Fair Street via a new curve, but is not programmed for construction because of federal funding needed.

The project will include two lanes in each direction, a center left-turn lane, a sidewalk on one side and trail on the other.

The project is a partnership effort of Blue Earth County, the City of Mankato, MnDot and the private sector.



The second stage of the Victory Drive Extension, which includes a bridge across Thompson Ravine, will run south to Holly Lane on the east side of Madison East Shopping Center.

**Stage 1: Complete**

**Stage 2: In Progress**

**Stage 3: Federal Funding Needed**

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT HONORED IN ENGINEERING COMPETITION

The Blue Earth County Public Works Department received the 2003 Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers Seven Wonders of Engineering Award for its efforts in the emergency stabilization of the Rapidan Dam.

The Rapidan Dam, an 82-foot-high dam built in 1910, is located on the Blue Earth River near Mankato. In early 2002, severe scouring beneath the dam threatened to cause failure. At the request of Blue Earth County and the State of Minnesota, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers initiated emergency stabilization procedures. Within seven days, a multi-agency team planned, designed and implemented a solution. The solution consisted of a rock cofferdam, and the pumping of concrete beneath the dam to support the buttresses. The



cooperative efforts of many agencies and organizations allowed the County, with the assistance of the Corps, to effectively complete the emergency stabilization, assure public safety and formulate a long-term solution to the dam in a safe and orderly fashion.

Al Forsberg, Blue Earth County Public Works Director, displays the 2003 Minnesota Society of Professional Engineers Seven Wonders of Engineering Award.



Cooperation and organization of efforts allowed for the successful emergency stabilization of the Rapidan Dam.

## Poster Sales Benefit Red Jacket Trail

By Dean Ehlers, Park Supervisor

With the support of Marian Anderson, local businesses and citizens who enjoy the Red Jacket Trail, the Blue Earth County Public Works Department launched a fundraiser in November to improve Weagel Park, located along the Red Jacket Trail.

Mankato artist Marian Anderson has completed an oil painting, "The Red Jacket Trail." Blue Earth County will use proceeds from poster sales to improve Weagel Park on Indian Lake Road. The new improvements will include a picnic shelter, tree and grass plantings, and a hard-surfaced parking lot. Parks located along the trail are important because they increase trail access and convenience through parking, rest and recreational areas. Improvements to Weagel Park are slated to begin this summer.



"The Red Jacket Trail" by Marian Anderson

Posters are on sale at the following locations for \$10: Get Your Gear, A-1 Bike Shop, The Peddler of Rapidan, Nicollet South Bike Shop, Hang Ups, Deck the Walls, Artisan Gallery at Quality 1-Hr. Foto, Blue Earth County Public Works Department and Blue Earth County Courthouse.

**Thank you for your support!**

**Major Contributors:**

SUBWAY  
DONALD & VIOLA HOLBROOK  
JOHN & CAROLYN KANYUSIK  
CURT AND DEBBIE FISHER  
PERRY & BARBARA WOOD  
MANKATO CLINIC FOUNDATION  
I&S ENGINEERING

**Other Contributors:**

FISHER GROUP  
JOHN & BARBARA HARMER  
ROBERT & PATRICE JOHNSON  
NICOLLET SOUTH BIKE SHOP  
DAVID SALSBERY  
JOHN & ANN CHRISTENSON  
THOMAS & ESTHER MARKS  
LINDA VAN SLYKE  
VANYO & ANN MOODY  
KEN & MARY JO SUPRENANT  
EDDICE BARBER  
STEVE PENKUS  
HARLAN & JUDITH BERGER  
JOHN & ANGELA GAPPA  
DUAYNE & DOROTHY ERDMAN  
GENE BIEWEN



Healthy Lifestyles  
Healthy Communities  
Healthy Youth

## PROPERTY TAX *Drop-Off Sites*

Citizens can mail or deliver property tax payments directly to the Blue Earth County Taxpayer Services Department, 410 Jackson St., Mankato, or may use any of these convenient drop-off locations:

- Taxpayer Services  
24-hour drop box,  
5th Street entrance
- Cub Foods, 1800  
Madison Avenue,  
Mankato
- Downtown Hy-Vee, Mankato
- Community Bank, Amboy & Vernon Center
- MinnStar Bank, Lake Crystal & Good Thunder
- Peoples State Bank, Madison Lake
- Pioneer Bank, Mapleton
- St. Clair State Bank, St. Clair



Bank locations are accessible during the operating hours for that particular bank.

## Thank You!

To these Blue Earth County Employees for their years of dedicated service as of December 31, 2002.

**Years of Service Awards**

Lisa M. Alitz  
Kenneth R. Frederick  
Larry L. LaPoint

Amy E. Smith  
Maureen R. Sop  
Jennifer L. Roemhildt

Paul C. Bogenschutz  
Nancy L. Braun  
Donald E. Freid  
Gerald T. Haley  
Bonnie K. Kalis-Frisk  
Lester E. Lear  
Michael J. Miller

Sara A. Perrino  
Ramona M. Raberge  
Alan K. Roseberry  
Mary A. Schroeder  
Douglas E. Sinclair  
Dixie J. Smith  
Elizabeth D. Wallen  
Karen S. Myers

Marjorie E. Beeman  
Royce W. Kilmer

Ronald C. Rohn

Valerie J. Baumgard  
Mary J. Claeys  
Gene G. Dalluge

Diane M. Telshaw  
Karen A. Zingmark

Daniel P. Sohler

### Summer Activities at Blue Earth County Parks!



	Tent Camping Sites	Mobile Camping Sites	Electrical Hook-ups	Bathhouse	Boat Launch	Canoe Rental	Dump Station	Fishing	Interpretive Center/Log Cabin	Nature Trail	Paddleboat Rental	Picnic Shelters	Picnic Tables	Playground	Swim Beach	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Restrooms
Bray Park (98 acres)	10	33	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Daly Park (126 acres)	15	71	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Duck Lake Park (26 acres)				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lake George Park (4.2 acres)				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rapidan Park (3.4 acres)								•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Red Jacket Trail Park (4 acres)					•							•	•					•
Williams Nature Center (65 acres)									•	•								•

### Camping Reservations

Camping reservation systems are available at Bray and Daly Parks. Reservations are taken by phone or in person at the park for which the reservation is requested. Park personnel will take reservations from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. A deposit is required to hold each camping site.

Daly Park: 11056 571st Lane  
Mapleton, MN 56065  
(507) 524-3000

Bray Park: 22214 Oriole Rd.  
Madison Lake, MN 56063  
(507) 243-3885

**REGIONAL HEALTH PROFILE**

*Survey Results*

By Erin Simmons, Community Health Educator

The 2002 Regional Health Profile health behavior survey was designed to monitor health status, identify health problems and establish health promotion priorities in 27 counties in south-central and southwestern Minnesota. The survey was a joint effort by 27 county public health agencies and 33 other organizations.

	<i>Blue Earth Region County</i>	
<b>No Health Coverage</b>	12%	6.6%
<b>(ages 18 to 34) One or More Occasions of Binge Drinking in the Last Month</b>	51.5%	41 %
<b>Five or More Servings of Fruits and Veggies the Day Before</b>	30.9%	2%
<b>Vigorous Exercise 20 Min. or More, Three or More Times a Week</b>	23%	20.2%
<b>Wear a Seatbelt All of the Time in a Motor Vehicle</b>	70.7%	62.4%
<b>Never Wear Helmets when Riding Bicycles, Motorcycles, Snowmobiles or All-Terrain Vehicles</b>	24%	27.9%
<b>Have Had a Cholesterol Check in the Previous Year</b>	41%	51%

For more information or to obtain copies of the complete survey results, contact Erin Simmons, Community Health Educator, at 389-8202.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH  
PLANNING IN PROGRESS**

Blue Earth County Community Health is seeking input from Blue Earth County citizens as it develops its 2004-2007 Community Health Service (CHS) plan. A new CHS plan is required every four years by the Minnesota Department of Health. The plan must be completed by October 2003.

For more information, contact Amy Smith, Community Health Planner, at (507) 389-8411 or amy.smith@co.blue-earth.mn.us

**Implementing the Federal Smallpox  
Response Plan at a Local Level**

By Kerry Paarmann, Community Health Supervisor

Recently, President Bush announced a plan to better protect the American people against the threat of smallpox. It is important for people to have information about smallpox and the efforts being made to protect citizens.

Smallpox is a serious, contagious and sometimes fatal infectious disease. There is no specific treatment for smallpox disease; however it is highly preventable with vaccination. Smallpox outbreaks have occurred from time to time for thousands of years, but the disease is now eliminated after a successful worldwide vaccination program. The last case of smallpox in the United States was in 1949. The last naturally occurring case in the world was in Somalia in 1977. After the disease was eliminated from the world, routine vaccination against smallpox among the general population was stopped because it was no longer necessary for prevention.

In the aftermath of the terrorist events in 2001, there is heightened concern that the smallpox virus might be used as an agent of bioterrorism. For this reason, a nationwide smallpox response plan has been designed to assure quick vaccination and containment of people infected during a smallpox outbreak.

This plan includes the creation of smallpox health care teams that would respond to a smallpox emergency. Members of these teams are being vaccinated against smallpox. The plan also includes vaccination of certain military and civilian personnel who may be required to work in high-threat areas. Finally, the U.S. government has ordered production of enough smallpox vaccine to immunize the American public in the event of an outbreak. The smallpox vaccination program is

voluntary; no one will be required to get the vaccine.

The smallpox vaccine helps the body develop immunity to the smallpox virus, but is effective for only three to five years. Persons who received the vaccine previously should assume they have little or no immunity to smallpox today.



*Blue Earth County Public Health Nurse, Donna Johnson, receives a smallpox inoculation from Mary Rippke, Public Health Preparedness Planner.*

The federal government is not recommending the general public be vaccinated during the initial phase of this plan. The vaccine can cause serious, potentially fatal reactions in some people; so the benefits of vaccination need to be balanced against the risks. Unless someone does use the disease as a weapon, the risk of becoming ill with smallpox is zero. If a

smallpox attack did occur, people would still have time to get vaccinated, even after being exposed. Vaccinating some people in advance of an outbreak assures that those with critical jobs will be able to perform them during an outbreak. This includes doctors, nurses and ancillary personnel in hospitals where smallpox victims would receive care; public health personnel who vaccinate others and respond to an outbreak; and public safety officers.

Blue Earth County Public Health is working collaboratively with the Minnesota Department of Health, other public health agencies, hospitals, law enforcement and other important partners to implement the President's smallpox response plan at the local level.

For more information on smallpox go to [www.health.state.mn.us/smallpox](http://www.health.state.mn.us/smallpox) or [www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/index.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/index.asp) or contact Donna Johnson, Public Health Nurse at (507) 389-8177.

**PARENTS CAN HELP PREVENT UNDERAGE ALCOHOL USE**

By Amy Smith, Community Health Planner

With prom and graduation parties around the corner, there are many chances for teens to access alcohol. According to the 2001 Minnesota Student Survey, the top three ways teens in Blue Earth County get alcohol is through friends, through buyers and at parties.

Parents play a big role in their children's choice to drink alcohol. Research studies show teens' number-one reason for refusing to drink alcohol is worrying about what their parents will think.

**Tips for parents:**

- Never buy alcohol for your teen, their friends or anyone under age 21.

- Do not allow your teen to have parties with alcohol on your property.
- Tell your teen that it is against family rules for them to drink alcohol.
- Talk and listen to your child. Be honest with them about the impact of alcohol.
- If you chose to use alcohol, drink responsibly. Remember that you are your children's role model.
- Let law enforcement know about any establishments or people providing alcohol to minors.

For more information on preventing alcohol use and other risk behaviors in youth, contact Amy Smith, Community Health Planner, at (507) 389-8411 or amy.smith@co.blue-earth.mn.us

# THE PEOPLE *-serving you!*



**Colleen Landkamer, Vice Chair  
District 1 Commissioner**  
349 Parry St., Mankato  
345-4444 (H) / 389-8283 (O)  
colleen.landkamer@co.blue-earth.mn.us



**Tom McLaughlin  
District 2 Commissioner**  
1129 Broad St., Mankato  
388-7647 (H) / 389-8282 (O)  
tc\_mclaughlin@hotmail.com



**Katy Wortel  
District 3 Commissioner**  
1411 Pohl Road, Mankato  
345-4494 (H)  
katy.wortel@co.blue-earth.mn.us



**Al Bennett, Chair  
District 4 Commissioner**  
48098 State Hwy. 60, Lake Crystal  
726-2158 (H)  
al.bennett@co.blue-earth.mn.us



**Kip Bruender  
District 5 Commissioner**  
204 Joan Lane, Eagle Lake  
257-3561 (H)  
kip.bruender@co.blue-earth.mn.us



**Brad Peterson, Sheriff**  
Law Enforcement Center  
710 S. Front St.  
Mankato, MN 56002-0228  
387-8711  
brad.peterson@co.blue-earth.mn.us



**Ross Arneson, County Attorney**  
Blue Earth County Gov. Center  
410 S. Fifth St.  
Mankato, MN 56002-3129  
389-8352



**Dennis McCoy, County Administrator**  
Blue Earth County Courthouse  
204 S. Fifth St.  
Mankato, MN 56002-8608  
389-8284  
dennis.mccoy@co.blue-earth.mn.us

## Board Information

The Blue Earth County Board generally meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month in the Boardroom at the Blue Earth County Courthouse, 204 S. Fifth St., Mankato.

Citizens who wish to address the Board of Commissioners at a meeting must contact the County Administrator at 389-8235 before noon Thursday preceding the Board meeting. This is needed to manage the Board's schedule. The Board will not take action at the time of the presentation, but will direct County staff to respond appropriately to issues raised by citizens.

## Blue Earth County Commissioner Districts



## Write Now!

WRITE & TELL US WHAT YOU THINK.

The Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners and other officials are committed to providing quality service to our residents. Responding to your concerns and needs is a priority.

Please fill out the information below and leave it with a receptionist at any County office, or mail it at your convenience to the **Blue Earth County Public Information Office, P.O. Box 8608, Mankato, MN 56002-8608.**

With which County department did you have contact?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please Evaluate:	Excellent	Good	Poor
Courtesy of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knowledge of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timeliness of service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value of service provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I would like County officials to know:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I would like a County representative to contact me about the following service or concern:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have a suggestion:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you want us to respond to your comments:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate your comments so we can serve you better!**

# SERVICE DIRECTORY



## **County Government Center 410 S. Fifth St., Mankato**

### **Taxpayer Services - License Center/Elections**

#### **Lower Level, 389-8340**

Driver's licenses  
Motor vehicle/Boat registration  
Fishing/Hunting licenses  
Birth/Death certificates  
Marriage licenses  
Passports  
Voter registration/Absentee ballots  
Filing of notaries

### **Veterans Service**

#### **Lower Level, 389-8246**

Federal and State benefits  
Transportation to VA Hospital

### **Extension**

#### **Lower Level**

Agriculture, 389-8141  
Home economics, 389-8143  
4-H/youth development, 389-8142  
Horticulture, 389-8325

### **Information Technology**

#### **Lower Level, 389-8204**

### **Human Services**

#### **1st/2nd/3rd Floors**

Financial Assistance, 389-8335  
Social Services, 389-8319  
Community Health, 389-8319  
Mental Health Center, 389-8319  
Sexual Violence Resource Center, 389-8319  
South Central Children's Project, 389-8319

### **County Attorney**

#### **2nd Floor, 389-8352**

### **Environmental Services**

#### **3rd Floor, 389-8381**

Planning and Zoning  
Building and Feedlot Permits  
Shorelands/Flood plains  
Water wells/Septic systems/Wetlands  
Recycling Center/Compost Site/Landfill  
Household Hazardous Waste Center  
911/Rural Addressing



## **Nichols Building 410 Jackson St., Mankato**

### **Corrections**

#### **1st Floor, 344-3700**

Restitution/Restorative justice  
Adult & juvenile probation  
Diversion/Prevention

### **Taxpayer Services - Property Information**

#### **2nd Floor, 389-8251**

Property assessment and tax collection  
Abstracts/Certificates for registered land  
Mapping  
Ditch management



## **Public Works Department 35 Map Dr., Mankato**

### Roads and Bridges, 625-3281

Road/bridge construction & inspection  
Permits: Driveway, overweight/size loads, utility  
Culvert Sales  
Swing-away Mailbox Mounts  
Calcium chloride for dust control  
Park & Trail System, 625-3282  
Camping & shelter reservations  
Firewood sales & boat rental  
Agricultural Inspection, 625-3281  
Weed control & seed testing



## **Law Enforcement Center 710 S. Front St., Mankato**

County Sheriff, 387-8711  
Burning Permits, 387-8700  
Civil Process Office, 387-8717  
Request a Crime Report, 387-8706  
Report a Crime, 911



## **Courthouse 204 S. Fifth Street., Mankato**

### **Physical Plant/Safety**

#### **Lower Level, 389-8249**

### **Finance**

#### **Lower Level, 389-8181**

### **Administration**

#### **1st Floor**

Administration, 389-8284  
Personnel, 389-8288  
Public Information, 389-8491

### **5th Judicial District Court**

#### **1st/2nd/3rd Floors, 389-8310**

Traffic tickets  
Small claims court  
Civil and criminal court



## **Blue Earth County Library 100 E. Main St., Mankato 387-1856**

Children's Services, ext. 237  
Adult & Reference Services, ext. 248  
Fines & Renewals, ext. 285  
Equipment Rental, ext. 231  
Meeting Room Reservations, ext. 221  
Bookmobile, ext. 225  
Administration, ext. 221

## **OTHER COUNTY FACILITIES**

**Household Hazardous Waste Facility,  
651 Summit Ave., Mankato, 389-8381**

**Compost Site,  
700 Summit Ave., Mankato, 388-3122**

**Ponderosa Landfill,  
10028 Goosebury Lane, Mankato, 625-7301**

**Recycling Center,  
741 Waseca Ave., LePhillier, 345-4255**



## **Serving Citizens Through County Government**