

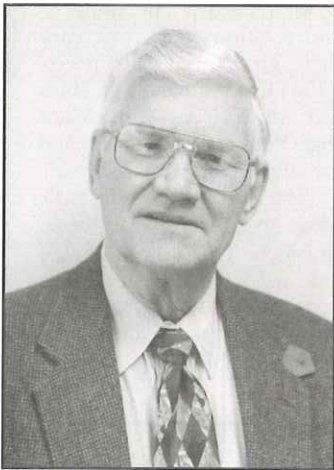
FREE
Take One

Polk County Newsletter

Spring 2003

Board bracing for impacts

Mattson is new chair; budget a big concern



Eugene 'Jeep' Mattson
County Board chair

Eugene "Jeep" Mattson, rural East Grand Forks, is chair of the County Board for 2003. He succeeded Warren Affeldt, rural Fosston, in that position as a part of the annual re-organization that occurred at the board's first meeting in January.

Mattson, who represents District 5, had been the vice chair in 2002. The commissioner from District 5, he was first elected in 1984. After serving three four-year terms (1985-1996), he did not seek re-election in the fall of 1996, but rejoined the Board in January 2001.

The new vice chair is Bill Montague, Crookston. Montague is the current chair of the Polk County Social Services Board. He will complete that duty in June with District 1 Commissioner Jerry Jacobson, Fertile, then slated to move into that position.

"The Board's greatest concern in 2003," Mattson says, "will involve how the state solves its budget problem. We know that there will be a significant impact locally with the governor proposing to shift many responsibilities to local governments — especially to the counties and cities.

The extent of that impact won't be known for some time yet, but the County Board and department heads are making preliminary plans about how to deal with it.

'New taxes,' too

"We on the County Board, along with our professional organizations, the Minnesota Association of Counties (AMC) and the Minnesota Rural Counties Caucus (MRCC)," Mattson says, "are making the point that reduced state funding to local governments to support mandated and other important services and

See BUDGET, Page 2

New attorney, sheriff are on the job

Widseth likes being in the courtroom

New Polk County attorney Greg Widseth likes being in the courtroom and plans to run his office so that is where he will spend a lot of his time.

"I'm loving it so far," he says of the position that he won in a race against Wayne Swanson in the November general election. "But I loved the office I left, too." That office was the Crookston law firm of Odland, Fitzgerald, Reynolds, Remick & Widseth. One of the partners' names has since been removed.

"I've inherited a great staff. They are really a good bunch of people... people who are



Co. Attorney Greg Widseth

invaluable because of all the things that they do. Having a staff like this makes my transition into the office so much easier," Widseth says.

Widseth plans to issue regu-

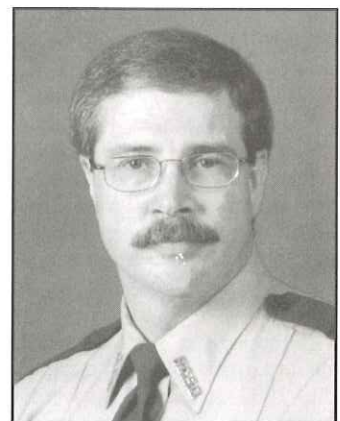
See WIDSETH, Page 2

Days going by way too fast for LeTexier

"Things are going well, but it's been a whirlwind," new Polk County Sheriff Mark LeTexier says. "The days are going by way too fast."

LeTexier, who defeated incumbent Sheriff Doug Qualley in November, took office in January and has been using the time since then to adjust to the new position and to implement some new practices.

"I attended the 'new sheriffs' school in January," he says. "It was the largest class ever with 39 new sheriffs out of the state's 87 counties. We spent a lot of time networking



Co. Sheriff Mark LeTexier

in the daylong sessions and we had a lot of speakers on subjects ranging from ethics in both your professional and personal lives to leadership, goal setting, trust and integri-

See LETEXIER, Page 2

Widseth

Continued from Page 1

lar news releases to inform the public of felony cases and their outcomes. In the future, he would like to create a web site for that purpose. The news releases, he says, will recognize the efforts of law enforcement officers and others involved in bringing criminals to justice.

A native of Crookston and a 1986 graduate of Crookston Central High School, Widseth earned a degree in political science at Concordia College, Moorhead, in 1990 and graduated from law school at the University of Minnesota in 1993. "I went right to work for the firm that my old neighbor is in. I grew up next door to Ed Odland," Widseth says.

The firm represents the City of Crookston and Widseth's assignment was to serve as city attorney. The position involved extensive time as a prosecutor and, he says, prepared him well to become county attorney. Widseth has also worked in civil litigation, real estate and family law. He and his wife, Nanette, a registered nurse, and their three children, Brittany, 9, Luke, 7, and Jake, 4, live in Crookston.

LeTexier

Continued from Page 1

ty. They talked a lot about vision. Mine is to provide quality law enforcement throughout the county and to have a lot of community involvement."

A member of the Polk County Sheriff's Office since May 1, 1986, LeTexier was "the last hire" of Sheriff Earl Mosher before he retired. Before joining the department, LeTexier, a 1975 graduate of Sacred Heart High School in East Grand Forks, had completed the sales, marketing and management program at Northwest Technical College in Thief River Falls, served in the Marines for four years, worked in construction, and graduated from the criminal justice program at Northland Community College, Thief River Falls.

"My first job in law enforcement was working part-time on Sunday nights as a police officer at Hatton, N.D. And before Earl hired me, I worked three days a week as a police officer at Emerado, N.D.," he says.

LeTexier attended DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) School in 1989 and started the program in five schools — Fosston, Win-E-Mac, Fertile, Fisher and Climax — in Polk County in 1990. In the

summers when school wasn't in session, he transported defendants to their court dates, and worked as a road deputy and as a dispatcher.

Deputy Phil Juve has succeeded LeTexier as the DARE officer. Another reassignment involves Sgt. Dan Chapa, who has moved from investigations to being a shift supervisor.

Great people

"I'm working to increase the scope and responsibility of shift supervisors by having them also be managers," LeTexier says. "Dan agreed to become a shift supervisor when I needed one more to make our shift rotation work. I'm very fortunate to have great people in supervisors in Capt. Karl Erickson and Sgt. Barb Erdman, shift supervisors Sgt. Mike Murray and Sgt. Walt Keller, and talented deputies. We really have a strong department. We're going to continue to be really strong on drug investigation activities."

LeTexier and his wife, Ruth, have two daughters, Kate and Jessica. Both are students at Washington State University. Kate will receive a masters degree in career counseling in May. Jessica is a junior in nursing.

Budget

(Continued from Page 1)

programs will require an increase in local property taxes to pay for them. Our message to the new governor and legislators is that increased property taxes constitute 'new taxes,' too."

New district lines

The start of the new year signaled changes in the boundaries of four of the five commissioner districts. This "redistricting" was mandated by results of the 2000 census to more equally balance the populations of the districts. The new boundary lines, which were determined last summer, required that there be mid-term elections in Districts 1, 3 and 5 with Jacobson, Montague and Mattson, respectively, all re-elected without opposition.

With the regular four-year commissioner terms in Districts 2 and 4 completed at the end of 2002, new elections were also held in those districts. Warren Strandell, East Grand Forks, won re-election in District 2 in a race against Monte Ruch, Fisher, while Affeldt was re-elected without opposition in District 4.

The biggest change in the commissioner districts involves the move of six townships — Angus, Belgium, Brandt, Brislet, Euclid and Helgeland — from District 3 to District 5. Gentilly Township has moved from District 1 to District 3. The division lines

between Districts 1 and 3 in the City of Crookston and between Districts 2 and 5 in the City of East Grand Forks were also changed slightly. District 4 in the eastern area of the county is the only district that did not change.

Polk County's interests are being represented regionally and in state associations.

Regional influence

Affeldt is the new vice chair of MRCC and, as such, is the chair-elect for 2004. This 22-county organization was formed in 1999 to advance issues and concerns of Minnesota's "outstate" counties. Most recently, MRCC has taken strong steps to insure that the transportation needs in rural counties continue to be funded fairly. At AMC, Affeldt is a member of the state Environment & Natural Resources Committee.

Strandell is the current state chair of the 87-county AMC organization's General Government Committee and is also a member of that body's Legislative Steering Committee. At the regional level, he is vice chair of the eight-county District 3 AMC organization in northwestern Minnesota. Strandell is also chair of the Tri-County Community Corrections Board, which includes Polk, Norman and Red Lake counties, and is secretary of the executive com-

mittee of the Northwest Regional Development Commission (NWRDC).

Mattson is focused on several regional water management boards and groups that deal with planning and other concerns spanning the area from the headwaters of the Red River to Lake Winnipeg.

Montague is a member of AMC's state Health & Human Services Committee and of the NWRDC loan fund. Jacobson is a member of the Lake Agassiz Regional Library Board and is an alternate member of AMC's Environment & Natural Resources Committee.

County Board Meeting Times

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

Meetings are open to the public.

Commissioners:

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

4-county system has center point near St. Hilaire

Rural addresses assigned; signs coming

Polk, Pennington, Marshall and Red Lake counties have jointly implemented a new, four-county rural addressing system.

In the project, Geocomm, a St. Cloud, Minn., consulting firm, was hired to locate all rural driveways in the four-county area using global positioning system (GPS) technology. Addresses were assigned for each based on a grid system of roadways in the four counties. The center point of the system is near St. Hilaire. The NW, SW, NE and SE designations transcend from there. A description of how to read the addresses is shown in the box at right.

While the new addresses become effective immediately, Post Offices in the county will continue to deliver to the old addresses for one year.

In the new system, a sign will be placed this summer at every

Rural Addressing

Example: **23502 190th St. NW**

23502 — The first 3 numbers indicate that the location (on 190th Street NW) is between 230th and 240th avenues.

23502 — There are allowances for 1,000 addresses per mile. The third number in an address indicates the approximate location within that mile. "5" is about midway.

23502 — This digit is the location within the 235th corridor. "0" is at the beginning; "9" at the end.

23502 — Even numbers indicate that the address is on the north or east side of the roadway. Odd numbers indicate that the address is on the south or west side of the roadway.

rural address (where a driveway and roadway meet). H&R Construction, Dalton, Minn., has been contracted to install the

signs. The work is to be completed by Aug. 31.

Intersection signs will also be erected. This work has not yet

been contracted, but the signs are expected to be in place by Dec. 31, 2003. Every intersection will be signed.

New county highway maps that include all county roads, new rural address street and avenue labels, county ditches and other information have been printed. These maps, which were printed in conjunction with implementation of the new rural address system, have been sent to all townships, cities and other governmental agencies in the county.

Maps Available

The new Polk County map, a smaller copy of which is reproduced on pages 6-7 of this newsletter, is available for sale at both the County Highway Department and at the County Auditor's Office. The cost is \$2 each.

UMC grad Jeremy Seibel in the new position

Computer tech to reduce service contract costs

Jeremy Seibel, who earned a B.S. degree in information networking management from the University of Minnesota-Crookston last May, is Polk County's first computer technician.

The position was created by the County Board to reduce the scope of the maintenance and service contracts required for both hardware and software computer issues. Having a technician on staff also significantly reduces "down time" when problems arise.

"This position is one that has

been severely needed for several years," Board Chair Eugene "Jeep" Mattson relates. "The savings that result from reduced down-time alone will more than pay for the position."

A native of Thief River Falls, Seibel, the son of Jim and Renae Seibel, earned an associate degree at Northland Community College, Thief River Falls, in 2000. As a part of his internship at UMC and after graduating, too, he worked for Northern Great Plains Rural Development Commission in Crookston. He began work for Polk County on Nov. 1.

"I'm really enjoying the job," he says. "Everybody has been really friendly and I really like working with networking and server maintenance issues. There's always plenty to do... fires to put out when a printer doesn't work or when there are computer and software problems. We're getting everyone on the same page. We've upgraded all the servers to Windows 2000. I can even address some issues from home, including the servers in the remote offices at East Grand Forks and Fosston. I really like what I'm doing."



Jeremy Seibel

Mold questions continue for Public Health staff

Polk County Public Health staff continue to receive questions about mold. And the callers continue to be from around the county, not just the communities that sustained water damage from the 1997 flood.

Molds are simple, microscopic organisms found virtually everywhere, indoors and outdoors. Molds can be found on plants, foods, dry leaves and other living material. Mold spores are very

tiny and lightweight, which allows them to travel through the air.

When molds are present in large quantities, they can cause allergic symptoms similar to those caused by plant pollen. Some of these symptoms include coughing, wheezing, nasal congestion, sneezing, sore throats, fatigue and headaches. Individuals have different sensitivities to mold.

For mold to grow, it needs:

- A food source such as leaves,

wood, newspapers;

- A source of moisture and
- A place to grow.

Sources of indoor moisture include: Flooding, backed-up sewer, leaky roof, humidifiers, ice dams, damp basement, plumbing leaks, and unexhausted moisture from dryers and other combustion appliances.

Homeowners and landlords should correct mold problems as soon as possible to protect the

health of their tenants and their investments.

If you can see or smell mold, you have a moisture and mold problem. The first step is to identify the moisture source and correct it. Then clean, disinfect, and dry the moldy area.

Call (218) 281-3385 for more information on how to check for moisture problems in your home and general instructions on clean-up procedures.

County sells \$4 million in state aid highway bonds to advance construction plans

Polk County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 9 will be widened and get a new bituminous overlay from Crookston to Minn. Highway 220 several years ahead of schedule as a result of the County Board's recent decision to issue \$4 million in general obligation county state-aid highway bonds. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2004.

The action does not obligate county residents since the bonds will be repaid over a five-year period from state-aid allotments that are made to the county. These allotments, which total about \$3.5 million annually for construction, come from the county's share of state gas tax revenues.

A benefit of selling bonds now, besides having road projects completed and put into use several years ahead of the normal schedule, is that the 2.169 percent interest cost will be likely be less than the rate of inflation for construction. The county has an A-2 bond rating.

The grade widening and bituminous overlay work that will be done on the about 14 miles of CSAH 9, commonly known as the KT Road, is estimated to cost over \$3.7 million, or just slightly more than one year's construction allotment. The balance of the \$4 million in bond issue money will be used to advance another smaller project.

Polk County has issued county state-aid highway bonds several times in the past to advance the road construction program. In fact, the final payment was just made in January on a \$2 million issue sold in 1998.

Narlock becomes new 9th District Court administrator

Kathy Narlock is the new 9th District Court administrator in Polk County. She succeeds Sally Hollewa, who moved to a similar position in Michigan last year.

"I'm really enjoying the new job," Narlock says. "The staff has been really great. They're helping me learn the Minnesota court system. And the judges and district office staff have been great, too. They've all been very patient with my transition," she says of her adjustment into the position. Narlock had previously been court administrator for the Northeast Central Judicial District of North Dakota.

A native of Drake, N.D., Narlock completed the computer operations program at North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton before studying court reporting at the University of Minnesota-Crookston. During her 15 years with the Northeast Central Judicial District, she worked in Grand Forks and Nelson counties.

After attending night classes



Kathy Narlock

over several years, Narlock received a B. S. degree in public administration from the University of North Dakota last August. She accepted the new Minnesota state position in Polk County in November. She and her husband, Charles, live in Grand Forks.

Busy season ahead for County road work

(See work location map) →

With another big season of road work ahead, the orange construction signs will soon start going up around Polk County. Not only will there be numerous county road projects, but also a number of township bridge replacements.

The following roads are to be graded with aggregate surfacing:

- **CSAH 31** from CSAH 8 to CSAH 1 (1 mile west of Fosston).

- **CSAH 44** from TH 2 to CSAH 53 (the "Landfill Road" 10 miles east of Crookston).

- **CSAH 76** from TH 2 to CSAH 17 (2 miles east of East Grand Forks).

The following roads will be grade widened and receive a bituminous overlay:

- **CSAH 6** from CSAH 35 to TH 92 (1 mile west of Trail)

- **CSAH 17** from TH 2 (1 mile east of East Grand Forks) to 3 miles east. This work will be done to widen the shoulders and flatten the existing in-slope.

The following gravel road will get bituminous surfacing and

aggregate shoulders:

- **CSAH 17** from TH 75 (3 miles south of Euclid) to CSAH 13.

Five span bridges will be constructed including two in Northland Township and one each in Tabor, Angus and Sandsville townships. Another 15 box culverts will also be installed throughout the county.

The total cost for the 2003 construction program will be approximately \$7 million.

When you come across road construction not only on the Polk County roads, but also on state highways, please be patient. The contractors and government employees will be working long hours to get this work completed in an efficient manner and don't need the distraction of impatient drivers who might have to wait a few minutes before traveling on.

If you have any questions concerning this year's construction program, please give our office a call at 218-281-3952 and talk with either Darin Carlstrom or me. — **Richard Sanders, Polk Co. Highway/Ditch Engineer**

Fly ash to be used in road base for CSAH 76

The Polk County Highway Department is in the process of designing and constructing County State Aid Highway 76, from TH 2 to CSAH 17. The project is one mile east of East Grand Forks.

As part of the work, Polk County will be utilizing fly ash from American Crystal Sugar Company's East Grand Forks plant. The fly ash is currently being landfilled at the Grand Forks Landfill.

Fly ash will be blended with clay material at a 25 percent rate. This mixture will be placed in the sub-base, 2 feet deep and 32 feet wide and will act as a soil cement.

This is a pilot project. American Crystal, the Polk County Highway Department and Wenk & Associates are all working together to determine if the ash has a use in highway

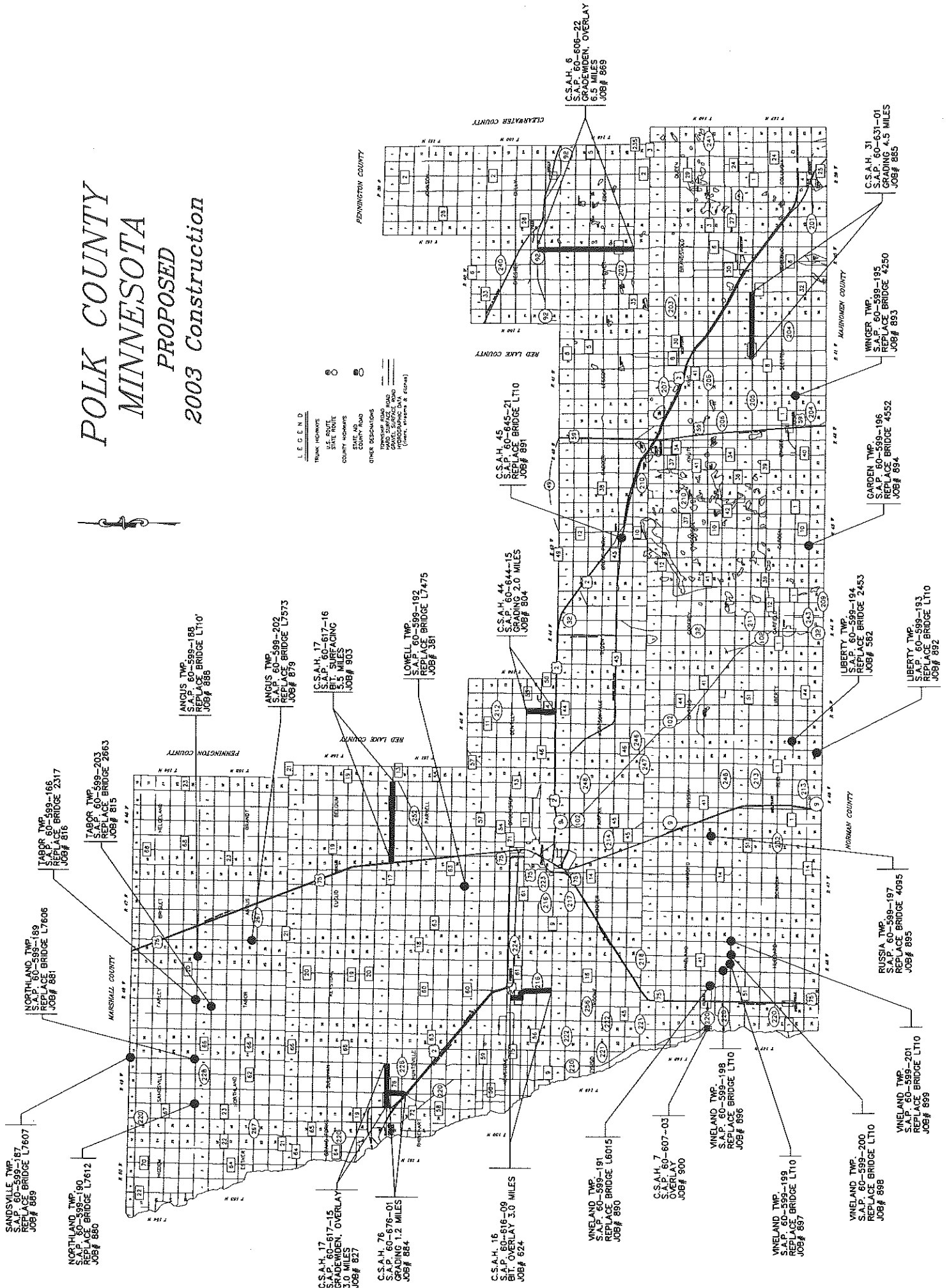
construction materials. Wenk & Associate, an environmental engineering firm from the Twin Cities, will perform the environmental testing. American Crystal will supply, stockpile and load the ash into the contractor's vehicles.

If the ash does what we hope it will do, which is strengthen the sub-base so that less gravel and bituminous is required to construct a 9-ton roadway, it will save precious gravel resources that could become limited.

This will save money for the Highway Department and hopefully for the beet growers, too, because American Crystal will have reduced amounts of ash needing to be landfilled.

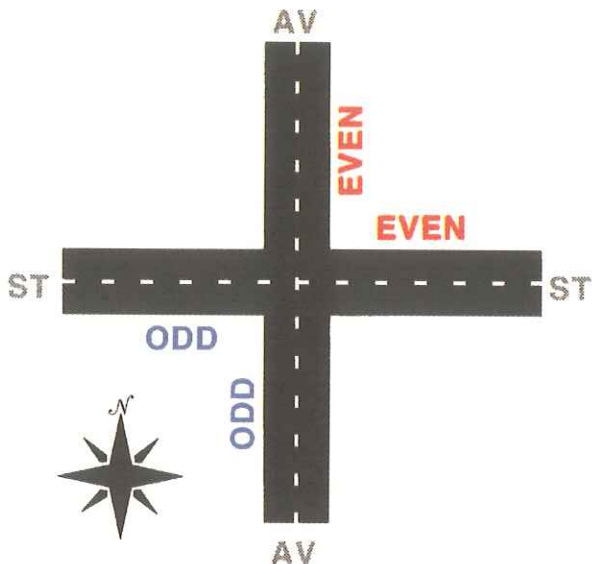
Construction is to take place this summer. — **Richard Sanders, Polk Co. Highway/Ditch Engineer**

POLK COUNTY MINNESOTA PROPOSED 2003 Construction



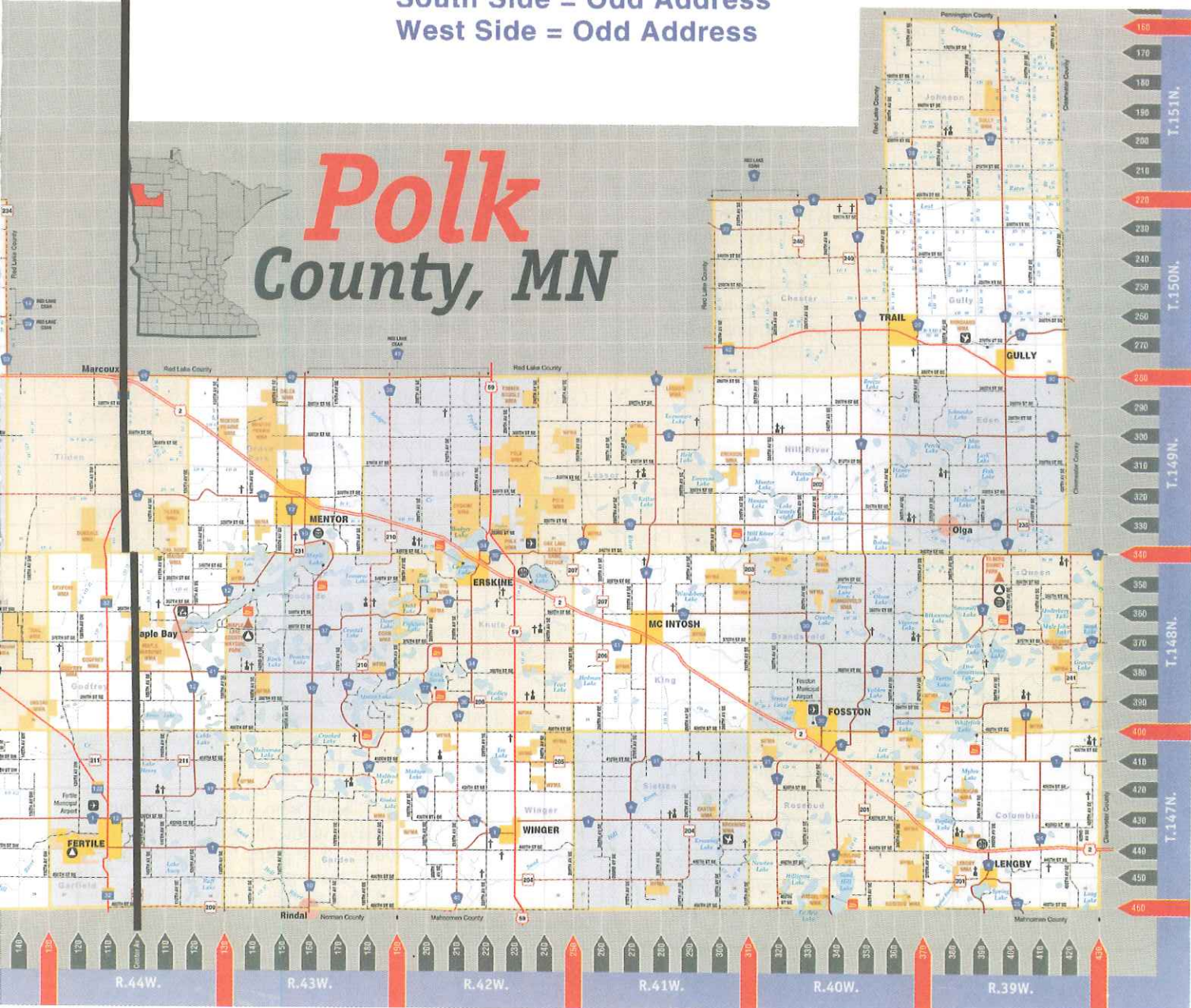
NW NE
SW SE

Center Avenue



North Side = Even Address
East Side = Even Address
South Side = Odd Address
West Side = Odd Address

Polk County, MN



Polk County Employee Anniversaries in 2003

<u>Hire Date</u>	<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>
35 Years		
5/6/68	Robert Lian	Maintenance II
30 Years		
7/9/73	June Delorme	Financial Asst. Supr. II
7/27/73	Arne Roseland	Welfare Fraud Invstgr
25 Years		
6/1/78	Marlene LeBlanc	Administrative Asst. I
6/1/78	Neil Parkin	Maintenance II
10/3/78	Sylvia Nelson	Collection Svc. Supr. I
20 Years		
2/22/83	LouAnn Olson	Social Worker
11/16/83	Brian Hoiseth	Engineering Tech III C
15 Years		
1/4/88	Steven Faldet	Mechanical Mtc. Tech
1/4/88	Jay Rhone	Maintenance Supr.
1/4/88	Shawn Sebenaler	Mechanical Mtc. Tech
2/1/88	James Tadman	Patrolman
2/22/88	Michael Murray	Patrol Sergeant
3/21/88	Velma Axtell	Financial Worker
4/15/88	Ricardo Ramon	Financial Worker
4/25/88	Carol Evenson	Social Worker
5/2/88	Carol Egeland	Registered Nurse II
5/23/88	Ruth Finseth	Social Worker
6/1/88	Michele Cote	Appraiser Tax Off. IV
8/1/88	Mary Beth Solheim	Clerk Typist Cashier II
9/1/88	Charlene Brekken	Administrative Sec.
9/1/88	Arla Meyer	Administrative Asst. II
9/16/88	Sheila Menard	Lead Dispatcher
9/27/88	Clarisse Miller	Child Support Officer
10/3/88	Kim Wolff	Registered Nurse II
10/17/88	Ronald Larson	Waste Combstr Opr
10/20/88	Marvin Berg	Landfill Tech
11/21/88	Randy Beggs	Accounting Tech
10 Years		
1/4/93	Darin Carlstrom	Project Engineer
6/1/93	Anita Brekken	Social Worker
6/2/93	Maxine Newhouse	Administrative Asst. I
7/26/93	Bryan Johnson	Waste Combstr Opr.
8/23/93	Deborah Berhow	Clerk Typist Cash III A
9/7/93	LeAnn Holte	Family Based Svc Prov
9/16/93	Jill Sonstelie	Registered Nurse II
9/20/93	Cherie Chaput	Accounting Tech
10/1/93	Margaret Bunes	Home Health Aid
10/18/93	Diane Kerksen	Home Health Aid
9/12/88	Lynette Lindgren	Accounting Tech
5 Years		
3/6/98	Heath Hanson	Patrolman
3/30/98	Cathy Berlund	Registered Nurse II
5/6/98	Irene Hurd	Social Worker
7/6/98	Darcy Bjorgo	Accounting Clerk I
8/3/98	Wesly Oian	Appraiser Tax Off. IV
9/1/98	Michael LeBlanc	Maintenance II
9/1/98	Kim Tweten	Social Worker
9/9/98	Lori Oian	Clerk Typist Cashier III
10/28/98	Irene Dosser	Registered Nurse II
12/14/98	Scott Deckert	Environmental Tech

Has seen tremendous changes

Anderson to retire as security director at Corrections Center

Norvald Anderson, one of the original employees when the Northwest Regional Corrections Center opened in Crookston in 1975, expects to retire in May from his position as security director for Tri-County Community Corrections.

A native of Clearbrook, Anderson, 62, enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps after graduating from high school in 1958.

Marine M.P.

Trained as an MP (military police), he used that experience including some two and a half years of "working in the brig" to get a job as a warden at Stillwater State Prison after he received his discharge in December 1962.

He later worked six years "making tape" for the 3-M Company and for a time at the Arctic Cat plant at Bagley before serving as a Bagley police officer for three years. Later, Anderson returned to state prison system and, given the opportunity to attend the Minnesota Department of Corrections' Academy, completed its course on the basics of corrections.

Told of opening in Crookston

"It was while I was in that class that one of my instructors told me about the new Northwest Regional Corrections Center that was about to open in Crookston. He knew the director, Dick Jenson, and referred me there," Anderson says.

Hired as a lead corrections counselor (jailer) at the center on Dec. 23, 1975, Anderson became its security director in September 1976.

"We're averaging from 1,400 to 1,500 people coming through here (the jail) every year now. We've had high of over 1,600," Anderson says. "It used to be that we had only from 800 to 900 a year."

Good career

"There have been some tremendous changes over the years. We used to have a high number of misdemeanor crime prisoners. Now there aren't many of those, but we have a high number of driving while intoxicated felonies, assaults, burglaries and other more serious crimes. There have been a lot of changes with sentencing guidelines and changes in law enforcement agencies. It has been a good career. I've really enjoyed it."

Anderson and his wife, Connie, who works in Tri-County's Probation Department, have eight children between them along with 13 grandchildren. "I'm going to be spending a lot of time," Anderson says of his impending retirement, "with those grandchildren. And after a while, I may find a few other things to do, too."



Norvald Anderson



— Photo courtesy of The 13 Towns

Employees and special guests when the mortgage for the Polk County Solid Waste Resource Recovery Plant at Fosston was retired, from left to right were: Brad Ness, Shawn Sebenaler, Wade Burrack, Erick Sandberg, Todd Rue, former Commissioner Don Bakken, Patrick O'Neil, Jay Rhone, Mary Winkler, Rick Kappedal, Carla Parker,

Roland Boucher (mostly hidden), JoAnne Martin, Robert Martin, Pam Spong, Julie Baumann, Commissioner Warren Affeldt, former Commissioner Lloyd Wold, former Commissioner Rupert Syverson, Fosston Mayor Arvid Clemetson, and plant manager Bill Wilson.

Final payment made

Incinerator is now debt-free

The Polk County Solid Waste Resource Recovery Plant is now debt-free. A mortgage-burning event was held at the plant on Dec. 29 to mark the final \$625,000 annual payment on the construction bonds that were issued late in 1987.

And there is even more good news in that no new debt is likely to be incurred as a result of the \$1.7 million project currently underway to bring the plant, located at Fosston, into compliance with new federal clean air rules for stack emissions. A grant will cover approximately one half of this air pollution control retrofit project. The balance, or the "local share," will come from monies that accrue by continuing the current \$70 per ton tip fee through August.

Reduced tipping fee

August is the start of a new five-year contract through which the original five county operating partners agree to bring their solid waste to the plant. A \$55 per ton tip fee is to begin at that time. These new contracts will extend through Dec. 31, 2008.

"By continuing the current \$70 tip fee through August even though there is no longer any debt to service," Bill Wilson, facilities manager, says, "we will accrue enough money to pay the local share of the retrofit project through the first three phases.

"We are really hoping to get

through this retrofit debt-free, and we will do that if we can avoid having to proceed through phase IV, which adds a bag-house to the system," Wilson says.

Likely not needed

A bag-house, at an additional cost of \$1.1 million (half of which would be grant-eligible), will only become necessary if other measures aren't successful in bringing emissions into compliance. Wilson is quite confident that the bag-house facility won't be needed.

The new, more restrictive federal clean air rules, which are to become effective Dec. 31, 2003, have been adopted by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Specifically, these new rules address particulate, dioxins, furans, mercury, lead, cadmium, and acid gas emission levels.

The recent mortgage-burning event officially marked the pay-off of \$4.8 million in bonding. The original \$6.8 million cost of the facility was reduced by \$2 million in grants. Fosston was selected as the site for the plant because the Land O'Lakes milk plant then operating there would be a prime customer for the steam that is produced in the burning of garbage.

First bonds refinanced

Construction of the plant began in April 1987 and the first waste was burned a year later. The original bonds were refinanced in 1996 to save some \$325,000 in interest

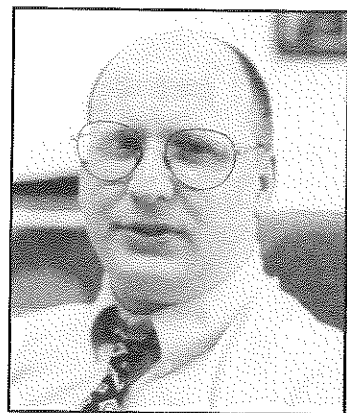
costs. The transaction was also used to provide some \$800,000 in new money to finance the construction and development of the plant's Material Recovery Facility (MRF). The MRF provides for an "upfront" separation of recyclable materials — cardboard, aluminum and steel — from the waste stream before incineration. Since the start of its operation, the MRF has removed more than 12,000 tons of material from the waste stream and the sale of these recyclable materials has generated more than \$1.5 million in revenue. Additionally, the MRF has served to further extend the life of the county's landfill.

Revenue from steam sales

Through the years, steam sales to the Northern Food & Dairy (as the successor to Land O'Lakes) and Minnesota Dehydrated Vegetables plants in Fosston have generated more than \$4 million in revenue.

An advisory board comprised of county commissioners from the five partner counties oversees the operation of the plant. Those counties and board members are: Beltrami — Ron Otterstad; Clearwater — Dean Newland; Mahanomen — Jerry Dahl; Norman — Richard Andring; and Polk — Warren Affeldt.

The plant was honored as the "Materials Recovery Facility of the Year" at the North American Waste to Energy Conference in May 2001.



Scott Buhler

Buhler rejoins attorney office

Scott Buhler rejoined the Polk County Attorney's Office as an assistant county attorney in January filling one of two open positions. In current planning, the second position is to remain vacant, according to County Attorney Greg Widseth.

A native of Janesville, Minn., Buhler had previously worked in the Polk County office for six years from 1993 until 1999. He then moved to Milaca, Minn., to try two murder cases for Mille Lacs County and later spent time working on a book on special prosecution techniques. He tried felony cases as a member of the Olmstead County Attorney's Office for 18 months before returning to Polk County.

"I love being back here," Buhler says of Crookston. "I consider this community to be my hometown even more so than the one in which I grew up. It really has been nice seeing all my old friends in law enforcement and in the court system and working for someone I know and trust."

After graduating from Minnesota State University-Mankato in accounting with a minor in business administration, Buhler earned his law degree in 1988 at the University of Minnesota. He then spent three years with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, mostly in Buffalo, N.Y., doing wiretaps for public corruption investigations.

Buhler also completed the 12-week FBI Academy at Quantico, Va., and worked in undercover operations for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Niagara County, N.Y. Buhler returned to the Twin Cities in February 1992 to work as a defense attorney before joining the Polk County Attorney's Office staff the first time in October 1993.

Jack Young Award winner...

Mills to head state corrections group

Susan Mills, who has served as administrator of Tri-County Community Corrections programs for the past 17 years, will begin her second term as president of the Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties (MAC-CAC) this fall.

She had previously served as state president in 1991. Tri-County Corrections provides probation and jail services for Polk, Norman and Red Lake counties through provisions of the state Community Corrections Act and Regional Jails Act.

In addition to being chosen as president-elect of the state organization at the annual meeting last fall, Mills was also presented



Susan Mills

MACCAC's prestigious Jack Young Award for dedication to corrections programs and efforts.

A native of Mankato, Minn., Mills earned a degree in sociology at Minnesota State University-Mankato before joining Tri-County Community Corrections as a research/training coordinator in 1976. She became deputy administrator of the Crookston-based, three-county agency in 1981, and implemented the first in-home supervision program for adolescents at risk of out of home placement. She has been the executive director since 1985.

The Jack Young Award specifically honored Mills for having been a driving force in Community Corrections including the establishment of Tri-County's 51-bed minimum-secu-

rity facility (the first of its kind in the state) and in the construction and opening of the Red River Valley Juvenile Center wing of the Northwest Regional Corrections Center in 1997.

The award cited her for developing and implementing a "life skills" program at the center and for partnering with school districts and other agencies in the three-county area to obtain a \$3 million federal Safe Schools grant and program. She was also cited for creating juvenile transition, restitution, and sex offender programs.

In addition to her professional roles in corrections, Mills also serves as a member of the Crookston School Board.

Letters help make career worthwhile

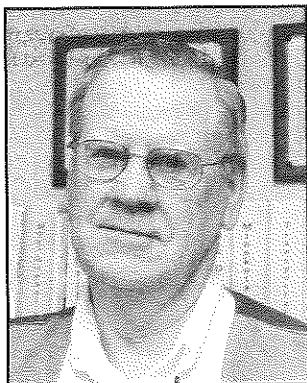
Rath retires from corrections

Each year around the Christmas season, Lloyd Rath has gotten a letter or two from some one with whom he had worked as a probation agent. The letters, which thank him for the influence he had on their lives, come from people who at one time had been on probation but are now doing well.

Those letters and other successes, the recently retired Rath says, made his career worthwhile. "I really did enjoy the job. I believe in the community corrections philosophy of getting people back into the community as productive citizens," he says.

Rath left his position as Tri-County Corrections' (TCCC) director of court services in February, completing a 20-year career in the probation field. A native of Jamestown, N.D., he had previously spent 20 years in Army following graduation from high school in 1958. His military career as an infantryman with the 101st Airborne Division took him to Vietnam for two years, Thailand for 18 months and to other assignments in places ranging from Alaska to Hawaii.

"She was working in Hawaii and living in the same apartment building as I was," Rath says of how he met his wife, Shirley. They were later married in her hometown of Ephrata, Pa.



Lloyd Rath

After his discharge, Rath attended the University of North Dakota and, as a part of earning a degree in social work, interned at the Northwest Regional Law Enforcement Center by booking people into the jail. Following graduation, he accepted a part-time position with TCCC as a counselor-caseworker. He became a probation agent when hired full-time in 1983. He was promoted to director of court services (manager of the probation department) in 1989.

The Rathes have three children: A son, Michael and his wife, Susie, in Sacramento, Calif.; a son, Mark and his wife, Alicia, Grand Forks; and a daughter, Markay, and her husband, Warren Roehl, Grand Forks. There are 11 grandchildren.

Lieberg selected as new director of court services

Tami Jo Lieberg is the new director of court services for Tri-County Community Corrections.

Lieberg, who has been a probation agent for Tri-County since December 1994, was one of three finalists — all from within the Tri-County agency — for the position that opened when Lloyd Rath retired. The position manages the probation department.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for me," she says. "There are exciting things happening in this office and I want to be a part of them. I'm hoping that my time with Tri-County will allow for a more seamless transition between directors. I have developed a great rapport with individuals in many facets of the criminal justice system such as with the county attorney's office, public defender's office, law enforcement officials at the local, county, state and federal levels, and with the judges in our region."

A native of Fargo, Lieberg earned a B.S. degree in criminal justice at Moorhead State University in 1995. She is in the process of writing the thesis for a masters degree in sociology from the University of North Dakota and has done work toward a Ph.D. in criminal justice through North Dakota State University.

Her experience includes work in corrections setting with both juveniles and adults in positions with the North Dakota Division of



Tami Jo Lieberg

Parole/Probation, the Northwest Mental Health Center, and Lutheran Social Services. She has also been a graduate teaching assistant for juvenile delinquency, criminal law and criminology classes at the University of North Dakota.

At Tri-County, she has worked with pre-sentence investigations, domestic abuse assessments, been a staff trainer, been a member of the Northwest Drug Task Force, had caseloads including felony drug and other adult felony offenders, and has supervised community service, house arrest, and electronic monitoring.

Lieberg and her husband, Randy, have three children: Blake, 12; Garrett, 6, and Juliana, 1.

County to step-up welfare fraud efforts

The Polk County Social Services Board is asking residents to provide information about cases of suspected welfare fraud to the Sheriff's Department. Information can be provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling (218) 281-0431, extension 2249. Callers can remain anonymous.

"In this request, we are in no way targeting persons and families who are truly in need and who qualify for services," Bill Montague, Social Services Board chairman, says. Instead, the request is designed to expose and eliminate as much as possible all incidents of persons receiving social service benefits when they are not eligible, he says.

"This is just one of the areas that the Social Services Board is investigating as it prepares to deal with reductions in state funding for programs that the county is mandated by law to provide," he says.

Top welfare fraud unit

Efforts to expose welfare fraud,

Montague notes, have been ongoing in Polk County for a number of years. "We already have one of the most effective — if not *the* most effective — welfare fraud units in Minnesota," he says of work done by the team of welfare fraud investigator Arne Roseland of the Social Services Department and Polk County deputy sheriff Todd Spray.

To be more aggressive

"But with the governor proposing huge reductions in the funding for many social service programs, we believe that we have to become even more aggressive in these efforts," Montague says.

Fraud occurs when people give false information or withhold facts in order to receive Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) aids, food stamps, general assistance, childcare or medical assistance.

Examples of welfare fraud include:

- Persons not reporting income.
- Incorrect reporting of persons who are living in the home.

- Misuse of food stamps or Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards.

- Providing false information on application forms.

- Not reporting all property and assets.

- Persons receiving benefits from more than one state.

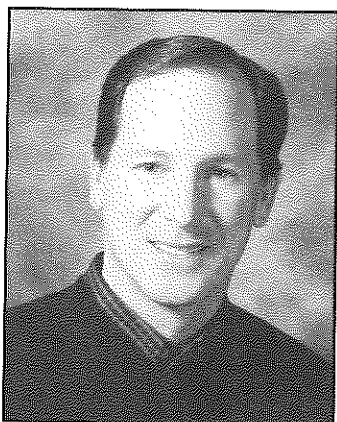
When reporting suspected cases of welfare fraud persons should be prepared to provide:

- Who — The name of the person.
- What — The fraud that is suspected.
- When — Date(s) of occurrence.
- Where — Address of person.

State hotline

Persons, who may not want to provide information directly to the Polk County Sheriff's Department or who have information for another county, may call the toll-free Minnesota Welfare Fraud Hotline at 1-800-627-9977. That line is also available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers to the state hotline can also remain anonymous.

Proulx joins board of Red Lake Watershed District



Bob Proulx

Bob Proulx, rural Red Lake Falls, has joined the Red Lake Watershed Board of Managers as one of the two representatives from Polk County.

A career farmer, Proulx was appointed to the position by the Polk County Board in January as the successor to Roger Love, rural East Grand Forks, who had served in the position the previous three years. The other manager representing Polk County, Dennis Nikolayson, rural Erskine, is currently serving his second three-year term on the board.

"I'm getting to know the needs and concerns of the people in West Polk County," Proulx says of serving his first months in the position. "A big area of the watershed is located in Polk County. All of the water passes through it and I really believe that there is justification for the county to have a third manager."

Born in Grand Forks, Proulx and his family lived near East Grand Forks until moving to Parnell Township northeast of Crookston in 1964. He graduated from Crookston Central High School in 1973 and then joined

his father, Earl, and brother, John, in the family farming operations. He has been a member of the Parnell Town Board for eight years, including six as chairman. A member of the Northwest Grain Board for eight years, he is currently serving as its secretary. He has also served on the St. Dorothy Parish Council at Dorothy for three years.

Proulx and his wife, Jennie, have six children: Katie, 18; Kris, 16; Kurtis, 15; Laura, 14; Nick, 12; and Jaclyn, 9. All are attending schools in Crookston.

Sand Hill River Watershed District to start 30th year

The Sand Hill River Watershed District (SHRWD), which was officially created on May 17, 1974, will soon begin its 30th year of existence.

Except for about 12 to 15 square miles of drainage area in Norman and Mahanomen counties, the watershed is located entirely in Polk County.

Members of its board of managers are: President Roger Hanson, Beltrami; vice president Harold Vig, Fosston; secretary Robert Brekke, Jr., Nielsville; treasurer Stuart

Christian, Erskine; and Gordon Sonsteli, Erskine.

Appointments of the managers are made by the Polk County Board. District offices are in Fertile.

Dan Wilkens, Fertile, who had served on the board of managers for all of its first 25 years, became the SHRWD administrator in 1999. He recalls accompanying Don Ogaard, rural Ada, to a meeting at Warren, Minn., in 1976 at which the Red River Water Management Board (RRWMB)

was established. Ogaard, who was the longtime executive director of the board, retired this year. Wilkens is treasurer of the RRWMB.

The RRWMB uses one half of the tax levied by the watershed districts in Minnesota that contribute to the Red River to support projects and programs that benefit their common good. The other half of the tax remains with the local watershed district for its projects and programs.

Wilkens also serves as vice president of the Red River Basin

Commission, an organization of water managers in Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Manitoba that coordinates and plans water management projects in the Red River of the North watershed.

The terms of Vig and Sonsteli on the SHRWD board expire this year and will be up for appointment prior to the annual re-organizational meeting in May. Christian's term expires in 2004 and the terms of Hanson and Brekke continue until 2005.

Report Welfare Fraud

People who give false information or withhold facts in order to receive Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) aid, food stamps, general assistance, childcare or medical assistance may be guilty of fraud.

You may wish to report:

- Persons not reporting income
- Incorrect reporting of persons living in the home
- Misuse of food stamps or Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards
- Falsifying of information on application
- Unreported property and assets
- Persons receiving dual benefits (from more than one state)



What you should include in your report:

- **Who** — The name of the person
- **What** — The fraud suspected
- **When** — Date of occurrence
- **Where** — Address of person

Welfare Fraud

If you suspect someone of misusing or abusing Minnesota assistance programs, call the Polk County Sheriff's Office at this number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

1-218-281-0431 (ask for extension 2249)

You can also contact the toll free Minnesota Welfare Fraud Hotline
24 hours a day, 7 days a week at:

1-800-627-9977

YOU MAY REMAIN ANONYMOUS