

# Florence County Connections

HOLIDAY NEWSLETTER

2015

As the 2015 year comes to an end, I would like to take time to reflect on all of the good things happening here in Florence County.

The millage rate levied for the 2016 Florence County budget will be down 4 percent from the current year. We have overcome a lot of hurdles over the past few years and managed to keep the mill rate in check while continuing to maintain valuable services to members of the community. Many of our projects are also successful because of the grants county departments secure and work together to achieve great results.

We have also invested in our infrastructure and will continue to do so with long term planning. Supervisors recognize the need to protect our rivers, lakes, and lands from invasive species. Our forestry management is one to be admired, and each year our timber sales improve. This is because of hard work and investment in our renewable resources. We also have new businesses that are opening, job opportunities expanding, and our school district is thriving.

I have to thank our administrators and staff for working so hard on behalf of the residents, landowners, and visitors of this great county.

As a board, we have made a commitment to make Florence County a thriving community, not indebted for the next generation.

*Merry Christmas to you all!*

Jeanette Bomberg  
Florence County Board Chair



*A variety of products fabricated in the new Fab Lab were on display at the Grand Opening held recently at Florence High School. Above is a 3-D printer making a guitar pick.*



*Representative Rob Swearingen and FHS student Jaden Streu holding an item made on the Plasma Cutter at the new Fab Lab.*

# 2015 Economic Development Successes

by Wendy Gehlhoff, Florence County Economic Development Director

Florence County Economic Development (FCED) covers a broad range of projects every year aimed at helping retain, expand and attract businesses that provide the products, services, jobs and local taxes that we need to sustain and grow our community. FCED also tackles numerous community development and tourism activities to improve our quality of life and attract visitors to spend their money in Florence County. Go to [www.ExploreFlorenceCounty.com](http://www.ExploreFlorenceCounty.com) for resources.

*Here are a few highlights from 2015 projects:*

**Business Growth:** 4 TIF District projects finished this year creating 21 new jobs and over \$1 million of new tax assessment.

Two of the projects will hit full assessment next year estimated at \$1.9 million in new value. Our largest sawmill, Florence Hardwoods, added a second shift which provided another 15 new jobs to our economy.

**Entrepreneur Growth and Workforce Development:** FCED wrote a DWD grant in partnership with our school to purchase equipment for a new Fab Lab at Florence High School. We are the 2<sup>nd</sup> high school in the state of Wisconsin to install a cutting edge Fabrication Laboratory that teaches the Engineering Design Process problem solving method and “How to Make Anything” curriculum. The Lab includes 2 Afinia H800 3D printers, a Roland Mini mill, Vinyl Cutter, Epilog Laser Engraver, Plasma Cam and CNC Router. Design software includes SolidWorks, Adobe Illustrator, and As-

pire. Items can be made from wood, metal, vinyl, acrylic and polymers. The school staff and administration spent countless hours getting this new program ready for the 2015/16 school year. Without dedicated staff willing to go the extra mile, this new community asset would not be here today.



*The new Family Dollar store opened in late August*

The Fab Lab program teaches students some of the skills needed to feed the growing demand for good paying, mid-level technology jobs that many of our regional employers are struggling to fill. Please thank our industry partner companies: Florence Hardwoods, Pride Sports, G&G Lumber, Xcell Graphix, Systems Control, Verso Corp. and Boss Plow.

The Lab is open to the public every Wednesday from 4pm to 7pm, though closed through the holidays. There is a fee of \$25 for Florence County residents. To learn more, visit [www.sites.myflorence.org/fablab](http://www.sites.myflorence.org/fablab) where you can fill out a registration form, understand the rules of use, and begin viewing the tutorials, along with reading about the engineering and design process that

guides product development. This is an opportunity for our local entrepreneurs to develop unique new products that, if they can be sold at a profit level, can provide income to the inventor and grow businesses in our county. Economic Development (715-528-3294) has business planning resources and loan programs to

help entrepreneurs start a new business.

**Visitor Attraction:** A new off lease 1 acre Dog Park and RV Dump Station were completed at the visitor center to get more US 2 travelers to stop in our town. Please thank our project partners Florence Utilities, Lumberjack RC&D, Florence High School TORPEDOs students, Florence Highway, Forestry & Parks, and Land Conservation Departments; along with Statewide Fencing for finding used fencing to keep the project cost within our budget.



## *We are Florence County Human Services....*

Operated with 10 staff, the Human Services Department provides a vast array of social and economic support services including but not limited to: Juvenile Justice, Child Protective Services, Mental/Behavioral Health, Coordinated Services Team, Children with Disabilities, Adult and Disability Services, Housing, and Economic Support including Food Share, Child Care, Badger Care, and Energy Assistance.

Additionally, Human Services partners with many community organizations and agencies across Wisconsin and Michigan as a means to provide additional services to Florence County. Specifically, NEWCAP now expanded its SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program to Florence County. SOAR provides assistance to adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness by helping to identify housing, obtain needed medical treatment by providing transportation, and assistance when applying for SSI/SSDI benefits. Furthermore, the Department has partnered with NEWCAP to provide the Work-N-Wheels program to individuals who may need financial assistance in obtaining a reliable and affordable vehicle in order to maintain employment.

Better known as the Northern Income Maintenance Consortium, the Department serves a 12-County Consortium for Economic Assistance benefits (Food Share, BadgerCare, etc.) and new in 2015 Child Care assistance. Staff continue to do an excellent job in providing services to our community and the residents of our 11 other partner counties to ensure benefits are accurate and successfully received. In fact, the Northern Income Maintenance Consortium was recognized as the only Consortium (out of ten Statewide Consortiums) for its 100% accuracy in Food Share benefits.

Through the partnership of the Florence Schools, Florence Sheriff's Office, and Human Services staff, the Department continues to see many families seeking voluntary services of the Department—meaning cases are not opened by way of Court Order. Voluntary services include but are not limited to Parent Education, Nutrition Education, Case Management, Counseling, Support Coordination, etc.

The Coordinated Services Team program has been a success with one youth graduating successfully from the program. This program allows community and family supports to partner in providing support and financial assistance to families on a voluntary basis and further allows families to build upon its strengths and obtain needed services to gain success within their homes.

The Department has assisted many elderly, physically and developmentally disabled individuals to stay in their community and most importantly in their homes by providing various homecare and community services. The Department is proud to offer services to those who are eligible without having to place individuals on a waiting list which could ultimately place them in a nursing home or other more restrictive setting.

The Department has been successful in diverting 16/31 Emergency Mental Health contacts so far this year. In order to divert an individual from a hospital setting, individuals were able to identify safety measures to ensure their own safety without being hospitalized. The Department is able to connect these individuals with community resources and other professional providers to meet the needs of the individual. If you are experiencing a crisis or know of someone who is, please don't wait for help, please contact the Florence County Crisis line at 866-317-9362 or your local Sheriff's Office at 715-528-3346.

While no one will likely soon forget the harsh winter of 2014, this past winter was a bit warmer which allowed for a break in heating costs in several households. The Department was able to keep 300+ families and homes warm with the help of the Wisconsin Home Energy Program. Current heating year applications are being accepted through May 15, 2016—contact Breanna at 715-528-3497 for an appointment.

The above is only a snapshot of what we can offer, so please contact our offices at 715-528-3296 or stop in to obtain further information regarding the above and/or to see what services are available to you and/or your family. We are always happy to assist and are continuing to explore opportunities to provide greater access to needed services in order to strengthen our community.

*-- Jen Steber, Director of Human Services and the HSD Team*



# Veterans Services

***Are your discharge papers safe?  
In Wisconsin — they are!***

For many years, veterans have been told to register their military discharges with the County Register of Deeds for safekeeping and easy retrieval. In the past, there have been reports in other states that unauthorized individuals have obtained personal information from veteran's DD 214s under public record laws.

In Wisconsin, state law protects the privacy and confidentiality of veteran's DD 214s filed with the

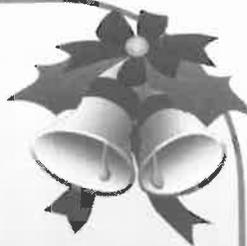
county. According to State Statutes 45.05, "The certificate shall be accessible only to the discharged person or that person's dependents or duly authorized representative, as defined in s. 45.04 (1) (a), the county veterans service officer, the department, or any person with written authorization from the discharged person or that discharged person's dependents". Any DD 214s that the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) or the County Veterans Service Offices has in their possession are also confidential documents under state law.

The County Veterans Service

Officer Association (CVSO) and the Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association (WRDA) encourage all veterans who have not done so to register their DD 214s with the county, free-of-charge, to ensure safekeeping of this important document which is used to obtain veteran's benefits from the state and federal government. The confidentiality and privacy of the document are well protected under state law.

Veterans who have filed their DD 214s outside the State of Wisconsin should check with your respective state's custodian of records as to the confidentiality of your record. For those that would like assistance, please contact Florence County's Veteran's Service Officer Mike Theis at 715-528-3446.

## County Clerk's Office Finance & Administration



- ◇ Where can I get a *Plat Book*?
- ◇ Where do I go to apply for a *Marriage License*?
- ◇ Do I need to get a *Cutting Permit* to harvest timber?
- ◇ Where can I get a *Dog License*?
- ◇ Who keeps all the records of *County Government Meetings, Agendas, Resolutions, and Ordinances*?
- ◇ Where can I find *Election Results* for Florence County, recent and way back in history?
- ◇ Where can I get a copy of the *County Budget*?
- ◇ Who is responsible for *County Finances & Administrative Matters*?

You can find answers to all these questions in the office of the Florence County Clerk. Donna Trudell serves as our County Clerk along with her Deputy Kelly Prevost. Our Financial Manager Joe Bestor also serves as part of the County Clerk team. Please give us a call at 715-528-3201 or better yet, stop in and say hello. We'd love to meet you, answer your questions, and listen to your ideas for how we can better serve the people of Florence County.

You might also want to check out our County website at [www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com). Click on "Departments" and "County Clerk" and you will find information on much of what we do.

— Donna Trudell, Florence County Clerk

## ***Victims of domestic violence are not alone***

Asking for help is a sign of courage and the Caring House offers a Florence County Outreach for victims of domestic violence and their children. All services are free and completely confidential and can include: counseling, advocacy for medical, legal, housing or financial appointments, transportation, referrals, along with providing temporary shelter. To talk to someone that can help at the Florence County Courthouse, call 715-528-5161 or you can access the 24-hour crisis line at 1-800-392-7839. Remember that nobody deserves to be abused. You are not responsible for another person's behavior, and you are not alone.

# Florence County Courthouse Security Exercise

On September 12, 2015, the Florence County Sheriff's Office – Division of Emergency Management along with Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) conducted a full-scale courthouse security exercise.

Prior to the full-scale exercise, a tabletop exercise was held in May of 2014 and a functional exercise in November of 2014.

During the tabletop exercise, courthouse employees, county board members, fire, EMS, and law enforcement met with Emergency Management to discuss a potential threat at the courthouse. (A tabletop exercise is conducted in a low stress environment where there is discussion on a pre-determined threat.) Participants have a chance to identify strengths and weaknesses in the areas of planning, communication & notification, and policies & procedures within their agencies.

During the functional exercise, the focus turned to communication interoperability. How will we communicate internally between courthouse employees, and externally between the Sheriff's Office 911 Communications Center and all the various emergency response agencies?

Between the tabletop and functional exercises in 2014 and the full-scale exercise this September, the department staff in the courthouse along with all emergency response agencies had the opportunity to review an After Action Report (AAR) from the tabletop and functional exercises. The AAR included an improvement matrix which list things that went well, but more importantly, areas that need improvement.

All courthouse offices and emergency response agencies then had the opportunity to revise their policies and procedures and attend any training necessary to improve on any deficiencies noted in the tabletop and functional exercises.

The full-scale exercise was the culmination of a year of planning. A full-scale exercise involves the movement of personnel and equipment to emulate a real life incident. Eighty-five people participated in the exercise including courthouse employees, county board members, law enforcement, fire and EMS from throughout the county along with the Sheriff's Office 911 Communications Center.

*Exercise objectives were identified from a list of five core capabilities.*

- Operational Communications
- Mass Search & Rescue
- Public Health & Medical Services
- Critical Transportation
- Community Resilience

Judging from participant feedback forms, the full-scale exercise was well received. The exercise required courthouse employees to make decisions related to personal protection, evacuation and communication. After the exercise, Wisconsin Emergency Management put on a breakout session on Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP).

Florence County emergency response agencies were able to perform critical functions such as incident command, search and rescue, triage and patient transportation. The exercise also allowed the Sheriff's Office 911 Center to test paging, notification, and communication interopera-

bility.

Not everything went smoothly. There is always room for improvement but by conducting these exercises, I believe our county employees and Florence County will be better prepared to respond to an actual incident.

I would like to thank the county board for their support, all the county employees and county emergency response agencies that participated in the exercise.

*David Gribble – Florence County  
Emergency Management Director*

**Available  
24/7**

## Prescription Drug DROP BOX

**Safely dispose of expired or  
unused prescription pills!**

*Located in the lobby of the  
Florence County  
Sheriff's Department*

**Sharps disposal available at the  
Florence County Health  
Department during regular  
business hours.  
Call 715-528-4837  
for more information.**

*A message from*

Florence County Mental  
Health & AODA Coalition



# *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of Florence County*

Nearly a year ago, the Florence School District's Board of Education and administration began recognizing the benefit of a more thorough understanding of the District's current and future facility needs. While the building sites and equipment have been very well maintained over many years, some of the infrastructure has gone well beyond its expected service life. Parts of the facility including the oldest structure built during the 1930's, and the more recent 1950's and 1970's additions, are also to the point where necessary maintenance costs may exceed the cost of upgrades or replacements. This has led to seeking a comprehensive review of the school buildings, equipment, classrooms, and the overall compatibility with student, staff and community needs and services.

During the late winter months of 2014, requests were put out for proposals for a detailed facility's assessment. After three different levels of interviews of several reputable companies, the School Board made a selection based upon consideration of the cost of the study, familiarity with the needs of northern Wisconsin schools along with organizing community participation. The Board selected Bray Architect and Miron Construction to lead the District in this thorough study.

Bray Architect is an architectural firm based in Sheboygan, Wisconsin that has been in business for 53 years. They began as a firm with a focus on K-12 educational design, and to this day, are recognized for their experience in modernization of existing school facilities across the state.

Miron Construction is a privately-held corporation that has been a premier builder in the Midwestern part of the country, headquartered here in Wisconsin. Miron has been a leader in the construction industry, remodeling and building private and public facilities for more than 60 years, and has completed more than 100 projects in the past decade alone. These two firms have worked together in collaboration for many years, and have formed a strong partnership that has led to many successful solutions to local district facility needs.

Upon selection of the respective firms, the next step was to form a diverse group of community members that were representative of the variety of viewpoints of Florence County citizens. Volunteers were sought from each township by school administration, school board members and other interested parties to form a Facility Task Force. Of the 20 member group, more than a dozen individuals are not directly affiliated with school, and this group also includes a resident teacher from each building. The individuals have volunteered to commit their time and energy to guide this detailed study and encourage community discussion. An ad-hoc committee of school board members and administration stand by to solely provide data and answer questions for the Task Force members during their study of the numerous detailed reports. Using the community's input and feedback, the Task Force will conclude by making a recommendation to the full Board of Education as to how to proceed.

Community feedback during this process is absolutely essential. A realistic and affordable solution can only be achieved through consistent, widespread correspondence from all stakeholders back to the Task Force. We encourage all county residents to voice their thoughts in this matter as we proceed in the coming months. This can be done via outreach to any of the Facility Task Force members or school board members.

Member of the board of education are: Jim Churchill, Ron Yadro, Don Dumke, Linda Opsahl, Tom Jonet, Shawn McLain and Jim Gehlhoff; members of the Facility Task Force are: Cary Anderson, Jeanne Richard, Mike Demko, Debra DeMuri, Dwaine Drewa, Kent Walhlstrom, Margie Yadro, Mick Mlinar, Mike Theis, Mike Veirzba, Pam Smith, Wendy Gehlhoff, Ben Neuens, and Ed Kelly.



The Task Force has met several times over the course of the past few months and now will begin prioritizing the needs, suggested recommendations and potential options for the foreseeable future. The dates of the last four meetings have been tentatively scheduled for:

- December 9, 2015 at 6:30 PM at Hillcrest Elementary in Aurora
- The remaining three meetings are scheduled for 6:30 PM at Florence High School, Room 215 on the following dates: January 13, March 16, and April 13.

Once again, **community input is essential** for the best possible outcome that provides realistic and affordable solutions for our community to continue providing educational opportunities and successes for our students well into the foreseeable future.

Sincerely,

*Jim Churchill*

Jim Churchill, President of the School District of Florence County School Board

## Cooperators pursue legislative action

Several Florence County Supervisors meet regularly with representatives from the Wisconsin Towns Association, the Florence School District and area state and federal legislators to become informed, discuss potential impacts, and take advisory action on legislative matters.

During 2015, the Florence County Legislative Advisory Committee along with the entire Board of Supervisors requested state and federal legislators to protect local and regional interests for area residents and visitors, businesses, public services, and the school district, while also being responsible environmental stewards of the land and water.

Highlights included action aimed at: increasing U.S. forest land timber harvests through the Good Neighbor Authority program; supporting grant dollars for revitalizing rail cars used for log transportation; increasing the ease of implementing community Tax Incremental Districts that grow jobs, services and products; strengthening the Secure Rural Schools pro-

gram, and Payment in Lieu of Taxes that offsets public budgets affected by untaxable federal forest properties; preventing increases to Medicare premiums, and requiring more information on insurance benefits listed on the American Health Benefit Exchange; seeking a state share for operating the Florence Wild Rivers Interpretive Center that houses local, state and federal agencies and services; fulfilling state funding pledges to public school districts; increasing emergency services cooperation across state lines; limiting timber impacts from Environmental Protection Agency rulings on unrelated risks to endangered species; promoting proper management of wolf populations; seeking e-waste as eligible coverage of the recycling grant program; and increasing funding for invasive species management, and much more. This committee encourages all to take an active role in communicating with legislative representatives on their proposals found at [legis.wisconsin.gov](http://legis.wisconsin.gov).



## “Above the Influence” campaign begins

The Florence County AODA and Mental Health Coalition are collaborating with the Florence County High School Student Council to make the community more aware of the Above the Influence campaign. The Above the Influence campaign’s purpose is to influence youth to be above the negative influence of drugs, alcohol and peer pressure. You can get more facts on the school website or above the influence.com.



### Holiday Prep Checklist

- Shopping
- Baking
- Wrap gifts
- Holiday card list
- Get flu shot

Getting the flu would put a real damper on your holiday festivities. Get vaccinated. [www.flu.wi.gov](http://www.flu.wi.gov)

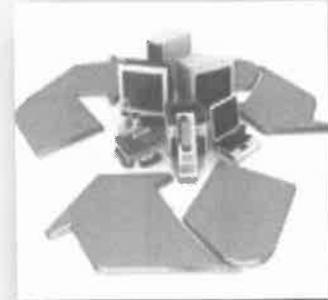
# Florence County Zoning and Recycling

Florence County experienced moderate growth in the construction of new one and two-family homes this year.

The following are rule changes in shoreland zoning:

*On July 12, 2015 Governor Walker signed 2015-17 biennial budget (Act 55) which modifies the shoreland zoning provisions. Act 55 was enacted July 12, 2015, published July 13, 2015, and took effect July 14, 2015. The changes to s. 59.692 went into effect the day after publication.*

- As part of its approval process for a conditional use permit, a county may not impose on a conditional use permit a requirement that is preempted by federal or state law.
- A shoreland zoning ordinance may not regulate a matter more restrictively than the matter is regulated by a shoreland zoning standard.
- A shoreland zoning ordinance may not require a person to establish a vegetative buffer on previously developed land or expand an existing vegetative buffer.
- A shoreland zoning ordinance may not impair the interest of the landowner by containing language that does any of the following:
  - ⇒ Regulates outdoor lighting for residential use.
  - ⇒ Regulates the maintenance, repair, replacement, restoration, rebuilding or remodeling of a nonconforming structure if the activity does not expand the footprint. No approval, fee or mitigation required.
  - ⇒ Requires the inspection or upgrade of the structure before the sale/transfer of the structure may be made.
  - ⇒ Regulates the vertical expansion of a nonconforming structure unless the expansion is greater than 35' above grade level. No approval, fee or mitigation required.
  - ⇒ Establish standards for impervious surfaces unless the standards provide that a surface is considered pervious if the runoff from the surface is treated by a device or system, or is discharged to an internally drained pervious area that retains the runoff on or off the parcel to allow infiltration into the soil. Essentially, NR 15.05(1)(e)3m becomes shall instead of may. Also note the inclusion of the word "off."
  - ⇒ Regulates the construction of a structure on a substandard lot in a manner that is more restrictive than the shoreland zoning standards. This reiterates the language in Act 170.
- The DNR may not issue an opinion on whether or not a variance should be granted or denied without the request of a county BOA.
- The DNR may not appeal a BOA decision.
- County shoreland zoning ordinances, construction site erosion control and stormwater management ordinances and city/village wetland zoning ordinances do not apply to lands adjacent to artificially constructed drainage ditches, ponds, or stormwater retention basins that are not hydrologically connected to a natural navigable water body.
- A county shoreland zoning ordinance may require a vegetative buffer to be maintained, provided that a 35' viewing corridor for every 100' is allowed and the viewing corridor is allowed to run contiguously for the entire maximum width.
- The DNR establish shoreland zoning standards for vertical and lateral expansion. A county can enact a shoreland ordinance that allows the vertical or lateral expansion of a nonconforming structure if the ordinance does not conflict with the shoreland standards of the DNR.



## Electronics recycling in Florence County

Electronics are one of the fastest growing parts of the waste stream, with millions of devices discarded each year in the United States. Computers, TVs, cell phones and other electronics contain valuable materials that can be recovered through responsible recycling. Electronics also contain potentially hazardous materials, such as lead and mercury that can pose a risk to human health and the environment if not properly managed. Wisconsin's electronics recycling law keeps many devices out of landfills and preserves valuable resources. The law requires many local governments to educate their residents about electronics recycling. Currently the Townships of Florence, Commonwealth, Fence, Fern, Long Lake and Tipler accept electronic waste at their drop off sites for a small fee. Please check with your respective township for the cost to recycle electronic waste.

## *Florence County Health Department connects you to a better life*

Do you know about the services available at the Health Department? Public health departments are mandated by law to provide certain essential services such as rabies, communicable disease and human health hazard investigations. At the Florence County Health Department (FCHD), in addition to meeting statutory requirements, it is our mission to connect you to a better life through excellent customer service, compassionate care, commitment to quality, and collaboration with community partners. Here are just a few of the exciting things that are happening at the Health Department:

### **Emergency Preparedness**

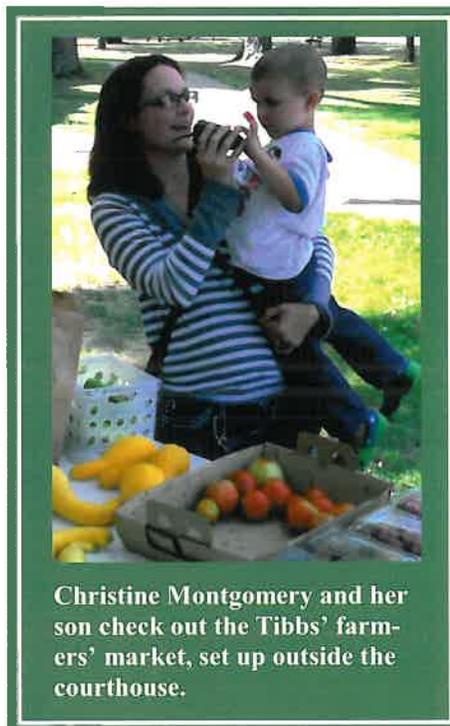
The public health emergency preparedness grant supports plans and exercises in mass clinics to plan for emergency scenarios we hope to never actually experience! In 2015, we exercised our mass clinic during the flu and adolescent clinic at the Florence High School where we gave 72 vaccinations. Thank you to all the community volunteers who helped make the clinic successful.

### **Immunizations**

We provide immunizations through the Vaccine for Children program through the Center for Disease Control (CDC). This program allows Health Departments to provide free vaccinations for Medicaid eligible children or families without insurance for vaccines. Several vaccines are available for adults including hepatitis B, hepatitis A, and Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria & pertussis). Because no other provider in Florence offered it, in 2014 we began

offering the shingles vaccine to adults. Call to schedule your appointment today.

### **Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)**



Christine Montgomery and her son check out the Tibbs' farmers' market, set up outside the courthouse.

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program for income-eligible pregnant and postpartum women and families with children under age 5. WIC provides nutrition education and support with a registered nurse and registered dietitian to an average of 50 participants in the county. New this year was a switch from paper checks to a much more convenient eWIC debit card. If you or a family member qualifies for the WIC program, contact the Health Department – we welcome new participants!

### **Radon testing**

Can you name the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers? It's radon - and getting your home tested is easy! It doesn't matter if

your home is old or new, it still needs to be tested for radon. Kits are regularly \$10, but offered free in January 2016 from a state Radon Grant.

### **Water testing**

Private wells should be tested annually for bacteria and nitrates. Kits are available at the Health Department though processing is done at the State Lab of Hygiene for a small fee to the homeowner. The Health Department received a grant and will be offering free arsenic testing to Florence County residents through March 30, 2016.

### **Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)**

At the beginning of 2015, a five-year CHIP was created with cooperation of over thirty community stakeholders. The process identified top health concerns in the county and ultimately resulted in the creation of a new Alcohol & Other Drug/Mental Health (AODA/MH) Coalition to work toward decreasing substance abuse and increasing resources for treatment and education. The coalition welcomes new members, so please contact the Health Department if you would like to participate.

### **Accreditation**

FCHD submitted an application for voluntary National Public Health Accreditation during the third quarter of 2015. The health officer and public health nurse attended preliminary training in November. Accreditation is a long process which will culminate with a decision by the Public Health Accreditation Board in late 2016 or early 2017. Accreditation provides the community with the assurance that your local Health Department meets national standards of quality.

**WISCONSIN *is* BETTER**

**SMOKE-FREE**

*Administrator: Patrick Smith  
Business Manager: Mary Podnar  
Parks/Ski Hill Manager: Rudy Vassar*



*Assistant Administrator: Andrew Nault  
Forester/Recreation Coordinator: Eric Brolin  
Assistant Parks/Ski Hill Manager: Aaron Johnson*

The Florence County Forestry & Parks Department provides services including forest management plans, timber sales, reforestation, wildlife management and recreational services.

### **FORESTRY**

The County owns and manages more than 36,000 acres of forest and it sure has been a busy year out there! Currently - it has 11 active timber sales and during the Spring and Fall Bidding process, sold 10 sales valued at more than \$1.4 million dollars. The Department has had a record setting year for revenues received as well – we are up to \$1.5 million dollars and counting!! Let's hope 2016 is another active and safe year on the County forest.

### **PROJECTS / GRANTS**

Florence County Forestry and Parks Department currently has 25 open projects which are funded primarily through state and federal grants awarded by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Of these 25 open grants – 15 were awarded this year for a total of \$411,560. The majority of these projects are for maintenance on Florence County recreational trails which include hiking, hunting, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, ATV/UTV, and snowmobile trails. Other grants awarded this year are for new boat landings, shooting range renovations and trail development.

#### ***Highlights from 2015 include:***

- A bridge development project over the Brule River in the town of Tipler. A 275' wooden trestle approach was constructed and

connected to an existing abandoned steel train bridge. The bridge was rehabilitated for safe use by ATV/UTV's and snowmobiles. This bridge provides a major connection to the Iron and Dickinson Counties' ATV/UTV and snowmobile trail systems.

- A section on the "F15" ATV/UTV trail was completed this summer. It was capped with crushed gravel to repair the degrading sandy surface that originally existed. This 2 mile section is located north of Burma Road.



*Here are a few projects the County can look forward to:*

- A new County owned boat landing will be created on the Menominee River off of Romitti Drive in Spread Eagle. Another County boat landing will be renovated on Sea Lion Lake. Both of these boat landings will include restroom facilities, parking, and docks that are handicap accessible. Construction bids for these projects will be open to the public this winter with work starting during the summer of 2016.
- The Florence County Rifle Range received grant funding for renovations to the range's facilities.

These renovations include handicap accessible paths to ranges and shooting benches, berm improvements, and resurfacing of the access roads and parking areas.

- The "F15" ATV/UTV trail between the LaSalle Falls and Halls Creek Dam Road is set to undergo construction in the summer of 2016. This trail is in need of rehabilitation due to a very rough and rocky surface. Larger rocks will be removed and the trail will receive new gravel and iron ore to re-establish safe riding conditions.
- The "F5" ATV/UTV trail will see some changes in the summer of 2016 as well. This trail currently crosses County Highway C at the intersection of Fire Tower Road and Fire Lane Road. The new trail will use the existing snowmobile trail which parallels Sunrise Road and crosses County Highway C in a different location than it currently does. This new trail will keep ATV/UTV traffic from crossing the highway at the busy highway intersection and keep them off of a town road.
- The Menominee River train bridge in Spread Eagle also received funding last year and should be under construction by next summer. This is a 379' long train bridge that will have railings and decking replaced for safe use by ATV/UTV's and snowmobiles. This bridge is another major connection to the Iron and Dickinson Counties' ATV/UTV and snowmobile trail systems.

## KEYES PEAK RECREATION AREA

Activities available at Keyes Peak just keep getting better and better!!! Keyes Peak Recreation Area has added a new attraction; a disc golf course running up and down Keyes Peak. This free course winds through the woods and along the ski slope with holes ranging from 137 foot par 3 to a 420 foot par 4. Par on this 9 hole course is 29. The signature hole, #7, starts at the top of Keyes Peak with a beautiful view of Keyes Lake and the Ski Lodge down below. This hole boasts the longest vertical drop of any disc golf course in Wisconsin and offers a great fall colors photo-op. If you don't own your own discs, you may sign out a set of discs from Keyes Lake Campground located next to Keyes Peak.

Keyes Peak Recreation Area also offers a free snowshoe trail network adjacent to Keyes Peak Ski Hill. This trail network contains multiple loops and is signed with the new Chickadee Trail logo. Volunteers created the new trail network this fall. The trails wind through the tall pines and mixed hardwoods left of the snow tubing run and traverse a small babbling brook. The packed trails are suitable for all snowshoe types. The ski lodge has several pair of kid sized snowshoes to sign-out and hopes to add more sizes for those who have never tried snowshoeing. If you own snowshoes that you no longer use, please consider donating them to the Lodge. Snowshoeing is great exercise and a wonderful cure for cabin fever.

Keyes Peak Ski Hill is open Friday-Sunday and other non-school days. It offers 6 runs and rails and jumps for snowboarders. Snow tubing is a favorite at Keyes Peak. Newly added is a beginner snow tubing run next to the bunny hill for younger kids and those not ready for the longer, faster tube run from the top of the hill. A family season pass is only \$150 and daily lift tickets range from \$8-\$12.

The Forestry and Parks Department would like to thank all the dedicated volunteers who help maintain our trail systems and recreation areas. Volunteers from the Blue Ox Trail Riders, Ski Hill Committee, Northern Saddle Club, Sportsmen Club, Lake Associations – all work together to make Florence County a safe and fun place to “play”!!!

For maps or information on any of these activities or services, please call the Florence County Forestry & Parks Department at 715-528-3207 or stop by.



We are located at the Natural Resource Center at 5617 Forestry Drive, Florence, WI 54121.

## Florence County Highway Department Year in Review – 2015

The year of 2015 has seen two big changes for the Highway Department. We said goodbye to a long serving employee,

Frances Freeberg, who retired at the end of September. Francie had worked nearly 48 years with our department, and her experience and ded-



ication will surely be missed. With Francie's departure, it opened the doorway for Tiffany White to step in. Tiffany has come from the private sector side over to the county government with a great attitude and willingness to take on any change that will come her way.

The Highway Department also completed a very necessary project from start to finish, the resurfacing of County Trunk Highway "N". With an average daily traffic of over 1,500 vehicles a day, it is the backbone of our County roads system. County Highway personnel replaced numerous culverts as well as ditching over the last two years in preparation of the project. Many safety improvements were also incorporated into the project, such as some road and curve grade changes near the Pine River, new guardrail and wider blacktop shoulders. This project was several years in the making and has been a real benefit to the citizens of Florence County.

*Highway Commissioner,  
Jeff DeMuri*

## Welcome to the Florence County Library!

Did you know you can get a library card for free if you are a resident of Florence County? Not only does the Florence County Library provide state-wide access to books and other traditional hard-copy materials, we also provide access to audio books, DVDs, free Wi-Fi, tablets for check-out, online ordering through infoup, and free downloads of thousands of electronic materials through Overdrive (Wisconsin's Digital Library Account Technology). We also offer programming for all ages such as 'reading for tots', animal demonstrations, art and craft exhibits, free movies with our in-house theater, and much more. And for our Aurora residents, we also deliver materials to the State Bank of Florence Aurora Branch for your convenience.

### Recognitions

Through the Mead Witter Grant of \$5,000 we received last year, the library was able to purchase numerous materials to add to our collection. Our "Friends of the Florence County Library" also received a \$1,000 grant from the Kimberly Clark Community Foundations Program and additional funds from Dickinson County and Shopko.

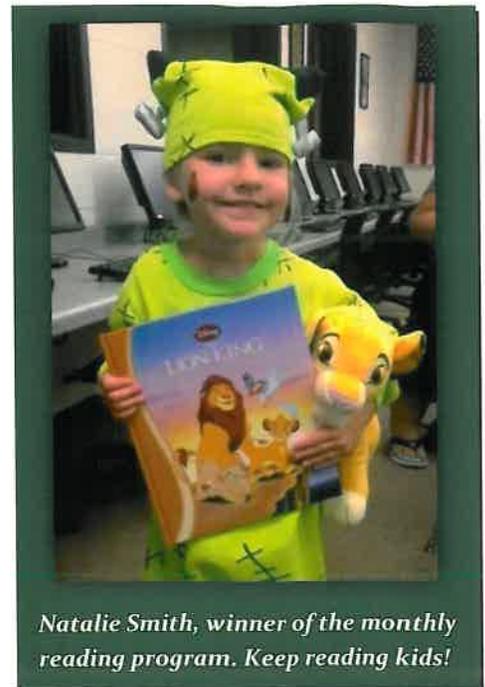


### Nicolet Federated Library System Board Visits Our Library

Nicolet Federated Library System Board (NFLS) visited the Florence County Public Library this year. The visit was prompted by the NFLS's curiosity about the numerous improvements recently implemented at the Florence Library. The counties represented in the visit were Brown, Marinette, Shawano, Oconto and Florence. After a personnel committee meeting, Florence County Public Library Director Stephanie Weber gave a tour of the updated facility, which includes donated new library furniture and shelving, new computers and smart pads, and a theater system which has increased programming for the community. Lunch was provided with the help of the Friends of the Library. The NFLS board was impressed not only with the improvements at the library, but the entire Florence community in helping to make this happen.

### Technology

The library increased the computer space to 9 stations this year! The stations are kept up-to-date with the latest technology available. In addition to these 9 stations available to the public, there are an additional 10 stations available for student homework.



Natalie Smith, winner of the monthly reading program. Keep reading kids!

### "Friends of the Florence County Library"

The "Friends of the Florence County Library" are instrumental in improving services at the library. Money raised by this group is used to sponsor monthly events and special events throughout the year. It is not only the additional funding that they support the library with, but it is the time and volunteerism that the group gives in support of the library that makes this such a special group of people. The Florence County Library is a special place in our community. It is where the community can come together. Thank you to everyone throughout the year and to all those that support the joint school and county public library partnership!

## HPV vaccine is Cancer Prevention.

Talk to the doctor about vaccinating your 11-12 year old sons and daughters against HPV

The HPV vaccine can be given thru Age 26



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
**Florence County Health Department**

# Florence County Treasurer/Property Listing/ and Information Office

JoAnne Friberg, County Treasurer  
Property Lister/LIO Officer

Donna Liebergen & Erica Hallgren  
Deputy Treasurers



## CLERK OF COURT/ REGISTER IN PROBATE

You will see a new part time employee in our office, Erica Hallgren. Erica lives in Homestead with her husband and two daughters. Welcome aboard Erica!

We are now accepting another service for payment of fines and fees. This service also allows for posting bond, which is different from our State payment website. The website is [www.GovPayNow.com](http://www.GovPayNow.com). Our State website is still available to pay fines and fees, [www.wicourts.gov/ecourts/payonline.htm](http://www.wicourts.gov/ecourts/payonline.htm).

If you need forms for filing in most of our case types, visit the State website at [www.wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit/index.htm](http://www.wicourts.gov/forms1/circuit/index.htm).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Billie McLain, Erica Hallgren, or myself at 715-528-3205.

*Tanya Neuens – Clerk of Court/  
Register in Probate*

**The Treasurer** receipts all funds coming into the county, records all disbursements, reconciles all bank accounts, invests any excess funds, prepares periodic reports for County Board members and various State departments, and assists all eight towns with their tax collections, tax settlements, and any other financial reports needed.

**The Property Lister** prepares and maintains accurate property records for the whole county, including the parcel database, parcel maps, and the county plat book. This provides data for other county departments, all eight towns, their assessors, property owners, realtors/banks/abstractors/

surveyors/utilities/lawyers/etc., and various State departments.

**The Land Information Office** oversees the County's participation in the Wisconsin Land Information Program. This includes coordinating land information projects within the county, writing and monitoring the Program's annual grants, updating the County-wide Plan for Land Records Modernization, and answering all reports and surveys required by the WLI Program.

**Please note:** The Florence County website ([www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com)) has a wealth of information – including property tax records. You can search by name or parcel number; the current tax information is usually available mid-December every year.

## Register of Deeds Office

The Register of Deeds Office is now e-recording. We also have our documents out online. So please visit the Florence County Website and take a look at your deeds. The link to this site will be available under Florence County Land Records.

As you know the documents on this site will go back from 1984 to present. If you want to do a more intense search, you will have to make a visit to our office. We house all the recorded documents back to 1882 when Florence became Florence County.

Our office consists of two people. Pattie Gehlhoff the Register of Deeds and Laurie Boren the Deputy Register of Deeds. Both Laurie and I want to wish you all a Very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Thank you,

*Pattie M. Gehlhoff*

Register of Deeds

# Help Today for a Better Tomorrow

- ◆ Do you know that the ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) of Florence County provides free information and guidance, as well as access to a wide variety of services that can help make the life of an older person or a person with a disability a little bit easier?
- ◆ Do you know the ADRC assists a person regardless of his or her level of income?
- ◆ Do you know the ADRC offers the Senior Nutrition Program, Caregiver Support Programs, Transportation, Elder Benefits Counseling, Disability Benefits Counseling, Information, Assistance, and help in understanding your options and making choices about Long Term Care needs?

ADRC staff are happy to help you find the answers to the questions you have about caregiving, healthy aging or living with a disability.

During 2015, the ADRC of Florence County provided information, assistance and referrals to over 502 unduplicated individuals. Over the past year, and with the help of the community and board members, the



ADRC has provided assistance with more than 1,300 phone calls, assisted 35 individuals referred from area nursing homes, served more than 10,000 meals through the congregate and home-bound meal programs, completed a meal-site revitalization project at Woodland Center in Aurora, assisted more than 200 county residents with Elder or Disability Benefits counseling, completed its three year plan, conducted a county-wide transportation needs survey, identified Hospice Care as an unmet need in Florence County as well as provided advocacy and assistance to help develop Hospice Care, created a

caregiver resource library, and provided several workshops including Welcome to Medicare, Smart Driver course, and a Caregiver Workshop.

The ADRC is located in the historic Florence County Courthouse, 501 Lake Avenue, Lower Level room 125. You may also reach the ADRC by phoning 715-528-4890, or toll-free 1-855-528-ADRC (2372). Find the ADRC on the web by visiting [www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com). On the right hand menu, click on Aging and Disability Resource Center. The ADRC is here today to help you plan for tomorrow.

## District Attorney's Office Programs and Services

The Florence County District Attorney's Office consists of two employees: Doug Drexler, who is the elected part-time DA, and Jessica McCoy, with a dual role of DA Secretary and Victim/Witness Coordinator.

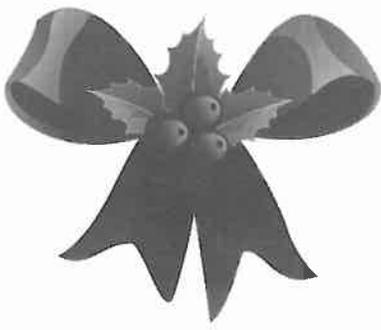
If you are victim of a crime, report the crime to the Sheriff's Department, and they will investigate the case and refer the case to the DA's Office for prosecution.

Victims have rights just as much as defendants have rights. Victims have the right and deserve to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect.

### *Victim/Witness Programs provide:*

- ◆ Information about victims' rights and how to exercise them
- ◆ Specific information about when and where the case will be heard
- ◆ Notice of hearings, cancellations or rescheduled court hearings, and the final outcome of the case
- ◆ Support for appearance in court by providing a separate waiting area and someone to go with to court
- ◆ Help with preparing a victim impact statement
- ◆ Information to the court about financial loss (restitution)
- ◆ Assistance with safety concerns
- ◆ Assistance to confer with the prosecutor
- ◆ Referrals to other sources of help, including domestic abuse programs, sexual assault programs, social services agencies, support groups and the Crime Victim Compensation Program.

The Florence County District Attorney and Victim Witness Office is located on the second floor of the courthouse. Please feel free to stop in or call at 715-528-3362.



# Happy Holidays

## *Florence County Land Conservation Committee*

**Members:** Chairman Ed Wenger, Vice Chairwoman Yvonne VanPembrook; Supervisors Edwin Kelley, Jeanette Bomberg, Gary Steber and Susan Theer; and, Farm Service Agency Representative Todd Broullire.

## Florence County **LAND AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

In 2015, several soil and water stewardship projects were completed and more pursued in Florence County.

The year kicked off by supporting the installation of a fish spawning reef on Lake Emily. Prioritized by the Land Conservation Committee members, a Lumberjack Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) grant was applied to this significant fisheries improvement project brought forward by dedicated local volunteers: Gary VanBellinger, Ron Raboin, Dan Doyle and members of the Lake Emily Lake Association. Local, state, and federal stakeholders found solutions which led to literally tons of rock hauled out on the ice on a crisp sub-zero day in February. This project, supported by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Fisheries Biologist Greg Matzke, who stated that even though there is no guarantee in results from improving habitat for the natural reproduction of walleye in the lake, he followed with..., "If the reef does work, we will see a walleye population larger than we have ever seen there, which is something that everyone involved felt was worth rolling the dice for!" Special thanks for all involved.

New this year to Land Conservation was the development of a county-

wide Invasive Species Council. A committed group of interested property owners, lake association members, town and county board supervisors, and department and agency staff offered to participate in the identification of invasive species prevention and management strategies for the area. The Council has recently requested funding to continue with a Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) boater inspection program located at high volume/source waters throughout the county. During this past season, boaters started hitting the water around the end of May and likely came across watercraft inspectors at 11 public boat landings within Florence County. A CBCW grant provided seasonal jobs to 14 Land Conservation Department staff members to cover these landings throughout the peak times of the summer. Some were even combined with boat wash units like the one at North Lake where members of the Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes Association partnered with the county to extend the boater inspector program. Preliminary data collected shows that 4,880 people were contacted this season and assisted with cleaning their boats while raising the public's awareness

in methods used to slow the spread of invasive species. The Council is also looking at the impacts of terrestrial plant management. Some invasive species are known to cause human health concern like Wild Parsnip that can leave burns on the skin once the sap of the plant touches skin that is then exposed to sunlight. The Council is developing a tool box for treatment options and working with the regional partners of the Wild Rivers Invasive Species Coalition for education and networking resources.

Through the Land Conservation Department's primary funder, Wisconsin's Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), two erosion control water quality projects were also constructed this year. A culvert replacement was installed at a crossing of the Lamont Tanguie Creek, and at a crossing of the Long Lake Outlet. These were engineered, permitted and constructed through township, county and state cooperative agreements and cost-share benefits. Also, a \$150,000 grant through the Mitigation and Enhancement Funds (MEF) has just been announced for restoration of aquatic watershed connectivity in the Pine and Popple River Watersheds. Sites are currently being selected.

# Advocates for Hospice: Caring at the End of Life

The ADRC of Florence County, along with a caring group of citizens, have been working to bring a Hospice Care agency to Florence County. Hospice care, which is often times misunderstood, provides end-of-life care to terminally ill. Hospice uses a team approach to care which may include various levels of medical, spiritual, personal, and respite care. The Advocates for Hospice group is working with Aspirus to develop a network of professional providers, as well as community volunteers. If all goes as

planned, Aspirus expects to offer hospice care in Florence County by June of 2016.

An important aspect of hospice care is volunteers. Volunteers are caring individuals who provide much needed support to the terminally ill person, and to that person's family. Assistance provided by hospice care volunteers may include helping with: paperwork, shopping or running errands, preparing meals, laundry & light housekeeping, yard work (mowing, raking, plowing, etc.), transportation, companionship, and

keeping vigil at the bedside.

If you would like to help Advocates for Hospice build their professional network, or be a hospice volunteer, please contact Marilyn Lutz at 906-779-0903, or the ADRC of Florence County at 715-528-4890. We look forward to hearing from you and to your commitment to help provide quality care to our county's residents.



## NOW ENROLLING Children & Families!

Florence County Human Services is excited to announce its partnership with Family and Child Learning Centers of Northeast Wisconsin by adding the Early Head Start Home Based Program to its service delivery model!

Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to income eligible infants and toddlers and their families, as well as pregnant women and their families.

Applications are currently being accepted into this program based on Eligibility Selection Criteria as outlined in the federal regulations and approved by the Policy Council.

For an application or for more information, please contact Allysa Kerschler at 715-528-3476 or Family and Child Learning Centers at 715-369-5688 or visit their website at [felcheadstart.org](http://felcheadstart.org).

### FLORENCE COUNTY RESIDENTS

## - HEATING ASSISTANCE -

With frigid weather making its way into northern Wisconsin, you may be starting to wonder how you will pay heating costs during another long, cold winter. The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) is taking applications now through May 15, 2016. The WHEAP program provides partial assistance for heating and electric costs and may help in crisis situations. The amount of assistance varies according to household size, income level, and household heating costs.

### INCOME GUIDELINES

<u>HOUSEHOLD SIZE</u>	<u>1 MONTH GROSS</u>	<u>3 MONTHS GROSS</u>
1	\$2,133.00	\$6,400.00
2	\$2,790.00	\$8,370.00
3	\$3,446.00	\$10,339.00
4	\$4,103.00	\$12,308.00
5	\$4,759.00	\$14,277.00
6	\$5,416.00	\$16,247.00
7	\$5,539.00	\$16,616.00
8	\$5,662.00	\$16,985.00

If you are interested to see if your household may be income eligible and you are a **Florence County Resident** please contact Breanna Thompson at **715-528-3497** or by email at [bthompson@co.florence.wi.us](mailto:bthompson@co.florence.wi.us) to set up an appointment. Please note that you have until May 15, 2016 to apply for assistance and the date in which you apply has no effect on your heating benefit. Please note that phone calls will be returned within two business days. Thank you for not leaving multiple messages as this will delay a response.

Your Florence County UW-Extension office offers a wide array of educational programming and services that have been identified through our many partnerships. By partnering with local government, schools, agencies and organizations, we address community needs, and build upon the many resources of our communities. In **2015 Extension staff and volunteers provided educational programming and services to 11,059 people**, with many participating in more than one event and/or service. All of our programming is guided by research-based best practices. We appreciate this opportunity to share some of the educational programs we offer.

- **Broadband Education** – *Learning about broadband, and what is available to people in the county*
- **Budgeting** – *Helping families learn ways to budget their finances*
- **Community Gardening** – *Providing the space and educational opportunities for all ages to garden*
- **Cooking for One** – *Easy ways to prepare and enjoy meals on your own*
- **Co-Parenting** – *Helping families transition through divorce or separation*
- **Criminal Justice** – *Preventing repeat offending*
- **Farm Management** – *Best practices in soil, crop, pest and livestock management*
- **Feeding Children** – *Nutritious, economical and tasty food that children enjoy*
- **Food Budgeting** – *Developing spending plans*
- **Food Safety** – *Keeping food safe to eat*
- **Food, Fun & Fitness** – *Summer day camps that get kids moving by growing and preparing fresh foods and exploring cultures, history and global events*
- **Fuel-up-to-Play-60** – *Empowering students to be active and eat healthy*
- **Garden Conference** – *An annual event offering workshops on various gardening related topics*
- **Glacial Gardeners Master Gardeners Volunteer Association (GGMGVA)** - *A volunteer organization of Extension. GGMGVA maintains public gardens, conducts plant sales and workshops with proceeds funding scholarships for high school students pursuing higher education in horticulture, agriculture or forestry*
- **Healthy Meals** – *Preparing low-cost healthful food*
- **Horticulture Education** – *Growing plants through a variety of hands-on workshops on the farm, in the orchard and in the garden*
- **Master Gardener Training** – *Intensive 14 week training in horticulture practices*
- **Natural Resource Education** – *High school students explore our natural environment, and learn about the economy and careers associated with it*
- **Outdoor Adventure** – *Summer day camp for middle school youth that gets them outdoors to explore the natural world and grow their self-confidence*
- **Parent Café** – *Creating opportunities for parents to come together in a relaxed environment to enjoy lively presentations, and to learn and share with each other*
- **Planning Menus** – *Saving money & time*
- **Pollinators** – *Promoting natural and built habitats to support native pollinators*
- **Raising Children** – *Helping parents find new exciting ways to navigate the challenging job of raising children*
- **Robotics** – *Summer day camp for youth to learn about science, technology, engineering and math while they create their own unique robots*
- **Sustainable Forestry Conference** – *Annually provides the latest information on forest management and industry, and offers continuing education credits*
- **Swimming Lessons** – *Teaching children water safety skills in partnership with the YMCA*
- **TORPEDOs** – *High school youth leadership*

(Continued on page 18)

**Volunteers** – Many of our programs include adult and youth volunteers. **In 2015 our local volunteers gave 3,943 hours of their time to benefit our communities. Those hours have a monetary value of \$87,692**, which is based on the current estimated dollar value of volunteer time in Wisconsin of \$22.24 per hour, from Independent Sector.

If you would like to learn more about these programs, or forthcoming changes to Extension, please contact your Florence County UW-Extension office at 715-528-4480 or visit us on the web at <http://florence.uwex.edu/>.

Sincerely,

**Corrin Seaman**, *Department Head & Community Resource Development*  
**Kathy Bednarski**, *Office Manager*  
**Meg Dallapiazza**, *4-H Youth Development*  
**Jenette Gunville**, *Family Living*  
**Terri Miller**, *Nutrition Coordinator*  
**Scott Reuss**, *Agriculture & Horticulture*  
**Jeanne Richard**, *Nutrition*  
**Carolyn Weber-Starling**, *Summer Horticulture Assistant*

Summer Swim



Food, Fun & Fitness

Everyone at the Florence County Sheriff's Office wants to thank you for allowing us to serve you for another year. Your financial and personal support enables us to meet our mission to be a valuable and effective resource for the people of Florence County.

We continue to work diligently towards our stated goals:

- To be responsive to our community needs.
- To provide efficient and effective law enforcement services.
- To work closely with all units of government.
- To support strong school safety programs, specifically in the areas of mentoring students, drug and alcohol prevention programs, and a high level of protective presence in all of our schools.

Briefly, our agency has had another busy year issuing 90 traffic violations which include 39 operating while intoxicated arrests, 8 arrests for operating while under the influence of drugs and a total of 55 drug arrests in the past year. We responded to 901 incidents requiring written reports and answered approximately 804 emergency calls during the year not to mention hundreds of non-emergency calls.

We would like to commend our fellow county employees for their interest and participation in the recent full scale exercise at the courthouse and thank the county board for their support of these important training efforts. Without the opportunity to work as a team, we could not have accomplished such a large project.

We remain committed to being Compassionate to the people we meet each day. Honest in our search for Justice. We are committed to treating all people with the respect and dignity they deserve. There is no greater mission than to serve you.

— Jeff Rickaby, Sheriff



## Even more “Green” at Florence High School

Mrs. Lambert’s Environmental Science Class helped identify a natural resource protection project at Florence High School. One of three water bottle filling stations has been installed with the first one replacing an older drinking fountain in the main hall. Students, staff and visitors have filled up over 7,500 water

bottles since August! With the help of the Florence County Health and Land Conservation Departments along with a grant from federal partner, Lumberjack RC&D, the School Board and maintenance crew have worked together to bring this “green” opportunity to the students and community and here is what they have to say —



- *“I like it so much better than the ones that people can touch and put their mouths on. It’s hands-free and so much cleaner. I think it keeps people healthier.”*
- *“Bottles fill up so much faster! I don’t have to worry about being late for classes or holding up the line to fill my water bottle.”*
- *“The water tastes so much better than out of the old fountain, and it’s colder. I definitely drink more water because it’s no t gross anymore.”*

### FLORENCE COUNTY CHILD SUPPORT AGENCY

Under contract with the Department of Children and Families, the Florence County Child Support Agency provides assistance to establish paternity; and also to establish and enforce child support and health insurance orders. Some of the specific services provided by the agency are:

- Establish paternity on behalf of the children whose parents are not married to each other at the time of the child’s birth.
- Establish court orders requiring parents to pay child support and to provide health care coverage for their children.
- Locate absent parents and assets as necessary to establish, enforce and collect child support and health insurance obligations.
- Enforce child support health insurance orders. Take administrative, civil, interstate and criminal actions as necessary to collect court ordered support.

#### 2015 Program Funding

The Child Support Agency is funded with a combination of federal, state and county dollars. Federal administrative cost reimbursement is the principal funding for the Agency. The Federal reimbursement rate for administrative costs is currently 66%. In addition to the administrative cost reimbursement, the Agency also receives performance incentives based on performance measures. The performance incentives are partially contingent upon the Agency meeting specific targets. The Agency met all four performance measures for Federal Fiscal Year 2014-2015.

MEASURE	AGENCY TARGET	AGENCY FFY 2013	AGENCY FFY 2014
Court Order Establishment	80% or greater	93.19%	93.68%
Paternity Establishment	90% or greater	94.85	98.58
Current Support Collections	80% or greater	84.10	81.95
Arrears Cases with Collections	80% or greater	77.44	80.14

You can apply for our services in the office at the Courthouse or online at <http://dcf.wisconsin.gov.bcs/default.htm> and we will get you started with the process for establishing a court order.

Florence County Connections Newsletter

P.O. Box 410  
Florence, WI 54121

[www.florencecountywi.com](http://www.florencecountywi.com)

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## POSTAL PATRON

(ECRWSS)



*Mary Butterfield enjoys growing foods at the Crossroads Community Garden for her family's traditional meals.*



### ***Crossroads Community Garden***

Completing two years of families growing, working, learning and celebrating together, the Crossroads Community Garden in Florence keeps getting better! Including 4 easy reach planting boxes, the 22 raised beds provided 15 families an opportunity to enjoy an abundance of fresh vegetables from spring through fall. Enclosing the garden is a 9 foot tall fence that excludes critters large and small. Climbing toys for the little ones, a community herb garden, picnic tables, water, and an outdoor classroom and tool shed all come together to make for an enjoyable and comfortable gardening experience. Through grant programs and in-kind efforts from county departments, schools, organizations, businesses, officials, and volunteers, the Crossroads Community Garden has become a place of pride and friendships. Plans for next season include additional easy reach beds, a children's sundial, a produce scale, a seed starting bench and cubbies for renters to store their hand tools. For more information about the garden and how you can rent a garden space, please call your Florence County UW-Extension office at 715-528-4480. Thank you to all of the gardeners and everyone who helped to make this a growing season of abundance and joy!