

FOCUS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE DESK OF WAUKESHA COUNTY EXECUTIVE
DANIEL P. VRAKAS



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Dear Friends,

I am pleased to tell you that Waukesha County's 2009 General Fund budget ended with a surplus of \$2 million, or 2.1% of the 2009 budget. This outcome was achieved in spite of recession based revenue shortfalls of \$1.5 million. This achievement is the result of outstanding budget and fiscal management at the County as well as a commitment by department heads and employees to hold the line on spending.

Many departments worked hard to keep personnel costs low. The Department of Public Works saved \$299,000 and the Clerk of Circuit Court operations saved nearly \$200,000 from position turnover and by holding positions vacant. An additional savings of nearly \$160,000 in personnel costs was achieved through a voluntary employee furlough program that ran from June through December of 2009.

Utility expenditures were under budget by approximately \$546,000 due to investments in energy conservation measures and favorable weather conditions that resulted in lower energy consumption. Investing in energy efficient equipment at the County was not only an effort to be more environmentally conscious, but ultimately to save tax dollars. We are now seeing cost savings and a return on our investment from these initiatives.

The Department of Parks and Land Use set aside more acres of naturalized parkland, requiring less mowing and maintenance efforts. This single initiative saved the County \$107,800 in personnel costs and additional dollars from the decrease in fuel consumption.

I am very proud of the outstanding work achieved Waukesha County administration and all county employees to minimize the fiscal impact on Waukesha County taxpayers. As we continue in 2010 and plan for the County's 2011 budget, we will continue to seek ways to save taxpayer dollars.

Sincerely,

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WAUKESHA COUNTY DRUG COLLECTION – MAY 8

Waukesha County Drug Free Communities will be holding a countywide prescription drug collection on Saturday, May 8th in an effort to reduce prescription drug abuse and accidental poisonings in Waukesha County as well as help protect local waterways.

Residents are invited to bring unwanted prescription medication, over the counter medication, ointments, sprays, inhalers, creams, vials, herbals and pet medications to the Waukesha County Drug Collection.

Drop off your items on Saturday, May 8 at the following locations:

- Community Memorial Hospital, Menomonee Falls (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- D.N. Greenwald Center, Mukwonago (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital, Oconomoc (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Ruby Isle, Brookfield (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- Waukesha State Bank, Downtown Waukesha (9 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- WCTC, Pewaukee (9 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

For more information, link to:
www.waukeshacounty.gov/drugcollection.

EARTH WEEK EXTRAVAGANZA

Join Retzer Nature Center on Saturday, April 24th, as they celebrate the 40th Earth Week, with a day of fun and adventure with Mother Earth - Sponsored by Kohl's Green Scene. Food will be available for purchase from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and all activities are free. Some of the events are listed below. For a full list of events please visit www.waukeshacountyparks.com.

Planetarium Shows (9, 10 and 11 a.m., noon, 1, 2 and 3 p.m.): “Endless Horizon”

This program, narrated by Patrick Stewart, describes the incredible voyages of early World Explorers. It then relates these voyages to modern science missions of space exploration. Free tickets for each show will be available starting at 8 a.m. at the Planetarium Ticket Office. Space is limited, so arrive early.

Noon - 5:00 PM: Family and Children Earth Day Activities “Recycled Beauty”

Fun and creative ways to use recyclable materials.

4:30 PM – 6:30 PM: Concert by Tom Pease

Before & after concert: Campfire Songs and S'mores

7:15 PM - 9:00 PM: Guided Twilight Hike

Our Magical Mystery Tour is a guided Twilight Hike into Brown's Fen Nature Area, featuring frogs and peepers, woodcocks, coyotes, stars, and constellations. The Fen is a place of mystery. We will have our own Treasure Hunt!



Earth Week events will take place at Retzer Nature Center, pictured above.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

WELCOME NEW COUNTY SUPERVISORS

After seven years of service to Waukesha County, Supervisor Bonnie Morris is retiring from the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors. Morris, who represents the County's 14th District, which covers portions of Oconomowoc, Summit and Dousman, has served as the Chair of Judiciary and Law Enforcement Committee since 2006. Mike Inda, of Oconomowoc, was elected to fill Morris's role as 14th District Supervisor.

Supervisor John Pledl also announced his retirement from the Board last year. Pledl, who represents the 23rd District, the City of Muskego, is retiring after one term on the Board. During his tenure, Pledl served on both the Judicial and Law Enforcement and Public Works Committees. Filling Pledl's seat will be Kathy Chiaverotti, a former City of Muskego alderwoman.

Both Inda and Chiaverotti will be sworn into office at the County Board's April 20th Organizational Meeting. County Board Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson will also be elected at the April 20th meeting.

RECOVERY FUNDS AVAILABLE

Waukesha County residents who experienced damage to their homes during the June, 2008 flooding may be eligible for funding through the Waukesha County Community Development Block Grant Emergency Assistance Program (CDBG-EAP). CDBG received a \$2,095,000 grant through the Department of Commerce to assist affected Waukesha County residents.

The program is designed to provide funding to low and moderate income, owner-occupied homeowners who experienced damage to their home. Households may receive grant money to repair damage to their property, reimbursement for insurance deductibles or non-reimbursed FEMA claims or to reimburse the cost of repairs previously completed caused by the flooding. No personal property losses can be reimbursed.

Dollars will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis to homeowners who are able to verify income and cost of damage via a home inspection and appropriate documentation.

For more information on the program or to receive an application, contact Lori Rutzinski by calling (262) 896-8169 or emailing lrutzinski@waukeshacounty.gov.



Many homes in Waukesha County were damaged by flooding in 2008.

“Waukesha County: Leading the Way ...”

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MENOMONEE FALLS EMERGENCY SCENARIO

On March 23, after nearly a year of planning and coordination, Waukesha County Emergency Management held a school-shooting emergency scenario exercise. The preparations for the event included specialized school crisis planning and training followed by a multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional tabletop exercise.

The exercise addressed two major objectives: providing a safe and controlled environment to test and evaluate emergency plans and to provide a hands-on training opportunity for emergency response personnel and school district staff. This type of experience is vital in developing and refining emergency plans.

Over 400 people participated in the exercise including Waukesha County Emergency Management, local students, parents, school staff and administrators, police agencies from across Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties, emergency medical services, Flight for Life and Community Memorial Hospital. The volunteer's commitment and willingness to participate provided a tremendous opportunity to help make Menomonee Falls, Waukesha County and our Southeast region of Wisconsin safer places to live, work and raise a family.



More than 400 individuals were part of the training exercise at Menomonee Falls High School.

WAUKESHA COUNTY CELEBRATES ANNUAL NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK

This week, Waukesha County and the Waukesha County Communications Center are celebrating the annual National Public Safety Telecommunications Week. This important week, recognized by the United States Congress, honors the thousands of men and women who respond to emergency calls, dispatch emergency professionals and equipment, and render life-saving assistance to citizens.

Waukesha County is proud to honor all telecommunications personnel in the public safety community for their continued efforts to preserve public safety in Waukesha County. The second week in April has been set aside so everyone can be made more aware of the hard work and dedication of these Telecommunicators, who provide a vital link to the public safety services on which we have come to rely on every day.



Follow County Executive Dan Vrakas on Twitter!

Username:
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