



Sheboygan County News

All Newsletters For County Employees Can Be Found At www.sheboygancounty.com

Sheboygan County Manages TB Outbreak

by Jean Beinemann, Interim Public Health Officer

2013 was an exceptionally challenging year for one extended Sheboygan County family affected by tuberculosis (TB)—a disease that many believe is no longer present in our community—and a challenging year for our County staff.

The Health and Human Services Department’s Division of Public Health (DPH) received a report in April that TB was suspected when a patient seeking care for depression and respiratory symptoms was seen at the new Lakeshore Community Health Center. The diagnosis was confirmed when further examination and tests were coordinated by our staff. Through that process, it was determined that the illness had been present for several months, placing others at risk of contracting the disease.

Contact investigations with the patient’s family and over 200 classmates and coworkers followed. Those investigations eventually confirmed an additional eleven cases – all occurring within the family unit and all requiring immediate treatment and disease con-

tainment. Included in the Department’s response was the need to arrange specialized housing to assure isolation as well as the need to make daily home visits to assure that medications were being taken as prescribed.

The demands of that effort quickly exceeded the capacity of our staff to manage them. In turn, several city, county, state, federal and other partners stepped in to help. Emergency Management Director Steve Steinhardt and County/City Purchasing Agent Bernie Rammer were foremost among them. The coordinated assistance of the Sheriff’s Department, the Sheboygan Police and Fire Departments, Sheboygan Schools, area health care providers, other county health departments, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control also served to help prevent a public health disaster.

Because the outbreak was discovered early in the year there was also a window of opportunity to request financial assistance in the

State’s 2013-15 budget plan. County Administrator Adam Payne and County Board Chairman Roger Te Stroete took the lead in working with our area legislators to secure unprecedented assistance as part of our response effort. In total, more than \$4 million was appropriated for the State’s TB Dispensary to pay for medications, other treatments, and staff time over the biennium should it be needed.

As a result of our success, calls have been received from around the country requesting information on how Sheboygan County addressed the outbreak and lessons learned – leading to a feature story aired on National Public Radio:

www.npr.org/blogs/health/.../tuberculosis-outbreak-shakes-wisconsin-city/

We are extremely fortunate to have had the assistance of so many willing partners, the support of our local leaders, and the excellent contributions of our County staff.

Volume 7, Issue 1

1st Quarter, 2014

Inside this issue:

Jacoby Receives State Award of Excellence	2
Sheboygan County Website Wins Awards	2
Discounts Offered to County Employees	2
Focus on Energy Presents Sheboygan County with \$45,222 Check	3
FMLASource Now Implementing Your Medical Leaves	3
2013 United Way Campaign Results	4

Inserts:

- Advancing Safety Initiatives at Sheboygan County
- Safety First—At Work and at Home
- Health & Human Services Building to See Improvements





Jacoby Receives State Award of Excellence

by Rachelle Valleskey, Rocky Knoll Administrator

Congratulations to Debra Jacoby, Activity Therapist at Rocky Knoll Health Care Center, who was awarded the Activity Professional Award of Excellence—Activity Assistant of the Year at the 35th annual Wisconsin Representatives of Activity Professionals (WRAP) Conference in Stevens Point in September. WRAP awards one activity assistant each year with

this outstanding award. Deb has worked at Rocky Knoll for the past 30 years and her daily work, positive attitude, and dedication to the field of long term care are exemplary. Deb took the initiative to bring technology to the residents by way of introducing Kindles, iPads, iPods, Skype, and email as forms of enhanced entertainment, music, and communica-

tion, and as a result, our residents enjoy a better quality of life. Deb is well deserving of this State award and honor, and is now being nominated at the National level. We wish her the best, and thank her for her admirable work.



Sheboygan County Website Wins Awards

by Adam Payne, County Administrator



Sheboygan County received two awards recently from the National Association of Government Web Professionals and the International Academy of the Visual Arts for its redesigned website launched earlier this year.

The first is “Gold W3 Award” which recognizes Sheboygan County’s website based on creativity, usability, navigation, functionality, visual design, and ease of use.

The second is a “Silver Davey Award,” which recognizes Sheboygan County’s website for distinctive creative work. With 4,000 entries from across the U.S. and around the world, the annual

Davey Awards honor the finest creative work from the best small media, advertising, and marketing firms worldwide.

I want to thank and acknowledge our IT Manager Josh McDermott and Finance/IT Director Terry Hanson for their leadership on this project. We are always striving for improvement, and it is nice to see our efforts recognized.

Discounts Offered to County Employees

by Bernie Rammer, Purchasing Agent

I am often asked if there are any discounts available to county employees for personal cell phones, smart phones, data plans, etc. At the present time, only Verizon Wireless is offering a discount to County employees. U.S. Cellular had offered a discounted rate, but they have discontinued their program. However, employees that were using the program prior to its discontinuation were grandfa-

thered and continue to enjoy those discounts.

Verizon Wireless currently offers a 15% discount on monthly service to all county employees. If the employee has a “share everything” plan (several phones on one account), the 15% discount is applied to the total monthly service charge. In addition, employees receive 25%



off accessories such as cases and chargers, and receive the lowest possible price on phones and equipment. These discounts are available

from any Verizon Wireless retail store by simply showing the sales associate your County I.D. Badge. If you have questions, don’t hesitate to contact me.





Focus on Energy Presents Sheboygan County with \$45,222 Check

by Jim TeBeest, Building Services Director

On October 3rd, Wisconsin Public Service (WPS), through Focus on Energy (FOE), presented the Sheboygan County Energy Team with a check for \$45,222 recognizing recent energy conservation projects including an energy efficiency ozone laundry system at the Detention Center, air sealing measures at Health and Human Services, boilers at the Highway Department, efficient gas dryer at Rocky Knoll Health Care Center, and various energy efficient lighting retro-fits at various other County-owned facilities. These eligible natural gas saving projects through Wisconsin Public service earned the County an incentive grant of \$25,000 through a limited time special incentive program available to local governments and school districts. Sheboygan County was one of only 12 municipalities

statewide awarded this grant. The remaining \$20,222 of the award relates mostly to normal rebates for lighting upgrade projects.

Following completion of these projects Sheboygan County now saves more than 30,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity and 9,500 therms of natural gas annually—enough to power 13 Wisconsin homes for a year.

These projects would not have been implemented nor would Sheboygan County have realized these savings without the hard work of its Energy Team, the efforts of all employees, support from management and the Sheboygan County Board of Supervisors, as well as assistance from Wisconsin Public Service, Alliant and Focus on Energy representatives. Well done!



Since the Energy Team was first established in 2009, the County has saved \$650,000 in gas and electric bills!

The Energy Team pictured (left to right) includes: Joel Harmelink, Laura Gumm (Alliant Energy), Mike Valleskey (WPS), Jim TeBeest, Marty Bonk, Mike Ziereis, Joe Kottwitz (FOE), Kathy Pluskat and Karin Pierce. Missing from the picture: Bryan Olson, Mary Wegmann and Tim Chisholm.

FMLASource Now Implementing Your Medical Leaves

by Penny Buchanan-Elsner, Human Resources Analyst

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides employees who have been employed with Sheboygan County for at least one year and have a minimum of 1000 hours (Wisconsin FMLA) and 1250 hours (Federal FMLA) of service, the ability to take time off from work due to a person's serious health condition or care for family members with a serious health condition.

Effective October 23rd, Sheboygan County outsourced the administration of FMLA. FMLASource is based out of Chicago and serves several Wisconsin municipalities as well as others throughout the United

States. FMLASource confidentially implements the leaves according to State and Federal laws. The main change in this process is that employees now need to directly request and manage their leaves with FMLASource. FMLASource may be contacted either via their website: www.fmlasource.com or by phone 877.462.3652.

Webinar training was provided to supervisory staff prior to implementation. Training, employee and manager checklists, and general contact information are available in the



Shared Folder at (S:) Sheboygan County/ Human Resources/ FMLA Information.

If you are in need of FMLA, please contact FMLASource directly. They are the professional resource that will address your personal and confidential needs.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the process, please contact the Human Resources Department at 459.3105.



SHEBOYGAN COUNTY
508 NEW YORK AVENUE
SHEBOYGAN, WI 53081

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SHEBOYGAN, WI
PERMIT NO 116

2013 United Way Campaign Results

by Adam Payne, County Administrator

I'm pleased to announce that Sheboygan County employees and County Board Supervisors generously donated \$28,882.62 to the United Way of Sheboygan County this year. **Thank You** for participating and helping our neighbors in need. Last year, we had an incredible 14.7% increase over 2011. Although we fell short of last year's total by \$900, I'm very appreciative of your generosity. I take pride in the very important work that our organization does, and your generous contributions are heartwarming and appreciated.

The United Way and your Sheboygan County neighbors appreciate your help in confronting *Health, Hunger and Homelessness* throughout Sheboygan County. A recent needs assessment completed by the United Way shows achieving a better life in Sheboygan County continues to be a challenge for many:

- * Poverty has nearly doubled in the past decade, increasing from 5,658 adults and children in the year 2000 to 9,153 in 2011—3,310 of them children.

- * 28,363 adults and children are uninsured or underinsured, with 8,488 children on Badgercare.
- * Over 14,500 nights of shelter were provided to homeless individuals and families in 2012.

Yet, there are many success stories too. United Way helped establish the new Lakeshore Community Health Center last year that provided services to over 3,000 children and adults, many who saw a dentist for the first time. The need is so great that there are more than 1,000 on a wait list for dental services. Sheboygan County government has a critically important role helping people in need. However, we can't do it alone. When everyone pulls together, we help make good things happen.

I'd like to thank and acknowledge the Sheboygan County United Way Campaign Ad Hoc Committee volunteers for their efforts during the 2013 Campaign: Sheriff Todd Priebe, Correctional Supervisor Dean Culver, Health and Human Services Director Tom Eggebrecht, Health & Human Ser-



Reach out and touch a life...
Uniting Sheboygan County

vices Clerical Support Supervisor Kim Pagel, Transportation Director Greg

Schnell, Transportation Department Secretary Ann Gottowski, Rocky Knoll Administrator Rachele Valleskey, Finance Director Terry Hanson, Payroll Account Clerk Denise Steiner, Building Services Director Jim TeBeest, Building Services Account Clerk Gail Ulezelski, Human Resources Director Jean Gallimore, County Clerk Jon Dolson, Clerk of Courts Nan Todd, Circuit Court Judicial Assistant Pat Schmidt, Child Support Director Jim Graf, Child Support Supervisor Kathy Pluskat, Family Court Commissioner Rebecca Persick, Director of Planning and Conservation Aaron Brault, and Assistant to the County Administrator Kay Lorenz. Their time, generosity and leadership helped us once again be successful.

Thank you again for your generosity and for supporting the United Way of Sheboygan County.



Advancing Safety Initiatives at Sheboygan County

by Julie Kinney, Sr. Human Resources Generalist

Sheboygan County continued to make healthy strides in advancing safety efforts in 2013 and looks forward to additional positive steps in 2014.

The County Safety Committee efforts culminated in the first County-wide three hour safety training which included an overview of the following topics: Employee Safety Manual, Black “Go To” Emergency Bags, Emergency Action Planning, Fire Extinguisher training (with hands on opportunities), Bloodborne Pathogens, Lockout/Tagout, Guest/Employee Injuries, MSDS (GHS) Hazardous Chemicals, Phone Threats, Robbery, Suspicious Packages, Workplace Violence, Anti-Harassment and Diversity.

All safety topics covered provided valuable information for a safe and healthy lifestyle both at work and at home. There was an overwhelming positive response to the training and many participants provided feedback and ideas that will help advance future training events. The entire training session was recorded and video files are available in the Shared Folder at (S:) Sheboygan County/Human Resources/Training. Employees who were unable to attend the training are encouraged to review the videos to further advance their own safety knowledge. The slide show presentations are also available for review in the same Shared Folder.

Next Steps:

- * The Orange Safety Manual for each department continues to be expanded with each department reviewing and updating their own internal practices and procedures to ensure safety of all County employees and visitors.
- * Department Heads have been asked to review and discuss the Safety Manual at an upcoming staff meeting, and the specific department procedures.
- * The Safety Committee will continue to address topics and issues that arise out of departmental conversations and concerns. The Committee plans to meet on a regular basis to continue to advance the Employee Safety Manual, review new ideas and plan future training.

All employees are encouraged to share safety ideas and concerns with potential solutions to their supervisor, Department Head, or departmental Safety Committee member. Working together with a “Safety Always” attitude will help Sheboygan County employees and families be more prepared in the event a need arises. Always think “Safety First”!

Safety First—At Work and at Home!

by Bernie Rammer, Purchasing Agent

In recognition of the County’s recent safety initiatives, Andre Fire Equipment, Inc. of Sheboygan has donated a Badger Advantage 5.5 pound commercial grade, rechargeable Dry Chemical “ABC” fire extinguisher to be awarded to one lucky employee in a county-wide drawing during the month of January.

If you haven’t done so recently, make a note to check on your fire extinguisher(s) at home assuring you know their location and if they are fully charged and ready to use in an emergency situation. If you need one or more extinguishers at home, I’ve worked with Andre to offer these fire extinguishers for sale to employees for home use. The list price is \$57.95, however County employees may purchase the extinguishers at a discounted price of \$42.95 plus tax.

Andre will also recycle old, non-rechargeable fire extinguishers you may have at home at no cost. Employees should simply drop off old extinguishers with Building Services and Andre will periodically pick them up and dispose of them.

The County will also be making available to employees for home use the same high quality first aid kits that are found in the black “go to” bags located in each department to be used in the event of an emergency while at work. The first aid kits will be available to County employees at a discounted price of \$24.00 plus tax. Be prepared at home for any first aid emergency with important first aid supplies in one easy to transport container!

If interested in a fire extinguisher and/or first aid kit, please contact Purchasing Agent Bernie Rammer in the Finance Department via email or call 459-1342.



Health & Human Services Building to See Improvements

by Tom Eggebrecht, Director of Health & Human Services

Chances are if you grew up in Sheboygan, you may have visited the County's Health and Human Services building when it served as the former Sheboygan Clinic. Constructed in 1921, the clinic hosted many dentists, physicians, nurses, and other practitioners over the years. Each had their own location and reception area within the building. While that layout worked well for the clinic, it has done little to promote efficiencies for our current Health and Human Services staff or serve the needs of current Department consumers. Health & Human Services has occupied the building since 1987.

A County commissioned operational review of the Department conducted by Virchow Krause in 2006 made note of that fact. It observed that the layout of the building was not conducive to operational efficiency in that it lacked a lobby capable of serving as a central waiting room, thereby requiring several interior receptionists and waiting areas. Work flow and building security were additionally observed to be compromised as a result.

There are also many other limitations and shortcomings well known by staff and regular visitors but not detailed by Virchow Krause:

- * The building has only one handicap accessible restroom to serve its 150 staff and 225 visitors each day, located at the far end of the third floor;
- * Its largest meeting room can only accommodate up to 48 individuals at one time - necessitating repeat meetings or offsite locations for events intended for all staff;
- * Most interior waiting areas are located in hallways, thereby compromising consumer privacy;
- * Community events, such as immunization clinics, require visitors to travel through work areas to interior spaces, further compromising consumer privacy and information security; and,
- * The entrance to the building is worn and lacks a welcoming appearance.

In 2012, as part of the building's east façade replacement, Building Services Director Jim TeBeest and a local architectural firm worked with Department staff to initiate conceptual planning for necessary improvements. Included were plans for a two story addition to house a secure lobby with central reception and outpatient offices, rooms to be used for immunizations and health exams, a handicap accessible public restroom, a security enabled elevator to transport authorized visitors to a large multipurpose meeting room on the second floor, and improved exterior green space.



The design was presented to and supported by the County's Health and Human Services and Property Committees in early 2013 and ultimately received the support of the Finance Committee and full County Board as part of the County's Five Year Plan for 2014. Costs, estimated at \$1.6 million, will be funded through the General Fund which has been bolstered in recent years by positive budget variances achieved by the Health & Human Services Department. Construction is slated to begin in the spring with completion projected by year end. Watch for an open house announcement!

