

OUR GREAT COMMUNITY

Quarterly newsletter of Washington County, Wisconsin



WELCOME

I am so excited to have the privilege of sharing with you Washington County's first quarterly newsletter! As part of my Strategic Priorities, I am acutely focused on the people. *Our Great Community* is designed to inform, educate, and motivate readers about County operations and how we are committed to creating an environment for authentic quality of life. From health services and public safety to recreational options and new program announcements, this publication is designed to cover what's currently happening and what will unfold over the next several months.

Washington County is a genuine place. One of the main reasons why my family and I chose to live here is for its strong sense of community. Every day, I enjoy driving to work, taking in the scenery of our rich heritage, and passing the many locally owned businesses and organizations that contribute to the hum of our vibrant economy. We are all so fortunate to be surrounded by the wonderful people who live and work here. As the county grows, we need to foster that family and community environment that makes this home.

I am honored to serve as your County Executive; working hard with the County Board and other elected officials to do the very best job possible for our neighbors. *Our Great Community* is not only the title of this newsletter but also a new initiative aimed at preserving and promoting our values and our authentic quality of life starting with our own kids:

- High Quality Education – Every year, these wonderful institutions produce some of the best and brightest students that the state of Wisconsin has to offer;
- Next Generation Housing – Filling the market void in suburban/exurban communities of urban living will bring our children back home;
- Employer Connection – Businesses throughout the county are experiencing major challenges in maintaining an adequate workforce and talent pipeline. It's our goal to inspire to connect kids to careers and employers, and then to identify and overcome hurdles to keeping and bringing our kids home to live, work, and raise their families; and,
- Social Capital – Working together with leaders in government, nonprofit, religious, and business sectors, will help create a social capital initiative and build connections among individuals.

As we continue to identify new ways of forming these networks and connections, I encourage you to engage with me and the county. We have many interactive activities including, opportunities to chat with me one-on-one, as well as events in our parks, such as live music, a grand opening of Yahr Park Beach, and a traveling beer garden. We welcome your feedback via county.exec@washcowisco.gov or at (262) 306-2200, as we strive to be a resource for the county's many services and programs. Together, we will continue to make Washington County a destination for all people to live, work, and strengthen our great community. Please read on to learn more.



COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JOSH SCHOEMANN

DISCOVER. CONNECT. PROSPER.



In this issue

COUNTY UPDATE

START LOCAL. STAY LOYAL.

SMALL BIZ LOAN PROGRAM

PARKS & TRAILS

WATER MANAGEMENT

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

TECHNOLOGY

COMMUNITY EVENTS

County Board's Corner

Don Kriefall, County Board Chairman

Now that the Samaritan/Cedar Community partnership is no longer a possibility, Washington County is at a crossroads as to how we continue to serve our seniors in need. Samaritan's aging infrastructure makes remodeling impractical, so we have two choices, build a new facility or end the County's long-term service to our seniors and leave it to the private sector. We must balance the moral obligation to serve the needs of our aging population with the costs associated that would be borne by the tax payer. Part of Washington County's due diligence was to engage WIPFLI, a firm with the expertise to evaluate the community's needs and resources available to meet those needs, now and into the future. The assessment of the current level of assisted living center's space found that privately operated assisted living facilities in Washington County had more than enough bed space to meet the needs of our aging population for the next 5-10 years. Even though there is no mandate from the State of Wisconsin that requires county government to operate an Assisted Living Facility, we must ensure that our seniors have the necessary safety net in place. We will seek citizen input with a number of informational meetings in the future, and likely will place a referendum on the April, 2022 ballot. A new facility is expected to cost as much as \$30 million and add as much as \$500,000 in annual county property tax collections. It is important that the electorate have a voice in this decision. For more information, contact don.kriefall@washcowisco.gov.

Start Local. Stay Loyal.

Krescent Valley Dairy

With 2020 in the rear view, local business owner, Charlie Jones sees a brighter future for his 250-acre farm Krescent Valley Dairy, located in Richfield. "I never took anything from the government before the pandemic but when I saw the WashCo Small Biz Loan Program, I applied almost immediately," said Jones. The sixth-generation farm operates 365 days a year and doesn't stop for anything. Jones explains that when COVID-19 hit, his income was cut by a third but expenses and inflated prices for fertilizer and seed went up. This combination led to past due credit accounts and ultimately the need to take advantage of the easy-access rocket fuel financing offered by Washington County and the Economic Development Washington County (EDWC).

"Having the right documentation made the application process pretty simple, and the EDWC staff were very responsive," said Jones. "I received the \$20,000 just over a month after applying. There weren't any over promises and no surprises. It was nice to have the County reach out to businesses and help get them back on their feet."

Jones has since shared his experience with other small business owners, including his father and brothers.

By the end of this year, Jones will have his cows paid off and has also added to his team of six employees to make the workload more manageable for him and his family. He's also excited to remain competitive and add value to his production by bottling Krescent Valley Dairy milk.



Together. We've Got This!

The WashCo Small Biz Loan Program

In April 2021, Washington County and the Economic Development Washington County (EDWC) launched the WashCo Small Biz Loan Program to offer county business owners easy-access to financing.

This pro-growth initiative is aimed at providing funds to local farmers, restaurants, and small retail establishments quickly and with no collateral necessary. With the approval from the Washington County Board, the County was able to appropriate money returned from sales taxes generated by the "Miller Park" tax. It was clear that these funds belonged to the businesses that helped generate it then and need the County's help now. The WashCo Small Biz Loan is designed to empower business owners with flexible and low-cost funds. The process from application to disbursement is designed to be fast and easy. We want to preserve businesses, jobs, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

Since the launch, nine businesses applied and all nine were approved with funds being disbursed. According to EDWC, there are 16 loans left to disburse at \$20,000 each. Loans are processed at a first-come, first-served basis. Financing is subject to review and approval of EDWC.

More information is available at:

<https://www.edwc.org/washcosmallbizloan/>

"It was nice to have the County reach out to businesses and help get them back on their feet."

Parks & Trails

- Join us as we celebrate the Yahr County Park Beach Grand Opening Friday, August 20th from 4-9 pm. With public demand increasing for local beach access, the County expanded the size of the beach in April taking the beach from about 2,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet. This expansion received an outpouring of positive feedback and is a tremendous asset for our park patrons. The project will be completed in October with the installation of 13 new shade trees.
- Keep an eye out in October for additional fall camping opportunities at the new rustic camping cabins currently being constructed at Glacier Hills County Park. Camping cabin reservations can be made at www.airbnb.com.
- A new parking area is currently under construction immediately adjacent to the southern terminus of the Eisenbahn State Trail along Rusco Road in West Bend. Trail users should be able to use the parking area in the beginning of August to access the trail.
- For more information, contact logan.bliss@washcowisco.gov.



All Drains Lead to the Ocean

Washington County is partnering with several of our local communities on an interactive educational booth focusing on storm water management at this year's County Fair July 20th – 25th . The booth will focus on water quality improvement and what citizens can do to reduce their impact on our surface waters. The theme is taken from Nemo – “All Drains Lead to the Ocean” and focuses on what we do on the landscape impacts the quality of our surface water. Stop by and learn about some water fun facts, enjoy games and prizes for the kids and a Rain Barrel and Compost Bin give-a-way. For more information, contact krystal.wangerin@washcowisco.gov.



Health and Human Services

The Washington County Health and Human Services Department is the County's comprehensive health and human services planning and delivery agency. It provides information and assistance to anyone facing economic crisis, health risks, challenges to child, family and community wellness, life changes associated with aging, and other needs. In collaboration with our contracted partners and under the guidance of the County's Health and Human Services Committee and Human Services Board, the Department serves a broad range of county residents through three Divisions - Economic Support, Children and Families, Behavioral Health – as well as our Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Veteran Services, Samaritan Campus and Public Health Departments. Our role as a Health & Human Services organization is to fulfill the statutory service requirements set forth by the State and to fill the gaps in service that cannot be provided in the private sector. One such service is mental health counseling and psychiatry in our Outpatient Clinic at the Public Agency Center, located at 333 E. Washington St., West Bend. We support youth and adults who cannot receive services elsewhere, because they are un/under-insured or receive Badger Care. Recently we have implemented two new programs to meet the needs of the community, as well as improve our service delivery:

- **Same Day Access:** Individuals or families needing mental health counseling or psychiatry, can now receive a Same Day Therapy Assessment to start services at our clinic. Please call **262-335-4600** for more information and next available day for walk-ins.
- **Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT):** MAT supports individuals who are recovering from a severe opiate addiction. We provide two types of medication, Suboxone (buprenorphine) and Naltrexone (Vivitrol). If you or someone you know is struggling with addiction or their mental wellness please call us at **262-335-4600**. For more information, contact julie.driscoll@washcowisco.gov.

Administration

Washington County continues our commitment to citizen-focused solutions. Changing our online presence from "co.washington.wi.us" to "washcowisco.gov" affords those accessing our website and communications systems to trust our communications are authentic and official. The .gov domain space is managed by Homeland Security Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. We have launched a new website design in 2021 and welcomes you to visit: www.washcowisco.gov. The new website features a modernized interface with user friendly navigation. The website URL and all County email addresses have adopted the new domain name, and any shortcuts or contacts you have saved should be updated. Eventually the County will phase out the use of co.washington.wi.us, there is no set timeline. We continue to make changes and improvements, watch for a new round of website enhancements this fall. Please share your comments and feedback on how we can continually improve our website for you. For more information, visit www.washcowisco.gov/departments/information_technology.



Washington Ozaukee Transit Connection

Washington County Transit has partnered with Ozaukee County Transit to launch a one-of-a-kind cross-county Shared Ride Taxi service. The Washington Ozaukee Transit Connection allows passengers to travel from any address in Washington County to any address in Ozaukee County and back again. Prior to the Transit Connection, passengers wishing to go to Ozaukee County would need to transfer between the two county's shared ride systems at the county border in Newburg.

The Washington Ozaukee Transit Connection is a pilot program designed to assess the need and feasibility of offering a joint Shared Ride Taxi service between the two counties. The pilot is scheduled to run from April 2021 – April 2022.

Just like our in-county Shared Ride Taxi service, the majority (75%) of rides on the Transit Connection are for employment. Washington County ran 146 trips into Ozaukee County from May 1 to June 27 with one rider reporting that this service has reduced his daily commute time by 40 minutes!

Washington Ozaukee Transit Connection rides are available 7 days per week and are available to everyone! To use the Transit Connection, call Washington Shared Ride Taxi to reserve a ride into Ozaukee County, and Ozaukee Shared Ride Taxi to return to Washington County. More information is available at www.washcowisco.gov/transit or contact the shared Transit Superintendent Joy Neilson-Loomis at jneilson@co.ozaukee.wi.us.



Drivers' License Renewal

Even though the deadline for the REAL ID requirement was moved back to May 2023, renewing drivers licenses is ongoing. Citizens need certified copies of their birth certificates (women also need to present their marriage license if they changed last names). The traditional hospital birth registration with baby footprints will not suffice. The County's Register of Deeds office can assist anyone who was born or married in Wisconsin, and we can issue certified copies within 10 minutes.

Office Hours

County Clerk - Register of Deeds - Treasurer

Monday office hours for the County Clerk, Register of Deeds, and Treasurer will be from 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. The Treasurer's Office will be open July 12, 19, 26 (walk-ins welcome); for the Register of Deeds' Office, please call ahead at 262-335-4321 in order to ensure they have your info. ready; County Clerk's Office is by appointment only for marriage licenses and passports (via email). Please visit marriagelicense@washcowisco.gov or passports@washcowisco.gov for more information.



COUNTY EVENTS

THE TRAVELING BEER GARDEN SHOWS

July 23	Homestead Hollow
July 30	Heritage Trails
August 13	Homestead Hollow
August 20	Leonard J. Yahr
September 10	Homestead Hollow
October 16	Sandy Knoll

SOUNDS AT SANDY KNOLL

July 30	Sam Ness	5PM
	Emily Zimmer Trio	7PM
August 13	Michael Tierny	5PM
	Carmen Nickerson	7PM
August 27	Ben Mulwana	5PM
	Ben Harold	7PM

OUR GREAT COMMUNITY

Several Opportunities to chat with County Executive Josh Schoemann

*Select
Tuesday's*

Breakfast Conversations 8:00 AM

Bring Your Own Lunch (B.Y.O.L.) NOON

Cheers and Chats 6:00 PM



For more details visit:

www.washcowisco.gov/departments/county_executive/events



HERBERT J. TENNIES GOVERNMENT CENTER
432 EAST WASHINGTON STREET
WEST BEND, WI 53095



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