



County of Ottawa

Administrator's Office

Alan G. Vanderberg
County Administrator

12220 Fillmore Street, Room 331, West Olive, Michigan 49460

(616) 738-4068

e-mail: avanderberg@miottawa.org

County Administrator's Weekly Digest July 9, 2010

2010 DIGITAL COUNTIES SURVEY – OTTAWA COUNTY WINS AGAIN (Keith Van Beek)

We have received early notification that Ottawa County has once again been awarded a top-ten ranking in the 2010 Digital Counties Survey sponsored by the Center for Digital Government. While a more formal press release will be forthcoming, we received 4th place in the 250,000-499,999 population category. This improves upon our 8th place finish last year. The awards will be handed out and more formally announced at the National Association of Counties Annual Conference on July 18. Much credit goes to Dave Hulst and our IT team and our website consultant WebTecs for their dedicated work on the miOttawa site and the functionality it provides our citizens and staff.

PRESIDENT OBAMA TO ATTEND GROUNDBREAKING (Bill Raymond)

President Obama is coming to Holland next Thursday for the LG Chem Groundbreaking ceremony. Angie and I have been invited and will be attending, as will Randy Thelen and GRCC representatives. Channel 3 from Kalamazoo was also just here and taped a brief interview regarding all of this. It should be on the news this evening. Let me know if you have any questions.

INSTITUTE FOR COURT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (Kevin Bowling)

43 Successfully Complete CMP

Several Circuit, District and Probate Court employees from five jurisdictions and two employees from the Ottawa County Clerks Office recently completed intensive, nationally recognized program in court management. This program is offered through the National Center for State Courts – Institute for Court Management.

The Court Management Program (CMP) addresses the training needs of mid-level court managers. Phase I of the national program courses are open to all. The Concluding Seminar certification is only available to those who have successfully completed the five core courses of the program.

Phase I consists of five core courses:

1. Court Performance Standards: CourTools
2. Fundamental Issues of Caseflow Management
3. Managing Court Financial Resources
4. Managing Human Resources
5. Managing Technology Projects and Technology Resources

The Concluding Seminar is a weeklong course combining elements of leadership, management techniques, and specific court issues in a program that provides participants with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve their professional goals as court managers. Incorporating nationally recognized articles and books on leadership, management and court issues, this course expands upon and integrates court management competencies identified in the NACM Core

Competencies. Participants built upon the Phase I foundational courses and explored the roles and purposes of courts; dealt with the concepts of judicial independence and interdependence; became familiar with various leadership and management theories as they apply to courts; took time to recognize and appreciate their own conceptual and interpersonal skills, as well as those of others. In addition, participants developed new teambuilding techniques and through interactive group work, understood the importance of good communication as they moved to higher levels of critical thinking.

Participants had to apply for the opportunity to participate in CMP and commit to class work and practical skill applications spanning a three year period. Each core seminar was two and a half days and the Concluding Seminar was a five day experience. The Concluding Seminar culminated in a formal graduation ceremony, attended by the Ottawa County Judges, and the awarding of “Certified Court Manager” certificates from the National Center for State Courts.

Conducting the CMP in Ottawa County was a direct result of the 20th Circuit and Ottawa County Probate Courts’ strategic planning efforts. It required extensive coordination among many staff members and their collective efforts are gratefully acknowledged. Program costs were mostly funded by generous grants from the State Justice Institute.

CMP Certificate Recipients include:

Bob Alward	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Detention
Kelly Aylsworth	20th Circuit Court – Trial Division
Jeff Bewalda	20th Circuit Court – Treatment Services
Nicole Bierema	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Kevin J. Bowling	20th Circuit Court – Court Administrator
Lyvanh Braak	58th District Court – Court Services Coordinator
Beth Burguard	20th Circuit Court – Treatment Services
Lori Catalino	Ottawa County Clerks Office – Asst. Chief Deputy Clerk
Jennell L. Challa	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Betty Claar	20th Circuit Court – Program Supervisor
Katrina Cooper	ImageSoft Technology (formerly 58 th District Court)
Christie Custer	20th Circuit Court – Treatment Services
Patty Dahlman	20th Circuit Court – Treatment Services
Penni DeWitt	Ottawa County Probate Court – Probate Register
Cindy Driver	58th District Court – Trial Court Specialist
Floyd Fonte	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Kathlyn Gould	20th Circuit Court – Trial Division
Kathryn Griffin	45th Circuit Court – St. Joseph County
Casey Henry	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Sue Hornacek	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Detention
Kristie Keltie	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Jami Kordecki	14th Circuit Court – Muskegon County
Michelle Krieger	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Detention
Karen Lamb	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Paul Lindemuth	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Tammy Lutz	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Lily Marx	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Detention
Reyna Masko	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Sandra K. Metcalf	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Tom Miller	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Andy Park	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Detention
Jodi Salacina	58th District Court – Director, Probation
Sherri Sayles	Ottawa County Clerks Office – Chief Deputy Clerk
Theresa Schaefer	20th Circuit Court – Trial Division
Eric Stevens	14th Circuit Court – Muskegon County
Rick Taylor	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Alma Valenzuela	58th District Court – Assistant Director, Probation

Sherry VanBemmelen	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Alan Vandenbosch	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
Mark Westrate	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services
James Winkle	20th Circuit Court – Treatment Services
Josh Wise	20th Circuit Court – Friend of the Court
Peter Zeedyk	20th Circuit Court – Juvenile Services

2010 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY GIRLS STATE PROGRAM

Many of you know that I spend one week each summer working with the Michigan Girls State Program. Girls State is a program of the Michigan American Legion Auxiliary which is a separate but related organization to the Michigan American Legion which provides the Michigan Boys State Program.

Girls State is a government simulation in which city councils, county boards, countywide officials, judges, state house, state senate, appeals and supreme court, governor and statewide officials are elected. Positions are also appointed at each of these levels. Participants who pass the bar exam are eligible for Bar Association membership and learn civil and criminal procedure during the week culminating in mock trial and moot court exercises. Each governmental body learns the appropriate process and tools for solving decisions that manifest in council and board meetings and local court trials. A press association publishes a newspaper each day and covers government meetings. Each participant is assigned to one of two political parties that plan and conduct party conventions for the purpose of placing nominees on the statewide ballot and adopting a platform

I have worked with the Girls State program since 1986 and worked as an educator until 1997 when I took over as Government Coordinator. In that role, I oversee the management of the government portion of the program and hire the educators and line up the speakers for the program.

Judge Susan Jonas performed the Naturalization Ceremony for Girls State citizens has she has once previously in the past.

Ottawa County schools have done an excellent job lining up students (all who going into their senior year of high school) for Girls State. Ottawa County students made up 8 percent of Girls State citizens in 2010. Considering that Ottawa has less than 1 percent of the State population, this is significant. I've listed the 2010 attendees below so you can see where they came from in the County:

Laurel Ackerman	Holland
Alexa Bakker	Holland
Meghan Bouman	Spring Lake
Rachel Bowen	Zeeland
Allyson Brooks	Spring Lake
Stephanie Brooks	Spring Lake
Shannon Connelly	Jenison
Brittany Daniels	Zeeland
Jill Dutmers	Spring Lake
Sarah Faubert	Grand Haven
Kelsey Fortier	Spring Lake
Robin Griffin	Zeeland
Kelsey Hinken	Jenison
Karen Holman	Hudsonville
Leighlyn Jacobs	Spring Lake
Lauren Kelso	Spring Lake
Gina Kim	Holland
Carley Lavercombe	Spring Lake
Sarah Lisman	Spring Lake

Elizabeth McLaughlin	Spring Lake
Joy Merlino	Holland
Levis Nguyen	Jenison
Sandra Ouwinga	Jenison
Anne Packard	Holland
Emily Peirce	Spring Lake
Grace Tesfae	Zeeland
Kara Turkstra	Zeeland

Gina Kim of Holland was elected Governor of Girls State and this is a major accomplishment. The last governor from Ottawa County was Leah Witters from Zeeland about 10 years ago. The highest honor at Girls State is to be named as one of the seven interviewed for the two delegate spots for Girls Nation. Three of the seven interviewed for Girls Nation this year came from Ottawa County: **Gina Kim, Joy Merlino, and Elizabeth McLaughlin**. Ms. Kim was further honored by being named as one of two Girls State citizens to be named Girls Nation Senators and will attend Girls Nation in a couple of weeks. **Joy Merlino** of Holland was named 1st Alternate to Girls Nation. and this is also a major honor. **Laurel Ackerman, Joy Merlino and Sarah Faubert** were all on the statewide ballot running for 5 spots on the supreme court and **Joy and Sarah** both won seats. **Elizabeth McGlaughlin** served as President of the Bar Association during the week and played a major part in organizing the mock trial and moot court exercises.

2011 BUDGET NEWS

Governor Jennifer Granholm officially withdrew her sales tax revenue proposal that was contained in her budget proposal for the State FY 2010-2011 Budget. The proposal to reduce the overall sales tax from 6% to 5.5% and then apply to 5.5% to services not currently taxed was first proposed by the Business Leaders of Michigan, led by Doug Rothwell in Detroit. This proposal was part of the Governor's budget proposal and would have covered a portion of the \$1.6 billion deficit resulting from Federal Stimulus dollars no longer being available to plug the State budget gap.

The Detroit News

www.detnews.com

July 8, 2010

<http://detnews.com/article/20100708/POLITICS02/7080421>

Granholm says services sales tax a no-go

KAREN BOUFFARD

Detroit News Lansing Bureau

Lansing -- Gov. Jennifer Granholm said Wednesday she has given up on extending the sales tax to services as a solution to this year's budget crisis.

It's the second time in three years a service tax proposal has died for lack of support.

Granholm said reconfiguring the tax structure is critical to Michigan's economic recovery, but lawmakers simply won't pass a tax increase in the run-up to November's general election -- and it's unlikely they will during the lame-duck session that follows.

"I understand there's very little desire in the Legislature to talk about anything with the word 'tax' in it," Granholm said at a Lansing press conference. "It requires some political courage for people to vote in that direction, and I don't see that happening before the election."

Extending the sales tax has been a key plank in Granholm's economic recovery strategy. The idea is supported by some Democrats and many social services advocates who are concerned about the effect of budget cuts. Republicans, who dominate the Senate, said they won't go along with a tax hike in the midst of an economic downturn.

House Speaker Andy Dillon, D-Redford Township, said he would support raising taxes only after the Legislature passes other cost-cutting reforms. Dillon is seeking the Democratic nomination for governor.

Matt Marsden, spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop, R-Rochester, said raising taxes is not the way to fix the budget.

"We're glad the governor has finally realized that's not going to be an option," Marsden said.

The state faces a \$255 million hole in its main checking account for fiscal year 2010-11, according to May estimates -- a gap expected to widen dramatically if Congress fails to appropriate money to extend federal Medicaid assistance.

Granholm's tax restructuring plan, rolled out in her State of the State address in February, was estimated to raise \$544.3 million in the fiscal year that starts Oct. 1. She proposed extending the sales tax to most services, reducing the sales tax rate from 6 percent to 5.5 percent, eliminating the Michigan Business Tax Surcharge over two years and making other business tax changes.

The governor said that by fiscal year 2014, the reforms to the sales and use tax and MBT will be essentially revenue neutral.

But, Senate Fiscal Agency director Gary Olson said under Granholm's plan the tax burden would increase for individuals and decrease for businesses.

"If you were to lower the tax and spread it to services, you would have a much more stable base on which to fund education," she said. "That, I believe, is critical for a 21st century economy.

"It's certainly not going to happen before lame duck, or if it will even happen in lame duck."

Small business owner Kandy Wagner said her St. Clair Shores salon, Exodus Hair & Nail Studio, would have been hurt by an extra tax. Business has been hurting the past few years as customers wait longer to get services such as haircuts, facials and massages, she said.

"We're hoping and praying it does not pass," she said. "It would be very, very hard on us."

Ed Deeb, president of the Michigan Business and Professional Association based in Warren, said he would rather not see the service tax passed. He said taxing small businesses is not the way to solve the problem.

"The Legislature should forget it," Deeb said of the service tax. "It creates a hardship."

Michigan's businesses are being taxed too much, he added, and to burden the companies -- many of which are struggling to stay afloat -- with more taxes could ruin them.

"A better idea would be to eliminate the Michigan business tax and start all over again," Deeb said. The state "needs to help businesses survive, not tax them."

Proponents of the services tax say Michigan's tax system must be updated to reflect the shift from a

goods-based economy to a service-based economy.

In reaction to a budget crisis that threatened to shut down government in 2007, lawmakers passed a sales tax on a hastily assembled list of services, including fortune telling and dating services.

The tax was overturned in less than a month and replaced by a 22 percent surcharge on the Michigan Business Tax.

"We believe that what was done in 2007 was done very, very badly, and it should not in any way be held up as a reason not to tax services now," said Sharon Parks, president and CEO of the Michigan League for Human Services, which supports raising revenue by extending the sales tax. "It needs to be done thoughtfully, and it wasn't before."

Parks said Granholm should push lawmakers to pass the sales tax extension.

"When legislators are staring at some really ugly cuts, they are going to have to make some cuts that are going to really hurt their constituents," Parks said.

kbouffard@detnews.com >kbouffard@detnews.com (517) 371-3660 Detroit News Staff Writer
Jennifer Youssef contributed.

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OCCDA – SILENT OBSERVER NUMBER

(Tim Smith)

CONSOLIDATION

July 12, 2010

To: News Media

From: Tim Smith, Executive Director
Ottawa County Central Dispatch Authority



Re: Ottawa County Silent Observer organizations implement one County wide contact number

Silent Observer is a program for reporting tips on crimes anonymously. Historically tips provided anonymously to Law Enforcement have been a valuable tool in solving crimes in Ottawa County.

The citizens of Ottawa County have been served by 3 Silent Observer organizations across the County. Three separate Silent Observer organizations, Northwest Ottawa Silent Observer, Holland Silent Observer, and Eastern Ottawa Silent Observer serve the citizens of Ottawa County and the entire City of Holland. Each of the 3 Silent Observer organizations has a governing board for administration of the individual programs.

With construction of the new Ottawa County Central Dispatch Facility completed, the answering of Silent Observer calls will be consolidated to one toll free number for the entire County and all of the City of Holland.

The new County wide Silent Observer number is 1-877-88-SILENT. The staff at Ottawa County Central Dispatch will be taking all Silent Observer calls 24 hours a day, and will relay the information to the appropriate agencies.

While the call taking will be centralized, each of the 3 Silent Observer organizations will retain their organizational structures for governance, finances, fundraising, and crime tips reward administration. The centralization will cut costs that each of the three organizations have incurred historically for 3 individual phone lines. It will also provide 24 hour availability for reporting of anonymous crime tips.

The change to one toll free number for Silent Observer in Ottawa County has been under study for the past few years, and is a collaborative effort between the business community through local Chambers of Commerce and law enforcement agencies in Ottawa County.

For more information contact:

Ottawa County Central Dispatch – Contact Executive Director Tim Smith, 616-994-7800

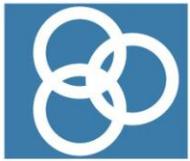
Northwest Ottawa County Silent Observer, Managed by the Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg – Contact: Joy Gaasch, President 616-842-4910

Holland Silent Observer – Contact: Tom Kazin, Holland Police Department 616-355-1100

Eastern Ottawa Silent Observer – Contact: Cindy Timmerman, Executive Director Coopersville Area Chamber of Commerce 616-997-5164

WMSA CHAIR & STRATEGIC PLANNING

I was honored recently to be named Chair of the West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA) and had served as Vice Chair for the past several years. I follow in the footsteps of Steve Heacock and Jim Brooks and will work hard to continue the good work of the Alliance. The news release is attached to the Digest email message.



WEST MICHIGAN
**STRATEGIC
ALLIANCE**

Celebrating our 10th year!

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Greg Northrup, President Phone: 616-356-6060 Cell: 616-204-0155

WMSA Appoints New Executive Committee

WEST MICHIGAN—July 6, 2010—The West Michigan Strategic Alliance has appointed the following individuals to the Executive Committee of its Board of Directors:



Alan Vanderberg, Chair
County Administrator
Ottawa County
Holland, MI



Dale Nesbary, Vice-Chair
President
Muskegon Community College
Muskegon, MI



James W.F. Brooks, Founding Chair
Managing Partner
Brooks Capital Management LLC
Holland, MI



Chris Hyzer, Treasurer
Administrator/Controller
Montcalm County
Stanton, MI



Jim Dunlap, Vice-Chair
Regional Group President
Huntington Bank – West Michigan
Grand Rapids, MI



Bob Garretson, Secretary
District Manager
Waddell & Reed
Muskegon, MI

About the West Michigan Strategic Alliance

The West Michigan Strategic Alliance was formed in 2000 and serves as a catalyst for regional collaboration among the businesses, institutions and governmental units serving more than 1.4 million people living in a eight-county region including: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo and Ottawa. WMSA works to encourage a regional mindset, which will foster collaboration on critical issues that impact how we live, learn, work and play. Additional information is available at www.wm-alliance.org.

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