

County Administrator's Digest

April 1, 2011

Alan G. Vanderberg, County Administrator

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MY SCHEDULE

I am taking off next week to get my deceased father-in-laws house ready for sale and it will be a major project. See Keith Van Beek or Bob Spaman if you have questions or I can be reached by Blackberry.

MAC CONFERENCE

Denny Swartout, Jim Holtrop, Phil Kuyers, Roger Rycenga, Don Disselkoen and Bob Spaman attended the MAC Conference this week and I heard that there were some excellent sessions. I did present on our Healthcare benefit solution on Tuesday afternoon. I will put my PowerPoint up on the front page after next week.

"CONFIRMED: OTTAWA COUNTY IS LOCATION OF CHOICE FOR LIVING, WORKING & RECREATION" (Shannon Felgner)

Ottawa County is Healthiest in Michigan According to New Rankings

Ottawa County has the healthiest residents in Michigan according to the 2011 County Health Rankings report released Wednesday, March 30th by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This is the second year of the comprehensive report ranking the overall health of nearly every county in all 50 states. According to this year's Rankings, the five healthiest counties in Michigan, starting with most healthy, are

1. Ottawa
2. Leelanau
3. Livingston
4. Washtenaw
5. Alger

The Rankings report, available at www.countyhealthrankings.org, includes a snapshot of each county in Michigan with a color-coded map comparing each county's overall health ranking. Researchers used five measures to assess the level of overall health:

- the rate of people dying before age 75,



- the percent of people who report being in fair or poor health,
- the number of days people report being in poor physical and poor mental health, and
- the rate of low birth-weight infants.

The Rankings report also examined factors that affect health within four categories:

- Health Behavior (adult smoking, adult obesity, excessive drinking, motor vehicle crashes, chlamydia rates and births to teens)
- Clinical Care (primary care provider density, uninsured adults, preventable hospitalization, diabetic screening and mammography screening)
- Social and Economic Factors (high school graduation, college education, unemployment, child poverty, social support, single parent households, violent crime)
- Physical Environment (air pollution, access to healthy food, access to recreation)

The Ottawa County Health Department is pleased that Ottawa tops the list of the County Health Rankings; however the Health Department is just one piece of the puzzle contributing to the overall health of the community. Ottawa County is fortunate to have strong groups who come together and make meaningful impacts on determinants of health including hospitals, schools, businesses, human service agencies, law enforcement, non-profits, economic improvement groups, local governments, faith communities... the list is endless! In addition, many areas for improving health remain.

Good health enables people to live meaningful, satisfying lives doing the things that they value and enjoy. The County Health Rankings report is another testament that Ottawa County is a great place for people to live, work and play.

Click on the links below for news articles and videos.

["http://www.wzzm13.com/news/article/160329/14/Ottawa-named-Michigans-healthiest-county](http://www.wzzm13.com/news/article/160329/14/Ottawa-named-Michigans-healthiest-county)

<http://www.hollandsentinel.com/topstories/x1608503855/Ottawa-ranked-Michigan-s-healthiest-county>

"Ottawa County" + "Health Department" on WOOD-GR (NBC) - Grand Rapids, MI

03/30/2011 05:42:51 PM

News 8 at 5:30pm (News)

"Ottawa County" + "Health Department" on WXMI-GR (FOX) - Grand Rapids, MI

03/31/2011 06:06:41 AM

FOX 17 Morning News (News)

OTTAWA COUNTY'S NEW ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR (By Ron Frantz)

New Assistant Prosecutor Juanita Bocanegra poses for a picture at Holland District Court Monday afternoon.

Dennis R.J. Geppert/The Holland Sentinel

Ottawa County's new assistant prosecutor Juanita Bocanegra brings fresh perspective

By MEGAN SCHMIDT

[The Holland Sentinel](#)

Posted Mar 30, 2011 @ 09:50 PM

Holland, MI —

Growing up in Texas, Juanita Bocanegra remembers watching “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” with a classmate whispering in her ear, translating every word to her.

Bocanegra — Ottawa County’s newest assistant prosecutor, working in Holland — was born in Mexico and didn’t learn English until the first grade.

She picked up English eventually, but the experience made Bocanegra sensitive to crime victims who must navigate the court system in a language or culture foreign to them.

“It’s one thing to speak the language, but another to understand a background,” said Bocanegra, who started her new position March 14. “I think if you’re going to be empathetic to crime victims, you have to understand how they see the world.”

Bocanegra, 36, was chosen for the position from more than 300 applicants, Ottawa County Prosecutor Ron Frantz said.

She is one of two bilingual prosecutors in Ottawa County.

“(Bilingualism) is not a mandatory part of the job at all,” Frantz said. “But it does give us a perspective that perhaps otherwise we wouldn’t have.”

In addition to being fluent in Spanish, Bocanegra has the experience of growing up in another culture.

Her parents, both migrant workers, moved to Texas when she was about a year old. They first came to Michigan when she was 8.

Adjusting to American culture was tough, she said.

“Things like going out for pizza, Chuck E. Cheese ... because I came from a different background, even though I was raised in Texas, a lot of the other kids were doing things I wasn’t doing,” she said. “The TV shows they were talking about, movies ... I was watching Spanish TV at home.”

Bocanegra excelled in school, but couldn’t get involved in extracurricular activities. Her family would leave Michigan for Texas each year in late October and return in mid-March, she said.

Bocanegra graduated from West Ottawa High School — the first in her family to earn a diploma. She went on to earn a degree in international relations from Grand Valley State University. She intended to become an international corporate attorney but decided to stay in West Michigan to start a family.

“I always knew I would go to law school,” she said. “It was just a matter of when.”

She worked for several years as a legal assistant at a Holland law firm, then enrolled at Thomas Cooley Law School in Grand Rapids.

After graduating in 2008, Bocanegra became a law clerk and later an associate attorney at Rhoades McKee, a Grand Rapids firm specializing in business, employment and family law.

She pursued the Ottawa County assistant prosecutor position because she wanted a role where she could truly see the results of her work, she said.

“I’m just excited to feel like what I’m doing really matters,” she said.

Bocanegra lives in Holland Township with her husband and two daughters.

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OTTAWA COUNTY CENTRAL DISPATCH MARKS 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY (By Tim Smith)

On Sunday March 27th, the Ottawa County Central Dispatch Authority will recognize its 20 year anniversary of going live “on the air”.

Ottawa County Central Dispatch is the largest County-wide 911 dispatch organization in the State of Michigan. OCCDA answers all 911 calls (wireless and landline) for all Ottawa County and the entire City of Holland, including the portion located in Allegan County. They also perform all dispatching for 21 Fire agencies, 7 Law enforcement agencies, and 4 EMS agencies. Central Dispatch employees also provide pre-arrival medical instruction to callers. In 2010 OCCDA answered 104,385 emergency 911 calls and 100,502 non-emergency calls, resulting in dispatching 100,438 Law incidents, and 12,844 Fire/EMS incidents.

The Ottawa County Central Dispatch Authority was formed after a vote of the Citizens of Ottawa County in 1989. The 3 founding governmental entities were the City of Grand Haven, the City of Holland and Ottawa County. The 3 founding organizations performed their own dispatching prior to the founding of OCCDA, and additionally Fire dispatching in the eastern portion of the County was handled by Grand Rapids Fire Dispatch. Over the next 2 years representatives from the public safety community worked hand in hand with OCCDA to establish a County wide 911 central dispatch system.

A few of the employees who were here on March 27, 1991 when OCCDA went live, still work at Ottawa County Central Dispatch. In addition to working with the new computers and radio system, the first day of operation saw a tornado warning issued for the County which added to the already stressful kickoff. Initially OCCDA had 18 employees in 1991, and today they employ 37 full time, and 4 part time employees. Originally housed in 5,000 square feet of area in the basement of the Grand Haven Public Safety facility, the organization moved to a new 17,000 square foot facility in June of 2009.

One of the biggest changes that Ottawa County Central Dispatch has faced over the years has been the proliferation of cell phones. In 1991 there were no cell phone calls into 911. With the growth of the cell phone industry and people dropping their landline telephone service the percentage of 911 calls from cell phones rose from zero in 1991 to 73% of all incoming 911 calls being from cell phones in 2010.

Please remember when you call 911 that you will be asked you location, phone number and nature of your emergency. If you have a non-emergency call that requires attention, please call 1-800-249-0911. You can also visit <http://www.occda.org> for more information about the Ottawa County Central Dispatch Authority.

This article appeared on MLIVE today in the Advance Newspaper section. http://www.mlive.com/northwestadvance/index.ssf/2011/03/ottawa_county_central_dispatch.html

FUTURE SEARCH

John Scholtz, Keith Van Beek, Sheriff Rosema, Mark Knudsen, Lisa Stefanovsky, Bill Raymond, and I all participated in the Future Search process in Holland this week. It was an excellent process and a press release follows.

Holland-Zeeland Strategic Leadership Forum

News Release

Release Date: March 31, 2011

Contact: Linda Brand

616-836-1570

FUTURE SEARCH CONFERENCE IS FIRST STEP IN COMMUNITY DRIVE TO BUILD 21ST CENTURY GOVERNANCE

Unique Community Process Gets Jump Start From 3-Day Event

Holland and Zeeland, Michigan—Ninety-five leaders from local government, business and community stakeholder groups came together for two and half days this week to be part of a shared learning and discovery process, which focused on rethinking the way local governments and other publicly funded organizations deliver services.

Using a structured but highly interactive process known as Future Search, the participants began by honoring the heritage of our past, collectively acknowledging the events and tremendous successes that have positively shaped our area and further acknowledging the economic realities that are impacting our future. Through an open, candid dialogue the group exchanged information, ideas and experiences to find common ground on transformative ideas for local governance that is more responsive to 21st Century needs and realities.

“The way our local government is organized to deliver services is fundamentally how it was set up over 200 years ago,” said Tim Hemingway, a co-chair of the group that organized the event. “Our community has changed as much as the world around us, and Future Search is a powerful way for us to begin the necessary conversations about how to transform governance to better serve our community.”

Future Search is a unique planning method used around the world to enable large, diverse groups to exchange a great deal of information and take shared responsibility for action and a commitment to implementation. Participants represented a broad section of our greater Holland – Zeeland area as well as state representatives.

In the room were business leaders, elected and appointed government officials, authorities and commissions, government representatives from public service organizations such as the library, parks, and transportation organizations, leaders from education and non-profit institutions, representatives from our general community and youth representatives from local high schools.

The participants brought energy and passion to a clear task: To find the common ground that will enable our community to build broad consensus on how to make the greater Holland-Zeeland area a model of best-practice governance in our state and nation, while preserving our exceptional quality of life for all citizens. A full report will be available for the whole community within a few weeks.

“It was a remarkable process, but this is just the beginning of what must be done,” said Dick Haworth, who hosted the session at Haworth Inc.’s corporate headquarters. “The process energized the leadership of our area to work collaboratively toward a complex set of difficult tasks. That doesn’t mean we came up with the an-

swers—we didn't. That will require a much broader level of public participation. But we achieved important consensus on the need to move forward and that is a huge accomplishment.”

The group identified a range of critical value statements focused on areas of common-ground that included job creation, health, public safety, area wide planning, sharing and delivery of services, importance of diversity and others that demand greater efficiency and effectiveness. Those areas of common ground are now focal points for action. Participants committed to continuing involvement as champions for the difficult work of making changes that preserve the community's quality of life and improve the global competitiveness of the entire Holland-Zeeland area.

A vital part of that work will be engaging the community broadly in the discussion about solutions.

“It's important to understand the essential nature of community engagement in these ideas,” said Jim Brooks, business leader and Chair of the Model Community Initiatives. “There's no silver bullet that gets us where we need to be. What we have ahead of us is months of purposeful and inclusive public discussion, evaluating choices about how to ‘think and act as one’ for the common good of our whole community. We have a common-ground roadmap for the values and concerns that unite us; now we all need to start walking forward together.”

The Future Search was organized as part of the Holland-Zeeland Model Community Initiatives, a groundbreaking community-wide effort being led by the Holland-Zeeland Strategic Leadership Forum. The Forum is a group of top leaders who represent most of our area's major employers. The Forum believes in the need to act boldly, to acknowledge the economic realities that are impacting us all and work together to create our future.

The Forum has produced a white paper titled *Model Community Initiatives*, which outlines the group's mission. The Forum focuses on clear initiatives to harness the power of three sector engagement (business, government and non-profit/education). The group provides leadership in establishing the Holland-Zeeland area as a model community generating private and public sector revenues that deliver jobs, economic prosperity and an exceptional quality of life for all of our citizens.

The Model Community Initiatives are:

- Business growth through innovation and diversified industry cluster development.
- World-class education and talent development systems.
- Best-practice governance for the 21st Century.

A copy of the Holland-Zeeland Model Community Initiatives White Paper is available on the following web sites: Holland Chamber of Commerce, Zeeland Chamber of Commerce, Lakeshore Advantage, The Holland-Zeeland Community Foundation and the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council. For more information on the Model Community Initiatives contact modelcomm@gmail.com or visit modelcomm.org.

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