



# Renville

## COUNTY MESSENGER

CONNECTING YOU WITH YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Volume 12

Fall 2013

Issue 3

## Outdoor Retreat Close to Home

If you are looking for an adventure, anytime of the year you won't have to travel very far from home. You can go by yourself or take family and friends and even your dog and head to a beautiful spot located about six miles southwest of Sacred Heart on County Road 10 to Skallbekken County Park. Skallbekken Park is one of seven of the most remarkable recreational spots in Renville County. The vistas from the upper Skallbekken Park shelter house will take your breath away. The park has water on three sides – Limbo Creek to the east, Hawk Creek to the west and the grand Minnesota River along the southerly perimeter. You will find updated shelters and restroom facilities, marked hiking trails, and fire rings. The park is open to everyone and can be used for horse and rustic camping, hiking, picnicking, fishing, biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and even horseback riding on designated trails.

The park was named in honor of Ole Skallbekken the original owner of a great deal of the now 400 acre park. One of the most unique features of the park is a “hand hewn log house”. This hand hewn home was built of logs that were hewn flat on the sides so that they would shed water rather than collect it on rounded surfaces and in cracks. Hewing also had the benefit



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## Outdoor Retreat Close to Home

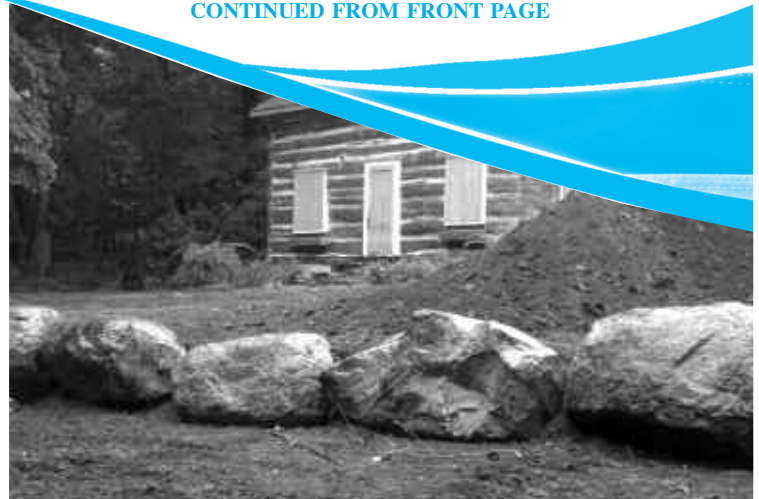
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of eliminating most of the sap from the logs. The logs were joined at the corners by a dovetail notch and chinking between the logs. The dovetailed corners made for a strong tight connection. The hand hewn log cabin is a direct link to the early settlers of our county. The hand hewn log cabin in Skallbekken Park was moved to the park to honor Odean Skallbeck, grandson of Ole Skallbekken, for his dedication to the Renville County Park System. As a lifelong resident of Renville County and a County Commissioner, Odean was dedicated to preserving the natural beauty along the river so that all citizens could enjoy the peace and tranquility of the area. Odean married Viola Strandjord in 1935 and their first home was a hand hewn log cabin originally built on a farm in South Sacred Heart Township. It was moved from the original location to another farm before Odean and Viola lived in it. During the original move the logs were marked by roman numerals to allow for its proper reconstruction. In 1974, Odean donated the log house his family called home to the Renville County Park Number 1 also known as Skallbekken Park.

### Skallbekken Park Summer Project

Grant dollars awarded by the Laura Jane Musser Fund and work provided by youth from the Conservation Corps Minnesota (CCM) aided the Renville County Parks department in a third year of Renville County Parks' renovation. The young CCM volunteers worked throughout this past summer in three separate intervals in the County parks. Many of the CCM volunteers, ages 15 to 18, who worked in the parks this summer are hearing impaired. The before, during, and after pictures illustrate the work that was accomplished to correct an erosion problem around the Skallbekken park's monument, "the hand hewn house". The house had been set on a slope in a hillside, so the crew dug into the hill to level the area around the house. Boulder retaining walls were constructed utilizing rock from the county landfill below and behind the house. Steps were built and a walking path was created to allowing walk in access to the house from the park road. The crew was also involved in the landscaping and grass seeding to finish off the project. The newly renovated spot is a great location for an outdoor reception.

Plans are already in the works to renovate the upper shelter house in Skallbekken Park during the summer of 2014. The upper shelter house is designed to be used as a wayside rest for day use. The view of the valley and the bluffs across from the park are awesome from this vantage point.



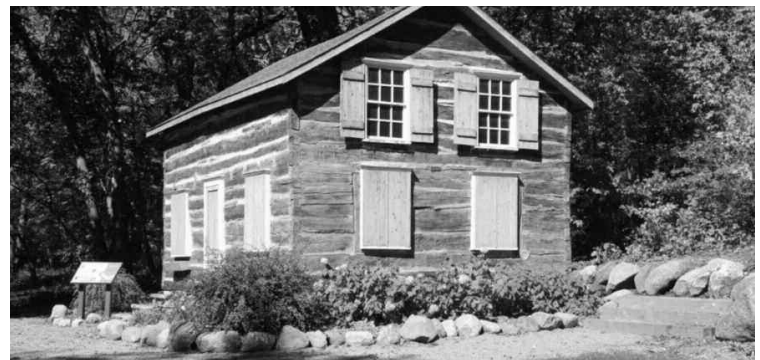
Retaining wall in process.



Moving dirt to correct erosion problem.



Completed retaining wall with landscaping.



Project completed!



## Renville County Parks History

The beautiful County Parks in Renville County were created as a direct result of planning efforts by former County Commissioners and County staff. These commissioners valued the natural beauty and the recreational possibilities of the wooded areas along the Minnesota River Valley and its tributaries. One of the primary goals of this group was to set aside areas of public land that would be easily accessible to the general public. They wanted the parks to be as close as possible to their natural state and to preserve and protect them from endangerment. According to a planning document from the early 1970's, their number one priority was to develop recreational planning for the wooded Minnesota River Valley and its tributaries. The preservation and restoration of the few lakes and marsh lands was their number two priority of the county's recreational planning group.

The Minnesota River bottom and the woodlands of its tributaries was designated a Forest and Wild Life area on November 20, 1968 by the Renville County Board of Commissioners. The State Department of Forestry was authorized to proceed under Minnesota Statutes to protect the valley woodlands from timber slaughter. If an individual wanted to cut timber from these protected areas, they needed to notify the Department of Forestry of their plans.

Much of the parks area land was acquired by Renville County through direct purchases, donations and forfeiture for non-payment of real estate taxes. Purchases were made through the use of the Land and Water Conservation, State Natural Resources and county funds. Development of the parks was also accomplished through the use of the Land and Water Conservation and State

Natural Resources. Lake Allie, the only Lake Park of Renville County, was purchased by the Lake Allie Park Association and the Buffalo Lake Rod and Gun Club. The property was deeded to the County by the Lake Allie Park Association in 1969.

The seven parks in Renville County are Anderson Lake Park, Beaver Falls Park, Birch Coulee Park, Lake Allie Park, Mack Lack Park, Skallbekken Park and Vicksburg Park. Six of the county parks are located from the east edge of the county to the west edge along or near the Minnesota River with Lake Allie Park located in the northeast region of the county. A drive through all seven parks can be accomplished in about 7 hours and will add up to traveling approximately 165 miles. The county parks are a great natural resource to be enjoyed by all visitors any time of the year.



### County Parks **OPEN** for Winter Recreational Activities

*Citizens are welcome to enter any of the seven county parks by foot to enjoy hiking, cross country skiing, bird watching, and fishing as well as any other winter recreational activity. Skallbekken and Vicksburg parks have designated winter parking areas located inside the parks. Lake Allie Park has a driveway for access onto the lake. All other county parks will be closed to all motorized vehicles from November 1, 2013, through April 15, 2014. Snowmobiling is allowed on*

*signed trails specifically designated for such use within each park. Services such as restrooms and trash pick up will not be available during these months, and remember **"NO HUNTING"** in any county park at any time of the year. If you have any questions regarding use of the parks during the winter and early spring, please contact:*

**Renville County Division of Environment  
& Community Development: 320-523-3768**



# School Located Vaccinations Offered to Renville County Schools



Some people call them immunizations. Others call them vaccinations or shots.

Whatever you call them, immunizations are one of the best weapons we have against a number of serious diseases.

Annually, Renville County Public Health offers flu vaccinations to school children. This year, more school clinics and different vaccines will be provided. Public Health had an opportunity to offer other vaccines to adolescents in Renville County schools while also doing an emergency preparedness drill to prepare for mass dispensing of medications. Parents will get information from their schools.

“By offering these vaccinations in the school this year, we are helping students and parents prepare for the School and Child Care Immunization Law for next fall”, said Jill Bruns, Renville County Public Health Director. “This also helps with paying for expensive vaccines”. The vaccine is being furnished by the federal government so only an administration fee is requested.

*Three vaccines will be offered to all 6-12th graders: Tdap, MCV*

and HPV. There will be new school entry requirements for meningitis vaccine (MCV) and tetanus with pertussis vaccine (Tdap) for teens. The other vaccine offered, HPV (human papillomavirus), protects against some sexually transmitted diseases and cancers.

Immunizations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community. While these diseases are not common in the U.S., they persist around the world. It is important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases can and do occasionally occur in this country.

*Before vaccines, parents in the United States could expect that every year:*

- Polio would paralyze 10,000 children.
- Rubella (German measles) would cause birth defects and mental retardation in as many as 20,000 newborns.
- Measles would infect about 4 million children, killing about 500.
- Diphtheria would be one of the most common causes of death in school-aged children.

- A bacterium called *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) would cause meningitis in 15,000 children, leaving many with permanent brain damage.
- Pertussis (whooping cough) would kill thousands of infants.

The disappearance of many childhood diseases has led some parents to question whether vaccines are still necessary. Further, a growing number of parents are concerned that vaccines may actually cause autism, or and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). These concerns have caused some parents to delay vaccines or withhold them altogether from their children. The myths persist, even with scientific data that disputes such claims.

Much of the protection against vaccine-preventable diseases that we have in our country is because so many children are immunized. Having many immunized children “indirectly” protects those who cannot get vaccine and protects those children for whom the vaccine didn’t work (because no vaccine protects 100% of those who get it). Indirect protection occurs because susceptible children are not exposed to the disease-causing germs.

For more information about vaccinations being offered in schools or about vaccine benefits and safety, contact Renville County Public Health at 320-523-2570.

**Renville  
County**

500 E. DePue Ave.  
Olivia, MN 56277

Phone: 320-523-3710

Email: [admin@co.renville.mn.us](mailto:admin@co.renville.mn.us)

Web site: [www.co.renville.mn.us](http://www.co.renville.mn.us)

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# Renville County Food Shelf

## *Thanks You*

In September the calendar marked a year since the fire that destroyed the clothing center and damaged everything in the Renville County Food Shelf as well as the Red Cross office, the hair salon and an upstairs apartment. The Food Shelf staff is grateful to Steve Dirks and his staff who have made it possible for the Food Shelf to establish a new home at 108 S. 9th Street.

**THANK YOU** to all of the donors who have continued to provide the funds and the food donations as well as needed equipment for the work to continue. Gardeners have showered the food shelf with beans, tomatoes, potatoes, squash, pumpkins, onions, peppers, corn on the cob, apples, and a variety of other foods that provide more nutritious meals for our clients. Regular donations of sugar, navy beans, and bakery products from county businesses provide staples for the clients.

A team of more than 50 volunteers serve as board members, unload and store thousands of pounds of food when the Second Harvest truck arrives twice each month, and at least four assist the clients each Monday and Friday from 1-3 p.m., Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Thursday evening from 5 to 7 p.m. and help restock the shelves.

In September, the Food Shelf helped 248 households made up of 848 individuals giving out 18,021 pounds of Food. A concern which needs **YOUR HELP**, is that only 37 of the 848 (about 4%) are "seniors" (65 years and older). The last census indicated a population of 15,730 in Renville County with about 20% or around 3,140 who are 65 or older. Many may not need food help BUT the Food Shelf is serving only 1 % each month.

The Food Shelf needs your help in reaching those seniors who may no longer have vehicles, or driver's licences, or for health reasons are unable to come to the food shelf on their own.



(Left to Right) Mary Schroepfer, Food Shelf Treasurer, Mary Ann Lewis Food Shelf Manager, and Esther Wittenberg, Food Shelf Volunteer.

**Would you be willing to help?** If you have questions, you may call the food shelf at (320) 523-5339; Mary Ann Lewis at (320) 365-4266 or your area board member.

**Bird Island:** Vivian Erickson (320) 579-0458  
Sylvia Welsh (320) 365-3238

**Buffalo Lake:** Yvonne Porter (320) 833-5381

**Danube:** Karen Serbus (320) 523-1797

**Franklin:** Cindy Zeman (507) 220-5267

**Hector:** Pastor Steve Hoden (320) 848-2438  
Betty Raitz (320) 894-1232

**Olivia:** Mary Schroepfer (320) 523-2822  
Ardis Wertish (320) 523-1515

**Renville:** Hilda Bach (320) 329-8216

**Sacred Heart:** Beryl Perry (320) 329-3773

### FREEZING FOR FOOD!

Please plan to contribute to the **DONATION DRIVE** for The Renville County Food Shelf  
**December 4th, 5th and 6th**  
at B & D's Grocery Store in Olivia, MN.

*You may donate cash or food!*

~~~~~  
**THANK YOU**, too, to the many who organize food drives. The annual "Freezin' for Food" campaign will be December 4th, 5th & 6th. Volunteers will be on hand at the B & D Market in Olivia to receive food and cash donations.

# Stay Warm and Keep Safe

(MN Department of Commerce - Energy)

## Home Heating Safety

Safety should be your first consideration when heating your home. Faulty home heating equipment is a leading cause of fires in Minnesota. Nearly all of the deaths, injuries, and property loss could have been prevented with proper understanding and safe use of heating equipment.

## Preventative Maintenance

The best investment in your family's safety is an annual check of your mechanical systems. Every year furnaces, water heaters, and other devices fail because of improper maintenance, cleaning, or adjustment. This costs money in unnecessary repairs or replacement and likely increases energy costs. In addition, equipment operating improperly can lead to dangerous conditions, including carbon monoxide leaks and back drafting of chimneys.

## Fireplace and Wood Stoves

Fireplaces and wood stoves have obvious risks associated with flames and high temperatures. These risks require adequate clearance from all combustible surfaces, furnishings, pets, and people. Additionally, dirty or faulty chimneys can cause chimney fires and can lead to dangerous gases in the home if the fireplace or stove back drafts. Proper installation and inspection may be required to secure homeowner insurance or a mortgage. Often heat is pulled from the house through flues or chimneys when not in operation, contributing to unnecessary heat loss. Infrequently used stoves and fireplaces can become significant sources of heat loss in a home.

## Space Heaters

With energy costs rising, many people are looking at alternative heating sources. Using space heaters safely includes understanding that any space heater that burns with an open flame (wood stove, natural gas, propane, kerosene, etc.) should be vented to the outside of the building. This prevents the buildup of deadly carbon monoxide (CO) and other gases in the building. Many of these heaters are illegal to install and use in Minnesota, (even though it may be legal to purchase them). Even electric space heaters can be hazardous if objects or furnishings come in contact with the heater.

## Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms are an essential part of home safety and are required by code to be installed and operational in every home. Although they detect different byproducts of combustion, both devices used together can warn of a fire or a dangerous malfunction with a furnace, water heater, fireplace, or stove. Batteries should be changed every year and tested every month. Learn more about carbon monoxide and indoor air quality from the Minnesota Department of Health website at

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/topics/air/index.html>.

## Available Assistance

There are several programs that help to pay or reduce energy costs for individual households. To apply, please visit Renville County Human Services Office located in the Renville County Government Services Center at 105 South 5th Street, Olivia, MN 56277.

Phone (320) 523-5522 or 1-800-363-2533 or TTY (320) 523-3560.

The Energy Assistance Program provides financial assistance to households to pay heating bills.

## EAP 2014 Income Guideline

| Household Size | Maximum 3 Month Income |
|----------------|------------------------|
| 1              | \$5,673                |
| 2              | \$7,419                |
| 3              | \$9,164                |
| 4              | \$10,910               |
| 5              | \$12,656               |
| 6              | \$14,401               |

The Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for households by making improvement to the home that will reduce energy bills. Only one application is needed for both programs.

## Weatherization Assistance Income Eligibility Guidelines

| Household Size | Maximum 3 Month Income |
|----------------|------------------------|
| 1              | \$5,745                |
| 2              | \$7,755                |
| 3              | \$9,765                |
| 4              | \$11,775               |
| 5              | \$13,785               |
| 6              | \$15,795               |

## VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED

Renville County Heartland Express

**Volunteer drivers particularly in the  
Sacred Heart, Renville,  
Buffalo Lake, & Hector areas!**

If you have a reliable vehicle and good driving record, you could become a volunteer driver. You would be reimbursed for your mileage at 56.5 cents per mile. If you would like to be a volunteer driver or need more information, please contact Renville County Heartland Express at 320-523-3589 or 1-800-450-7964.







**Minnesota.  
Land of 10,000 reasons  
to get health insurance.**



**And now  
one great  
place to  
find it.**

***MNsure is a new marketplace where Minnesotans can find, compare, choose and get quality health care coverage that best fits their needs and budget.***

MNsure is for you, whether you currently buy health insurance on your own or you are uninsured. MNsure is the one place to find out if you qualify for a low-cost or free plan.

***Choice, quality, convenience***

MNsure is the single best, uniquely Minnesotan place to find health insurance.

***Choice:*** One-stop shopping with a broad range of plans from multiple insurance companies.

***Clear Information:*** The site describes each plan in plain language so you can make side-by-side comparisons.

***Streamlined Application:*** You only need to fill out one application for you and your family for all coverage options in MNsure.

***No Exclusions for Pre-existing Conditions:*** There are no longer exclusions or waiting periods for individuals with pre-existing health conditions.

***No Denial of Coverage:*** Individuals can no longer be denied coverage or be charged a higher premium for coverage because of their medical history.

***No Annual or Lifetime Benefit Limits:*** There will no longer be annual or lifetime dollar limits on coverage.

***Help:*** Purchase online at [MNsure.org](http://MNsure.org), work with a community organization or broker, or get help from trained specialists over the phone through the MNsure Contact Center (1-855-3MNSURE).



## Health plans with quality benefits

All health plans will include these essential health benefits:

- Prevention and wellness
- Hospitalizations
- Ambulatory services
- Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices
- Emergency services
- Prescription drugs
- Laboratory services
- Maternity and newborn care
- Pediatric oral and vision care
- Mental and behavioral health

## Lower costs

Only through MNsure can you qualify for a tax credit that can lower your monthly premium.

- Individuals earning up to \$45,960
- Families of 4 earning up to \$94,200

You may also qualify for additional savings through cost-sharing assistance which reduces the amount you pay at the time of medical care; expenses like deductibles, co-pays and coinsurance.

- Individual earning up to \$28,725
- Families of 4 earning up to \$58,875

## Key Dates

**October 1, 2013 –  
March 31, 2014**

Open enrollment period.

**January 1, 2014**

Coverage begins; all individuals are required by federal law to have health insurance.

Medical Assistance and MinnesotaCare will also be available through MNsure with comprehensive benefits. MinnesotaCare will be improved with reduced premiums, no limit on hospital coverage, no waiting period and more.

## What you pay

Only through MNsure can individuals and families see if they qualify for tax credits that will immediately lower the cost of private health insurance. Some will qualify for no cost or low cost coverage under Medical Assistance or MinnesotaCare.

| People in Household            | Annual Income                                                                       |                                                               |                                                                                            |                                               |                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                | Up to                                                                               | Up to                                                         | Up to                                                                                      | Up to                                         | More than                                                                            |
| 1                              | \$15,282                                                                            | \$22,980                                                      | \$31,597                                                                                   | \$45,960                                      | \$45,960                                                                             |
| 2                              | \$20,628                                                                            | \$31,020                                                      | \$42,652                                                                                   | \$62,040                                      | \$62,040                                                                             |
| 3                              | \$25,975                                                                            | \$39,060                                                      | \$53,707                                                                                   | \$78,120                                      | \$78,120                                                                             |
| 4                              | \$31,322                                                                            | \$47,100                                                      | \$64,762                                                                                   | \$94,200                                      | \$94,200                                                                             |
| 5                              | \$36,668                                                                            | \$55,140                                                      | \$75,817                                                                                   | \$110,280                                     | \$110,280                                                                            |
| For each additional person add | \$5,347                                                                             | \$8,040                                                       | \$11,055                                                                                   | \$16,080                                      |                                                                                      |
|                                | Medical assistance for adults: \$0 cost per month                                   | MinnesotaCare for adults: \$21 to \$50 monthly cost per adult | Tax credits for private coverage for adults. Monthly cost as low as \$0 after tax credits. |                                               | As low as \$77 per month per adult and lower for kids. Not eligible for tax credits. |
|                                | Medical assistance for children ages 0 to 18 and pregnant women: \$0 cost per month |                                                               |                                                                                            | Tax credits for private coverage for children |                                                                                      |

437,000 uninsured Minnesotans could get financial help to pay a portion of their health plan, according to a 2011 MDH study. 296,000 of those are working.

**Learn more, sign up for updates and find help in your community at: [MNsured.org](http://MNsured.org)**  
**Call toll-free to get help in multiple languages: 1-855-3MNSURE (1-855-366-7873)**





# HOUSING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWS

500 E Depue • Olivia, MN 56277 • (320) 523-3656 • [www.renville.com](http://www.renville.com)

Fall 2013

Issue 3

Volume 12



**Blandin Foundation™**  
STRENGTHENING RURAL MINNESOTA

## Blandin Community Leadership Program Available for Residents of Southern Renville County

The Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP) is moving forward with the applicant recruitment phase for residents connected to southern Renville County in the communities of Fairfax, Franklin, Morton and the Lower Sioux. If you are interested in applying for this program or would like to learn more about the BCLP contact the HRA/EDA at 320-523-3656. Applications are also available on line at [www.bclp.blandinfoundation.org](http://www.bclp.blandinfoundation.org).

The goal of the *Blandin Community Leadership Program* is to develop and train a broad base of local leaders to build healthy communities. Topics covered during the retreat include: *identifying and describing community issues and opportunities, effective interpersonal communication, building social capital, appreciating personality differences, managing interpersonal conflict, understanding community power, mobilizing community resources and goal setting.*

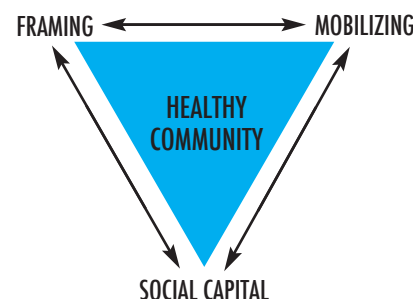
Earlier this year individuals from the communities of Bird Island, Hector and Buffalo Lake participated in the community leadership program. Previous BCLP graduates of both Renville and Redwood Counties formed the Tatanka Bluffs Project ([www.tatankabluffs.com](http://www.tatankabluffs.com)) as a result of participating in the program.

The BCLP training programs are supported entirely by the Grand Rapids based Blandin Foundation whose mission is to strengthen rural Minnesota communities through grants, leadership development programs and public policy initiatives.

The program is **FREE** of charge to participants because of a \$89,000 Blandin expenditure that covers all costs for food lodging and tuition for the retreat and workshops.

Southern Renville County BCLP Retreat Dates: March 24th - 28th, 2014  
Southern Renville County BCLP Workshop I Dates: July 15th - 16th, 2014  
Southern Renville County BCLP Workshop II Dates: September 30th, 2014

*For additional details contact the Renville County HRA/EDA at (320) 523.3656 or Becky Adams at 877.882.2257*



*The Blandin Community Leadership Program is centered on three core competencies:*

### **Framing:**

Engaging others to identify, choose, and define issues affecting community health.

### **Social Capital:**

Building a network of relationships for getting things done for a healthy community.

### **Mobilizing:**

Engaging enough people and resources to get the job done.

## **BLANDIN COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

Renville County is working towards a better tomorrow with the help of its residents and leadership program (BCLP). Applications are currently being accepted for the communities of **Fairfax, Franklin, Morton and the Lower Sioux.**

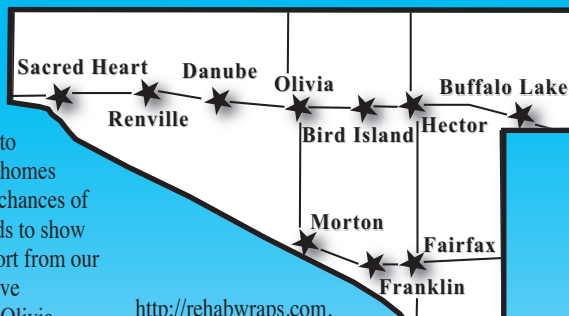
Please go to [www.bclp.blandinfoundation.org](http://www.bclp.blandinfoundation.org) to learn more and submit your application.

**APPLICATION DEADLINE is JANUARY 27th, 2014**

Contact Becky Adams at Blandin for more information (218) 327-8736

## NEWS FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

**OLIVIA** ~ The City of Olivia is applying for a grant through Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership for funding that property owners in the designated area could use to make improvements and repairs to their homes or businesses. In order to maximize our chances of receiving a grant, the City of Olivia needs to show there is considerable support for this effort from our residents and business owners. If you have questions or need information about the Olivia Property Repair Program Grant Process, please contact Susie Lothert @ 320-523-2361.



<http://rehabwraps.com>. Please join our businesses in celebrating Old Fashioned Christmas on Friday, December 6th!

**SACRED HEART** ~ The Sacred Heart Lions Bingo will be held on November 21, 2013 at the Sacred Heart Community Center and will start at 7:00 p.m. Winners will receive a turkey or ham. The American Legion will also be serving a pancake and sausage supper for a fee.

Sacred Heart's Santa Day will be on Saturday, December 14, 2013.

Activities are being planned for the Sacred Heart School and Museum 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. with HAY RIDES between the two sites. Sacred Heart School: Refreshments by Today's Ladies, Santa arrives 10:00 a.m., Jaycee's Drawing 10:00 a.m., Candy bags for Kids by Today's Ladies, Lunch by SHAHS, Live Christmas Music, Kid's Activities. Museum: Kid's Crafts, "Minnesota on the Map" Traveling Exhibit at Museum.

**BIRD ISLAND** ~ Two new commercial buildings are going up in Bird Island. On the west edge of town, S. J. Jacobs & Sons, drainage & excavation contractors, are constructing a shop/office building and a seed & storage facility, owned by 212 Seed & Ag, Inc. is going up on the east end of town. The former dentist office at 760 Ash Avenue is now home to Island's Edge Spa & Salon and Terri's Thrift Shop has opened east of Main 151 South 2nd Street. Rehab Wraps, a full service graphic design and vinyl shop with emphasis in recreational vehicle wraps, is now open for business, currently at 751 South 12th Street. Check out their website at

**FAIRFAX** ~ Weis Oil on the corner of State Highways 4 & 19 has changed their fuel source from Mobil to Shell. Fairfax Santa Day will be held on December 4 with the Fairfax businesses having evening hours. The popular Fairfax Civic and Commerce Association banquet is scheduled for January 25, 2014.

**BUFFALO LAKE** ~ Santa's Brunch with a visit from Santa will be Saturday, December 7th at the Community Center 11:00-1:00 with Santa visiting between 11:30 & 12:00. Winter Fest is planned for the week of February 17-23rd 2014 with many activities planned during the week.

### STAFF MEMBERS

Christina Hettig, Executive Director  
Linda Larsen, Housing Coordinator  
Susie Lang, Development Assistant  
Ron Louisiana, Maintenance

### HRA/EDA BOARD

Chair, Joel Harmoning, District 2  
Vice-Chair, Blair Anderson, At-Large  
Secretary- Treasurer, Mark Thiesse, District 4  
Sandy Housman, District 1  
Deb Lingl, District 3  
Chad Kingstrom, District 5  
Wendy Schwint, At-Large  
Ex Officio, Randy Kramer

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND

The Business Revolving Loan Fund is a unique and flexible source of supplemental financing for businesses that have a positive economic impact on Renville County.

### INTEREST RATES AS LOW AS 2 %!

Building & Plant Renovations  
Energy Efficiency Upgrades  
Permanently Retaining Existing Jobs  
Creating New Permanent Jobs  
Working Capital Loans

### Start-up

For more info contact, **Chris Hettig**,  
Renville County HRA/EDA.

Phone: (320) 523-3656 or E-Mail:  
[chris@mail.renville.com](mailto:chris@mail.renville.com)

Funds made available by the Renville County Housing & Economic Development Authority, The American Recovery & Reinvestment Act, & a grant from the USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) Program.

## Would Your house like a little TLC?



Do you need a new furnace, or maybe some insulation or windows? Those are just some of the eligible improvements under the Renville County Homeownership Program.

Homeowners in Renville County may qualify for a no-interest loan of up to \$5,000 for half the cost of their home improvement project.

Downpayment assistance also available to first time homebuyers.

For more information call  
Renville County  
HRA/EDA  
at 320-523-3656.

### Maximum incomes

1 person \$41,450  
2 people \$47,350  
3 people \$53,300  
4 people \$59,200  
5 people \$63,950  
6 people \$68,650  
7 people \$73,400  
8 people \$78,150



### NEW HRA/EDA Board Member

*Sandy Housman*

of Buffalo Lake is representing

District 1 as a commissioner to the

Housing and Economic Development Authority.

*We thank Sandy for her service to Renville County!*

## 2013 COMMUNITY EVENTS

### MORTON:

- November 22-24  
Beneath the Village Wreath
- December 5 Mistletoe Madness

### HECTOR:

- December 5 Unforgettable Christmas

### OLIVIA:

- December 5-7 Holiday Happenings

### BIRD ISLAND:

- December 6 Old Fashioned Christmas



## Questions

## Answers

### I've heard that I should no longer flush unwanted medication. What should I do with unused or expired drugs?



Expired or unwanted prescription or over-the-counter medications have traditionally been disposed of by flushing them down the toilet or drain. Although this prevents accidental ingestion, it can cause pollution in wastewater, which has been demonstrated to cause adverse effects to fish and other aquatic wildlife. When the water is eventually reused, it can also cause unintentional human exposure to chemicals found in medications.

Rather than "flushing", Renville County residents can safely dispose of unused or expired prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, animal drugs, and illegal drugs at the medication disposal box. In addition, keeping unused medication in the home can result in accidental poisoning of children or having the medication stolen.

The disposal box is located in the lobby of the main entrance to the Renville County Government Services Center in Olivia and is available 24 hours a day. Disposal is free for Renville County residents. The medicine should be kept in the original container. Remove the person's name and other personal information, but leave the name of the drug and other content information on the bottle or package. For more information, please contact the Renville County Sheriff's Department at (320) 523-1161.

### What are the rules for manure application during the winter months?

Manure is a valuable fertilizer resource in the production of crops, but when handled improperly, manure can contribute pathogens, nutrients, and biological oxygen demanding materials to surface water and negatively impact water quality.

Application of manure to frozen or snow covered fields shall be applied to slopes less than six percent. If

*"Questions & Answers" continued on back*



## Protecting Your Septic System: Freezing Problems

Frozen septic systems are not typically a widespread problem in Renville County, however, a winter of very cold temperatures and little snow can occasionally result in freezing problems for some homeowners. There are a number of preventative steps a homeowner can take to reduce the possibility of freezing problems:

- **Let Your Lawn Get Long in the Fall:** Leaving the grass a little longer will help to hold the snow and will provide added insulation. For newly installed systems, six to twelve inches of mulch over the pipes, tank, and soil treatment area will add extra insulation.
- **Use Water (Normally):** Normal water use keeps water flowing and keeps the water in the system warm. **DO NOT** leave water continuously running as this may overload your system.
- **Fix Leaking Fixtures:** Leaking toilets and faucets send a small trickle of water to the system. This slow flow of water can freeze in the pipes and eventually cause the pipe to freeze solid.
- **Keep the Cold Air Out:** Broken or missing caps on inspection or riser pipes and manhole covers allow cold air into the system which can cause the system to freeze.
- **Keep Off the System:** Vehicles (i.e., cars, ATVs, snowmobiles), excessive foot traffic, and livestock should be kept away from your septic system. Compacted soils and snow do not provide insulating qualities and send frost deeper into the ground.

For more information on freezing systems, maintenance questions, or general septic system information, visit the University of Minnesota Onsite Sewage Treatment Program's website at <http://www.septic.umn.edu/> and refer to "Septic System Owner" or contact the Renville County Environment and Community Development office at (320) 523-3768.

Source: University of Minnesota – Water Resources Center

## Renville County Adopts Updated Water Management Plan



The Renville County Board of Commissioners officially adopted revisions to the Renville County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan during their regular meeting on August 13, 2013. The goal of the 10-year Plan is to locally guide the implementation of water management activities that will protect and improve surface water, ground water, and related land resources. To view the Water Management Plan, visit [www.co.renville.mn.us](http://www.co.renville.mn.us) and search under "water plan". For more information, please contact the Renville County Water and HHW Management office at (320) 523-3706.



Renville County, along with sponsoring drop sites, will once again participate in the *Recycle Your Holidays* program this holiday season. The program coordinates recycling efforts with Minnesota-based vocational centers to provide jobs and training opportunities for adults with disabilities. Every part of the light string is recycled with local recycling companies. The program also accepts electrical cords, such as extension cords or cords from appliances. For more information:

(320) 523-1144 or (320) 523-3706

[www.recycleminnesota.org](http://www.recycleminnesota.org)



*Consider replacing holiday lights with energy-efficient LED light strings.*

**Recycle your old holiday light strings and electrical cords through January 31<sup>st</sup> at the following collection sites:**

**Maynard's Food Center**  
302 North Main Street, Renville

**Beckler's Hardware Hank\***  
245 South Main Street, Bird Island

**Danube Upholstery**  
315 North Main Street, Danube

**Farm Mercantile**  
110 1<sup>st</sup> Street SE, Fairfax

**Hardware Hank**  
107 Main Street South, Hector

**K & S Millwrights**  
217 East Hall Avenue, Buffalo Lake

**City of Morton – City Office\***  
221 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Morton

**Franklin State Bank**  
278 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue East, Franklin

**City of Sacred Heart – City Office**  
309 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Sacred Heart

**Olivia Hardware\***  
124 South 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Olivia

**Renville County Landfill & HHW Facility**  
32877 County Road 4, Olivia

*\*Locations offering year-round collection*

### ***"Questions & Answers" continued from front***

sufficient fields with slopes less than six percent are unavailable, then the manure must be applied to land that is managed to control runoff and erosion with soil and water conservation practices.

Whenever possible, winter application of manure should be avoided to prevent run-off during snowmelt and the spring thaw. This can carry manure into the open water and promote algae growth. If winter application cannot be avoided, the following manure application setbacks must be met to protect surface waters:

| <b><i>WATER SOURCE</i></b> | <b><i>SETBACK DISTANCE</i></b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DITCHES | 300 FEET                       |
| INTAKE TILE                | 300 FEET                       |
| LAKE                       | 300 FEET                       |
| RIVER OR STREAM            | 300 FEET                       |
| WETLANDS                   | 300 FEET                       |
| SINKHOLE                   | 300 FEET                       |

For questions pertaining to the land application of manure during the winter months, please contact the Renville County Environment and Community Development office at (320) 523-3768.



### **Can businesses or non-profit organizations dispose of paints/chemicals at Renville County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility?**

No. The Renville County Landfill and HHW Facility are not permitted to accept hazardous waste from businesses, non-profit organizations and governmental units. If a business or organization generates 220 pounds or less of hazardous waste per month and are located in Renville County, they may be eligible to participate in the Kandiyohi County Regional Clean Shop Program. The Clean Shop Program was established to help businesses and organizations dispose of small amounts of hazardous waste, often referred to as Very Small Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste or VSQG's.

The Clean Shop Program can accept hazardous waste from businesses that is similar to the waste accepted for the household program, including paints, pesticides, degreasers, autobody repair wastes, strippers, laboratory wastes, and cleaning agents. The Clean Shop Program is designed to provide a more cost-effective method for hazardous waste disposal. To determine if your business or organization is eligible to participate in the Program, please contact the Kandiyohi County Regional Clean Shop Program at (320) 231-3587.