

County Corridors

A Newsletter for
Tompkins County
Employees and Retirees
October 2009
Volume 21, Number 3

<http://www.tompkins-co.org/countycorridors>

Are You Prepared for an Emergency?

By Jessica Verfuss, Assistant Director, Dept. of Emergency Response

September was National Preparedness Month. Are you ready for an emergency or disaster?

Imagine that you have no electricity, no gas, no water and no telephone service. Imagine that all the businesses are closed and you are without any kind of emergency services. What will you do until help arrives?

"Emergency response is a team effort, and the most important member of that team is the public," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. "The truth is, the more the public does now to prepare, the better we can respond in the future."

According to the Ad Council, 91 % of Americans believe it's important to be prepared for emergencies. However, only 58% of households report having taken any steps at all to prepare.

The need to prepare is real. Disasters disrupt hundreds of thousands of lives every year. Each disaster has lasting effects, both to people and property. If a disaster occurs in our community, local government and disaster-relief organizations will try to help, but you need to be ready as well. Emergency responders may not be able to reach you immediately, or may need to focus their efforts elsewhere. You should be ready to be self-sufficient for at least three days. This may mean providing for your own shelter, first aid, food, water, and sanitation.

Here are a few things you can do to prepare for an emergency:



- Water; one gallon per person per day for at least 3 days
- Food; 3-day supply, non-perishable
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio/NOAA Weather Radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit

- Whistle
- Dust masks
- Moist towelettes
- Garbage bags
- Wrench or pliers
- Can opener
- Local maps
- Cell phone w/charger
- Prescription medication

There are additional items you may want to consider. For a complete list, visit www.ready.gov.



- Make sure you have an out-of-town contact and you all know/have the number
- Make sure everyone has a cell phone* or a prepaid phone card. Use "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) in your cell phone, but make sure you tell the person you've listed them as an emergency contact.
- Learn how to use text messaging. Text messages often go through when calls may not.
- Subscribe to alert services. Here, NY-Alert is New York's all hazards alert and notification system.



- Learn about the types of emergencies that may affect our community and know how to respond.
- Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in our area.

There are real benefits to being prepared. Being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that accompany disasters. Communities, families, and individuals should know what to do in the event of an emergency or disaster.

Some available resources: www.ready.gov; www.fema.gov; www.fema.gov/kids; www.semo.state.ny.us; www.nyalert.gov; www.tompkinsready.org

Visit www.nyalert.gov for more information and to sign up.

- Have a place to go. Depending on the situation, you may have to evacuate. If you plan on staying with family or friends, inform them ahead of time.
- Create a support network. This is especially important for those with disabilities and the elderly who may not be able to help themselves.

* Cell phone service may not always be available during disasters and should not be relied upon as the only means of communication.

- Learn about plans at work, school and other areas where you spend time. Emergencies can strike at any time, even away from home.
- Keep tuned to the radio or television stations that provide EAS (Emergency Alert System) information.

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Notes From the County Administrator:

Thanks for Your Suggestions and Support!



Over the past several months, we have spent a great deal of time navigating through a severe recession. Although we are still not out of the woods, I'm very grateful for the ideas, insights, and guidance offered by our employees. The tentative 2010 budget was clearly shaped by your input.

Much of that input has come to us through the new electronic Suggestion Box. If you would like to submit an idea—or take a look at a summary of the suggestions that have been provided so far—you can access the Suggestion Box through the County's Intranet (http://www.tompkins-co.org/employee_only/forms/suggestions/suggestion.html). You can send a suggestion with your name attached or anonymously. Believe me, we seriously review every one of the suggestions and have incorporated them into our thinking about policies, programs, and budget strategies.

The Suggestion Box is a continuation of the County's tradition of being innovative and working to save taxpayers' money and improving services at the same time. There are several projects happening right now that were just good suggestions a few years ago.

The first is a pioneering plan for the County, City, and most of the local governments within the County (<http://www.tompkins-co.org/pubinfo/health/>) to come together as a health benefits coalition—allowing even the smallest local government to enjoy the kind of volume discounts otherwise available only to the largest employers. The plan, which begins January 1, will provide benefits that are equal to or better than the benefits already received by employees and retirees, through the same network of physicians and providers, and a familiar administrator—Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Employees, employers, retirees, and taxpayers all gain when we slow the growth of health costs without diminishing benefits.

We are also about to begin the installation of a new Human Resources/Payroll system that will take the place of our antiquated, paper-based, and labor-intensive current system. For payroll staff, the system will be far easier than the current process. For employees, it will provide easy, immediate, up-to-date access to their fringe time balances. For managers, it will provide useful information on items ranging from planning schedules to tracking project costs.

And through the County Clerk's Office, we are well underway with a tremendous initiative that is scanning huge volumes of paper records maintained by several county departments, allowing staff much easier access to records and lowering the very high cost to store paper records in our buildings. Tompkins County is on the cutting edge of digitizing its public records.

These are examples of ideas being translated into real change and innovative action in nearly every area of County government, helping us to sustain services even during a time of diminished resources. I appreciate your contribution of ideas that may be tomorrow's next major initiative, and look forward to seeing your recommendations through the electronic suggestion box.

- Joe Mareane



**She's retiring... from
THE MOST "UNPOPULAR" POSITION...**

By Aurora R. Valenti, County Clerk.

Who is that tall beautiful blonde with the intriguing foreign accent? Look now, folks, because **VALERIA COGGIN**, our terrific Director of Assessment, will retire on October 30, 2009. This superlative leader has made her mark in our County, succeeding at educating real property taxpayers of the facets surrounding the assessments of their homes and businesses.

Valeria has captured the respect and admiration of all who have had the pleasure of working with her. She not only cares about her employees, I hear, but she took steps over the years to know each of them as individuals. For example, she can tell you the name of their spouses, children, animals; and each of these employees feels a special bond with her.

So, Valeria, we know you will be spending more time with your husband, John, and with your sons, Roland and Sandon, your daughter, Aleta, and your beautiful grand-daughter, Helena. Oh no, we haven't forgotten your beloved doggie, Oliver. But please.... think of us once in a while. I know for myself, I sure will miss whispering with you at Department Head Meetings!!

Ciao!

Sustainability Spotlight:

County Environmental Efforts: Some Good News!

Report from the Tompkins County Sustainability Team

By Cheryl Nelson, Chair

In the time when the economy is in a major slump, budgets are being debated, and we are starting to think about the change of the seasons to fall/winter (Yuk!), I thought it would be a good time to provide you with some good news, for a change. That good news is the result of the efforts of the Tompkins County Sustainability Team.

So, here are some highlights that I thought you would find informational and useful:

Alternatives Fuel Consortium Works to Make Biodiesel Available to Municipal/Public Sector Fleets

In April, the first load of 9,000 gallons of biodiesel rolled into the County Highway Division's yard on Bostwick Road and was dumped into the underground tank. Through the work of the Consortium and County Purchasing, bids were received that made biodiesel available from Mirabito Energy Products. Several other municipalities are now purchasing and using B5 or B20 in their fleets. The County Legislature adopted the target of reducing green house gas emissions across the county 80% by 2050. Since emissions from vehicles and buildings are the major contributors of green house gas emission levels, the use of biodiesel in municipal and public sector fleets makes a big step forward to reducing the emissions levels and helps in reaching this target. Now that biodiesel is available, the Consortium is investigating compressed natural gas (CNG), propane, electric, and any other potential alternative fuels and their application in the fleets.

Green Fleet Policy – A team comprised of representatives from the County departments that have fleet vehicles has been developing a green fleet policy. This policy is nearly complete and will soon be moving through the legislative review and approval process.



Green Purchasing – Tompkins County is a founding member the Finger Lakes Environmentally Preferred Procurement Consortium (FLEPPC). This Consortium, with representatives from municipalities, colleges, school districts, Cayuga Medical Center, and the Chamber of Commerce works to pool their collective purchasing power to acquire more environmentally favorable products and services. Through the efforts of this Consortium, County Finance, and County Purchasing, the County now purchases copier paper with 30% or 100% recycled content. For information on numerous environmentally friendly products, check out the Resource Guide at www.FingerLakes-BuyGreen.com and feel free to share the information with your family and friends!!

Vendor Fair – Mark your calendars for October 22, 10 AM – 3 PM when a green vendor fair will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn. Vendors will be presenting and discussing their environmental products and services. The event is open to county employees, but remember to seek approval for time away from work from your supervisor!!

Waste Reduction – Solid Waste Management Division staff members have worked with all County departments to discuss ways to reduce the amount of materials thrown away and entered into the waste stream. Through these efforts, numerous alternatives to throwing items away have been identified and implemented including additional recycling, composting, creation of an electronic listserv to advertise unwanted items to other departments that might be interested in obtaining them, and the selection of an employee in each building/department that serves as a waste reduction representative.

Infrastructure Design – The new Health Department building located at 55 Brown Road will be the County's first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building!! The construction will be completed in the fall and the Health Department staff will move in soon thereafter.

Workplace Environment – A revised administrative policy, #06-09, titled "**Facilities Management and Workplace Environment**" is working its way through the legislative review and approval process. This revised policy contains information that will be important to all employees and outlines information including thermostat settings, after-hour use of county conference rooms, and processing work requests to the Facilities Division. Please take time to read this policy when it is approved and available through the county employee intranet.

Energy Efficiency – All employees are aware of energy saving devices installed in the County departments as part of the energy performance contract with Johnson Controls a couple of years ago. These devices turned off lights and electronic components when left unattended for a set number of minutes. Even with these improvements, which have provided substantial improvements in the amount of energy used in County buildings, there are often lights or other energy-consuming items left on in public areas of buildings. Even though a motion sensor may be installed on the lights, please take the time to turn the lights off when they are not needed or you are the last person to leave the



Lightbulb Lenny asks that you turn out the lights to conserve energy and \$!!

you of this, you will be seeing "Lightbulb Lenny" installed in public and common areas of County buildings in the next few weeks. Please turn off lights and other electronic components when not in use. Please help conserve both energy and money!!

Day of the Giant Hogweed

By Rick Ewald, Health Department

A few years ago I had the unique experience of visiting an old abandoned house the owner was planning to refurbish. The lot was overrun with Giant Hogweed. The plants were mature, about twelve feet tall, and were the most abundant vegetation on the lot. I had an otherworldly sensation being on that lot: standing beneath and surrounded by the plants reminded me of a movie I saw as a child, *The Day of the Triffids*, in which plants from outer space grew large and deadly to the human race. After recognizing I am old and like schlock movies, I decided to learn more about the plants.



First, the scary part. The tall, regal plant, which has the appearance of Queen Anne's lace on steroids, produces a sap capable of causing severe skin irritation in susceptible people. Contact with the sap can produce painful, burning blisters within 24 to 48 hours after contact. Brownish or purplish scars may persist for several years.

Skin, moist from perspiration, contaminated with plant juices and exposed to sunlight causes a reaction known as Phytophotodermatitis (phyto = plant, photo = light, dermatitis = skin rash). If the plants are damp from a heavy morning dew or shower, the effect will be the same as perspiration. There is one documented case of a person who, with sap on his hands, wiped his face, introduced the sap in his eyes, and was permanently blinded.

Mowing, cutting, or weed whacking are poor means of control and just not a good idea: the plants large root system quickly sends up more growth, and the plant parts flying around during cutting can land on your skin, beginning the blistering, or worse conditions.

Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum Mantegazzianum*) is a member of the carrot family (Apiaceae) which includes carrots, Queen Anne's lace and Cow Parsnip (which also produces noxious sap). The Giant hogweed, however, is not a native species. It was introduced into the United States in the early twentieth century from the Caucasus mountain region. It was brought here as an ornamental garden plant, but soon proved to be an aggressive competitor, out competing native plant species. Being an invasive and dangerous noxious weed, the New York State Department Of Environmental conservation (DEC) and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDA&M) encourage homeowners and landowners to call one of their hotlines as the first step towards managing a Giant Hogweed infestation. DEC's hotline is 1-845-256-3111, and NYSDA&M's hotline number is 1-800-554-4501 Ext. 58760. Someone will (according to the brochure) visit your property to confirm if the weed is Giant Hogweed, and discuss management options with you. The brochure can be found online at: www.agmkt.state.ny.us/CAPS/pdf/giant%20hogweed%20fier.pdf

You can also find information on the weed at a DEC webpage: www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html

Small infestations may be removed by carefully pulling up the plants and tightly bagging in plastic bags for the trash. Also effective is plowing the plants under the soil, although this may have to be done for several years to remove the infestation. Weed killers will also kill the plant. In all of these cases, the removal is most effective before the plants get too big. If the plants become taller than you, leave removal to the pros.

The **best** recommendation for all concerned is: Leave removal to the pros no matter how big or small the plant is. If you think you have an infestation, call one of the hotline numbers for identification and recommendations for treatment. If you think you have contacted the plant, get out of the sun immediately, shower and launder your clothes.

As for my first encounter with the weed, I was lucky that I only briefly brushed against the plant with my right hand. I developed a single blister, and a small scar is on my hand to this day. I survived the triffids, er, the giant hogweed, and hope you can, too.

Tompkins County Veterans Memorials Rededicated

Submitted by Karen Fuller Legislature Office

A rededication of the county veterans' memorials was held in DeWitt Park on Saturday, October 3. The ceremony honored those who made the ultimate sacrifice in wars dating from the Civil War to Iraq, as well as their families, who also paid a heavy price. The following presentation issued by Legislature Chair Mike Koplinka-Loehr, was presented at the rededication:

WHEREAS, on November 11, 1924, all stores in the City of Ithaca closed at 1:00 p.m. to enable all citizens to view the patriotic parade and attend the unveiling of the first World War Memorial in DeWitt Park, and

WHEREAS, this event was the largest outpouring of citizens seen in the County for a public event, and

WHEREAS, this monument's design, representative of the four Allied armies, was the result of many hours of deliberation, with the final design being that of Cornell University Professor of Architecture Leroy P. Burnham, and



WHEREAS, the funding for this monument was approved by the Tompkins County Legislature, and

WHEREAS, on November 10, 1924, the Ithaca Journal reported: "Ithaca and Tompkins County tomorrow will dedicate a memorial to those who sacrificed their all in the great cause to which the country had committed itself. Even to those who served, those days are becoming a rather dim memory, yet this county and this community should never forget, and as long as love of country and humanity inspires us, never will forget, the courage, devotion, and selflessness of those heroes in whose memory and to whose honor this memorial has been erected", and

WHEREAS, these words are equally as fitting for the subsequent memorials placed within DeWitt Park, funded in part by the Tompkins County Legislature: the World War II memorial, dedicated November 11, 1953, the Korean/Vietnam memorial dedicated July 4, 1976, and the City of Ithaca's Civil War memorial dedicated in 1988, memorializing these many persons for the ultimate sacrifice given in service to this nation, and

WHEREAS, on October 3, 2009, a rededication of the memorials is scheduled to reaffirm the respect and appreciation of all the residents of Tompkins County for these many sacrifices, as well as adding to the Roll of Honor the names of John C. Smith, Jr. (USS Liberty) and Patrick L. Griffin, Jr. (Iraq) to their rightful place of honor,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Michael Koplinka-Loehr, Chair of the Tompkins County Legislature, do hereby proclaim Tompkins County's continued appreciation and dedication to the memory of these men of the armed services who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their Country, and express our hope that our men and women who are presently in the service of their country come home to us safely,

THE PUZZLE

By Jackie Kippola

What is your plan? Planning Department

MITIGATION
 HOME OWNERSHIP
 COMPREHENSIVE
 CONSERVATION
 GREENHOUSE
 STORMWATER
 DEVELOP
 PLANNING BOARD
 NATURAL
 COMMUNITY
 ENERGY
 EFFICIENCY
 REDUCE
 NODAL
 LONG RANGE
 LAND
 MAP

BONUS: COMMISSIONER'S NAME

ANSWERS TO "THE PUZZLE"
are on Page 10

H O M X R A C N O I T A G I T I M E P
 H S T O R B I O E M I T I G R E D U C
 O G R E E M H I M S E L O N R A N G A
 M C O M S E R T V P A T I O N L A N Y
 E O L A D O N A X A R X R A M D E B C
 O C Q O N S E V A T S E T U V W D X N
 W Y U Z O M A R B C D G H N O R P E E
 N A B D Z Y M E I T I G G E A T I O I
 E M A F E X C S O M M R U O N L N I C
 R G Y E R R E N H O E U B S A S E D I
 S D T A E V E O L E O G P R P M I N F
 H L I S A N D C N C N O U O M P R V F
 I N N I A T U H R I A T L C L O M P E
 P L U B M I O T N I A G A T I O A R X
 D J M L A U C N C N D A R I E B V C F
 K E M T S C A C E G N A R G N O L E G
 A A O E D L E N E R G Y J O A S H A D
 T N C Z P K A T S C O T Q A D N A L H
 H S X R E T A W M R O T S L E S P A M

If you have comments or suggestions for future puzzles, contact Editor Maureen Reynolds at mreynolds@tompkins-co.org or 274-5431.



**Prize Winners at the CSEA Local 855
 Employee Recognition Picnic**
 Saturday, August 25, 2009

David Baker
 Richard Baker
 Edward Barhite, Jr.
 Ida Besemer
 Shannon Brutcher
 Mary Bush
 Sherry Carmon
 Lee Carter
 Melinda Case
 Cynthia Casterline
 Tony Cirulli
 Deborah Cooper

Kathy Cornell
 Philip Davis
 Marge Dean
 Stephanie Egan-Engels
 Robert Ellis
 Paulette Fisher
 David Hoaglin
 Asher Hockett
 Carmen Hockett
 Rosanne Lahr
 Maxine Lelik
 Debra Mack

Donald Mack
 Mary Ellen Meade
 Amy Miller-Larkin
 Mary Rounds
 Gary Schnock
 Mandy Shonk
 Christie Sims
 Ivan Thomas
 Carla Trenchard
 Bea Valent





When You Need Help Finding Help . . .

- My allergies are bothering me, but I'm having trouble paying for my prescriptions. Is there a program to help me?
- My parents are starting to need more assistance at home and I'm not sure what to do.
- Where can I find some low-cost activities for my children?

To find out where to call for answers to these and other questions about not-for-profit and government services in Tompkins County, just dial three numbers: **2-1-1**.

2-1-1 provides area residents and individuals who work in Tompkins County with information on finding health care, services for seniors, programs for people with disabilities, mental health services, legal assistance, youth programs, addiction treatment, employment, housing, food resources, consumer information, transportation, day care, and other community services.

2-1-1 Tompkins is **FREE, CONFIDENTIAL**, consumer-focused, and non-judgmental. Referrals to services are based solely on callers' needs. Interpreter Services are available for callers who do not speak English. Advocacy and follow-up services are also provided when appropriate.

Callers to **2-1-1 Tompkins** speak with a trained information and referral specialist with access to a database of more than 650 not-for-profit and government organizations that provide services in Tompkins County. Find our **online resource directory** and **internet chat** at www.211tompkins.org. Dial **877-211-TOMP (8667)** as an alternative number to **2-1-1**.

2-1-1 Tompkins is operated by Information & Referral (I&R), a program of the Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County. I&R has provided information and referrals to community services in Tompkins County for over 30 years.

With a "Hub" Center in Rochester and "Partner Sites" in Steuben and Tompkins counties, the **2-1-1 Finger Lakes Region** serves 1.5 million people in 11 counties.

Nationally, **2-1-1** serves over 234 million Americans -- approximately 78% of the US population through 210 active 2-1-1 systems in 45 states, Washington, D. C. and Puerto Rico and Canada.

Or Giving Help . . .

Thinking about giving back to the community by volunteering? Not sure what you want to do or which organization in the area you'd like to volunteer with?

Here in Tompkins County, you can find the right spot for you by visiting www.volunteertompkins.org for a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities in the Ithaca area. You can also call 2-1-1 Tompkins/Information & Referral at 2-1-1 or 1-877-211-8667 to seek answers to your volunteer questions.

If you're a "people person," you'll find more than 20 opportunities working directly with children and young people, including requests for one-on-one tutors/mentors, sports coaching and group leaders.

Or, share your interest in a specific area such as art by becoming a docent at the Johnson Museum of Art or sewing by helping out at SewGreen, a group promoting sewing as a self-reliant and sustainable skill. Does helping the environment interest you? Organizations in the Volunteer Tompkins database have programs ranging from cleaning up stream banks and building trails to helping spread the word about recycling.

If you prefer working behind the scenes, many agencies are looking for volunteers to help out in their offices. Several meal and food programs need volunteer workers in their kitchens or pantries.

If there's a specific organization you'd like to serve, you can also search Volunteer Tompkins by organization. For instance, the American Red Cross, Tompkins County Chapter, offers a number of ways to volunteer. There's also contact information for the many volunteer fire companies in Tompkins County.

If a long-term volunteer commitment doesn't meet your needs, the Volunteer Tompkins Web Site also hosts a volunteer calendar where you can find one day or short-term volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer Tompkins promotes community volunteerism and facilitates among four partner organizations that coordinate and promote volunteerism in the community: Cornell Public Service Center, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Ithaca College Community Service Program and the Human Services Coalition's 2-1-1 Tompkins/ Information and Referral Services.

Ready to lend a hand? You can reach Volunteer Tompkins at www.volunteertompkins.org or by calling 2-1-1 Tompkins/Information & Referral at 2-1-1 or 1-877-211-8667.

*Prepared by Tompkins County 2-1-1
Submitted by Brooke Kominos, Personnel*

Highway Highlights...

Submitted by Ryan Sherry, Engineering Technician

THE EYE IN THE SKY –

There are many computer programs, devices, and hardware that we rely on throughout our professions. Here at the Tompkins County Highway Division (TCHD), we use a variety of equipment to keep our roads clean and safe. Besides the physical machinery, which makes up a big part of the facility, there are the behind-the-scenes tools, which make the daily operations a little easier.

Among these silent tools is the Aerial Photography database. Aerial Photography has proven to be a timesaver in the many day-to-day operations the TCHD performs. The ability to study many things from vegetation, road segments, and property divisions, as well as hydraulic features, such as ponds and streams, which have a large impact on the longevity of our roads and storm systems.



Aerial photography not only gives us the ability to analyze features and make quick site analysis, but it allows us to translate and teach the homeowners and taxpayers throughout the County our intent on large projects. I find that nothing is as clear and understandable as an aerial photograph to a taxpayer. The first thing you hear after showing an aerial to someone is, "Wow, look, there's my house, cool!" They are not only useful tools but great conversation pieces.



The TCHD also uses GIS data and tax parcel information overlaid on aerial images. This allows us to see many layers of information, which is very valuable in locating home addresses, utilities, and water features, which are necessary in our daily operations.



Hello, County Employees,

I hope you have all had a great summer! I would like to introduce myself for those of you who may not know me. My name is Shanovah Moodie and I am the Records Officer for the Tompkins County Records Center. I am also running the 2009-2010 United Way Campaign.

This will be my second year coordinating this effort and I need all of your help to make it successful.

As you all may know, we as a nation are in a critical financial state. There are some who are not affected by this crucial time, but there are many who are. I have stepped up to the plate to stand as a voice for those who are in need. I ask that you consider your blessings and give a gift that would enable someone or family to be blessed within our own community.

If you have any questions I will do my best to answer them, or refer you to a Tompkins County United Way representative who can. Please contact me @ 607-274-7532 or smoodie@tompkins-co.org.

Thank you for your time and remember to LIVE UNITED!

Shanovah Moodie

Employee Spotlights

Iretta Ellis

Iretta is Network/Systems Administrator in the Department of Information Technology Services. In 20 years of employment with Tompkins County, Iretta has held the positions of typist, account clerk, secretary, administrative assistant, microcomputer specialist, and systems analyst technician.

Iretta responded to the following questions from *County Corridors*:

What do you do here (your job duties)?

Manage the Computer Network.

What do you like best about your job?

Working with and getting to know employees from all departments.

What do you like least about your job?

When something breaks and people get mad at me.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?



Family activities – Softball, Racing, Football, Camping

If you ran the world, what is the first thing you would do?

Bring back common sense.

Anything else you'd like to add?

I really don't read everyone's emails. There are legitimate reasons we block certain web sites not just to tick people off. ITS does not have unlimited resources.

Steve Mente

Steve Mente is a Motor Equipment Operator in the Highway Division and has been employed by Tompkins County for 27 years. He previously held the positions of watchman, laborer, and motor equipment operator. Steve responded to the following questions from *County Corridors*:

What do you do here (your job duties)?

Truck driver, arm mower, flagger, etc. as needed.

What do you like best about your job?

Being outside, variety of work.

What do you like least about your job?

Plowing snow late.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

Fish, ham radio.



If you ran the world, what is the first thing you would do?

Take the people by the hand that can't find a job and show them all the "Help Wanted" signs that I see everywhere. I have done lesser jobs in the past and might again.

Tamara VanOrman

Tammy is a Real Property Systems Specialist in the Department of Assessment. She has worked for the County for about nine years.

Tammy responded to the following questions from *County Corridors*:

What do you do here (your job duties)?

I help process exemptions and proper-sales, assist the public with assessment questions and research. In addition, I have a variety of daily/weekly/monthly clerical tasks.



What do you like best about your job?

What I like best about my job is my co-workers...everyone of them...they are the best group of people I have ever worked with! I also enjoy working with the senior citizens that come thru our office. They have some of the most interesting stories to tell.

What do you like least about your job?

I dread telling someone they can't get an exemption because they filed their application late.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

When I am not at work, my favorite way to pass the time is to watch my daughter Sarah and son Sam in their many scholastic and athletic events. My husband Todd, who is also a county employee with the Highway Division, and I are devoted to making it to all their events, which keeps us quite busy. In addition, we support their various friends who are like family to us. When we aren't following the kids we are busy cooking our favorite foods for our favorite people. Todd and I are a great team in the kitchen, and now Sarah and Sam are learning the many dishes we make. Even some of their friends are learning, too!

If you ran the world, what is the first thing you would do?

I would never want to run the world, but I do have some words of wisdom. I would advise people to slow down, enjoy life, and appreciate what you have today. I am a big believer in karma, so be kind to others and always be honest. Share stories and recipes with the family. Get as much out of your elders as you can before it's too late to ask. And if you have children, love them with all your heart. After all, isn't that why you brought them into the world?

DON'T FORGET THIS YEAR'S HALLOWEEN CONTEST!

Again this year, the Halloween contest will be highlighted in *County Corridors*, with two category winners – individual and group.



The prizes, being sponsored by the Vending Committee, will be: \$20 for the group winner and \$10 for the individual category winner.

E-mail your pictures to Maureen Reynolds at mreynolds@tompkins-co.org by November 15th.

Thanks From Fran and Mike!

We want to thank all the employees who have wished us well in our retirement and for letting us know that they will miss us.



We have encountered a lot of people in the last 25 years with the County. Some of them retired already and to them I want to let them know that now it is our turn to start the next step in our life together - finally. We have really been blessed to have worked with all of you.

To the employees still there working, keep it up. We miss you guys also.

To my fellow workers in the Budget & Finance group, I'll really miss working with all of you.

And a special thank you for the Retirement Luncheon and the get-together afterwards at the office. Also a thank you to all who joined in the luncheon and the get-together afterwards. It was really nice to see the retirees that came to the luncheon. Mike has met more of the people in the County than I have, some of you I only know by a voice on the phone, but it has been a real pleasure to get to know you even that way. I hope that I have helped you in some way at times.

We are in the process of selling our house - looks good right now. Then we will be making a trip to South Carolina to look at places down there in a couple of 55+ communities, as soon as we get a final OK on the sale. We have been on the internet looking at places, but it is hard to judge by the pictures.

To the Sheriff Department employees, good luck on your contract. I will miss figuring your retro when you settle. It has been a pleasure working with all of you.

Thanks again.
Michael & Frances Armstrong

A Note About Flu Shots...

To all county employees,

You will be able to receive a free flu shot by coming to one of our public clinics. We are not able to conduct the site specific clinics for seasonal flu shots at this point in time like we did last year. Visit our website at www.tompkins-co.org/health for the complete clinic schedule. Please call 274-6609 during business hours to schedule an appointment. At the clinic, identify yourself as a county employee and your immunization will be free of charge.

Depending on availability of vaccine and staffing we may be able to offer additional clinics for county employees. The vaccine is first come, first serve, so to assure a shot, I strongly recommend that you attend one of our public clinics.

Please call 274-6609 if you have any questions.

Alice Cole, Public Health Director

From the Family of Liz Croop

Dear Friends and Fellow Coworkers,

In the past few months I have heard from quite a few of you with support and comforting thoughts during my mom's (Liz Croop) illness and then her passing from this world into heaven with Jesus.

At this time I would like to thank you all for your thoughts, prayers, cards, flowers, telephone calls, emails, etc. Mom lived life to its fullest, as you know, and she died living up to her middle name (Grace) so gracefully. Thank you again.

Your gifts to, not just me, but my sisters and other family members also have made us realize what our mother taught us about life. It is about paying it forward and we are trying very hard to do just that. Please know that all you have done for us, even in our time of grief and mourning, has made us smile in remembrance of our mother - The Lady in the Balcony - Liz Croop (Feb. 27, 1939 Aug. 17, 2009).

Thank you again,
Katy (Tompkins County Health Department) & Tommy Prince
Joan Peak ~ Sally Iacovelli ~ Susan Pealo

From Aurora R. Valenti, County Clerk...

Why an Enhanced Driver's License?

An Enhanced Driver's License (EDL) is available to you at our DMV office. What is it? It's a most-secure identification document which may be used for travel anywhere in the world BY LAND OR BY SEA. In this respect it replaces the need for a Passport. The cost is in the area of \$40, of which your local DMV retains \$9.

On September 1, 2008, the EDL came into being; and as of August 4, 2009, your local DMV office has issued 686 EDLs.

STEP RIGHT UP, folks, and apply for your EDL today!

Keep Your DMV Office Afloat!

I am often asked, "When it's so convenient to do my DMV transactions online or by mail, WHY should I go to our DMV office to accomplish the same thing?"

ANSWER: BECAUSE Tompkins County receives 12.7% of every dollar that comes across our counter, to keep the office open and running! So... every transaction done online or by mail returns \$-0- to Tompkins County.

Don't forget, you can deliver your work to me via inter-office mail, or send it directly to DMV via inter-office mail. We will complete your work and return it to you, again via inter-office; hence, no standing in line. Tell your family and friends. WE NEED YOUR 12.7%. Thanks.

Department News

Kudos Korner...

Youth Services

Tompkins County Youth Services and Planner **Kris Bennett** were recognized at a national conference this summer.



Kris, who also serves as the Assistant Coordinator for the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth, delivered a workshop presentation entitled "10 Tips To Successful Implementation of a Middle School Social Norms Campaign" at the National Social Norms Institute's annual conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota July 12. Kris, along with co-presenters Judy Epstein (from Ithaca's DeWitt Middle School) and Dr. H. Wesley Perkins (from Hobart and William Smith Colleges), presented the workshop to a national audience of academics and practitioners who work to change risky behaviors by correcting misperceptions through the use of social norms marketing campaigns in colleges and high schools.

The Youth Services Department administers a federal drug prevention grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Over a five-year period at DeWitt Middle School, Kris and Judy worked with a school team to regularly expose students to posters and classroom activities that conveyed actual data on the use of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and bullying gathered through surveys of DeWitt students.

Since students were significantly overestimating the risk behaviors of their fellow students, the campaign to correct their misperceptions helped students see that by making healthy choices they could fit in with the positive norms of their peers, Director Zahler adds. The evaluation performed by Dr. Perkins showed statistically significant reductions in risk behaviors over time. The findings also are being published in a professional journal.

Congratulations to...

Cheryl Nelson, Public Works Administration, on the birth of her two grandsons: Breyton Ross Nelson, born on June 20th, and Adam Gregory Nelson, born on July 25, 2009.

Kevin Hulbert, Highway, on the birth of his son, Jaxson William Hulbert, on August 5, 2009.

Jerry Stern, Highway, on the birth of his grandson, Ashton Thomas, on August 24, 2009.

Dawn (Arthur) Sprague, HEAP Coordinator at DSS, on her wedding to Larry Sprague July 18, 2009.

County Clerk's Office

Welcome, New Employees!

by Aurora R. Valenti, County Clerk

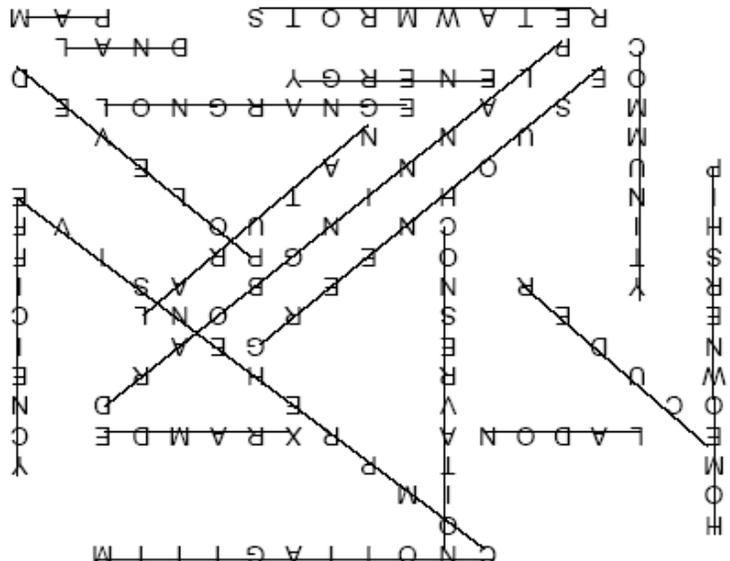
Autumn Edwards is the newest Recording Clerk in the Tompkins County Clerk's Office, having joined the TCCO team on July 20, 2009. Autumn is not new, however, to Tompkins County employment, having previously worked at DSS for 3.5 years as Keyboard Specialist. Autumn replaces long-time Recording Clerk Geri Bochenski, who retired July 24, 2009.



Doug Smith is our new Mail Clerk in the Central Services Division as of July 20, 2009, transferring from the Facilities Division, where he was employed as cleaner. He also served 3.5 years in that position. Doug replaces Mike Armstrong, who ran the Central Services operation since its inception. Mike also retired July 24, 2009.

We were so lucky to have had Geri and Mike as members of our team; they are dearly missed, and we speak of them often, with many smiles. We now look forward to a long and happy future with the new guys.

ANSWERS TO "THE PUZZLE"



Fun in the Sun- the Friday after Labor Day

By Jackie Kippola, Tournament Director

A team DSS did it again: the won the 15th Annual County Employee Golf Tournament. Denny Fairchild, David Chase, Frank Justice, and Denny's must-be-a-super-golfer-brother, Mark Fairchild took home the trophies for 1st place this year. Congratulations to each of you.

But for most of once a year golfers, this tournament isn't about winning first place. It is a recipe for a fun day:

Ingredients:

- Fresh air early
- Sort of exercise, except we ride on golf carts all day
- Healthy inter-departmental banter with co-workers and former co-workers
- Basking in the end of the season sunshine (14 out of 15 years)
- Laughing out loud at ridiculous shots
- Fond memories, like hearing Frank Croteau chipped one in at 120 yards away
- Little cash side bet called "skins"
- Getting a hot dog or burger at the turn (when else would you eat that at 10:30 a.m.?)
- Devour a mouth-watering lunch like we haven't eaten in days
- Everyone gets a nifty prize, no matter what your skill level was on the course

For the benefit of those of you who haven't participated in this annual ritual, I encourage you, even if you've never hit a golf ball in your life, to sign up next year. The first rule is that we have either two employees or former employees on our four-person team. The format is Captain and Crew - four players hit at tee shot. Then, the team chooses the best tee shot to play from for the second shot. The other three players pick up their golf balls and drop them at best ball chosen. All four players hit from that spot and follow same sequence for all remaining shots.

It helps if you have one person on the team who knows the rules of golf, but it is not mandatory. Trust me, you'll get the hang of it quickly.



Although I didn't coin this phrase, every year for one Friday in September we live by the motto: **A bad day on the golf course beats any day at work.**

2009 County Employee Golf Tournament Participants

(RET) means former employee

Tom Richardson (SWAS); Lynn Leopold (RET); Tom Powers; John Gail

Jack Crance (DOER); John Shaffer (DOER); Carl Smith; Dan Garrison

Nancy Curtis (DSS); Harold Baylor (WKDV); Mike Hughes; Mark Smarr

Suzi Cook (ATTY); Deb Lawrence; Sue Van Voltanburg (DOER); Sherry Huddle

Denny Fairchild (DSS); Mark Fairchild; David Chase (DSS); Frank Justice (PROB)

Bob Nicholas (AIR); Fritz Hess (AIR); Bob Mastropaolo

Frank Croteau (PHLTH); Joe Crosby; Patty Stamm (PHLTH); Carl Stamm (PHLTH)

David Squires (FIN); Jonathan Wood (ATTY); Jim Dennis (LEG); Bill Marquardt

Greg Stevenson (LEG); Sherry Stevenson (DOER); Lois Barden (DOER); Bob Barden

Bill Shaff (SHER); Roger Griswald (SHER); Linda Griswald; Karen Potter

Bob Slocum (COFA); Kevin Streeter; Diane McDonough; Gladys Brangman (RET)

Jackie Kippola (ADM); Paul Darby; Kevin Sutherland (ADM); Jim Holmes

Tim Kessler (RET); Jeff Potter (SHER); Tom Walpole (SHER); Daryl Avery (RET)

Alan Scheer (DSS); Doug Perine (DSS); Marty Fulton; BJ Robison



Blood Drive Benefits Many

Submitted by Cheryl Nelson and Jackie Kippola, Coordinators

The annual County employee blood drive, held on August 8th in the Borg-Warner Room in the Library, resulted in 51 units of blood being collected from County employees and walk-in donors. These 51 units collected will benefit up to 153 individuals in need of blood or blood products in the central New York area. County employees also volunteered for one-hour shifts covering registration and canteen duties throughout the day.

Thank you to everyone who served as a building contact and reached out to employees to sign up, donated a unit of blood, and/or volunteered at canteen or registration. Thank you also, to County Department Heads who have supported this event each year by allowing employees the time to participate.

VENDING COMMITTEE "VENDS"

Buffalo Bills vs Miami Dolphins Football Game

Date: Sunday, November 29th

Time: 1:00 p.m. (subject to change)

Cost: \$70.00/pp (includes bus transportation and ticket to the game)

Seat Location: Upper Deck

Reservations & Payment: Accepted through Friday, October 23rd.

54 tickets have been obtained for this game. Payment is required one month prior to game date. If interested, please contact Pete Coats soon, as tickets will likely go quickly (contact information listed below).

Transportation Information: TBA

New York City Winter Day Trip, December 5, 2009

Date: Saturday, December 5th

Cost: \$35.00/pp

Depart: 7:00 a.m. SHARP! (From the Tompkins County Public Works Facility on Bostwick Road.)

Arrive: Around noon, at Bryant Park (41st Street and 6th Ave.) or Macy's (34th St. and 7th Ave.).

You're on your own to explore the vast and exciting city, and enjoy your own interests.

Depart: From Bryant Park at 8:00 p.m.

Arrive: Back in Ithaca around midnight.

Minimum of 40 people needed to make this trip possible. Call now for reservations or for additional information.

Reservations & Payment: Accepted through Monday, November 23rd.

Check us out on the intranet, at http://www.tompkins-co.org/employee_only/VendingCommitteeNews.pdf for updated information!

Classified Ads

Dog Dayz Inn

A place where your dog feels
"at home".

Located in North Lansing

Sandy Strehle, 315-497-3467

dogdayzinn@yahoo.com

<http://www.dogdayzinn.com>



FOR SALE – 1995 31' Challenger 5th-wheel camper. Features include two slide-outs, basement, full-size bathroom, and a queen-sized bed. Excellent condition. Asking \$10,000.00, complete with hitch. Also, 2000 Chevy Silverado ¾-ton, extended cab, 3-door pickup. Loaded, with 81,000 miles, 6.0 Vortec engine, new tires, solid tonneau cover, excellent condition. Asking \$12,000, complete with 5th-wheel package. Both for \$21,000. Will consider selling separately, only if the camper sells first. Must sell due to health reasons. Please call (607) 898-5196.

FOR SALE – 1985 24' Tioga motor home on Chevrolet chassis. Sleeps 6, A/C, tilt steering wheel, cruise control, 70,000 miles, all new tires. Very good condition. Asking \$7,500.00. Must sell due to health reasons. Please call (607) 898-5196.

FOR SALE – TAKE YOUR TOYS WITH YOU! 2005 Keystone Hornet Hideout camper-trailer with "garage" in the rear. Sleeps 6+. Excellent condition. Will sell fully stocked and ready to go. \$15,000.00, or best offer. Please call (607) 898-3214, evenings.

FOR SALE – 1988 Camper with front porch & deck. Clean & in good condition. Hejamada Camp Ground – Montezuma, New York (camper can be moved). \$1,800.00, or best offer. Please call Bob, at (315) 209-2147.

FOR SALE – Wood splitter, 8 1/2 HP, pull and electric start, 40-ton ram, 2-stage pump, auto return, over-the-road tires. Mint condition. \$2,000.00 or best offer. Please call (607) 532-4092.

FOR SALE – Upright "Doctor's" weight scale. weighs up to 350 lbs. \$25.00, or best offer. Needs to be picked up at my house. Please call Judy, at (607) 229-6019, days, or (607) 387-5076, evenings.

FOR SALE – Upright "Doctor's" weight scale. weighs up to 350 lbs. \$25.00, or best offer. Needs to be picked up at my house. Please call Judy, at (607) 229-6019, days, or (607) 387-5076, evenings.

FOR SALE – Dining table. IKEA Norden solid birch butcher block, 39"x87", plus 18" leaf. \$250 (list price \$399). Buyer must pick up in Trumansburg. Please call Kathy & Bob Wilsea, at (607) 387-5819.

LAMP REPAIR – Do you have favorite old lamps that are no longer working properly? I can restore them to their original and safe condition. Reasonable prices! Please e-mail to hickscthelight@gmail.com, or call (607) 319-4090, evenings.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME – Nearly new snow tires, size 205/65/15. Tires were used on Toyota Camry. Please contact David Squires, at dmsithaca@gmail.com, or (607) 227-3845.

WANTED – New or gently used ladies coaster or 3-speed bike, for petite beginning bicyclist. Please call 273-5844 with leads. Thank you!



FUNNY BONES

GOLDEN YEARS....

An elderly gentleman had serious hearing problems for a number of years. He went to the doctor and the doctor was able to have him fitted for a set of hearing aids that allowed the gentleman to hear 100%.

The elderly gentleman went back in a month to the doctor, and the doctor said, "Your hearing is perfect. Your family must be really pleased that you can hear again."

The gentleman replied, "Oh, I haven't told my family yet. I just sit around and listen to the conversations. I've changed my will three times!"



THE CORRIDORS TEAM

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