



# Employee News

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**September**

3	Labor Day— Offices Closed
4	Commissioners Meeting
7	Payroll Check Date
11	Commissioners Meeting
17 - 18	Season Flu Immunization Clinic 
21	Payroll Check Date
25	Commissioners Meeting

## Positive Communication at Work -

### It's Not Just Good Manners, it's Good Business:

As writer Harvey Mackay was quoted in a January 23, 2012 article in the Post Bulletin, “Good manners are never out of place in the workplace. When we think of positive communication, we think of good manners, we think of “please-s and thank you-s”. Well, you’d be right, but positive communication is much more and can have far reaching effects.

There are countless sites on the internet explaining the relationship between positive, effective communication in the workplace and employee engagement and, therefore, productivity. It is simple logic— we work harder when we feel we are valued and an important part of the whole team. In the same logic— when we feel we don’t matter, we tend to only do what is required, feeling that any extra effort would not be appreciated anyway. An employee who may be a marginal performer is often seen as lazy or incompetent. In reality, they may simply not be receiving the positive communication they need to become more engaged and as such, more productive. Some studies have shown that productivity could increase as much as 40% in departments with positive, effective communication from departments with poor or negative communication patterns.

With this knowledge, it is easy to see how important it is for those in leadership to be intentional about their positive communication with their staff. To let the employee who offered to do the filing, only to find out it is done, know that you appreciate their willingness to do the extra work. A simple “great job” to the employee who was given a new task and work hard to master it. Simple terms like “that’s really helpful, thank you” or “I appreciate that” go a long way.

Just as important, if not almost more so, is finding constructive ways of correction. If we point out the minor mistakes without noting the good work around it, we create employees who become afraid of making errors and will take twice as long to complete a task. Worse, we have employees who do not want to do anything extra for fear of making a mistake. We need to find ways of correcting the mistake without “you failed” being the message heard. Phrases like “I noted a few, minor corrections. This is really great work” or “That looks really good, would you please check one item I marked, it may need a quick fix”. These types of phrases send a clear message “you did well” while still addressing the needed corrections.

For those who are not in leadership, this article is for you too. Leadership is not the only place where positive communication is important. In fact, employees are known to be more quickly effected by the results of negative communication from peers. It is vital that we all recognize the importance of each member of our work team. Thanking a peer for help with a question, noticing a job well done. Pointing our mistakes in a positive, non-judgmental manner makes all the difference. We all learned the Golden Rule growing up. When we treat others as we would like to be treated at work, the benefits to not only the organization, but everyone involved will be limitless.

As we think of how we communicate, remember this:



**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**October**

2	Commissioners Meeting
	Household Hazardous Waste Collection
5	Payroll Check Date
9	Commissioners Meeting
10	BCBS—Medicare Supplement
17	NuVal Presentation
18	PERA Sessions
19	Payroll Check Date
23	Commissioners Meeting

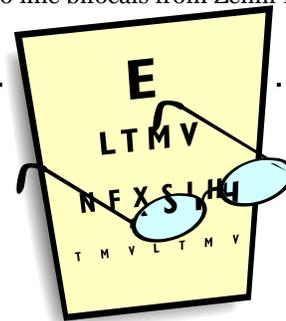
## Back by popular demand:

This article appeared in the November/ December 2011 newsletter. Due to the widespread interest in this topic, we are reprinting this article:

### Make the Most of Your VEBA Dollar - Get the Scoop on...Zenni Optical Affordable Rx glasses and Bifocals

Eye exam time for my family always meant big bucks going out the door. With three in glasses (one in bifocals) getting glasses for the family meant hundreds of dollars a pair. Well I no longer dread the eye doctor, in fact, I look forward to my annual visit. Now I get Rx glasses, sunglasses and even “for fun” glasses – all for less than I used to pay for one pair at the eye doctor. My scoop– **zenni-optical.com**. I was recommended this site years ago by an insurance rep. and boy am I glad they did! Zenni offers prescription glasses online at drastically discounted rates. In fact, the price listed online for the frames is the price **with** single vision lenses! You need bifocals, no problem, add no line bifocals for an extra \$25.00! The price of their frames range from \$6.95 to \$49.00. You can also make any pair Rx sunglasses for \$5.00 or more.

I know what you are thinking (I did), they must be cheap and break right away. I have been using this company for 3-1/2 years and all have lasted and been donated to charity when I get the next year’s glasses. My husband likes his no line bifocals from Zenni more than the ones he got in the store. It is a great way to make your health care dollar go a long way.



#### PERA MEETINGS ARE HERE IN OCTOBER

Five years seems like a long time– unless you are within 5 years of retirement. There, five years goes by in the blink of an eye.

If you are considering retiring within the next 5 years, now is the time to start getting the information you need. Now is the time for your PERA group counseling session.

This session will be held on Thursday, October 18th at 10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in Room 108 of the Office building. The session will give you both general and specific information regarding your PERA and what it means for your retirement. Registration is confidential and completed either online at: [www.mnpera.org](http://www.mnpera.org) or calling toll free (800) 652-9026. Registration closes Friday, October 5th to receive your personalized information.



#### Medicare Supplements: What you need to know

As employees look toward retirement, there are generally two major concerns: 1) Will I have enough money and 2) What about health insurance. For the first, I recommend reading the article to the left on PERA meetings; as for insurance, we are here to help. Fillmore County is presenting a meeting with Blue Cross and Blue Shield to discuss Medicare supplements, what they are, what you need to know. This is a great opportunity to anyone who is thinking of retiring within the next 5 years to come, and get the facts straight from the source.

Meetings will be held **Wednesday, October 10th** at **10:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. in Room 108** at the Fillmore County Office Building. Minimum attendance required, so please contact the Coordinator's Office to register at 765-4566 or [ainglett@co.fillmore.mn.us](mailto:ainglett@co.fillmore.mn.us)

## ANNOUNCEMENT: Flu Injection Clinics Set

### Healthy You Should Avoid the Flu!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that anyone over the age of six months receive a seasonal flu vaccine each year as soon as it becomes available. It is especially important for you to receive vaccination if you have asthma, diabetes, chronic lung disease, are pregnant, age 65 and older, or if you live with or care for others who are at high risk of developing serious complications if exposed to the flu.

**New this year**, Fillmore County Public Health will be offering both seasonal influenza injections and nasal mist to the public at clinics held the following dates, times, and locations.

- Monday, September 17 from 12:00 to 7:00 PM at the Fillmore County Office Building, Preston, MN.**
- Tuesday, September 18 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Fillmore County Office Building, Preston, MN.**
- Tuesday, September 18 from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the American Legion Club, 114 North Main Street, Mabel, MN.
- Monday, September 24 from 3:00 to 6:00 PM at the Community Center – Library Activity Room, 225 3rd Avenue SW, Harmony, MN.
- Thursday, September 27 from 3:30 to 6:30 PM at the Lanesboro Elementary School located at 100 Kirkwood East, Lanesboro, MN.
- Tuesday, October 2 from 11:00 to 1:00 PM at the Thurber Building, 21 Second Street SE, Chatfield, MN.
- Thursday, October 11 from 9:30 to 10:30 AM at the Community Center, 226 Gold Street North, Wykoff, MN

To make your experience quicker, wear a short sleeve shirt and bring the age-appropriate completed vaccination form with you to a clinic. If you would like to complete your influenza vaccine paper work in advance go to <http://www.co.fillmore.mn.us/> and print the appropriate child or adult form. For more information about flu vaccinations, call Fillmore County Public Health at 507-765-3898 or visit <http://www.co.fillmore.mn.us/>.

### Public Health Strives to “Share the Health”

Fillmore County Public Health received a grant from the UCare fund to conduct community health screenings, encourage active school days, and increase healthy eating in the community. Public Health staff have screened 185 community members for high blood pressure, cholesterol, and glucose and provided them with individualized health counseling and follow-up. They are still looking to host screening events in the Chatfield, Rushford, and Spring Valley areas in conjunction with local breakfast events. If you know of a pancake breakfast or morning event they can collaborate with contact Brenda at 507-765-2636.

In addition to the screenings, Public Health is also working with schools to make classrooms more active by offering training and materials to teachers. The final area of the grant is to encourage better nutrition among all Fillmore County residents. This summer and fall, public health is working with farmer’s markets, grocery stores, and WIC participants to encourage increased fruit and vegetable consumption following the new USDA MyPlate dietary guidelines which can be found at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

Employees are encouraged to participate in healthy eating by bringing or eating healthy lunches and snacks. If you wish to check out one of the area farmers markets, their location and hours of operation up to **through October 2012** are listed below.

Market City	Location	Address	Days of Operation	Hours of Operation
Chatfield	Chatfield City Park	Hwy 52 and 3rd St SW	Thursdays	3 -6 PM
Harmony	Country Lodge Motel	525 Main Avenue N	Saturdays	9 AM -5 PM
Lanesboro	Sylvan Park	202 Parkway Avenue S	Saturdays	9 AM - 12 PM
Preston	Root River Bike Trail-head	County Hwy 12 and Center Street	Fridays	11 AM - 5 PM
Wykoff	Picnic Shelter	Front and Gold	Saturdays	9 AM - 12 PM
Mabel		HWY 44/52	Saturdays	9 AM - 1 PM
Spring Valley	Across from Utility Plant	HWY 63	Fridays	4 - 7 PM
Spring Valley	Across from Utility Plant	HWY 63	Saturdays	9 AM - 5 PM

# All about Melons



## How to choose a ripe melon

Want to choose the best? Look for a symmetrical melon heavy for its size and free of blemishes or soft spots. Roll it around and check for the *couche* (the spot where it rested on the ground while growing). It should be readily identifiable. Don't see one? The melon's not yet mature. Last, find the spot where the stem was attached. Clean indentations should appear on melons that detached naturally from the vine, like watermelons.

## Store watermelon to bring out its best

Watermelons don't ripen after picking, but they do continue to develop nutrients. Lycopene and beta-carotene—plant nutrients thought to benefit human health—increase in a whole melon stored at room temperature. One cup already contains more of both than a medium-sized tomato.

## Melon ice cubes add a splash of color

Once cut, fresh melons only last a day or two, so if you won't finish a big one before it spoils, puree seeded chunks in a blender or food processor. Pour mixture into ice-cube trays, and freeze until solid. Use the cubes to dress up lemonade, or try our favorite pairing: watermelon ice cubes in a minty-fresh [mojito](#).

## Watermelon Cooler



**Tip:** Always rinse a melon before slicing. Melons are grown in dirt and frequently handled: They may look clean but can harbor bacteria on the skin—especially netted varieties like cantaloupe. Thoroughly rinse so you don't transfer bacteria to fruit when cutting.

### Ingredients

8 cups (1/2 inch) watermelon cubes  
1 1/2 cups of ginger ale  
1/3 cup water  
1 (6 oz) can frozen limeade concentrate

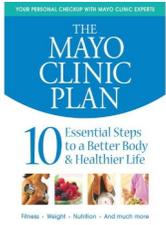
### Preparation

1. Place watermelon cubes in a single layer in an extra-large zip-top plastic freezer bag, and freeze 8 hours. Let stand at room temperature 15 minutes.
2. Process half each of watermelon, ginger ale, water, and limeade concentrate in a blender until smooth; pour mixture into a pitcher. Repeat procedure with remaining half of ingredients; stir into pitcher, and serve immediately.

**Honeydew Cooler:** Substitute 8 cups (1/2-inch) honeydew melon cubes for watermelon cubes and 1 (6-oz.) can frozen lemonade concentrate for limeade concentrate; proceed as directed.

## FREE EMPLOYEE RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE COORDINATORS OFFICE

Fad diets, weight-loss gimmicks, and get fit quick exercise machines abound, but none provide lasting results. Too quickly people fall off these diets, stop using the latest machine, and lapse back into their unhealthy habits. The clutter of diet options and conflicting advice leaves us all the more confused. Imagine if you could follow a simple, straightforward ten-step plan to a healthier life from the worlds leading medical experts? **The Mayo Clinic Plan** is culled from MAYO CLINICs current research and world-renowned medical experts, and includes the keys to healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle that are easy to follow. From achieving your optimal weight through eating the right foods and watching portions (and not necessarily carbs!!) to the incredible health benefits of incorporating exercise or any physical activity into your weekly life, the important new findings on the impact of sleep, and much more, you'll feel a difference quickly by following these steps.



Contact the Coordinator's Office at 765-4566 to check out this new resource, **"The Mayo Clinic Plan—10 Essential Steps to a Better Body & Healthier Life"** as well as several other informative Mayo books.

## WELLNESS ACTIVITIES UPDATE

The Poker Run Challenge that was held June 3 through June 30. Employees were given an opportunity to increase their level of physical activity and improve their nutritional status by participating. Participants were able to earn a maximum of 16 poker cards and submit "one" hand of their five best cards to compete for prizes. The prizes were a gift certificate to any Fillmore County business of choice as follows: 1st Prize—\$100, 2nd Prize—\$75, and 3rd Prize—\$50.



### Congratulations to our Winners!

3rd place—Jennifer Peterson, Social Services Division

2nd place—Barbara Kerns, Social Services Division

### 1st place—Vicky Topness, Public Health Division

A BIG thanks to everyone who participated in this Wellness Activity!!!! Your continued cooperation in the wellness activities is very much appreciated.

## Coming October 17th– NuVal Presentation

HyVee Dietician, Kaitlin Anderson, RD,LD, from the Rochester North Store will be presenting tips on meal planning, grocery shopping, food preparation, "MyPlate" - regarding fruits, grains, vegetables, protein and dairy.

**"Making Lives Easier, Healthier, Happier..."** Presentations with food samples will be **Wednesday, October 17th** at **11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** and then again at **12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.** in **Conference Rm. 108** at the Fillmore county Office Building. **Be sure to mark your Calendars!!!**

## ATTENTION: SelectAccount launched a new-and-improved Online Member Service

There are new features to make it easier to manage FSA and VEBA accounts and funds, including the ability to access customizable reports, such as those needed for tax purposes.

If you have any questions about the new Online Member Service Center, please call the SelectAccount Group Leader Line at 1-888-460-4013, Monday through Friday, from 8:00a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or visit their website at:

<https://www.selectaccount.com>.

Check it out!

The screenshot displays the SelectAccount website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for HOME, ACCOUNTS, DEPOSITS, CLAIMS, INVESTMENTS, and RESOURCES. Below the navigation, the user is greeted with "Welcome Karen!". The main content area is divided into several sections:

- My Accounts:** Shows a balance of \$13,379.79 for a Health Savings Account. It includes a "VIEW ACCOUNT" button.
- Recent Payments:** A table with columns for PAYMENT DATE, ACCOUNT TYPE, and PAYMENT AMOUNT. It lists two payments from 07/16/2012 and 07/19/2012, both for a Health Savings Account, with amounts of \$31.73 and \$124.50 respectively.
- HSA Contribution Limits:** A table showing limits for 2012 (\$3,100.00) and 2013 (\$3,100.00).
- Manage My Profile:** A section with a "VIEW MY PROFILE" button.
- Need Help?:** A section with a "VIEW PAGE" button.



# Fillmore County Household Hazardous Waste Collection

**Date: October 2, 2012**

**Where: Resource Recovery Center, Preston**

**Time: Noon - 5:00p.m.**

**Early drop-offs are illegal and will not be accepted!!!**

## Examples of Household Products Accepted

Aerosol cans	Wood preservatives
All types of paint	Roofing tar
Bug sprays	Battery Acid
Oven cleaners	Gasoline & Diesel fuel
Paint thinner	Adhesives
Floor care products	Lighter fluid
Degreasers	Swimming pool chemicals
Poisons	Moth balls
Antifreeze	Car care products
Lawn care product	Epoxy & glues
Garden & flower products	Stains & varnishes

## Items Not Accepted During This Collection

Agricultural chemicals	Business waste
Explosives	Radioactive waste
Medical waste	Empty cans

During this collection only— there will be a program that will allow you to exchange all your mercury thermometers for one new digital thermometer.

Help your neighbors and friends and either car pool or bring their waste along with yours. Please bring waste in non-returnable containers or boxes for faster unloading.

For more information, contact the Fillmore County Resource Recovery Center @ 765-4704.

## NEW . . . . TIPS FROM INFORMATION SYSTEMS

### How to keep Outlook clean and neat

Follow these recommendations and you shouldn't have any problem with Outlook, unless there is a bug that is causing the problem; for that- drop me a line describing the problem and I hope we find a solution for it.

1. Keep your mailbox at a reasonable size, don't expect Outlook to run at the speed of light when you have a big mailbox size. Outlook is a client side application that is always connected to the exchange server, every time you open Outlook, all e-mails needs to get transferred to your local Outlook through the network and that takes time.

How to minimize the size? Archive it, on your Outlook go to FILE and then select ARCHIVE make sure you change the path to where you want to archive it, put it on your "DOCUMENTS" select the date of your mail you want to archive and hit OK. If these are emails you need backed up be sure they are saved on your H: drive.

2. Remember to check the "junk E-mail", "Drafts", and "Sent Items" folder. Those e-mails utilize space on your mailbox, delete them, clean them up every week at least.

3. Things I've noticed with users , when they delete e-mails from their inbox, junk and sent item folders, they think they're gone? Nope they're still there in your "Deleted Items" folder. Unless you deleted them using "SHIFT + DELETE" keys they're still sitting in your mailbox. Make sure you delete that too. You can also set Outlook so it empties the deleted items folder after you close Outlook each time.

4. And last but not least, do not use your email address for any email newsletters or registration forms for any non-work related items. This not only increases SPAM to come through and exposure to viruses or malware, but is also against our Fillmore County Policy.

If you have any questions about these steps please feel free to ask. We would rather have you ask questions than be afraid not too.

Information Systems

## EMPLOYEE NEWS

### WELCOME!

We would like to welcome four new additions to our County team!

**Kari Jergenson, Kala Urban, Natalie Pappas and Patricia (Trish) Christian** have joined the Community Services, Public Health Division as Home Health Aides.

**Welcome to Fillmore County!!!**

### Moving on up...

#### Effective

August 3, 2012

**CRISTAL ADKINS** was promoted to Assistant Zoning Administrator in the Fillmore County Zoning Department.

**CONGRATULATIONS,**  
Cristal!

#### Effective

August 17, 2012,

**JOEL JOHNSON** became a Full-Time Deputy Sheriff in Spring Valley.

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
Joel!!

#### Effective

September 1, 2012,

**ANTHONY WEBBER** was promoted to Chief Deputy Sheriff and

**BRIAN MINER** was promoted to Lieutenant

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
Tony & Brian!!

## REMINDER:

Protect yourself, your family, your coworkers and your community.

**Get the flu shot!**