

Visit us at The Fair!

A number of Rice County departments will have booths at this year's fair, including:

- County Attorney
- Environmental Services
- Extension
- Public Health
- Sheriff (mobile command unit)

County Employees Learning To Work Lean As State Aid Dwindles and Need Grows

As state program aid to local governments continues to dwindle and the need for social and other services continues to grow, Minnesota's counties have had to find ways to do more with less. In Rice County, an operating philosophy derived from automobile manufacturing is helping employees work smarter.

does, Workplace Lean identifies and eliminates obstacles in administrative processes.

"Lean is not a method to reduce staffing or a one-shot quick fix," says Tom Kammer, the manufacturing consultant at South Central College in Faribault. "Lean is about improving organizational and employee productivity, reducing waste, reducing errors, and involving all employees in improving work processes."

Kammer, who has trained more than 100 county employees in the Workplace Lean process to date, has seen it work with clients ranging from John Deere and ACT (American College Testing) to banks and health care groups. All have been able to identify and eliminate wasteful processes, create better workflow and better serve their customers.

"The training is already paying dividends in Rice County," says County Administrator Gary Weiers. "It has improved office layouts and effected work process changes within a number of departments. Interdepartmental teams are also using the tools it has provided to evaluate and improve workflow between administrative areas. Over time, despite the economic pressures we are dealing with, Rice County citizens will see significantly improved systems, efficiency and accountability."

[See Workplace Lean, page 2](#)



Workplace Lean, as it is known, is an outgrowth of the Toyota Production System, which aims at continually improving operational performance and enhancing customer value by delivering solutions faster and at a lower cost. Instead of finding bottlenecks in assembly line processes as the Toyota system

Free Electronics Recycling Days This Fall Offer Opportunities to Save Money, Reclaim Space

Looking to reclaim the space that old computer monitor or dead video game system is taking up in the family room or garage? You can do so this fall, when Rice County Solid Waste will be staging two days of free electronics recycling. Disposing of such material usually costs from \$2 to \$10 per item at the county facility, but the county will be waiving fees in order to enable residents to dispose of them in a safe, responsible and cost-effective manner. Once collected, items will be sent off to facilities to be disassembled and recycled properly. Materials will be collected Saturday, September 17, in Faribault (at the Rice

County Fairgrounds) and Saturday, October 1, in Lonsdale (at the County Highway Shop).

There are Some Restrictions, of Course

Only Rice County residents are eligible to bring in material, and proof of county residency will be required – driver's licenses, utility bill statements with I.D. verification, etc. No business electronics will be accepted.

What Kinds of Things Will be Accepted?

Television sets, computer monitors, computer towers and laptops, household printers, fax

[See Electronics Recycling, page 3](#)

INSIDE

2 Septic Upgrade Rebates
Public Health at Fair

3 Foster Parents

4 Rice County
Standing Meetings

How to Contact Your
Rice County Officials

www.co.rice.mn.us

- Dundas • Faribault
- Lonsdale • Morristown
- Nerstrand • Northfield
- Warsaw • Webster

On the Web

Commissioners Approve Rebates for Septic Upgrades, Lower Rates on ISTS Loans

County commissioners voted in March to use the county's Clean Water Fund – Subsurface Sewage Treatment System Enhancement grant to provide \$300 incentive payments to county landowners who upgrade sewage treatment systems.

Eligible for the rebate are individuals who own the real property for which the improvement is to be made, who are upgrading an existing imminent threat to public health or failing to protect groundwater septic system, and who attend an operation and maintenance education workshop. Systems installed in the 2010 construction season are eligible if the applicant attends a workshop. The final one of 2011 will be held September 15 at the Rice County Government Services Building.

The commissioners also lowered the interest rates and term of the Rice County ISTS Revolving Loan Program. The county is now offering a 1 percent interest rate for individuals at or below 80 percent of the county's median income and 3 percent for those above. Loans have a 10-year term. The maximum loan amount is \$15,000 per property. Fifty percent cost-share grants are available to those meeting USDA very low-income guidelines.

Detailed information is available at www.co.rice.mn.us/planning or by contacting the Rice County Environmental Services Department at RCPlanningZoning@co.rice.mn.us or 507-332-6113.

Produced by Graffics Design and Ashmore Ink.

Workplace Lean Training

Continued from page 1

Meeting Customer Needs

It is customer requirements that drive change in the Workplace Lean process, notes Kammer. Who are Rice County's customers? All of the county's taxpayers are, of course. And anyone who needs a county service, such as a birth certificate, a building permit, a highway repair, immunizations, rent or food assistance, a clean, green, safe place to take the family for a picnic, crime victim's assistance, or a grant for business development.

The 25 employees who participated in a Workplace Lean training session on May 25 came from Community Corrections, the County Recorder's Office, the Highway Department, Information Technology and Social Services. The group included case workers, clerks, corrections officers, managers and department heads.

"You're the experts," Kammer told them. "You know the workarounds you have to engage in, the procedures that waste your time and energy. Workplace Lean depends on everyone involved in a process to make it better."

A common explanation for why something is being done a certain way is "That's the way we've always done it." Procedures of this type often have embedded in them steps that address situations that are no longer pertinent, such as a regulation or a staffing situation that has changed. Workplace Lean techniques encourage those who are most familiar with the pluses and minuses of routine tasks to find ways to make them simpler and more effective.

It also emphasizes the importance of making sure everyone in an administrative "assembly line" understands the end purpose of what they are doing. Often, Kammer notes, people only know about their own part of the puzzle and not how it fits into the overall picture. At Toyota, he notes, people on the assembly line rotate every two hours to different tasks. Not only does this make their work more challenging and more interesting, but



when workers have a better idea of how processes fit together, very often they can find additional ways to improve them.

Try-Storming Simulation Provides Insight

Too often initiatives to improve processes stop where they begin, with brainstorming. Kammer advocates "try-storming," hands-on tests that determine the validity of ideas. He gave participants firsthand experience with the concept during their training session. During a 10-minute simulation that relied on preset procedures, they managed to process only one contract, far short of the goal of 50. After the group spent 20 minutes identifying bottlenecks and considering ways to eliminate them, they tried again – and this time processed more than 35.

"Some obstacles can't be removed," Kammer notes. "If the state requires a certain set of signatures on something, you can't just decide not to provide them. You can, however, sometimes find ways to engage outside agencies in the examination and possible modification of their procedures," as members of the county Social Services staff have done in inviting state regulators to a forthcoming meeting.

Working smarter doesn't have to entail major changes, he adds. Waste occurs in areas that often escape detection – the compilation and distribution of unnecessary reports, making more copies of things than are needed, adding attachments to e-mails that never get read (and sometimes don't need to be), collecting unneeded information, entering data more than once, and making multiple checks of the same information.

Visit Public Health at the Fair!

Rice County Public Health will again have a booth at the fair. This year's theme is "Staying Healthy in an Emergency." We will be giving away hand sanitizer and other prizes for playing a game about what to do in an

emergency. We will also have some GPS maps of the flooding last fall.

Be sure to stop by when you visit the 2011 Rice County Fair!

Foster Parents Nurture County Children in Need of Stability, Support

“There is always a need for good, qualified foster care homes,” said Cheryl Marek, the social worker who oversees child foster home licensure in Rice County. Emotional, behavioral and special needs – the county’s family foster care homes deal with them all, serving at-risk children from birth through the age of 18 years.

The number of children in foster care varies from day to day, Marek noted, but at the moment there are around 50 children in full-time foster and kinship care, along with a number who make periodic use of respite care. Kinship care is made possible, she noted, when family members – “kinship care families” – come forward to work toward licensure so they can care for young relatives who may need out-of-home placement.

Who can become a foster parent? Anyone 21 and older who can give children a stable, secure family home experience. They can be single or married. They can own a home or rent an apartment. Foster parents must have an income adequate to meet their own needs. They must be in good physical and mental health and enjoy children of different races, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

The process of becoming a licensed foster parent is not terribly complicated, but the county and state take great care to make sure the homes foster children are placed in are safe ones. A medical report is required for foster parents and household members. Each foster parent and family member over the age of 13 must also submit to a criminal and social

services background check. Licensing also includes a home study, home safety check, references, orientation and ongoing training. It may also include a fire marshal inspection of the home. Foster homes are evaluated and re-licensed, usually on a bi-annual basis, after the initial year of licensure.

Learn More in September

People who are interested in learning more about becoming foster parents can do so by attending part or all of the training series Rice County holds in partnership with Steele County. The 12-module series, which began last January, is scheduled to resume on Thursday, September 22, with a session on the impact of abuse and neglect on child development. Each module last three hours.

During the series, participants become familiar with licensing and child placement procedures and have a chance to explore their expectations and the expectations of the child-placing agency. Guided by an experienced foster, adoptive or kinship parent and an agency professional, they participate in interactive and informative activities that explore team building, cultural issues in placement, family systems and abuse and neglect, attachment, separation and placement, discipline and other challenging topics.

For more details about the training, which is available at no cost, visit www.co.rice.mn.us/social/faktraining.php. For further information and to register, contact Marek at 507-332-5964 or cmarek@co.rice.mn.us.

County Profile



Kim Kelzer

Case Aide, Rice County Child and Family Unit

When Kim Kelzer interviewed to become an office support specialist with the county, she expected to stay a few years, get some experience, and move on. That was more than 25 years ago. She has lots of experience now – and she puts it all to work for Rice County.

Kelzer aids the social workers in the Child and Family Unit, where she supervises family visits, transports clients to medical appointments, tends to urinalysis tests for substance abuse, serves as a Social Services Information System mentor, fulfills office duties and does anything else that is requested. “I work with a great crew of fellow employees who make coming to work a lot of fun; we are always willing to help each other out.”

Kelzer credits her parents for teaching her to be kind to people and never give up. “One of the things I’ve learned in working with families over the years is that it’s important that you treat everyone with respect and consideration, because we, as citizens, never know where life will take us.”

Born and raised in Faribault, Kelzer is a graduate of Bethlehem Academy High School and of South Central Technical College. She enjoys going to movies with her husband, Marty, and their six-year-old daughter, Grace. She also loves biking, gardening, playing volleyball during the summer, and getting together with friends and family.

County Holds Free Electronics Recycling Days

Continued from page 1

machines, small electronics video games and devices, and rechargeable devices such as cell phones and MP3 players/iPods.

What Will Not be Accepted?

The following types of materials will **NOT** be accepted during the recycling drives: Small devices such as fans, toasters, hair dryers, electric pans and blenders; major appliances such as stoves, washing machines, dryers, refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, microwave ovens and water heaters; garbage or household hazardous waste, including fluorescent bulbs. To dispose of these items

properly, please consult the information at www.co.rice.mn.us/waste/index.php, where full information about these electronics recycling drives will also be posted.

Start collecting now!

FREE ELECTRONICS RECYCLING

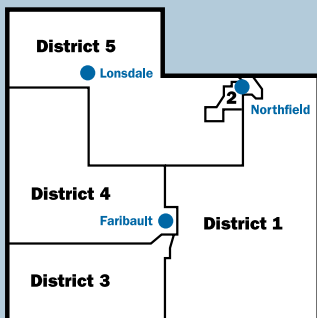
Saturday, Sept. 17, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Rice County Fairgrounds, Faribault
1814 2nd Ave. NW, near Hwy. 3

Saturday, Oct. 1, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Rice County Highway Shop, Lonsdale
Co. Hwy. 33/Jasper Ave.,
near Co. Road 33/Central St.

Contacts



Rice County Board of Commissioners

(as of January 1, 2009)

District 1

Jake Gillen
507-334-5746
jgillen@co.rice.mn.us

District 2

Galen Malecha
507-645-6041
gmalecha@co.rice.mn.us

District 3

Milt Plaisance
507-334-7612
mplaisance@co.rice.mn.us

District 4

Steve Bauer
507-334-9700
sbauer@co.rice.mn.us

District 5

Jeff Docken
952-652-2876
jdocken@co.rice.mn.us

Phone Numbers

General Information 507-332-6100
Toll-Free Numbers (do not dial "1" or area code)
 From Northfield 645-9576
 From Lonsdale 744-5185

Rice County Standing Meetings

Board of Commissioners

Meets the first and third Tuesdays of each month as a Committee of the Whole/Work Session, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month as a Regular Board, 8:30 a.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Planning Commission

Meets the first Thursday of the month, 7:00 p.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Board of Adjustment

Meets the second Monday of the month; 7:00 p.m., Commissioners' Room, Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Corrections Advisory Board

Meets the third Thursday of even-numbered months (February, April, June, August, October, December), 3:30 p.m., Rice County Government Services Building.

Community Health Services Citizens' Advisory Committee

Meets the fourth Wednesday every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November), 6:30–8:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6111 for location.

Emergency Medical Services Provider Council

Meets quarterly, 7:00–9:00 p.m.; call 507-332-6119 for meeting date and location.

Mental Health Advisory Council

Meets the fourth Wednesday of the month, 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friendship House, located at 212-B Central Avenue, Faribault.

Rice County Departments

Administrator Gary Weiers
507-332-6101 gweiers@co.rice.mn.us

Assessor Paul Knutson
507-332-6102 pknutson@co.rice.mn.us

Attorney Paul Beaumaster
507-332-6103 pbeaumaster@co.rice.mn.us

Auditor/Treasurer Fran Windschitl
507-332-6104 fwindschitl@co.rice.mn.us

Community Corrections Director Christine Curtis
507-332-6106 ccurtis@co.rice.mn.us

Court Administrator Hans Holland
507-332-6107 hans.holland@courts.state.mn.us

Economic Development Director Deanna Kuennen
507-332-6126 dkuennen@co.rice.mn.us

Environmental Services Director Julie Runkel
507-332-6113 jrunkel@co.rice.mn.us

Extension Educator Lisa Holling
507-332-6109 hollis21@umn.edu

Highway Engineer Dennis Luebbe
507-332-6110 dluebbe@co.rice.mn.us

Human Resource Manager Kerie Anderka
507-332-6123 kanderka@co.rice.mn.us

Information Technology Director Melissa Reeder
507-333-3777 mreeder@co.rice.mn.us

Parks/Facilities Director Joe McGough
507-332-6105 jmcgough@co.rice.mn.us

Public Health & CHS Director Anna Haubrich
507-332-6111 ahaubrich@co.rice.mn.us

Recorder Marsha DeGroot
507-332-6114 mdegroot@co.rice.mn.us

Sheriff Troy Dunn
507-332-6010 tdunn@co.rice.mn.us

Social Services Director Mark Shaw
507-332-6115 mshaw@co.rice.mn.us

Veterans' Service Officer Tracy McBroom
507-332-6176 trmcbbroom@co.rice.mn.us



2011 Rice County Fair Calendar

TUESDAY, JULY 19

Exhibits & Barns – 5 p.m.
 Midway Open – 5 p.m.
 Over and Back Band
 – 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.
 Fair Queen Coronation
 – 7 p.m.
 Rockie Lynne Concert
 – 8:15 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20

Exhibits & Barns – All Day
 Midway Open – 3 p.m.
 Kids' Pedal Tractor Pull
 – 6:30 p.m.
 The Rockin' Hollywoods
 – 6:30 p.m.
 Demolition Derby – 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 21

Exhibits & Barns – All Day
 Midway Open – 12 p.m.
 The Whitesidewalls – 6 p.m.
 Enduro Car Races – 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 22

Exhibits & Barns – All Day
 Midway Open – 12 p.m.
 Ranch Rodeo – 12 p.m.
 Texting Contest – 6 p.m.
 Wylee Band – 6 p.m.
 MPRA Rodeo – 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 23

Exhibits & Barns – All Day
 Midway Open – 12 p.m.
 Antique Tractor Pull
 – 9:30 a.m.
 Bluegrass & Gospel Music
 Festival – 12:45–10 p.m.
 NTPA Truck & Tractor Pull
 – 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, JULY 24

Midway Open – 1 p.m.
 Amateur Talent Contest
 – 12 p.m.
 Demolition Derby – 6 p.m.

Special Attractions at the 2011 Rice County Fair

It's time for the Rice County Fair – some of the most exciting days of the summer! Every year, members of the Fair Board work hard to bring different events and exhibits to the fair.

Admission to the Rice County Fair is free! You will be able to see more than 100 commercial exhibits, lots of animals, and exciting entertainment all week long. Here is a preview of just some of the free entertainment. Be sure to check the full schedule published just prior to the fair.

Remember to enter some of this year's contests, including Chocolate Classic, Salsa, Senior Citizens' Spelling, Texting, Chili and more. New this year is a "This Old Barn" photo contest.

"Mutiny On The Mississippi," a swash-buckling pirate adventure, will explode from the decks of a paddlewheel steamboat when the **Mitchell Marionettes** return to present their Showboat Puppet Spectacular three times a day. Popular with adults as well as children, the troupe features ventriloquism,

stringed marionettes and other puppet forms in a comical, musical variety show.

New this year is **Farmer Bob and Johnny, the World's Funniest Tractor**. You'll roll with laughter when Farmer Bob starts up Johnny, a 1949 John Deere MT, whose features include a skunk that sprays water, lots of sirens, horns, bells, whistles and some surprising remote controls. Johnny even blows up balloons, which Farmer Bob twists into all sorts of creations. They'll wander throughout the Fair all week.

On Saturday, listen to the **Bluegrass & Gospel Music Festival**. Four different groups will perform on two stages: Midway, 1–10 p.m., and Cannon, 12–3 p.m. Bring along a chair if you plan to stay for the day.

Please remember: NO pets, roller skates, inline skates, skateboards or bikes are allowed on the fairgrounds. (There are exceptions for service animals and pets allowed for exhibition, demonstration or show.) Please help ensure the safety of all our visitors. Enjoy the 2011 Fair!

GRANDSTAND CONCERT
Tuesday, July 19 • 8:15 p.m.

*Tribute
 to the Troops!*

Special Concert by Rockie Lynne

• Free Admission •

2011 Entertainment Lineup

Bruce Sellner Memorial Midway Stage

Tues., July 19	Over and Back Band – 6 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Tues., July 19	Rice County Fair Queen Coronation – 7 p.m.
Wed., July 20	Carter and Hawk Classic Country Music – 12 noon
Wed., July 20	The Rockin' Hollywoods – 6:30 p.m.
Thurs., July 21	The Whitesidewalls – 6 p.m.
Fri., July 22	Wylee Band – 6 p.m.
Sat., July 23	Bluegrass & Gospel Music Festival – 1 p.m.
Sun., July 24	Amateur Talent Contest – 12 noon

Cannon Stage

Tues., July 19	Greg Skillestad's Mystifying Magic – 7:30 p.m.
Wed., July 20	Good Vibrations and Brodini Magic – 7:30 p.m.
Thurs., July 21	Good Vibrations – 7 p.m.
Fri., July 22	Electric Fusion with Patty Anderson – 7:30 p.m.
Sat., July 23	Bluegrass & Gospel Music Festival – 12:45 p.m.
Sun., July 24	Electric Fusion with Patty Anderson – 12 noon

Grandstand

Tues., July 19	Salute to Veterans: Rockie Lynn Concert – 8:15 p.m.
Wed., July 20	Demolition Derby – 7 p.m.
Thurs., July 21	Enduro Car Races – 7 p.m.
Fri., July 22	MPRA Pro Rodeo – 7:30 p.m.
Sat., July 23	NTPA Truck & Tractor Pull – 6:30 p.m.
Sun., July 24	Demolition Derby – 6 p.m.

Beer Garden Entertainment (Music: 8 p.m.–midnight; No cover charge)

Tues., July 19	Jacob Martin Band
Wed., July 20	Under The Covers
Thurs., July 21	Killer Hayseeds
Fri., July 22	2UNE
Sat., July 23	Mister Peabody



www.ricecountyfair.net • 507-332-2470

Free Events on the Fairgrounds

Brodini (3 times daily)
 Showboat Marionettes (3 shows daily)
 Farmer Bob and Johnny, the World's Funniest Tractor
Grandstand: Free bike drawing every day
 ... and much more!

CASH DRAWINGS

Every Day – 5 p.m. and 10:15 p.m.
 Final Sunday Drawing – 4 p.m.

\$1,300 in cash given away all week plus two Grand Prizes:

Win one of two casino trips to Treasure Island (Red Wing) and Grand Casino (Hinckley)

Drawings Held Every Day (Cannon Stage)

(To be eligible, sign the ticket you receive upon paying your parking admission and deposit in the barrels in either of the commercial exhibit buildings. You must be present to win.)

Stroll the Midway! Over 30 Thrilling Rides!

Ride Specials & Schedule

Tuesday, July 19 – Open 5 p.m.
 Power 96 Radio Night
 8 Rides for \$9.60

Wednesday, July 20 – Open 3 p.m.
 Thrill Day! – Reduced Prices

Thursday, July 21 – Open 12 noon
 Senior Day, Day Care Day
 Special Senior Citizen and Day Care Prices

Friday, July 22 – Open 12 noon
 Kids' Day – 12–5 p.m.
 (Special Kids' Arm Band Price = \$15)

Saturday, July 23 – Open 12 noon
 Family Day – 4–10 p.m.
 (Special Family Arm Band Price = \$20)

Sunday, July 24 – Open 1 p.m.
 Amateur Talent & Latino Day
 (Special Arm Band Price, 3–9 p.m. = \$20)

GoldStar Amusements
Passport to Fun!
 Unlimited Rides for the Entire Fair
\$45.00

ADVANCE SALE ONLY
 Sold only at Rice County Extension Office,
 Nelson's, Hy-Vee and
 KYMN Radio