

NCRPC NEWS

North Central Regional Planning Commission
Serving Kansans Since 1972

April/May 2008
www.ncrpc.org

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- Vice Chair:**
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NCRPC Staff

- Sherry Angell
Brett Beck
Margaret Cathey
Connie Cyr
John Cyr
Jeff Gansel
Dell Gier
Jeff Maska
Doug McKinney
Deb Ohlde
Debra Peters
Pepper Roberg
Lori Thielen
Rod Thompson
Carol Torkelson
Jeanell Tucker
Todd Tuttle

Upcoming Events

Thursday, April 24, 2 p.m.
Thursday, May 29, 2 p.m.
Executive Board Meetings

Tuesday, April 28, 8 a.m.
Community Development
Block Grant Annual
Application Workshop, Salina.
For registration details, visit
www.kansascommerce.com.

CYR LEAVES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POST

After 22 years of serving as the NCRPC Executive Director, John Cyr stepped down from his leadership position effective March 31.

Cyr began working at the NCRPC in September 1980 following completion of his graduate work in Geography at Kansas State University. John completed his undergraduate work at The University of Kansas.

A mere six years after joining the organization, he became executive director.

"The past 28 years have sped by and I am honored by the fact I have been allowed to serve as Executive Director for 22 of those years," Cyr says. "It has been a learning experience more than a job and for that I'm most grateful."

Long-time NCRPC employees, Doug McKinney and Debra Ohlde have been named Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director, respectively.

Cyr will continue to work part-time with the NCRPC on special projects.

NCRPC Housing Director, Carol Torkelson, has witnessed the organization change under John's leadership.

"We came to work for the Commission within a few short months of each other and have seen many changes during this time," Torkelson says. "His foresight is remarkable."

Kansas Department of Commerce CDBG Grants



John Cyr

Coordinator, Debbie Beck, says Cyr's legacy is thinking outside the box.

"John is always willing to try anything for his area or his staff," Beck says. "His mind is working on what can be tried to benefit his region or even the state."

NCRPC Executive Board Chair, Marcia Funke, says the entire board appreciates Cyr's efforts.

willing to take on challenges and encourage investment in Kansas that tends to go against the urban mindset," McKinney says.

While Cyr has been involved with hundreds of projects during his tenure as executive director, notable items include the creation of the NCKCN Internet and the investments made in the introduction of the Home Town Competitiveness (HTC) model and of BoardSource, Inc. and its perspective on nonprofit governance.

The largest in-office controversies under Cyr's leadership typically were accompanied by games between intrastate rivals K-State and KU.

"The only time John ever seems to slow down is for the NCAA tournament,"

"The foundation of everything with John is that he truly loves rural Kansas and is committed to it in a personal as well as professional way."

{Debra Ohlde}

"John has exemplified leadership qualities as Executive Director of the NCRPC," Funke says. "His knowledge and expertise have brought us to where we are today."

McKinney says Cyr is a mentor who has a strong love for all things rural.

"When it comes to rural development, he has been

Ohlde jokes. "The purple vs. crimson and blue war was a fun, on-going feud."

Cyr believes the best is yet to come for the region.

"The NCRPC has come a long ways during its history, but the future holds even more opportunity," Cyr says. "The door is opening to regional conditions like we've never seen before."



The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications will be distributed at the Annual Application Workshop sponsored by the Kansas Department of Commerce on April 29 in Salina.

Does your community have a project in mind for the fall CDBG application rounds? Planning on NCRPC assistance? Contact us before **June 1** so we can make plans to help with your project.

Due to staff and time constraints, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to assist with your CDBG project if you contact us after the June 1 priority deadline.



THANKS, MARK!



Mark Freel, an NCRPC Executive Board Member since 2005,

recently left his position as the Economic Development Director for the City of Minneapolis to work for ISG Technology, Inc., Salina.

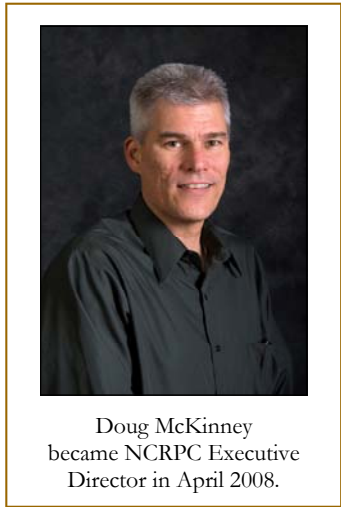
The NCRPC would like to thank Mark for his contributions to the organization and to the region and wish him well in his new endeavors.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: ENGAGE, INVOLVE YOUTH IN YOUR COMMUNITIES

Recently I attended a Harlem Globetrotters event in Salina. Hundreds of boy scouts and their families were joined by youth from throughout the region. It was a good reminder that involving young people in an activity or conversation and providing examples or lessons to which they can relate can go a long way toward engaging our youth.

The Globetrotters did both during the basketball game, but most of all during special pre-game dialogue with the scouts and while signing autographs.

In order for our communities and the region to prosper and to be attractive to future generations, we need to engage the youth and young adults currently residing here. Just as we more mature adults have developed ties and



Doug McKinney became NCRPC Executive Director in April 2008.

roots locally, youth need the same. I applaud communities and school districts that have service project requirements for high school students. The completed project enhances the community all while encouraging mentoring relationships and trust to be developed.

I will share a few formal youth engagement activi-

ties from around the region. The City of Beloit has established youth council positions enabling input from a few high school juniors and seniors at city council meetings. North Central Regional Planning Commission has a relatively new scholarship program in which graduating seniors are encouraged to share thoughts on rural Kansas. The League of Kansas Municipalities also provides the platform "If I were mayor for a day?" Awards and attention are provided through this annual process.

The more we engage our youth, the better we will be. After all, they are observing us and will have the opportunity to fill our seats in the not too distant future. Hopefully, they will seriously consider doing so even better than we do.

MITCHELL COUNTY RFD RECEIVES FIRE TRUCK FROM CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT

Persistence and several phone calls resulted in a new fire truck for Mitchell County RFD No. 3.

It all began when Assistant Fire Chief, Carl Eilert, learned from a Riverside County, California, Code Enforcement Officer, who has family ties to Mitchell County, that surplus fire trucks were being donated each year to Mexico. Eilert decided to contact the Riverside County Fire Chief to make a request.

"The Fire Chief originally said no, but by being persistent we ended up getting

an engine," Eilert says. "There was a lot of red tape to jump through but it was very well worth it."

Eilert and two others from the Mitchell County RFD No. 3 flew to California in January to take possession of their donated engine, which is a 1985 four-wheel drive Spartan truck with a 1,000 GPM pump.

"It was extremely well maintained," Eilert says. "It's going to replace the structure unit that we had been using and will be a very good asset for Mitchell County."

Since Eilert made the first request, he says the financing in Riverside County is starting to dry up and they are unsure if they will be able to continue having surplus trucks to donate.

"Ours was the only department to get what they requested this year because Riverside got a big budget cut from the state," Eilert says. "We really had to show our need."

Riverside County is located in southeastern California, stretching from Or- (See Trucks, Page 3)

STAFF MEMBER'S PUBLIC HEALTH TOOLS GETTING STATE, NATIONAL ATTENTION

When Sherry Angell was selected to the Kansas Public Health Leadership Institute in 2006 she had no idea that fulfilling a capstone project requirement would lead to her creating tools that would have application to such a large audience.

Angell, who joined the NCRPC in 2003, is the North Central Kansas Public Health Initiative Regional Coordinator. Her capstone project resulted in creation of a Special Needs Populations Assessment Toolkit, which is connected to a larger project partnering with the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD) to use Geographic Informa-

tion System (GIS) technology to assist in emergency preparedness planning.  Angell

This toolkit has since received national attention from the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy.

“Combining GIS technology with assessments, surveys and registries — through partnerships with other state public health groups — can help officials identify the resources, needs, and gaps to improve

overall emergency preparedness planning and response for vulnerable populations,” Angell says.

“Some local public health departments are small and don’t have the resources to develop their own assessment tools,” Angell says. “This tool is easily adapted to meet individual county needs.”

Recognizing that resources are limited after a disaster, the toolkit instructions address how important it is to provide education regarding realistic expectations and individual preparedness planning.

To view the kit, visit www.pandemicpractices.org and search under “Vulnerable Populations.”

MEET THE BOARD



Steven Errebo joined the NCRPC Board in 2005 after he was elected to the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners.

He is an owner-operator of Errebo Farms, Inc. in rural Lincoln County near Denmark where he manages a beef herd and grows calves in addition to raising feed, cereal grain and hay. Steven was born in Lincoln County and now lives on the quarter first homesteaded by his great grandfather.

Prior to his involvement on the farm, Steven spent six years in the United States Navy.

Steven is involved in several community organizations, is American Legion Post #359 Commander, and is a member of the Central Kansas Mountain Bike Club. In addition, he was appointed in 2008 by Governor Sebelius to the Kansas Wind Working Group to represent the Kansas Association of Counties.

Steven and his wife, Marilyn, have a son, Benjamin, and a daughter, Talena. His favorite hobbies are riding dirt bikes and mountain biking.

(Cont. from Trucks, Page 2)

ange County to the Colorado River, which is the border with Arizona. U.S. Census data in 2000 indicate a population of more than 1.5 million people. Mitchell County was home to just over 7,000 people during the same Census.

“We think this engine will work well for us for at least 15 years and it’s something that was just beyond its service life out there,” Eilert says.

More trucks are available for purchase from California this spring. The California Department of Forestry (CDF) will sell 50 1980 through 1988 International trucks. Most have between 150,000 and 200,000 miles.

“I think they would make good wild land engines and could be a good deal if de-



The Riverside County Fire Department spent an afternoon training the Mitchell County RFD No. 3 representatives on the new truck.

partments worked together to share freight back to Kansas,” Eilert says.

According to Eilert, the trucks available for sale are a mix of two-wheel and four-wheel drive. The majority have automatic transmissions, 500 gallon tanks, 300 GPM pumps,

and run on diesel fuel. The fixed prices of the trucks range from \$3,000 to \$15,000.

For more information about the CDF trucks for sale, interested parties may contact Jay McDonald, CDF Fleet Manager, at 530-757-2407.

NCK REGIONAL TAX CREDIT PROGRAM MAKES FIRST EQUITY INJECTION IN LOCAL TECHNOLOGY COMPANY

A Bennington company recently received the first equity injection made by the North Central Kansas Rural Business Tax Credit Initiative.

The \$50,000 equity injection will help Matrix Electronic Measuring Systems develop a photographic electronic measuring system specifically for the upper body of a vehicle. Called the Matrix Wand System, it is the second major product the company has developed since it began in 2003.

The funding for the equity injection was made possible, in part, from private contributions made to the North Central Kansas Community Network through use of the Kansas Rural Business Development Tax Credit Program administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce.

Jan and Bob Srack founded the company after Bob scribbled down his

idea on a napkin during an airline flight. Jan is President/CEO and Bob is Co-Developer and Consultant.



They already had been in the collision repair industry for approximately 20 years with their company, Gold Medallion. That company manufactures automotive and truck racks and other assorted collision repair equipment.

The Srack's saw a need for an accurate, photographic electronic measuring system in the industry.

Matrix already has been manufacturing and selling an automated computer measuring system for the lower body carriage to auto repair shops. This product aids the automotive body industry in bringing the lower frame of damaged

vehicles back to manufacturer's specifications.

The second product, the Matrix Wand System, is a

handheld, portable device for the purpose of evaluating automotive vehicle damage.

It uses technologies to quickly and accurately determine 3-D XYZ deviations of vehicle measurements from manufacturer's specifications.

The patented technology can also be used in many other industries including the aircraft, construction and insurance industries, factories, forensics crime scenes, car auctions, railroads, roads and bridges.

"We offer an innovative new generation of electronic measuring systems," the Srack's say. "These

systems are simple, fast, accurate, reliable, and affordable."

The company currently has two full-time employees and plan to expand by an additional five full-time positions as business grows.

The business has worked with Kansas Technology Enterprise Corporation (KTEC), Wichita Technology Corp, Wichita Holdings, Inc., Midwest Venture Alliance, and the Bennington State Bank.

The financing for the marketing of the first product was assisted by Four Rivers Development, Inc. and StartUp Kansas.

For more details about the business, visit www.matrixelectronicmeasuring.com or call 1-800-424-8023.

For more about the North Central Kansas Rural Business Development Tax Credit Initiative, contact John Cyr at the NCRPC at 785-738-2218.

Know others who would like to receive this newsletter? Prefer e-mail format? Send contact information to rlhelen@nckcn.com. Feedback is always welcome.

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