

# Dickinson County Newsletter # 42

December 2008

[www.co.dickinson.ia.us](http://www.co.dickinson.ia.us) (click on news at the top, then on County Newsletters)

Articles written by Mardi Allen, information provided by participating departments... thanks Jan & Janelle - Recorder's office, Clark & Beth - courthouse, Nancy - budget, Dave & Barb - P&Z, Alissa - IT, Amy - GIS, & JoLynn for the picture.



**Dickinson County Christmas Party:** On December 6<sup>th</sup>, the Recorder's office hosted the Dickinson County Christmas party at the Blue Water Cabaret. Janelle Treganza reports that around 60 people attended. The festivities started off with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres and a nice dinner with a full salad bar. The entertainment was Jim and Jesse Howard, who sang songs while the partiers did some dances - the Twist, Hooky Poky and the Chicken dance. A skit was presented with 3 men riding a stick horse and 3 girls playing with a big blow up guitar. Dave Kohlhaase was asked to sit in a chair in front of the band while the band played "It's Hard to be Humble". The band made up a couple of funny songs about the courthouse and the County offices. It was basically good food and wonderful entertainment. In addition to the party, the Recorder's office collected 3 huge boxes of toys, coloring books, crayons and craft items that were donated to the Milford and Spirit Lake Head Start programs. Janelle believes a good time was had by all and the party and donations were very successful.

**Courthouse Construction Update:** Although all construction on the new courthouse seems to be done

there are still a few outstanding items to be resolved. The following have recently been reported to McHan and RDG:

The gutters are leaking on the south side of the courthouse in two locations.

The Snow guards do not seem to be working on the South Side of the Courthouse.

There is a leak in the roof in the hallway between the Engineer and the DHS.

The Door to the County Attorney's office area is hitting the floor in the secured hallway.

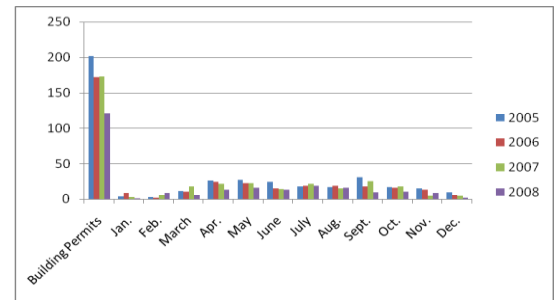
The Auditor's office is still quite a drafty and seems to be coming in through the wall. None of the other offices on the north side outside wall of the first floor seem to have this draft problem.

In addition to these, there is still concern with the boiler system - Clark is monitoring it closely.

**FY 2010 Budget:** This year the Supervisors are asking that Departments meet with them to discuss their proposed budget. The entire Board will be meeting with each department individually. Budgets, both expenditures and revenues, are due to the Auditor by the January 15, 2009, so the numbers can be compiled in to county budget reports for the Board. The individual department's schedules with the Board can be found on the County's web site. The following is the FY2010 budgeting schedule:

January 6	County Engineer/Secondary Road planning session
January 15	Department budgets due to Auditor
January 16 - 22	Auditor compile county budget from department worksheets
January 26-30	Supervisors to review proposed budget/outside requests
February 3-6	Departments present budgets to Board of Supervisors
February 10-13	Board to finish/departments to make final changes
February 17	Final review and setting of public hearing
March 10	Public hearing on proposed FY2010 County Budget and adoption of budget

**Building Permits in Dickinson County:** Is Dickinson County seeing a reduction in new construction like other counties in Iowa? The adjacent chart seems to indicate just that. The blue line on the far left of the chart shows the total building permits issued in 2005, the red is 2006, the green is 2007 and the light purple line is 2008. Of course you must remember that these are only those issued in the county and not those issued for any of Dickinson County's cities. The Recorder's office, however, is also seeing a reduction in real estate recording revenues from 2005 which was \$171,755 compared to \$156,950 in 2008. The recorder's numbers do take into account the entire county. Jan Bortscheller believes she will be seeing A LOT of re-financing and she can already see some of the banks coming through. The Recorder's real estate recording revenues did increase from a 5 year monthly low of \$8,600 in November '08 to \$12,675 in December '08.



**Information Technology:** Alissa reports that the spam filter has been working much better. The vendor has fixed the bug and very few good emails are getting blocked by the spam filter. Alissa is still checking the spam filter every day to ensure that the few emails that are blocked get forwarded to the correct mailbox and the sender is added to the safe list. Spam filters generally work from two parameters to determine if the email is spam. They work from a word list of suspicious words that are flagged as potentially dangerous and usually indicate spam. Pornographic words or sales pitches used in spam advertising campaigns will usually be caught by spam filters as well. If an email is loaded with graphics or contains attachments, it could also be flagged as spam. Other things that will flag email as spam would be using all capital letters or "yelling", bright colors and backgrounds.

**GIS Countywide Information Available:** Amy Schmeling attended a one day workshop on Dec 11, in Minneapolis. The workshop was called mapping your community and was tailored to mapping localized data as well as mapping census data. She was shown how to map all census data and create thematic maps for analysis. Thematic maps serve three primary purposes. First, they provide specific information about particular locations. Second, they provide general information about spatial patterns. Third, they can be used to compare patterns on two more maps. All of this data can be tailored to show exactly what the targeted audience is attempting to analyze. She is looking forward to having time to look into our local data available and create some informative maps from it. In the meantime, Amy has the following information mapped along with much more.

Childcare providers-layer of all childcare providers in Dickinson County-used for sex offender informational maps

Polling locations- layer of all polling locations, including name of location and address

Recycling Route- mapped route of the current curbside Recycling routes

Road Centerlines- countywide roadways

School districts- layer of school district boundaries

School properties-layer of all school owned properties-used for sex offender informational maps

Soils- countywide soil types based on the 1979 Soil Survey

Subdivisions- layer of all subdivisions countywide, including date of platting

Supervisor Districts- boundaries of all 5 supervisors' districts, including supervisor name, term expiration, & district population based on the 2000 census

Voter Precincts- boundaries of current precincts, including polling location

Zoning- current zoning designations

County Owned Property- Property owned by Dickinson County, including primary use of property