

Employees recognized during County Government Month

By BUTCH HEMAN
Times Herald Staff Writer



Carroll County is observing National County Government Month by recognizing its tenured employees. Workers with more than 20 years of service include (first row, from left) Barb Schultes, Treasurer's Office, 20 years; Joann Martin, Auditor's Office, 20 years; Mary Lou Nichols, Treasurer's Office, 35 years; (second row, from left) Joan Schettler, Auditor's Office, 31 years; Pam Daniel, Sheriff's Office, 21 years; (third row, from left) John Werden, Attorney's Office, 22 years; Doug Bass, Sheriff's Office, 36 years; Glenn Kerkhoff, Custodial Services, 24 years; (fourth row, from left) Peggy Weitz, Treasurer's Office, 35 years; Judy Schreck, Assessor's Office, 30 years; Diane Janning, Assessor's Office, 33 years; (fifth row, from left) Kevin Schultz, Custodial Services, 25 years; Greg Kustra, Sheriff's Office, 27 years. Absent were Luanne Schlichte (23 years), Kris Nagl (22 years) and Barb Thielen from the Homemaker Health Aides Service. (Photo by Butch Heman/Daily Times Herald)



Carroll County Secondary Roads Department employees with more than 20 years of service are (front row, from left) Duane Wenck, 40 years; Jack Schmeiser, 47 years; Dick Henrich, 41 years; Gary Brauckman, 40 years; (middle row, from left) Dan Quandt, 25 years; Mike Wolfe, 23 years; Steve Hoogestraat, 32 years; Paul Heuton, 26 years; Allen Soyer, 31 years; Ron Berger, 20 years; Dave Paulson, 24 years; (back row, from left) Ray Hagedorn, 31 years; Craig Hansen, 20 years; Steve Olberding, 28 years; Dave Williams, 25 years; John Bernholtz, 34 years; Don Stork, 22 years; and Alan Brincks, 23 years. (Photo courtesy of Carroll County Secondary Roads Department)

If you want to see dedication, look no farther than Carroll County's employees. The county has 113 full- and part-time workers who tend your roads and parks, process your tax and property data, even protect your life and property. Need proof that these folks are committed to their jobs and the public they serve? Nearly one-third have more than 20 years' experience.

Carroll County is recognizing its staff during April, which is National County Government Month. County officials have been building awareness about Carroll County government by speaking to civic groups. And on Friday the county will host this week's Carroll Chamber of Commerce coffee, from 8 to 9 a.m. at the courthouse.

Carroll County's government was formed along the banks of the Middle Raccoon River just south of the now-unincorporated village of Carrollton, in August 1855. Of the estimated 200 people living in the county at the time, only 28 men were eligible to vote. Once the new county officials were elected, a county seat had to be named. Two judges appointed by the 6th Judicial District designated Carrollton as the county seat.

Work on a new courthouse started in 1858. The contract was let to Nelson D. Moore, who died a year later with the courthouse unfinished. The first story had been constructed, but no plastering or painting had been done. Moore's estate was paid \$818 for the finished work. The second story and remaining interior work were completed by L&J Hampton in 1865. The total cost for the Carrollton courthouse was \$3,000.

Carrollton was a bustling community at the time, complete with a stagecoach stop, a post office, two general stores, a drug store, a blacksmith, a hotel, a doctor's office, two churches and even broom and cheese factories, according to the 1906 Carroll County Atlas. But with a new railroad built through Carroll City, the newest town in and geographical center of the county, "Westerners" doubted manufactured goods could be brought in easily from the east.

In August 1867, a petition was presented to the Board of Supervisors calling for a relocation of the county seat to Carroll City. Sixty-seven people signed the document. An election was called to decide the fate of the county seat. Carrollton residents were shocked to hear that 88 residents voted for moving the county seat to Carroll City while only 30 opposed the move.

Glidden, located seven miles east of Carroll and also on the railroad line, could easily have been selected as a new county seat. Many residents wanted the county seat moved there, as Glidden was a prominent town at the time while Carroll City was a few shacks surrounded by a wide expanse of prairie. Seven Carrollton citizens fought back, presenting a petition to the Board of Supervisors that stated the election was illegal, that voters did not have sufficient legal notice and that Carroll City was not recorded as a legal town or city and therefore could not be county seat. The supervisors refused to act on the petition, and the county records and courthouse furniture were moved to the new county seat on the following day, April 28, 1868.

Some local historians say the records were transported at night to avoid a confrontation by Carrollton residents who didn't want the county seat to leave. The first courthouse in Carroll City was a two-story, four-room Chicago and Great North Western Railroad Land Company supply depot located off Main Street on the south side of the railroad tracks and owned by William Gilley. Gilley was paid \$50 a month for rent. The courthouse was at that location for 16 months. After one defeat, a bond issue to construct a permanent courthouse was approved in April 1869. It was a wooden structure located in the area of the present courthouse. But the building was destroyed by fire in 1886 under what some people called suspicious circumstances. A newspaper account of the incident said an "incendiary" was found on the premises. Another courthouse was constructed where the current courthouse parking lot sits in December 1887. By the early 1960, the building was showing signs of age. After two bond issues failed, a \$750,000 bond issue to build the current courthouse was approved, with construction starting June 1, 1964, and ending in the fall of 1965.

Carroll County now operates more than 20 departments and offices with a combined annual budget of \$17.3 million. It's two largest departments are Secondary Roads and mental health, costing \$4.6 million and \$2.8

million, respectively, and being comprised of nearly half the county staff. The county maintains 1,007 miles of roads — 793 graveled and 198 paved — and 230 bridges. The mental health department handles 145 clients.

Recent projects for the county include paving the remainder of the Sauk Rail Trail and construction of a sewer system for the village of Maple River. Several departments were also busy dealing with clean-up from winter storms.

More information about Carroll County government is available online at www.co.carroll.ia.us.