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# Carlton County

County-wide newsletter brought to you by the County Coordinator's Office

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## **New Barnum Transportation Garage Serves as Perfect Set-up for Drive-thru COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics**

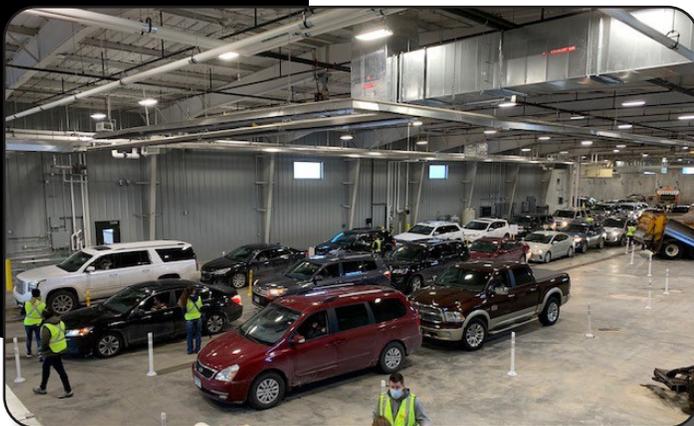
In an unexpected partnership, Carlton County Public Health and Human Services teamed up with the Carlton County Transportation Department to transform space used normally to house the County's salt trucks and other maintenance equipment, to use as a drive-thru COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Modeled after the pilot drive-thru flu vaccine clinic at the Carlton County Transportation Garage in the fall of 2020, modifications were made to make an almost contact-less, streamlined approach to vaccinating large populations in a short amount of time. The County's COVID-19 Response Team helps direct the efforts on a weekly basis, if not more often, based on the vaccine allocations.

Carlton County's COVID-19 Response Team is partnering with local healthcare facilities in the County to coordinate interested and eligible residents with upcoming clinics; the Barnum Transportation Garage is one of the locations. The requirement for pre-registration for the drive-thru clinics is the major reason the process can be relatively contact-less, which is of high importance during a pandemic. As highlighted by Jenny Barta, Carlton County's Subject Matter Expert, "In utilizing this drive-through method, we have been able to administer over 2,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine to those who live and work in Carlton County since late December 2020. This drive-thru option has allowed us to streamline the way we offer vaccinations and still offer adequate physical distancing and minimize time spent in close proximity to those giving and receiving COVID-19 vaccine."

The pre-registration also speeds up the process by allowing for 'paperwork' to be completed prior to the clinic. Mass Dispensing Director, Ali Mueller reports that "the Barnum Garage has been an ideal venue for mass vaccination clinics. Because of the ample space, we are able to vaccinate between 80-90 people every hour." Most patients spend about 25-30 minutes in the garage during their vaccination and recovery.

This approach has been recognized by local and national media sources as an effective, innovative approach to vaccinating residents in a very safe and effective way, and county staff have had the opportunity to share the model/process with other counties and organizations across the United States. New partnerships with County GIS staff and software (for registration, evaluation, etc.) have also led to an organized, efficient process, as shared by clinic participants.\* (Quotes used anonymously with permission from participants.)



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2020 Carlton County Board of Commissioners



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\*Board meetings are held at the Transportation Building on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8:30 a.m. and the 4th Monday of every month at 4:00 p.m.

## Resilience in Times of Adversity

The past 12 months have been stressful for many of us. For some, jobs have been lost; for others, the isolation has felt overwhelming. Although we are in the same storm, we are in very different boats. What we thought would be a sprint to the end of COVID-19 ended up being an ultra-marathon and we are getting weary. As hard as it may be, there is reason to be hopeful amidst current struggles and resilience is something that will help carry us through.

Resilience is a buzzword lately. So what does it really mean? Resilience is the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Being resilient does not mean that people don't experience stress, emotional upheaval and suffering. Some people equate resilience with mental toughness, but demonstrating resilience includes working through emotional pain and suffering.

Resilience is important because it gives people the strength needed to process and overcome hardship. Those lacking resilience tend to get easily overwhelmed and may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms. Resilient people tap into their strengths and support systems to overcome challenges and work through problems.

There are various forms of resilience; a few are as follows:

- Emotional resilience in which a person can tap into realistic optimism even when dealing with a crisis.
- Physical resilience refers to the body's ability to adapt to challenges and recover quickly.
- Community resilience refers to the ability of groups of people to respond to and recover from adverse situations such as natural disasters, acts of violence or economic hardship.

Resilience may be easier for some than others (now, and during other major life events), and no matter where you fall on the spectrum of resilience at any one time, there is always support if you need it. Please see the following resources that are available to you or to someone you know who may be having a difficult time:

- Crisis Text Line: Text "MN" to 741741 (24/7)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1- 800-273-8255 (24/7)
- SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline: call or text 1-800-985-5990 (24/7)
- Minnesota Mobile Mental Health Crisis Line: Call \*\*CRISIS (\*\*274747) – 24/7. If you are a resident of Carlton County you may also call 218-623-1800.

MN Warmlines:

- Wellness in the Woods. Peer-to-peer telephone support (warmline): 1-844-739-6369, 5 p.m. - 9 a.m. daily
- Mental Health Minnesota. Volunteer staffed telephone support: 1-651-288-0400/1-877-404-3190 or text "Support" to 85511, 12 p.m. - 10 p.m., Monday - Saturday
- NAMI MN Virtual Support Groups (Zoom): the groups are specifically for those individuals suggested by the group's title – check out the regularly updated list. For information and registration visit [here](#) or call 1-888-626-4435/651-645-2948.

Any questions regarding this article can be directed to Brenda Carlson at [Brenda.Carlson@co.carlton.mn.us](mailto:Brenda.Carlson@co.carlton.mn.us).

## Carlton County Jail Project

In 2015, a group of county administration (Commissioner Marv Bodie, County Coordinator Denis Genereau, Jail Administrator Paul Coughlin and Sheriff Kelly Lake) went to Colorado to participate in the PONI (Planning of a New Institution) put on by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) which is a subsidiary of the U.S. Department of Justice. This process is what led to several reports dealing with the "Needs Assessment" of our Justice system to be explored for the planning of a new Jail.

While Carlton County worked with information provided through the series of reports on the Justice system, groups were tasked with reviewing the need for a new jail. In January of 2020, the MN Department of Corrections (MN DOC) notified Carlton County that our current Jail will be

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### *Carlton County Jail Project continued*

“sunset” and not allowed to house inmates after the date of July 31st, 2023.

A smaller subcommittee, the Jail Steering Committee, was formed. Members include: County Coordinator Dennis Genereau, Commissioner Dick Brenner, Auditor/Treasurer Kathy Kortuem, Sheriff Kelly Lake, Attorney Lauri Ketola, Commissioner Marv Bodie, Economic Development Director Mary Finnegan, Jail Administrator Paul Coughlin, Property Management Supervisor Rob Carr and consultant Tony Mancuso. This subcommittee works under the Carlton County Justice Partners to review detailed information related to the Jail project. Through this group, Jail Administrator Paul Coughlin was appointed the project manager.

Using knowledge gained during the NIC visit, a Facility Development Process was created. Information will be provided to the Board of Commissioners on a monthly basis at a working session open to the public on the third Monday of each month. That process started on February 23, 2021. The information will be placed on the Carlton County website for review once provided to the Board for approval.

A construction manager firm is in the process of being hired. Carlton County will move to secure Architectural and Engineering services to help with designing the building. Several decisions will need to be made by the Board of Commissioners before a final project plan will be complete. Please watch for updates as Carlton County works through this process. Information will be shared with all staff and the public through the use of the Carlton County website. Please contact Sheriff Kelly Lake or Jail Administrator Paul Coughlin at 218-384-3236 for further questions.

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## ***Employee Assistance Program Offers Support for Employees During Pandemic***

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As employees cope with the unusual circumstances of the coronavirus pandemic along with regular challenges of life, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is still operating and providing support for personal concerns. The EAP phones continue to be answered 24 hours a day, every day to assist individuals in need, and counselors offer sessions over the phone and by video to comply with social distancing guidelines. The EAP offers no-cost, confidential, short-term counseling sessions. Employees, elected officials and their dependents can use EAP services. Support is provided for a variety of personal concerns including:

- Relationships
- Family
- Anxiety
- Stress
- Depression
- Work
- Finances
- Loss and grief
- Substance abuse
- More

### **Reactions Vary to Unusual Circumstances**

Individuals may be experiencing a variety of reactions to the circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak and social distancing, such as anger, depression, anxiety, disconnection, loneliness, fear and difficulty concentrating. The intensity of people’s reaction might surprise them. The EAP is a valuable tool to help individuals manage through this time.

The EAP is simple to use:

1. Individual calls the EAP at 1.800.550.6248 and describes the issue. Alternatively, an individual can complete the online intake form at [SandCreekEAP.com](https://www.sandcreek.org/eap).
2. The EAP recommends a counselor able to address the person’s concerns.
3. Individual connects with the counselor to make an appointment.

### **Learn More about Reacting to and Coping with Abnormal Events**

Sand Creek, the Employee Assistance Program administrator, offers more information about its operations during the coronavirus pandemic and how people react to and can cope with abnormal events. [Read more.](#)

*Article Credit: MCIT.org*

### *Vaccine Clinics continued*

“Awesome job! Your team worked like a well oiled machine! Even though it was the most surreal weird thing having such a huge scale vaccination process during a global pandemic, I felt safe because Carlton County was so prepared.”

“Well organized, safe, quick, easy. Everyone I interacted with was kind and professional and clearly very genuinely concerned for all the patients’ well-being. This clinic went above and beyond, thank you!”

“Very easy. Comfortable. Informative and helpful. Friendly, well prepared people attending and serving the vaccine drive-in population. I highly recommend this style of clinic to anyone who may inquire.”

Residents are encourage to visit the County’s [COVID-19 Hub Vaccine Information tab](#) or call the vaccine hotline at (218)499-6312 for regular updates on population eligibility and resources.

All residents are encouraged to sign up through the Vaccine Connector to help find out when, where, and how to get your COVID-19 vaccine. This is the best way to find out when you are eligible for the vaccine. The website address is <https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov/>. If you do not have internet access and would like to sign up, please call (833)431-2053. Registering does not schedule you for a vaccine, it is only intended to notify you when you are eligible for the vaccine. Once you are notified, you will need to make appointments directly through a registered vaccinator that can be found [here](#).

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## ***Family Friendly Jail Initiative***

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The Family Friendly Jail Initiative (FFJI) has received a grant in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Health to add further programming and support for families experiencing incarceration in Carlton County. The federal grant award from the U.S. Department of Justice, Second Chance Act Addressing the Needs of Incarcerated Parents and their Minor Children program, will provide funding for a Family Liaison to work with families and children impacted by incarceration. The Family Liaison will provide on-site coordination of parenting resources, facilitate community partnerships, establish family-focused re-entry into the community and provide referral and follow-up to families and children in the program. They will also serve as a liaison to our local school districts and will help to extend the support to participants in the FFJI after release from the jail. The award also brings training to jail staff and Parent Education curriculum resources.

Parental incarceration can be difficult for a child. When a parent goes to jail, the child may experience challenges in family relationships, at school and in their community. The stigma of having an incarcerated parent can affect mental health and social interactions as well. Carlton County’s FFJI strives to support kids and parents in this stressful situation to build connections and resiliency. A 2017 study conducted in partnership with the University of Minnesota, Division of Pediatrics and Adolescent Health, demonstrated a number of conditions that made jail visits burdensome for children: the physical environment was set up for adults, children may be in spaces with inappropriate input from other visiting adults, incarcerated parents could see only one child at a time causing issues with siblings and logistics. These issues added to the stress and fear of the experience and presented obstacles in maintaining contact with the child’s parent. The FFJI, in partnership with the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Health, began in 2018 with changes to programming, policy and procedure to better accommodate families and to support them with resources and parenting education as well as to mitigate the fear and stress for children coming to the jail to visit their parent. Training for jail staff on topics like Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACEs was part of the effort to help end the cycle of trauma and support better outcomes for children.

Family Friendly visiting hours were created to allow children to interact with their incarcerated parent in a more appropriate environment. Families are intact and young children don’t have to wait alone for their turn to visit with their parent. Communication at Family Friendly Visits is focused on the child. Parent education sessions with a Parent Educator were added to programming along with a parent library. Books for parent and child to read together and coloring books for children were some of the things added to foster healthy interaction and lower anxiety. Participating inmates must put in the work to remain a part of the program, Visits and the feedback received has been very positive. One inmate shared his experience: “This program is very beneficial for me and my children. Being incarcerated is not easy for anyone involved. My children’s behavior was showing rapid deterioration... Their grades were showing low scores with no improvement... I learned how to talk to them by reading the book provided, how to answer questions, what to say to answer some of their fears. The realization of how much my kids need me turned my attitude right around. Having to face them made me see what I’ve been doing is wrong way more than just a jail cell ever will... Within a few visits my children’s school lives as well a home life improved noticeably. I am so grateful. I got some real great reasons to succeed. Two beautiful reasons.”

Carlton County Jail’s U.S. Department of Justice grant award runs through September of 2023, will supplement the services of the existing Family Friendly Jail Initiative and aims to improve parent-child relationships, reduce recidivism, increase child wellbeing and improve public safety.

## Carlton County Committee's

**Building Committee -**  
2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 a.m.  
(Transportation Building -TB)

**Committee of the Whole -**  
1st Tuesday of the month at 4:00 p.m. (TB)

**Diversity Committee -**  
3rd Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m.  
(PH&HS)

**Finance Committee -**  
1st Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. (TB)

**Policy Committee -**  
3rd Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m.  
(Law Enforcement Center - LEC)

**Management Team -**  
1st Tuesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. (TB)

**Supervisors Committee -**  
3rd Thursday quarterly at 2:00 p.m.  
(Varies)

**Wellness Committee -**  
2nd Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m.  
(PH&HS)

**For a more detailed Carlton County  
Committee list [click here](#).**



Are you interested in submitting an article in the next Carlton County Newsletter? Email or mail your articles and pictures by the March 19, 2021 deadline to:

Shanny Hurst  
Carlton County Coordinator's Office  
P.O. Box 510  
Carlton, MN 55718  
[shanny.hurst@co.carlton.mn.us](mailto:shanny.hurst@co.carlton.mn.us)

\*Please note that all submissions are subject to editing, as needed.

## Let's Get Acquainted with Carlton County Jail Program Coordinator



My name is Stephanie Upton. I have worked for the Carlton County Sheriff's Office for 23 years, 19 of which have been as Jail Program Coordinator.

In that role, I facilitate programs for inmates during their incarceration. The programming work I find the most rewarding is with the Family Friendly Visiting Program, a part of the Family Friendly Jail Initiative. The testimonies from incarcerated parents who have participated in the program have been very powerful.

Like many of my colleagues, I went into this line of work with hopes to make a difference in the lives of others. My work with the Family Friendly Jail Initiative and Family Friendly Visiting

Program has allowed me to do just that. Incarcerated parents have discovered the impact their incarceration has had on their children and it has motivated them to make changes to turn their life around. My ultimate goal is to reduce recidivism; reduce the amount of times an individual is incarcerated.

I'm excited to be a part of great things that are happening at the Carlton County Jail. Our work has gotten local, state and national attention. I have been asked to present our program at conferences across the state. Periodicals with national distribution have published articles about our program. We were recently awarded a Department of Justice Federal Grant. Through the grant we will train correctional and community professionals through the evidence-based Parenting Inside Out program. This will address the unique challenges facing criminal justice-involved parents and their children. Facilitators who have been trained in Parenting Inside Out curriculum will be working in the jail as well as working in the community in order for participating individuals to continue the program within our community in the event they are released from custody prior to completing the program.

From the grant, we will also be hiring a Community Family Liaison. The Community Family Liaison will work with the families of the incarcerated parent. They will be a support person with the child's school and connect the child and their family with additional services, if needed.

Followed by reducing recidivism, my goal is to break the cycle of incarceration for these families. Our objectives within the grant will assist in this. It is my hope that the success of Family Friendly Visiting will be taken into consideration with decisions made regarding the jail project. Studies show children of incarcerated parents are at risk for cognitive delays, depression and delinquency. Visits during the parent's incarceration have the potential to reduce these risks. It would be my dream to have approval for a child-friendly space within the jail facilities for incarcerated parents to have contact with their minor children to perform healthy and engaging activities together. The benefits would outweigh the cost of recidivism and the long-term costs associated with additional care and services for children of incarcerated parents.

When I am not at work, I am spending time with my amazing husband and my three adult stepchildren and three grandchildren, which includes attending UMD men's hockey as a season ticket holder, golfing, enjoying the outdoors with my dogs, scrapbooking and selling Tastefully Simple. I asked my bonus son to describe me; his answer was "hard working and someone who takes care of the people she loves. Straight forward and honest. Loves to relax and have fun, but only after getting the days work done. Enjoys the little things in life and is happy with very little. Adventurer and explorer."

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."