

**Carlton County  
Coordinator/HR Office**

1307 Cloquet Avenue  
Suite #1  
Cloquet, MN 55720  
Phone: (218) 384-9141  
[www.co.carlton.mn.us](http://www.co.carlton.mn.us)

# Carlton County

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

Issue 02 April / May / June 2022

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- Pg. 2 . . . Carlton County Public Health Educator Receives Award
- Pg. 3 . . . Omnibus Mental Health Budget Bill
- Pg. 3 . . . Let's Get Acquainted

## Employee Service Awards



**Ryan Rennquist**  
(Sheriff's Office)  
20 Years

**Russell Rowenhorst**  
(PHHS)  
30 Years

## Carlton County Nurse Recognized for her Pandemic Efforts

Reporter/Article credit: Laura Butterbrodt, Duluth News Tribune

CLOQUET -- Jenny Barta, a Carlton County public health nurse specialist, has received the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees' "Never Quit" service award to recognize her efforts during the coronavirus pandemic. The award is presented to AFSCME members nominated by their peers.

"I was so honored to be a part of this work in helping our community to stay safe during the pandemic," Barta said. "I was pretty shocked, surprised, amazed and humbled that I would even be considered for this award. It was such an amazing group effort, with regards to the pandemic response. I'm just so honored to be able to receive this."

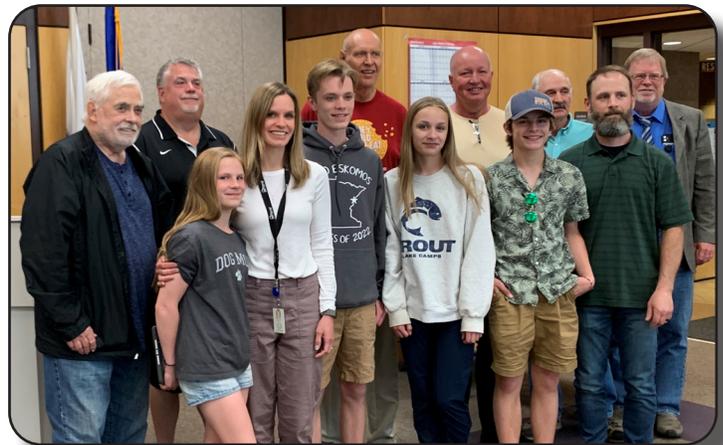
Barta, a member of AFSCME Council 65, was nominated for the award by her co-worker Tom Shay, an IT coordinator for the county. They have worked together extensively over the course of the county's vaccination clinics, which used iPads and other computer systems for registration and records. Barta is also the county's disease prevention and control coordinator.

Barta and the Carlton County Public Health team were among the first in the U.S. to arrange local drive-thru vaccination clinics in the county's garage to protect people from the wintry weather, plus avoid exposure to the virus.

The first clinic was held in December 2020, when the COVID-19 vaccine was first authorized for emergency use. The county's emergency preparedness team tested the drive-thru vaccination idea the summer before with child immunizations and flu shots. Their work was featured in national news articles by the Associated Press and Time magazine.

"When vaccines rolled out, being able to administer vaccines in a short amount of time to a large number of people and to do it safely is part of my core values as a nurse, to protect our community at large," Barta said. "Because this was a coronavirus pandemic and no one really had it on our radar that we would have a global pandemic from a coronavirus, it was very novel and something really new. We didn't have a step-by-step playbook so we needed to rely on state sources, federal sources and learning from the science as things progressed throughout the pandemic."

As the vaccine became more readily available and approved for more groups of people, the county held vaccination clinics about one to three times a week over the next six months, Barta said, coordinating frequently with the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and local schools.



Back L to R: Commissioner Dick Brenner, Commissioner Thomas Proulx, Commissioner Gary Peterson, Commissioner Marv Bodie, Commissioner Mark Thell, Tom Shay. Front L to R: Lucy Barta, Jenny Barta, Nathan Barta, Ellynor Barta, Joel Barta, Dan Barta

Continued on page 3

2022 Carlton County Board of Commissioners



Dick Brenner  
Member  
218.879.5572

District 1  
Dick.Brenner@co.carlton.mn.us



Marv Bodie  
Member  
218.879.2085

District 2  
Marv.Bodie@co.carlton.mn.us



Thomas Proulx  
Member  
218.348.4288

District 3  
Thomas.Proulx@co.carlton.mn.us



Mark Thell  
Vice-Chairperson  
218.384.3878

District 4  
Mark.Thell@co.carlton.mn.us



Gary Peterson  
Chairperson  
218.380.4949

District 5  
Gary.Peterson@co.carlton.mn.us

\*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.

# Carlton County's Public Health Educator Receives Duluth News Tribune's 20 Under 40 Award

Article credit: Duluth News Tribune



Ali Randall (27), Carlton County Public Health Educator  
(Photo credit: Rachel Rossiter)

### What do you do professionally?

As a public health educator in Carlton County, I serve as the Northeast Regional Coordinator for Suicide Prevention and Crisis Text Line. As a health educator, I work in a variety of health program areas such a healthy aging and well-being.

### How are you involved in the community? Do you volunteer with any organizations?

In the community, you can typically find me at an ice arena. More specifically, Fryberger (Freezeberger). I am a volunteer youth hockey coach and serve as one of the recruitment and development directors for the Duluth Girls Hockey Association. I sit on the Duluth Amateur Hockey Association Board and this off-season I will be an assistant coach for the Minnesota Hockey High Performance Program.

Most recently, I have loved spending time with horses and the incredible Strong Compass crew at the Northern Lights Cutting Center who strive to help veterans find direction, purpose and hope. I am eager to get back to work with Alzheimer's Association Young Champions-Twin Ports, which is a diverse group of young professionals dedicated to creating a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia.

### What is important to you?

Living out my purpose, embracing adventures, and unconditionally loving people along the way.

### How do you spend your free time?

My family and friends are the type to find any occasion to get together so it's safe to say most of my free time is spent with them. You can typically find me at live music, running marathons (long story), coffee shops, cooking, journaling, hiking, traveling, playing hockey and attempting to golf.

### Favorite things about living and working in the Northland?

It feels like a little slice of heaven for me and it allows for a way to balance a packed schedule. I get to work, live and explore everyday with Lake Superior out my front window.

### What advice would you give to up and coming professionals?

Nothing really prepares you for the feeling you get before any big brave transition, whether it be a graduation, your first big job, or moving to a new city. You start to feel like a kid who lost their parent at the grocery store all over again. The difference is that, this time, those feelings will eventually fade. One day you will receive a sign that you are exactly where you are meant to be and that nothing that was meant for you passed you by. With this big brave transition, comes failure. We will fail, and when we do, remember the words of Maya Angelou, "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

### Favorite moment in life?

I am a firm believer that the best is yet to come! But, if picking one means I get to relive it . . . then skydiving!

### Who has inspired you or your favorite motivational quote?

Undoubtedly, my family. I come from a long line of resilient go-getters who work hard, serve their communities and always know how to have a good time.

### Anything else you want to add?

I want to express my gratitude to all those in public service, education and healthcare who make sacrifices to keep our communities healthy and thriving everyday and particularly during this pandemic.

*Nurse Recognized Article Continued*

"No one ever wants to go through such a challenging global pandemic like this, but one of the silver linings is that the community partnerships that we had developed in public health were strengthened, I believe, throughout this pandemic response," Barta said.

She said much of the work done by public health departments is more behind-the-scenes, such as pushing to pass legislature ensuring the community has safe drinking water and air quality. But regardless of the publicity of the work, she said public health specialists are looked to as experts for the community to rely on for their safety.

"Jenny keeps going day after day, week after week, month after month," said Dave Lee, director of the Carlton County Public Health Department. "She is very much driven by: she's got a job to do, she's got people to serve. She wants people to be healthy and safe and vaccinated and have all the tools that they need to keep themselves, their family and their community safe and healthy."

Barta said she is grateful to her husband and children, who were understanding in her need to spend a large portion of her time away from them while working on pandemic responses. In addition, she credits her parents for teaching her to take care of her neighbors and supporting her in her calling to become a nurse.

Barta was born and raised in Duluth and attended nursing school at the College of St. Scholastica. She and her family now live in Carlton County.

"Especially as a nurse working in public health, my job and responsibility is to protect the community at large," Barta said. "This is my home community, so it meant so much to be a part of this effort and response in this Northland that I love so much."

Joanne Erspamer, a public health supervisor, said Barta's investment to the people of Carlton County has helped her become a trusted face for the public health department to communicate with the community.

"She really has become that trusted messenger," Joanne Erspamer said. "I really believe it's because she does really take the time, both personally and professionally, to get to know the community, and that shows in all the things that she does."

Every month, AFSCME honors one or two of the 1.4 million public service workers in the union with the "Never Quit" award. AFSCME receives hundreds of nominations and chooses individuals who have a profound impact on their community. Members who win the award receive a Never Quit Service Award Certificate, online recognition and a letter of congratulations from AFSCME leadership signed by the union's president Lee Saunders.

Barta credits her co-workers in Carlton County for their support of everyone on the team, and said their ability to work so well together is what has kept her in the job for the last 15 years.

---

## ***Carlton County's Public Health and Human Services Director Invited to be Witness to the Signing of the Omnibus Mental Health Budget Bill***

---



*Carlton County Public Health & Human Services Director Dave Lee and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz*

Dave Lee, Director of the Carlton County Public Health and Human Services Department, was in St Paul, Minnesota, on June 7th at the invitation of the Office of Governor Tim Walz to be witness to the signing of the Omnibus Mental Health Budget Bill into law. The signing took place at Children's Hospital in St. Paul, site of the new addition of inpatient psychiatric beds that are currently under construction.

The bill authorizes the investment of \$60 million into the State of Minnesota's mental health system, including funding for increased hospital beds dedicated to mental health needs and an expansion of mobile crisis units. Just as important, the funding will be used to generate a growth in the number of mental health care professionals, which is badly needed both in Minnesota and across the Nation.

Mr. Lee, who has served Carlton County in his current capacity for nearly 20 years, sits as the Chair of the State Advisory Council on Mental Health, a position he was appointed to over 4 years ago, representing Minnesota social services directors. As Chair, Mr. Lee has been

*Continued on page 4*

## Carlton County Committee's

**Building Committee -**  
2nd Wednesday of the month at 1:00 p.m.  
(Government Services Building -GSB)

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

**Diversity Committee -**  
4th Tuesday 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. (GSB)

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

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

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  
September 23, 2022 deadline to:

Shanny Hurst  
Carlton County Coordinator's Office  
1307 Cloquet Avenue, Suite #1  
Cloquet, MN 55720  
[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 Chief Deputy Recorder



Hello! My name is Heather Nylund, and I am currently serving as the Chief Deputy Recorder for Carlton County. Our office is responsible for recording all real estate documents as well as providing access to vital records, military discharges, and other vital records functions. I am responsible for making sure that the day-to-day operations of the real estate and vital records departments go smoothly. I also am part of the intake staff for daily recordings of real estate documents which involves interacting with various members of the public. I am the administrative support for the County Recorder/Registrar of Titles. When the County Recorder/Registrar of Titles is away from the office, I act for her during that time. Another main responsibility I have is to work with the County Recorder/Registrar of Titles to co-manage various special projects for the office and assist with the special requirements for the Torrens Department.

What I enjoy most about my work is that I feel I am helping the public with the confusing world of real estate transactions. I believe I have a

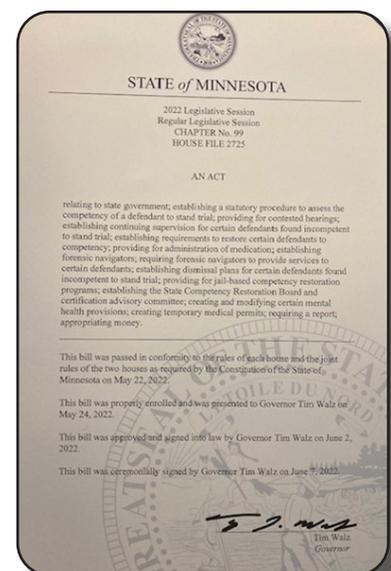
talent for explaining the processes to the public in a way that they can understand. I also enjoy reading legal descriptions and following the chain of title on a property which is interesting and informative. I take pride in what our office does; that this office makes sure that documents are properly recorded and meet statutory requirements. This office, I believe, does an exceptional job of preserving and maintaining the public land records. Our constituents can be assured that these land records are indeed preserved forever.

In my free time I enjoy spending time with my family. We camp and fish in the summer and enjoy snowmobiling and ice fishing during the winter months. My three children and grandson are all my pride and joy, and we treasure our time spent together.

*Omnibus Mental Health Budget Bill Article Continued*

responsible for providing the advisory council with direction and promoting changes in mental health law with members of both the Minnesota Senate and House of Representatives. During the signing, Mr. Lee had the opportunity to talk with a few of the Senators that he and the other Council members worked with over the past years on mental health legislation, including Senators Rosen and Abler.

"I am proud of the collaborative efforts of the Council and our state senators and representatives. It has been a pleasure working with Governor Walz and everyone else who has been instrumental in bringing this legislation to fruition," stated Mr. Lee. He noted that the Governor was appreciative of the collective efforts of those in attendance, including the bipartisan work to complete the 2022 mental health legislation. Mr. Lee was honored to be given a copy of the signed bill on behalf of the State Advisory Council.



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