

One Person With Determination Makes a Huge Difference

By Brad Karger

Dave Eisenreich, retired Marathon Electric President and CEO, describes himself as a persistent man. Much of the community's success in building 15 tournament quality soccer fields on the recovered Holtz-Krause landfill site is attributable to his determination and a willingness to address and overcome obstacles.

20 years ago, Dave Eisenreich and other corporate leaders envisioned an environmental cleanup of the landfill that re-purposed the site for recreation. At that time no one imagined that the site could become a community asset that combined a sports complex with the curling facility and a conservation area with hiking trails and kayak access to the Eau Pleine River.

In retrospect, all this seems to have been a pre-ordained, orderly progression of steps. But in reality there were many obstacles. Here is just a sample of some of the obstacles that at various points seemed to block the door to redevelopment of the site:

1. The first hurdle was convincing the community that a "voluntary" clean-up led by local leaders would be far less expensive than a clean-up project led by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This also included convincing the EPA and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to allow a volunteer led clean-up of the site. The community stepped up, sufficient funds were raised, and the work was completed at a reduced cost.
2. Another obstacle, which started 15 years ago, was the unfounded fear and perception by a few vocal people that the site was hazardous and presented a health risk to anyone using it. Many times these "hazardous to your health" arguments were presented without



Brad Karger and Dave Eisenreich

- any scientific foundation. Even though the vocal group's arguments lacked scientific evidence, it was difficult to overcome the subjective objections.
3. In the beginning, no governmental entity was willing to assume ownership of the site because of concerns about future pollution liability. This was a legitimate concern given the way the law was written. After about a year of discussions with the DNR, legislative representatives from both parties and other interested parties, we were able to address this by asking the legislature to modify the law to allow sites such as Holtz Krause to qualify under the Voluntary Party Liability Exemption (VPLE) provisions of the law. Essentially, the new legislation extended the state Brownfield laws to cover older, closed, licensed landfills so as to transfer any future environmental risk to the state. After extensive discussions with the representatives for the city and the county, it was decided that the county would take the lead and assume ownership of the property.
 4. Yet another challenge was the purchase of the land. Negotiations to purchase the site from it's owners was
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problematic because the owners had a very inflated perception of the value of the landfill property. In the end, the issue was resolved through the combined efforts of the city, county, and the steering committee who combined resources to purchase the property so development could proceed.

5. Another issue was demonstrating to the DNR and others that the methane gas resulting from the decomposing waste was minimal and not an environmental concern. Fortunately, the DNR had about 20 years of data and agreed that the level of methane had significantly declined over the years. After lengthy discussions, the committee elected to install a new downsized flare system to control odor at the site.
6. The DNR had communicated the possibility that the groundwater would need to be treated at some point. Based on this, the committee held money in reserve in case this was needed. Fortunately, the data from 20 years of monitoring indicated the groundwater quality had significantly improved. Based on this data, the DNR agreed that it would not require groundwater treatment and natural attenuation was adequately addressing this concern. This was a major milestone because it meant that we could use the money held in reserve to build the soccer fields.
7. Reconstituting and re-energizing the Executive Committee after several years of inactivity was an additional challenge, but necessary to satisfy the group by-laws and so that decisions could be made going forward.
8. And finally, there were many hurdles from a construction perspective. The steel support beams that support the concession building and light towers had to be driven over 60 feet deep to bedrock. Each light tower has 4 beams and the concession building has 12 beams. In

addition, we experienced severe rains that stalled the project in the beginning by about a month.

Had Dave Eisenreich been something less than a very persistent man, the landfill site would be a barren, unused site for the next 100 years. Because he stuck to it and enrolled partners along the way, the athletic complex has become a reality and will be enjoyed by county residents and visitors for a long time.

If you want to see a digital representation of the soccer fields or the athletic complex [check here](#)

The new Marathon County Sports Complex is close to completion. The site will grow grass in 2014 and will officially open with much fanfare in 2015.

This is a case study of how one person with vision and determination can make a big difference in the lives of many and the success of a whole community!



Every Day Heros

By Sara Klebenow, Foster Care Coordinator

Sometimes children are unsafe in their family homes and need to be cared for by foster parents. Marathon County is proud to introduce you to two of our community's every day heroes – Foster Parents Katie and Joseph Howlett are one of many example of these every day heroes.

The Howletts have been foster parents for Marathon County since 2010. They have fostered over a dozen children, provided respite care for other foster parents, and have served as mentors to new foster families. They specialize in caring for young children and sibling groups. Recently, the Howlett family adopted a sibling group of 4 children that had been placed in their home.

The Howletts are exceptional foster parents because they work well with the Department of Social Services and with birth families, while providing loving and nurturing care to the children in their home.

Here is how the Howletts responded when I asked them some questions about being a foster parent.

What is it like to be a foster parent?

It is amazing to be a foster parent. We love that we get to touch the lives of so many families, not just the kids but moms and dads too. Being a foster parent means that our family gets to make a positive difference in a family's life and help guide kids to make good choices. We also have a chance to be with parents and have them see how we parent. It means being a parent to child that is not yours and doing it with love. It means folding a family into your family completely.



The Howlett Family

What does the job entail?

The job entails taking care of kids as your own and loving them unconditionally and giving it your all even though you know they are going home. It means being a friend to a parent even when it is hard. It means never speaking ill of parents or situations. It is our job as foster parents to build the children and their parents. It means classes and learning how to be a better parent and learning how to guide children and families through a tough time. It means lots of doctors' appointments and school trips and doing anything to help a child be healthy and succeed.

What does it take to do it well?

It takes patience and open minds and lots of love and faith to do well in foster care. We need to be ourselves and not pretend we're something we're not. If you are real with

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Every Day Heros

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families they will be real with you and you can help make a difference in their lives.

What are the benefits?

The benefits are beautiful smiles from children. Watching an angry child start to smile. Watching a child who is afraid of everything become excited over everything. Having a parent confide in you or trust you enough you share their worries or fears with you. You get a chance to meet people and, make a positive difference in their lives that will last a lifetime. Helping a family become a family is priceless.

How would you describe a success?

I would describe a success as sending children home to a stable home. Having a family who was in a difficult

situation come together closer than they were before. Having a child learn that someone out there loves them and will stand up for them.

Marathon County is responsible for recruiting, training, licensing, and monitoring foster homes. Foster parents are compensated with government funds in order to provide for the basic care of children. Foster parents who care for children with exceptional care needs receive additional compensation with supplemental funds.

Foster parents provide a valuable service to our county by taking care of our most vulnerable population– our children. Visit this web page for [more information](#) about becoming a foster parent, or contact Sara Klebenow at 715-261-7553.

There are currently **56** licensed foster homes in Marathon County.

From January 1, 2013 through April 30, 2014 **96** children were placed in foster care.



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Creating a Safe Marathon County

By John Robinson, Marathon County Board

Marathon County Government has adopted a goal of becoming the safest county in Wisconsin. The concept of Marathon County being the “safest” community in Wisconsin requires the Marathon County Board to consider the diverse activities we offer that protect our citizens. Safety is a partnership that involves our families, schools, churches, and workplaces where we create physical and emotional environments. People have the right to live peacefully—without fear of crime, disorder, danger, injury and harm to themselves and others.

Citizens have very simply told us they want Marathon County to provide a safety support system which:

- Provides a timely and full service response to critical and immediate safety needs when the unexpected occurs.
- Anticipates and improves any environmental, social, physical and economic safety conditions that threaten people and communities to prevent serious issues.

This commitment to safety goes beyond its established management and funding of the Marathon County Sheriff's department and county jail. Some programs that help enhance the safety of residents include:

Safety Net for Those in Need:

Income maintenance workers determine the eligibility for various programs, such as, Medicaid and FoodShare.

Services to Vulnerable Populations:

- Mount View Nursing Home Services
 - Dementia care, ventilator support, or long-term care.
 - Protective placement to ensure safety for those in need.
 - Counseling, including a 24-hour crisis and suicide prevention hotline.
- North Central Health Care Services
 - Short-term crisis stabilization unit for temporary shelter and support
 - Inpatient hospital setting for those with severe psychiatric needs



Creating a Safe Marathon County

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Children and Infant Safety:

- “Start Right” provides support and resources to infants through age four
- “Cribs for Kids” educates parents and ensures that every newborn has a safe place to sleep
- Social Services Department helps insure the safety of youth by working with families and other service providers to identify and address needs that contribute to child abuse and neglect

Physical Health: The dedicated staff in the Health Department works with other health care providers to offer:

- Immunization and vaccinations to avoid the transmission of controllable communicable diseases.
- Bike Safety through improvement of bike and pedestrian routes.

Chronic Disease Prevention: Educational programs aimed at reducing the incidence of chronic disease are enhanced by efforts to improve access to locally grown produce.

- Environmental Health
- Food Safety
- Water Safety
- Groundwater and surface water protection
- Home Safety

Road and Bridge Safety: Addressed through the efforts of the road crews at the highway department to plow the roads and patch the potholes.

Sheriff Services and Disaster Preparedness:

- Police services
- The Emergency Management Department helps prepare for and respond to natural disasters
- Communication of emergency responders

There is a strong commitment to safety through county government. By working together we can achieve our goal of becoming the safest county in Wisconsin.



Enjoy Your Food—Safely

By Dale Grosskurth, Program Director of Environmental Services

It is the role of the Marathon County Health Department to keep you safe. The Health Department serves as an agent for the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection, and the Department of Safety and Professional Services. The Health Department is responsible for the county licensing and regulation of: food operations; grocery and convenience stores; bakeries; lodging establishments (hotel, motel, tourist rooming houses, bed and breakfasts), campgrounds; swimming pools; mobile home parks and body art businesses.

Narrowing in on what impacts the majority of the population of Marathon County, we will focus this discussion on restaurant licensing. The estimated average cost per foodborne illness nationally is \$1,068 in medical expenses and lost work time according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The economic impact is significant and worth preventing. The Marathon County Health Department Licensing Program is a key component in the effort to protect public health and support businesses so we can all enjoy living safely in Marathon County.

The sale of food to the public is a highly regulated activity requiring proper facilities, approved equipment, and usually, a license from Marathon County Health Department. There are a variety of food licenses such as restaurant, retail food store, mobile restaurant; mobile retail food store and temporary food

stands. The type of license required and license fees vary depending on the complexity of the operation and the type of foods that are served.

Activities in the food safety program include on-site informal education of food service employees; licensing and inspection of food service facilities including 54 schools in the Federal School Lunch/Breakfast Program; enforcing the Public Health Agent Program Regulation; food sampling; investigating food borne outbreaks; and responding to product recalls and consumer complaints.

The Marathon County Health Department inspects almost 500 restaurants in the county, and specific regulations exist for this type of business. The licensing program involves inspections and working with business operators to comply with the regulations that keep things safe. Every year, each business is inspected and re-inspected when needed. We answer business operators'



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questions about meeting the regulations and equipment purchases, provide educational materials or training, or guide remodeling improvements. We can help them plan their business future with information needed for decisions. In 2013, all the businesses we inspected were surveyed about public health services, asking about our ability to demonstrate respect, share knowledge, and communicate effectively. 98% percent of respondents choose “always” or “usually”. This demonstrates the positive, collaborative relationships that exist between the inspectors and businesses on public health safety and business success.

We also answer citizen inquiries about regulations, concerns, or illness. These are taken seriously and the

response may be just an explanation or it may lead to an investigation. If we investigate and determine there is a connection to a business, we work with that business identifying steps to prevent the injury or illness from reoccurring. Businesses want to provide you a great experience. Marathon County wants to keep you safe so we work with area businesses to ensure they meet the requirements. If they still fail to meet the requirements, they will be required to close their business until problems have been addressed.

If you have questions or would like more information about Licensing or Inspections, please contact one of our Health Inspectors by calling the Marathon County Health Department at 715-261-1900.



Paws Enforcing Laws: K-9 Unit

By Bill Millhausen, Patrol Lieutenant, K9 Unit Supervisor

The addition of three K9's to the Marathon County Sheriff's Department Patrol Division in January of 2014 has been a great success. Protecting the citizens of Marathon County with the K9 unit is one of many ways Marathon County is striving for their goal of becoming the safest county in Wisconsin.

The K9 Unit is comprised of three handlers and their partners. Deputy Troy Deiler (K9 Leo), Deputy Cory Gladden (K9 Radar), and Deputy Brandon Stroik (K9 Csibi) have been very effective in investigating drug related complaints and have become very successful. Since its inception, not only has the K9 Unit been responsible for the seizure of well over \$100,000 in currency and assets thus far in 2014, but has also been involved in several drug-related events including:

- Discovery, seizure and arrest of one of the largest indoor marijuana grows in Marathon County history, with approximately 800 plants.
- Two separate marijuana seizures of more than eight pounds each.
- Seizure of several large quantities of Methamphetamine and Heroin.

The K9 Unit is a part of the Marathon County Drug Interdiction Team, which focuses on high intensity enforcement action in the realm of drug use, sale, and trafficking. This team has been extremely effective and has worked with many of the communities in Marathon County.

The K9 Unit has been active with the school districts within Marathon County and has conducted locker searches in many of the schools. This is a very proactive approach to drug enforcement and education. However, the K9's are dual purpose, which means they are used



Meet the K-9 Unit: Leo, Radar and Csibi

for narcotic detection as well as police service such as apprehension, protection, and locating missing or fleeing persons.

The K9 Unit offers community demonstrations and presentations. This allows citizens the opportunity to meet the K9's and see them in action. The handler's demonstrate the K9's ability to sniff out narcotics and apprehend a suspect through a bite scenario. The next demonstration will be during a pancake feed fundraiser on September 21, 2014 at the Country Aire in Stratford. The K-9s will be on-site and doing demonstrations throughout the day.

If you have any questions or would like to request a K9 demonstration for your organization, please contact Lt. Bill Millhausen at 715-551-4218.