

**Dunn County Register of Deeds
Annual Report
May, 2012**

Statutory changes in the fee structure and marketing the off site access contracts for real estate records has really generated additional income for the Register of Deeds. \$276,898 was deposited to the general fund with operating expenses of \$239,460 leaving a positive balance of \$37,438. In addition, segregated revenues of \$44,922 were generated for the Land Records Fund and \$14,974 for the Electronic Access Fund. The Land Records funding helps offset the cost of Dunn County's GIS mapping project and the Electronic Access Fund is to support putting tax information online.

Integration of the new software for tracking real estate has been completed but not without some major bumps along the way. Many thanks to the IT staff and the excellent support staff at Fidar Corporation for getting the job done. Now Dunn County can be in compliance with the mandated Social Security Redaction requirements. All of the real estate records dating back to 1936 must be examined for social security numbers and any found must be altered so they cannot be viewed. This software will aid us in the process of searching the records. This new software which is called "Avid" will now allow us to receive real estate documents electronically. A few more issues need to be worked out and we hope to begin this process by mid-summer.

The vital records section of the office has been staying very constant with previous year's numbers when it comes to issuing Birth, Marriage and Death records. It appears the State Department of Vital Statistics is trying to create a single point for issuing vital records. This would be devastating for counties not only for the loss of revenue but for the general public as local Register of Deeds can provide much quicker and efficient service than one giant state agency. The Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association is very active working to keep as much of the vital records program local as possible.

This is my final annual report and I'd like to make some comments and observations about the past 26 years.

- 1. The staffing levels have remained unchanged but the work load has nearly doubled. Automation has allowed the same amount of staff to complete twice the work.**
- 2. The office use to be packed with people searching the records – now much of the searching is done online. Attorneys and bankers would frequently come to the office to check records – now we don't even know who most of them are.**
- 3. Staff members have been encouraged to follow the “Golden Rule”. I think it has paid off as there have been very few complaints of the Register of Deeds office over the years. This fact is also a testament to the fine employees I've been so fortunate to have worked with.**
- 4. Hopefully in the future, offices that deal with similar issues can be located in the same proximity. The Register of Deeds, Treasurer, Surveyor, GIS Specialist, Tax Lister and Zoning all need to be in the same location to better serve the public.**
- 5. I am beginning to have more concerns about security issues in the Government Center. Society is changing and some of the view points of individuals we have to deal with differ greatly than what we as government employees are allowed to do. There are no law enforcement personnel available the majority of the time and few offices have security systems.**

On a final note, I'd like to thank the citizens of Dunn County for allowing me to hold the position of Register of Deeds. It has been an honor and privilege.

Sincerely,

Jim Mrdutt