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**GOVERNMENT &
NONPROFIT—**
Electronic Edition

www.lcsc.org



submitted by: PartnerSHIP 4 Health

Are you a produce gardener or do you know someone who is? Whether you are a casual gardener or seasoned expert, PartnerSHIP 4 Health and Lakes Country Service Cooperative encourage you to consider planting a little extra this season and donate your bounty to those in need through the **Plant a Row for the Hungry** campaign.

Plant a Row for the Hungry began in 1995 by the Garden Writers Association and encourages gardeners to grow a little extra and donate their produce to food banks, food shelves, or local soup kitchens serving the hungry.



Plant a Row for the Hungry is a great opportunity to alleviate the burden of hunger and food insecurity in our communities. You can feel good knowing your gifts are being shared with those in need. A 2017 Minnesota Food Shelf Client Survey indicated that “fruits and vegetables” are on the list of

the top five foods most requested by food shelf clients.

Laurie Drewlow, member of the Richland Wilkin Food Pantry Board of Representatives, has this to say about fresh produce at the pantry, “Fresh produce is necessary for a healthy diet. When one of us is healthy the whole community is better off. Our clients’ eyes light up when they can select vine ripened tomatoes or fresh cucumbers. Fresh produce is a great gift.”

Please consider jumping in and participating in **Plant a Row for the Hungry**! Consider donating your gift of produce to your local community food shelf. Encourage your friends, neighbors, and affiliates to do the same!

FORMER LCSC BOARD MEMBER ELECTED TO THE MINNESOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Doug Huebsch one of 4 elected to University of Minnesota Board of Regents

Doug Huebsch of Perham has been heavily involved in the university alumni board, and locally retired from his Otter Tail County commissioner position in December 2020.

Focus Perham [Article courtesy of the Perham Focus -](#)
[Written By: Rebecca Mitchell | 1:34 pm, Mar. 17, 2021](#)

There's likely a way you know Doug Huebsch, whether in Perham or in connection with the University of Minnesota. His most recent role is being named a member of the University's Board of Regents.

The board represents the university in continuing their goals of education, research and outreach. Huebsch is often involved in living these goals as a U of M graduate, using animal science research at his farm, working on international trade relationships and helping Otter Tail County succeed as a commissioner. He also hopes their research work is useful for the state's needs.

"I'm very much looking forward to getting started and working on that board," Huebsch said. "It's an honor and a privilege to serve and hopefully we can have the university represent the whole state."

He is one of four newly elected regents on March 15. Each serve six-year terms. Huebsch represents Congressional District 7 in place of Thomas Anderson of Alexandria. The board has eight members from the congressional districts and four from the state at-large.

With the university as an "economic driver" of the state, Huebsch is looking forward to focusing on students and their success. Over 10,000 Minnesota businesses have been started by U of M graduates, according to Huebsch.

"We need students to be successful when they get out of college with their degree, they can get a job that's useful and beneficial to themselves and to society, that's number one," he said.

The Board of Regent's top two priorities for 2020-21 are implementing the M Pact 2025 plan and overseeing the university's response to the pandemic, as stated on the university website. Huebsch's first meeting will be on May 13-14.

The five campuses each bring different students and carry unique elements, but their combined success is needed, Huebsch said.

"We have to look at ways to make the U more affordable for everybody. And we can't just keep raising tuitions at this ungodly rate," Huebsch said. "There's a lot of work to do. We have limited resources and we have to allocate them really practically."

Huebsch has served on the university's alumni association board of directors, and in December 2020 received the alumni service award.

"The U's been a big part of my life and (I) just want to give back," Huebsch said.

Huebsch is also the founder and CEO of the Goose Group of retail stores, partner and CFO of New Life Farms and founder and partner of Perham Capital Company.



Doug Huebsch

NEW OPTION FOR HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS ADDED BY MINNESOTA SERVICE COOPERATIVES

If you are a small organization with a few employees and are looking for options to provide health insurance benefits, Lakes Country Service Cooperative has a new option that may be the right fit for you. Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangements, better known by its acronym, ICHRA, allows employers to determine how much money they want to contribute to each employee through a health reimbursement arrangement (HRA) and employees to use their money to purchase individual health insurance policies. ICHRA gives employees the choice of insurance plan that fits their needs, and the choice of carrier.

Any organization can use the ICHRA option as long as 1) a QSEHRA or Excepted Benefit Health Reimbursement Arrangement (EBHRA) is not already offered and 2) a traditional group plan and an ICHRA are not offered simultaneously to the same class of employees.

Like most health care options, ICHRA is administered through a carrier. Through a competitive process, Minneapolis-based benefits company Gravie was selected by the service cooperative's Minnesota Healthcare Consortium (MHC) to provide for the administration and brokerage services for members using the ICHRA option.



**Minnesota
Healthcare
Consortium**
Participating Minnesota Service Cooperatives

Employers can offer employees any amount of money through an ICHRA that can be used to purchase medical insurance as long as it is offered fairly to each employee within a designated employee class. There is no limit to the number of employee classes an employer sets up, as long as they fall within the eleven broadly defined categories in ICHRA rules. ICHRAs allow for more flexibility because employers can vary contribution amounts by employee class. For example, an employer could offer one amount to full-time employees and a different amount to part-time employees, or those who live in North Dakota vs. those who live in Minnesota.

Employees who use the ICHRA can select an Affordable Care Act (ACA) compliant individual health insurance plan or enroll in:

Medicare Part A and Part B, or Part C. If an employee also takes advantage of pre-tax payroll deductions under a Section 125 cafeteria plan, the individual insurance plan cannot be purchased on a federal or a state-based health insurance exchange.

Interested in learning more about ICHRA? This FAQ answers many basic questions. To learn more about the service cooperative program contact the Minnesota Health Care Consortium's Dan Weir at danjw@ebisinc.net.

OTTER TAIL COUNTY CHOOSE TO REUSE CAMPAIGN

submitted by: Otter Tail County Solid Waste

The Otter Tail County Solid Waste Department is promoting a year-long campaign to increase awareness of the benefits of reducing and reusing. Research shows that people often think of recycling as the primary way to reduce waste, but reducing waste before it happens and focusing on reuse have more positive environmental impact.

Reuse doesn't require the extraction and processing of virgin resources, and it also doesn't require the energy and infrastructure that comes along with recycling. Recycling does help to reduce waste, but people often stop there.



Clothing rack from a local consignment boutique

"While we still want people to recycle everything they can, we also want people to approach purchasing as if nothing gets recycled. Recycling still uses resources, like energy and water resources – to turn waste into new stuff. If you can choose a refillable or reusable option over a recyclable one, that is the best choice."

- Rena Simon, Otter Tail County Recycling Manager

The Choose to Reuse OTC campaign will focus on different reuse topics through the year including:

- Easy swaps to move from disposable to reusable
- Project ideas for creative ways to reuse
- Reuse business highlights
- A thrift store challenge
- Showings of a documentary about reuse
- Stickers reminding shoppers to BYOB – Bring Your Own Bag

Watch out for more information throughout 2021 tagged with **#ChooseToReuseOTC**, and make this the year you choose to reuse, not just recycle! For a list of reuse resources in Otter Tail County, visit <https://ottertailcountymn.us/choose-to-reuse/>, and make sure to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, and subscribe to our seasonal e-newsletter News You Can Reuse to stay up to date on waste reduction and disposal topics.

Welding Careers Arc Upward with Help from Rural Minnesota CEP

Aviation enthusiasts come to Javron, Inc. in Brainerd to have their experimental aircraft designed, built or repaired. That would not be possible without individuals like Kelsey Saba, a welder at Javron and recent graduate of the welding program at Central Lakes College (CLC), also in Brainerd. And just as Saba helps those aircraft take to the skies, Rural Minnesota CEP has helped her career take flight. "Assistance from Rural Minnesota CEP helped me go through the welding program with a little less stress," said Saba. "I would still be paying student loans if it was not for them."

Highly Skilled

Javron Inc. manufactures experimental aircraft fuselage kits. All the components are formed, assembled and welded at their location by individuals such as Saba, whose main job is welding and fabricating the aircraft. She graduated from the one-year welding program at CLC in 2019. Rural Minnesota CEP was able to help her pay for tuition and two welding certifications, helping her achieve a Level II Advanced Welder status right out of college.

Welding as a career had never occurred to Saba prior to attending CLC. After high school, she took a few college courses in Accounting, able to turn them into a well-paying job with a company in Accounts Receivable. Not quite satisfied however, she looked into the welding program on the advice of a friend while on a snowboard trip. Despite never having welded anything before, she immediately displayed a knack for welding, displaying excellent skills and earning top grades once enrolled, even placing seventh in a Minnesota SkillsUSA Competition. When asked how she got to be so good at welding, her initial response indicated she had no idea. "If I had to pick one thing, it would be my attention to detail, because welding is like an art form and I am constantly trying to make all my welds perfect," she said.



Kelsey Saba, Welder at Javron, Inc.



Kelsey Saba, Welder at Javron, Inc.

"I absolutely love being able to do something different every day and not be stuck sitting at a desk."

Saba knows she is going down a bit of a non-traditional path, in a workforce where only about 5% of all welders are women. She graduated with two other women but currently doesn't work with any other women welders. Welding is a skilled trade in high demand, so she knows employers want to hire anyone with the skill for the job. "Javron hired me because I am a good welder," she said. "I was interested in practicing on chromoly, chrome-alloy steel commonly used in airplanes, because it is so different from other metals and I believe they were impressed with my ability."

Future Growth

The financial assistance provided by Rural Minnesota CEP was part of a federal program designed to develop more skilled trades workers. In addition to the funding, they provided Saba with the guidance to navigate all the steps necessary to complete the program and certification requirements. And they are seeing some return on their investment, as she devotes some of her time with students in the program she came through. "I'm a big fan of Kelsey," said Amber Kropp, the Job Counselor with Rural Minnesota CEP who worked with Saba. "She continues to help the welding program students at CLC, which shows her dedication to the field of developing welders." And Saba does so, knowing those students are needed out in the field, whether with her company or another. "We have more planes coming in here every day, so there is no end to the work," she said. "I guess you could say our future is taking flight!"

View the full article provided by Rural Minnesota CEP: <https://www.rmcep.com/news-and-resources/p/item/33444/welding-careers-arc-upward-with-help-from-rural-minnesota-cep>



CONVENIENT | COMPETITIVE | COOPERATIVE

Cooperative Purchasing Connection has had a busy spring! We have six new contracts in our portfolio and two vendors who were re-awarded contracts and are ready to continue their great work for CPC. Let's start by talking about our vendors that appeal to you, our City, County and Government members.

Capitol Electronics Inc (CEI) is an independent manufacturer's representative firm established in 1987 serving the Public Safety, Emergency Management, Education, Municipal and other markets. CEI's products specific to the Security Solutions category include emergency notification systems, non-contact thermal temperature scanners, lightning suppression technology and virus/pathogen eliminating technology. CENTEGIX innovates technology to save and enrich lives. This is accomplished through our award-winning CrisisAlert™ solution which enables anyone to get help with the push of a button.

CrisisAlert empowers confident human action in any incident – from the everyday to the extreme. Hellas Construction, Inc. is the nation's leading turnkey sports construction firm and is the only sports surfacing contractor to offer a dedicated Lighting Division to its clients. Through one contract and one point of contact, stadium owners can upgrade all their fields and courts from the surfaces that community members use to the lights that enable them to practice and play long after the sun has set.

Finally, we've got two longtime vendors who you may have worked with in the past. Fisher Tracks offers participating agencies a turnkey solution including all equipment, materials, supplies and installation services for an athletic running track surface. They will provide: the industry's highest quality of workmanship; the most cooperative and knowledgeable people to work with; the most reliable products and dependable service in the industry. Hiller Commercial Floors, with more than 65 years of experience offers Cooperative Purchasing Connection members a wide assortment of popular products at consortium discounted pricing. They will make available carpet, resilient flooring, accessories and installation services.

For more information on our vendors, please visit
<https://purchasingconnection.org/category/>

CPC renews and awards contracts!



Visit www.purchasingconnection.org for more information

Aquatic Invasive Species Efforts

by Justin Swart, Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Coordinator



Seeing the ice off of our area lakes makes us think of fishing, kayaking, wakeboarding, and other fun activities. It also makes officials in the Douglas County Land and Resource Management Office think of new ways to share important information in order to keep aquatic invasive species (AIS) from spreading. As a member of Lakes Country Service Cooperative, we appreciate the opportunity to share what we hope to accomplish this season.

We will have a number of decontamination stations at area lakes. Our permanent station on Lake Le Homme Dieu provides an onsite opportunity to thoroughly rinse and remove aquatic vegetation from boats and trailers. Inspectors at the Krueger's Creek Landing are on hand to assist boaters. We'll have three Aqua Weed Stick Landing Stations back in action. These weed sticks can be used to push, pull, hook, and scrape off dangerous vegetation like Eurasian watermilfoil, Curly-leaf pondweed, and zebra mussels. The self-service weed sticks will be located at Lakes Geneva, Miltona, and Mary. There will also be bait disposal containers so anglers can get rid of bait they no longer need.

New this year in the Osakis area will be what's called a CD3 waterless cleaning system. This is also a self-service unit that includes tools to blow, scrub and grab the aquatic vegetation.

More than a dozen watercraft inspectors will be stationed at Douglas County lakes to answer questions and help educate boaters. We know these inspectors are instrumental in reducing the spread of AIS and we appreciate when boaters work with them to keep the risk low.

Once again, Douglas County will survey 15 lakes to look for invasive aquatic plants. This adds to the 30 lakes that have been surveyed over the last two years.



Douglas County Aquatic Invasive Species surveying being conducted.

Lake users of all kinds can learn more about why the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species is such a concern by visiting the AlexAreaLakes.org website. We will be partnering with our neighboring counties and place billboards on Interstate 94 to educate folks who don't live here full time. Three words continue to dominate our message: Clean, drain, and dry.

Visitors to our beautiful lakes area can also pick up recreational maps with essential AIS information, see our ads in the Alexandria Visitor's Guide, and check out the coasters under their favorite beverages at local restaurants. They'll see the same message designed to protect our lakes and rivers and stop the spread of invasive aquatic species.

PACC Consulting

Submitted by Leigh Shebeck
Executive Director of Perham Area Community Center



Have you built a culture that allows for growth and development on a deeper level which in turn grows the organizations mission and vision? Have you or do you provide ongoing training and development to your board members, staff, and prospective board members?

PACC Consulting equips you and your team, or board members, with the skills and tools you need to create outstanding leaders throughout your organization or community.

FAQ

Approach

There is no cookie cutter training or coaching. Each program is developed specifically for your organization.

To set up your FREE consultation and see how we can help you and your organization have a big impact, contact us!

Cost

The initial consultation is FREE! At this consultation we establish very specific goals and objectives that you have and want us to touch on.

Contact Leigh Shebeck

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THE LCSC COMMUNICATOR IS A PUBLICATION OF LAKES COUNTRY SERVICE COOPERATIVE.

Lakes Country Service Cooperative (LCSC) is a public, non-profit membership-based organization dedicated to providing services that help make our members successful. Originally created by legislation in 1976 as one of Minnesota's nine service cooperatives to provide services to pre-K through 12 education, we have grown and expanded to provide high quality, innovative programs to cities, counties, other governmental agencies, and non-profit entities. Together, we build relationships that help make all members and communities stronger.

Together...We Achieve.

STAY CONNECTED.



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