

## 2003 Annual Report of the Office of Register of Deeds

Ozaukee County's Register of Deeds office performs four important functions for the public as well as internal County operations; Register of Deeds, Property Description, Land Information Systems and Internet Development. Over the last 22 years, this office has expanded service dramatically with the addition of the Land Information Office (LIO) and County Internet development. In 2003, the Register of Deeds Office recorded seven times the amount of documents as it did in 1982. These additional services and workload has been accomplished with the addition of only one additional employee and a student intern working less than 600 hours per year. Below is a brief description of each function of the Register of Deeds office and what transpired in 2003.

### Register of Deeds

Since the first deed was recorded on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1835, recording and indexing documents is the main function. Since 1835, this office has recorded 782,332 documents. 2003 added an additional 47,594 documents, which broke last year's record of 36,984 documents, a 29% increase. For the fourth year in a row a new record was set for revenue generation. \$2,956,994 was taken in producing a 21% increase over 2002. However, the majority of the money or \$1,588,385 is sent to the State of Wisconsin. The Register of Deeds, by statute, collects the revenue for the total "non-levy" funding of the Land Information office. 2003 totals were \$237,295 for the LIO and \$1,131,314 provided to the county general fund.

I would like to thank the county board for the approval of the purchase of a document management system for this office. We were the last of six counties in the state to automate. We should have this system installed sometime in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2004. In 2003 this office microfilmed 249,764 pages on a microfilm system that was purchased in 1984 and has no replacement parts.

### Property Description

The Property Description office maintains over 35,816 legal property descriptions including owner name and address, and references to how they acquired the property. This is the fundamental backbone of the assessment role. In addition the associated mapping of tax parcels is performed. Every deed that is recorded causes a change to the assessment roll.

### Land Information

See separate report for detail information about the function of the Register of Deeds office. This office creates, compiles, maintains and distributes land information, which includes more than maps, but information associated with land in Ozaukee County. This office works with all county municipalities State and Federal government as well as the regional planning commission. The office is totally self-funded, by statute, through revenue generated specifically for this function collected through the Register of Deeds Office. No property levy is applied.

## Internet Development

This function of the office not only develops and maintains the Ozaukee County website, but also develops and maintains websites for the following: Village and Towns of Belgium and Fredonia, Village of Newburg and Thiensville, Town of Port Washington and Saukville, Wisconsin Land Information Association, Ozaukee County Historical Society, 4-H, Wisconsin Real Property Listers Association, Ozaukee Tourism, Interurban Trail, Ulaio Partnership, Ozaukee/Washington County Collective Bargaining Agreements site and Ozaukee County Master Gardeners. We also host the following websites: Village of Grafton and Saukville, City and Town of Cedarburg. As you can tell this facet of the office continues to grow each year. We currently have about 1560 visitors weekly to Ozaukee County's website and this continues to grow. For more statistical information on the Ozaukee County's website see both the Technology Resource and Land Information report.

Sincerely

*Ronald A. Voigt*

Register of Deeds

Land Information Administrator

Webmaster