



Leon Branderhorst Retires

After 15 years of service, Leon Branderhorst has retired as the GVMC Director of Finance. Leon's last day was March 2nd. After 32 years with Kent County working in their finance area, Leon retired from the County and began working for GVMC. He never expected his second career would have lasted 15 years. Leon and his wife Jan left immediately after work on his last day to drive to their home in Florida. We wish them both the best in the future!

Finance Duties Privatized

At our next meeting, the Board will be asked to authorized a contract with Mr. Chis Brown, CPA to take over the duties of our Finance Department. Mr. Brown, will work on a part-time contractual basis. He also handles the financial duties at the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (MACC) in Holland and will continue to do so.

(finance continued)

With five years experience working with the Holland area metropolitan planning agency, Mr. Brown, a licensed CPA, is very experienced with all the financial duties we require.

Thank you to our Treasurer Cy Moore along with Jeff Dood and Brian Donovan from EGR and Jon Rice and John Strauss from the Kent County Road Commission for assisting me with this process. Abed Itani and Gayle McCrath of the GVMC staff were also very helpful. Our auditor Peter Haefner first recommended Chris. Special thanks to Steve Bulthuis from MACC for working with us to share the talents of his consultant and helping to create a win/win for both agencies. MDOT has already approved the selection and the draft contract. .

The good news is we have a new leader in our finance department. **The GREAT NEWS is that privatizing the position will reduce costs by approximately 70%.**

While the majority of the savings will be realized by MDOT and Federal Highway programs, it will still be significant for GVMC and REGIS.

Spotlight on Cooperation

At its March 6th meeting the Finance and Physical Resources Committee of the Kent County Board of Commissioners recommended approval of a one-year agreement for Kent County to provide Equalization Direction services to Montcalm County.

Kent County Equalization Director Matt Woolford and Deputy Director Steve Rickers will each work one day a week in the Stanton office for Montcalm County.

This pilot program will allow each county to evaluate the effectiveness of the service and the benefits to both organizations. This new and unique inter-governmental agreement has been discussed for several months.

In exchange for the services of the Kent County personnel, Montcalm will pay \$65,000 for the one-year trial.

The full agreement is expected to be voted on by the Kent County Board of Commissioners on March 22nd.

Please Email Your Community's
Programs and Ideas for
Cooperation!

Don't Forget to Reserve Your
Quarterly Luncheon Tickets

for

April 9th with Mark Murray

RSVP to Gayle at mccrathg@gvmc.org