

**Volume 1, Issue 2      July - September 2008**

*Proudly serving 24 Western Illinois counties*

## Inside This Issue:

- Lincoln College
- New Retirement Village in Henderson County
- Director's Corner
- New Farm Bill Helps Area Water Systems
- Program Spotlight
- FAQs
- Area 4 Employees Recognized



## Contact Us!

At Rural Development, we are committed to supporting rural communities.

Galesburg Service Center  
(309) 342-5138 ext. 4 and 5

Jacksonville Service Center  
(217) 243-1535 ext. 4 and 6

Quincy Service Center  
(217) 224-9307 ext. 4

## Federal Support Announced for Lincoln College

Congressman Ray LaHood announced that USDA Rural Development is providing a \$3.8 million loan guarantee to help Lincoln College build their \$8.4 million state-of-the-art athletic, convocation and museum facility.

Rural Development is guaranteeing a loan originated by the State Bank of Lincoln. The guarantee helped Lincoln College obtain lower cost financing from the bank. The rest of the



*State Bank of Lincoln President Steve Aughenbaugh, Illinois USDA Rural Development Director Doug Wilson, Lincoln College President John Hutchinson, and Congressman Ray LaHood were part of announcement of a USDA \$3.8 million loan guarantee award to help make the construction of the Lincoln Center possible while college board members look on.*

funding is being provided by contributions and state grants.

"Lincoln College is a tremendous institution and is a vital part of the community's foundation in Lincoln and Logan County," said Congressman LaHood. "Lincoln's athletic programs have always been a particular point of pride for the College and the Lincoln Heritage Museum has an excellent collection of Abraham Lincoln artifacts. This new facility will combine these two assets into one state-of-the-art building. I am proud the federal government stepped forward to assist with this worthy project."

LaHood made the funding announcement Monday at University Hall and was accompanied by U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Director Doug Wilson. LaHood presented a gold shovel to Lincoln College President John Hutchinson for the June 25 groundbreaking for the Lincoln Center.

"The new Lincoln Center is unquestionably one of the most important new structures to

*(continued on page 2)*

## Retirement Village One Step Closer to Opening

Oak Wood Estates Retirement Village received acknowledgement from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that financing for the new 18 room assisted living facility had been approved. Congressman Phil Hare and Illinois Director for USDA Rural Development Doug Wilson presented a ceremonial check for \$2,405,000 to board members and staff at a public event on Saturday, June 21, at the site where the new facility will be built adjacent to Oak Lawn Nursing and Rehab located at 604 Oakwood in Stronghurst.

The financing will make it possible for Henderson County Retirement Center, Inc. (HCRC), a non-profit corporation first created to provide nursing home care for area

residents, to meet the changing health care needs of the community. The new assisted living center will offer seniors a cost effective alternative to maintaining a home and securing private home health care services.

Rent at Oak Wood Estates will include weekly housekeeping services, laundry services, three meals plus snacks daily, assistance with personal care, podiatrist services, medication reminders, nurse on staff, emergency communications in each room, private mail boxes, daily activities, chapel, parking and transportation services. The facility will also have a library, internet services, lounge and dining area,

*(continued on page 2)*





**Dwight Reynolds**  
Area 4 Director

## Director's Corner

As we near the end of the Government's fiscal year, I would like to take a second to recap some of the accomplishments of Rural Development that were made in Western Illinois for 2008.

Fiscal year 2008 will turn out to be an exceptional year in the amount of funding that was provided to the residents of Western Illinois. So far this fiscal year, over \$117 million has been obligated within the boundaries of Area 4.

More than 1,080 households received funding through the single family housing programs. Twelve communities and/or water districts were assisted with financing for new or improved water and waste projects. More than \$11 million in guaranteed Community Facility funds were used to construct two new assisted living facilities and an athletic/convocation center for a university.

Additionally, in excess of \$8 million was provided for existing or new business financing and economic development.

In June, the Western part of Illinois suffered through the second 500 year flood in the past 15 years. If there is an individual, family, business or community still needing some financial help to assist in their recovery, Rural Development offices are available to help applicants determine what USDA Rural Development resources are available to help them.

As fiscal year 2008 comes to an end (Government's year ends September 30<sup>th</sup>), the employees of Area 4 would like to say "Thank You" to everyone we have worked with this past year. With everyone's help, we are looking for 2009 to be another record year. ▪

## Lincoln College (continued from page 1)

be built on the Lincoln College campus in nearly a half century," said Hutchinson. "It will not only include a wonderful new athletic and convocation center but a substantially expanded and upgraded Lincoln Heritage Museum as well. It will be a major venue for regional and community events and will assist greatly in the recruiting and retention of students."

The Lincoln Center will replace the 80 year old Davidson-Sheffer Gymnasium for athletic events, making it possible to host basketball tournaments, wrestling meets and volleyball games on campus. The new center will offer the community and the region a much needed site for larger events, such as conferences, trade shows, conventions, and entertainment.

The college's Lincoln Heritage Museum, complete with state-of-the-art environmental controls, will have 12 times the

space in the new facility to exhibit its significant collection of Abraham Lincoln artifacts.

"The Lincoln Center will benefit students and be a great resource for the college," said Doug Wilson, Illinois director for USDA Rural Development. "We supported this project because we believe it will improve the economic climate of the area and the quality of life for Lincoln residents."

"We are very pleased that the USDA Rural Development has granted the College this important loan guarantee," said Hutchinson. We are delighted to join with Representative LaHood and Illinois Rural Development Director Doug Wilson to announce this guarantee, which was originated by Lincoln's own State Bank of Lincoln."

Completion of the facility is scheduled for 2009. ▪

## Retirement Village (continued from page 1)

recreational activities, trips and outings.

Rural Development is directly financing part of the assisted living facility and guaranteeing HCRC's loan with Security Savings Bank in Monmouth. Raritan State Bank and The Bank of Stronghurst are also participating in the loan to HCRC. The guarantee enabled Security Savings to provide a lower interest rate and longer terms to HCRC. The direct Rural Development loan completes the needed financing and makes the construction affordable.

The non-profit organization was first organized in 1986 by a group of concerned citizens, and it has continued to enjoy strong support from the community ever since. ▪



Illinois Rural Development Director Doug Wilson and Congressman Hare (17th District) present a \$2.4 million check to Diana Doran and Richard Clifton from Henderson County Retirement Center and Randy McElwee from Security Savings Bank.



## New Farm Bill Helps Area Water Systems

Illinois Director Doug Wilson for USDA Rural Development announced today the investment of \$7.4 million in loans and grants for five Illinois water systems to provide safe drinking water. Low interest loans and grants are being awarded to **Greene County Rural Water District, Apple Creek Water Cooperative**, the City of Wyoming, Bond Madison Water Company, and Clinton County East Public Water District.

The funding for the Illinois projects was part of the 2008 Farm Bill, also known as the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 and was authorized to address the backlog of requests for rural water funding. The legislation provides \$357 million to communities nationwide for low interest loans and grants for water and wastewater applications the agency had on hand.

“We are very happy about the recent legislation because it speeds up access to funds for these projects,” said Wilson. “Getting the funding to them more quickly will have a significant impact on their construction costs.”

The \$7.4 million investment in rural Illinois water infrastructure will help build 160 miles of water line and bring better water to 2,600 households and businesses.

The Farm Bill legislation also lowered the interest rate for rural water and sewer system construction and improvements.

Depending on the household income of the area, interest rates can be as low as 2.75 percent. The low interest rate combined with a 40 year term makes the cost for rural systems manageable.

**Greene County Rural Water District** has been approved for a \$1,704,000 low interest loan and a grant of \$894,000 to expand their system. The expansion will allow them to serve an additional 130 customers south of Carrollton in Kane and Woodville townships. The District was organized by a group of concerned citizens organized in 1994 when tests showed the quality of the well water in the area was unsatisfactory. Their objective is to provide a county-wide rural water distribution system.

The **Apple Creek Water Cooperative** will use a \$2,140,000 loan and \$494,600 grant to lay 48 miles of water main in eastern Morgan County and western Sangamon County. The project will alleviate the overall health concerns related to poor quality water as well as low quantities of water available from private wells. The expansion will serve 134 additional customers, some of whom have had to haul water during dry periods in order to meet household and agricultural needs.

“Safe and reliable water services are vital to the health and economic viability of rural communities,” Wilson said. “Without our assistance, many rural water systems would face the untenable option of charging their users rates they couldn’t afford.”

# Program Spotlight

## Home Repair Loans and Grants

### HOME REPAIR LOANS

**Purpose:** To provide loans to eligible rural homeowners to improve or modernize their homes, to make them safer and more sanitary or to remove health and safety hazards.

**Applicant:** Must be very low income per guidelines, own and occupy the home and demonstrate the ability to make loan payments.

**Eligible Area:** Areas with population of 20,000 or less. For eligible areas, visit: <http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do>

**Residents:** U.S. Citizens and permanent resident alien.

**Financing Features:**

Maximum loan amount is \$20,000.

Interest rate is fixed at 1%.

Maximum term is 20 years.

May be used for new roof, siding, windows, foundation repairs, new septic system, new furnace/AC. Other qualifying repairs include removing health hazards from the home as well as cosmetic improvements if they are needed.



### HOME REPAIR GRANTS

**Purpose:** To provide grants to eligible rural homeowners to improve or modernize their homes, to make them safer and more sanitary or to remove health and safety hazards.

**Applicant:** Must be 62 years of age or older, be very low income per guidelines, own and occupy the home and demonstrate an INABILITY to make loan payments.

**Eligible Area:** Areas with population of 20,000 or less. For eligible areas, visit: <http://eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov/eligibility/welcomeAction.do>

**Residents:** U.S. Citizens and permanent resident alien.

**Financing Features:**

\$7,500 lifetime limit on grant funds.

Agree to not sell property for 3 years following the grant, otherwise the grant must be repaid.

May be used for new roof, siding, windows, foundation repairs, new septic system, new furnace/AC. Other qualifying repairs include removing health hazards from the home as well as cosmetic improvements if they are needed.

...

...

### Frequently Asked Questions



**Q: Can Rural Development make loans for golf courses?**

A: No. On May 16, 2008, Rural Development National Office ruled that it was not considered an essential community facility. RD Instruction 3575-A says an essential community facility must: (1) be a function customarily provided by a local government; (2) be a public improvement needed for the orderly development of a rural community; (3) not include private affairs or commercial or business undertakings (except for limited authority for industrial parks); (4) be within the area of jurisdiction or operation for public bodies eligible to receive assistance or similar local rural service area of a not-for-profit corporation; and (5) be located in a rural area.

information to potential applicants about Rural Development funding available through national competition. The notice is published in the Federal Register to announce the rules and guidelines for applying. An in-state contact is usually provided. Information in the NOFA includes the program's purpose, eligibility requirements, application deadlines (typically 60 to 90 days from the date of publication), award amounts and selection criteria. The success of the application often depends on the applicant specifically addressing each of the selection criteria. ▪

**Q: What is a NOFA and how does it work?**

A: A NOFA or Notice of Funding Availability provides necessary

**For more on Rural Development's programs, visit us on the web!**  
<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/il>

### Area 4 Employees Recognized



Illinois RD State Director Doug Wilson presents Lynn with the Support Staff of the Year award.

**Lynn Armstrong**, Area Technician in the Galesburg Area Office, was recently honored as Support Staff of the Year.

Over the past year, Lynn has been the person responsible for holding together the community programs in the Galesburg Office. Lynn kept track of file flow and work load for all the specialists by creating helpful spreadsheets. Through it all, Lynn did not complain. She was always there to help and was the glue that held everything together. She is a true asset to RD. Congratulations, Lynn! ▪



Illinois RD State Director Doug Wilson presents Jann with a commemorative plaque for Employee of the Quarter.

**Jann Beckham**, Area Technician in the Galesburg Area Office, was recently honored as Employee of the Quarter.

For most of FY 2008, the Galesburg staff dedicated to housing was functioning with only two people. During that time, Jann stepped up and did what was needed to ensure files were processed and closed in a timely manner. With Jann's extra efforts, the office realized a 52% increase in guaranteed loan approvals. Congratulations, Jann, for a job well done! ▪

### Years of Service



Front row: JoAnn Hickman, Quincy Office, 25 years of service; Nicki Morgan, Galesburg Office, 5 years of service.

Back row: Dwight Reynolds, Area Director, 20 years of service; Chris Mowrer, Galesburg Office, 25 years of service; Trish Yeager, Galesburg Office, 25 years of service; Bobett Dunphy, Jacksonville Office, 25 years of service; Darrel Monts, Jacksonville Office, 25 years of service. ▪

September 15 - October 15  
Mes de la Herencia  
National Hispanic  
Hispanic  
Heritage Month

<http://www.loc.gov/topics/hispanicheritage/>

A special thanks to: Lynn Armstrong, Patrick Lydic, Joan Messina, Rob Maschhoff, Dwight Reynolds, Jim Vanatta & Julie Wilson for contributing to this quarter's newsletter.