

Lakewood recycling billboards into bags

In this day and age, every bit of conservation helps.

At Lakewood Health System, not only is each department doing their part to save energy and recycle, but the system is also doing something unexpected. The vinyl from each of Lakewood's billboards

is now being recycled into reusable tote bags, which are now sold at The Shoppe, the gift shop located at Lakewood's Main Campus in Staples.

The idea to recycle billboards became reality in the summer of 2009. At a green fair in Little Falls, the "Eco Bags" made their first appearance. From grocery bags and beach bags to purses and messenger bags, the billboard vinyl is a perfect material for long-lasting use.

All proceeds from each Eco Bag sale will benefit the new Serenity Sanctuary gardens at Lakewood Health System. "The dollars raised through the Eco Bags will help us pay for garden supplies and flowers," said Connie Etzler, Lakewood Health System Foundation Director and Serenity Sanctuary project manager. "What a great way to encourage being 'green'. Recycling and the natural beauty of a garden go hand-in-hand."

The Eco Bags by Lakewood Health System are made by a local vendor and for sale in The Shoppe at Lakewood Health System's Main Campus. The Shoppe is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.



Eco bags are available at the Lakewood Health System's The Shoppe, and are made from recycled billboards.



Smooth as silk

Staples area residents could hardly believe their butts as they rode over the now smooth Highway 210 (Sixth Street) crossing in Staples. Opened Friday afternoon after a five day project caused traffic to detour to the Seventh Street crossing, the new crossing features

new rails and new concrete slabs that are all the same level! The new road is a stark contrast to the previous railroad crossing, which claimed more than a few rusty mufflers and shaky shock absorbers. (Staples World photo by Tom Crawford)

\$14,000 in grants given locally

The Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative's Community Trust board met on October 5, 2009, and approved grants totaling \$14,111 for 15 local community service projects.

The following organizations were awarded grants in the latest round: Wadena County DAC, appliances, \$1,000; Eagle Bend Senior Nutrition, TV/DVD, \$527.88; Foster Grandparents, programming, \$2,000; Menahga Schools, Anti-bullying Program, \$836.19; Mental Health Consumer Survivors Network, Mental Health Awareness, \$750; Sebeka Fire & Rescue, Combustible Gas Indicator, \$500; Staples All-Veteran & Community Park, Stone work near flag pole, \$1,200; Staples Historical Society, landscaping by Depot, \$547; Todd County Livestock Advisory, educational display, printing, \$500; Wadena

Area College Foundation, move station, \$1,000; Wadena City Library, Expansion project, \$2,000; Wadena County Sheriff K-9, new K9, \$2,000; WDC Girls Basketball, uniforms, \$500; Wadena Historical Society fur trapper storage box, \$150.

Operation Round Up is made possible by the members of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative, who allow their monthly electric bills to be rounded up to the nearest dollar, so that their change can 'bring change to the local communities'. While each individual's donation averages less than fifty cents a month, together the members raise about \$30,000 a year all of which goes to community service projects. To date the program has given away more than \$240,000 to nearly 300 service projects in the Todd-Wadena area.

An independent nine-member board meets twice a year to review applications and determine awards. Current Trust board members are Severin Blenkush, Browerville; Mike Heino, Sebeka; Roger Houselog, Staples; Mary Kobliska, Staples; Marci Olson, Sebeka; Jim Pratt, Clarissa; Rita Stracek, Browerville; Carl Trager, Browerville.

Local community service groups may apply for an Operation Round Up grant by stopping by or calling the cooperative office at 800-321-8932 or by downloading a copy of the application form and guidelines from the Todd-Wadena website: www.tod-wadena.coop. Current applications deadlines are April 15 and September 15.



On top of city hall

Crews from Thelen Roofing from Brainerd were installing rubber roofing last Thursday on the top of the new Staples City Hall and Library under construction at Sixth Street and Second Avenue. The flat roof coverings have a 20 year warranty, according to the workers. (Staples World photo by Tom Crawford)

Earning activity badges

The first snow on the ground recently didn't stop the Webelos from Cub Scouts Pack 61 of Staples Motley from taking part in Webelos activity badge days at Camp Parker near Merrifield. Following their morning earning their Geologist activity badge are, from left; Gaten Fleishhacker, Nick Allshouse, Joe Pugsley, Noah Han, Garrett Schmieg, Austyn Ploshnick, Dakota Torma (front), with den leader Kathryn Edwards (back), and Zachary Carlson. Most of the group stayed overnight in tents they pitched. Waking up Sunday to 32 degrees was much nicer than the previous 24 degree morning, earning new scouts Pugsley and Ploshnick their Outdoorsman badge. The group split up for those attending a second day of camp with five boys completing their Engineering activity badge and one completing his Forestry pin. (Submitted photo)



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Thursday, Oct. 22, 2009
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 6:00 p.m.
 Call 320-749-2607 or email mnsurgery@clearwire.net

Presenter: **George M.A. Fortier IV, M.D.**

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