



Sam Tidwell, left, director of planning and parks for Fond du Lac County, gave our reporter an interesting project with Fond du Lac County Clerk Lisa Freiberg. *Aileen Andrews/The Reporter*

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FDL COUNTY VOTES, THANKS TO WORK OF COUNTY CLERK LISA FREIBERG

MONICA M. WALK
Special to The Reporter

Lisa Freiberg has dear childhood memories of accompanying her parents when they would vote. She recalls standing in line, talking with neighbors, waiting their turn.

Those memories burnish her voluntary classroom visits to area schools, where she enjoys explaining the election process and showing students how voting machines work through her own elected role as Fond du Lac County Clerk.

Since 2009, Lisa has been Fond du Lac County's chief election official, which means she provides all materials and training for voting to run smoothly in 23 county municipalities.

With information provided by the Govern-

ment Accountability Board (GAB), Lisa creates and tests the ballots for each election in each municipality. And she is one of only five county clerks in the state with the computer skills to program election machines. She estimates her ability to program 63 reporting units on site rather than outsource it to a Minnesota company saved the county \$20,000 during recent recall elections that had already strained the budget.

Recall elections were top Wisconsin headlines this year and, like county clerks around the state, Lisa worked in the thick of the news events, aware of the scrutiny on her office.

"All the elections made it a trying year," she

said, noting that she dealt with more special elections in three years than her predecessor and former boss, Joya Buechel, had in more than 50 years in office.

"With everyone watching us so closely, trust has gone away and that concerns me. We do so much training, and so much time and effort goes into it, it's all so transparent, I feel bad that people don't trust us. I test everything before it goes out of our office, and the municipal clerks publicly test...it's posted in the newspaper and gives the public an opportunity to see how the equipment works...I make up sample ballots for the papers, so people can understand. There is transparency throughout the process."

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