Harkin puts $2 billion on the table for rural development

By Jennifer Wilson
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Congressional efforts to reauthorize the 2002 Farm Bill, which expires Sept. 30, continue to attract significant attention. On July 27, the House passed its version of the Farm Bill by a vote of 231–191. The spotlight has now switched to the rural development title in the Senate farm bill drafted by Senate

See FARM BILL page 3

More teens, women, minorities abusing meth

By Jim Phillips
MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER

Methamphetamine abuse remains a national epidemic, and more teens, women and minorities are abusing the highly-addictive and deadly drug in communities across America, according to a national survey released Aug. 24 by NACo.

NACo's survey of 500 county law enforcement officials in 44 states found that 61 percent of counties have seen an increase during the last three years in the number of women abusing meth. In addition, 49 percent reported an increase in meth abuse among teenagers, and 36 percent reported an increase of meth

See METH page 6

Hennepin’s disaster preparedness pays off in tragic bridge collapse

By Charles Taylor
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

“A bridge in America just shouldn’t fall down,” said Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) in the wake of the I-35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis. But on Aug. 1, fall one did, and in the immediate aftermath Hennepin County officials shared the worldwide spotlight with their colleagues in Minneapolis, the county seat.

Thirteen people died and scores more were injured in the incident. The last body of an unaccounted-for missing person was recovered more than two weeks after the tragedy.

See HENNEPIN page 5

INSIDE»

So you need a permit to build an Ark?
One county’s efforts to make moviemakers happy » Page 7

Blue Earth ‘goes green’
First Minnesota county to win ENERGY STAR designation » Page 2

Online access to wildfire plans expanded
The U.S. Forest Service Web site adds new section » Page 4

QuickTakes

Highest Per Pupil Spending Elementary thru Secondary Education

New York $14,119
New Jersey $13,800
District of Columbia $12,979
Vermont $11,835
Connecticut $11,572

Source: Public Education Finance
Census Bureau

Photo courtesy of Hennepin County, Minn.

Divers search for victims of the I-35 bridge collapse. Recovery operations continued in the Mississippi River for weeks after the bridge collapse in Minneapolis.
When television screens around the country go static in 2009, officials are hoping that consumers will be prepared and not going to the landfill.

Currently, some television stations broadcast both analog signals — magnetic waves used to display sound and pictures — and digital signals. However, on Feb. 17, 2009, analog transmissions will cease, leaving only digital television broadcasts.

Digital television transmits information as data bits, like a computer. This allows for the broadcast of pictures with higher resolution, thereby giving better picture and sound quality. In addition to improved service, the transition to digital television will free up portions of the broadcast spectrum to be used for a variety of purposes, including public safety.

After the 2009 deadline, however, analog televisions will be unable to read the digital signals. The result, some industry experts say, could be a wave of fresh electronic waste (e-waste) from people whose televisions have become obsolete. “The fact now that the world is going to go from analog to digital is only going to further expedite the e-waste crisis that already exists today,” said John Shegerian, co-founder and chief executive officer of the California-based private organization Electronic Recyclers. He explained that billions of tons of e-waste are handled inappropriately in the U.S., including dumping in developing countries.

According to the EPA, Americans disposed of between 24 million and 26.3 million units of e-waste. Although e-waste accounted for less than two percent of the solid waste stream, it remains one of the fastest-growing categories. Televisions accounted for between 0.3 percent and 0.4 percent of the solid waste stream.

EPA believes that disposal of e-waste represents a loss of valuable resources and can potentially pose an environmental threat if improperly managed. The greatest benefit to the environment is to reuse the materials in these products, rather than mining and manufacturing raw materials,” said Roxanne Smith, press officer for the EPA. “Our primary goal is to extend the useful lives of these products by providing opportunities to reuse and recycle electronics.”

Ways to reduce waste

When the 2009 deadline comes, people won’t be forced to trash their analog televisions. Of course, not every analog set will be discarded,” said Rosemary Kilmartin, director of media relations for the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission. “Every household in the country will be eligible for coupons towards purchase of converter boxes that will permit people to continue using their analog sets.”

These coupons will be worth $40 each and can be used toward the purchase of up to two digital-to-analog converter boxes. The program, authorized in the Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005, will begin Jan. 1, 2008 and run through March 31, 2009.

The FCC has yet to determine how citizens can apply for the coupon program. According to Tom Watson, recycling program manager for King County, Wash., the big-picture solutions involve federal intervention and private sector responsibility.

“We really feel that TV and electronics recycling is a product stewardship issue and that the industry should be providing the recycling and disposal options for electronics,” he said. “We don’t think local government should be stuck providing all the answers for recycling.”

Fortunately, Watson is getting some help from his state. Washington passed a law that aims to require electronics manufacturers to provide consumers with free recycling of electronic products by Jan. 1, 2009.

As of the beginning of this year, registered manufacturers will affix labels on products like computers, monitors and televisions. Electronics manufacturers will be required to register before that date with the state’s Department of Ecology and pay a fee to the department to cover the cost of administering the law, including registration, enforcement and planning. After that, only labeled products from registered manufacturers can be sold in Washington.

Watson offered that recycling is “really more of a problem for the electronics industry than all these other states having different regulations. If there was national legislation on electronics and recyclers, that would make a lot of sense.”

Meanwhile, Shegarian claims that his business is planning on opening between four and six locations to handle the fast-growing amount of e-waste that the public generates.

County residents gather to celebrate their courthouse’s ENERGY STAR designation.

Blue Earth County courthouse ‘goes green,’ earns coveted ENERGY STAR rating

When it comes to “going green,” Blue Earth County, Minn. is full-speed ahead. The county continues its proactive effort to promote green building initiatives within existing buildings and future construction, and recently earned national designation for its commitment to energy efficiency.

Earlier this summer the county’s courthouse, a 120-year-old historical landmark, became the only courthouse in Minnesota, and just the eighth county courthouse nationwide, to receive the EPA’s ENERGY STAR designation.

Only about 35 other public buildings in all of Minnesota have received this honor.

Working over the past few years with NACo’s ENERGY STAR Courthouse Campaign, the county successfully improved the performance of its courthouse and tracked its energy use with a free Web-based tool.

The tool provides each county office building and courthouse (among other buildings in the community) with a rating on a scale of 1 to 100. Scoring 75 or higher puts a building in the top 25 percent of energy-performing buildings in the county.

To help the county celebrate this achievement, an evening concert by the Mankato Area Municipal Band on the courthouse lawn, along with food, beverages and other activities to promote energy efficiency, drew about 400 people.

Nearly 100 individuals used the opportunity to take some of the first guided tours of the historical courthouse. The historical society also published a book on the history of the courthouse, which was sold at the event.

Some of the energy improvement measures include:

- compact fluorescent light bulbs
- energy-efficient flat screen monitors
- installing a properly-sized cooling tower with drift eliminator
- installing diesel generators to reduce electrical costs
- insulating ductwork and patching leaks
- cleaning the heating and cooling coils, and
- implementing an aggressive recycling program.

As the NACo Courthouse Campaign evolved into the ENERGY STAR Local Government Challenge, Blue Earth was among the first counties to join the new program. Challenge participants seek to reduce energy consumption from public and private buildings by 10 percent or more.

According to the EPA, if all buildings met this goal, by 2015 Americans would reduce greenhouse gas emissions equal to those from 15 million vehicles while at the same time saving about $10 billion on energy bills.

What’s in store next? A green county

County Justice Center is being built to be LEED-certified. LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a U.S. Green Building Council program that uses a point-based system to designate green buildings. To achieve that designation, the county’s new building will incorporate such things as priority parking for low-emitting and fuel-efficient vehicles, well-efficient landscaping with a retention pond, and rain gardens and the use of recycled materials for items such as carpeting.

Individuals may view a live construction webcam of the project at www.co.blue-earth.mn.us.

The following counties also participate in the new ENERGY STAR Challenge: Calhoun County, Ala.; Arapahoe County, Colo.; San Miguel County, Colo.; Charlotte County, Fla.; Miami-Dade County, Fla.; Seminole County, Fla.; Story County, Iowa; and Johnson County, Kan. Also participating are Evangeline Parish, La.; Vernon Parish, La.; Macomb County, Mich.; Watahenaw County, Mich.; Bates County, Mo.; Carbon County, Mont.; Buncombe County, N.C.; and Catawba County, N.C. Durham County, N.C. is also a participant, as are Lee County, N.C.; Arlington County, Va.; Fairfield County, Va.; and Prince William County, Va.

(For more information on energy efficiency and green government please visit www.naco.org/energy or contact Kelly Zonderwyk at 202/942-4224 or kzonderwyk@naco.org.)
Subcommittee chair unveils crime prevention strategy

By DONALD MURRAY
SENIOR LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

At NACo’s recent Annual conference, Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott (D-Va.) outlined for NACo’s Justice and Public Safety Committee some of the major elements of a comprehensive strategy to prevent crime and at the same time to dramatically lower recidivism rates for those individuals currently in the system.

Scott, chair of the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, said he discovered early in his political career (dating back some 30 years when he was a member of the Virginia House of Delegates) that the real choice for political leaders “was to reduce crime or play politics.”

“If we really want to make a difference in reducing crime,” Scott said, “we have no choice but to educate the public on what works and what doesn’t work.” Instead, “We keep funding programs that don’t work.”

The public, he added, is inundated with an endless stream of misleading and inaccurate sound bites that ignore the current state of knowledge and actually set the public off in the wrong direction.

For example, “no cable TV for prison inmates,” he noted, was the popular slogan that led to the abolishment of college Pell grants for inmates all over the country, despite their proven effectiveness in lowering recidivism.

“Can you imagine a TV commercial featuring a cable TV technician disconnecting the TV’s in prison and crime suddenly coming down all over America?” Scott asked humorously.

Early intervention and nurse visitation programs he emphasized have also proven their effectiveness in reducing crime. Scott noted one study conducted over 18 years that demonstrated a one-third arrest rate reduction for children who participated in the Nurse Family Partnership Program — a model program that usually relies on county nurses to educate families on the needs of babies during the formative stages of development. Additionally, investments in Headstart have demonstrated savings of $4 for every dollar spent.

Virginia, Scott noted, is now forced to spend $3 billion to construct and operate new prisons because parole was abolished under the state’s sentencing legislation. “Can you imagine what $3 billion could buy in terms of nurse visitation, job training, education and summer jobs?”

When a member of the committee inquired about gangs, the congressman replied that the threshold question was whether the nation was going to be serious. “You cannot wait for kids to join the gang before you do something. The criminal justice system is virtually useless in preventing gangs.”

Farm Bill draft addresses seniors, hospital access

FARM BILL from page 1

Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-Iowa). The Senate is expected to take up the bill this month.

Harkin’s draft of the Farm Bill includes $2 billion over five years in new money to provide funds for rural development projects such as:

• water and wastewater treatment facilities, so rural families have safe drinking water that meets EPA standards
• the Rural Collaborative Investment Program (RCIP), which would provide funds for people to come together within a region to carry out locally driven projects that fit their community
• critical access to hospitals
• expanding Internet access to rural areas, and
• providing funds for day care and assisted-living facilities for senior citizens.

NACo is focusing on efforts in the Senate now and has joined forces with 30 other groups in a coalition called Campaign for a Renewed Rural Development under the leadership of NACo Immediate Past President Colleen Landkamer.

The campaign, launched April 25, includes groups representing state and local governments as well as those concerned with rural health care, rural infrastructure, rural economic development, rural electrification, rural housing and planning, and others. (See County News, May 7 or visit www.ruralcampaign.org)

Campaign members are calling for increases in the rural development title of the Farm Bill but do not advocate for reductions in other titles.

“We are working to build support for Chairman Harkin’s rural development title since his version provides the much needed funding that previous legislation neglected,” said NACo Legislative Director Ed Rosado.

Harkin is circulating a letter of support for his rural development title, Rosado added, which highlights some of the reasons why rural development is so critical.

NACo members are also encouraging the public to call or e-mail their senators and ask them to support Harkin’s rural development title. For more information, go to NACo’s Legislative Action Center, which you can access from NACo’s Web site under the Issues and Interest bar.

You can sign the letter by going to: www.ruralcampaign.org, under “Sign Rural Development Letter to Senate Agricultural Chairman Tom Harkin…” click “Read this Story.”

NACo members are also encouraging the public to call or e-mail their senators and ask them to support Harkin’s rural development title. For more information, go to NACo’s Legislative Action Center, which you can access from NACo’s Web site under the Issues and Interest bar.

Letter from Sen. Tom Harkin to NACo members ...

Dear Friends,

The measure we commonly call the “farm bill” is the single most important piece of legislation for improving the quality of life and economic vitality of our rural communities. As the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, I am committed to enacting a balanced, forward-looking farm bill that helps build a better future for agriculture and all of rural America.

Today, rural communities face enormous challenges, with loss of population and jobs contributing to a negative cycle which feeds on itself. We have a real opportunity to help reverse this negative dynamic by including a strong rural development title in the new farm bill. We need to establish new initiatives and improve existing programs to spur economic and community innovation by harnessing the entrepreneurial spirit, ingenuity and creativity of rural Americans.

I hope you will join me in working to build support in the Senate for major new federal investments in programs to promote entrepreneurs and microenterprises, boost renewable energy development, fund the mounting backlog of water and sewer assistance, expand broadband to underserved areas, provide support for hospitals, day care and assisted living and provide incentives and resources to attract and leverage essential public, private and philanthropic investments across small town and rural America.

Experience has shown quite clearly that rural communities greatly improve their prospects for success by forging partnerships across jurisdictional boundaries and leveraging precious resources. In promoting such partnerships and cooperation, I am proposing the Rural Collaborative Investment Program for the rural development title as a groundbreaking program that will provide essential resources and incentives for rural communities to formulate and carry out innovative, locally driven strategies and projects. I know that the RCIP will help better position rural communities for the new realities of global competition and also prove vital in promoting NACo’s agriculture priorities, such as increasing rural development funding, providing more renewable energy options and attracting young people to production agriculture.

While you fully understand the need for this funding and for this new vision and policy approach, unfortunately, that need is not as widely understood in Washington as it needs to be. I thank you for your efforts to support rural America.

CORRECTION

A photo caption in the Aug. 6 issue incorrectly identified the county in which Commissioner Bill Doherty serves. He is from Barnstable County, Mass.
Profiles
In Service

Valerie Brown
Supervisor
Sonoma County, Calif.
NACo Board of Directors
First vice president

Number of years active in NACo: 5
Years in Public Service: 17
Occupation: Sonoma County supervisor, District One
Education: B.S. in education, University of Missouri; M.A. Lindenwood College, St. Charles, Mo.; licensed marriage family therapist

The hardest thing I’ve ever done: I am usually energized by challenges; however, watching and participating in my parents’ struggle through changes dealing with aging is excruciating.

Three people (living or dead) I’d invite to dinner: Eleanor Roosevelt, Harriet Tubman and Babe Didrikson Zaharias

A dream I have is to: ensure that every child grows up in a safe, loving and healthy environment.

You’d be surprised to learn that I: love to fly fish.

The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: run for public office.

My favorite way to relax is: in a hammock, with a good book.

I’m most proud of: my daughter, Lisa.

Every morning I read: the newspaper.

My favorite meal is: anytime.

My pet peeve is: wasting time.

My motto is: “You can do it…”

That last book I read was: Years of Trial and Hope by Harry S. Truman (actually autographed by him for my mother in Independence, Mo.).

My favorite movie is: The African Queen.

My favorite music is: from the 60s.

My favorite president is: John F. Kennedy.

Developing wildfire protection plans gets boost online

The U.S. Forest Service, Southern Research Station, in cooperation with Louisiana State University, recently developed a new information section in the National Database of State and Local Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Programs Web site, www.wildfire-programs.usda.gov. The section assists community leaders and fire officials in developing community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) and provides a central location to review key features of existing CWPPs.

“Through the CWPP process, community stakeholders can address a wide range of concerns and establish priorities that reduce wildfire risk,” says Peter J. Roussopoulos, station director. “These plans are critical in helping protect citizens, homes, infrastructure and natural assets from catastrophic wildfire events.”

The user-friendly Web site features a searchable format that allows stakeholders to review existing CWPPs as they formulate strategies to address wildfire vulnerability in their communities.

The 2003 Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) promotes development of CWPPs by offering communities that meet HFRA criteria priority consideration for projects and treatment areas identified in CWPPs, as well as a voice in the federal government’s process for selecting wildfire mitigation projects on adjacent public lands.

The minimum requirements for a HFRA compliant CWPP include:
1) collaboration of stakeholders in plan development
2) identification and prioritization of areas for fuel reduction treatments, and
3) recommendation of measures communities and homeowners can take to reduce structure ignitability.

The National Database of State and Local Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Programs serves as a clearinghouse of information about non-federal policies and programs that seek to reduce the risk of loss of life and property through the reduction of hazardous fuels on private lands. Additional content will be added in the coming months.

For additional information contact Terry Haines, research forester, at 504/589-6652 or by e-mail at thaine01@fs.fed.us.

Competition looks for 100 best communities for young people

For the third time, the America’s Promise Alliance is conducting a nationwide search to find the 100 best communities for young people.

The 100 best communities provide great places for young people to live and grow up, and communities that work together — in collaboration with local schools, nonprofit organizations and businesses — to offer unique and innovative programs to help children succeed.

As a partner of the Alliance, NACo is proud to bring this opportunity to your attention. The 2008 100 Best competition will recognize outstanding community-wide efforts to improve the quality and well-being of youth.

Last year, hundreds of communities representing 50 states, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, applied for the award, and the winners represented a broad cross-section of urban, rural, inner-city and suburban communities from every region of the country.

Please be sure your county applies. In addition to significantly increasing national and local media visibility, the 100 Best winners will promote civic pride and build greater support within their communities that could ensure the long-term success for current and future youth-based initiatives.

Applications will be accepted online until Friday, Nov. 2, at www.americaspromise.org/100best.

Winners will be selected by a panel of distinguished civic, business and nonprofit leaders. The 2008 100 Best Communities for Young People will be announced late January 2008. Questions can be sent via e-mail to浓浓r07@ca.gov.

County News invites
Letters to the Editor

If you have a compliment, complaint or different point of view, let us know.

Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail, fax or e-mail to: County News, NACo, 440 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2080, 202/393-2630, cnews@naco.org.

What’s NACo up to? ... Find out online ...

www.naco.org

© National Association of Counties Research Foundation, Inc.
HENNEPIN from page 1

Minneapolis police took the lead as incident commanders of the emergency response. However, with the city’s request, Hennepin County officials played a major role in rescue and recovery operations — and more.

“We’ve taken emergency preparedness and training for disaster very seriously, and it sure paid off here,” said Randy Johnson, chairman of the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. “It was heartwarming and chilling to see so many people come together so quickly. There were true heroes on August first who put themselves at great risk in order to rescue others.”

Even before 9/11, Hennepin County had been training with its neighboring counties and cities to mount a coordinated disaster response. Hennepin was a member of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) several years ago, which outlines roles and responsibilities across agencies and jurisdictions in emergencies. Neighboring Ramsey, Dakota and Anoka counties, among others, also responded to the incident.

A critical link in the regional response was the metropolitan area’s 800-megahertz (mHz) emergency communications system, in place since 2002, interconnecting seven counties’ emergency radios. “It paid off big-time,” said Tim Turnbull, the county’s director of public safety. “We had been working on a regional interoperable radio system and the need for interoperability came at a time when we were already close to implementing it.” Turnbull said that the radio system was used to coordinate the disaster response with the whole world watching.

Two county officials uniquely qualified for disaster response

Aug. 1 was to have been much like any other day for Rick Stanek, Hennepin County, Minn., sheriff of just seven months. It was bookended with meetings: Rotary Club at 6 a.m.; flipping burgers at a “thank you” cookout for volunteer mounted patrol officers at 6 p.m.

At 6:10 p.m., he was only half way to his meeting in Medina, a city about 20 miles from Minneapolis, when he heard the news on the radio. The I-35W bridge had collapsed into the Mississippi River.

Minutes later — dressed in a “very nice suit and tie” — he would be on the river helping to coordinate the disaster response with the whole world watching. A daunting task for the new sheriff in town. Hardy. While new to his current job, Stanek was more than up to the task. Before taking office in January 2007, he spent 23 years as a Minneapolis police officer, served 10 years in the State Legislature and had been the Minnesota’s commissioner of public safety and director of homeland security.

Because of his varied experiences and “personal relationships,” Stark was uniquely positioned to help lead a multi-jurisdictional response.

I was fortunate enough to know a number of the first responders, or the leaders or commanders of these different agencies on a first-name basis,” Stanek said — because of his previous public safety and legislative positions.

Stark and Andrew Baker, M.D., the county’s chief medical examiner, both bringing distinguished resumes of relevant experience to their jobs. In the weeks that followed the bridge collapse, they would become the face of the county’s response to the tragedy as they briefed the international news media.


The magnitude of what happened here was not as large, say, as a 9/11 attack or genocide in another country,” Dr. Baker said, “but the funny thing is that the emotions that immediately come to the surface are exactly the same.”

The proximity of one of his offices to the bridge site — a few blocks away — made it difficult to “detach from emotionally or physically.”

“Most of our folks safe. It coordinated our efforts,” Stanek said. “You couldn’t do that 10 years ago or even six years ago in New York,” he added. “And that kept our folks safe. It coordinated our response, and that goes to the County Board and their investment — and their foresight to invest in infrastructure.”

Hennepin County’s Chief Medical Examiner Andrew Baker, M.D. (left at microphones) and Sheriff Rick Stanek (r) were often the face of the county’s response to the I-35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis.

Dr. Baker explained that some of victims died instantly of their blunt force injuries, which were “unsurvivable,” whether they went into the water or not. For those whose cars caved in or folded, if the car had folded a different way, they might have lived.

“The things that medical examiners can tell you about how people die are responsible for things like air bags, and improvement in seatbelts and automotive design.”

For both men, the bridge disaster only reinforced their belief in the value of advance training and investing in the right resources.

“I can’t emphasize enough being able to talk directly with a doctor at Hennepin County Medical Center when you’re out on the bridge tending to a victim,” Stanek said, which was possible using the region’s 800-mHz, interoperable communications system.

“For example, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is going to want to assess things like survivability and survival factors,” the medical examiner said. The causes of death provide data about whether victims, under different circumstances, could have survived.
Majority of counties see increase in robberies, burglaries due to meth abuse

**METH from page 1**

abuse among minorities during the same period.

Overall, 80 percent of counties said that meth abuse has not decreased in the last year, and 47 percent of counties said that meth remains their number one illegal drug problem. That is more than cocaine (21 percent) and marijuana (22 percent) combined.

The survey, The Methamphetamine Epidemic: The Changing Demographics of Methamphetamine, was completed in July by NACo to assess the effectiveness of new precursor laws and whether increased public awareness of the synthetic drug’s dangers have changed patterns of meth manufacture, acquisition and usage.

Forty percent of counties said that meth use has stayed the same, and 30 percent said it has increased. However, 81 percent of counties said that new precursor laws enacted since 2003 have helped to reduce the ability of abusers to manufacture or “cook” meth in their area and avoid meth labs. Sixty-two percent of those responding counties report that out-of-state importation of meth has increased, while 56 percent report that Mexican drug importation has increased. Four of the eight responding counties in New Mexico said that between 75 and 100 percent of incarcerations are meth-related.

**Other survey findings**

Fifty-five percent of counties report increases in robberies and burglaries during the past year. Sixty percent of counties report an increased workload because of meth abuse, and 43 percent report that they are paying more overtime. Forty-two percent of counties report that up to 10 percent of their jail inmates are incarcerated because of meth-related crimes. However, four of the eight responding counties in New Mexico said that between 75 and 100 percent of incarcerations are meth-related.

Only 24 percent of counties report that their county facilitates a meth rehab center or program. Of those 363 that do not have a facility, 45 percent cite lack of funding as the primary reason.

Coleman said that the nation’s counties are renewing their call for all states and the federal government to work collaboratively to address the meth epidemic in America.

“The federal government must do more to help prevent the importation of ‘ready to abuse’ meth from international superlabs,” he said. “In addition, county law enforcement agencies, health care facilities and drug treatment centers need additional resources to fight the meth epidemic at the local level.”

The new meth survey is the sixth released by NACo in two years. In July 2005, NACo released two surveys which indicated that meth was the top drug threat to counties and that meth was responsible for an increase in out-of-home placements for children. In January 2006, NACo released two additional surveys that found that meth was the most prevalent drug that drove people to county public hospital emergency rooms and that the need for meth treatment was growing. Last July, NACo’s fifth survey reaffirmed that meth was the number one illegal drug problem facing counties.

**County’s communicators deal with ‘crush’ of international media**

**HENNEPIN from page 5**

“the initial reaction is shock,” said Susan Littrell, a social work unit supervisor with the county’s mental health center. “As time goes on, people need a chance to tell their story and validate their experiences.” That also applies to county staff, such as the first responders, such as the first responders, such as the first responders, such as the first responders, such as the first responders.

The day Dr. Baker spoke with County News, he and his staff had just finished a debriefing session with a county mental health facilitator. “Everybody got a chance to vent things to share some emotions — to talk about their coping skills, to describe what it was like personally for them to go through this, and that’s an incredibly important thing,” Dr. Baker said.

“When you go through events like this, you bottle up and internalize a lot of stress. If you don’t come up with healthy ways to get rid of that stress, it will come back to bite you in a very bad way at a very inopportune moment.”

**Communications ‘not discretionary’**

Communications and media relations professionals from the county’s public affairs office were also key players, helping county staff deal with the “overwhelming” media interest in the story.

Public Affairs Director Carolyn Marinan, a former reporter herself, knows the media is not an “end” but a “means” to getting vital information to a concerned public.

“It’s essential to the success in anything and especially in a crisis,” she said. “Because when there’s no information people will create their own if there is a void.”

Dealing with unrelenting requests from reporters was only a part of her and her staff’s duties. As part of the incident management team, her office also counseled county officials and prepared them to deal with the media.

Public Affairs set up a special Web page for the medical examiner’s office, where the public and the media could get the latest updates on the recovery and identification of victims’ bodies. This and other efforts gave Dr. Baker “a newfound respect” for Marinan’s public affairs group.

“I never really imagined before this event what they would be capable of doing for the medical examiner,” Dr. Baker said. “But there were very helpful in helping me get information out to the press, getting me ready for my first press briefing, which I had never done before in my life. Believe me, they don’t teach in medical school how to do a press briefing.”

In a crisis response, Marinan said communications expertise is “not discretionary.” However, she was quick to add, “I’m not equating our job to the people who are on the ground trying to save lives and rescue people. I’m not the one who’s going to put on the wetsuit, but I’m part of that team that helps, hopefully, the inside run smoothly so that the people on the frontlines can do their jobs.”

**What Congress Should Do**

- Pass the Methamphetamine Remediation Research Act, which would set up a research program for remediation of closed meth production laboratories. The House of Representatives passed the bill on Feb. 7. Companion legislation is awaiting action in the Senate.
- Pass the Methamphetamine Production Prevention Act, which would establish a grant program to facilitate the creation of meth-precursor electronic logbook systems. The bill aims to set up systems to alert local authorities when individuals are exploiting a loophole in the Combat Meth Act by acquiring pseudoephedrine from a large number of pharmacies.
- The bill was introduced in the Senate on May 3 by Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa). Companion legislation has been introduced in the House by Reps. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) and Rep. Jim Ramstad (R-Minn.).
- Pass the CLEAN-UP of Methamphetamine Act, introduced on June 5 by Rep. Dennis Rehberg (R-Mont.), which would authorize federal agency response to environmental hazards associated with illegal manufacture of meth on public lands and would create grant programs to assist state and local governments in cleaning up toxic meth labs.

*See METH page 7*
When preparing county building codes, not even the most savvy planner would have been able to foresee the project posed before the supervisors in Albemarle County, Va. As part of the production of the recent movie *Evan Almighty*, which filmed large segments within the county, the county had to approve the construction of an ark that stretched 80 feet wide, 59 feet high and 260 feet long.

“I guess when you’re a county government person and you’ve got a county code that’s many inches big, [you think you have] every possibility accounted for,” said Lee Catlin, community relations manager. “We found out that we did not. Because when someone said they wanted to build a big ark, we really had to scratch our heads and think ‘How can we make this happen?’”

*Evan Almighty* tells the story of a newly elected congressman (played by Steve Carell) who is charged by God with the task of building an ark. The comedy gets even more surreal as Evan’s beard begins to grow uncontrollably and a menagerie of animals begins to help him in the construction of the vessel.

The construction of the ark took place in the idyllic town of Crozet, near the city of Charlottesville. Director Tom Shadyac chose the town based on his experiences as a student at the University of Virginia. Several locations were considered, including various places in northern Virginia, Winchester and Front Royal, but, with the help of the Virginia Film Office, the Crozet location was secured.

Construction began in January 2006 and initially involved the laying of a large concrete foundation as well as eight 4,000-pound, cedar-lined steel ribs. “The ark was assembled in stages for different parts of the movie,” Catlin said. “It was a huge endeavor,” he said. “I’m happy that we are able to build something of this scale. With all the advancements in CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), it’s almost unheard of today.”

In order to accommodate the production, the county granted the filmmakers a zoning clearance for the property project — which also included a large house façade. The agreement included several stipulations including:

- guarantees special access to nearby residential developments
- maximum noise levels, and
- restrictions on traffic, due to a nearby school bus schedule.

Filming took place off and on for two to three months, as the crew would often depart to film in Richmond, Va., and Washington, D.C.

“The county made the filmmakers agree that they would leave the site exactly the way it was before they found it,” Catlin said. “It was really challenging for us to see how they would do that because they put in a large gravel parking lot structure, equipment, machinery, all kinds of things,” Catlin said. “But it was amazing how quickly [they took it down].” Once they had the final edit done, they had it back to a pristine open field area really quickly.”

**Economic impacts**

According to Rick McClenny, vice president of film and industry relations for the Virginia Film Office, 30 percent to 50 percent of a film production’s spending takes place in the site it films in.

Café said the public was very supportive of the production. Numerous locals were extras; citizens rented out rooms and cottages to staff, and local businesses served meals to the crew.

In addition to the local spending, Café said that Shadyac was very community-oriented and didn’t want to, in his words, “pillage the community.” After filming wrapped, he donated money to plant trees near the filming site. He also contributed money for a local homeless shelter and library.

**NACo continues to raise meth awareness**

METH from page 6

Evan’s head begins to grow uncontrollably and a menagerie of animals begins to help him in the construction of the vessel.

The construction of the ark took place in the idyllic town of Crozet, near the city of Charlottesville. Director Tom Shadyac chose the town based on his experiences as a student at the University of Virginia. Several locations were considered, including various places in northern Virginia, Winchester and Front Royal, but, with the help of the Virginia Film Office, the Crozet location was secured.

Construction began in January 2006 and initially involved the laying of a large concrete foundation as well as eight 4,000-pound, cedar-lined steel ribs. “The ark was assembled in stages for different parts of the movie.

The ark, which was designed to ancient Biblical specifications in the Book of Genesis, was eventually digitally enlarged to 450 feet long.

Construction Coordinator Dennis DeWaay led the production crew at an extremely quick pace to have the shoot done on schedule.

“It was a huge endeavor,” he said. “I’m happy that we are able to build something of this scale. With all the advancements in CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), it’s almost unheard of today.”

In order to accommodate the production, the county granted the filmmakers a zoning clearance for the temporary project — which also included a large house façade. The agreement included several stipulations including:

- a ban on explosions on set
- restrictions on nighttime filming
- guaranteed access to nearby residential developments
- maximum noise levels, and
- restrictions on traffic, due to a nearby school bus schedule.

Filming took place off and on for two to three months, as the crew often departed to film in Richmond, Va., and Washington, D.C.

“The county made the filmmakers agree that they would leave the site exactly the way it was before they found it,” Catlin said. “It was really challenging for us to see how they would do that because they put in a large gravel parking lot structure, equipment, machinery, all kinds of things,” Catlin said. “But it was amazing how quickly [they took it down].” Once they had the final edit done, they had it back to a pristine open field area really quickly.”

**Economic impacts**

According to Rick McClenny, vice president of film and industry relations for the Virginia Film Office, 30 percent to 50 percent of a film production’s spending takes place in the site it films in.

Café said the public was very supportive of the production. Numerous locals were extras; citizens rented out rooms and cottages to staff, and local businesses served meals to the crew.

In addition to the local spending, Café said that Shadyac was very community-oriented and didn’t want to, in his words, “pillage the community.” After filming wrapped, he donated money to plant trees near the filming site. He also contributed money for a local homeless shelter and library.
Volunteer attorneys ease Orange County D.A.'s caseload

The Orange County, Calif. District Attorney’s Office is facing a ballooning caseload. The office, in this county of about 3 million residents, files about 50,000 misdemeanor cases a year.

Additionally, since 2003, changes in the county Superior Court’s procedures require more prosecutors to staff the county’s five justice centers or branch courts, according to Todd Hart, the office’s director of government and community relations. The D.A.’s office, faced with budget cuts, was looking for new ways to handle the crush of work.

The solution? The office could have hired more deputy prosecutors at starting salaries ranging from $62,500 to $112,800 per year. Instead, it decided to recruit junior associates from the county’s 25 largest law firms to pull two-month stints as volunteer deputy prosecutors.

“We came up with this idea of a public-private type partnership,” Hart says, “where we’d go out and recruit qualified, capable attorneys that were out in the community that were maybe interested in coming and volunteering periods of time in our office.”

Thus was born the Trial Attorney Partnership program, TAP for short.

For the D.A.’s office, the attorneys are unpaid volunteers; however, the TAP lawyers’ firms continue to pay their salaries. As full-time, temporary deputy D.A.s, TAP attorneys handle all aspects of misdemeanor criminal cases — including filing charges, negotiating pleas, picking juries and trying cases. They also handle felony preliminary hearings and are encouraged to watch jury trials by experienced trial lawyers. The program was the brainchild of Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas.

It’s been a win-win-win for the county, the firms and the young attorneys. The county gets free legal help. Since the program’s inception in 2003 — and through July of this year — the volunteer prosecutors have conducted 17 court trials, 87 jury trials and nearly 500 preliminary hearings, services to the county valued at $840,000.

TAP litigators get experience that might otherwise take them years to obtain in a big law firm, and the firms get more confident and experienced associates when they return to their private-sector jobs.

The program’s appeal is simple, Hart explains. “It’s hard for young associates to get courtroom time, especially to conduct trials.” Often, it can take a young litigation associate in a huge firm seven to eight years before she or he gets to try a case.

“Here, they come over and after two weeks of training, just like any of our new deputy D.A.s, are put right into their courtroom assignment and find themselves picking juries just like anyone else,” Hart continues. “It’s almost a kind of trial by fire.”

Two weeks’ training might not sound like much, but Hart reminds that the attorneys coming into the program aren’t exactly blank slates. Since they’re employed at top law firms, they’ve already been vetted through the hiring process. In fact, many of the TAP attorneys have more experience than new deputy D.A.s fresh out of law school, he adds, and the training they receive is the same orientation given to “D.D.A.s.”

“They’re litigators,” Hart says of the TAP attorneys; they understand the trial process and have studied criminal procedure in law school. “So for us, it’s just bringing them up to speed on the penal code and criminal law.”

Matt Lilly, 34, is an associate with the firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, a Los Angeles-based practice with offices in Santa Ana, the county seat, which has “700 to 800” attorneys nationwide. He was among the first group of attorneys in the program and calls his experience with the D.A.’s office “personally fulfilling.”

Lilly says, “The law is different, but those skills translate directly into what we do as litigators, and you end up with better attorneys, I think.”

The program’s Web site offers several testimonials from former TAP participants. Joan Hucksabone Mayer, an associate with Newmeyer & Dillon, says conducting preliminary hearings “gave me an opportunity to put on witnesses and make arguments in a high-stress environment. It also helped me to develop more ‘thinking-on-your-feet’ skills.”

While TAP might appear to be a great recruiting tool for new D.D.A.s for the prosecutor’s office, Hart says that would be self-defeating. One or two attorneys have joined the staff after stints in the TAP program: One did so with his firm’s blessing; the other was between jobs, Hart explains.

“The law firms are making an investment in their young associates and looking at this as a training experience,” he adds. “If they found that they were losing the attorneys to us that might end the program.”

Even if the young lawyers were inclined to make the jump, it would be at considerable personal sacrifice. Hart says first-year associates at prestigious law firms “make generally as much as 10-15 year veterans here in our office, so they can’t walk away from the money.”

Hart believes the program could easily be replicated in other counties. “It could be done anywhere; it’s simply a matter of reaching out to those firms.”

For more information about the TAP program, visit www.orangecountyda.com.

(Model Programs from the Nation’s Counties highlights Achievement Award-winning programs. For more information on this and other NACo Achievement Award winners, visit NACo’s Web site, www.naco.org ⇒ Resource Library ⇒ Model County Programs.)
News From the Nation's Counties

COLORADO

“It’s a good day when some- body tries to recall you for trying to help kids,” EAGLE COUNTY Commissioner Arn Menconi recently told Basalt Town Council members.

According to The Aspen Times, the commissioner has made child care a pet project. Last November, he unsuccessfully tried to convince county voters to approve a $3.5 million property tax increase to support early childhood facilities and programs. He appeared before the Basalt Town Council recently — as well as other municipal governments, employers, service organizations and individuals — to urge the board to contribute to the county’s attempt to raise money for child care-related causes.

Menconi’s efforts made him the target of a recall effort, with a group of citizens claiming that he has kept the will of the people. The recall effort calls, past citations and other code enforcement actions, unpaid property taxes or sewer bills, the state of disrepair and related issues on the property, and more. The information is scored objectively, and the properties are ranked. The 25 highest scoring properties are highlighted by the list.

MARYLAND

CHARLES COUNTY can’t be accused of letting waste go to waste. Under a proposed plan, the county’s sewage could be routed from treatment stations to area power plants.

According to WRC-TV, instead of using groundwater, the plants would use the treated sewage for cooling towers and other operations.

ENvironmental benefits of the plan include the preservation of groundwater and the diversion of treated sewage away from the Potomac River.

The plan is thought to be the first of its kind in the country.

FLORIDA

The International Association of Fire Chiefs has named ORANGE COUNTY as one of its seven final-ists for its Fire Service Award for Excellence.

The county’s Fire Rescue Department was recognized for its Wellness Program, which started in 2002. The program used funds to purchase a mobile fitness evalu-ation unit vehicle and hire a staff of peer-fitness trainers. The program also purchased exercise equipment for fire stations.

Along with annual physicals and medical monitoring overseen by the Wellness Bureau, the program has helped reduce workers’ compensation claims and costs by 63 percent.

GEORGIA

Officials in COBB COUNTY scraped plans to implement a virtual ban on day laborers from seeking work, citing legal issues.

However, a long-standing similar law still exists in Marietta. The law forbids the solicitation of “temporary employment” or the hiring day laborers on the streets, sidewalks, parking lots, public property or public rights of way in the city, according to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

The paper said that Cobb County was deterred from enacting similar legislation because of a recent federal court decision about a law passed in the town of Hazleton, Pa. The law, which fined landlords who rented to illegal immigrants and de-nied business permits to companies who employed them, was found to be unconstitutional.

NEW YORK

ROCKLAND COUNTY’s human rights commission will hold two public meetings in October on accepting people’s differences as part of its Stop Prejudice Now program.

One session, titled “It Takes More Than Ramps,” will focus on persons with disabilities, while the other will address race relations and equality. Other topics will be scheduled for next year, according to The Journal News.

S. Ram Nagubandi, the county’s Human Rights Commissioner, said it’s not unusual for disabled persons to be perceived as weak, making them potential targets for criminals.

The first conference will address how residents with disabilities can protect themselves against fraud, Internet crime, gang activity and other dangers.

ILLINOIS

A recent decision by BP North America to increase the amount of toxic chemicals dumped into Lake Michigan has angered the county. According to The Chicago Tribune, the refinery will be releasing more ammonia and suspended solids into the lake.

The county passed a resolution rebuking both the company and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, which approved the decision.

Board Member Jeff Redick said the department has “the duty to protect the citizenry and its neighbors.”

The counties don’t plan to appeal the decision, he said.

• Two North Carolina county commissioners have been named Outstanding County Commiss-ioner of the Year for 2006-07. Sharing the honor are CATAWA COUNTY Board of Commission-ers’ Chairwoman Kitty Barnes and EDGEcombe County Commissioner Viola Harris. The award was presented by the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) at its recent annual conference.

Outgoing NCACC President Terry Garrison said without Barnes’ involvement, “We would not have achieved Medicaid relief this session” of the state legislature. She helped keep the issue “at the front.” Harris chaired NCACC’s Presidential Task Force on Af-fordable Housing for 2006 – 2007, and she is president of the North Carolina Association of Black County Officials.

HOUSTON

The county’s Fire Rescue De-partment is undergoing a $5 million renovation and expansion.

The project is being funded through a capital project sales tax. “This is the third project to be completed with the penny sales tax,” said County Administrator Sabrena Graham. A Department of Social Services building was completed in 2005; a new Emergency Services Building was completed the following year.

“This is just one of many steps [our] county government and council will be taking to prepare for the future,” said Hugh Gray, chair-man of the county council. “When completed, the courthouse will truly represent the past, present and future of Hampton County.”

In 1878, Gov. Wade Hampton laid the cornerstone for the building which is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

TEXAS

Nearly 1,200 video gambling machines are biding their time in a vacant HARRIS COUNTY jail — awaiting “execution.”

The machines, seized from illegal gaming operations, are the size of small refrigerators. They’re impounded pending the disposition of court cases against illegal gambling parlor operators and are destroyed when no longer needed as evidence.

See NEWS FROM page 11
Financial Services News

457 Plans Offer Surprising Benefits

According to a 2006 survey by Nationwide’s Retirement Education Institute, 40 percent of public employees say that saving for retirement is their most important goal. One response to this is to take full advantage of the county’s deferred compensation plan (also called a 457 plan after the Internal Revenue Code section of the same number) and understand all of the benefits that come with it.

Well-known benefits

Tax deferred investing: Contributions to a 457 plan are on a pre-tax basis. This means that investing in a 457 plan lowers taxable income and reduces the current tax burden. The money that would have been spent on taxes is allowed to compound tax-free, which helps retirement savings grow over time.

Access to a retirement specialist: The retirement planning landscape is constantly changing, and it can be difficult to keep up with. Contributing to a Nationwide deferred compensation plan provides access to a retirement specialist who can offer assistance along the way. Information from retirement specialists is for educational use only and should not be deemed as tax, legal or investment advice.

Automatic deposit into your account: Contributions to a 457 plan are automatically deducted from the employee’s salary and deposited into their retirement account. This makes it easier to save for retirement and gives the employee the chance to pay himself first.

Lesser-known benefits

Assets are protected from the employer’s creditors: Governmental 457 plans are structured in a way that protects employees’ retirement savings account from the employer’s creditors. This means that if the employer had to declare bankruptcy, the employees would not be at risk of losing their retirement assets.

Early withdrawal option: When an employee separates from service or has an unforeseeable emergency, they are eligible to start withdrawing money from their 457 plan. This gives the freedom to withdraw money before age 59.5 without having to pay the early-withdrawal penalty associated with other types of retirement accounts like an IRA (individual retirement account). Please note that withdrawals from a 457 plan are taxed as ordinary income.

Optional Features

Nationwide’s FundGuard and ProAccount are two optional programs that can help make the most of an employee’s retirement planning. FundGuard provides the participant with a guarantee that their principal investment will be protected no matter how the market performs. With ProAccount, investments are managed by a professional adviser who will actively review and adjust the portfolio according to the employee’s needs. Both of these features are offered for an additional fee. FundGuard’s principal protection guarantee is subject to the claims-paying ability of Nationwide Life Insurance Company.

For more information about 457 plans or to start participating, contact your human resources manager or visit www.nrsforu.com. To learn more about Nationwide’s FundGuard and ProAccount programs please call 877/NRS-FORU (877/677-3678). Investing involves market risk, including possible loss of principal. Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) partners with the NACO to provide counties and their employees with a competitive deferred compensation program.

As part of this partnership, Nationwide pays a fee to NACO in exchange for NACO’s exclusive endorsement, marketing support and program oversight of Nationwide products made available under the program. For more information, including fees paid, Nationwide encourages you to visit www.nrsforu.com.

We all make choices in life, but we often look for the ways to avoid or blame others for the consequences of some of those actions.

“pre-approved” credit card offer clogging my mailbox. In life, it’s good to be pre-approved.

All of these social and societal anomalies are not healthy for the development of the next generation. Perhaps the saddest and most troubling of the anomalies is the constant stream of violence with attendant subtle messages of how to solve problems between people and how to address complicated issues.

The ease with which violence equates to “winning” and satisfaction in the world of video games, or the correlation between the degree of extreme violence and the profitability of movies, is not only a reflection of what’s going on in the society but arguably a cause as well as an effect.

Here is a challenge to consider: Name something that you can expose a young person to hundreds of thousands of times as they are growing up without having some kind of significant and sustained impact on the HR Doctor of the next generation of our society.

Another common feature of the mall besides shoe stores and food courts is that they seem to contain at least one video arcade, required by law.

Much like the way many people allow their children to be raised by default and abdication by video games and television, the video arcade takes on an image, at least to the HR Doctor, of a warehouse or cloak room where the real “sole” of America lies (Sorry?)!

A quick walk through an arcade in a mall, or for that matter a conversation with many kids in America on their gaming skills, allows you to observe some of the video game industry’s impact on the development of the next generation of our society.

The HR Doctor urges you to spend some thoughtful time playing video games with your child, or at least observing what goes on. Many of the games have very violent content. You want your kids to learn the characteristics in the games or by emulating the largest and most deadly collection of weapons. It’s not a matter of playing Space Aliens on an antique Atari machine from the 1980s. It’s a matter of hijacking cars and killing other people while suffering little or no apparent harm or danger to the player.

If you lose the game, all you have to do is hit the reset button and you get to start all over as if the killing in the previous game never happened.

457 Plans Offer Surprising Benefits

Just Hit the Reset Button

It has long been a contention of the HR Doctor that when you expose vulnerable young people, in the prime period of their social and thought process development, to anything in excess, you set in motion dangerous trends that affect their own future as well as the futures of those around them, including relationships with coworkers and clients.

This over-exposure takes a primary form in America when we realize that the average person watches about four hours of television a day. It also results in a pattern of relationships where, at least according to a recent survey by Los Angeles-based Kelton Research, a person spends more time with their computer than they do with their spouse.

On television we see a constant flooding of information about food and the joys of eating, interspersed (ironically), with an endless stream of diet commercials.

Our society’s over-exposure may take the form of an “I want it now” entitlement society, perhaps exemplified by the regular stream of commercials tantalizing all of us to take out loans that can be approved in less than 10 seconds online and to get into debt to buy what we want right now.

Once again, with similar irony, the very next commercial may be a get-out-of-debt credit counseling service. Hardly a day goes by at the HR Doctor’s house without observing what goes on. Many of the next generation of our society.

The retirement planning landscape is constantly changing, and it can be difficult to keep up with. Contributing to a Nationwide deferred compensation plan provides access to a retirement specialist who can offer assistance along the way. Information from retirement specialists is for educational use only and should not be deemed as tax, legal or investment advice.

Automatic deposit into your account: Contributions to a 457 plan are automatically deducted from the employee’s salary and deposited into their retirement account. This makes it easier to save for retirement and gives the employee the chance to pay himself first.

Lesser-known benefits

Assets are protected from the employer’s creditors: Governmental 457 plans are structured in a way that protects employees’ retirement savings account from the employer’s creditors. This means that if the employer had to declare bankruptcy, the employees would not be at risk of losing their retirement assets.

Early withdrawal option: When an employee separates from service or has an unforeseeable emergency, they are eligible to start withdrawing money from their 457 plan. This gives the freedom to withdraw money before age 59.5 without having to pay the early-withdrawal penalty associated with other types of retirement accounts like an IRA (individual retirement account). Please note that withdrawals from a 457 plan are taxed as ordinary income.

Optional Features

Nationwide’s FundGuard and ProAccount are two optional programs that can help make the most of an employee’s retirement planning. FundGuard provides the participant with a guarantee that their principal investment will be protected no matter how the market performs. With ProAccount, investments are managed by a professional adviser who will actively review and adjust the portfolio according to the employee’s needs. Both of these features are offered for an additional fee. FundGuard’s principal protection guarantee is subject to the claims-paying ability of Nationwide Life Insurance Company.

For more information about 457 plans or to start participating, contact your human resources manager or visit www.nrsforu.com. To learn more about Nationwide’s FundGuard and ProAccount programs please call 877/NRS-FORU (877/677-3678). Investing involves market risk, including possible loss of principal.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) partners with the NACO to provide counties and their employees with a competitive deferred compensation program.

As part of this partnership, Nationwide pays a fee to NACO in exchange for NACO’s exclusive endorsement, marketing support and program oversight of Nationwide products made available under the program. For more information, including fees paid, Nationwide encourages you to visit www.nrsforu.com.
In real life, unlike video games, people can't just hit the ‘reset’ button

H.R. DOCTOR from page 10

when you’re booked into a county jail or when behavior or performance trouble on the job is moving you toward termination of employment.

The point is that in real life it is extraordinarily difficult and often not practical to just hit the reset button and find that everything has been returned to the way it was before.

We all make choices in life, but we often look for the ways to avoid or blame others for the consequences arduous and manpower intensive.

Thanks to a new state law, effective in June, law enforcement officials now have the option of selling the machines to buyers in states where they’re legal.

“A law enforcement was telling me they didn’t have the tools to clean this stuff up,” said Corbin Van Arsdale, a state lawmaker from Houston, who wrote the law. “It gives them another option other than destroying them.” Under the law, at least half of the sale proceeds go back to local governments; the balance goes to the state.

Virginia counties oppose being used for nighttime Navy plane drills

Figuring out what to do with the machines can be a challenge, said Harris County Sheriff Tommy Thomas: “It’s arduous and manpower intensive.”

Virginia counties oppose being used for nighttime Navy plane drills

Figuring out what to do with the machines can be a challenge, said Harris County Sheriff Tommy Thomas: “It’s arduous and manpower intensive.”

Figuring out what to do with the machines can be a challenge, said Harris County Sheriff Tommy Thomas: “It’s arduous and manpower intensive.”
in auditing, public accounting and public administration, including four years of supervisory experience. Also requires a Texas Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) or an out-of-state CPA or CIA and willingness to achieve Texas CPA license within two years. Compensation: The beginning salary will be highly competitive and is open and negotiable depending on qualifications. Fort Worth provides excellent educational, recreational and cultural opportunities and is a great place to remain open until filled. Please send your resume and cover letter with your current salary immediately to: Robert E. Slavin, President, Slavin Management Company, Bridge Road, Suite A-1, Norcross, GA 30071. Phone: 770/449-5656, fax: 770/416-0884, e-mail slavin@bellsouth.net, www.slavinweb.net. An Equal Opportunity Recruiter/Employer.

**CLASSIFIEDS from page 11**

**CONTROLLER – CITY OF CAPE CORAL**

Salary: Up to $85,862, DOQ.

The City of Cape Coral (pop. 163,000), is located on the southwest coast of Florida, in Lee County, approximately 125 miles south of Tampa. The city is principally a residential, recreational and vacation community. Visit the city's website at www.capegov.org. The Financial Services Department has a position available for an Controller. Responsible for the development and implementation of a comprehensive financial management system for the city to include centralized accounting, financial reporting, budget services, procurement services and program performance evaluation. Bachelor's degree in Finance, Accounting, Administration, or closely related field. CPA or CMA preferred. Must be a minimum of $50,000 minimum/year with a related experience in finance account management, financial statement preparation or related field. Government experience required. Schools experience desirable. Compensation is negotiable, starting salary is negotiable. Salary range is $50,000-$60,000. Applications should be submitted by Sept. 14 to: Tom D. Freijo, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, The Mercer Group, Inc., P.O. Box 9328, Winter Haven, FL 33883. Tel: 863/299-3711. E-mail: t.df@dcreg.com. EOEE. Preference in initial employment shall be given to eligible veterans and spouses of veterans. Applications in Florida become a matter of public record upon receipt. Go to www.mercergroupinc.com for a complete Position Profile.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – YUMA COUNTY, ARIZ.**

Salary: $155,000 +/-, DOQ.

Progressive, high-growth county (pop. 190,000) in the midst of becoming the fastest growing in the country, is seeking a strong administrative leader to coordinate a broad range of services and programs. The administrator is appointed by a five-member County Board of Supervisors. The PAR Centers by districts for four-year concurrent terms. Three Administrators since 1990. Yuma County provides a broad range of mandated and optional services, has 1,140 employees and a $360 million budget. BS/BA in public or business administration or related field required; master's degree a plus. Significantly and progressively responsible experience as a Government Account Executive, Assistant Administrator, or other top management position required. Experience in county government is preferred, but not required. Experience in financial management, economic development and human resource management required. Compensation, leadership, organizational management and team building skills required. Beginning salary $135,000 +/- negotiable, DOQ/E. Please apply at 1201 County Admin Way, Waukegan Rd., Suite 211, Lake Bluff, IL 60044. Phone: 847/234-0005; fax: 847/234-8309; www.pargroupld.com. Apply to: resume@pargroupld.com.

**COUNTY MANAGER – FULTON COUNTY, GA.**

Fulton County, Georgia is seeking a county manager. The county manager supervises the daily operations of all boards of County Commissioners, assuring commissioners in setting policies and programs, recommending agenda items to commissioners, overseeing board decisions and the preparation of management reports. Compensation is negotiable, starting salary is negotiable. Salary range is $71,307 to $76,789. Applications should be submitted by Sept. 14 to: Tom D. Freijo, Ph.D., Senior Vice President, The Mercer Group, Inc., P.O. Box 9328, Winter Haven, FL 33883. Tel: 863/299-3711. E-mail: t.df@dcreg.com. EOEE. Preference in initial employment shall be given to eligible veterans and spouses of veterans. Applications in Florida become a matter of public record upon receipt. Go to www.mercergroupinc.com for a complete Position Profile.

**COUNTY MANAGER – HABERSHAM COUNTY, GA.**

Salary: $100,000 +/-, DOQ.

Habersham County, population 40,000 and growing, located in extreme northern Georgia — heart of the Georgia Mountains — and only two hours north of Atlanta is currently seeking a County Manager position. This position will be a team leader who understands and can balance the complex political and fiscal responsibilities of county government and can demonstrate experience in motivating people to work together successfully to establish and accomplish long-range goals, strategies, plans and policies for the county. This position is appointed by, and will be working directly with, the Board of Commissioners to ensure that county operations, direction and decisions are consistent with the comprehensive county planning and policy initiatives. The County Manager will also supervise the county's administrative offices and senior management, oversee coordination and program performance evaluation. The minimum requirements of the position include the completion of a bachelor's degree, degree in public administration, business management or a closely related field, and three to five years of managerial experience that includes progressively responsible local government management, public administration, financial management, budget administration and public relations. Any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities for this job will be considered. The starting salary is negotiable falling within the range of $71,307 to $76,789 DOQ and includes an excellent benefits package. Complete job description available upon request. Resume and references (with telephone numbers) must be received by the Habersham County Commissioners, Habersham County Administration Building, Attn: Human Resources Director, 555 Monroe St. Unit 20, Clarksville, GA 30033, by 5:00 p.m. on Sept. 14. Telephone number is 706/754-6264. Applications cannot be held confidential. Habersham County is an equal opportunity employer and drug-free workplace.

**EQUITY PROGRAMS DIRECTOR – FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA.**

Salary: $72,181 to $120,219

Fairfax County government seeks an accomplished expert to lead and direct its Equity Program, both directly and through subordinates. The Office of Contract Compliance manages the county's multi-faceted Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity, ADA programs and other related AA/EEO training programs experience in the development and/or implementation of equal employment opportunity/affirmative action programs and projects for a large organization. Preferred: Thorough knowledge of employment law; experience with affirmative action and equal employment opportunity; relevant laws, rules and regulations. Working knowledge of purchasing and public works contractual and experience activities. Ability to analyze and address complex affirmative action issues and represent the county’s interests, and prepare and present complex written and oral reports. Ability to develop and maintain effective working and public relationships with various board members and community groups and property owners.Property and/ or SHIR certification. Apply online at www. fairfaxcountyjobs.org. Please note the Job No (07-2180) for this announcement before you visit our Web site to apply. EEO/Reasonable Accommodation. TTY 703-222-7314.

**HIGHWAY CIVIL ENGINEER – ROBSON FORENSIC, LANCASHER, PA.**

Robson Forensic is a multi-discipline forensic engineering firm practicing throughout the northeastern and central U.S. We seek mature professionals, experienced in the design, construction and maintenance of roadways. You would be part of a comprehensive team that investigates roadway collisions. The team includes vehicle engineers and operators, crash re-constructionists, human factors engineers, biomechanical engineers and well qualified communications professionals. See role would be determined if there are improper roadway conditions that were a cause of a particular incident. You must be degree and registered, with excellent analytical and communication skills. Please e-mail your resume and a cover letter describing your experience and previous exposure to jobs@robsenfro- rensic.com. Ref: CN-082007. Please, no fax, no mail.

**HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT MANAGER III – MONTgomery COUNTY, MD.**

Salary: $60,680 – $110,910, DOQ.

Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Affairs seeks a qualified professional to serve as a Housing Code Enforcement Manager III with responsibility for managing and directing all enforcement activities involving major cases, administering funding and contracts, and presenting hearings. Requires a bachelor’s degree and five years of progressively responsible experience in housing code inspection/ enforcement, investigations, or closely related field (equivalency applies). To view the entire job announcement and to apply online, please visit www.co.montgomery.md.us/jobs@robsonforsen- rensic.com. Ref: CN-082007. Please, no fax, no mail.

**PROPERTY RECORDS AND REVENUE DIRECTOR – RAMSEY COUNTY, MINN.**

Salary: $95,723 – $139,816, DOQ.

Responsibility for property tax assessments including assessments and property records, also elections. Requires MA in public administration, public finance or property management, supervisory responsible top-level management and administration of a department engaged in fiscal or administrative operations. $95,723 to $139,816 annual. Visit: www.co.ramsey.mn.us/hr/jobs/index.htm or call 651/266-2700. Closes Sept. 19. EOE M/F/H.

**NEWS AND COUNTY NEWS ONLINE, please contact Matthew Fellows at 202/945-4256 mfellows@news.com**