

A new capital season: key dates, deadlines to follow

By Austin Igleheart
legislative assistant

A new administration and nearly 60 new members of Congress — including 17 former county officials — are set to take their roles as 2017 debuts the 115th Congress and the Trump administration. Below are some key dates to consider.

Jan. 3: The 115th Congress convened on this day as members came together to certify the election results and elect a new speaker of the House. Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) won easily, garnering the support of all but one Republican and retaining his role as speaker. Shortly after his election, Ryan administered the oath of office

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President Bryan Desloge briefs state association presidents and executives at NACo's new conference center as they prepare to begin a full day of meetings and briefings on Capitol Hill during the National Council of County Association Executives' annual winter meeting in Washington, D.C. Photo by Hugh Clarke

'Brilliant Ideas at Work,' theme for NCGM (April) celebrates innovation

NACo President Bryan Desloge announced that "Brilliant Ideas at Work" will be the theme for this year's National County Government Month (NCGM) celebration in April. The theme provides NACo members with an opportunity to showcase programs and initiatives that help to create healthy, vibrant and safe counties across America.



NACo has unveiled an updated logo for National County Government Month. To download it, visit www.naco.org/NCGM.

"Counties overcome complex challenges, provide essential services to residents, save taxpayers money and constantly do more with less. Yet, our successes don't receive nearly the attention they deserve," Desloge said. "I wanted to find ways to recognize these innovations

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NACo Past President Miller retires after 24 years in office

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

Karen Miller's strength and weakness, in her estimation of her career in government, was her directness. An inability to beat around the bush or play any games. That's how she got into this situation in the first place.

As the owner of The Establishment restaurant and lounge in Columbia, Mo., she played host to a political fundraiser for a friend in January 1992. As the conversation turned to the challengers for an open Boone County Commission seat, she couldn't hold her tongue:

"I can't support them. I can do better than any of them."

One of the assembled people had a quick answer.

"I just happen to have the paperwork out in the car. I'll go get it," he told her.

"It was a spur of the moment decision, I didn't give it a thought," Miller said. "I didn't plan it, but that's what happened. Here we are."

We are at the end of a 24-year career on the County Commission, more than a year after Miller decided against running for a seventh term. That includ-

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Start charting your course at NACo's 2017 Legislative Conference



Below is the full workshop schedule for the upcoming Legislative Conference, Feb. 25-March 1. This year, the NACo Legislative Conference will offer more than 30 workshops that have been organized into six specialized tracks to make it easier to chart your educational path.

The six educational tracks include: Economy, Justice and Health, Advocacy, Finance and Administration, NACo Programs and Leadership

If you're interested in learning more about economic development, NACo has a wonderful lineup that will focus on topics such as working with coun-

ty-based, cross-sector partnerships hosted by the Intersector Project, or developing healthy and inclusive neighborhoods with speakers from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

If you're interested in gaining a better understanding of how federal legislative and policy is-

sues impact counties or upcoming Supreme Court decisions, the advocacy educational track will be your go-to resource. Each time-slot will offer you the option to attend one workshop under the

six educational tracks. Review the conference schedule and chart your educational path, today. Additional details on workshops along with full descriptions and registration information can be found at www.NACo.org/Leg.

	Sunday, Feb. 26	Monday, Feb. 27		Tuesday, Feb. 28		
	1:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	1:45 p.m.-3:00 p.m.	3:15 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	8:00 a.m.-9:15 a.m.	1:00 p.m.-2:15 p.m.
Leadership	Persuasion: A Workshop in Advanced Communication Skills for County Officials	Building Leadership: Creating a Collaborative County Government	NACIO- Crisis Communications (1:45 p.m.-5:00 p.m.) Master Class: Transforming Public Leadership Through Integrity and Civility	Aligning Strategy, Culture and Customer Experience in Government	Newly Elected, Now What? Tips and Tricks to Making the most of NACo Programs and Services	NACo's County Leadership Institute: Gaining a Deeper Perspective
Justice/Health		Reinvesting Justice Dollars to Reduce Mental Illness in Jails	Overcoming Barriers to Integrate and Share Justice and Health Data	Building a Culture of Health through Cross-Sector Collaboration	Addressing Disparities and Inequities in Your County's Justice System	Using Data to Create Effective Health Policies
Economy		Healthy and Inclusive Neighborhood Development: A 'How to' Discussion for Elected Officials	Understanding the Role of Mega-Regions in Economic Development and Transportation	Is Your County Solar Ready? Strategies for Removing Local Barriers to Solar Energy	Getting Started with County-based Cross-sector Partnerships	Economic Shock: Lessons Learned from Coal and Timber Counties
Advocacy		Outlook for Federal Legislative and Policy Issues Impacting Counties	How to Create Stories to Move Lawmakers' Hearts, Minds and VOTES	How to Create a Local Event that will Attract a Member of Congress and Staff	Supreme Court Local Outlook	Understanding and Shaping the Federal Regulatory Process
Finance/ Administration		More than Manners: Counties Advancing Civility at the Local Level Managing Your County Manager: How to Retain Management Talent	Revenue Caps, Mandates and More: Lessons Learned and County Revenue Solutions		Top Things You Wanted to Know About Public Finance but were Afraid to Ask	Investing in County Priorities: Strategies for Effective Property Tax Administration
NACo Programs (FSC/ Membership)			Achieving Health and Wealth: New Solutions for Counties	County Economies 2016 Social Security- The Choice of a Lifetime		Clearing the Way for Big Taxpayer Savings: Considering the Role of Cooperative Purchasing in Procurement

**Hill Events
Tuesday
Afternoon**

Hill Briefing on Counties and the Future of Transportation Technology (tentative)

Former County Official Members of Congress Reception

**Conference
Summits**

Homelessness Special Summit Saturday, 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

Opioid Epidemic Summit (tentative) Sunday 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

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Miller focused on rural-urban county divide, information technology



KAREN MILLER
NACo PAST PRESIDENT

From MILLER page 1

ed nearly 23 years on the NACo Board of Directors and a term in 2003-2004 as NACo president.

A few days after leaving office, she organized files from those two dozen years in her home.

"This is going to take about six months," she said.

First on her agenda in 1993 was a half-cent tax for the county's road system. That was done within six months. Within the year she was an active member of the Missouri Association of Counties and in the next, she was a NACo Board member. Anything else would have been foolish for Miller, who was on the Board of the Missouri Restaurant Association.

"I had great value for association work," she said. "You can get a whole lot more done in a group than you can on your own."

She has had to get an awful lot done before. With an appointment to meet then-First Lady Hillary Clinton at nearby Stephens College less than a year into her time on the commission, she faced a day when her cook at The Establishment didn't show up.

"I could either go cook, take care of customers and employees or schmooze with First Lady," she said. "I cooked, but I went right to the business broker and sold the place."

Her attention now focused solely on the county, she managed all manner of departments, but was most interested in information technology and construction, a field in which she worked before The Establishment.

"I knew enough about it to be dangerous," she said.

Boone County recently opened up its new emergency dispatch center, a blending of those two disciplines that adds up to a \$10 million building filled with \$8 million of technology. A far cry from the county's technological starting point when she was elected.

"We didn't have email, we probably had two computers, and one fax machine for the entire county," she said. "Personal property declarations were alphabetized."

The NACo connections helped her learn a lot about how counties were using technology, and she says what she learned about Geographic Information Systems and its application across many different county functions paid for the county's NACo membership for those 24 years.

While she was running for the County Commission, her late father, Donald Childress lost the Scotland County, Mo. assessor's race by a single vote. Two years later, he won a seat on that

county's commission, and the pair had plenty to talk about.

"I remember at Christmas I told him about residents wanting dust control for the roads," she said. "He laughed at me, his entire county was rural."

Though Boone County is home to the University of Missouri, among other colleges and a strong health care industry, Miller made rural counties a focus of her NACo presidency, particularly the lack of reliable internet and tight budgets.

"My father kept me grounded when I ran for NACo's executive committee, and tried to help rural counties," she said.

Even now, she advocates for a share of internet sales tax to go to the county where the goods are being delivered.

"I know that's not popular everywhere because a lot of places would lose revenue," she said, harkening back to her inability to hold back on her positions. "But we get the benefit of their tax base and their community suffers. If we allow that change, it will allow rural America to have a tax base again. I can't think of anything that would stabilize rural America more."

It would help encourage rural community development, she said, and spur business growth outside of cities.

"Not everybody wants to live in a big city, and they shouldn't have to just because that's where the jobs are."

From her careers in construction and as a restaurant owner, Miller has developed a taste for the details.

"Every time you have a new commission, you figure out your roles, and that was mine. I finish things, I'm a detail-oriented person."

One of her skills she only recently appreciated was her willingness to defer to others for different projects.

"A lot of times, I've given up things I've loved but I felt like it's for the greater good," she said. "If it is a project someone was really excited about, I was comfortable stepping back and letting their passion take over. I

could figure out how to get my input in some other way, but you really have to let people grow into their passion. That way the whole county benefits."

She plans to work on a family genealogy and contribute to the county historical society and maybe, some time down

the line, take the cruise she told *County News* she dreamed of, back in 2012.

"I'll miss watching the county progress (from inside) and making the decisions that make it a better place to live," she said. "I'll stay involved somehow, just not every day." **CN**

NCGM theme echoes initiative

From NCGM page 1

and help NACo members share best practices.

This year's theme aligns with Desloge's 2016-2017 presidential initiative: The Counties Matter Challenge: Brilliant Ideas at Work, a friendly competition to identify and share 100 examples of visionary county leadership that results in improving residents' quality of life.

By applying for NACo's 2017 Achievement Awards, entries will be in the running for the Counties Matter Challenge. The deadline to apply is March 27, and Counties Matter Challenge winners will be announced in May.

"We will build an honor roll that highlights county innovation at its best," Desloge said. "National County Government Month and the Counties Matter Challenge are opportunities not only to raise public awareness of the role counties play in our lives, but also to learn from one another."

Each April since 1991, NACo has encouraged counties to actively promote county services and programs during this annual celebration of county government. **CN**

Stay tuned for NACo's 2017 NCGM toolkit to assist counties with planning and publicity around NCGM. The toolkit will include planning strategies, resources for student and school involvement, a sample proclamation, a sample press release and more. For questions about NCGM, contact Brian Namey at bnamey@naco.org.



SNAP/FACTS

INAUGURAL FIRSTS

FIRST INAUGURATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
1801 – Thomas Jefferson is the first to take the oath of office in the new capital city, Washington, D.C. His inaugural speech is also the first to be reprinted in a newspaper.

FIRST PARADE
1805 – Thomas Jefferson's second inauguration hosted the first inaugural parade.

FIRST INAUGURAL BALL
1809 – James and Dolly Madison attend the first inaugural ball held on the same day as the inauguration. Tickets were \$4 each.

FIRST INAUGURATION IN WARTIME
1813 – Only a few months after declaring war on the British in 1812, James Madison delivers an address criticizing Great Britain. One year later, the Capitol would be set ablaze by the British Army.

'Sanctuary' county: embraced by some, disputed label for others

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

Howard County, Md. is the latest jurisdiction being dragged into the debate about sanctuary cities. Two of the county's five councilmembers introduced a measure to have the county, which lies southwest of Baltimore, declared a "sanctuary county." So to say the county is seeking sanctuary status is premature. The bill won't be voted on until February at the earliest.

All this comes at a time when the illegal immigration debate is roiling and is expected to result in action by President-elect Donald Trump. He has promised to withhold federal funding from sanctuary jurisdictions.

Though the term is widely used, there's no legal definition of sanctuary city, county or state. Organizations such as the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Immigration Studies (CIS) define them as jurisdictions that have a "law, ordinance, policy, practice, or rule that deliberately obstructs immigration enforcement, restricts interaction with federal immigration agencies or shields illegal aliens from detection."

According to CIS, there are about 300 sanctuary cities, counties and states in the

United States. This includes several counties that disagree with their inclusion on the list, among them are Chesterfield County, Va. and Clallum County, Wash.

The Howard County, bill introduced by County Council members Calvin Ball and Jennifer Terressa, calls for "no enforcement" of federal immigration laws and further states that "in the performance of their official duties, an employee shall not engage in the enforcement of the immigration or nationality laws of the United States."

Ball could not be reached for comment, but in a recent television interview, he said, "We have had some issues whether it's anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, issues with race against blacks, Hispanics, and that's not who we are as Howard County. That's not our values."

Since the contentious November presidential election, a number of racist social media postings in the county have raised alarms; one of them threatened violence against African Americans.

"I'm hearing from a lot of constituents who feel unsafe and uncomfortable in our own county, and that's unacceptable to me," he added.

Ball's council colleague, Greg Fox, has said the bill is a "solution in search of a problem." He described Howard County res-

idents as "very pro-immigrant." The issue isn't immigrants, it's illegal immigrants, he told radio public radio host Kojo Nnamdi.

The City and County of San Francisco has what is perhaps one of the earliest sanctuary laws. In 1989, the Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance that bars its government employees from helping Immigration and Customs Enforcement with immigration investigations or arrests unless that help is required by federal or state law or a warrant.

From the counties that dispute being on the CIS list, Chesterfield County Sheriff Karl Leonard said he "takes issue" with being branded a sanctuary by an "independent, arbitrary, nongovernmental organization."

He said his department enjoys a "very close relationship" with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and communicates with the agency "daily," advising them of all the illegal immigrants being held at the county jail.

"This allows ICE sufficient time to secure legal court orders to detain the illegal immigrant before their release date and then ICE officials can address their illegal immigration status," Leonard said. "When these papers have been obtained, the Chesterfield Sher-

iff's Office has always complied and held the illegal immigrants until picked up by members of ICE."

Asked if he was concerned about losing federal funds, Leonard said, "No, since we are not a sanctuary county."

Leonard has contacted CIS about being taken off the list to no avail. Similarly, Clallum County Sheriff Bill Benedict says his requests have been ignored.

"I've talked to that organization," he said, "and I couldn't be more vehement when I disagree with their assertion. We are in no way or shape a sanctuary county."

He believes the designation remains for this reason: "We listen to our own state attorney general's opinion that essentially tells us that unless immigration has an immigration detainer out on someone that includes the little box that says they have probable cause — if that box isn't checked, we're not going to turn them over to immigration."

Johnson County, Iowa is also on CIS's sanctuary list, and Supervisor Dave Carberry is okay with that. Although the county hasn't passed a sanctuary ordinance, Carberry calls the liberal, college town — home to the University of Iowa — a "de facto sanctuary," at least attitudinally. The county created

a "community ID" program in 2015.

It's a local-government-issued photo identification available to residents of Johnson County, regardless of citizenship status.

The ID was established to ensure that "all members of our diverse community are welcomed and can participate fully in the economic and social life of our county." It costs \$8 for adults and is renewable every four years.

Carberry explained that in the wake of the contentious presidential election, the county reasserted its commitment to diversity with a "resolution of commitment to support and protect all residents."

It reads, in part, "We the Johnson County Board of Supervisors, renew our commitment to: Welcome and protect the rights of all people regardless of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, marital status, national origin ..." and affirm "the right of every person to live peacefully and without fear..."

For the county, which was the first in the state to pass a human rights ordinance, Carberry said the resolution "doubled down that Johnson County is a welcoming community to all religions, all races, all creeds, regardless of documentation." **CN**

GET TO
KNOW...

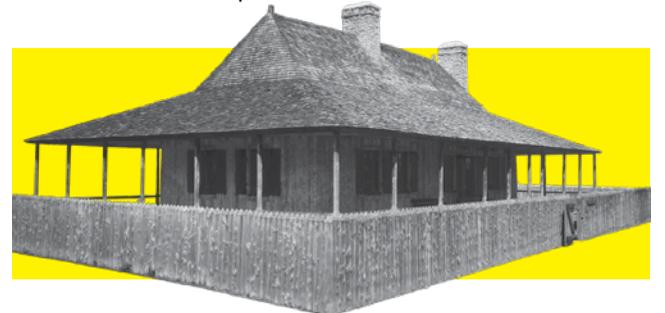
Ste. Genevieve
County, Mo.



Welcome to Ste. Genevieve County, Mo.

Sainte Genevieve County is **one of Missouri's oldest civil jurisdictions**, dating to the Ste. Genevieve District of French colonial days. Its seat, the town of Ste. Genevieve, is Missouri's oldest settlement, having been founded by the early 1750s. Prior to the 1803 Louisiana Purchase, the community was home to people from at least five Native American tribes, France, Spain and Africa under the colonial governments of both France and Spain.

Ste. Genevieve has preserved its French heritage and original colonial settlement. In 2005, it was the **winner of the Preserve America Award for "the first most authentically restored Creole house in the Nation" — the 1785 Louis Bolduc Historic House.**



Action looms on debt ceiling, new budget resolution

From 2017 DATES page 1

to members-elect, officially swearing in the 115th Congress. Over the coming days, he will begin making his committee appointments, which will shape each congressional committee's legislative agenda and have a significant impact on prospective legislation.

Jan. 20: President-elect Donald Trump will be inaugurated on this day, beginning his administration. President-elect Trump is currently working to fill his cabinet, as well as to finalize thousands of other federal appointments in a process that will continue after Inauguration Day. Trump is then required, per the Congressional Budget Act, to submit an annual budget proposal to Congress in early February. However, he has suggested that he may not submit a budget after all. While

many budgets have been submitted late — some by several months — or have been pared down, no administration has failed to submit some form of annual budget plan since the law was enacted in 1974.

March 16: One of the first major legislative tests for congressional leaders will be the expiration of the debt ceiling in mid-March. Though Republicans control both chambers of Congress and the White House, it remains to be seen how or if they will come together as a caucus to agree on a deal. If the GOP agrees to raise the debt ceiling, the debate would turn to what concessions, such as spending cuts, they might demand in exchange from Democrats.

If Congress and Trump are unable to reach an agreement on the debt ceiling, the Treasury Department will likely turn to “extraordinary mea-

asures” to push the deadline into the summer.

April 15: Another major deadline for Congress is the need to pass a budget resolution by mid-April. While budget resolutions do not need to be signed by the president, and therefore do not have the force of law, they typically outline congressional spending priorities for the coming year and provide direction to committees as they work through appropriations legislation.

Congressional leaders have indicated they will pass not one, but two separate budget resolutions in 2017: one early in the year as a vehicle for a repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and another roughly coinciding with the April deadline, which, according to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), will serve as a way for Congress to ad-

dress tax reform.

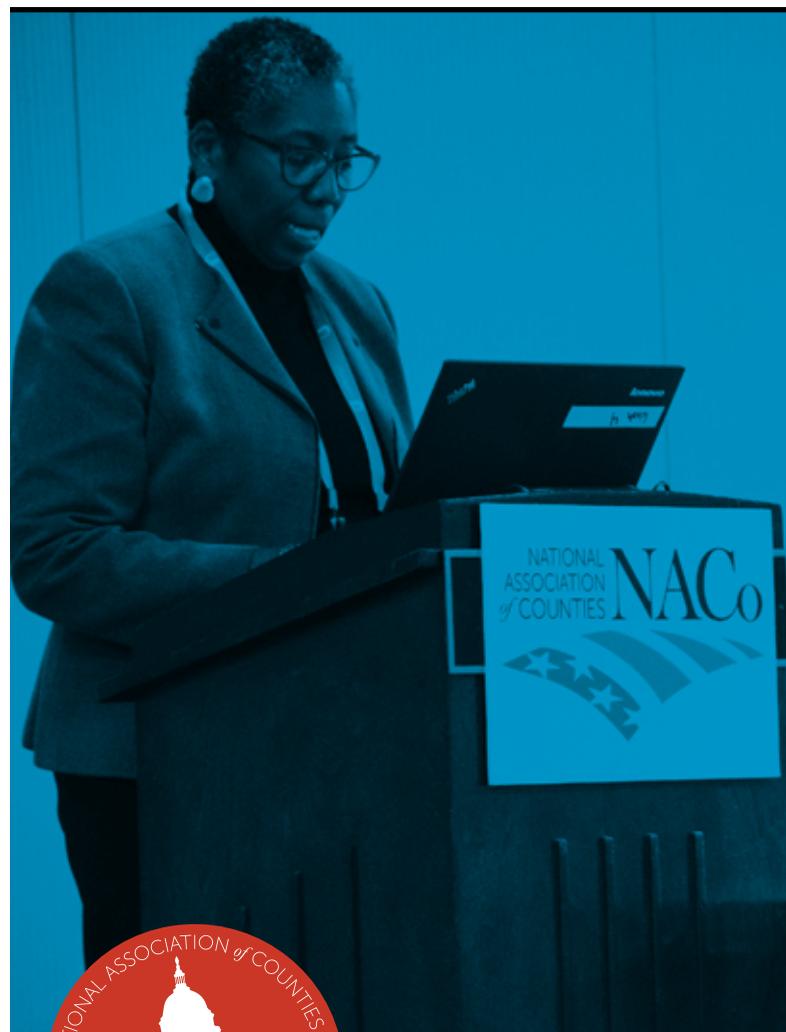
A repeal of the ACA and its coverage provisions could significantly impact counties, which are responsible for providing key health services to their residents, including mental and behavioral health care as well as Medicaid. A tax reform package could also affect counties, especially if lawmakers choose to include language limiting or eliminating the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, a measure NACo strongly opposes.

April 28: Though Congress pushed the battle over full FY17 appropriations into April by passing a Continuing Resolution (CR) on Dec. 9, 2016, lawmakers still must decide how to fund the government for the remainder of the fiscal year. The current CR will expire on April 28, and while the end game is unknown, issues that

are expected to arise include debate over an extension of miners' health benefits that almost forced a government shutdown earlier in December.

Several county priorities may also be hanging in the balance. The Payments in Lieu of Taxes Program has yet to be fully funded in FY17 and the Secure Rural Schools Program has disbursed its last forest payments to counties and schools unless Congress acts to reauthorize the program. Appropriations also must be made for many other programs such as those to address the nation's opioid and mental health crises, promote community economic development and provide key services to families. **CN**

To learn more about NACo's priorities for counties and its election analysis, see this report online at www.countynews.org.



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- Understanding and Shaping the Federal Regulatory Process
- More than Manners: Counties Advancing Civility at the Local Level
- Clearing the Way for Big Taxpayer Savings: Considering the Role of Cooperative Purchasing in Procurement



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California county seeks heritage branding

By **Charles Taylor**
senior staff writer

Quick, name the county where Silicon Valley is located.

Do you know the way to San Jose, Calif.? It's the seat of Santa Clara County, America's tech capital — home of Apple, Facebook and Google, to name a few.

But the county's broader identity often gets overshadowed by the greater San Francisco Bay area, of which it's a part.

Dave Cortese, president of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, is out to change that. He's spearheading an effort to have Congress designate the county as a National Heritage Area (NHA). NHAs are regions where natural, cultural and historic resources combine to form a "nationally distinctive landscape" that tells a story of national importance, according to the National Park Service (NPS) website.

"If you say Silicon Valley, you can make the argument that we're a well identified, well labeled, well defined, well branded area," Cortese said. "On the other hand, where the hell is Silicon Valley?"

"Is that tech or is that really intended to represent what our heritage is really about here?" San Jose was the state's first capital — before Sacramento — and the Santa Clara Valley has a rich agricultural history.

Since 1984, Congress has designated 49 NHAs, and counties have often taken a lead role in creating them. In Ohio, four counties — Cuyahoga, Summit, Stark and Tuscarawas — comprise the Ohio and Erie Canalway NHA, and Park County, Colo. is home to the South Park NHA.

Santa Clara County's proposed NHA would be the first in California or any other West Coast state.

National Heritage Areas contribute \$12.9 billion annually to the national economy, according to NPS — primarily through heritage tourism, economic development and branding. They are not units of the Park Service, but NPS provides them with technical, planning and limited financial assistance.

The Ohio and Erie Canalway NHA has attracted more than \$100 million in private, local, state and federal investment for its main feature, a multi-use recreational trail along the canal's tow path, said Dan Rice, president and CEO of the Ohio and Erie Canalway Association.

Each year, the South Park NHA awards about \$100,000 in sub-grants to local nonprofits, according to Andy Spencer, director of Heritage, Tourism and Community Development for Park County.

"Designation can be a long and arduous task. ... However,

with a strong community, it can be done," he said.

Santa Clara County formed a task force that's been meeting since May — one of whose committees is developing a community engagement plan. Last month, the group conducted three community meetings across the county.

Cortese said the county hopes to have its feasibility study done by this fall, and the county has asked Stanford University, San Jose State and the University of Santa Clara to be "academic partners" in this process.

Obtaining congressional approval of an NHA is hardly a slam dunk.

It took three tries before the Ohio and Erie Canalway area was approved. After unsuccessfully applying in 1992 and 1994, the organizers had a "change in perspective," and their persistence paid off, Rice explained.

"We didn't stop working on the designation, but we just accepted the fact that we are a heritage area, our resources are worthy.

"We weren't going to wait until someone in Washington or Congress blessed us," he said. That continued effort paid off in 1996, when Congress approved the region's NHA.

Santa Clara County is at the beginning of that process with a clear goal in mind.

"People have been talking for years in the county and the city of San Jose about the fact that for a lot of the rest of the country, there's no 'there' there," Cortese said. "We do think a National Heritage Areas will help change that to some extent.

"It will build an even greater sense of community here, and it would certainly be useful in terms of visitors and convention bureau-type branding." **CN**



INAUGURATION RECEPTION

Join the National Association of Counties for an Inauguration reception on Jan. 19 from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Go to www.naco.org/inauguration to RSVP.

On Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, stop by between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to warm up at NACo and the National League of Cities' new headquarters at 660 North Capitol St. NW, Washington, D.C.



Welcome Newly Elected Officials



By Bryan Desloge
NACo President

2017 brings new faces to all levels of government, and thousands of leaders will begin new roles in county government. To those leaving county government, thank you for your service. To those beginning or continuing county service, we look forward to your participation in NACo in the coming year.

For many of you, this may be your first time holding public office. Eleven years ago, I was in the same position when I was first elected to the Leon County, Fla. Board of Commissioners.

In my early days as a commissioner, just as my state association proved to be invaluable, I quickly learned that the National Association of Counties (NACo) was also tremendously helpful. Through unique services, resources and programs, NACo empowered me to be a more effective county leader, and I know NACo will equip you to better serve your county. Here's a quick snapshot of what we're doing to keep counties healthy, vibrant and safe.

Federal Advocacy

Washington, D.C. may seem distant and unrelated to your day-to-day responsibilities, but decisions made by the White House, Congress and federal courts often have major, cascading impacts on our ability to lead our communities and pursue a better future. Federal legislation, regulations

and unfunded mandates can significantly affect county budgets and our residents' lives.

NACo adeptly represents our nation's 3,069 counties in our intergovernmental system and offers resources to keep county officials informed and engaged on issues important to our residents. *County News*, your print and online newspaper, connects you to counties across the nation. Policy briefs, reports and other resources can be found at www.NACo.org/advocacy.

NACo also gives its members the opportunity to be directly involved in the federal policy process. More than 1,300 members serve on NACo committees, boards and caucuses that address a wide variety of issues.

Through our 10 policy steering committees, members set NACo's agenda and legislative priorities. In 2016, our members testified before Congress on key legislative and regulatory issues facing counties and represented counties on over 50 federal task forces and advisory groups.

NACo is truly elevating county voices in Washington, D.C., and I encourage you to get involved by joining a policy committee.

Resources

For many county leaders, serving on the county board is a part-time job with full-time responsibilities. That's why NACo provides easily accessible, online resources that will save you time and energy.

NACo's award-winning County Explorer gives you access to county-specific data right at your fingertips. This interactive online tool, with more than 900 data sets, grows every month with new research and updates. It also provides county-specific profiles for issues such as endangered species and transportation, and state-specific profiles for issues like tax-exempt municipal bonds.

We maintain a grants clearinghouse with hundreds of federal grant opportunities for counties. This online, one-stop shop enables NACo members to search for grants by category, eligibility, funder type and state.

Lastly, you'll be making difficult decisions every day, and NACo understands how important it is to have accurate information readily available. NACo offers a large collection of research publications, reports and webinars online for free. NACo is here to help you and your county thrive.

Cost-Saving Solutions

Budget constraints are an issue in every county, and NACo provides programs designed to save your county and residents money. Here are some examples:

- U.S. Communities Cooperative Purchasing Alliance — Leveraging the purchasing power of more than 70,000 public sector entities.
- Nationwide Deferred Compensation and other employee benefits — Helping more than 1.5 million county employees and retirees save more than \$15 billion extra for retirement.
- Live Healthy U.S. Counties — NACo member counties have achieved \$650 million in savings on prescription drug, health and dental services for county residents.

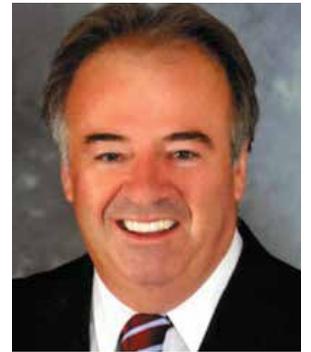
I encourage you to leverage your NACo membership to benefit your communities and residents.

I also hope you'll join us for NACo's Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Feb. 25-March 1. With a new administration and new Congress, there are countless new opportunities for counties to advance our policy priorities at the federal level. Together, we can build stronger counties and a stronger America. **CN**

PROFILES IN SERVICE

DANIEL P. TROY

Board Member
Commissioner
Lake County, Ohio



Number of years active in NACo: 13

Years in Public Service: 42 — nine years as a city councilman and council president; 14 years in the Ohio House of Representatives; 19 years as county commissioner

Occupation: County commissioner and part-time community college faculty

Education: B.A. in political science, The University of Dayton

The hardest thing I've ever done: Quit smoking

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Jackie Gleason, Casey Stengel and Andy Rooney

A dream I have is to: Be a congressman or a Major League second baseman.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Was first elected to public office in 1971.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Hitchhike to and from college for four years, and often visit friends in other states during the summer via the same mode.

I'm most proud of: My ability to compose the written word and to do so in a grammatically correct fashion.

Every morning I read: Two local newspapers.

My favorite meal is: Corned beef and cabbage.

My pet peeve is: Traffic lights that impede rather than improve traffic flow.

My motto is: Don't tell people what they WANT to hear; tell them what they NEED to hear.

The last book I read was: *Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns Goodwin.

My favorite movie is: *The Graduate*.

My favorite music is: Late '50s, early '60s "doo-wop" oldies.

My favorite U.S. president is: John F. Kennedy.

My county is a NACo member because: Much of what we do at the county level is the front-line administration and delivery of state and federal programs. It is imperative that we have a strong association like NACo to make sure the federal government realizes that fact and improves our ability to perform those functions.

My favorite way to relax is to: Watch historical programs or my Cleveland Indians on TV.



BRIGHT IDEAS | SMITH COUNTY, TEXAS

HOPE Academy Teaches Juvenile Felons Responsibility, Job Skills

PROBLEM: It was expensive to send juvenile felons to other counties for detention, rehabilitation and treatment. Remote programs also made it difficult to involve parents.

SOLUTION: An in-county residential program, closer to parents, that stresses family counseling, vocational education and aftercare.

By **Charles Taylor**
senior staff writer

In many places, a boy charged with a felony would wind up in juvenile detention. But Smith County, Texas has a different option — its Juvenile Attention Center.

That's where you'll find the HOPE Academy — and other juvenile justice services — a residential program whose goal is to provide male juvenile offenders with a "safe, secure, nurturing" environment for rehabilitation — one that's close to home. The acronym stands for Helping Others Pursue Excellence.

HOPE Academy began in 2015 as an alternative to sending juvenile felons to residential fa-

cilities in other counties, sometimes hours away. That could be costly and made it tough to involve parents and counselors in a youth's rehabilitation. The program is a referral option for county juvenile judges for all but juvenile sex offenders.

Before the HOPE Academy, it could cost the county up to \$500,000 per year to house 15 juveniles in a secure residential setting outside the county, according to Ross Worley, director of Smith County Juvenile Services.

"We were spending gobs and gobs of money," he said. "To have those kids here is not just good for them being local, but it's good for us financially. We save every year over \$200,000 just keeping kids at home."

Worley said residential treatment for juvenile girls is contracted out to facilities that deal only with female offenders. "Our policies don't allow male staff to supervise female offenders, so the cost of running separate placement facilities and the extra staff that would be required would be too much of a financial burden on our budget." Only about 20 percent of juveniles referred by the court are girls, he said.

The program's objectives include providing mental health



A 'pod' at HOPE Academy is a hub for learning and group activities. Photo courtesy of Smith County, Texas

assessments and services to the youths and their families; assessing program residents' educational aptitudes; tutoring and training; and instruction in vocational trades. Worley sees the shop classes as a key component of the program.

"A lot of these kids aren't going to be college material," he said, "and so getting them the opportunity to learn a vocation in either auto mechanics, building trades or metal fabrication is a big thing."

He relayed the experience of a boy, unidentified because of his age, who was able to enter a junior college vocational program

after the HOPE Academy.

"Those are good stories when we see kids who we never think would darken the door of a college end up across town doing what they were doing here," he said. "Our hope to build that bridge between us and a local junior college that has an excellent vocational program."

All of the boys were able to raise their math and reading scores to age-and-grade-appropriate levels. And each youth completed the vocational instruction component, county officials said.

One dramatic success story involved a boy with dyslexia.

Instructors from Success Learning Center, which specializes in dyslexia correction, helped him go from failing grades to "straight As." "He's well above everybody else and just turned out to be a totally different kid now," Worley said.

To date, the program has had a completion rate of about 85 percent, he added. Of the first eight HOPE Academy participants, seven juvenile offenders successfully finished the then-seven-month program in 2015.

Graduates who complete the program are released to

See HOPE page 9

ON THE MOVE

NACo STAFF

● **Lindsey Maggard** is NACo's new public affairs coordinator. Maggard will provide professional support and administrative assistance to the department. Before joining NACo, she served as the state party program coordinator for the Democratic National Committee and also worked with the Senate Select Com-

mittee on Ethics as special assistant for financial disclosure. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Kentucky.

● **Spencer Bridgers** has joined NACo's Financial Services Center (FSC) as its new



Maggard



Bridgers



Hurley

operations specialist. She will provide technical and administrative support for all NACo

FSC programs. Previously, Bridgers was a communications assistant and project consultant for the U.S. Council for International Business and Global Apprenticeships Network. She holds a bachelor's degree in American

history from the University of North Carolina and a master's degree in international affairs from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland.

● **Eryn Hurley** in the Legislative Affairs Department has been promoted to legislative associate. She will support the associate legislative directors.

Offenders get a shot at success

From HOPE page 8

their families on probation and placed in juvenile services' Rebound Aftercare Program. At that point, a probation officer and a licensed professional counselor continue to work with the child and his family on a successful transition back to home, school and community.

No county funds were used to establish the program, Worley said; grant funding was used to build and equip a vocational education facility. "If it weren't for some of the grant money, this would have never happened," Worley said.

Existing space was reconfigured for the residential facility. The county incurred no ongoing costs by reassigning staff, rewrit-

ing and redistributing budget line items, and reorganizing unused space at Smith County Juvenile Services. "We really had to reinvent ourselves," he said. "We reassigned people from regular probation officers to residential probation officers — from working on the street to working in a facility. We've reassigned supervisory staff; we've reassigned regular detention officers.

"It takes a staff that has vision; you need leadership to do that," he continued. "If juvenile court wasn't supportive it would be a nightmare. This just doesn't happen overnight; it begins with a vision and ends with persistence."

Bright Ideas features noteworthy and award-winning county programs.

MONEYMATTERS

Saving Money — the U.S. Communities Way

U.S. Communities is a cooperative purchasing alliance that has provided goods and services to NACo's members for 20 years. The process is simple. Essentially, one county goes out to bid for a product such as specialty vehicles, computer software or auto parts. Once the bid is awarded, every other county can access the same savings that the lead county negotiated, saving them the time and money of duplicating the bid.

When counties stand together, they can obtain better pricing and save taxpayer money. A county needs to register to use U.S. Communities, but registration is free and fast. Currently, there are over 60,000 registered government agencies, education institutions and nonprofits using the program to save.

What Products and Services Are Available?

U.S. Communities works with approximately 40 suppliers that provide access to a wide variety of offerings. Counties can purchase items for HVAC systems (Trane), carpet and flooring (Home Depot and HD Supply), and roofing products (Garland/DBS), for example. U.S. Communities also offers services along with goods, including energy management and consulting (Graybar), temporary staffing solutions (Acro and Kronos) and public sector consulting (Alvarez & Marsal).

In 2016, U.S. Communities focused on innovation and technology. Counties can now purchase electronic balloting services with DemocracyLive, translation services with Language Select and technology hardware, software and services from big names such as Google, Amazon Web Services, Microsoft and Apple.

U.S. Communities is different from any other cooperative purchasing agency because it uses lead public agencies to competitively bid products and services in a process that promotes transparency, competition and integrity.

The lead public agency model creates a win-win cost-saving opportunity for counties nationwide.

What Is a Lead Public Agency?

The lead public agency model uses the strength of a selected county, along with the collective power of all of the counties in the nation, to secure money-saving contracts that can be used by every county in the nation. When a need is identified, U.S. Communities designates a lead public agency to bid for a product to address that need. The competitive bidding process on behalf of all counties saves time and money for every county and promotes a carefully structured, legal, transparent process.

The lead public agency implements the competitive solicitation process, including the release of an RFP, evalua-

tion of received proposals, selection of a supplier and award of contract.

Maricopa County, Ariz., for example, has served as the lead public agency on several of U.S. Communities' most successful contracts. It is currently managing three ongoing solicitations as a lead public agency for the program and also piggybacks off other contracts.

"Maricopa County regularly uses contracts available through U.S. Communities because the procurement processes of the lead agencies meet or exceed our standards. The program provides great value, and it also reduces our administrative burden," said James Foley, deputy chief procurement officer with the county.

Fairfax County, Va. has also served as a lead public agency for U.S. Communities. It executed the solicitation process for one of U.S. Communities' newest suppliers, Experian, which provides public sector data, analytics and fraud-protection services. Prince William County, Va. and Miami-Dade County, Fla. are also in the midst of collecting proposals for online marketplace purchasing, and waste and recycling carts.

The lead public agency model ensures that participating counties receive the highest quality products and services at the lowest possible prices. As a founding and national sponsor of the program, NACo stands behind U.S. Communities as a transparent, innovative program that helps counties save money. 

WORD SEARCH

PULASKI COUNTY, Ark.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS FEATURED COUNTY IN 'BEHIND THE SEAL?'

Created By: Charles Taylor

B T L T U Y M U F E I V N H H E V O I C
 D H J O F K X P N R N M S Y R G O K H C
 X A P C O B E P A X F D G C Q E S T X T
 E E J I X H R E V I R S A S N A K R A U
 R G G Q G N C C M A U M E L L E C U L G
 U A V P V A H S L A J B M U O M U O M D
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 W I B I G D A M B R I D G E K Y O U T K
 O V K A Z N E L X M S H S E V C S R F N
 N K J I E U Z H I D K P L S R E R O V Y
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 M O R W U O H T I M S R E D N A L I H P
 C M B L I T T L E R O C K Z U L P I G X
 U D W F S E C F Y T S G K V E A U P H R

- ARKANSAS RIVER** (Runs through county)
- BIG DAM BRIDGE** (Bicycle and pedestrian bridge spanning Arkansas River)
- CAMMACK VILLAGE** (Small city in the county, pop. @ 800)
- CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL** (Historic focus of school desegregation)
- COUNT CASIMIR PULASKI** (County's namesake, Polish Revolutionary War hero)
- DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE** (Local newspaper)
- DILLARDS** (Department store chain based here)
- LITTLE ROCK** (County seat and state capital)
- LONOKE** (Eastern bordering county)
- MAUMELLE** (City, pop. 17,000)
- MONTEREY BANDSTAND** (historic bandstand, built in 1912, on National Register)
- PHILANDER SMITH** (Historically black college)
- QUORUM COURT** (County's governing body)
- SALINE** (County to the west)
- TOLTEC MOUNDS** (Archeological site straddling border with Lonoke County)



U.S. COMMUNITIES
GOVERNMENT PURCHASING ALLIANCE







For more information, contact Sharon Russell, srussell@naco.org or Kelly Boggs, kboggs@naco.org.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

ALABAMA

● The **ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONS OF ALABAMA (ACCA)** has endorsed a 3-cent-per-gallon **motor fuels tax increase** to fund a \$1.2 billion bond issue for local road and bridge projects. If approved by the state Legislature, it would take effect July 1.

Under the plan, bond revenue would be divided among counties using the existing gas tax formula, which is based partly on population. Every county would get a minimum of \$10 million, according to drivealabama.org. Twenty percent of the money would be spent within local jurisdictions.

Bonds would be issued by a “cooperative district,” comprising each of the 67 county commissions. ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield said, “We just feel like the only way to push this forward is for county leaders to advocate for a specific plan.”



● A bill to create a **JEFFERSON COUNTY Cemetery Board** will be in the legislative hopper when the 2017 Alabama Legislative session begins next month.

It would regulate privately owned cemeteries, *The Birmingham News* reported.

The bill’s sponsors say the board would receive complaints from residents and cemetery plot owners about cemetery upkeep.

The board, independent of the County Commission, would levy **finances on cemetery operators** or declare a graveyard as a public nuisance, if necessary.

The Cemetery Board would have five unpaid members, selected by the county’s legislative delegation.

CALIFORNIA

● A **MONTEREY COUNTY** judge has delayed implementation of Measure Z, which would **limit oil-drilling operations** in the county. The time-out will remain in effect while two oil-industry lawsuits challenging the measure are resolved in the courts.

“The oil industry wanted (a restriction)

from implementing Measure Z, County Counsel Charles McKee told the *Mercury News*, and fighting that could have taken significant resources and taken away from real issues as to whether (the measure) is valid.”

● In the state’s Inland Empire counties, it can take over an hour for a patient to be transferred from an ambulance into hospital care. **SAN BERNARDINO** and **RIVERSIDE counties**, which are in the region, also suffer from a shortage of physicians.

Last month, the counties implemented a policy that will allow ambulances to **drop off patients sooner**. An ambulance shortage during an offload delay would allow paramedics to drop off certain patients in a waiting room rather than waiting for hospital staff to see the patients.

From 2013 to 2015, about 35 percent of ambulance transports were delayed in San Bernardino County; 22 percent in Riverside County, according to county officials.

GEORGIA

More than a dozen counties filed lawsuits Jan. 4 against more than 50 telephone companies for allegedly failing to properly bill, collect, report and remit 911 charges, according to law firms representing the counties. Those fees fund local 911 operations.

The counties are: **CLAY, CRISP, DEKALB, DOOLY, FULTON, MACON-BIBB, MARION, MUSCOGEE, QUITMAN, RANDOLPH, TALBOT, TAYLOR, SCHLEY, STEWART, SUMTER** and **WEBSTER. COBB** and **GWINNETT counties** filed similar suits in December.

Former Georgia governor Roy Barnes is among the lawyers representing Cobb and Gwinnett. He said 37 suits have now been filed to recover more than \$100 million for 21 different local governments.

Plaintiffs contend that the alleged underbilling practices mostly affect Georgia businesses in order to gain a competitive advantage.

ILLINOIS

ALEXANDER COUNTY is still recovering from flooding that occurred over a year ago. In January 2016, Mississippi River floodwaters left a three-quarter-mile **hole in a levee** in the county — destroying homes, businesses and farms in its path.

“I thought that we would’ve had it back by now,” County Board Chairman Chalen Tatum told KVFS News, “because other counties up and down the river have had theirs already put back with the [Army Corps of Engineers] but we’re on our own.”

The county recently learned it didn’t qualify for a \$1 million grant it applied for through the Delta Regional Commission and has run out of options for outside help, Tatum said.

“We got shot down twice, three times,” he said. “We’re back doing it ourselves, so we got a lot of good farmers that’s going to pitch in (and) said they would help rebuild it.”

MINNESOTA

County officials want to delay implementation of a law designed to keep **polluted storm water** out of the state’s lakes and streams.

A 50-foot buffer of permanent vegetation would be required to filter runoff — mostly soil, fertilizer and chemicals from farm fields — before it flows into rivers and lakes, according to Minnesota Public Radio.

“I’m not suggesting that this should go away because I think this is part of the solution,” said **ROSEAU COUNTY** Commissioner Jack Swanson, “but I think we need to understand better what it is that needs to be done instead of rushing to put it in place.”

Last year, the state Legislature authorized \$10 million to help counties cover the costs, but Gov. Mark Dayton (D) vetoed the bill, leaving the program unfunded.

“What I’m hearing from counties, especially in the north, is if the money’s not there, the county has no interest in taking on that enforcement role,” Swanson said.

NEW JERSEY

The New Jersey Council on Local Mandates rejected a request by the **NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES** to postpone implementation of a **bail reform law** that was scheduled to take effect Jan. 1.

The association will continue to challenge the endeavor, claiming it represents an unfunded state mandate, projecting costs at \$45 million to \$50 million to implement.

The law will require counties to hire new assistant prosecutors, investigators, sheriff officers and correction officers, make capital improvements to court facilities and county jails, and purchase new information technology.

NEW YORK

Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) has vetoed a bill that would have shifted the cost of **indigent defense services** to the state over seven years. The state currently contributes 10 percent of the 2010 costs and would have shouldered 25 percent of the costs starting April 1, *The Times Union* reported. Cuomo said the bill would cost more than \$800 million annually.

He wrote in his veto message that the bill would force the state to pay for defense beyond that of indigent defendants.

OHIO

CUYAHOGA COUNTY is inventorying solid-waste disposal sites as possible **solar farms**.

The electricity generated by solar farms would be used to power county-owned buildings. As part of a power purchase agreement, the county will also buy some of the electricity that will be generated by an offshore wind farm planned for Lake Erie, *The Plain Dealer* reported.

PENNSYLVANIA

The **ALLEGHENY COUNTY** Board of Health will consider requiring **mandatory lead testing** for children at 9, 12 and 24 months of age, the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* reported. Lead testing is currently recommended at 12 and 24 months.



● There's a fence going up in South Texas and it's not on the Mexican border. WILLACY COUNTY is hoping a chain-link fence will force ocelots to an underpass and keep the endangered cats out of traffic. There are only 80 in Texas, and seven had been killed by vehicles in an 11-month period ending April 2016, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.



In November 2016, the department began opening investigations when children's blood tests showed at least 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter, previously the threshold for investigations was 15 micrograms per deciliter or more. The department also recently hired a new lead inspector and plans to train housing inspectors in lead inspection.

TEXAS

● The HARRIS COUNTY Flood Control District will install rain gauges in surrounding counties to trace the path of floodwaters from WALLER, MONTGOMERY and GRIMES counties.

The data would allow county officials and emergency responders to better tailor warnings, provide estimates of how long people might be trapped in their homes and decide where

to place high-water vehicles or boats, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

UTAH

SALT LAKE COUNTY has launched two new "Pay for Success" social impact bond programs, aimed at approaches to finding housing for the homeless and keeping men with drug or mental-health problems from recycling in and out of jail.

The Pay for Success approach pays nonprofit service providers only after they have reached their goals, which are funded in the meantime by private investors and philanthropies. These projects budget \$11.5 million to house 315 persistently homeless people and keep another 135 men out of jail on drug charges.

The county hopes the cost savings will cover the \$11.5 million, the *Salt*

Lake Tribune reported.

WEST VIRGINIA

● MCDOWELL COUNTY, which has the highest drug overdose death rate in the county and the second-highest fatal prescription drug overdose rate, has sued Cardinal Health, McKesson Corp. and AmerisourceBergen, saying the drug companies shipped an excessive number of opioid painkillers to the county and fueled the drug epidemic there.

The County Board also sued a doctor who had been disciplined by the state Board of Medicine for his prescribing of controlled substances.

An investigation by *The Gazette-Mail* showed that drug wholesalers shipped a disproportionate number of highly addictive painkillers to southern West Virginia. McDowell County, which has 28,000 people, was shipped 9 million hydrocodone pills over six years, and another 3.2 million oxycodone (OxyContin) tablets, according to DEA records obtained by the newspaper.

● Repeated false alarms from home security systems could draw fines in PUTNAM



COUNTY.

A new ordinance will fine homeowners and businesses that officers respond to for false alarms more than three times in a 12-month window. The first two false alarms are free, but after the third call there is a \$50 fine. A fourth costs \$100, five will cost you \$200 and six and more will cost \$300, according to WSAZ News.

In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, Putnam County officials recorded 704 false alarms. **CN**

News From Across the Nation is compiled by Charles Taylor and Charlie Ban, senior staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please email ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.



PULASKI COUNTY, Ark.

Introduced: 2016
Designed by: Advertising agency Eric, Rob & Isaac

The Pulaski County seal design illustrates the diverse county landmarks and infrastructure in its the bridges, roads and mountains. The county's downtown area has six bridges that cross the Arkansas River connecting the cities of Little Rock — the state capital — and North Little Rock.

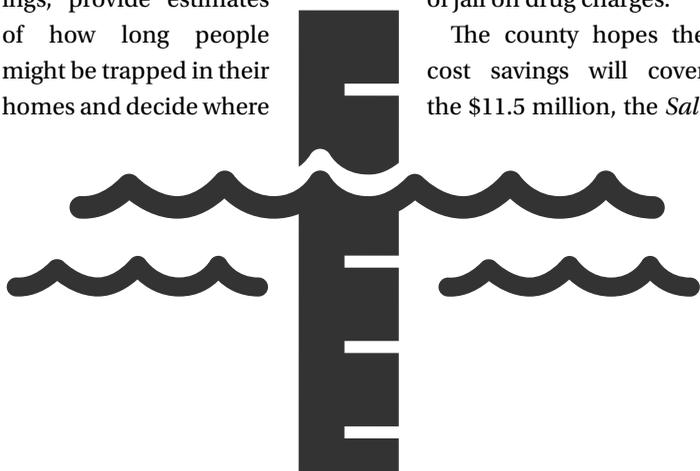
Pulaski County was established on Dec. 15, 1818, and was one of five counties organized when Arkansas was part of the Missouri Territory. It was named for Count Casimir Pulaski, a Polish soldier credited with saving George Washington's life during the Revolutionary War. The landscape of the county is rugged in its western and northern regions, and rolling hills in the southern tip with the Arkansas River Valley delta in the east. Pulaski County is the most populous county in the state. Little Rock is the county seat.



The mountain represents Pinnacle Mountain that overlooks the Arkansas River Valley and stands in the background of the bridges.

Pulaski County Communication Director Cozetta Jones assisted with this report.

Would you like to see your county's seal featured? Contact Charlie Ban at cban@naco.org.



the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkler

These Boots are Made for... Standing

From Coconino County, Ariz., HR gurus and contributors, Erika Philpot, human resources director and Rose Winkler, deputy county attorney, address common and critical HR questions from their 'boots on the ground' perspective, while HR Doctor Phil Rosenberg continues his unique vision of the HR practice.

Sitting is the new smoking." Many employees have heard this phrase or read related articles in health magazines and are trying to be proactive with their wellness. To promote health, get up and move around. As a result, requests for standing desks pour in to your office. Is it something you should purchase? Do you have the budget to purchase the desks? Will the desks even be used or is this just a passing fad?

Standing desks can assist employees to stand up more frequently and to be aware of their wellness, but they have drawbacks too. If you are dealing with this issue, here are some things to consider.

First, it is important to remember that some employees may have a need for an alternative workstation, as documented in a doctor's note. In these cases, you should work with Human Resources to engage your ADA process, which will include ADA forms and an interactive process to determine whether a standing desk is a reasonable accommodation. Once a standing desk has entered the department, several new requests will arrive. You can't respond with, "But Sue's standing desk was due to an ADA accommodation." So do you just buy one for everyone and consider it a good retention and morale strategy?

Standing desks are not a solution for every employee. There

are pros and cons to every workstation. Employees who stand all day will tell you standing has its own drawbacks. Employees with back, knee or foot pain may not be able to stand for prolonged periods of time. According to Cornell University's Ergonomics Web, CUERgo Web, standing requires 20 percent more energy than sitting and is less effective for performing fine motor tasks like driving, computer work or creating detailed drawings. Employees with standing desks also need tall chairs, which again can be difficult for some employees. Where is the happy medium?

Some new standing desk models have the ability to be adjusted up and down. This allows employees to stand for periods of time and sit when necessary. This type of desk means there is no need to purchase another chair. However, the work surface may not be as wide as some employees need to accomplish their daily tasks. Also, raising and lowering the surface may be difficult for employees with arm, shoulder, elbow and back restrictions, or for employees who are below a certain height.

One possible solution is to have a trial standing desk, where employees use the desk for a month and see how much they choose to stand, if they can manipulate the desk and whether they like the workstation on a day-to-day basis. Employers who offer a trial desk often have a process to request the trial, and may have employees with ADA requests also try the sample before purchasing. Beware, however, that some employees might believe they were promised a standing desk if they try it and like it. If they try the desk in August and see another employee who tried the standing desk in September get a standing desk be-



Photo By Hugh Clarke

fore them (perhaps it is an ADA situation) morale might suffer. Communicating clear expectations and budget constraints is important.

Another possible complication of standing desk introductions is the need for other equipment. In addition to the desk itself, the employee might now need a longer monitor cord, a wireless mouse and keyboard, a longer phone cord, and different floor mat on which to stand. Beware of these budget implications. The desks might also impose additional burdens on facilities and information technology departments. Your risk manager may have an ergonomic assessment consultant you can

speak with to ensure ergonomics for complicated cases.

There is no one-size-fits all answer when it comes to standing desks. In all cases, be aware of "want" versus "medical need," or ADA request versus wellness request.

Is standing the answer? Cornell University suggests that a combination of sitting and standing is ideal and recommends sitting for computer work. Perhaps part of the solution might be as easy as getting up every 30 minutes to walk to the copier, get a file out of a filing cabinet, walk to a meeting or walk over to collaborate with a colleague. Encourage employees to take a minute to stretch and to adjust the dis-

tance of their vision focal point. This solution is free, after all.

Standing desks are a tool that may be used in several situations, but it is important to keep the end goal in mind — we want to create a workplace that is safe, reduces the frequency of workplace injuries, and allows employees to be their most productive and effective for the good of customers.

Share with us — Send us feedback on a your experience with standing desks. We would love to hear about lessons learned and successes. Shared ideas may be included in a future edition with your name and contact information to allow for reader networking. **CN**