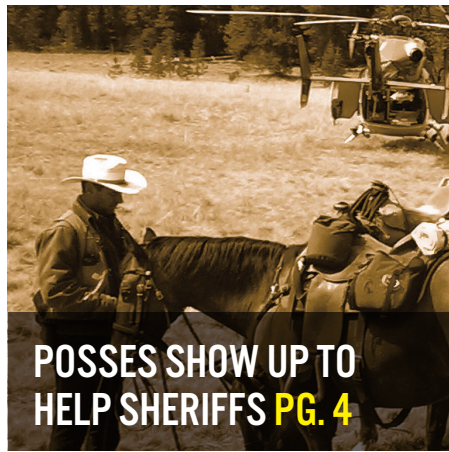
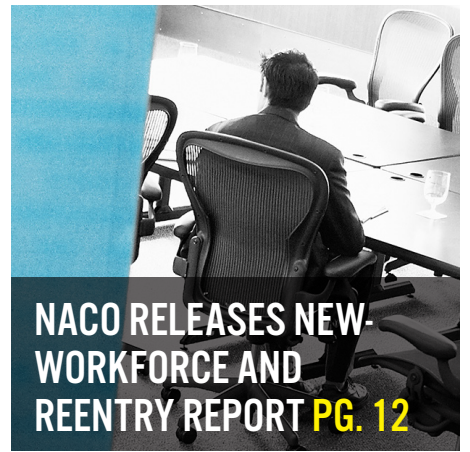


NACO PAST PRESIDENT ROY ORR DIES AT 87 PG. 3



POSSES SHOW UP TO HELP SHERIFFS PG. 4



NACO RELEASES NEW-WORKFORCE AND REENTRY REPORT PG. 12



PEST PATROL

Zika virus puts county mosquito control programs in spotlight

A Chatham County, Ga. mosquito control technician prepares for a flight to apply pesticide to manage the local mosquito population. Photo courtesy of Chatham County Mosquito Control

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

For county mosquito control professionals, the fog of war can have a faint chemical

smell.

The work these warriors do — year round in some climates — has been in the spotlight since the arrival of the Zika virus infections in the United States.

Travel-related cases have been recorded in Los Angeles County, Calif., Lee County, Fla. and Harris County, Texas, among others. Florida Gov. Rick Scott

declared a health emergency in Miami-Dade, Lee, Hillsborough and Santa Rosa counties, Feb. 3.

The virus is spread to people through mosquito bites, but Dallas County, Texas recently confirmed the first case in the United States that was sexually transmitted between intimate partners, one of whom was infected.

“This is a game-changer,” according to Zachary Thomp-

son, director of Dallas County Health and Human Services. “Now we (also) have to talk about safe sex practices...”

The arrival of the Zika virus comes at a time when some mosquito control programs have folded, according to Jeff Heuser, director of mosquito control for Chatham County, Ga., where the American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA) happens to be holding its annual conference in Savannah, Feb. 7-11. Zika virus won’t dominate the agenda, but at least two sessions will focus attention on the issue.

Farther south, the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District has a “very aggressive” program in place to control aedes aegypti, the type of mosquitoes that transmit Zika vi-

See **PEST** page 2

Leg conference features top-notch speakers

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

Unlike Las Vegas, what happens in Washington doesn’t stay in Washington. It has ramifications across the nation’s 3,069 counties.

Delegates to NACO’s 2016 Legislative Conference Feb. 20-24 in Washington, D.C. will have opportunities to hear from — and speak to — nationally recognized thought leaders who shape the policies that redound to the benefit or peril of counties.

“Counties and our residents feel the effects of countless decisions made in Washington,” said NACO

President Sallie Clark. “We are here to work with our federal partners because their actions profoundly impact Americans on the ground, where we live and work.”

More than 1,600 delegates are expected to attend the conference, which will feature prominent speakers from Congress and the Obama Administration.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) will address delegates during the conference’s closing session on Feb. 23. HUD Secretary Julian Castro will be the featured speaker at the Large

See **CONFERENCE** page 10

Mosquito control operations must obtain pollution discharge permits from EPA

From PEST page 1

rus, said Beth Ranson, public education and information officer. The agency is special taxing district that serves all of Monroe County — from the Everglades on the mainland to Key West — with a budget of about \$10 million annually.

She said their vector control program “never really came off high alert” after an outbreak of dengue in 2009 and 2010. “What we do day-to-day, operationally, is more than what most districts or counties do,” she said. “We have boots on the ground that go door-to-

door inspections of property, and we try to get to every property at least once a month.”

Nationwide, there are about 720 named mosquito control districts, according to Joe Conlon, the ACMA’s technical expert, and they spent about \$235 million in 1999, the last year for which reliable data are available.

Adding to those costs, he said, are federal regulations. In 2009, in *National Cotton Council of America, et al. v. U.S. EPA*, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overruled the EPA and held that the Clean Water Act requires discharge permits for the application of pesticides for mosquito control “in, above or near” a “water of the United States.”

Conlon contends that the time spent on filing reports could be better used fighting mosquitoes. “We’re generating enormous amounts of data and whatnot that are sitting on someone’s desk in Washington,” he said, “but it’s taking us time and resources to compile all of this stuff.”

That hasn’t been a problem for Chatham County, said Heuser, whose program has an annual budget of \$3.8 million and an arsenal including three helicopters and a fixed-wing aircraft. “We have always kept extremely good records on what we do, so from the standpoint of having to document what we’re doing, it didn’t cause us a lot of problems.”

But he said reporting requirements can be a burden for smaller programs, a number



Inspectors search for breeding sites in the Florida Keys. Photo courtesy of Florida Keys Mosquito Control District

of which have closed up shop in recent years. The economic downturn was a factor, he said, “But in that economic downturn there were associated costs such as the reporting requirements of the NPDES.”

He noted that many mosquito control programs were started with seed money from the Centers for Disease Control, back when West Nile virus began to spread in the United States. Once the money ran out, there was, in some cases, no local funding to sustain operations.

Diane Weems, M.D., health director for Georgia’s coastal district, added, “The funding and capacity of those vector control agencies from county

to county varies greatly and that does depend on county funding.” The state has 159 counties.

“I would love to see several more mosquito control organizations, operations pop up here in Georgia,” said Heuser, who is also president of the Mid-Atlantic Mosquito Control Association.

At the county level, public health officials see an opportunity in the Zika outbreak: “I think the key message for government officials and county officials is really just to remind people why it’s so important to invest in public health and (disease) surveillance,” said Umair Shah, M.D., health director for Harris

County, Texas. Thompson, his colleague in Dallas County, echoed that message. “Hopefully there’ll be more funding for vector control programs throughout the United States as we move more into these emerging viruses,” he said. “I think that has to still be our number one priority.”

Weems called mosquito control “a real vital partner to what we do in public health.” “A lot of our focus is on prevention, messaging, on guidance and surveillance of human cases and keeping data related to human cases. But we cannot work without mosquito control, so we consider them a very key partner.”

SNAP/STATS
HIGHEST VOTER TURNOUT
 2012 PRIMARIES/ CAUCUSES*

State	Percentage
North Carolina	31.5%
New Hampshire	31.1
Alabama	24.8
Oregon	21.9
West Virginia	21.2
Indiana	21.2

*Bonus: In 2012, the Iowa caucuses drew 6.5% of registered voters. This year, the rate more than doubled to 15.7%.
 Source: United States Election Project

CountyNews

President
Sallie Clark

Publisher
Matthew Chase

Public Affairs Director
Brian Namey

Executive Editor
Beverly Anne Schlatterbeck

Senior Staff Writer
Charles Taylor

Senior Staff Writer
Charlie Ban

Design Director
Leon Lawrence III

ADVERTISING STAFF

Job Market/Classifieds representative
 National Accounts representative
 Beverly Schlatterbeck
 (202) 393-6226
 FAX (202) 393-2630

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACO

Roy Orr remembered as family focused, NACo-driven

By Charlie Ban
 senior staff writer

Dallas County, Texas Commissioner and NACo Past President Roy Orr’s memoirs may have been titled Plain Vanilla, but perhaps a better summation for his life might be Family Matters.

Orr, who died Jan. 29 at 87, reportedly couldn’t finish a conversation without asking about someone’s family, which NACo Past President Glen Whitley saw firsthand to amusing results.

“I had gotten to know Roy when I was a county commissioner and I went to visit my mom in Dallas,” he said. “I mentioned his name to her and it turned out Roy had been my commissioner when I was growing up and he knew my parents.”

Orr’s wife, Janice, died two months to the day before him. Where there were no formal family relationships, Orr created them.

“He was a goodwill ambassador and got to know his colleagues all over the country, and he was a catalyst for NACo being known as a big family,” said former NACo Executive Director Bernie Hillenbrand. “He made sure we all stuck together, regardless of what state they came from.”

Whitley, like Ken Mayfield, another NACo past president, considers Orr a mentor who encouraged them to become active in the organization and pursue leadership roles. Mayfield was a successor to Orr’s commission seat, making them the first pair to serve as NACo president from the same county district.

“He taught me that in the end, you’re the only one who can make a decision and you have to do what is right, but along the way you have to listen to all sides,” Mayfield said. “Otherwise you aren’t doing what’s right.”



Roy Orr (left) with Glen Whitley at the 2010 NACo Annual Conference. Photo by David Hathcox

Whitley remembered Orr as a man of great conviction.

“He was extremely loyal, someone of high integrity,” he said. “If he told you something, you could bet he was going to stick to it.”

“He might disagree with you on something but he wasn’t going to hold it against you. Then when the debate was over, he’d go back to being your best friend.”

Orr’s political career started on the DeSoto School Board and as the city’s mayor before he was appointed to the County Commission in 1972. His memoir recounts taking an average of 72 phone calls a day and returning many more as a commissioner. He found the county to be his ideal level of government, “the form of government closest to the people.”

“I tried to make county government not have the image of a country boy and have the image of a professional organization,” he wrote. “The people in county government are professional and worthy of respect.”

He served as NACo’s president in 1980 – 1981, at the tail end of Hillenbrand’s tenure.

“Roy was always there and always supportive, and always critical when ideas were being discussed because he wanted to see the best results

for the organization,” he said. “He was a strong proponent of having elected county commissioners making the decisions for NACo, not the county staff, even though we represent the public health officials and others.”

“That’s why we are as strong of an organization as we have been.”

Though Orr called himself a “Texas Democrat and a national Republican,” he served Presidents Jimmy Carter — on the board of the President’s Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations — and Ronald Reagan — on the Advisory Committee on Federalism.

While NACo president, Orr oversaw the groundbreaking for the First Street office building, and started the sponsorship of what is now the Nationwide Retirement Solutions deferred compensation program, which allowed for portable retirement savings for county officials.

He also made a visit to China with 29 other county officials, where they met with local government leaders. He defended the use of county funds to be a NACo member to the Dallas media.

“It’s an emotional drag to lose him,” Hillenbrand said.

PRESIDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

By Sallie Clark

Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to represent NACo at Governing magazine’s Outlook 2016 State & Local Market Forecast event at the National Press Club, where I discussed the importance of public-private partnerships in delivering services to our residents.

Counties always seek ways to deliver cost-effective programs, and our collaboration with private and public sector partners, including states and the federal government, is the key to our success. It is important to acknowledge these partnerships and our joint successes as we recognize the vital role we play in residents’ lives.

An outstanding opportunity to feature our role in building a stronger America is National County Government Month (NCGM). An annual event for the past 25 years, NCGM provides an opportunity every April for us to highlight effective county programs, raise

awareness about county-provided services and increase public understanding about the pivotal role we play in our communities.

This year’s NCGM shares its theme with my 2015-2016 Presidential Initiative: Safe and Secure Counties. To learn more about how you can engage your community, download NACO’s NCGM 2016 Toolkit at www.naco.org/ncgm2016.

I hope you find these resources useful for highlighting how your county serves residents, not only in April, but every month of the year. And thank you for serving NACo through your membership and active involvement in issues that impact counties throughout the nation.

I look forward to seeing you soon at NACO’s Legislative Conference Feb. 20-24, where we will focus on federal policies that impact our counties and residents. Learn more about what’s in store, and if you haven’t already registered, please do so at www.naco.org/leg.



NACO President Sallie Clark offers her take on public-private partnerships during a Governing magazine forum Feb. 2 as fellow panelists, ICMA President Patricia Martel and National League of Cities First VP Matt Zone listen. Photo by Brian Namey

Sheriffs' posses alive and well in counties

By **Charlie Ban**
senior staff writer

The math didn't add up for Wes Thurston.

Six full-time deputies. Five part-timers. Himself — the sheriff of Clearfield County, Pa. His chief deputy. Three cars. Divide that by 1,145 square miles, the third largest county in Pennsylvania, and he knew he was outmatched.

But after a man suffering from dementia left a nursing home and was found dead more than 10 days later two miles away, Thurston woke up in the middle of the night and had his answer.

"I knew I had to start a posse," he said. "We're in a really rural area, we have miles and miles of forest. If I need 300

people to comb the area for a child who wandered away from a picnic table, I want to have those people in 45 minutes."

He's recruiting 500 volunteers, all of whom will be subject to background checks, but they won't have arrest powers or the authorization to use force. He reports more than 300 applicants since announcing the plan in late December.

"It's not just a bunch of hillbillies out there, we have doctors, lawyers, teachers... people with master's degrees applying," he said, noting that several women have expressed interest. "A chiropractor who has friends who do snowmobiling in the winter has volunteered their service.



Sheriff Wes Thurston
Clearfield County, Pa.

That's something we wouldn't have had on our own."

The idea isn't as quaint as it would seem. Less a vestige of cowboy movies and more a solution to large territories and small law enforcement staffs, there are more than 100 sheriff's posses scattered around the country, most of them operating in Colorado,



A member of the Lane County, Ore. posse tends to the horses after rescuing a hunter lost in the woods. They took him on horseback to a clearing where a helicopter could transport him to a hospital in Eugene. Photo by Alan Murphy

"I think they're a good resource, to have it when it's needed because human resources is our biggest problem."
— J. Thompson

Oregon, Utah and California. Liability policies for posse members vary by county.

In Geary County, Kan., Sgt. Thad Jones saw an underused sheriff's reserves unit and wanted to scrap it in exchange for a posse program like what he was used to in Maricopa County, Ariz., where he worked previously.

"They'll basically do the same things as deputies, except for having the power of arrest and they aren't armed," he said. "Ours will be able drive our cars, but without the flashing lights."

The Geary County program is also in its nascent stages — just five months old, but it has 17 volunteers so far.

"They'll basically be our third arm," Jones said. "If we need an extra body, watching our back at a scene, they'll be it. They won't be helping investigate or making decisions.

"It's great for people who want to help, people who want to be involved but not actually be a cop," Jones said.

Thurston sees it as an opportunity to screen the people the sheriff may need for help someday, whether that is doing search and rescue, traffic control or other tasks that would free up his deputies to do investigative work.

"If I went out in the street and called for help, who knows who I'd get," he said. "Drug dealers, drunks, people who are in over their heads... I'm looking for people I can depend on, people we've trained and can rely on to do the right thing. They'll be safe and not get themselves into

trouble in the process."

While noting that circumstances in individual counties merit different approaches, John Thompson, deputy executive director of the National Sheriffs' Association agreed with that prospect.

"To not pre-plan and have some kind of contingency in case something happens is very sad and I don't think it's in the best interest of the county," he said. "I think they're a good resource, to have it when it's needed because human resources is our biggest problem."

Being part of a posse is a civic activity for many participants. Jim Haney, president of the Columbia County, Pa. posse and a former police officer, was recruited to the posse by his friends and brother-in-law.

"We did a pretty good job patrolling the Bloomsburg Fair Grounds parking lot on horseback," he said. "We had a good vantage point to see down between the cars and make sure people weren't drinking or vandalizing cars."

Haney has been involved in several search and rescue operations, including locating a downed airplane. The Columbia County posse is frequently called out to search for lost hunters.

In Lane County, Ore., posse member Alan Murphy was called upon for a search mission that eventually became a rescue mission when they learned the missing hunter who had been out for two days was in need of medication. A team of three carried the man on horseback to a clearing where a helicopter could pick him up and take him to the hospital.

See *POSSE* page 5

From *POSSE* page 4

Murphy has been a member of the posse for 10 years, and sees an operation like this every three years or so.

"I like horses," he said. "I'm retired and I have time and wanted to do something useful with my horse so I joined the posse."

That's where Thompson sees a posses' ideal place.

"Especially in rural areas, you need all the bodies you can get," he said. "People who can stand at a traffic post and do the minor jobs that free the deputies to do their more serious jobs. If you have a stand-off and all of your deputies are tied up there, that means there's nobody left for the or-

dinary citizens."

Thurston plans to break the posse up into five portions of the county, with roughly 100 members in each, and grouping them in teams of 10, coordinated by group leaders. He will give instructions in writing to each group, and any posse member who deviates from those instructions will be removed by the group leader.

"Another thing I see of value in the posse is that with such a large county, people from one end don't know the people from the other end," he said. "When we bring people together for training and organizational purposes, it's going to bring a lot of cohesiveness. These men and women are all in it together." **CN**

ON THE MOVE

IN THE NEWS

NACo's third landmark report on county economies, *County Economies 2015: Opportunities and Challenges* released last month, continues to spark media attention and discussion.

It was the focus of an editorial in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, "National report on counties shows economy hasn't recovered" and mentioned in a *Washington Post* article, "The 7 big issues in the seventh Republican presidential debate."

NACO OFFICERS, COUNTY OFFICIALS

President **Sallie Clark** participated in *Governing* magazine's *Outlook 2016* State and Local Market Forecast discussions, Feb. 1-3 in Washington, D.C.

Chris Marklund, associate legislative director, represented NACo at the Wildland Fire Leadership Council meeting in Nassau County, Fla., Jan. 25-26. He later joined **Matt Chase**, executive director representing NACo, at the

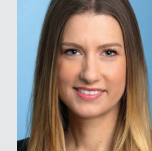
Montana Association of Counties in Cascade County (Great Falls), Mont. for its mid-winter conference, Feb. 1-4.

Feb. 1, **Daria Daniel**, associate legislative director, participated in a panel discussion by public sector



Daniel

employers regarding the U.S. Department of Labor's proposed overtime pay regulations at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.



Cox

Deborah Cox, legislative affairs director, briefed attendees on the progress of NACo's legislative priorities during the Wisconsin Association of Counties Legislative Conference in Dane County (Madison), Wis., Feb. 2-3.

COMING UP

NACo President Sallie Clark and Andrew Goldschmidt, membership-marketing director, will be at the West Virginia Association of Counties Conference in Kanawha County (Charleston), Feb. 7-9.

House bill would classify municipal securities as high-quality liquid assets

By **Austin Igleheart**
legislative assistant

On Feb. 1, the House passed legislation, H.R. 2209, that would require federal financial regulators to classify municipal securities as high quality liquid assets (HQLA). Such a move could forestall higher borrowing costs for county governments.

In 2014, the Obama Administration finalized the Liquidity Coverage Ratio rule, which requires large banks to carry a certain percentage of their assets as liquid assets and identifies acceptable investments, known as HQLAs, which banks may hold to meet this requirement.

In response to the 2007-2008 financial crisis, the rule was designed to prevent major bank failures by ensuring that banks have sufficient funds readily available to cover their obligations during an economic crisis.

However, the rule excludes investment grade municipal securities from its definition of HQLAs.

Since the rule was published, NACo has worked in coalition with other public finance stakeholders to engage the administration and Congress to amend the rule.

Most recently, NACo joined a coalition letter sent to the House urging passage of H.R. 2209.

In the letter, coalition members state that failing to classify municipal securities as HQLA would increase borrowing costs for states and local governments because banks would demand higher interest rates on the purchase of municipal bonds, particularly during economic downturns; banks may even forego the purchase of municipal securities altogether.

Efforts now turn to the Senate, where a companion bill is expected to be introduced. **CN**

For more information, contact **Mike Belarmino**, associate legislative director, mbellarmino@naco.org.

Another 'deductible' may be on the horizon

By **Hadi Sedigh**
associate legislative director

Another 'deductible' may be on the horizon

FEMA is considering the establishment of a "disaster deductible," which would require that recipients of FEMA Public Assistance (typically states with counties as sub-recipients) meet a predetermined level of financial or other commitment before receiving federal disaster funds. FEMA made the announcement in an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking (AN-PRM) released Jan. 20.

FEMA is not formally proposing the implementation of a deductible, but the agency is soliciting comments on the deductible concept. These comments are due by March 21.

In the notice, FEMA writes that under a disaster deductible framework, states could meet the deductible requirement not just through their post-disaster spending, but

SPEEDREAD

FEMA mulling over the establishment of a "disaster deductible."

Mitigation efforts could be applied against the deductible

Comments on disaster deductible concept, due March 21

also through investments in certain resilience and mitigation projects, like "prior adoption of a building code that reduces risk; adoption of proactive fiscal planning such as establishing a disaster relief fund or a self-insurance fund; or investment in programs of assistance available when there is not a federal declaration."

The deductible concept is being put forth by FEMA in response to recommendations from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the Department of Homeland

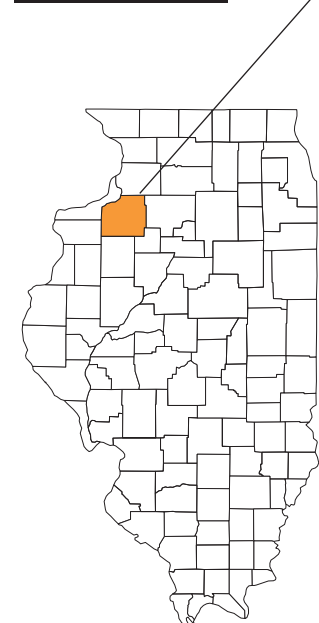
Security's Office of Inspector General that the federal disaster declaration threshold — the level of fiscal damage caused by a disaster at which the federal government provides funding to states — be raised to reduce federal spending on disasters. According to FEMA, the deductible proposal would be one way to address the concerns of GAO and the inspector general without raising the disaster threshold.

Ultimately, FEMA believes that a deductible could result in more effective use of taxpayer resources, incentivize proactive fiscal planning for disasters and encourage the set-aside of funds for disaster response and recovery.

NACo is working with its members and partner organizations to assess the potential impact of a "disaster deductible" on counties, and plans to submit comments to FEMA. **CN**

For more information, contact **Hadi Sedigh** at hsedigh@naco.org.

GET TO KNOW... Henry County, Ill.



Welcome to NACo, Henry County, Ill.
Henry County, in northwest Illinois, **boasts the first "green" home ever built. In 1926**, local eccentric Fred Francis finally finished his dream home, which took more than 36 years to build. It included radiant heat, lightly automated doors and windows and even the first air-conditioning system — all without electricity. The county is also **home to the Bishop Hill Colony, a national historic landmark.** Founded in 1846 by religious dissidents who emigrated from Sweden to establish a new way of life on the Illinois prairie, the colony was run as a commune until its dissolution in 1861. The Bishop Hill Colony was the landmark Swedish settlement in Western Illinois. **Get to know another new NACo member in the next County News**

GET TO KNOW... Yates County, N.Y.



Welcome to NACo, Yates County, N.Y.
Yates County, in the Finger Lakes region of New York, has **36 wineries in its 338 square miles**, second only to its neighbor, Seneca County. It has a large agricultural base, including a thriving Mennonite community.



INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT NEW TOOLS FOR MANAGING RISK IN YOUR COUNTY?

WORD SEARCH CROW WING COUNTY, Minn.
LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS FEATURED COUNTY IN 'BEHIND THE SEAL.'
Created By: Charles Taylor

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KICK OFF YOUR 2016 NACo LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE RIGHT!

Come to the Resilient Counties Advisory Board meeting on Saturday, Feb. 20, at 8 a.m. in the Hoover Room on the Mezzanine Level.

For more information, email Kathy Nothstine at knothstine@naco.org or visit www.naco.org/resilience.



- AITKIN** (East adjacent county)
- BRainerd** (County seat)
- CASS COUNTY** (Crow Wing annexed land from this county west of the Mississippi River)
- CHIPPEWA LOOKOUT** (Provides a scenic view of the Mississippi River in Crow Wing State Park)
- CROSBY** (First U.S. city to have a communist mayor, Karl Emil Nygard, 1932)
- CROW WING RIVER** (River for which the county is named)
- LAKE EDWARD** (One of the more than 400 recognized lakes in the county)
- LETOILE DU NORD** (French for Star of the North, the state's motto, which also appears on the county seal)
- MILFORD MINE** (Site of Minnesota's worst mining disaster in 1924)
- MORRISON** (Neighboring county to the south)
- NISSWA** (City in the county)
- NORTHERN PACIFIC** (Railroad responsible for the county's growth)
- ROLLING TO FLAT** (Describes the county's geography)
- SPINA HOTEL** (Building on National Register of Historic Places)
- STATE FORESTS** (There are two in the county: Crow Wing and Emily)
- WATER TOWER** (Iconic symbol of Brainerd)



Harney County, Ore. residents show a wall of support, outnumbering out-of-state 'patriot' groups (not pictured) who protested outside the county courthouse on Feb. 1. Photo by Samantha White/Burns Times-Herald

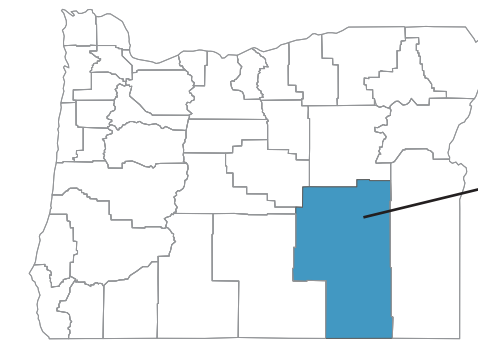
Locals back county judge who won't resign

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

Harney County, Ore. Judge Steve Grasty says that he, his fellow county commissioners and Sheriff Dave Ward have no intention of resigning — as members the Pacific Patriots Network demanded they do.

It's been more than a month since Ammon Bundy, his brother, Ryan, and a group of supporters seized the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. The Bundy brothers have been arrested, along with two of their followers. Robert "La-Voy" Finicum was fatally shot on Jan. 26 by Oregon State Police, according to the FBI. It was Finicum's death that prompted members of patriot and militia groups to return to Harney County, where on Feb. 1 more than 100 of them demonstrated in protest outside the county courthouse. They were met by some

300 local residents with a demands of their own, chants of "Go home, go home" and "Stand down, leave our town." Grasty said there are legitimate concerns, both among protesters and some locals, about having little say in federal land policy. "There's clearly some angst here: this thing of local government, local communities not being heard is true," he said. While Grasty and Sheriff Dave Ward have been the faces and voices of the county throughout the ordeal, other county employees have resumed their normal duties as best they can, albeit under tightened security, according to Laura Cleland, an Association of Oregon Counties spokesperson who has been assisting the county. "Most of the offices are just doing their daily work," she said, adding that Grasty has spent "the vast majority of his



Harney County, Ore.

time" dealing with local issues relating to the standoff. "The other two commissioners are part-time commissioners. They are still holding their regularly scheduled court meetings and continuing on as they can." Oregon Gov. Kate Brown (D) has asked the state Legislature to approve \$500,000 in emergency funding to offset state and local costs associated with the refuge standoff in Harney County. Because it was largely a federal oper-

ation, she said she expects to be reimbursed. At the heart of refuge takeover are anti-government sentiments about public lands policy. Outside protesters first came to Harney county to show support for two local ranchers, Dwight Hammond and his son, Steve Hammond, who were imprisoned for setting fire to federal grazing land in Harney County. Grasty said it's not just a local issue, but one that has national ramifications — especially in western states, many of which have large percentages of federal land within their borders. There is agreement from the state's congressional delegation to the State House in Salem to the streets of Burns, the Harney County seat, that local voices need be considered on the issue of federal land policy. "When we say local decision making, we don't think that means leaving everybody else in the world out," Grasty said, acknowledging the role of environmentalists and federal agencies. "It's just that our voices ought to get heard with the same passion that you would listen to a biologist. "My argument there always is when you've got a biologist who doesn't know where the sage grouse are in the winter, yet the rancher can go point them out to you in five minutes, who's got the most knowledge?" **EN**

PROFILES IN SERVICE

ALISHA BELL

NACo Board Member
Vice Chair
Wayne County, Mich.

Number of years active in NACo: 11 years

Years in public service: 13

Occupation: vice chair, Wayne County Commission

Education: B.A. Florida A&M University; M.ED University of Nevada, Las Vegas

The hardest thing I've ever done: Run for public office

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Harriett Tubman, Oprah Winfrey, Michelle Obama

A dream I have is to: visit the continent of Africa.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: was the youngest African-American woman in 2003 to be elected to a County Commission Board in the country.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: move to Las Vegas for four years.

My favorite way to relax is: going to the spa.



Every morning I read: *The Detroit Free Press.*

My favorite meal is: my homemade lasagna.

My pet peeve is: people that complain but don't offer solutions.

My motto is: Service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy.

The last book I read was: *Successful Women Think Differently* by Valorie Burton.

My favorite movie is: *The Contender*, starring Joan Allen and Jeff Bridges.

My favorite music is: Jazz and house music.

My favorite president is: Barack Obama.

My county is a NACo member because: NACo offers an abundance of resources that have proved to be extremely helpful to my county and our residents. It allows us to have one voice as we lobby on issues important to all counties.

I'm most proud of: giving away hundreds of prom dresses every year to girls in need.



MONEYMATTERS

NACo-Nationwide scholarship essay contest entries due March 6

Your high school senior could be awarded \$2,500 for college.

The National Association of Counties-Nationwide Scholarship Essay Contest is an educational opportunity for high school seniors. Students whose parents, grandparents or legal guardians actively contribute to a 457(b) plan offered through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program are eligible to apply for a college scholarship of \$2,500. Four \$2,500 scholarships will be awarded in spring, 2016.

Nationwide sponsors the NACo-Nationwide Scholarship to recognize its 35-year partnership with NACo and its member counties.

How an eligible student can apply

The application can be completed online at www.naco.org/retirementscholarship. Please refer to the eligibility requirements listed below:

- Graduating high school seniors who are legal U.S. residents are eligible to apply.

- Applicant's parent, grandparent or legal guardian must be enrolled in and actively contribute to a 457(b) plan offered through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program.

- Applicants must enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study no later than the fall term of the 2016-2017 school year at an accredited two- or four-year college.

- Immediate family members of NACo employees, or members of the NACo Defined Contribution and Retirement Advisory Committee, or its governing board of directors, or staff of individual states' association of coun-



MacKAY

"Starting early means having more money set aside, allowing you to maybe retire 10 or even 15 years earlier than your coworkers who haven't saved."

—Luke MacKay

ties that are members of the LLC, or Nationwide employees are not eligible to apply; this program is not offered outside the United States.

- Application and entry must be submitted online by March 6. No faxed or emailed submissions will be accepted.

David Thompson at NACo Financial Services says, "Even though these applicants are often decades away from retirement, they often show impressive thinking when it comes to investing in their future."

"Their submissions reflect this focus in a manner that shows both depth and creativity. Now in our 11th year, we are pleased to be able to continue to award \$2,500 to help these seniors in the next step in their education."

To help prospective applicants as they start to write their entries, Thompson shared a quality response from one of last year's schol-

arship winners about the importance of building your retirement savings early:

Luke MacKay of San Bernardino County, Calif. wrote: "Starting early means having more money set aside, allowing you to maybe retire 10 or even 15 years earlier than your coworkers who haven't saved. This can allow you to enjoy activities, family, volunteering or travel while you have the health and vitality to be really adventurous...and that's what all the saving and hard work is for in the first place." **EN**

For additional information about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, please contact Carlos Greene at cgreene@naco.org or your Nationwide Representative.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) makes payments to the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACo PEB LLC and the NACo Financial Services Center Partnership (FSC) for services and endorsements that NACo provides for all its members generally related to Nationwide's products and services sold exclusively in public sector retirement markets. More detail about these payments is available at www.nrs-foru.com.

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Nationwide, the Nationwide N&Eagle and Nationwide Is On Your Side are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company.

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2016 ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

CELEBRATING 46 YEARS OF INNOVATION

DOES YOUR COUNTY HAVE AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAM THAT IMPROVES COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND INCREASES SERVICES TO COUNTY RESIDENTS?

For 46 years, NACo has recognized outstanding efforts in county government through the Achievement Awards Program. Awards are given in 21 categories including Criminal Justice, Health, Human Services, Information Technology and many more. For more information on this year's awards cycle and to begin your application visit: www.naco.org/achievementawards

QUESTIONS? CONTACT

awards@naco.org

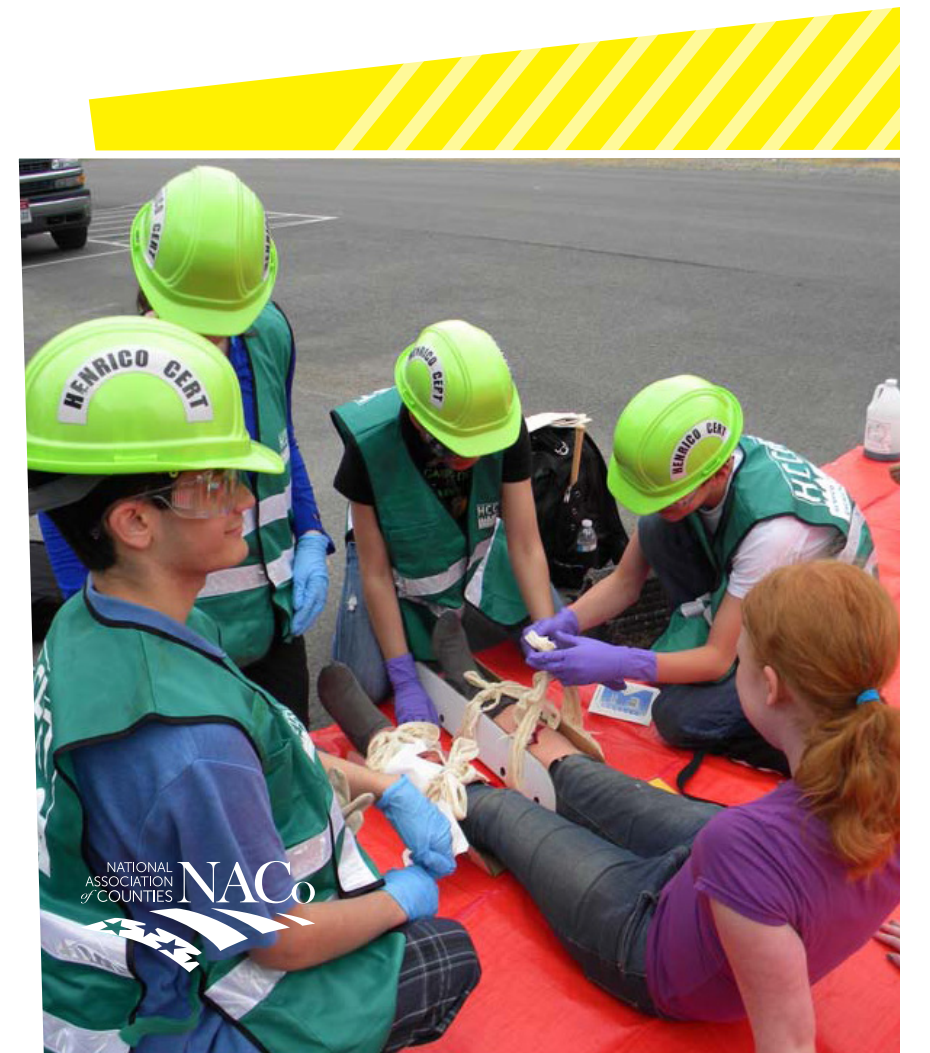
IMPORTANT DATES:

Submissions Open:

February 1, 2016 12:00 a.m. EST

Submissions Close:

April 1, 2016 11:59 p.m. EDT



Hill briefing Feb. 23 highlights criminal justice

From CONFERENCE page 1

THE LINEUP OF SPEAKERS IS A WHO'S WHO IN WASHINGTON

Urban County Caucus (LUCC) steering committee meeting, and Acting Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. will address one of the general sessions.

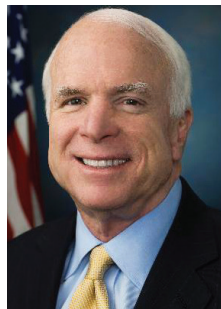
France Cordova, director of the National Science Foundation, will speak during the conference's Opening General Session. She is a former president of Purdue University who earlier served as NASA's chief scientist.

A bipartisan group of governors will discuss how states and localities are working together to tackle chronic rural poverty in a roundtable discussion Feb. 22 led by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, himself a former governor of Iowa. Democrat Govs. Terry McAuliffe (Va.) and Tom Wolf (Pa.) will be joined by Republican Govs. Bill Haslam (Tenn.) and Gary Herbert (Utah).

The following day, Vilsack — along with other experts and Administration officials — will also



MITCH MCCONNELL
U.S. Senate Majority Leader



JOHN MCCAIN
U.S. Senator



JOHN B. KING, JR.
Acting U.S. Secretary of Education



TOM VILSACK
U.S. Secretary of Agriculture



CHRIS WALLACE
Award-winning veteran journalist & host of Fox News Sunday



RON BROWNSTEIN
Editorial director of the National Journal Group

participate in a White House Rural Council Poverty Summit, being held at the conference, which is open to all conference attendees.

NACo's steering committees will meet to consider a number of policy resolutions, dealing with issues such as full funding of the 2002 Help America Vote Act, raising the federal minimum wage, aid for counties in complying with HUD's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing final rule and reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program.

A Chief Information Officer Forum precedes the official opening of the conference, where county CIOs and elected leaders will exchange information about the technological challenges facing their counties.

More than 20 educational workshops are being offered, exploring topics such as the Affordable Care Act's Cadillac tax, the opioid drug abuse epidemic, freight traffic's role in stimulat-

ing local economies and reducing mental illness in jails. Several professional development workshops are also on the agenda.

A Capitol Hill briefing is on tap Feb. 23 on counties' role in America's criminal justice system — how counties are creating innovative systems and developing unique partnerships to lower rates of incarceration and recidivism in local communities. Conference attendees will also use their time in Washington to meet with their congressional representatives.

No conference in a presidential election year would be complete without hearing from the national news media, this year in the persons of Ron Brownstein, political director for the Atlantic Media Co., and Chris Wallace, host of *Fox News Sunday*.

The conference will pivot, briefly, from serious to silly on Feb. 22, when The Capitol Steps are sure to lampoon the presidential candidates in comedy skits and song. **CN**

BRIGHT IDEAS | CLACKAMAS COUNTY, Ore.

Water department stresses education in rainy county

PROBLEM: Runoff from developments was overwhelming the sewage system

SOLUTION: Outreach to schools, businesses and other developments helped introduce stormwater remediation measures



Shrubs can draw in more rainwater diverted from roofs and other impervious surfaces. Photo courtesy of Clackamas County, Ore.

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

Every square inch of pavement is a square inch that displaces rainwater, and it rains a lot in Oregon. With an eye for the consequences of that displaced water getting into the sewage system, Clackamas County's Water Environment Services (WES) Department's Water Management Program took aim at reducing the amount of displaced rain that leaves large developed properties.

"Large campuses, schools, churches, parking lots," said Gari Johnson, WES's community relations specialist, "they were all places rain would fall and wind up somewhere else."

It was an afterthought, if developers thought of it at all. But it was chief on WES's agenda.

The department tried to get in on the ground floor on the younger generation with hands-on educational K-12 programming in the Watershed Health Education Program, which ultimately won a 2012 NACo Achievement Award, but those students weren't in charge of the rapid urbanization in the watershed that was covering the ground with impervious surfaces like cement, roofs and macadam.

The Community Rain Garden Partnership, formed in 2013, focuses more on direct relationships with landowners to try to minimize the im-

perfect their properties would have on the storm sewers and the health of waterways. That includes getting the word out about how completed building and paving projects can be augmented and educating decision makers for future development so that rainfall will be taken into account in the real estate design process.

"We already had a great relationship with the school district, so we changed our approach and talked to the principals and the facilities people," Johnson said. "We wanted to go about it in a way that would build trust, because we're coming in and trying to change things and they can be wary of that."

Schools and their campuses turned out to be an excellent test site for low-impact development retrofits, including rain barrels to trap and use water that runs off of a roof for irrigation; adding organic matter to soil and incorporating specific types of vegetation in landscaping.

"We had some basic education to do there," she said. "We had to tell them that some shrubs weren't supposed to be mowed by the grounds crews, but it was a big moment when we realized there just hadn't been much awareness before."

The students are still a part of the program, but there's an

emphasis on the concepts behind stormwater management.

"There's a higher-level discussion of how water flows, what's living in it and how it affects the environment," Johnson said. "Outdoor school should be every day; we should be appreciating the water and habitat that we have."

WES staff is also doing outreach to non-educational institutions and businesses. One of the most common responses — that a lack of money stood in the way — now gets some help from \$30,000 grants the WES will distribute through its Riverhealth Stewardship Program.

Citizen groups, businesses, schools, nonprofits, student groups, faith organizations, neighborhood or business associations and service groups will be eligible for funding to implement low-impact development retrofits that aren't otherwise mandated.

Johnson said the work the grants will make possible will lead to a more informed discussion during future real estate development.

"If we think about surface water first, how we go about developing properties will change," she said. **CN**

Bright Ideas features noteworthy and award-winning programs.



CROW WING COUNTY, Minn.

Current seal created in: 1983
Original design by: Seth Eastman

Crow Wing County, Minn.'s seal has been developing since it was still a territory, and the symbolism contained in the design is dense and varied.

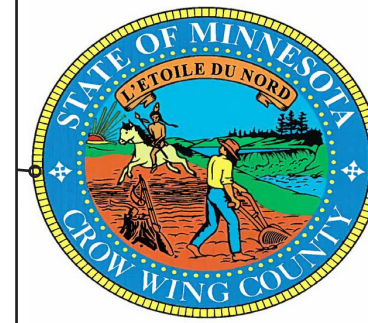
A settler plows his field with the Falls of St. Anthony and the setting sun in the background.

The Native American on horseback represents the heritage of the region's indigenous people. Their spear, ax, rifle and plow represent the hunting and labor that supported the area, and the stump symbolizes the importance of the lumber industry in Minnesota's history.

The Mississippi River and St. Anthony Falls are depicted to note the importance of these resources in transportation and industry. Beyond the falls, three Norway pine trees (the state tree) represent the three great pine regions of Minnesota; the St. Croix, Mississippi and Lake Superior.

The seal's design evolved from the mid-19th century, with the ethnicity and direction of the horseback rider changing several times until the current design was finalized in 1983.

When Minnesota became a state, the new state's motto *L'Etoile du Nord*, French for "The Star of the North" (Minnesota is known as the "North Star State"), replaced a misspelled Latin phrase meaning "I want to see what lies beyond."



CN SPOTLIGHT



THE BLIZZARD OF 2016

Four-legged critters were much more mobile in the aftermath of the D.C. area's Jan. 22-23 blizzard than the Arlington County, Va. police car in the background. Neighborhood streets remained unplowed for several days as crews concentrated on main arteries. Official snow totals ranged from 36 inches in the outer Virginia suburbs to 22 inches in the District of Columbia.

Photo by Matt Chase

MOVING RURAL AMERICA

Advancing **SAFE** Transportation Systems to Enhance Economic Development and Quality of Life

Save the Date **SEPTEMBER 7-9**
2016 Denver, CO

www.ruralsafetycenter.org/news-events/moving-rural-america-summit/

Second Chances, Safer Counties

By **Natalie Ortiz**
senior research analyst

Getting formerly incarcerated individuals into good paying jobs helps the local economy and efforts to reduce recidivism.

This month, NACo released *Second Chances, Safer Counties: Workforce Development and Reentry*, research examining how counties intersect workforce development and reentry.

The study shows that reentry programs offer a way for counties to reintegrate formerly incarcerated residents into the labor market to keep them in the community and out of jail. The study finds that reentry programs are largely supported by the federal government, through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

WIOA is the federal statute that supports and governs the funding of a public workforce development system. WIOA expands workforce opportunities by increasing labor market access for individuals with employment barriers such as a criminal record.

Local workforce development boards (local WDBs) put WIOA into action. Counties support more than 90 percent of the nation's 557 local workforce development boards. With the support of the National Association of Workforce Boards, NACo surveyed local WDBs to better understand how counties collaborate in reentry programs developed by local WDBs. Nearly half (47 percent) of local WDBs responding to NACo's survey operate a reentry program.

Federal funding helps local WDBs and counties to innovate and provide reentry programs that improve county economies and reduce crime. Two-thirds of local WDBs with a reentry program receive more than 50



"Through our partnerships, we now have one workforce system to serve our population rather than three disjointed programs, making us better able to support our residents."

— Bridget Dazey

percent of program funding from the federal government, according to this new research. WIOA provided more than \$3.2 billion to states and local areas in 2015 for education, training and employment services that grow county economies.

County governments benefit directly from reentry programs. County jails assist local WDBs by providing inmates with information on workforce services available in the community. A large majority (92 percent) of responding local WDBs with reentry programs indicate that individuals who are in-

carcerated or released from county jails or juvenile detention centers receive program services. Reentry programs report success in increasing the number of formerly incarcerated individuals employed and reducing recidivism, including new arrests and incarceration.

Funding is vital to the ability of counties to improve their economies and reduce crime. More than half of local WDBs identify funding as a major challenge to creating or maintaining reentry programs that reintegrate formerly incarcerated individuals. The issue of funding will only become

more serious for counties as the federal government and many states have recently enacted, or are currently considering, policies that reduce incarceration.

These policies would enable prisoners to return to their communities, which will increase the demand for reentry services.

A decline in funding for reentry programs would reduce resources at a time when reliable and adequate funding is necessary to meet public safety and policy goals.

Local workforce development boards partner with a wide network of agencies

and organizations to improve reentry and employment for formerly incarcerated individuals.

The reentry program in Clackamas County, Ore. is a joint effort between the Clackamas Workforce Partnership, the Clackamas Health, Housing and Human Services Department and the Clackamas County Sheriff.

In 2012, the three agencies received a Department of Labor grant to provide formerly incarcerated women with educational and employment opportunities. The grant has since expired, but the program continues to be funded by the Clackamas Workforce Partnership.

Bridget Dazey, executive director, Clackamas Workforce Partnership, said, "Through our partnerships, we now have one workforce system to serve our population rather than three disjointed programs, making us better able to support our residents."

Counties are centrally situated in the workforce development and justice systems to help realize the public safety and economic benefits of reentry and employment.

The county role in local WDBs facilitates the partnership that implements and delivers reentry programs to reintegrate individuals into the workforce and reduce recidivism.

Reentry programs are part of larger county efforts to maintain public safety while reducing the jail population and jail costs, including preventing jail inmates from cycling in and out of county jails. **EN**

To read NACo's new research report on reentry and workforce development or to learn more about Clackamas County and its re-entry program, visit: www.naco.org/workforceandreentry

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

ALABAMA

State health department officials are disputing a recent news media report that claimed **HOUSTON** and **DALLAS** counties have some of the highest levels of **lead poisoning** in the nation.

The online news site Vox reported that, based on Centers for Disease Control data, Houston County ranked first and Dallas County third. This is based on 2014 data that states reported to CDC — data which Vox noted that "most states don't bother reporting..."

The Alabama Department of Public Health has reviewed the data, which it says "doesn't provide a true picture regarding lead levels in either county."

There is "no heightened level of concern" about high lead levels in the two counties, according to Thomas Miller, M.D., acting state health officer.

COLORADO

■ **BOULDER COUNTY** and the city of Boulder are speeding up the installation of **electric-vehicle charging stations** in the county by providing nearly \$11,000 in funding to Charge Ahead Colorado (CAC). CAC is an electric-vehicle and infrastructure grant program — a partnership between the Regional Air Quality Council and the Colorado Energy Office.

In the most recent grant cycle, the partnership funded 24 new charging stations in Boulder County, according to county officials.

"We hope to encourage Boulder County businesses, nonprofits, owners of multi-family housing properties, Home Owners' Associations and neighborhoods to install EV charging stations," said Susie Strife, the county's sustainability coordinator.

ARKANSAS

"**MADISON COUNTY** ain't got no stoplights" — according to the lyrics of a song about the county. But that's about to change. The county, population 15,717, is about to get its **first traffic signal**, arkansasonline.com reported.

Of the state's 75 counties, five have no stoplights, according to the state highway department and sheriff's offices. The other four are **MONT-**

GOMERY, NEWTON, PERRY and PIKE.

Korey Danley, a local musician who wrote the song, said she's not changing a word. "In fact, when I wrote that line, we already knew that a stoplight would be put up for use, so I figured I had better get the line [in] there while it was still accurate!"

"Places change, but it won't change our awesome memories of the old times we've had."



...And the meatballs go into the sauce as Cook County jail inmates prepare a meal in the jail's Recipe for Change Program, run by a local chef. As they say in Italy, *buon appetito*.

Photo courtesy of Recipe for Change

ILLINOIS

A program at the **COOK COUNTY** jail that provides **culinary education to inmates** has won a \$50,000 award from the MacArthur Foundation. Local Italian chef Bruno Abate started the nonprofit Recipe for Change in 2014. Inmates from the jail's medium security section take weekly cooking classes.

The program also provides job skills, cultural awareness, and mentoring in the value of work and responsibility to inmates. It aims to reduce recidivism, promote personal accountability and build stronger communities.

Last year, Abate had a pizza oven installed in the jail's basement, where the cooking classes are held.

■ **Kudos to SUMMIT COUNTY** for being named a 2016 **Wildfire Mitigation Award winner**.

The National Association of State Foresters, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the National Fire Protection Association and the USDA Forest Service jointly sponsor the awards, which are given in three categories: Fire Adapted Communities; Fire Service Leadership; Wildfire Mitigation Innovation and the Community Wildfire Preparedness Pioneer. Summit County was the only county to win in the Wildfire Mitigation Innovation category.

"Wildland fire continues to be a major threat to communities and fire departments across the U.S.," said Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr, IAFC president and chair of the board. "The IAFC commends the 2016 Wildfire Mitigation Award winners for

FLORIDA

By a vote of 3-2, **SARASOTA COUNTY** commissioners approved an ordinance that would ban the **retail sale of commercially bred pets** — from so-called puppy mills. It also applies to cats and rabbits.

The ordinance will not limit home or hobby breeders, WSTP 10 News reported. It will go into effect on Jan. 27, 2017.

County Board Chairman Scott Christiansen said under Illinois law, the state is obligated to reimburse counties for a portion of the salaries of the supervisor of assessments, the state's attorney and the public defender.

The county is seeking more than \$152,000 it is owed from from July through December 2015, a spokesperson said.

Established in 2014, the awards are the highest commendation for innovation and leadership displayed by individuals and organizations committed to wildfire preparedness.

ILLINOIS

The state's eight-month budget impasse prompted **WINNEBAGO COUNTY** to join with 15 other counties that are **suing the state** for funds they're due, the *Beloit Daily News* reported.

County Board Chairman Scott Christiansen said under Illinois law, the state is obligated to reimburse counties for a portion of the salaries of the supervisor of assessments, the state's attorney and the public defender.

The county is seeking more than \$152,000 it is owed from from July through December 2015, a spokesperson said.

See **NEWS FROM** page 15



the HR DOCTOR

With Phil Rosenberg
Phil Rosenberg

“Terrorist is among our very most frequently used words these days.

The word evokes characteristics we dread very much. The terrorist strikes unexpectedly and without warning. The terrorist can do horrific damage, including causing the death of innocents and the infliction of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. It can shake the foundation of our physical and psychological well-being.

As a former intelligence officer, the HR Doctor, has spoken and written on security matters as they affect modern human resources management. I know that many things can be done to identify and control the risks we face from the terrorist. We can review our own security status, perhaps change our behaviors to make us less likely targets, seek the protection of other people,

including our neighbors and experts in both the public and the private sector.

One of the most important things we can do at the individual level is to resolve not to allow the scourge of terrorism to destroy our well being just by frightening us so much. We do not have to become paralyzed and assume that nothing can be done to stop this evil.

Terrorist attacks have killed thousands in the U.S. and many more in other countries. They have changed history, including being the catalyst event in the beginning of World War I. Despite how terrible the “disease” of terrorism is, there’s another terror which shares many of the characteristics of the kind of murderous philosophies and perverse behaviors of those who support the Islamic State.

This other terrorist is cancer. It is a horror that kills millions of people around the world each year. It is a terror

Cancer the Terrorist

we are learning more about each day and have improved tremendously in our ability to overcome it, notwithstanding the fact that much more remains to be done.

Cancer the terrorist can strike without warning. It can make its presence known initially in a small

way, with a skin lesion or a breast lump. It can result in a traumatic visit to the doctor, hearing her or him pronounce the terrible “c-word.” That word can lead to very difficult treatments, such as chemotherapy and radiation. It can have a sudden and profound impact on how we live our lives and manage our families and careers.

Yet, like the terrorists of the headlines who often claim political or radical religious roots to justify their horrors, the cancer terrorist can be attacked by education and by creating an army of supporters. These include physicians, medical institutions, friends and family.

Cancer can also be dealt with aggressively by how we think and respond mentally to a crisis. We can treat more than the physical ailment. We can take steps to ensure that we keep a clear and confident mental attitude and not give up things we love out of fear and sadness. We can meditate and practice the imagery that tells us that “...even though the terrorist has struck at me, I know that I can track it down, defend

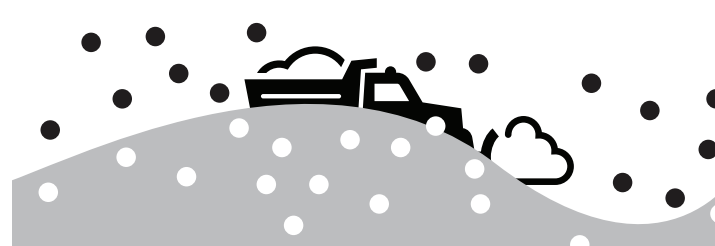
myself with all the weapons available to me, and I can triumph!” We can echo the Gloria Gaynor song “I will survive!”

We attribute the word “survivor” to someone who has succeeded in keeping cancer at bay, generally through a milestone like five years of treatment. We may celebrate hearing our physicians say words like “remission” to us. However, “survivor” tends to be thought of as a passive word. That is, we have beaten back the cancer terrorist and we can resume how life used to be.

The HR Doctor would urge readers of this article to appreciate that surviving something takes courage and action which should continue well after the first words about remission are heard. The close allies of cancer include smoking, obesity, being sedentary to the point of seeming to be unconscious. Not learning about risks, not developing a close relationship with a great and caring physician are also allies of the terrorist. All of these things are within our control and all of these things reduce the risks of falling prey to this form of terrorism. The concepts of protection employed by the Secret Service have very direct similarities to the protections we need to establish in our own daily lives. Follow the concepts outlined in this article and reduce the risks we face in our own personal “Departments of Homeland Security.” Look forward to that periodic medical exam as a time to see the results of putting your protective measures to work. Don’t let “Cancer the Terrorist” defeat you physically or in spirit. **CN**



MORE NEWS FROM...



MARYLAND

HOWARD COUNTY pulled the plug on its **online snow plow tracker** after it couldn’t keep up with the blizzard that hit the area in late January. The tracker is provided and maintained by a third-party vendor, County Executive Alan Kittleman said, and was used for years.

“Because of the severity of the storm, including high winds, drifting snow and an historic record snowfall (up to 29 inches with 8-foot drifts), the service was not providing accurate information,” he said. “Although we had contacted the vendor, we did not see an improvement.”

From **NEWS FROM** page 13

OHIO

Twelve counties are now participating in the State Treasurer’s OhioCheckbook website. **BULTER COUNTY** now **opens its checks and expenses** to public access through the site.

The state checkbook will show every check written by all offices and departments in the county, and the tool allows the viewer to customize the information they are looking for.

State Treasurer Josh Mandel put the state’s books online in December 2014 and invited local jurisdictions to join him in April 2015 at no cost. There are 3,962 local governments and school districts in the state and so far 70 cities and villages, 47 townships, 53 school districts and five special districts have opened their books to the public, and there have been more than 444,000 searches on the site as of late January., according to the *Hamilton Journal News*.

OREGON

The seeming inevitability of a crude oil train derailment a half-mile from where more than a quarter of **MULTNOMAH COUNTY** residents live has prompted the County Commission to consider a

resolution **opposing crude oil shipments by rail** and any projects that would increase the amount of crude transported through the county.

That includes the Tesoro Savage Vancouver Energy Distribution Terminal. If approved, Tesoro would be the largest oil transport facility in North America, KGW TV News reported.

In addition to the number of homes near train tracks, 108 schools and 100 childcare facilities are also within a half mile.

SOUTH DAKOTA

A **donation of two cars** from the Rapid City Police Department has doubled the **OGLALA LAKOTA COUNTY Sheriff’s Department’s** fleet.

The cars were headed for retirement, but now they, along with some added equipment, will relieve the burden on the county’s two existing cars, both of which have logged more than 100,000 miles, according to the Associated Press.

TEXAS

Three sheriff’s departments will display the motto “In God We Trust” on squad cars. **LIBERTY COUNTY** will join **BRAZORIA** and **MONTGOMERY** in displaying what was adopted by Congress as a national motto in 1956.

The Texas attorney general

ruled recently that it won’t violate the U.S. Constitution, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

UTAH

SALT LAKE COUNTY officials have partnered with the Tesoro Foundation and local auto repair businesses to help more county residents pay for **vehicle emission repairs**.

Tesoro is donating \$300,000 over three years to fund the county’s year-old vehicle repair assistance program, allowing more vehicle owners to qualify for financial assistance to lessen their cars’ pollutants and get them back on the road.

The county initially launched its vehicle repair assistance program last year to use the county’s fleet services division to perform repair work on vehicles accepted into the program and now the grant will allow auto repair businesses to participate, KSL TVNews reported.

The program’s eligibility

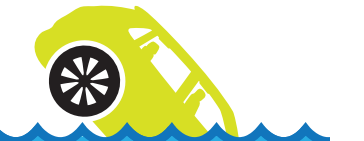
is based on federal poverty guidelines, and financial assistance varies based on level of poverty.

VIRGINIA

ARLINGTON COUNTY debuted a **new online system** for reviewing and approving plans for building permits and land disturbance applications. Electronic Plan (ePlan) Review will eliminate paper applications and the need for customers to hand-deliver multiple copies to different county offices, because all applications, plans and comments will be stored in a centralized location online.

The system includes a step-by-step video tutorial and other resources.

(*News From the Nation’s Counties* 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.)



TEXAS

The **HARRIS COUNTY** Flood Control District started a pilot project to remove 20 - 25 cars **submerged in bayous**. Hundreds of cars could be submerged over the years.

Salvage crews will initially focus on retrieving vehicles from the bottoms of the Brays and Sims bayous.

Investigators with the Houston Police Department will check the license plate and the vehicle identification number of the cars that are recovered to identify the owner and will determine if they were involved in a crime, Houston Public Media reported.



Monmouth County Freeholder John Curley (r) and Charles Richman, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, thank the volunteers working at the NJ Counts event at the Jersey Shore Rescue Mission. Photo courtesy of Monmouth County, N.J.

NEW JERSEY

Nearly 480 people were served at **MONMOUTH COUNTY’s** recent NJ Counts event to provide various health and human services for **homeless individuals**.

NJ Counts offered winter coats, personal care items and a range of health services at four, one-stop locations throughout the county, to those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

The event is part of the county’s annual point-in-time survey of the homeless population. Attendees completed a brief survey before being provided food, clothing, free health screenings, employment resources and other services.



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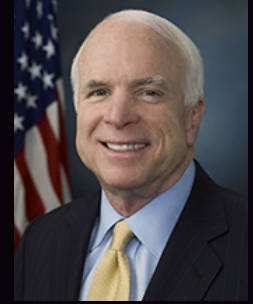


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