

## Minor crimes get 'clean slate' in Utah

by **Rachel Looker**  
staff writer

Citizens who committed low-level crimes in the state of Utah are getting a second chance to have a "clean slate" thanks to Salt Lake County and the passing of House Bill 431.

Utah is the second state (after Pennsylvania) to pass an automatic expungement bill for eligible citizens who committed low-level crimes. Utah Gov. Gary Herbert, a Republican, signed the Expungement Act Amendments bill at the end of March. The bill alters the current expungement process and will go into effect in May 2020.

Expungement is a "process by which a record of criminal conviction is destroyed or sealed from state or federal record." This process allows an individual to answer "no" when asked whether they have ever been

arrested, charged or convicted of a crime.

The new bill makes the state's current manual expungement process automatic, where those who meet certain requirements have their records automatically cleared. Eligible individuals would not have to file a petition or pay fees to clear their record. An individual must be crime-free for specific time periods based on the type of crime committed, have no open or pending criminal cases and no outstanding fees or fines due.

The manual expungement process is often complex, time-consuming and expensive, according to Noella Sudbury, the director of Salt Lake County Criminal Justice Advisory Council. The process involves completing stacks of paperwork, paying certain fees, hiring an attorney and waiting for approval, which may take up to two years.

Sudbury played a significant role in creating a one-time Expungement Day clinic in Salt Lake County in April of 2018. The clinic brought awareness to the expungement process and helped drive the Expungement Acts Amendment through the state legislature. It provided rapid and free expungement of criminal records to those who were eligible and allowed 32 individuals to clear their records.

Sudbury worked with the county to raise \$20,000 in private donations to pay for those who could not afford the fees. The county received close to 500 phone calls from interested

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## WIR conference comes to Eastern Washington



**WIR Conference attendees will tour the Grand Coulee Dam.** Photo courtesy of U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

by **Charlie Ban**  
senior writer

NACo's Western Interstate Region will map out the next moves for counties in 15 Western states May 15-17 when the caucus meets for its annual

conference in Spokane County, Wash. With a population of 506,000, the county is the population center of Eastern Washington, which is encircled by counties in Washington, Oregon and Idaho that are among the greatest recipients of fund-

ing through the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools (SRS) programs.

Mobile workshops will include tours of the Grand Coulee Dam and the Colville National

**See WIR page 2**

## Deadline May 29 for \$1.7 billion in DHS grants

by **Brett Mattson**

More than \$1.7 billion in grants to prepare for emergencies and natural disasters are available, the Department of Homeland Security recently announced.

The deadline for applications is May 29 for eight FY2019 DHS preparedness grant programs that support state, local and tribal governments

Of the \$1.7 billion made available, funding levels for grants utilized by counties in-

clude:

- \$350 million for Emergency Management Performance Grants: These grants fund local programs to build and maintain core infrastructure needed to protect, mitigate and recover from disasters.
- \$415 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program: This program assists state, local and tribal efforts to prevent acts of terrorism and prepare to respond to threats and hazards that pose security risks for localities.

- \$590 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative: Used by high-density metropolitan areas, this program is designed to build and maintain the capability to protect, prevent and respond to security threats.
- \$90 million for Operation Stonegarden: Funding for Operation Stonegarden is used to enhance cooperation and coordination among the Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Border Patrol and local,

**See DHS page 2**



## WIR attendees to visit forest restoration project

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Forest.

The Grand Coulee Dam in Grant and Okanogan counties is owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

It is the largest capacity hydroelectric producer in the United States and the fourth largest in the world and is currently undergoing a \$100 million upgrade to extend its operating life. Visitors will get a behind-the-scenes look at dam operations.

The Colville National Forest, in Stevens County, contains the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge. Visi-

tors will learn about the A to Z Forestry Project, a timber sale and forest restoration project that involves a private timber company thinning and restoring 54,000 acres of the 1.1 million-acre forest.

Attendees will hear from James Hubbard, undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Kim Wyman, Washington's secretary of state and Jim Osbury, executive director of the Western Governors Association.

The conference will follow the recent Senate confirmation of David Bernhardt as Secretary of the U.S. Depart-

ment of the Interior April 11 on a 56-41 vote.

Prior to his confirmation, Bernhardt, a Colorado native, served as deputy secretary to Ryan Zinke and became acting secretary in January 2019 after Sec. Zinke resigned. Bernhardt also served as the department's solicitor during the George W. Bush Administration from 2000-2009.

Register or find out more about the Western Interstate Region Conference on NACo's website under the "Events" tab.

It's not too late to register for the WIR conference. Visit <https://www.naco.org/events/2019-wir-conference>. **CN**

# Get involved with NACo!

Looking ahead to my year as NACo president, I want to take this opportunity to let you know about the appointments that I will have the privilege of making to NACo's leadership team.

These appointments are for:

- Policy Steering Committee chairs and vice chairs and subcommittee chairs and vice chairs
- Large Urban County Caucus and Rural Action Caucus chairs, vice chairs and members
- Standing Committee chairs, vice chairs and members
- Ad Hoc committee, task force and advisory board chairs, vice chairs and members
- At-Large NACo Board Directors

To become a member of a steering committee you must fill out a nomination form and submit it to your state association. Find it online here: [www.naco.org/presidential-appointments](http://www.naco.org/presidential-appointments). They will submit the nomination to NACo.



**Borgeson**

To be considered for a presidential appointment to any of the following committees or as an At-Large Director for the NACo Board of Directors, you must complete the application form before May 31, 2019. Find that application form here: [www.naco.org/presidential-appointments](http://www.naco.org/presidential-appointments).

Thank you, in advance, for your interest in serving, and I look forward to receiving your application. Please direct any questions to [committee@naco.org](mailto:committee@naco.org).

Mary Ann Borgeson

## SNAP/STATS



### CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

In recognition of National Foster Care Month in May, we're looking at the increase in children in foster care from 2013-2017. One in three children entered foster care in 2017 because of parental drug abuse.

YEAR	NUMBER OF KIDS IN FOSTER CARE
2013.....	400,394
2014 .....	414,129
2015 .....	427,328
2016.....	436,551
2017 .....	442,995

Source: HHS, Office of the Administration for Children & Families, Children's Bureau, AFCARS Report #25

## DHS emergency, disaster grants available

From DHS page 1

state and federal agencies.

- \$100 million for the Port Security Grant Program: Port security grants help to protect port infrastructure from acts of terrorism and facilitate security mitigation protocols that support port recovery and resiliency.
- \$88 million for Transit Security Grant Program: Transit security grants provide funding for the protection and maintenance of critical surface transportation and public transit routes.

For more information on the grants and to access the application portal, visit: <https://bit.ly/2D9zYos>. **CN**

*Brett Mattson is a legislative assistant in NACo's Government Affairs department.*

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# Goal of expunging low-level crime records is to remove barriers to jobs, education

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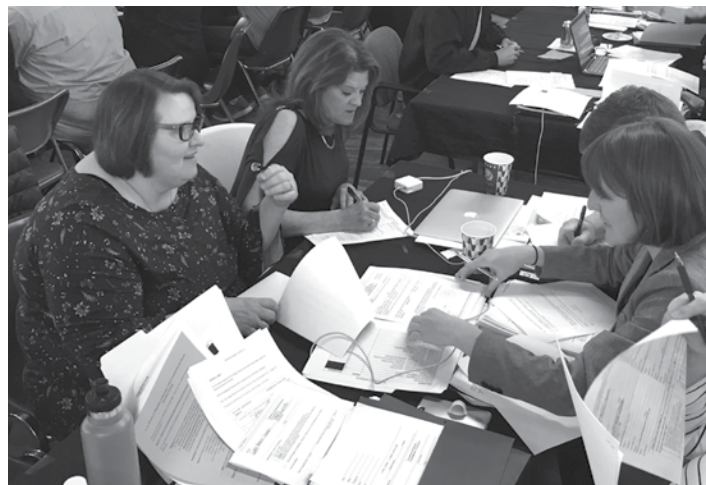
individuals after spreading the word about the clinic using local newspapers.

"The need out there from the community was overwhelming, but also very exciting," Sudbury said.

The county's pre-screening process identified eligible individuals and collected data from applicants about how criminal records impacted their lives. This data was later used to provide information about the expungement process to lawmakers, Sudbury said.

On Expungement Day, 40 volunteer attorneys met with the eligible individuals to complete necessary paperwork.

"It was an amazing day where a process that typically takes about 18 months to complete... we were able to streamline that into really a two-and-a-half-month period," Sudbury said. The clinic's success was critical to the bill's passage.



Attorneys volunteer at Utah's Expungement Day event. Photo courtesy of former Salt Lake County Mayor Ben McAdams.

"To give all of the elected officials the opportunity to see those human impacts firsthand and also to see things like the stacks of paperwork that had to be filled out, the experience from that day is going to stick with people who had an opportunity to be there," Sudbury said.

Abby Osborne, vice president of Public Policy and Government Relations for the Salt Lake Chamber of Commerce, said the automatic expungement process is a "huge workforce driver"

and added "the demand on our [the county's] workforce is incredible." Criminal records, she noted, often hold people back from finding a job, advancing in a position, applying for housing, or furthering their education.

"Now, they have an opportunity with this automatic expungement to hit the ground running and that only just starts to compound goodness in our community when people can start bettering themselves," Osborne said. An implementation

group is working with the state to find the best way to inform residents if their record will be automatically expunged, according to Sudbury. She said they are considering a public education campaign to spread the word about the bill.

The Administrative Office of the Courts identifies eligible cases and notifies the Department of Public Safety to expunge records. The office estimates about 30,000 cases will be eligible each year.

When researching if other states have automatic expungement processes, Sudbury discovered Sharon Dietrich, the litigation director at Community Legal Services, Inc. in Philadelphia. Pennsylvania was the first state in the country to have an automatic expungement process that was passed in 2018.

An automatic expungement bill was introduced in California. In New Mexico, the governor signed legislation that allows people to petition the court

and get the court's permission to have their record expunged.

Dietrich, who works in the employment unit, worked with colleagues to find a way to seal records by automation. Her work was recognized by the Justice Action Network in Pennsylvania and moved its way through the legislature, where it was eventually passed. Dietrich's colleague created an "expungement generator" that takes data from the court's public websites and assembles expungement conditions.

Automating the process is a major win for the courts. It reduces paperwork, time required for hearings and district attorneys' resources. Courts in Pennsylvania estimate 31 million cases are going to be automatically sealed when the automation starts in June, Dietrich said.

"Nothing beats eliminating your record," she said. "We think sealing and expunging records is the best re-entry tool we have in our toolbox today." **CN**



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# \$600 million available for rural broadband

by **Mary Ann Barton**  
editor

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently announced it will begin accepting the first round of applications for the Rural e-Connectivity Pilot Program (ReConnect Program).

Last year, Congress provided \$600 million to USDA to expand broadband infrastructure and services in rural parts of the country.

USDA is now making up to \$200 million in grants, \$200 million in loan and grant combinations and \$200 million in low-interest loans available. The application deadlines are:

- May 31 for grants
- June 21 for loan/grant combinations
- July 12 for low-interest loans

Applicants can visit [reconnect.usda.gov](https://reconnect.usda.gov) to apply; those needing technical assistance from USDA can fill out a contact form here: <https://www.usda.gov/reconnect/contact-us>.

Those who may apply include counties, internet service providers, rural electric co-ops and telecom companies.

According to the USDA, funds will be awarded to projects that have financially sustainable business models that will bring high-speed broadband to rural homes, businesses, farms, ranches and community facilities such as first responders, health care sites and schools.

If you're not sure what sort of broadband speeds are in your county, well, there's an app for that.

NACo is helping its members test their county broadband signals across the country thanks to a new app, TestIT. So far, there have been more than 7,300 downloads of the app and more than 38,000 tests.

Users can test broadband speeds in their area and see how those speeds compare to

FCC minimum standards. The app was created by Measurement Lab or M-Lab.

NACo is partnering on the test with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation and the National Association of Development Organizations.

For more information about the app, contact NACo's Arthur Scott at [ascott@naco.org](mailto:ascott@naco.org) or (202) 942-4230.

## More help on the way for broadband?

Rural America's anemic broadband network may see an injection of \$20 billion thanks to funding from a reverse auction of 5G spectrum to broadband networks over the next decade.

The news was announced April 12 by Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Ajit Pai at a White House ceremony.

"From precision agriculture to smart transportation networks to telemedicine and more, we want Americans to be the first to benefit from this new digital revolution, while protecting our innovators and

citizens," Pai said.

"And we don't want rural Americans left behind."

The FCC will create the new \$20.4 billion Rural Digital Opportunity Fund at the FCC to extend high-speed broadband to up to 4 million homes and small businesses in rural areas.

The news is being met with some skepticism. "I think we need to see the details," said communications attorney Gerard Lederer.

"According to the Democratic commissioners there is no new money and what the President and Chairman Pai announced is nothing more than a repackaging of existing programs under another name."

FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democrat, noted that the type of spectrum that is being auctioned to fuel the fund is off base.

"If we want a bold wireless future — for urban and rural communities alike — the U.S. needs to refocus our spectrum efforts on the airwaves that mix capacity and coverage,"

she said. "It's time to pivot to mid-band spectrum. Stat."

She explained that "we are relying on high-band spectrum for which the network densification costs are exceptionally high and unlikely to be economically viable in vast swaths of this country," she said. "If we truly want to deploy 5G service to everyone, everywhere, we are going to have to pivot to mid-band, and the time to do it is now."

The Rural Broadband Association noted that they're waiting on more details of the plan to be revealed.

"As the rules of this program are further developed, our members look forward to working with policymakers on these initiatives and to furthering their critical role in delivering on the promise of sustainable and affordable broadband for rural America," said Shirley Bloomfield, CEO of the Rural Broadband Association, headquartered in Arlington, Va.

The announcement comes after a \$4.5 billion federal

grant program to expand wireless internet in rural areas is on hold while the FCC researches incorrect data submitted by broadband providers that overstate broadband coverage on maps used to allocate grants. See the map here: <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/#/>.

Before the map was challenged, the FCC said that "approximately 100 percent of the American public lives in geographic areas covered by mobile LTE with a minimum advertised speed of 5Mbps/1Mbps."

If a map shows there is broadband in an area — and telecom companies were saying that an area was "covered" if just one person in a Census block could get high-speed access — then a company could not apply for those funds.

## Investigation of broadband coverage?

Earlier this month, the U.S. House passed an amendment authored by Rep. Abigail Spanberger, a Democrat who represents Virginia's 7th District, that requires the Government Accountability Office to examine the accuracy of FCC mapping of broadband coverage and to make recommendations to the FCC on how to accomplish accurate mapping.

"The digital gap between our rural and urban communities is real, and I hear about it from the people I serve every day," Spanberger said.

"In Central Virginia, farmers and producers are disadvantaged, because the lack of broadband makes doing business harder," she said.

"In our district, constituents driving their kids to a McDonald's or to neighboring counties so that they can complete their research projects for school," she noted. "And what's happening in our district is happening nationwide."

A 2017 USDA survey says that 30 percent of rural areas lack broadband access. **CN**





# Trump seeks to ease restrictions on pipeline projects

by Zach George

President Trump's April 10 executive order attempts to ease restrictions on oil and gas pipeline projects, directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review and revise a section of the Clean Water act.

Trump's Executive Order 13868 directs the EPA to review and revise section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Section 401 requires permission from states before a company starts work on federally approved infrastructure, like pipelines, within that state's borders.

This section gives state officials the authority to deny projects if they think it would have a negative impact on water quality within their jurisdictions, even if the project has received federal approval.

Many state groups have expressed concerns that the executive order would block



Photo courtesy of North American Oil and Gas Pipelines

their authority to regulate pipeline and other energy infrastructure siting projects.

The executive order pro-

vides a timeline for the EPA to review and revise their regulations implementing section 401. It requires the EPA to

consult with state and local governments to review section 401 by June 10 and publish, for notice and comment,

proposed rules revising section 401 by Aug. 10.

Lastly, the executive order instructs the EPA to finalize their rules by May 2020.

As co-regulators and regulated entities under the Clean Water Act, counties stand ready to work with federal partners to streamline the permitting process, while maintaining existing state and local government authorities.

While NACo supports increased energy development nationally, counties oppose any federal attempts to preempt state and local planning policies, processes and decisions.

As the EPA begins the rulemaking process, NACo will consult with the agency on any potential rule changes. **CN**

*Zach George is a legislative assistant in NACo's Government Affairs department.*

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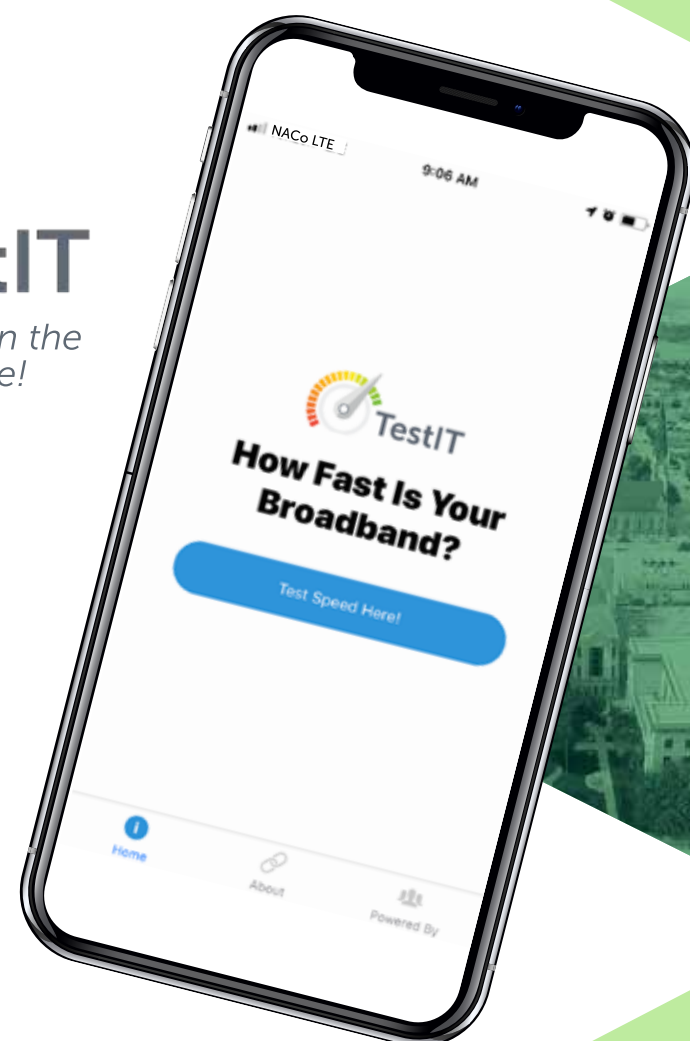
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# Supreme Court mulls Census citizenship question

by Lisa Soronen

Predicting the outcome of a Supreme Court case based on oral argument is foolhardy. But unless the more liberal justices (Ginsburg, Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan) are able to pick up the vote of a more conservative Justice (Roberts, Thomas, Alito, Gorsuch, and Kavanaugh) it seems likely the 2020 census will contain a question about citizenship.

In March 2018 Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross issued a memorandum stating he would add the question. He claimed the Department of Justice (DOJ) wanted the data to enforce the Voting Rights Act's prohibition against diluting the voting power of minority groups.

Ross later admitted that his staff asked DOJ and the Department of Homeland Security to ask the Census Bureau to include the citizenship question. Both agencies declined. Commerce

staff ultimately asked then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions to ask to include the question, which he agreed to do.

The court has to decide four issues in this case including whether those suing have standing, whether the court has the authority to review the case, and whether adding the question violates the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) or the U.S. Constitution's Enumerations Clause.

The justices spent very little time on either standing or reviewability after Justice Breyer asked if the Court would have no say so if the census was going to be written in French. The justices spent most of their time asking questions about whether adding the question violates the APA, which prevents federal agencies from acting arbitrarily and capriciously or not in accordance with law.

The argument began as

might have been expected. United States Solicitor General Noel Francisco defended the addition of the question by pointing out that citizenship has been asked on the census in "one form or another" for over 200 years. Justice Sotomayor immediately interrupted him to point out it hasn't been on the main survey since 1950 (it still appears on the American Communities Survey, sent to 3.5 million house-

holds each year).

As the argument continued the more liberal justices focused on three points indicating they think adding the question was arbitrary and capricious.

Justice Breyer pointed out that numerous studies indicate fewer people will respond to the census if the citizenship question is added.

Justice Sotomayor noted that the option Ross chose (asking the citizenship question plus relying on citizenship information in the administrative record) was expected to produce less accurate information than relying on citizenship information in the administrative record plus using modeling to estimate citizenship where data doesn't exist. Relatedly, Justice Kagan noted that the Solicitor General's brief came up with 60 pages of reasons why Ross chose the option he

*See CENSUS page 8*





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# State law on voting machines sticky for counties

by Rachel Looker  
staff writer

Some counties in North Carolina are scrambling to convert their current electronic voting machines to systems that use voter-verifiable paper ballots to comply with a state law.

In 2013, the North Carolina General Assembly passed an election reform law called the Voter Identification Verification Act (VIVA). The law requires that voting systems produce a paper ballot, which is defined as “an individual paper document that bears marks made by the voter by hand or through electronic means.” According to the law, “any direct record electronic (DRE) voting systems currently certified by the State Board of Elections which do not use paper ballots shall be decertified and shall not be used in any election.”

The law was originally planned to go into effect on Jan. 1, 2018, but the deadline was extended. The new date is Dec. 1, 2019.

Only voting machines certified by the North Carolina State Board of Elections can be used in elections.

According to Patrick Gannon, a spokesperson for the North Carolina State Board of Elections, the state currently has six different types of certified machines and tabulators. These machines were certified in the mid-2000s, he said. The state board is currently certifying three new voting machines that feature ballot-marking devices and produce voter-verifiable paper ballots.

“A BMD or ballot-marking device also has a touchscreen interface, but instead of recording your votes to memory, the machine prints your marked ballot for you to verify and then cast using the same kind of tabulator that can be used for hand-marked ballots,” Gannon said.

A total of 35 counties in the state are using electronic voting machines in some form for elections and will have to con-



A voting technician tests iVotronic voting machines before an election in Haywood County, N.C. Photo courtesy of Haywood County Board of Elections

vert their systems to meet the requirements set by the new law. The current iVotronic voting machines are direct record electronic systems that allow voters to use touchscreens to make their selection and records votes directly onto memory hardware, Gannon said. These machines have a paper receipt trail that keeps track of votes, but does not produce voter-verifiable paper ballots.

A few counties throughout the state that are affected by the law are filing bills and resolutions to try to delay the decertification date of the DRE voting machines.

Charlie Collicutt, director of the Guilford County Board of Elections, said the decertification of the electronic voting machines poses a major challenge. State representatives filed a bill in the North Carolina House of Representatives that would change the decertification date of DRE voting machines in Guilford and Alamance counties.

Collicutt said the county has to make a decision to go with a paper ballot system and wait to see what types of equipment the state board certifies.

The new system will need to be tested in a real election, he said.

“We’ve got municipal [elections] coming out this year, but the turnaround time is really tight,” Collicutt said.

He added that another challenge is the state’s 2020 presidential primary, which has been moved to March from May, giving counties even less time to comply with the law. He emphasized that absentee-by-mail ballots need to be sent out in early January.

“It’s going to be a massive push over the holidays to get the poll workers ready for the new system,” he said.

Collicutt explained changing to a paper system will be a “total overhaul” of the system and will need to be done quickly.

“The administrative aspect of this is extremely, extremely difficult,” he said.

He estimates the switch to a paper ballot system could cost Guilford County as much as \$8 million.

“We’re in the 11th hour and every day that goes by without a chance to look at new voting equipment, to look at new certified equipment, is going to make this more difficult,” Collicutt said. “We’re getting to a point where it’s not going to be fair to the voters to either be saddled with a system that maybe we don’t want or to not

have a chance to fully vet some new and current and pretty neat technology that’s out there.”

Haywood County also uses DRE voting machines that have a verifiable paper trail, but not voter-verifiable ballots.

Haywood County commissioners requested a formal resolution for a postponement of the decertification date because the state is still completing the certification process of machines that will comply with the law.

Robert Inman, Haywood County’s director of elections, explained that changing to systems with paper ballots would be a dramatic shift for Haywood County. He said the conversion process is complicated and requires administrators to consider many different factors such as how to pick up paper supplies and where to store paper ballots.

“People look at it as a very simplistic thing and it’s truly not. It’s far more involved and has its challenges,” he said.

Inman estimates it will cost the county approximately \$800,000 to switch to machines with paper ballots.

Mecklenberg County, one of the largest counties in North Carolina, will also need to make

changes to the county’s electronic voting equipment.

“It would be very hard for me to roll out new equipment for an election in March,” said Kristin Mavromatis, Mecklenberg County’s Public Information manager for the Board of Elections.

Although the State Board of Elections says there are six types of machines currently certified in the state, Mavromatis said the technology of these certified machines is antiquated. She added that counties are unable to buy these certified machines in new condition and would have to purchase them used.

“If you’re going to spend money, you don’t want to buy used. You want to buy new,” she said.

Because the State Board of Elections has not recently certified any machines, Mavromatis said the county would be stuck with purchasing the outdated voting equipment. If the state does not certify any machines between now and the decertification date, the county plans to rent machines, she said.

“It seems ridiculous to get rid of something just fine to rent something that is so antiquated,” she said.

Additionally, Mavromatis said the county “loves” the electronic voting machines and has used a form of DRE machines for the last 30 to 35 years.

She said once the state board does certify new machines, the county needs time to decide which equipment they want to purchase.

“We would love to see an extension. I’m happy to go with paper. I want to do it the right way. I’d like to be able to see my options. I’d like my county to be able to make arrangements,” she said. Davidson County also passed a resolution to delay the decertification until 2022.

A North Carolina state bill was filed April 16 to delay the decertification date of DRE voting machines. The new decertification date would be Dec. 1, 2021, and apply statewide. **CN**



## Court considers citizenship

From CENSUS page 6

did. But none of these reasons appeared in his memo and were instead “post-hoc rationalizations.”

Finally, Justice Kagan asked General Francisco to explain how asking a number of federal agencies to request adding the question wasn’t “shopping for a need” that was “contrived.”

Three attorneys argued in favor of excluding the citizenship question from the census. The more conservative Justices spent their time refuting their more liberal colleagues’ points and making points of their own.

Justices Alito and Gorsuch questioned whether the Census Bureau’s predication that 5.1 percent less households with non-citizens will complete the form if the question was added was accurate given other reasons non-citizens might not complete the form

(like it is so long).

Justice Alito asked why Ross couldn’t ask the citizenship question when it would produce 98 percent accurate information for the 22 million people who the Census Bureau lacks this information for. While the Census Bureau said it could come up with a model more accurate than asking, that model doesn’t yet exist.

And the first question coming to the first attorney arguing in favor of excluding the citizenship question was from Chief Justice Roberts. He asked why additional information on citizenship wouldn’t help states comply with the Voting Rights Act.

The Supreme Court will likely issue an opinion in this case in June, right before the census form is printed. **CN**

*Lisa Soronen is the executive director of the State and Local Legal Center in Washington, D.C.*

## ON THE MOVE

### NACo STAFF

- **Jenny Hilscher** has joined NACo as executive assistant to the CEO, where she will also serve as the liaison for the NACo Board of Directors and Executive Committee. She previously worked for the National Association of Broadcasters and Sen. Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii). She earned a bachelor’s degree in English from the University of Southern California.

- **Alejandra Montoya-Boyer** has joined NACo as associate program director for community and economic development. She will be responsible for the execution of a new grant on county leadership in advancing economic opportunity funded by the Gates Foundation, where she worked as a program officer. She also worked at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies as a NextGen Policy Leader at Google was a graduate fellow at the Center for American Progress. She earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from New York University and master’s degrees from Columbia University and



**Hilscher**



**Montoya-Boyer**



**Buffington**

Universidad de Alcala in Spain.

- **Warren Buffington** is NACo’s new database administrator, responsible for the performance, integrity and security of NACo’s data. Prior to joining NACo, he worked on several projects in the area of database application development using SQL and PL/SQL to solve real-life data management problems. He also worked on a project to develop and design a database using Oracle DBMS. Warren earned a bachelor’s degree in Information Systems from the University of Maryland.

- Director of Program Strategy **Jay Kairam** spoke April 3 to the Retail Opportunity Network in Baltimore.

- Associate Legislative Director **Daria Daniel** spoke about urban development April 16 to the International Economic Development Council Conference in Washington, D.C.

- Associate Legislative Director **Jonathan Shuffield** gave a federal update April 18 to the County Supervisors of Arizona Board meeting.

## Preliminary Schedule Including Featured Speakers Now Available

Find out more at [www.naco.org/WIR](http://www.naco.org/WIR)



## NACo’s WESTERN INTERSTATE REGION 2019 CONFERENCE

May 15–17, 2019 • Spokane County, Washington



## LEADERSHIP EDGE

# Don't let actions get ahead of culture

by Tim Rahschulte

Aristotle said, "Change in all things is sweet." From some perspectives, that may be true, but if you've ever experienced periods of big transformation or massive and disruptive change, you may very well take issue with Aristotle's fervor in explaining it with such palatability.

In business and in life, even change brought about by a leader with a clear vision and proper planning can be fraught with risk and challenge. It's for this reason that most efforts to bring about a new order of things fail.

The odds of success are usually worse than the odds of failure. As David Pottruck, a former chief executive officer at Charles Schwab, said, when it comes to change, "the deck is stacked against you."

Regardless of the odds, most actions you take as a leader are in an effort to change the status quo to something better. This effort is necessary for anyone or any team, organization, or community hoping to keep pace in an increasingly competitive and complex world that is constantly changing. Nothing and no one survives, let alone realizes mild



achievement or especially great success, without vision, preparation, and action to change. Business author Alan Deutschman reminded us of this fact, noting our option to either "Change or Die," which was the title of his FastCompany article. Grim ... but true.

While you may think your

organization — and the people within it — could change when it matters most, Deutschman warns that "you're probably deluding yourself." Decades of research confirm that only a small handful of change efforts are ever truly successful. If individual and cultural resistances to change are great-

er than the compelling vision of the future and how to get there, the change will fail. The truth is, if there's limited dissatisfaction in the current state of things, lackluster vision of a possible future state, and ambiguous or overly zealous steps to get there, cultural and human resistance will overcome

the effort to realize the envisioned change every time.

In addition to making sure there's sufficient dissatisfaction in the current state, clarity in the vision of the future state, and proper preparation in the planned steps to get there, leaders can also increase their probability of success by ensuring their actions don't outpace the readiness of their teams or enterprise of employees.

Because any effort to realize a vision likely requires people to operate on the fringe of their capability and bring about new ways of performance and behaving, the best leaders know not to go too far beyond that fringe too quickly; otherwise, they end up in the fear zone, which will fuel significant resistance and freeze action.

As you go about any aspect of change, you've got to make sure the path of change is aligned with a readiness to change. Any time you get change ahead of your employees' readiness, you're going to have problems. So be aware of the current state of change readiness, and don't get your actions to bring about some change ahead of the employees' readiness to act in support of that change. **CN**

### GET TO KNOW...

#### Pike County, Mo.



#### Welcome, Pike County, Missouri

Pike County is located in northeast Missouri and was organized in 1818. The 670-square-mile county is named after Zebulon Pike, an American general and explorer. The northeast border of the county sits along the Mississippi River. Bowling Green, centrally located in Pike County, is the county seat. With a population of more than 18,300, the economy is based on agriculture, manufacturing and retail businesses.

The county experiences frequent changes in temperature with cold winters and hot summers, but it is unusual for extreme weather to last long. There are many scenic areas like the St. Louis University Lay Center and Highway 79, which is also known as a National Scenic Byway. Parks, playgrounds and picnic facilities throughout the county provide many opportunities for boating, fishing, swimming and hunting. **The Missouri Conservation Commission manages certain outdoor areas including the DuPont Reservation Conservation Area, Ted Shanks Conservation Area and the Ranacker Conservation Area.** During the winter, **visitors come to Pike County to see the bald eagle migration.** With all the recreational outdoor opportunities, the tourism industry is gaining more importance in the county's economy.



# *You're Invited!* *Stepping Up* **Month of Action** *May 2019*



**WHERE:** YOUR Community

**WHO:** Stepping Up Champions in YOUR County

**FIND OUT MORE:** [www.StepUpTogether.org](http://www.StepUpTogether.org)

THE  
**STEPPINGUP**  
INITIATIVE



WORD SEARCH

COCONINO COUNTY, Arizona

Created by: Mary Ann Barton

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

- CANYON:** Grand Canyon National Park is located in the county.
- COCONINO:** The county's name comes from Cohonino, a name applied to the Havasupai tribe.
- DANSON:** Actor Ted Danson is a native of the county.
- FLAGSTAFF:** The county seat.
- KICKS:** Get your kicks on Route 66, which runs through the county.
- LAKE:** The northern edge of Lake Powell is located in the county. The lake is the second largest man-made reservoir in the United States.
- LARGE:** The county is the second largest in the country, at 18,661 square miles.
- METEOR:** A meteor hit land in the county 50,000 years ago, leaving a 4,000-foot wide, 600-foot deep crater.
- MOUNTAINS:** The state's highest point, Humphrey's Peak at 12,670 feet, is located in the county.
- MOVIES:** Lots of films have shot scenes in the county, including *Forrest Gump*, *Casablanca* and *National Lampoon's Vacation*.
- PINE:** The county is home to the largest strand of ponderosa pine forest in the world.
- PLUTO:** The "dwarf planet" was discovered in 1930 at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff.
- SEDONA:** This desert town near Flagstaff straddles Coconino and Yavapai counties.
- SNOWBOWL:** The Snowbowl Ski Resort offers winter skiing down San Francisco Peaks.
- VOLCANO:** Parts of Sunset Crater Volcanic Field are considered still active. More than 600 volcanic vents have been active for 6 million years.

CN SPOTLIGHT



**Celebrating National County Government Month**  
Commissioners in Washington state celebrated National County Government Month by showing off their socks, produced for each county by the Washington State Association of Counties.

PROFILES IN SERVICE

KEN BORTON

Board Member  
Chairman  
Otsego County, Mich.  
Board of Commissioners



Borton

- Number of years involved in NACo:** Eight
- Years in public service:** 20
- Occupation:** Property management business
- Education:** Bible study and biblical counseling at Liberty University
- The hardest thing I've ever done is:** Divorce
- Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** My great-great grandfather, Ronald Reagan and Jesus
- A dream I have is to:** Visit every national park and travel the backroads of every state.
- You'd be surprised to learn:** I am a private pilot who is afraid of heights.
- The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** Drove around Lake Superior, hiking back into most of the waterfalls along the way.
- My favorite way to relax is to:** Sit in my recliner with my two cats on my lap, watching the wildlife outside.
- Every morning I read:** The Bible and my local paper online.
- My favorite meal is:** Anything that ends with a great dessert.
- My pet peeve is:** Gossip
- My motto is:** Your life will become better by making other lives better.
- The last book I read was:** *The 5 Second Rule*

- My favorite movie is:** *Airplane!* I love a mindless comedy. And don't call me Shirley!
- My favorite music:** Christian contemporary
- My favorite U.S. president:** Ronald Reagan
- My district is a NACo member because:** It gives my small county in rural northern Michigan a voice at the national level. NACo educates us and advocates for us!

Gaylord Michigan

Snowman Cam

Webcams

Live Streaming Video Webcam

Live Chat room

Pictures & Weather

FB Fan Group

YouTube Page

Video Archives

Facebook Page

Twitter Page

Donate

Gaylord Webcams

Snowman Cam

Richard's Pond

Identify Wildlife

Stay near the Snowman Cam

Peck's "The Snowman" Christmas

Feed the Wildlife

**I'M MOST PROUD OF:**  
My website  
[www.SnowmanCam.com](http://www.SnowmanCam.com).  
It has created friendships and support for many people around the world and is viewed 50,000 times per day.

Welcome to our home page. We are owned by Ken & Brenda Borton

All dates for the bear contest have been entered. Now you can watch to see when the first bear of 2019 will appear on our Cam. Go to the link that made a guess.



## BRIGHT IDEAS SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, Calif.

# Library Modernizes with ‘E-Card’

### PROBLEM:

County residents who are unable to visit a physical library branch can't access library resources.

### SOLUTION:

Create a program for all residents to have online access to materials.

by Rachel Looker  
staff writer

The San Bernardino County library system has found an innovative way to better serve all of its members both at the checkout counter and with the click of a mouse.

Library administrators launched an electronic “e-content” library card program in 2016. It provides county residents who are unable to visit a physical branch of the library the option to sign up for a digital library card and access over 250,000 items online.

The program allows library patrons to access a wide variety of electronic materials including e-books, audio books, magazines, music, videos, documentaries, comic books, scholarly journals, news databases and the most recent national and local newspapers. Users have access to a database of over 11 million songs in addition to five free downloads per week and five free hours of streaming per week.

San Bernardino County is the largest county in the continental United States and the 32-branch library system serves individuals throughout 20,000 square miles. County Librarian Michael Jimenez explained that it takes him more than three hours to drive from the library's administration office to one of the physical branches.

“It's a lot of ground to cover and for any given reason, whether it be economic reasons, or they can't find the

transportation to get to our facilities ... we wanted to give an opportunity for those folks to still have access to at least our online collection,” Jimenez said.

Before the program, an individual would have to visit a physical branch to get a library card in order to access the online content. Jimenez said this defeated the purpose of having digital materials that can be remotely accessed.

“We wanted to just be able to give the ability for folks to get a library card without having to actually come to a physical library,” he explained.

Before the program launched, the county library's e-content circulation was 226,000 per year. For the upcoming year, the library is projecting to have a circulation of 545,000 for digital content items. The program's goal is to reach 1 million circulations of e-content each year.

“My thought is with as much content as we have, with as much variety of items that we have within our digital media, we can easily if not meet but surpass what our largest facility does,” Jimenez said.

The creation of the e-content library card program was a collaborative effort from the library's management team. The library's IT staff developed an online application that users complete to receive a digital library card. When an application is submitted, the administration office receives an email, creates an account for the user and then emails the individual their new digital library card number. The program didn't cost the county any additional funding.

“We take really seriously the fact that we don't have a lot of resources and we have to try to do the best with what we got,” Jimenez said. “We're always looking at just creative ways to

come up with things.”

With the creation of the program, over 8,700 digital library cards have been registered and 5,000 of those cards belong to students. The program has worked to expand the county library's partnership with school districts. Specifically, a major benefit of the digital library card for students is it does not have a financial component if a book is returned late, Jimenez said.

“With a digital card you don't have that [late fee], so it kind of breaks down some of those economic barriers as well,” he said.

The program is able to issue digital library cards to an entire school of hundreds or thousands of students within several minutes. Teachers may request the digital cards for students and the library emails digital codes for everyone in the class to access the database of resources.

Andrew Mills, a San Bernardino County librarian and the collection development lead for the county, works to add new materials to the online system on a monthly basis.

“Since we have such a large community, we have people from all different walks of life, all different financial capabilities and backgrounds. Just being able to offer as much different material as we can allows us to really service as many different patrons and as many different demographics as we possibly can,” he said.

For example, Mills explained that audiobooks are very popular because a large portion of the county's population regularly commutes.

“This supports the lifestyle that is very prevalent nowadays and feels like a modern option as opposed to what can feel a little bit archaic in the brick and mortar physical branches,” he said. **CN**



A student uses the e-content library card program in San Bernardino County, Calif. Photo courtesy of San Bernardino County Library



## the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkler

# Living Longer: Part of Your Total Compensation

**W**e've all seen health news articles claiming people who volunteer live longer. But health news articles say a lot of things. Does volunteering really lower stress and make people happy? Yes.

A 2013 Harvard health blog was more specific, stating people who volunteer "feel more socially connected, thus warding off loneliness and depression." The author went on to say volunteers have "better physical health — including lower blood pressure and a longer life span." Volunteering goes hand in hand with public service. Both volunteering and public service can give individuals a sense of purpose, create personal satisfaction and improve community.

Volunteer Time Off (VTO) is a benefit that is climbing in popularity among employers and employees. VTO provides employees with paid days for volunteering in the community. According to a 2018 employee benefits report by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), only 24 percent of companies offer VTO. Employers are finding that volunteering often aligns with the organization's values, and it allows employees to come back to work refreshed and engaged.

Applicants and employees find that an organization with volunteer time off has values that align with their own values and that the organization's purpose is in alignment with their personal sense of purpose. Millennials in particular value volunteerism — it affects their decision to apply for, accept and remain in a position. According to the 2017 Millennial Impact Report published by the Case Foundation, "Millennials strive for a world in



which conditions are better than they are today and will continue to get better for everyone."

Volunteer Time Off programs work well in the private sector, but what about the public sector? One concern of public entities in offering VTO may be laws prohibiting public entities from giving "gifts" to private entities without adequate consideration.

Secondly, public entities need to consider whether it will limit how employees can spend this volunteer time and ensure that any limitations are consistent with the First Amendment. Before implementing any VTO program, entities should consult with their legal counsel to ensure they can design a program that does not run afoul of such laws.

The City of Aurora, Colo. launched its employee volunteer program in August 2016, allowing full-time employees eight hours of paid volunteer time off and part-time employees four hours. Similarly, the City of Mooresville, N.C., began its program in September 2016, granting 16 hours

VTO per year with a long list of approved agencies and organizations where employees may volunteer their time. Fairfax County in Virginia also provides "Volunteer Activity Leave" offering its full-time employees 16 hours each year to "support the neighborhoods in which employees live and work to include educational and charitable institutions, religious/faith-based and community service entities."

What are some of the items to consider when creating a VTO program?

- Work with your County Attorney's Office to outline any legal constraints you will be working within when designing the program.
- Who will be eligible? Regular employees? Benefit-eligible employees? Will employees have to be employed one year to be eligible for the time? Be employed six months?
- When will the hours be available? On a calendar year? A fiscal year? Will the hours be accrued or allotted in a bank? Does your payroll system have a code that can track the

hours?

- How many hours of VTO will employees receive? Do employees have to take the time in certain increments? What is the cost of the lost productivity?
- How will employees request the benefit and how will it be approved? Organizations often have the supervisor approve the time to ensure it does not impact operational coverage or business operations. Are employees required to avoid peak work periods?

Other important items to consider include: VTO is paid leave, so employees who get injured participating while taking VTO are not on work time and are not covered by workers' compensation. VTO hours do not usually carry over from year to year. VTO is usually paid at a worker's base salary. Employees do not receive travel time when reporting to and from the volunteering site. Is the employee required to give a contact phone number in case the employee's VTO service needs to be confirmed?

Be prepared for eligibility

questions. Will a VTO eligible employee be able to use the time for a parent/teacher conference or meeting at their child's school? Will they be able to use the time to coach a youth team? Volunteer at their child's school? Attend a school field trip? Will all eligible agencies need to be a 501(c)3?

Whether an employee's passion is hunger, literacy, youth, seniors, homelessness or housing, there is a partner agency in your community starving for volunteers. Employees may individually volunteer, volunteer as team-building or create a team of volunteers across the organization.

Gandhi said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." If volunteering really helps individuals live longer lives, then adding a VTO program to your total compensation package gives employees the benefit of longer life. And that is a great recruitment and retention tool. **CN**

*Erika Philpot is the human resources director and Rose Winkler is the deputy county attorney for Coconino County, Ariz.*



# NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

## CALIFORNIA

- A proposal in **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** is designed to give young people a voice in policy decisions. The Board of Supervisors voted to explore the creation of a **youth advisory group**, NBC-TV Los Angeles reported. If passed, the proposal would invite young people who have been part of the juvenile justice system or child welfare system to provide policy input to different county departments. The youth advisory group would work to establish programs that would help other young people and their families.

- Port of San Diego Commissioner Rafael Castellanos, who is running for the **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** Board of Supervisors, wants to create a county office to **enforce fair labor laws**, FOX-TV reported. The idea, he said, is similar to other county departments already established in the state. The Office of Fair Labor Standards would work to improve wage theft laws, increase training on workers' rights and help with the reporting of labor law violations.

- Supervisors in **NEVADA COUNTY** passed a rule stating **accessory dwellings** cannot be turned into short-term rentals, the *Tahoe Daily Tribune* reported. Also known as "granny units," accessory dwellings are second residences on the same property of a house or attached to a house. The rule prohibits an accessory dwelling unit, such as an apartment in a basement of a home, from being rented for less than 30 days. The new rule is designed to bring more affordable housing options to the county.



## COLORADO

Lawmakers in **ROUTT COUNTY** have **set limits on the amount of money** that can be donated to county elections, the *Steamboat Pilot & Today* reported. This is the first time in Colorado's history that a cap has been placed on county election contributions. Under the new law, a person is unable to donate more than \$1,250 to a candidate for county office in the primary or general elections. Small donor committees are unable to contribute more than \$12,500 and political parties are unable to donate more than \$22,125 for an election cycle. Local commissioners say the law improves oversight on county elections and emphasizes the candidates instead of monetary donations.

## FLORIDA

- Commissioners in **BREVARD COUNTY** voted for a **special traffic plan** that allows golf carts to cross an overpass above Interstate 95, *Florida Today* reported. Community members debated public safety concerns, specifically how the new plan would allow teenagers to use golf carts to drive themselves to school. Those who supported the new plan argued that the county is a golf cart-friendly community. The county is seeking permission from the state de-



## FLORIDA

- A **dog park** in **MANATEE COUNTY** has been dedicated to the former chair of the Manatee County Animal Ad-

visory Board. The Happy Tails Dog Park has been renamed the Laurie Crawford Dog Park in honor of Laurie Crawford, who served on the advisory

board for 15 years. Crawford, who passed away at the age of 64 in 2018, helped create the dog park, which was the first in the county. The four-acre

partment of transportation to approve the plan.

## ILLINOIS

A missed deadline may put the brakes on a bill that would give **more power to county board chairs**, the *Northwest Herald* reported. The bill would allow county board chairmen to give funds back to taxpayers, remove advisory committees and remove advisory commissions. The bill may not make it through the Rules Committee after members missed a deadline to send it back to the House.

## MAINE

Law enforcement agencies are collaborating in **KNOX COUNTY** to help those struggling with **addiction**, WGME-13 reported. The Knox County Recovery Collaborative partners four county law enforcement agencies with health care organizations. The goal of the program is to create a network of resources for addiction and recovery in an area that has been impacted by the opioid epidemic.

## MARYLAND

Officials in **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** are taking steps to alleviate the **overcrowding of local schools**. The county is reviewing boundaries to see if some students can be rerouted to other schools and is temporarily halting new housing construction, WAMU reported. Four school clusters will enter a one-year housing moratorium in July.

## MICHIGAN

- Commissioners in **EATON COUNTY** are making decisions on where **large solar companies** can purchase land and the restrictions they will be required to follow if they move to the county. The board passed an amendment that allows for solar operations on 900 acres of industrial land and more than 281,000 acres of land zoned as limited agricul-







park was recently renovated and includes pavilions, water fountains, picnic tables, trash cans and waste-bag dispensers.

tural, the *Lansing State Journal* reported. The amendment also sets requirements for approval of a development.

- The county board of commissioners in **MUSKEGON COUNTY** voted to end a lease with **Planned Parenthood** after a five-hour, controversial meeting, *MLive* reported. The commissioners voted to evict Planned Parenthood from the

county's Department of Public Health building, stating the health department needs the space. Planned Parenthood has 90 days to move out of the building.

## NEVADA

One man's church is another man's **nude resort**, and **CLARK COUNTY** wants a judge to make the distinction. The county is suing to close the Zen Temple because it is an unlicensed business that violates health and zoning codes and has racked up \$15,000 in unpaid taxes, fees and interest.

According to the lawsuit, the defendants were asked to "cease and desist" from using the property "for commercial purposes," but they refused and continually refused to comply with county codes.

## NEW JERSEY

- A fourth-grade student has won a contest to **design and name a mascot** for **MONMOUTH COUNTY** Recycling. Kiernan Turbitt of St. Leo the Great School told the tale of Recycling Rocky and his "Environmental Buddies" who helped recycle a sad soda bottle and turned him into a happy blue thermos.

# RECYCLING ROCKY



- **SUSSEX COUNTY** freeholders have asked the county clerk to put a special question on November's ballot asking citizens if they want to tell the county sheriff to **ignore sanctuary state rules**. The state policy, known as the "Immigrant Trust Directive," prevents law enforcement officials from

quizzing people about their immigration status unless relevant to an investigation and limits cooperation by jails with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

## NEW YORK

- With **measles** continuing to spread, **ROCKLAND COUNTY** is again trying to contain the virus. The commissioner of health has ordered anyone with the measles, or who has been exposed to the virus, to avoid public places. Another order requires all unvaccinated students to stay home from schools in two ZIP codes. County Executive Ed Day said he would reissue a state of emergency, despite the invalidation of his last declaration.

- Hoping to attract more candidates, **SCHENECTADY COUNTY** has **dropped its residency requirement** for most county government jobs. The previous policy, in place since 2000, was that employees must have lived in the county for a year before being hired and must remain county residents while on the payroll, *The Daily Gazette* reported. The rule has previously been waived for public safety dispatchers, health care workers and social services caseworkers, because of difficulties hiring or retaining people in those jobs.

- Smarting from the cap on the State and Local Tax Deduction in the 2017 federal tax overhaul, **SUFFOLK COUNTY** is establishing a **charitable gift reserve fund** for payment of local taxes designed to entitle donors to a tax credit worth 95 percent of their contribution. The IRS has challenged the legality of such a workaround, and County Executive Steve Bellone told WLNY News that he will push for clarity before the fund accepts any money.

## OHIO

- **JEFFERSON COUNTY**'s Board of Elections would like to test its new digital voting system and it will do so by en-

**couraging residents to vote early** in May's primary. The in-person absentee voting period will run until the day before the election, giving poll workers a low-pressure, live run-through of the new system before the primary, WTOV-TV News reported.

- The **SUMMIT COUNTY** Council has banned businesses in eight townships from selling cigarettes, tobacco products and other **tobacco product paraphernalia** to anyone younger than 21. *The Akron Beacon Journal* reported that according to Summit County Public Health data, 95 percent of adult smokers begin smoking before they turn 21. In Summit County, about 15 percent of people ages 18 to 20 smoke. Eighteen- to 20-year-olds with tobacco products won't be punished.

But any tobacco products sold or given to anyone under 21 are subject to seizure and forfeiture as contraband,

according to the ordinance. Businesses that sell tobacco products will be required to get a one-time \$150 certificate of compliance, and violators will be fined. The public health department will enforce the rule and issue the fines, with inspections and undercover purchases.

## OREGON

- **COOS COUNTY** Commissioners voted to sue the U.S. Department of the Interior in favor of seeking a federal judgement requiring the department to meet its statutory duties outlined in the 1939 **Coos Bay Wagon Road Act**. The county claims for a number of years the DOI has failed to fairly appraise Coos Bay Wagon Road lands and as a result has forced it to make difficult financial decisions, and the county is currently set to receive about \$234,308 for its over 50,000 acres of CBWR

See NEWS FROM page 16



## TEXAS

- The **Courthouse Cedar Tree**, which has been in **BRAZOS COUNTY** longer than Texas has been a state, was removed after its health began deteriorating rapidly, *The Eagle* reported. The trunk, wood and other remains will be donated to the Brazos County Historical Commission.

According to the Texas A&M Forest Service book *Famous Trees of Texas*, the tree grew alongside the cabin where Brazos County's first court convened and where county officials were first elected in January 1841. When the county seat moved in 1870, the 14-foot tree came along. Officials with the Texas A&M Forest Service have collected seedlings from the tree, and hope to have some viable trees to plant in the future.

## MICHIGAN

- **GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY** is doing more to **help seniors** in the community. Commissioners voted to increase annual payments to the county's pension provider, according to *The Ticker*. Additionally, they approved a contract to expand the Commission on Aging Senior Transit (COAST) bus program. The bus provides door-to-door, round-trip service for seniors to any location in the county. Seniors may make reservations to be picked up by the bus, which features handicap-accessible lifts.



NEWS FROM  
**ACROSS  
THE NATION**

From NEWS FROM page 15

lands according to *The World*.

- **MULTNOMAH COUNTY** was temporarily using a downtown Portland building as a homeless shelter while a developer worked on redevelopment plans for it. Those plans fell through, so the county has purchased the building to use as a facility for **mental health services**.

County Board Chair Deborah Kafoury said in her State of the County address, “Our vision is to create a safe place where people can come inside, get a peaceful night’s rest, a place to wash their clothes and, most importantly, support from a community of people who know exactly what they’re going through because they’ve been there, too.”

**TEXAS**

- With its probation director

pushing to keep kids at home and out of custody, **HARRIS COUNTY** may close one of its **juvenile detention facilities** and convert it to a hub for outpatient services and day reporting. The county would maintain three other juvenile facilities, *The Houston Chronicle* reported.

**UTAH**

- Following turnover on its commission, **SAN JUAN COUNTY** is withdrawing as an objecting intervenor to lawsuits filed by conservation and tribal groups challenging President Donald Trump’s downsizing of Bear’s Ears National Monument. The county gave notice it would no longer side with the president in the ongoing litigation filed by tribal groups, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

- **UTAH COUNTY** is considering creating a specialized

**domestic violence court**, which will concentrate resources in one place aiding victims, providing offender accountability and processing cases more efficiently. In 2017, the Utah Association of Counties directed counties to take a closer look at domestic violence in their communities and Utah County held town halls across the county to talk with victims and stakeholders about issues related to domestic violence locally. Utah County Justice Court doesn’t deal with a large enough number of domestic violence cases to warrant a separate court, *The Salt Lake Tribune* reported. The court may partner with Orem and Provo.

*News From Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Rachel Looker. Do you have an item for us to include? Contact us at [cban@naco.org](mailto:cban@naco.org) and [rlooker@naco.org](mailto:rlooker@naco.org).*



**MONTGOMERY  
COUNTY, MD.**

**M**ontgomery County, Md. borders Washington, D.C. and is considered part of the Washington metropolitan area. It was created from Frederick County by resolve of the Constitutional Convention of 1776. The county was named after Revolutionary War General Richard Montgomery, an Irish officer in the British Army during the French and Indian War.

The circular seal uses elements from Gen. Montgomery’s family arms. The College of Arms in London designed and approved the county seal, which was officially adopted in 1976 at the request of the County Executive.

The gold fleur-de-lis is a reminder of the French ancestry of the Montgomery family.

The year 1776 represents when the county was created.

“Gardez Bien,” which translates to “guarded well,” is located near the bottom of the seal.



The gold rings with blue gemstones, which are also found in the Montgomery family coat of arms, symbolize royal favor and protection.

If you would like your county’s seal featured in “Behind the Seal,” contact Rachel Looker at [rlooker@naco.org](mailto:rlooker@naco.org).



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