

County News

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Action on Internet tax bills heats up

BY RALPH TABOR
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Internet tax issues are heating up in Congress with the introduction of several new bills and possible committee markups this month.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) reportedly has told the chairmen of the Commerce and Judiciary committees that he wants Internet tax legislation approved by their committees prior to the May 27 Memorial Day recess.

The Republican leadership indicated that the legislation should include a permanent ban on Internet access taxes and a five-year extension of the current moratorium on discriminatory and multiple taxes on Internet transactions. The leadership also wants the 3 percent federal tax on telecommunications eliminated.

Legislation to extend the current moratorium on Internet access taxes for five more years was scheduled to be marked up by the Senate Commerce Committee on April 13 but was postponed by committee chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.).

According to press reports, McCain pulled the bill because of resistance by retailers and state and local governments. A staff spokesman stated that "he was barraged by requests from committee members who want more time to look at the bill."

When the Senate Commerce Committee markup is rescheduled, a bipartisan amendment will be offered that authorizes states to require collection of remote sales and use taxes if states simplify their sales tax system. NACo, other state and local government organizations and the retailers' E-Fairness Coalition are working with the senators.

The bipartisan amendment also calls for a two-year extension of the moratorium that is linked to the simplification of state and local sales taxes.

Legislation was introduced by the House Judiciary Committee leadership last month to implement the pro-business proposals included in the report of the Advisory Commission on Electronic Commerce (ACEC).

The top two Republican and Democrat committee members put their names on the bill (H.R. 4267) in an attempt to maintain committee jurisdiction. They also intend to introduce legislation this week on a proposal presented to the ACEC by eight local government, state and federal commission representatives.

Senators Judd Gregg (R-N.H.) and Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) introduced S. 2401 last month that would implement one of the ACEC proposals on

See TAX BILL, page 7

County News Quik Takes

Top 10 Farm Counties

Counties with the most farms, 1997

Fresno, Calif.	6,592
San Diego, Calif.	5,925
Tulare, Calif.	5,446
Lancaster, Pa.	4,556
Stanislaus, Calif.	4,009
San Joaquin, Calif.	3,862
Yakima, Wash.	3,365
Riverside, Calif.	3,048
Stearns, Minn.	2,982
Weld, Colo.	2,959

Source: 1999 County and City Extra



"This, obviously, is excellent news," said NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake. "When counties are doing well financially, that means they can keep tax rates low and still provide the services that residents need and want."

Taxpayers are benefiting from the



Photo by David Hathcox

Harris County, Texas won the top overall award, the Legacy Award, in the Acts of Caring volunteer recognition program for The Children's Assessment Center. Receiving the award for Harris County are County Judge Robert Eckels (third from right), Roz Hill, assistant director of the program and Alan Pinkett (c), board member of the program. The award was presented by judging panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka (l) of Nationwide Financial and Harris Wofford of the Corporation for National Services and NACo President C. Vernon Gray. Rep Ken Bentsen (D-Texas) was on hand to congratulate the winners. (See photos 12-14.)

America's counties enjoy nation's economic prosperity, study says

America's counties are sharing in the nation's economic growth, according to a survey released by NACo April 18.

The survey shows that counties are enjoying positive financial conditions. Eighty-four percent of all responding counties reported current financial conditions that range from "very good" to "excellent." In addition, 47 percent of the counties expect financial conditions to improve over the next three years.

The survey is part of a two-year study by researchers at Kansas University and Miami University of Ohio for NACo. One hundred and fifty-three counties, representing 45 states, completed the survey.

"This, obviously, is excellent news," said NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake. "When counties are doing well financially, that means they can keep tax rates low and still provide the services that residents need and want."

positive situation. In the last year, most counties did not increase taxes, according to the survey. Eighty-four percent of the counties did not raise taxes. Out of that number, 13 percent actually reduced taxes. In addition, 95 percent of the counties did not enact a new tax.

Counties also may not have the power to raise tax rates. More than half of the counties responding—55 percent—are operating under state-imposed property tax limits. Among the counties with limits, 46 percent currently tax at the maximum property tax rate allowed by state law.

At the same time, 21 percent of the counties reported that in the last fiscal year, state mandates required them to provide new county services or programs. Many of these mandates involve public safety programs.

The survey did show a greater reliance on fees at all levels of government. Thirty-five percent of the responding counties did make decisions to raise fees. Local sales tax is

an option for only 27 percent of the responding counties.

Urban counties are experiencing the most positive financial health. One hundred percent of the sample counties in the most urbanized population category reported good to excellent financial conditions. These counties cited positive financial conditions to growing economies, growth in tax bases and increases in population.

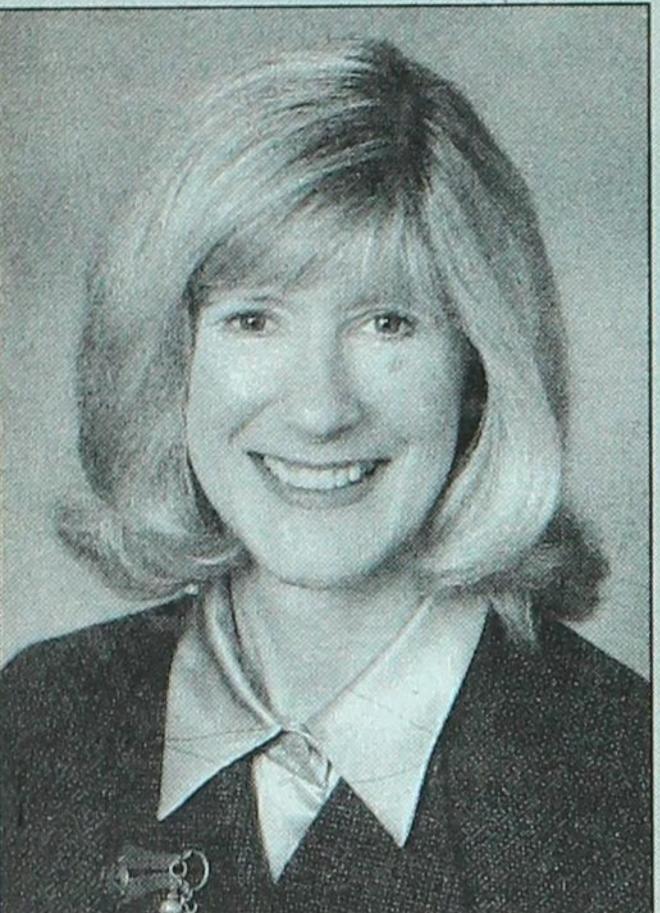
In contrast, 63 percent of the least urbanized counties reported good to excellent financial conditions, with 37 percent indicating fair or poor conditions. These counties attributed their fair or poor financial health to state mandates or stagnant or declining tax bases.

"This is an important point," Naake said. "There are 3,066 counties in the country. While some counties are doing very well financially, others are facing difficult times. Even

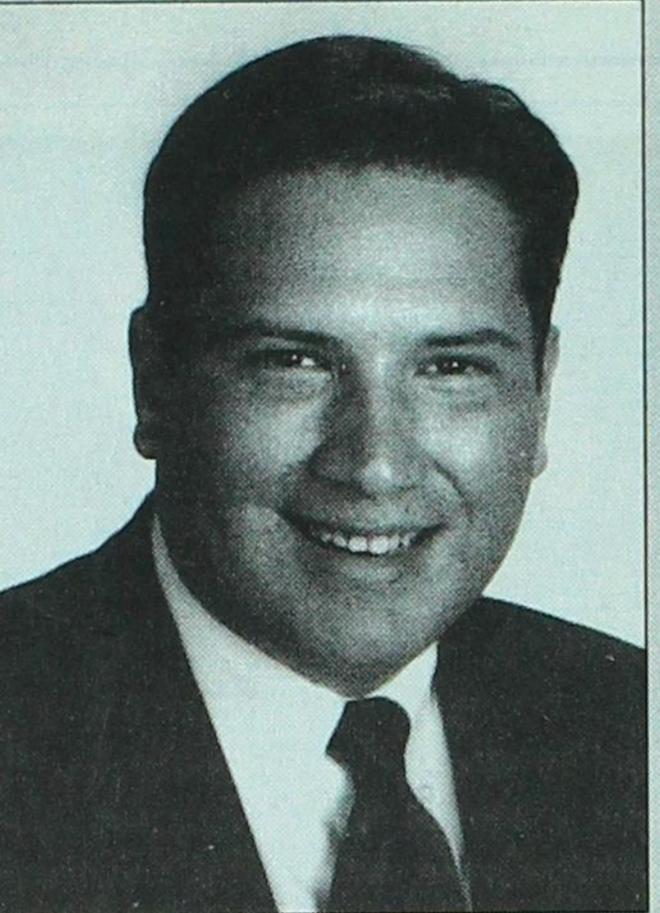
See PROSPERITY, page 8

In Our View

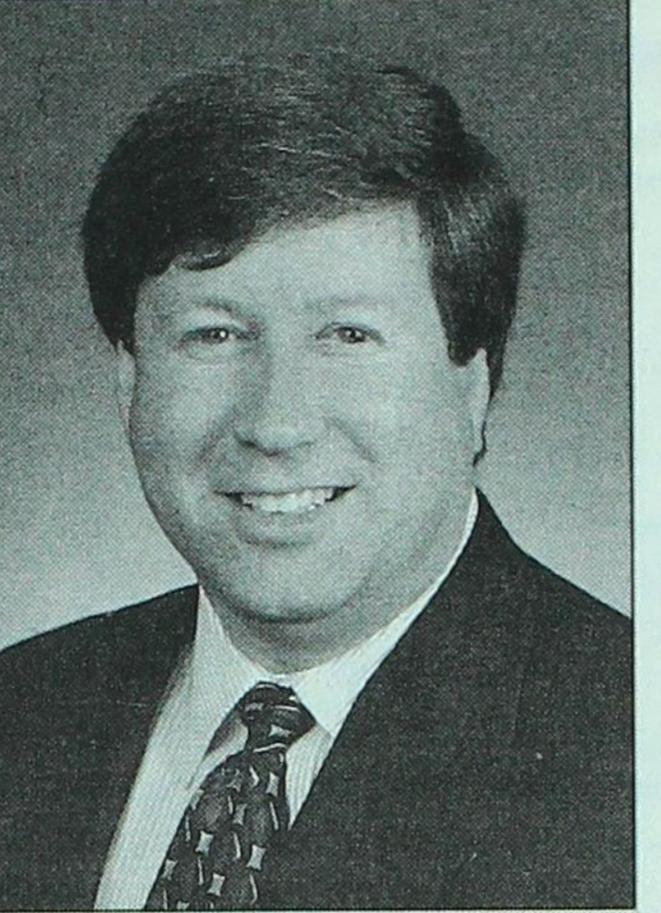
NACo officers share common vision



Jane Hague
president-elect



Javier Gonzales
first vice president



Ken Mayfield
second vice president

NACo's Annual Conference is always a time of reflection, expectation and excitement. It signals the beginning of an incredible year for its incoming president, and for our vice presidents, it reinforces their realization of the commitment and responsibility they have undertaken.

As yet another Annual Conference approaches and we each prepare to move up to the next position, it seems appropriate to share with NACo membership some of the ideas we have to ensure that NACo is a member-oriented and member-driven organization.

We have a shared vision for leadership that is meant to encourage membership participation at all levels and to ensure that NACo's collective voice is stronger than ever.

This is our pledge to you

We will work hard to be accessible, in touch and accountable. We want to know what NACo is doing that works for you, and what we could be doing additionally to better serve you and your county.

Our shared vision is designed to provide continuity and a multi-year policy that will permit committees to look beyond the usual one-year terms and develop more strategic approaches to the crucial policy issues they address. Additionally, this thread of continuity over a three-year period will permit committee leadership to more effectively drive the agendas of the committees they serve.

We will only appoint steering

committee chairs, vice chairs and subcommittee chairs, chairs of caucuses, task forces, standing committees and NACo board members who can and will devote the time, resources and effort to provide the leadership necessary to drive the agenda and stimulate participation by all members. And, we will work with that leadership, once in place, to develop standards of accountability that will serve our committees, caucuses, board, membership and our association well.

We will meet with steering committee chairs whenever possible and will make regular communication our highest priority.

We will make a strong commitment to strengthen and provide more visibility for both the Large Urban County and the Rural Action caucuses. Further, we will seek ways to provide the resources these caucuses require to build on the unprecedented successes they have achieved in Congress and at the White House.

We will also work hard to position NACo to reflect the strength of counties as the economic engines that sustain our nation. We will continue to seek opportunities to emphasize the crucial role of county officials within those economic engines as those elected officials that are closest to the constituents they serve.

Finally, we pledge to forge partnerships that can enhance and further the agendas set by our membership. We will seek collaboration on an issue-by-issue basis, building on already existing relationships as well as

identifying new partners for the new challenges we will certainly face.

First and foremost, we see NACo as a member-driven organization, meeting the needs of counties and providing a strong voice before Congress and the White House. We can only meet our pledge, however, with your help.

We need to hear from you. We need to know what is working well, what is not. We want to know where your interests lie, and where and when you might want to move into leadership. We particularly want to know your thoughts on how your officers at NACo can help our organization meet your needs.

As your president-elect, first vice president and second vice president, we are excited about the next three years! We have many ideas in common, we are committed to seamless transitions through our offices and we are in total agreement on our vision for NACo. Now we need you!

Please let us hear from you — by mail, by phone, by e-mail.

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EPA to make air quality designations: Transportation funds could be withheld

BY STEPHANIE OSBORN
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently announced it will begin the process of designating counties in "non-attainment" status with a new, stricter air quality standard for ground-level ozone.

It is expected that hundreds of counties across the country, primarily those in metropolitan areas, soon will be designated as being in non-attainment status with the new standard. And with non-attainment status comes the risk of having federal road funds withheld if counties do not have a transportation plan aimed at achieving compliance with the air quality standard.

The new standard for ozone, called the "eight-hour standard" since air quality monitor readings are averaged over an eight-hour period, was promulgated in 1997 under the Clean Air Act and replaces a previous standard in effect since 1991. Non-attainment means the area's air exceeds allowable concentrations of the pollutant or that the area contributes to a nearby locality exceeding the limit.

Ozone designations

On March 28, EPA requested that states submit a list by June 30 of metropolitan areas that should be designated in non-attainment status with the new standard. EPA will review and revise the list, then solicit comments on the revised lists from states and local governments this fall.

The earliest a non-attainment designation could become effective is early 2001.

While fewer than 100 counties have been subject to non-attainment designations under the earlier ozone standard, air quality monitoring conducted from 1996-1998 indicates that nearly 300 counties in 34 states will probably not meet the new standard.

See list, page 6.

Under the March guidance issued by EPA to the states, areas showing monitoring violations of the new standard during 1997-99 should be designated as non-attainment. "Surrounding counties contributing to those violations should be included in the non-attainment area," the guidance continues.

States are encouraged "to base

attainment and non-attainment boundaries on Metropolitan Statistical Areas or Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas. The boundaries will ensure that states consider population density, traffic and commuting patterns, commercial development and area growth when recommending areas."

Transportation conformity

Additional requirements are triggered when a locality is designated in non-attainment with an air quality standard.

For local governments, a requirement known as "conformity" kicks in, compelling the area to conduct transportation planning in con-

with state plans to improve air quality.

Conformity rules require an area to submit a transportation improvement plan (TIP) to support targets and deadlines in the state's implementation plan (SIP) for meeting air quality standards. Non-attainment areas without conforming transportation plans can have federal transportation dollars withheld, primarily through direct projects that add capacity to the road system. To avoid a conformity lapse, counties in non-attainment will be required to update their transportation plans by the effective date of the new ozone standard.

Previously, an EPA "grandfather" rule accommodated the complex transportation planning and environmental review processes. On April 1, 1999, a vote of 274-133 in the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3133, the Transportation Conformity Act, which would have required states to update their transportation plans by the effective date of the new ozone standard. The Senate passed the bill on March 23, 2000.

The immediate impact of the bill is to restrict the number of stations that can receive federal funds at risk in about a dozen metropolitan areas.

The more universal effects of the decision are likely to be felt in 2001 as counties are designated in non-attainment with the new ozone standard and conformity requirements come on line.

See EPA, page 3

EPA from page 2

The eight-hour ozone standard continues to be the subject of a legal challenge. In a May 1999 decision, *American Trucking Associations vs. U.S. EPA*, a federal appeals court prohibited EPA from enforcing the eight-hour standard by resurrecting a long-dormant legal principle limit-

ing the policy-making authority Congress can delegate to agencies. EPA has appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, but a final decision is not expected for several months.

In the meantime, EPA maintains it does have the authority to move forward and make non-attainment designations under the new ozone standard.

NACo's position

Given the potential for costly delays in transportation projects, NACo is advocating legislation that would reinstate the grandfathering provision of the conformity rule. NACo also supports delaying implementation of the eight-hour ozone standard until there is a scientific consensus that the standard will protect human health

and the environment, and until EPA adequately evaluates the costs and benefits of the standard.

NACo is supporting identical bills introduced by Sen. Kit Bond and Rep. James Talent, Republicans of Missouri, which would reduce the negative impact of the EPA rules on counties. The Senate bill, S.1053, has 21 co-sponsors and has

been reported out of committee. The House bill, H.R.1876, has 35 co-sponsors and awaits action by the Commerce Committee.

County officials are encouraged to weigh in with their states during the non-attainment designation process and to ask their congressional delegations to co-sponsor S.1053 and H.R.1876.

House passes broadcast legislation

BY ROBERT J. FOGEL
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The House acted on two bills recently that affect local television and radio broadcasting.

By a vote of 375-37, the House passed H.R. 3615, a bill that would provide loan guarantees to businesses that build the infrastructure to provide local broadcast stations to those communities that can't receive them through direct broadcast satellite. The legislation will make \$1.25 billion in loans available but allows only 80 percent of each loan to be guaranteed.

The program would be administered by the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service. The Senate passed a slightly different bill on March 30 for \$1 billion on loan guarantees.

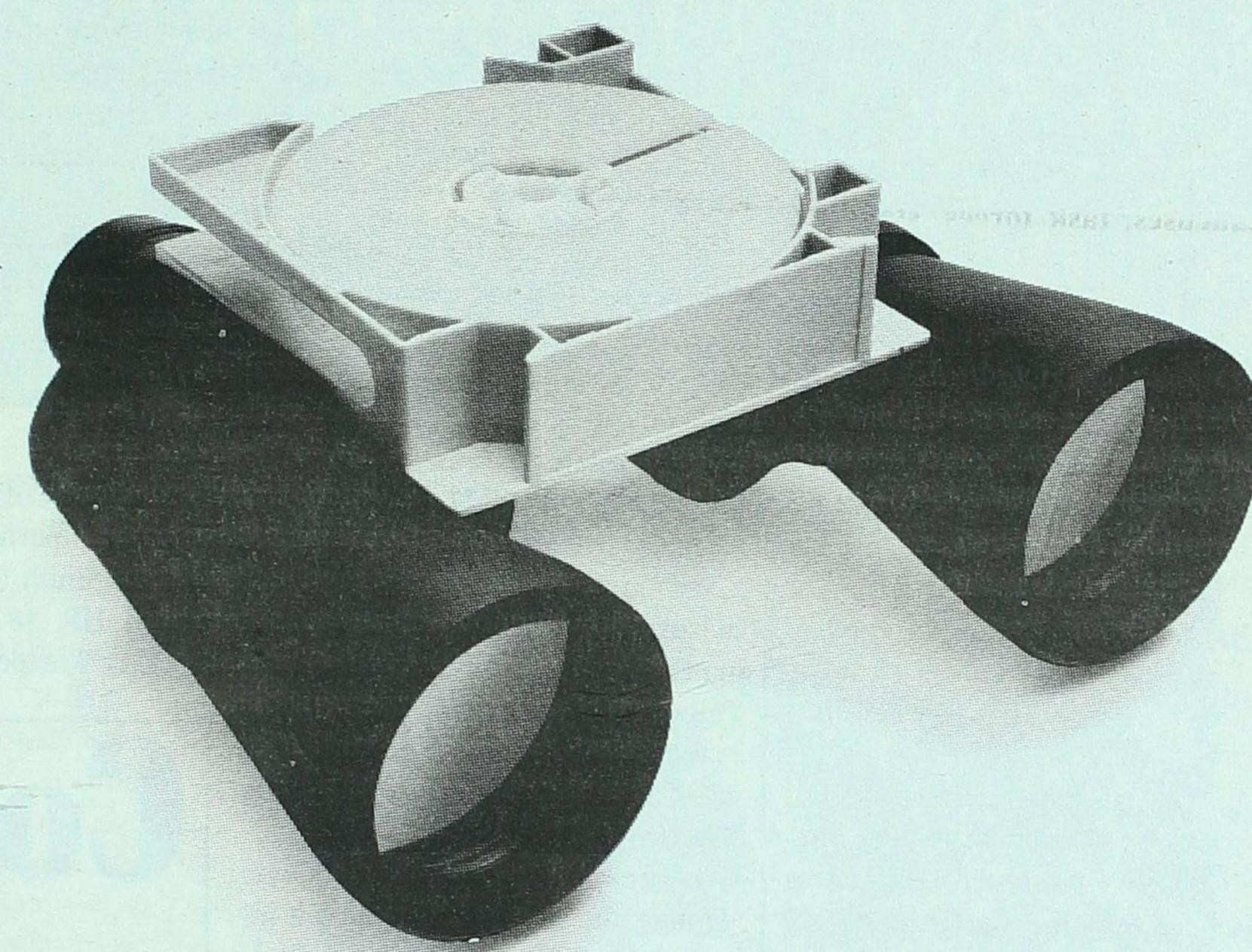
On April 13, the House passed, by a vote of 274-11, a bill that would allow the implementation and licensing of low-powered FM radio stations. The Federal Communications Commission recently adopted regulations that would license this new low-powered service. NACo supported these regulations as a way of creating new low-power FM radio services to meet the urgent needs of localized communities and underrepresented groups.

The legislation, H.R. 3439, would affect the number of new low-powered stations that could be established and mandate a study of the amount of interference that these new stations would cause for existing stations.

Correction

Jackson County, Mo., winner of an Acts of Caring Award in the Parks and Recreation category, was misidentified in the April 17 issue.

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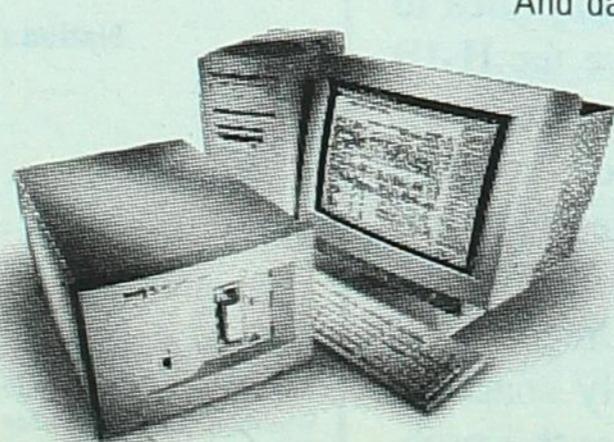
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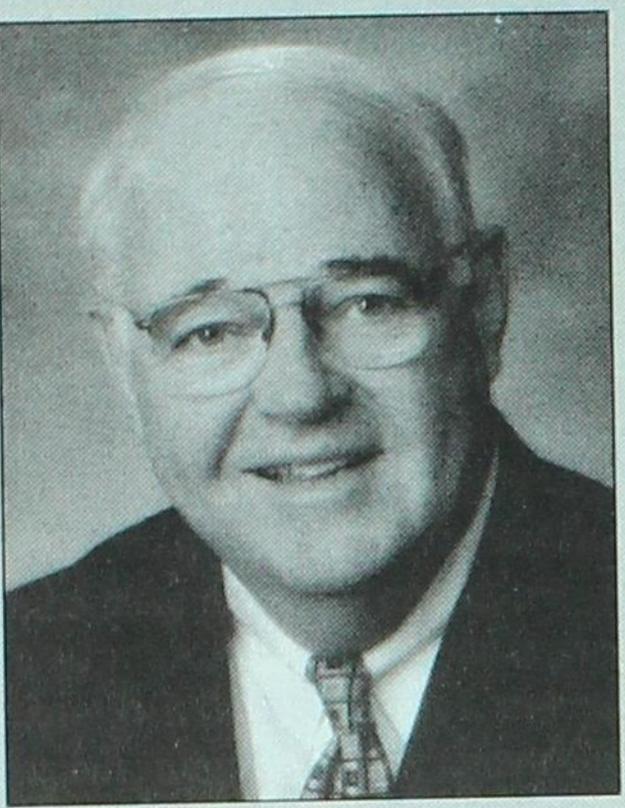
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Profiles in Service



James Snyder

Legislator
Cattaraugus County, N.Y.

NACo Board member
Past NACo president

Years as a NACo member: 24.

Years in public office (list offices held): Cattaraugus County Legislature – 24 years; 12 years as chairman.

Occupation: Vice-president, AAA of Western and Central New York.

Education: Bachelor's degree, Syracuse University; master's degree, St. Bonaventure University.

The hardest thing I've ever done: Bury my mother in 1995. She raised me as a single mom.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Bobby Knight, Margaret Thatcher, Harvey Ruvin and John Stroger.

A dream I have is to: Spend a month in China. I just returned from a visit there.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Am left-handed, color blind, and have been inducted into the Syracuse University Sports Hall of Fame.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Hike all over the East Coast as a teenager by myself.

My favorite sport is: High school and college basketball.

I'm most proud of: My wife, four children, two stepchildren and seven grandchildren. I am also very proud of my work on behalf of single moms.

Every morning I read: The Buffalo News and The Wall Street Journal.

My favorite meal is: Veal parmigiana with pasta.

My pet peeve is: Having clueless politicians lecture me, wasting my time.

My motto is: *Carpe diem* or to those less informed, "chew the peanuts while you still have your teeth."

The last book I read was: *Sick Puppy* by Carl Hiaasen, a journalist with The Miami Herald.

My favorite movie is: "Casablanca" or "Saving Private Ryan." I remember those days.

My favorite music is: Beach Boys, Abba, Billy Joel and Backstreet Boys.

My favorite president is: Easy. President George Bush. He was a wonderful human being and I served as a special assistant to President Bush for two years in the White House.

Bankruptcy bill could give county employees more control over pensions

BY NEIL E. BOMBERG
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The House and Senate conferees on the Bankruptcy Reform Act are likely to be named shortly after Congress returns from its spring recess. If the measure is adopted, the impact on public pensions would be significant. The provisions have strong bipartisan support and would enable county, city, state and other public sector employees to have increased control over their individual retirement pensions.

If adopted, county employees would be able to roll over their defined benefits retirement plans into a defined compensation retirement plan or vice versa. Increased pension protections would be put in place through stronger ERISA reporting requirements and stronger protection against creditors in the event that an employer

or employee goes bankrupt.

As positive as these changes are, there remain a few troubling issues.

The first and most serious problem is a provision that would nullify new retirement asset protections that both the Senate and House bills contain. In the Senate version, a debtor would be able to waive the protections that pensions have from bankruptcy proceedings in a loan or credit agreement.

The second is a recent set of court decisions which found that required employee contributions to a defined benefit plan are disposable income under Chapter 13 bankruptcy cases and can be taken by creditors in the event that an employee declares bankruptcy. The bankruptcy bill states that such contributions are not part of a bankruptcy estate.

NACo has asked Congress to clarify that these contributions not constitute disposable income, that the funds can neither be taken retroactively or proactively by creditors to pay off bankruptcy debt.

The third is a provision which states that employee pension plan contributions cannot become part of an employer's estate in the event that an employer goes bankrupt. Current language in the bill only applies to private sector plans. NACo and other interest groups have asked that it apply to governmental, 403(b) and 457 plans.

Finally, NACo is asking that pension plan loan-repayments not be treated as disposable income for purposes of bankruptcy law. Some retirement plans allow their participants to take out a loan against their retirement assets.

Visa issue emerges as a significant problem for high-tech employers

BY NEIL E. BOMBERG
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

A booming job market for tech wizards has created an enormous backlog at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), making it tough for foreign workers to obtain jobs or switch jobs once they're in the United States.

According to the INS and employer groups, the backlog has made it increasingly difficult for high-tech firms around the United States to address their worker shortage problems. The problem has been compounded by the fact that the INS issued several thousand more H-1B visas last year than allowed by law. To address this problem, the INS has been forced to stop issuing new H-1B visas.

H-1B visas allow foreign workers to enter the United States to fill high-tech positions if a company can document that it cannot hire an American worker to fill the job.

The law requires an H-1B visa recipient who is switching jobs to notify the INS and have the H-1B visa switched to the new company. This process, which used to take two to three weeks, now takes up to five months, especially in California, Washington state and Oregon.

Congress is currently considering legislation to address this problem. Three bills have been introduced. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) has introduced S. 2045, the American Competitiveness in the 20th

Century Act of 2000. That has substantial bipartisan support. Rep. Lamar Smith (R-Texas) has introduced HR 3814, the Technology Worker Temporary Relief Act, and

Rep. David Dreier (R-Calif.) introduced H.R. 2983, Help Improve Technology Education

See VISA, page 5

County News

"THE WISDOM TO KNOW AND THE COURAGE TO DEFEND THE PUBLIC INTEREST"

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Senate votes twice against cutting federal gas tax

BY ROBERT J. FOGEL
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Two recent votes taken in the Senate have hopefully ended an effort to cut the federal fuel tax.

On April 11, the Senate went on record against S. 2285, legislation to reduce the federal fuel tax. By a vote of 43-56, a cloture motion to shut off debate on S. 2285 failed.

Cloture requires 60 votes and the proponents of a cut in the tax were unable to even muster a majority. Opposition to the cloture motion was a vote against a reduction in the gasoline tax. By not shutting off Senate debate, the bill was subject to a filibuster or unlimited debate.

The bill, sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.), would have suspended 4.3 cents of the gasoline tax and would suspend the remainder of the 18.4 cents tax if the national average cost of gasoline reached \$2 a gallon. In recognition of the strong opposition to the legislation, S. 2285 was withdrawn from consideration after the cloture vote.

In a vote the week before, oppo-

nents of a reduction in the fuel tax won a 65-35 vote on a Sense of the Senate resolution amending the FY2001 budget resolution that supported continued use of federal fuel taxes for construction and rehabilitation of highways, bridges, and transit systems. This was done in re-

sponse to a provision in the budget resolution that assumed the 4.3 cents fuel tax reduction. The resolution was offered by Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) and was co-sponsored by Sens. John Warner (R-Va.), Max Baucus (D-Mont.), George Voinovich (R-Ohio), Frank

Lautenberg (D-N.J.) and Kit Bond (R-Mo.).

In a letter to the Senate, NACo President C. Vernon Gray stated, "NACo is opposed to any legislative proposals that would interfere or interrupt the current level of transportation user fees being collected which

provide dedicated federal funding of transportation programs."

While Senator Lott could still offer his bill as an amendment to another piece of legislation, the lack of support as well as the current downturn in fuel prices may discourage another attempt.

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Miami's mayors take center stage

Leaders navigate choppy waters of Miami's politics during Elian saga

BY KEVIN WILCOX
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

In the aftermath of an April 22 raid to remove six-year-old Elian Gonzalez from the Miami home of relatives and reunite him with his father in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., rioting broke out.

Miami's mayor called for calm. Actually, both of them did. This months-long saga of a young boy rescued from sea on Thanksgiving Day 1999 has been played out in one of the few areas in the nation with dual mayors.

Alex Penelas is the mayor of Miami-Dade County. Elected in 1996, Penelas is the first person to hold that job. A spokesman in the mayor's office said the county chose to call the position mayor instead of county executive because the mayor is elected county-wide by voters in no less than 30 municipalities.

Joe Carollo is the mayor of the City of Miami. In 1998 Carollo was named the winner of a 1997 runoff election after a judge threw out 4,000 absentee

ballots because of evidence of fraud. Penelas and Carollo maintain high profiles in the community. Although the two are occasionally at odds, they took a similar tack during the Elian Gonzalez saga. Both supported the Miami family.

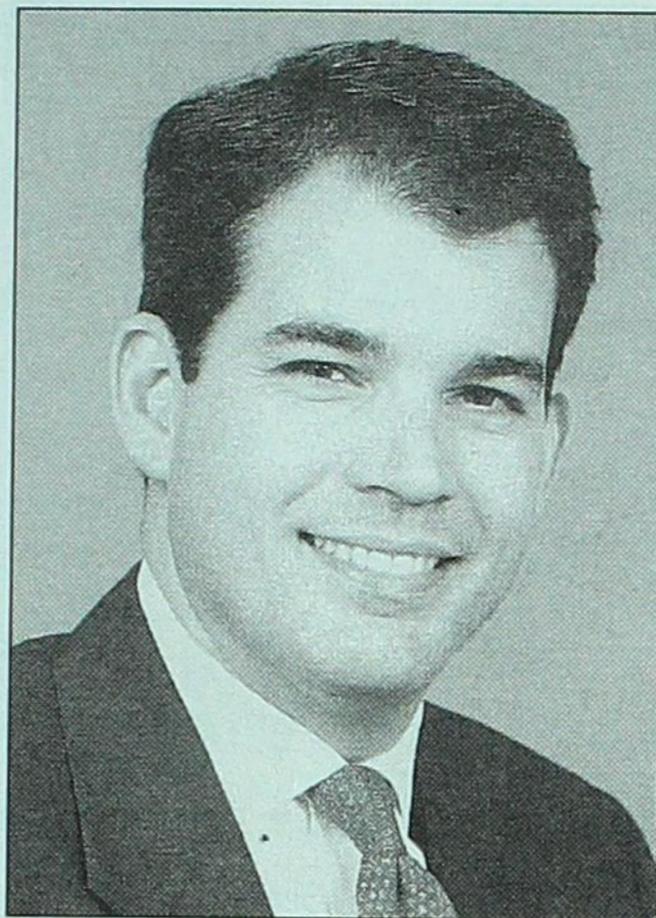
Earlier this year, the mayors met with Attorney General Janet Reno in Washington D.C., pressing for a meeting between Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, and the Miami relatives who were caring for Elian.

"The community will support whatever the family will decide," Penelas said at the time.

After the raid, both mayors expressed outrage over the action, but were quick to stress that violence wouldn't be tolerated.

Carollo and Penelas certainly don't march in lockstep, however. Just last year they locked horns over the Miami Circle, ruins of what is likely a temple of the Tequesta Indians.

The ruins were found during excavation of the 2.2 acre site for de-



Alex Penelas

velopment. The county went to court to stop the project and seize the property for preservation of the 500- to 700-year old site.

"To just literally pave over our past like that, without any sort of respect to what happened here — that could have been a sacred monument of some sort — I think that

"To just literally pave over our past like that, without any sort of respect to what happened here — that could have been a sacred monument of some sort — I think that would send a very bad message."

Alex Penelas
Miami-Dade
County Mayor

would send a very bad message," Penelas said.

Carollo countered that seizing the property could have a chilling effect on efforts to develop other properties.

"We would lose \$1.1 million of property tax every year, plus millions of additional dollars that new residents who move to this project

would be spending in city businesses," Carollo said.

Whether they agree or disagree, both mayors have roughly the same charter powers. For instance, both can hire and fire the government's professional manager, but only with commission approval.

Both have veto authority over the budget, provided they don't strike a revenue source without striking an equal or greater expenditure. The nine-member county commission and the five-member city commission can override those vetoes, however, at the next meeting.

The mayors are charged with delivering a state of the city or county address and preparing a yearly budget report.

One key difference is the size of the government. The county is the largest metropolitan government in the southeastern United States. It has 2.1 million residents and a budget of \$4.1 billion. The City of Miami, on the other hand, is home to about 365,000 people.

Governing Magazine's MANAGING TECHNOLOGY 2000 set for May 31

Governing Magazine's MANAGING TECHNOLOGY 2000 Conference, scheduled for May 31-June 2 in Denver, Colo., promises to be a premier technology event for state and local governments. Topics as diverse as "Bridging the Digital Divide," "Privacy and the Public Trust," and "Assessing IT Management" will be discussed at this interactive forum where participants from many different states, cities and counties will brainstorm strategic issues of technology management across functional boundaries. NACo is a conference co-sponsor.

The program will include a special regional meeting of the Information Technology Task Force of the National Governors' Association chaired by Wyoming Gov. Jim Geringer. Other speakers include Colorado Gov. Bill Owens; Denver Mayor Wellington Webb; Aldona Valicenti, chief information officer, State of Kentucky; Wisconsin State Sen. Robert Jauch, chair, NCSL Committee on Communication and Information Policy; Don Saelens, chief information officer, City of Minneapolis, and Peter Tippett, chair, Alliance for Internet Security.

For additional information go to www.Governing.com or contact: The Conference Department, P.O. Box 189, Winchester, MA 01890; (Tel.) 781/729-8611, (Fax) 781/729-8677, (E-mail) ConfDepart@aol.com

AX BILL from page 1

ing nexus in the collection of sales and use taxes. The bill would set into law the Supreme Court decision in *Quill vs. North Dakota* that restrict states to only collecting sales and use taxes in their own state. The bill also redefines physical nexus and exempts many businesses from paying income, business and sales taxes. County and city officials used

the Easter recess to talk to senators and representatives about not acting too quickly on any of the ACEC proposals or on bills expanding or extending the moratorium. Many counties also passed resolutions urging no action on the moratorium unless it was linked to congressional authorization for states to require collection of taxes on remote sales.

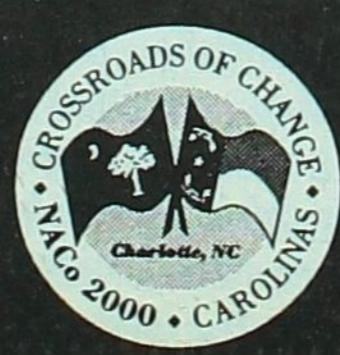
County News invites Letters to the Editor
If you have a compliment, complaint or different point of view, let us know. Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail, fax or e-mail to: County News, NACo, 440 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2080; 202/393-2630; cnews@naco.org.



Charlotte Convention Center

COME TO THE CAROLINAS

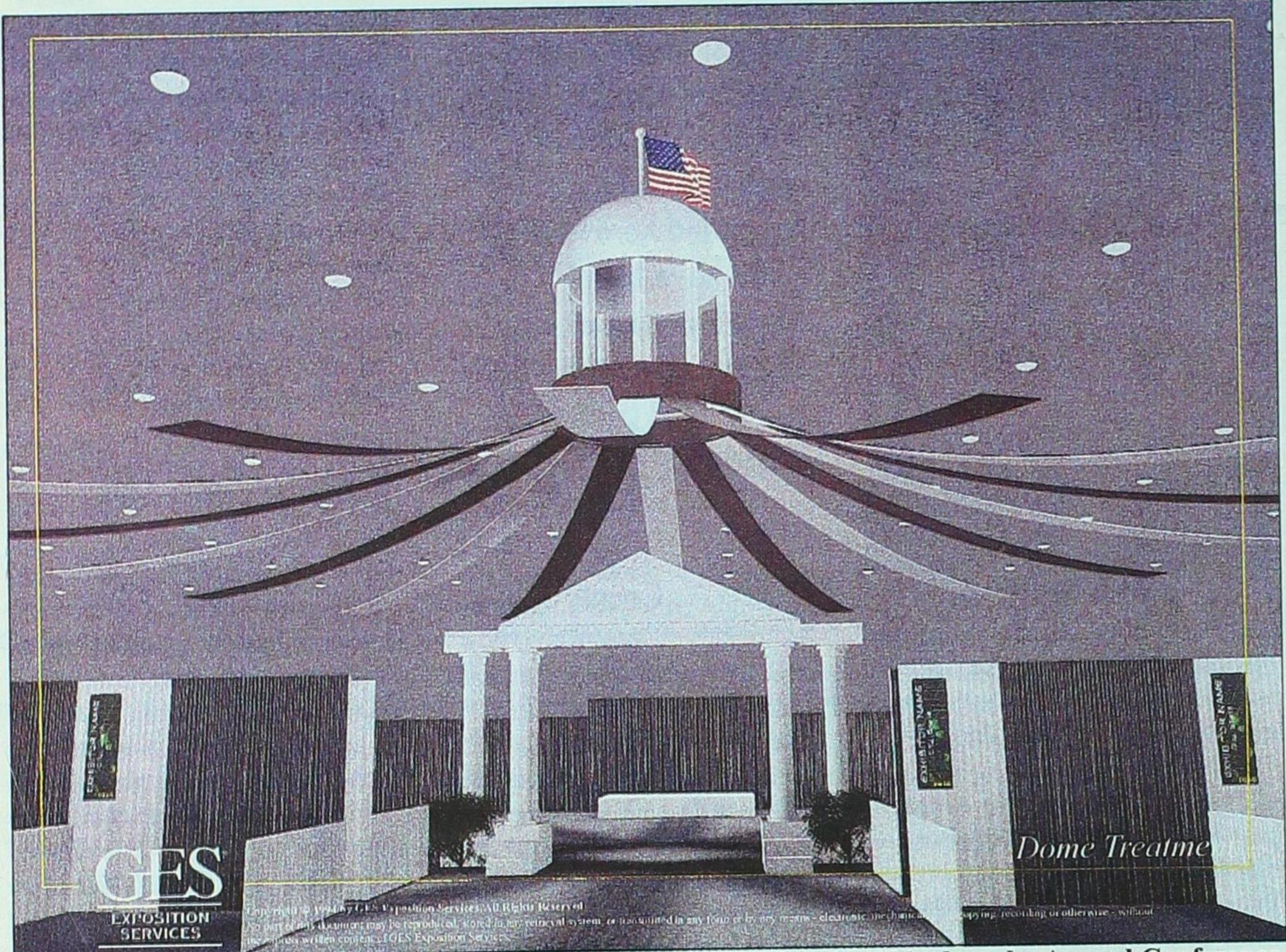
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FOR NACo 2000

Registration: www.naco.org • Tel. 202.393.6226
Host Site: www.co.mecklenburg.nc.us/naco

New exhibition will debut at NACo's Annual Conference



A computer rendering shows how the Crossroads Technology Booth will look at the Annual Conference.

By JANE FORSYTHE
MEETINGS MANAGER

The 2000 NACo Annual Conference and Exposition, July 14-18, in Mecklenburg County (Charlotte), N.C., will feature an exciting new exhibit area called "Crossroads: Where Technology and Counties Meet." This exhibit will showcase a range of high technology cutting-edge solutions that can provide faster, cheaper and more efficient county services to constituents, vendors and employees.

"Crossroads" will be located in Hall A/B of the Charlotte Convention Center as part of NACo's existing exhibition show. The area will be designed around a facade of a county courthouse and will include a product demonstration stage where delegates will be able to see hands-on, live demonstrations of how these cutting-edge solutions can benefit counties.

Attendees will have the opportunity to interact with the vendors and ask specific questions about the individual needs of their own counties. Delegates will leave the Crossroads exhibit with an inside track as to how to better use technology to meet the growing demands for county services.

A wide range of products and services will be highlighted in the Crossroads area by companies such as ATI, Inc., Convergent Group, ea Consulting, Inc., ezgov.com, FuGEN, Inc., Greentrac.com, Inc., Motorola Communications, PeopleSoft, Discover Business Services, Space Imaging and GovStoreUSA.

Another new feature of this year's exposition will be an opening exhibit hall reception to be held Saturday, July 15 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.

During this time, in addition to visiting the Crossroads and other

trade show booths, delegates will have an opportunity to participate in the creation of a mural that will reflect their impressions of how counties can use technology to better their communities.

Artist Xavier Cortada from Miami-Dade County, Fla. will lead the creation of the mural. The process will continue throughout the conference on Sunday and Monday with the final product to be unveiled on Tuesday.

In addition to the opening reception, the exhibit hall, including the Crossroads exhibit, will be open on Sunday from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and Monday from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. A brunch will be served in the exhibit hall on Sunday and a box lunch will be provided on Monday.

For more information on NACo's 2000 Annual Conference and Exposition, visit our Web site at www.naco.org or call Sherri Greenwood at 202/942-4293.

and all population sizes.

The survey results were compiled into a report titled, County Revenue and Expenditure Patterns. It is the second report of an ongoing national study of the fiscal condition of U.S. counties. The first report, County Revenue Patterns: A Preliminary Investigation, provided an assessment of general fund revenues, enterprise and debt service funds, capital improvement projects, tax-exempt property, intergovernmental aid, state imposed tax limitations and county debt levels.

Second phase of census begins

By JACQUELINE BYERS
RESEARCH DIRECTOR

On April 18, the Census Bureau completed the first phase of Census 2000. This phase involves the mailing in of census forms. It is now preparing for the most costly and most comprehensive portion of any 10-year census. Non-Response Followup (NRF) is the process where the Census Bureau sends thousands of employees out to knock on doors to try to get responses from people who have not mailed back their census forms.

NRF is required for several reasons. First the constitution requires a count of all residents for the purpose of reapportioning U.S. congressional seats. When people don't return the forms that were mailed to them in March, it is necessary to try to get the information required by law by sending an enumerator out to each non-responding household.

There are some people who can only participate in the census by giving their information to an enumerator. Those households that are in newly constructed areas that opened for habitation since Dec. 31, 1999, when the Master Address Files used to mail out census forms were completed, did not receive a form in the mail. Unless these people contacted the Census Bureau to request a form, their information will only be collected during the NRF phase. Others, who may not have requested a form in the language that they need by responding to the first census mailing, can only respond in language during this non-response followup.

Enumerators, who are required to make three visits and three phone calls, or a total of six attempts at contact, will be in the field from April 27 until July 7.

PROSPERITY from page 1

urban counties have poor neighborhoods. We realize this and are working hard to help all counties, but especially those in rural areas, to find ways to boost their economies."

NACo recently formed the Rural Action Caucus, which has as one of its objectives rural economic development.

The survey also focused on expenditures. The responding counties spent an average of \$395 per capita on general fund activities. Public safety was the largest reported general fund bud-

get each visit by a census enumerator costs taxpayers \$35, contrast with a cost of \$3 to process a mail-in form. With a national response rate hovering somewhere around 70 percent of 120 million households, more than 40 million households need to be counted.

In addition, for the first time in years, there is an appreciable difference in the rate of response for short forms and the long forms.

In the last three censuses, there was only a 3 percent difference in the rate of returns. This time, because

the ongoing controversy over the long form, which goes to only 70 percent of households, that difference has increased to nearly 13 percent. Many people who have expressed concern about the question on the long form do not realize except for a question on grandparents as caregivers that was required to be added as part of the Welfare Reform Act, no additional question have been added since 1990.

The board In fact, there are five fewer April 13 authorizations than in the 1990 Census. Changes programs on the long form are mandated by the U.S. Congress to provide new programs that is necessary to put out federal programs. Each question on the form is required by a specific federal law.

The Census Bureau will begin putting up advertising in targeted responding areas. Many counties that have complete count committees have worked tirelessly to figure out about the importance accurate count to their communities. Local census offices have people to be enumerators that are visible and have standing in communities where non-response is highest. All possible actions are taken to maximize participation.

John this, the largest count of Americans in the history of the nation. Employees in Kan. are being with the CIA wire taps or men, though CIA. This is the classification Analysts. The project concepts that are county government Dennis Gelman analyst project. The county-based cost management.

Spread the Word

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is looking for your best practices. On March 20, HUD opened the nomination process for programs for 2000 Best Practices called "Building a Better Tomorrow." Nominations will be accepted until May 31. Winning programs will be honored at the Best Practices Symposium on Aug. 7 in Washington, D.C.

If your county has programs that use partnerships or creative problem solving, have overcome serious obstacles or demonstrate efficiencies achieved and address two or more of HUD's strategic goals, you may want to submit these programs for consideration. For additional information go to <http://www.hud.gov/bestpractices> or contact the Best Practices Help Desk at 202/708-1992.

It allows you to group more than six number of participants. To get the

Multnomah County, Ore. buys 'green power'

County partners with utilities, Earth Day advocates to promote renewable energy sources

BY MARY ANN BARTON
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Officials in Multnomah County, Ore. celebrated Earth Day last month in a big way by pledging to purchase 1 percent of its electricity from environmentally preferred renewable resources or as it's sometimes called, "green power."

Green power is electricity generated from renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydropower, biomass and landfill gas. It doesn't have the negative environmental impacts of fossil fuel, the major source of electricity in the country.

"Clean, renewable resources are the way of the future," said Beverly Stein, who chairs the Multnomah County Board.

Multnomah County urges individuals, business and governments to join in buying green power," she said. "This is the beginning of a new community ethic and a great way to celebrate Earth Day 2000."

The board adopted a resolution April 13 authorizing the green purchase program to begin May 1.

The electric power will come from new programs at the county's two electric utilities: Portland General Electric (PGE) and Pacificorp. The electricity will be generated through wind turbines and salmon-safe, hydroelectric facilities or "low-impact hydro" as it's called in the industry.

The utilities began offering the

green power option after it was approved by state regulators. Power companies in 22 states now offer customers a green power choice, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists. So far in Oregon, 2,400 households and more than 40 businesses are participating in PGE's green power program.

Financial vs. environmental impact

The utilities are charging between \$4.75 and \$5 extra per 100 kilowatthour block for its green power or twice the amount of conventional power, according to Dan Brown, director of the county's Facility and Property Management Division.

Multnomah County will spend an extra \$19,845 in fiscal year 2000-2001 to purchase green power for its Multnomah Building and the Central Library.

By purchasing 1 percent green power each year, the county hopes to avoid emissions of 400,000 pounds of carbon dioxide (the major global warming gas) and 1,500 pounds of sulfur and nitrogen oxides (causing



Some of Multnomah County, Oregon's "green power" will be generated by wind turbines like these at Vansycle Ridge Wind Farm in Oregon.

acid rain, smog and respiratory illness), according to a report made to the board.

The report points out that it's the equivalent of planting 85 acres of new trees per year or of not driving county vehicles 400,000 miles per year.

Multnomah is the first government in Oregon to commit to use green power for its electricity, making it the largest purchaser of green power in the Northwest region of the country.

Just 3 percent of the power consumed in the Northwest comes from green sources — windmills, solar panels, geothermal plants or other renewable sources, according to the Northwest Energy Coalition in Seattle. Hydropower produced at dams accounts for 54 percent; coal-burning plants account for 32 percent; natural gas and oil 8 percent and nuclear plants 3 percent.

Other local government activity

Ed Holt, a consultant on the green power issue who lives in the village of Harpswell, Maine, says the market conditions have to be just right for green power to flourish. "You have to have buyers and sellers," he said.

For instance, he notes that market conditions for green power are right in California. "Citizens are more active in the environmental movement there," he said.

Several counties surrounding the San Francisco Bay Area in California, including Butte, Humboldt, Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, made a deal last year with Calpine Corporation to provide green power at a savings.

Approximately 30 local governments in California have switched to Commonwealth Energy, which is supplying geothermal energy from Lake, Sonoma and Imperial counties.

The use of green power in Cali-

fornia represents more than 10 percent of energy produced in the state.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency became the first federal agency to buy 100 percent green power, for its laboratory in Richmond, Calif. last year. During the first year, geothermal energy was to provide 60 percent of the energy for the lab, with the remaining 40 percent to come from the landfill gas generation source being built by Sacramento County, according to the EPA.

In future years, all of the electricity will come from the landfill, the agency notes. Methane gas, produced as trash in a landfill as it decomposes, is a source of energy not often used. Usually it's either burned or escapes into the atmosphere, both of which contribute to air pollution, according to the EPA.

For more information on green power, head to The Green Power Network (GPN), <http://www.eren.doe.gov/greenpower>.

The site provides news and information on green power markets and related activities. The site is operated and maintained by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory for the U.S. Department of Energy.

The site contains information on and links to green power providers and their product offerings, utility green pricing programs, and net metering and other policies that affect green power markets.

Johnson County, Kan. CIA won't keep secrets about efficiency

BY KEVIN WILCOX
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Employees in Johnson County, Kan. are being asked to cooperate with the CIA. Nobody has to wear wire taps or monitor foreign governments, though. It's not that kind of CIA. This is the county's Cost Identification Analysis project.

The project weds two business concepts that are working their way into county government, according to Dennis Gehrt, a senior management analyst who manages the project.

The county is combining activity-based costing with performance management. Activity-based costing lets the county find out exactly what it spends on each activity, rather than on each department or agency. "It allows you to say, for instance, what group mental health therapy costs a number of dollars per patient," Gehrt said.

To get the complete picture, how-

ever, the county needs to add performance measurement. This forces a county to think about what it's trying to accomplish with a program. "And then it forces you to say, 'are we doing it?'" Gehrt said.

This approach was new to local governments five years ago, but has taken off quickly for departments that have clearly defined activities and goals, such as public works or public utilities, according to Gehrt.

"The thing that makes us unique now is that we're attempting to do it in all our departments," he added.

The county is wrapping up pilot projects in corrections, public works and mental health departments and is doing the groundwork for projects in nine more departments, Gehrt said. The goal is to have the CIA project in all 37 county departments.

A CIA program is more complicated to implement for mental health and social services departments, where the activities and goals are

more complex and difficult to measure.

"It's another level of data that everyone has to track," Gehrt explained. "No one is exactly sure if that data will help them, or if someone will use it to cut your budget."

A comprehensive education campaign has helped Johnson County allay some of the fears departments had about the CIA project.

"There has to be some way to show that this is useful," Gehrt said. "We've involved the departments from the beginning, making sure they were involved. I think it's generally been successful, but the level of anxiety is something you have to factor into the process and address."

Gehrt said it's not easy to implement a CIA program for some departments. The mechanics are time consuming and complicated.

"Many of us in government do so many things that it's hard to think of them all," Gehrt said. "Another thing

is how small a thing do you track? That's trial and error."

Labor is a major expense for counties, but it's hard to keep records of where it goes. Tracking how staffers spend their time is a delicate issue. Filling out activity logs "kills people over time," Gehrt said. Instead, the county is using surveys and short-term logs.

Performance measurement is new to many social service departments, but it can provide valuable information, Gehrt said. It will allow Johnson County to not only track the cost-to-benefit ratio of a program over time, but to also compare Johnson County programs to programs in other counties.

"Yeah, it's great to say you served 472 people. Now, how many did you help," Gehrt said. "Let's say we're spending \$60 per patient for group mental health therapy, but we're not getting results. We're spending \$90 per patient for individual therapy, but they're better in three sessions."

What's the better deal? It's simple."

What isn't simple is weighing the benefits of social service programs that don't show up on the balance sheet.

"For instance, we'll be able to determine the exact cost of home meals. I think it will be hard to determine all the benefits of a hot meal and a visit to a homebound person. We have to be very aware that performance measurement can't stop with the cost of providing services. There are intangibles that can't be shown on a general ledger," Gehrt said.

"CIA is not going to tell you what decisions to make," he added. "You still have to make the decisions. There is a tendency to think this will tell us how to cut costs. This will only tell you how much something costs."

"It hasn't changed that you have to make decisions," Gehrt said. "It probably won't make the decisions any easier, but it will make them more informed."

E-government:

What is govWorks?

govWorks is a private company that works with government to provide Internet-based services that enhance interactions between government and constituents. At govWorks.comSM, constituents can pay tickets, bills or taxes online, look for government jobs, exchange ideas with elected officials, find information, access government resources, participate in government auctions and much more.

Our solutions range from free access to the govWorks.com network to do-it-yourself Web development tools that local governments can use to create their own site with full transactional capabilities.

Like our government partners, govWorks is dedicated to the people we serve. Through our Community Commitment Program, govWorks re-invests a portion of revenues in the form of computers and pre-paid Internet access to public schools, libraries, educational programs and community centers. It's all part of our effort to help bridge the Digital Divide.

How does govWorks work with government?

govWorks enables governments to provide a variety of services and information to their constituents in an effective, secure and cost-efficient manner, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

govWorks seeks to form collaborative relationships with local governments. Dedicated government account managers are assigned to help at every step of the process. Our integration partners work directly with governments to ensure that electronic payments and our software integrate easily with your current systems.

Through a nationwide advertising and marketing campaign, govWorks will bring millions of constituents to the consumer portal, www.govWorks.com, and to government Web sites indexed on our site.

We conduct extensive research with leaders from governments across the country, to help design and test our products and help identify future products and services that address constituents' needs. And we work with other professional service companies that specialize in doing business with government to ensure the best solutions.

govWorks helps governments use the Internet to provide better services, lower costs, increase revenues and free up resources that can be used to address other needs.

How does qovWorks handle government transactions?

govWorks currently offers a service that allows people to pay certain government fees, fines and taxes online anywhere in the U.S. using a credit card, debit card or checking account.

govWorks forwards the payments, along with all relevant data, directly to the appropriate government agency.

For our affiliated government partners we provide electronic transfers of funds, electronic data and electronic postmarks. This enables government agencies we partner with to get payments 7-10 days sooner.

We offer online payment facilitation to our government partners more quickly and with more extended functionality than any other private company in the marketplace.

How will citizens benefit from govWorks' services?

- They can make payments and get information on their own 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.
- They can save money on their transactions through the govRewards program.
- They can instantly get a receipt.
- govWorks has customer service representatives available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to answer questions.
- Payments can be made instantly to affiliated government

The Next Internet Frontier

partnerships. These are two of the hottest topics in government today. More and more, local governments are investing in Internet technology to put their services and information online.

But what kinds of online government services do constituents really want? And how can government best use the Internet to meet the needs of the people it serves? Leaders in government are looking for the most efficient way to leverage the power of the Internet.

govWorks, Inc., one of a growing number of Internet companies serving the public sector, uses a collaborative approach to offer government agencies innovative solutions for what has come to be called "e-government."

How does govWorks handle late payments?

- govWorks delivers payments within specified time periods.
- If a constituent submits a late payment, the constituent is responsible for any late charges.
- In all cases, govWorks will work directly with constituents and governments to resolve problems and answer questions.

How does govWorks respond to payment processing errors?

govWorks follows up on *all* payments to make certain that they are processed correctly. If payments are not processed correctly, govWorks' customer service representatives personally investigate and work to correct errors. In all areas, govWorks takes every measure to ensure timely and accurate delivery of payments.

What other services does govWorks offer?

- A nationwide public-sector job listing service—free to job seekers—that gives governments a cost-effective way to find the best prospective employees.
- A nationwide listing of government auctions, which expands the market for these goods and ultimately generates greater revenue for governments. In the near future, we will host online government auctions.
- A comprehensive database of contact information for elected officials and government agencies.
- Coverage of political campaigns.
- A calendar of civic events, and important government dates and deadlines.
- Helpful information about accessing government resources.

What is the cost to government for these services?

The govWorks.com payment processing service, auction listing service and informational services are free to government agencies. There is a small fee for using the nationwide public-sector job listing service.

Electronic government. Public/private-sector

partnerships. These are two of the hottest topics in government today. More and more, local governments are investing in Internet technology to put their services and information online.

Consumers using govWorks to make payments are charged a small convenience fee to cover the transaction processing costs, but governments receive *the full payment amount of every transaction*.

How secure is govWorks' Web site?

govWorks uses industry-standard Secure Socket Layer technology with 128-bit encryption, the same stringent security system that leading e-commerce and government sites use to conduct transactions on the Internet.

What are govWorks' support capabilities?

govWorks' customer service staff, including specially trained government account representatives and technical support experts, is always available to answer questions, assist with transactions and receive constituent and government feedback. We can also integrate with your existing constituent service operations.

Customer service can be contacted online or by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

How do I contact govWorks?

For more information, or to provide feedback, please visit www.govWorks.com, e-mail govWorks' Director of Government Accounts at govsolutions@govWorks.com or call toll-free 1-877-729-8587. govWorks is ready to discuss a solution to meet your e-government needs.



govWorks.com

How can we work for you?

Photos by David Hathcox

ACTS OF *Caring* AWARDS



Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah) (right photo) and Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) (left photo) congratulate Salt Lake County (Utah) Sheriff Aaron Kennard for winning an Act of Caring award for Operation Safe Passage.



Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D-Ill.) (r) congratulates Cathy Geraghty, director of Grant Development for the Cook County (Ill.) Forest Preserve for winning an Act of Caring Award for the NeighborSpace program.



Fairfax County, Va. won an Acts of Caring award for its Nurturing Parent Program. Volunteer Services Manager Chloe Padgett (c), Social Worker Jane Shaw, Volunteer Brent Bowen and Supervisor Gerry Hyland (second from left) accept the award from awards panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka (l), Harris Wofford and NACo President C. Vernon Gray.



Henrico County, Va. officials Harvey Hinson (c), deputy county manager, and Paul Johnson, community maintenance manager, accept an Acts of Caring award from awards panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka (l) and Harris Wofford and NACo President Vernon Gray. Henrico won for its Community Maintenance Program.



Hanover County, Va. won an Acts of Caring award for its library program that has high school students reading stories to children. Accepting the award were Assistant to the Administrator Marilyn Blake, Supervising Librarian Patty Franz and student Danielle Parra. Looking on are awards panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka (l) and Harris Wofford and NACo President C. Vernon Gray.



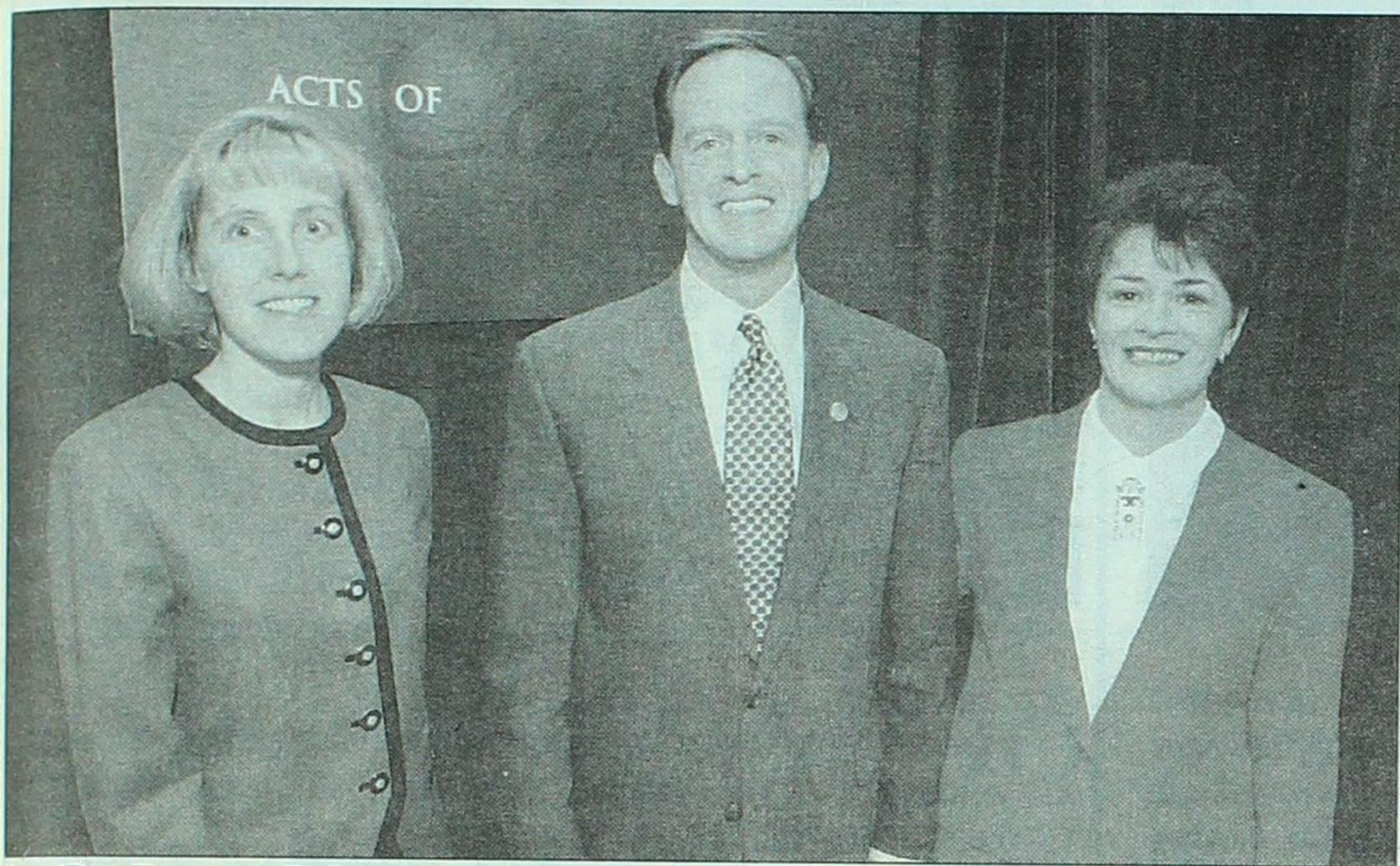
Jackson County, Mo. Volunteer John Walsh (second from left) and Volunteer Program Director Bettie Yahn-Kramer happily accept an Acts of Caring award for the Parks and Recreation Volunteer Service Program from awards panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka and Harris Wofford and NACo President C. Vernon Gray (r).

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Winners



Rep. Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) was at the awards ceremony to compliment Northhampton County, Pa. for winning an Acts of Caring award for The Dental Initiative. Bonnie Coyle, M.D. (l), director of community health, and Diane Fosco, administrator of the county drug and alcohol program, accepted the award.



Rep. Bill Luther (D-Minn.) congratulates Washington County (Minn.) Parks Manager Mike Poleha and Gudrun Nordby of the Historic Courthouse program for winning an Acts of Caring award. Washington County received the award for the Historic Courthouse Volunteer Association.



Kate Wanderer (left, front), Marge Fare (c) and Suzanne Levy accept the Acts of Caring award for Fairfax County, Va.'s Historical Newspaper Index Project. Pictured in back are (left to right) Greg Lashutka, Fairfax County Supervisor Gerry Hyland, Harris Wofford and NACo President C. Vernon Gray.



Executive Director Herb Edmon (second from left) and Director Barb Edmon accept the Acts of Caring Award for the Bernalillo County, N.M. Isshin Ryu program. Presenting the award are awards panel co-chairs Greg Lashutka (l) and Harris Wofford and NACo President C. Vernon Gray.



Sen. Slade Gorton (R-Wash.) (r) and Rep. Jack Metcalf (R-Wash.) (l) congratulate Skagit County (Wash.) Commissioner Harvey Wolden and RSVP Program Director Donna Sitts for winning an Acts of Caring award for the RSVP Program.



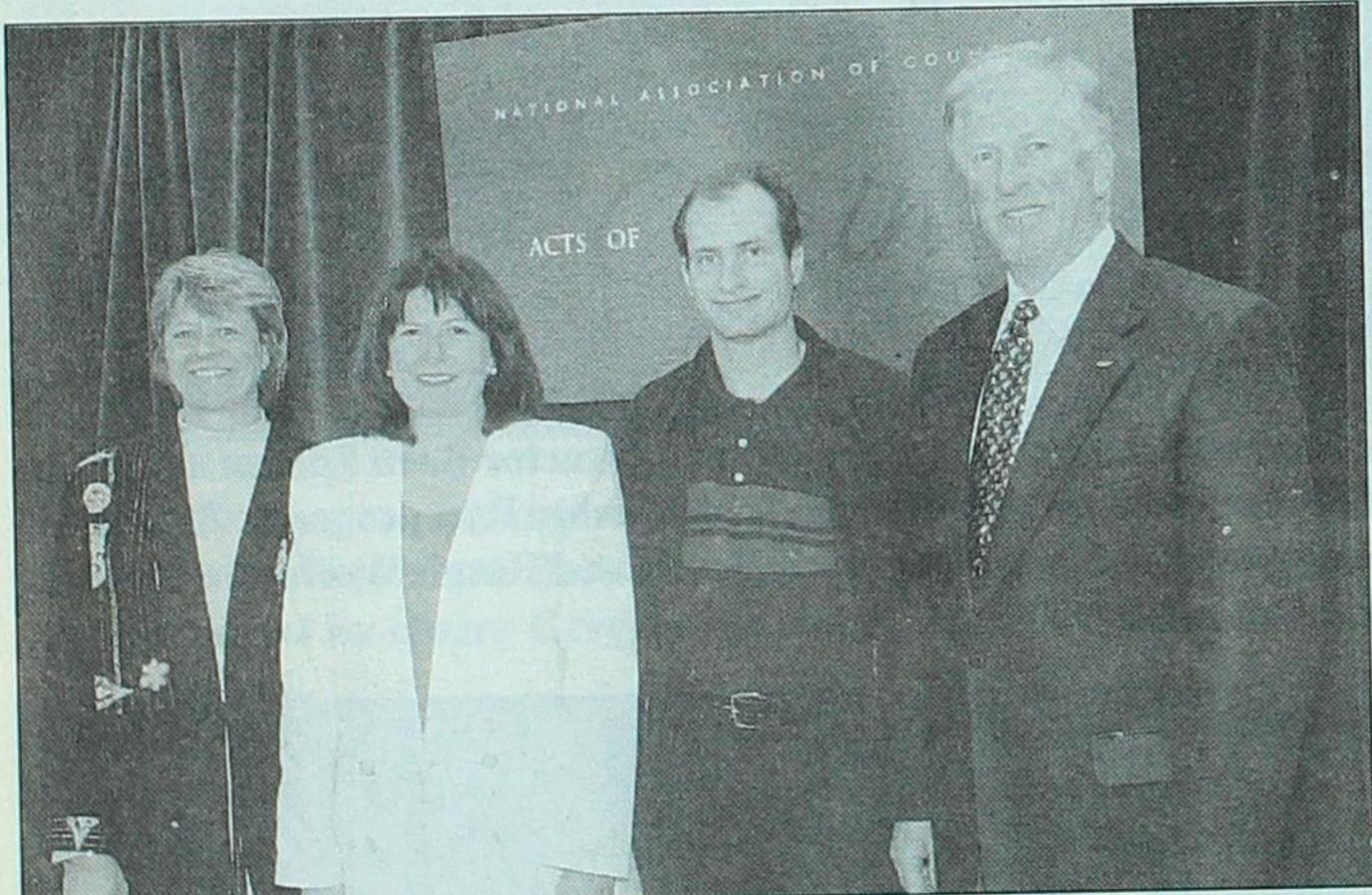
Clark County (Wash.) officials and Rep. Brian Baird (D-Wash.) (r) are all smiles after Clark County won an Acts of Caring award for its Juvenile Court Community Accountability Boards. Accepting the award was County Executive Bill Barrons (l), Superior Court Judge Barbara Johnson and Juvenile Court Administrator Ernie Reach-White (second from right).

ACTS OF *Caring* AWARDS

Marin County (Calif.) Supervisor John Kreff and Volunteer Coordinator Joan Brown (l) celebrate winning an Acts of Caring award with Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-Calif.) (c) Marin won the award for its Civic Center Volunteers program.

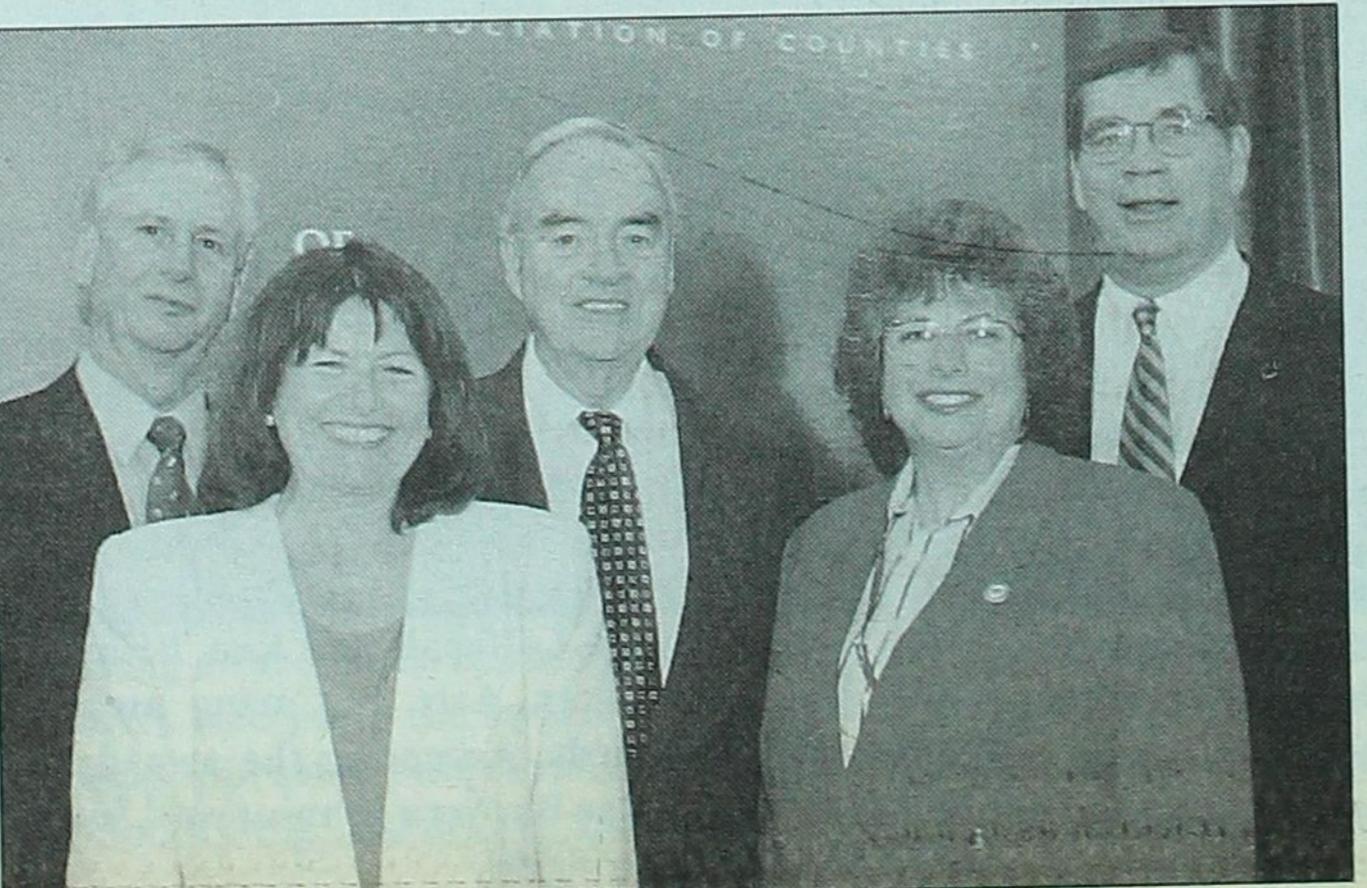


Rep. Ron Packard (R-Calif.) praises Jan Grotewold (l) and Joan Kilgore of Orange County, Calif. for winning an Act of Caring award for the Child Abuse Service Team.



Rep. Mike Thompson (D-Calif.) (r) and Awards Judge Dawn Matheny, president of the National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government, are on hand to congratulate Sonoma County officials Sophia Galifaro (l) and Ralph Dickey for winning an Acts of Caring award. Sonoma County won for its Hazardous Materials Response Team. Galifaro is program coordinator; Dickey is a volunteer specialist.

NACo Executive Director Larry E. Naake (l) is pictured with members of the judging panel for the Acts of Caring awards. Shown with him are (l-r): Dawn Matheny, president, National Association of Volunteer Programs in Local Government; Harris Wofford, chief executive officer, Corporation for National Service; Liz Dietz, representing Bernadine Healy, M.D., president of the American Red Cross; and Greg Lashutka, senior vice president, corporate relations, Nationwide Financial.



— NACo ON THE MOVE —

NACo OFFICERS/COUNTY OFFICIALS



C. Vernon Gray



Javier Gonzales

◆ **C. Vernon Gray**, NACo president, represented counties at the conference of the National Organization of Black County Officials (NOBCO) April 26-28 in Clark County, Nev.

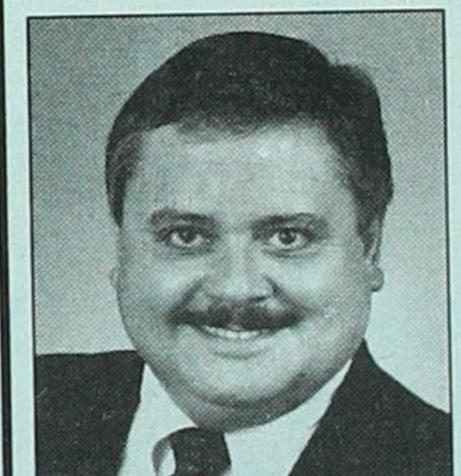
◆ Gray discussed NACo issues with the editorial board of *The Charlotte Gazette* during a visit to Mecklenburg County, N.C. on April 25.

◆ On April 18, **Javier Gonzales**, NACo first vice president, addressed delegates at the opening general session of the quarterly meeting of the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City. Gonzales spoke about current legislation that will affect Oklahoma counties and touted NACo's ability to help the counties of Oklahoma with lobbying, grant assistance and money saving programs.

◆ On April 17, Gray addressed delegates at the opening session of the conference of the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) in Overland Park, Kansas.

◆ Gray traveled to Provo, Utah to speak to the Utah Association of Counties Management Conference at an April 13 banquet.

NACo STAFF



Jeff Arnold

◆ On April 19, **Jeff Arnold**, deputy legislative director, spoke to the Bureau of Land Management Executive Leadership Team in Shepherdstown, W.Va. on the importance of working with county officials. He also gave them tips on how to improve their relationships with counties.



Andrew Goldschmidt

◆ **Andrew Goldschmidt**, membership director, represented NACo at the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma conference, April 18-20 in Oklahoma City. Goldschmidt discussed the benefits of NACo membership. NACo also sponsored the Legislative Reception on April 19.

◆ **Susan Parrish**, membership coordinator, represented NACo at the annual meeting of the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia April 15-19 in Savannah, Ga. Parrish discussed the benefits of NACo membership with delegates.

◆ On April 13-15, **Arnold** and **Sandy Markwood**, deputy director of the County Services Department, traveled to Red Lodge, Mont. for the second session of the Western Community Stewardship Forum, a joint project of NACo and the Sonoran Institute through a grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

The forum is designed to provide growth management tools to Western county officials with fast-growing counties. The session brought together teams from seven rural counties in the West to learn innovative strategies to deal with growth while balancing the environmental, economic and cultural concerns of their communities. The seven counties participating in the session were: Valley County, Idaho; Madison County, Mont.; Teton County, Idaho; Uinta County, Wyo.; Douglas County, Nev.; Grand County, Colo. and Saguache County, Colo.

Keeping up with death investigations

Presenting latest forensic investigative techniques keeps Wayne County, Mich. morgue officials busy

It's a conference agenda that unnerves most people: Death by Fire, Stab versus Cut Wounds, Strangulation, Crime Scene Photography, Recognizing Child Abuse.

But twice annually, attendees line up to receive advanced training in those topics and more than a dozen others at the Medicolegal Death Investigation Course for Law Enforcement, held at the Medical Examiner's Office in Wayne County, Mich.

The three-and-a-half-day course delivers the latest information to law enforcement officers, firefighters, forensic investigators, prosecutors and detectives seeking up-to-date knowledge in forensic science and

related fields.

The Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office, located on Detroit's East Side, is the fifth busiest in the nation, fielding 12,000 calls a year.

Sawait Kanluen, M.D., chief medical examiner, at the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office, and his staff offer the popular training. "Because this office deals with so many cases, we have in-depth knowledge of a wide variety of forensic data," he explains. "Our experienced pathologists, chemists and technicians are a great resource and we believe in sharing what we know with others."

Participants hear more than 20 lectures, tour the building, view autopsies, learn about laboratory testing required in forensic work and talk individually with staff pathologists about their work.

The training, held each May and September, includes instruction in crime scene investigation, examination and evaluation of evidence, time of death, firearm injury, death by fire, blunt force injury, knife wounds, child abuse, suffocation, handling a mass disaster, forensic toxicology and drug-related deaths, forensic odontology, forensic anthropology and court testimony.

"We have come full circle with

our new Medical Examiner's Office," says Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara, who cut the ribbon on the present Medical Examiner's Office in 1995. "One of our long-range objectives was to offer training to law enforcement, public safety and medical professionals. With this course, we have reached

that goal."

All of the Wayne County medical staff double as presenters during the seminar.

To find out more about the Wayne County, Mich., Medicolegal Death Investigation Course for Law Enforcement, call the medical examiner's office at 313/833-2540.

Hats off to... Emergency Management

Issues of Public Policy in Emergency Management

Livingston County, Mich.

Communities in Livingston County have experienced a variety of disasters in recent years and local officials began to express a need for direction in preparing for future emergencies.

Realizing the important role of local governments in the emergency management process, the Livingston County Department of Planning, in partnership with the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA), created a 10-page brochure outlining the steps necessary to develop a comprehensive emergency management program.

The brochure discusses policies covering the full spectrum of emergencies, including natural, man-made and technological disasters. This user-friendly brochure has been especially helpful to local governments within the county because it stresses the importance of integrating hazard mitigation into the community planning process so that emergency or disaster situations are addressed at the earliest possible time.

It discusses all the critical elements, including evacuation, medical concerns, security issues and legal obligations, that are necessary for government leaders to consider when developing a local emergency management program.

The program has been quite successful. The brochure, which was sent to all local governments within the county, has been distributed to several hundred entities throughout

the Michigan and the entire nation.

It has also been used as a resource by numerous organizations, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Michigan Department of State Police Division of Emergency Management, and the American Planning Association.

The county was able to minimize the cost of the brochure by partnering with the MMRMA for printing and mailing costs.

Regional Hazardous Materials Response

Palm Beach County, Fla.

Palm Beach County had a complex, multi-tiered response system for fire and EMS comprised of 14 municipal fire and rescue departments, five municipal public safety agencies, two volunteer-only fire departments, and a full-service county fire-rescue department. However, only the county and the five municipal public safety agencies had the capability to provide hazardous materials response and mitigation.

To provide comprehensive hazardous materials response services to the entire county, the Regional Hazardous Materials Response Program was created.

This program provides hazardous material responses to more than one million residents living within the 2000+ square miles within the county. Four highly trained and well-equipped hazardous materials response teams are strategically located throughout the county to respond quickly to hazardous chemical incidents regardless of the mu-

nicipal boundaries.

The four teams, although from different fire-rescue departments, are dispatched from a common 911 center, have common radio communications and are totally compatible in the areas of personnel, equipment and operating procedures, leading to a seamless delivery system.

A critical element of this program was identifying and securing a new funding source. The county identified the solid waste authority, which is an independent taxing district, as a potential source for program funding because it has a vested interest in all matters relating to hazardous waste in the county. In addition, it also had a proven track record in assessing user fees based on services provided. The solid waste authority quickly agreed to fund a large portion of the costs associated with the operation of the four designated response teams.

Today, all residents and businesses within the county are covered by well-trained emergency response personnel at an average annual household cost of \$1.60. Each of the regional response teams respond to an average of four hazardous materials emergencies per month.

Because some jurisdictions in the county were already providing hazardous materials response, most of the capital equipment needs for this program were already in place. Personnel costs, totaling approximately \$1.7 million, were the greatest expense in creating and operating this program.

(*Hats Off* was written by Jim Culotta, research associate.)

Fast Facts About the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office:

- The facility has the largest caseload in Michigan, handling an average of 10-12 deaths a day or 3,500 to 4,000 annually.
- Fifty persons are employed at the facility, which is manned 24 hours a day.
- The medical examiner's office fields 12,000 calls each year.
- Annually, about 500 homicides are autopsied a year.

Counties celebrate NCGW

Counties across the country held a variety of activities to celebrate National County Government Week on April 9-15. Here is a sample of the programs that were held.



NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEEK

Fulton County, Ga. held a "Volunteer Expo" on April 11 that featured displays by agencies showing how

volunteerism helps their cause. April 9-15

Then on April 13, the county sponsored a Volunteer Recognition Luncheon to honor Fulton County employees who are volunteers in the community.

Grundy County, Iowa celebrated the week by hosting a field trip of 225 fifth and sixth grade students. The students learned about the voting process by voting on whether they would rather live in the past, present or the future. The future was a clear winner.

The students also toured the

law center, the new jail, public health facilities and the landfill. At the landfill, the students learned about the importance of recycling and saving the environment.

Nearly two dozen Peoria County, Ill. departments set up shop at Northwoods Mall on April 9 to provide information to citizens. The mall event, which began in 1997, is an opportunity for Peoria County to reach out to its citizens in a convenient setting. Several hundred shoppers visited the booths, received identification cards for their children, tested their "County IQ" and much more during the five-hour event.

Both Rapides Parish, La. and Trumbull County, Ohio passed resolutions proclaiming the week that pointed out the important role that county governments in serving America.

COUNTY SERVICES NEWS**Energy Management for Georgia Counties**

Thirty-eight county officials representing 18 different counties attended a full day seminar on energy management strategies. The seminar focused on how county elected officials, facility managers and budget personnel can save energy while also saving money in their operating and capital improvement budgets. Many of the attendees were just beginning to consider energy efficiency improvements in their county buildings but a few were much further along and served as peer experts during the training.

A resource panel featured DOE officials, a representative from the state government of Georgia, as well as a Georgia Power utility representative, all of whom provided an excellent array of usable resources, particularly DOE's Energy Star Purchasing Tool Kit. The tool kit contains a step-by-step guide, along with ready-made tools for implementing local energy efficiency activities.

Three local case studies were presented and served as a very useful way of discussing what could be achieved at the local level. Two of the studies (Murfreesboro, N.C. and Dublin, Ga.) focused on savings through lighting upgrades to energy efficient T-8 lamps and electronic ballasts. The third case study (Fulton County, Ga.) detailed how the county used energy performance contracts through a third party lender to acquire new boilers, cooling towers and air conditioning units for the county's buildings.

Former NACo President and Fulton County (Ga.) Commissioner Michael Hightower elaborated on the operating efficiency and savings that have resulted since the county adopted an energy management plan in 1994. The county is saving \$132,000 annually.

The final breakout sessions allowed county officials to work on action plans for their counties. The day concluded with a guided tour of the Southface Energy Facility, which is a working, full-size model building demonstrating the latest cut-edge technology for energy efficiency.

Coweta County (Ga.) Commissioner Jim McDuffey provided a welcome. Commissioner Robert Downing, Calhoun County, Ala., chair of NACo's energy subcommittee served as the seminar's moderator.

Sponsored by NACo and the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG), with support from the U.S. DOE and EPA, the seminar presented practical, cost-effective ways to conserve energy resources through HVAC systems and lighting upgrades. Participants gained hands on experience by a detailed examination of the Energy Star Purchasing Tool Kit. There are plans to hold a similar energy management seminar in June in the Midwest.

To obtain an Energy Star Purchasing Tool Kit or for more information on how your county can save money as it becomes more energy efficient, please contact Naomi Friedman, senior program manager at 202/942-4262.

(County Services News was written by Lou Witt, senior program manager.)

NACo conducts second economic development hearing

BY JACQUELINE BYERS
DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH

President Vernon Gray has hosted the second in a series of hearings on economic development. This time in Clark County, Nev., April 1. The topics selected for the Clark County, Nev. meeting were "Financing Development and Revitalizing Stressed Communities and Workforce Development."

Two case studies were presented. The first, on revitalizing stressed communities, involved a presentation about an inner-city neighborhood in Hennepin County, Minn. Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin led

the discussion, which centered on the importance of pulling all interested parties to the table. McLaughlin spoke about the public-private partnership that had been forged between the county, the mayor and the private sector, that helped make this project a success.

The second presentation concerned a job-training program in Clark County, Nev. and the commitment they received from a major casino to hire workers from this program.

This presentation was lead by Richard Blue from the workforce-training group that was formed by a

governmental consortium headed by Clark County Supervisor Yvonne Atkinson Gates.

It also included a video presentation and discussion by Tony Gladney, vice president for Community Ser-

The last hearing will be conducted on Saturday, May 6 in Peachtree City, Ga. (Fayette County). For more information, call Jackie Byers at 202/494-4285.

RESEARCH NEWS**Where are the Wealthiest Counties?**

Which counties are the most prosperous in the country and why? The average per capita income for the nation in 2000 is \$28,309. The counties around New York City (10 counties), San Francisco (5 counties) and Washington, D.C. (5 counties) are the most prosperous.

There is also plenty of wealth scattered around the rest of the country, generally in the major urban metropolitan areas. Some of the most likely and most recognizable areas, such as Las Vegas, Miami, Houston and Salt Lake City are major county areas that don't make the top 20.

The primary determinant of per capita income is the kinds of jobs that are available. Las Vegas/Clark County, Nev., has an economy fueled by a large service-sector employment that pays lower salaries than many other industries. Honolulu/Honolulu County, Hawaii, Reno/Washoe County, Nev. and Orlando/Orange County, Fla. also have large service industry employment. Counties with a high number of retirees also tend to have lower per capita incomes. Even though the investment holdings of retirees may be large, their actual annual income tends to be lower than most working adults.

This retirement factor affects counties such as Maricopa and Pima counties in Arizona and Miami/Dade County, Fla. These same counties have also been affected by immigration, which tends to create younger and lower paid workers, adding to the lower per capita incomes.

Areas with large households also generally reflect lower per capita incomes.

Nine of the 20 counties in the nation with the lowest per capita

income are in the top 20 counties with the largest household size. Counties like Salt Lake County and other Utah counties that have large Mormon populations, generally have lower per capita incomes. Mormon families tend to be large and therefore lower the per capita figures in those areas.

The larger the county, the more varied the income.

This is generally the reason why few counties with large geographic areas are often in the top per capita group. Most Western counties have a lower per capita income because of their large land size. Smaller, more

concentrated counties tend to have higher per capita incomes.

There are also counties scattered throughout the nation, many of which are seasonal escapes, that have large amounts of wealth. Some of these that are in the top 20 include Pitkin County, Colo. (Aspen), Teton County, Wyo., (Jackson Hole), and Nantucket County, Mass.

Florida also has the counties of Sarasota, Martin, Collier and Indian River, all upscale counties, on the list of high per capita income counties.

(Research News was written by Jacqueline Byers, research director.)

Twenty Counties with the Highest Per Capita Income

County	2000 Per Capita Income
New York, N.Y.	\$69,157
Marin, Calif.	\$54,608
Pitkin, Colo.	\$54,076
Fairfield, Conn.	\$53,474
Somerset, N.J.	\$51,605
Alexandria, Va. (independent city)	\$50,752
Westchester, N.Y.	\$50,402
Morris, N.J.	\$49,640
Bergen, N.J.	\$48,640
Arlington, Va.	\$47,252
Montgomery, Md.	\$46,911
Teton, Wyo.	\$45,758
San Francisco, Calif.	\$45,694
Montgomery, Pa.	\$45,553
Fairfax (includes Fairfax City and Falls Church) Va.	\$45,493
Lake, Ill.	\$45,218
Nassau, N.Y.	\$45,176
Oakland, Mich.	\$44,767
Nantucket, Mass.	\$44,534
San Mateo, Calif.	\$43,884

Some data used in this article was extracted from American Demographics April 2000.

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contact Jackie Byers at 202/9
4285; jbyers@naco.org or
Forsythe at 202/943-42
jforsyth@naco.org.

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NEWS FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

CALIFORNIA

• Officials in the **COUNTY OF ORANGE** will hold a public hearing this week to discuss uses for the old El Toro military base other than the proposed airport, which has been at least temporarily derailed by a voter referendum.

The Board of Supervisors also voted to ask contractors to suspend their contracts until the future of the proposed airport is clearer. That move could save the county \$160,000.

COLORADO

• **COLORADO COUNTIES, INC.** is following the progress of a proposed ballot measure for the November election that would cut property, income, vehicle and utility taxes.

The state's local governments stand to lose \$114 million in property taxes in 2002 if the measure were to succeed.

It still has a few hurdles to clear, however. Doug Bruce, the man pushing the measure, submitted petitions with 78,645 signatures to the Secretary of State's Office recently. Now the office must determine if the signatures are all valid.

CCI contends that a petition drive usually has to net 90,000 signatures to have the 62,000 valid ones needed get on the ballot.

FLORIDA

• Hurricane Irene was a messy guest in **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**. It cost the county's department of solid waste management more than \$3 million to clean up the debris.

It took county employees, working dawn to dusk, seven days a week for three months, to clean up the more than 50,000 tons of debris left in the storm's wake.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recently announced it will reimburse the department \$4.8 million, which will cover about 88 percent of the costs.

MARYLAND

• Officials in **BALTIMORE COUNTY** are happy with the 2000 General Assembly session, which ended recently. The county snagged a record \$42 million in school construction money.

That's on top of \$13.3 million the state gave the county to reduce class size, hire mentors and make minor repairs to schools.

"Our schools have been neglected too long," said County Executive C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger. "We've been pledging to fix schools first. This state aid will help us fulfill that promise."

NEBRASKA

• It was about this time last year that **LINCOLN COUNTY**'s Anita Childerston, clerk of the District Court, began working on a project for Christmas — sewing a quilt for each of her eight staff members.

After polling each one on their interests, favorite colors and other information, she and her daughter and another area quilter worked through the summer and fall to present each staffer with a personalized quilt, each with its own name, i.e. "Blue Moon," "Ferns and Fences" and "Across the Fields." Childerston told the local newspaper the quilts were well-deserved by her staff members.

NEW JERSEY

• **MONMOUTH COUNTY** has received word that the county's 52.8 percent census mail-back response rate is the highest in the nation. Freeholder Theodore Narozenick, who chairs the county's Complete Count Committee, said he received official word from the manager of the federal census office for the county.

• The Census is also on the minds of **OCEAN COUNTY** officials, who are saying they don't want their "snow birds" — people who flock to Florida for the winter — to be counted as Florida residents in Census 2000.

"All we want is a fair and accurate count," said Freeholder Joseph Vicari. "People should be counted where they live most of the time."

NEW MEXICO

• Low-income homeowners whose houses are in need of repair are receiving assistance from **BERNALILLO COUNTY**. The county recently received a New Mexico Mortgage Finance Author-

ity Grant of more than \$500,000 to help rehabilitate homes and bring them up to housing code standards.

The average expenditure per house is \$25,000. Repayment is either deferred or offered at low interest rates, depending on income level. Applicants must be at about 40 to 60 percent of the median income level (family of four) for the county, which is \$24,150.

NEW YORK

• You're not getting older, you're getting better. That's the message **NASSAU COUNTY** hopes to convey next week in ceremonies honoring the county's Senior Citizen of the Year, in a day celebrating Senior Citizen Month.

In addition to the award, to be presented by County Executive Thomas Gulotta, the day will also include workshops, exhibits, and a luncheon. The county delivers more than 90 programs and services to its senior citizens. For more information, contact the county's Department of Senior Citizen Affairs, at 516/572-0800.

• Ray Herrick never misses the obits. He's not checking to see if he knows anybody who died. He's just looking for guns.

As supervisor of the **ONONDAGA COUNTY** Sheriff's Department pistol license unit, it's part of Herrick's job to track down the guns registered to people who have died. As many as 4,000 licenses in the county belong to people who would be at least 75 years old if they are alive. Many of the gun owners would be in their mid-100s.

State law requires a relative of a deceased pistol license holder to either register the weapons in their name or turn in the handgun within 15 days of the person's death.

"We're not out to arrest anyone," Herrick said. "Our responsibility is to investigate the whereabouts of these guns."

(News From the Nation's Counties is compiled by Mary Ann Barton and Kevin Wilcox, senior staff writers. Got some news? Send it to mbarton@naco.org or kwilcox@naco.org.)

FINANCIAL SERVICES NEWS

Developing a Risk Management Program for a Health Department

There are 12 basic steps in developing a comprehensive risk management program for the health department setting.

1. Identify and secure the authority necessary to implement a risk management program.

The success of any risk management program requires support and commitment from the governing board, senior and middle management, the medical staff and other healthcare providers. Each of these groups should understand the importance of a risk management program from its own perspective. The roles and responsibilities of the governing board, administration, clinical staff and other committees should be clearly delineated.

2. Assess the organizational risks and risk management needs.

Losses that are the concern of risk management can be categorized as property, net income, liability and personnel losses.

3. Identify and organize the facility's existing risk management activities.

Most health departments practice some type of risk management even if there is no formalized program in place.

4. Develop quantifiable short and long-term goals for the risk management program based on the risk management needs assessment.

These should be developed with the organizational objectives in mind. It is important to remember that every risk management need cannot be addressed immediately. Risk management needs must be prioritized and addressed according to the most pressing issues.

5. Develop a risk management plan for approval by the administration and governing board.

The risk management plan should be designed to provide for coordination of risk management activities and related functions and to prevent fragmentation and duplication of efforts.

6. Establish a system for risk management data collection and develop forms needed to collect this data.

Categories of data that are to be collected should be identified. Data collection procedures should be implemented and timetables developed.

7. Establish a communication sys-

tem for formal and informal transmission of verbal and written information.

8. Design reporting systems concerning risks specific to the needs of the governing board, administration, medical staff, other clinical staff, insurance companies and other internal and external groups.

9. Incorporate risk management functions into existing job descriptions.

Develop job description for risk management staff. Risk management



should be the responsibility of all staff. Annual evaluations should include a section on the adherence to risk management principles.

10. Establish appropriate working relationships with internal staff and external resources such as legal counsel, brokers and insurance companies. This should be developed within the parameters of job responsibilities.

11. Develop risk management educational programs for patients, staff and visitors. Risk management instructional activities should include orientation programs for new staff, continuing education programs for the medical, clinical and ancillary department staffs and educational tools and procedures for patients, families and visitors.

12. Evaluate the risk management program on an ongoing basis. An annual evaluation of the risk management program should be done based upon pre-established quantitative and qualitative objectives. The strengths and weakness of the risk management program should be monitored. The program should be modified based upon the evaluation results.

(This article was written by Joyce Benton, RN a senior healthcare consultant for CNA HealthPro. Benton earned an associate in risk management certification from the Insurance Institute of America. She has authored several articles and has spoken on the local, state, regional and national levels.)



Got some news? Give us a call.

News From the Nation's Counties
202/942-4210 • 202/942-4223

Web Watch

202/942-4210

NACo On The Move

202/942-4223

Web Watch

Fairfax County, Va. promotes itself as 'e-country' in ads

Fairfax County, Va. is marketing itself as "e-country" in TV and print ads appearing nationally, including on the CNN Airport Network and in Silicon Valley (Santa Clara County, Calif.).

The ad — with the slogan, "Yep, you're in e-country now!" and a tagline "Bandwidth as Big as Your Dreams" — touts Fairfax County as a good place to live and work. The county spent \$200,000 on an Henrico County ad agency to develop the four print ads and one 30-second TV commercial and will spend another \$1.4 million to place the ads in bus shelters and business magazines such as *Wired*, *Fast Company*, *Red Herring* and *Venture Edge*.

For more info on the ad campaign, go to www.e-country.org.

Register to vote on NACo's Web site

NACo has initiated a new feature that allows anyone, anywhere to register to vote directly through the Internet. Just go to <http://www.naco.org/leg>. You will be linked to *BeAVoter.org*, a non-profit, non-partisan voter registration program with title sponsorship from AARP, MCI WorldCom and AOL. *BeAVoter.org* allows visitors to fill out an online form in English or Spanish so that they may be mailed a pre-addressed official national voter registration form, ready to sign and mail at no cost to the citizen.

U.S. Supreme Court launches Web site

Looking for Supreme Court opinions that affect your county? Just head to the just-opened

www.supremecourtus.gov.

A 1999 study found that an official Supreme Court Web site was named as the second most-wanted government document by reporters, researchers, librarians, government employees and ordinary citizens.

Government equipment on the Internet

A government exchange site for surplus materials and equipment may be found at <http://www.bidgov.com>.

The site is an "eBay" for government, with no charge to access or view items up for bid. There is a charge to post a classified ad or other listing. There is an online auction and the site receives a commission.

Dead politician department

If you want to know where the bodies are buried, just head to politicalgraveyard.com. The site lists the final resting places for 53,115 politicians, judges and diplomats. You can conduct a search by county or by politician.

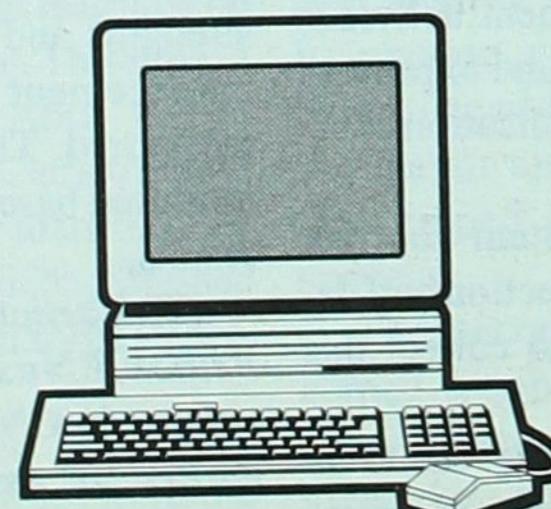
If you plug in the name Abraham Lincoln, you'll find that he was buried in Sangamon County, Ill. Along with Honest Abe, you'll also find the names of 17 other politicians who were buried in Sangamon, including governors and U.S. congressional representatives.

The site also includes information on the circumstances surrounding the deaths of politicians, such as: those who died while on board boats (16), while they were campaigning (18), the number killed in duels (13) and those who donated their bodies to science (six).

The site's founder, Lawrence Kestenbaum, by the way, is a former county commissioner for Ingham County, Mich., from 1983-88. He now lives in Washtenaw County. He says if he included county officials in his database and Web site, the number would be "just too overwhelming."

(*Web Watch* is compiled by Mary Ann Barton, senior staff writer. Got some news? Send it to mbarton@naco.org.)

County News



Visit us online at

www.countynews.org

THE H.R. DOCTOR IS IN

The Border Patrol

There is an article about the "border patrol." No, not the federal law enforcement agency. This border patrol affects many more people. It patrols the borders of convention and status quo and reduces the spirit of innovation. This border patrol is not user friendly and needs to be downsized or eliminated from the thinking and behavior of public employees.

The HR Doctor just returned from attending and speaking at a conference in the United Kingdom. A lot of the discussion by British local government chief personnel officers centered on Prime Minister Tony Blair's "best value" initiative. This is a national government mandate that all UK government agencies benchmark their practices and develop ways to improve service and reduce waste. This might happen through improved internal efficiency or reorganization but it may also come by outsourcing, privatizing or simply eliminating services. Sound familiar?

It should, because by different names, the UK's best value initiative is something which has occupied the attention of local government leaders in the United States for several years. One important difference, however — one which was noticed and commented on throughout the conference was the fact that this was a national government mandate and local governments had no choice but to comply.

The unwritten British constitution lacks a 10th Amendment and a truly federal system. We, too, suffer

from federal mandates often unfunded, but clearly not to the same degree that concerned my British friends and colleagues.

The tremendous irony here is that to measure best value results, the national government will be unleashing a horde of auditors, monitors and inspectors. Such people live in a world of history. That is, they look back at what occurred already and try to count it, sort it and measure it. What ends up happening is that in the name of monitoring and "compliance," the real outcome can be, as one British colleague put it, "... killing the spirit of innovation." This is an important lesson for everyone in local government and especially for elected or appointed officials.

Certainly there must be accountability, more so when public funds and government authority is involved than in most private industry settings. Certainly we must look for benchmarks and mechanisms to judge how we are doing as an individual employee and as an agency. Indeed, the HR Doctor has written several articles supporting the value of evaluation.

The reality in government, however, is that the risk of a loss of accountability and wasted effort when programs are unrestrained may be outweighed by an overzealous insistence that everything be counted and that all efforts at innovation must be accompanied by reams of reports and certifications.

There must be a balance.

HR professionals are often in the best position in the organization to see the need for this balance. The stifling of innovation leads to a withdrawal from engagement by employees. It produces a tendency to avoid any change to the status quo and retreat behind the safety of existing rules and policies. After all, these have already been audited. In fact, the rules may be safe but they will not help an agency meet new challenges. To be nimble in a changing world, every agency must create an environment for employees in which it is safe to both constructively challenge the status quo, and fail.

Patrolling the borders of current thinking and policies to keep them safe from any change is a guarantee that these policies and programs will ultimately fail.

The best auditors are those who balance a search for accountability with a clear understanding of the compelling role of innovation. Looked at another way, new Missouri voters should regard as job security for auditors because their work becomes more interesting and more valued by other federal government employees. Isn't that a combination that makes them a valuable asset to their careers?

The HR Doctor wishes you all the best. Feel free to visit the "office" at www.hrdr.net.

Sincerely,
Phil Rosenberg

philrosenberg@prodigy.net

The HR Doctor



Photo by Bryan

NACo members and leadership played a key role in the success of the Web Managers Forum and the Annual Member Conference of Public Technology, Inc. (PTI), held last month in Denver, Colo. Sarasota County (Fla.) Administrator Jim Ley (c), who won a 1999 Technology Leader Award, was elected as the chairman of PTI's Urban Consortium Steering Committee. Hennepin County (Minn.) Administrator Sandra Vargas (r) becomes the committee's new vice chair. Also pictured during committee deliberations is past NACo President Barbara Sheen Todd, commissioner, Pinellas County, Fla.

NEAL PEIRCE COMMENTARY

Gun Control: A Great Year, But What's Next?

BY NEAL R. PEIRCE
WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP

Neal Peirce is a syndicated columnist who writes about local government issues. His columns do not reflect the opinions of County News or NACo.

For gun control, call it a banner year.

Maryland has just passed America's first trigger lock "smart gun" law, with President Clinton traveling to Annapolis to see Gov. Paris Glendenning sign it.

Massachusetts has cleared legal barriers to applying consumer safety laws to guns, just like toasters and

Following the Columbine tragedy, California expanded its assault weapons ban and started requiring trigger locks on all guns sold. Missouri voters stunned the gun lobby by rejecting a referendum to allow concealed firearms. To escape a barrage of suits by local, state and the federal governments, Smith & Wesson, the nation's biggest gunmaker, agreed to gun safety and dealer responsibility standards.

Voter initiatives are pending in Colorado and Oregon to close the gun show loophole by which unlicensed dealers aren't required to make background checks on buyers.

Conservative governors are starting to switch. Latest example: New York's George Pataki. He now wants ban on assault weapons, mandatory background checks at gun shows, child safety locks on guns and a ballistic fingerprint of new guns so their owners can be traced.

So are we at an historic break? Are the states, closer to the people and the families ravaged by America's daily toll of some 85 fatalities, ready to assume gun form leadership? Can they, will they fill the void left by a Congress apparently still beholden to the gun lobby?

Maybe so. Voters are impatient 'don't care who does it' — just

keep guns out of their kid's school," CNN commentator William Schneider tells Stateline News Service.

But let's not be fooled. In a political world that lets money rule supreme, the National Rifle Association and its allies are a continuing, feared force. And not just in Congress, but also — sometimes especially — in state legislatures.

Even in 1999, year of the Columbine High School carnage, 14 states passed NRA-backed bills to pre-empt home rule and forbid cities and counties from filing damage suits against gunmakers whose products are used to terrorize their streets. The 14 included Pennsylvania and Arizona, not to mention Texas and Tennessee — home states of our leading presidential contenders.

And now comes a study from the New York-based Open Society Institute, backed by financier George Soros, which shows that most states, far from having the scads of unenforced firearms statutes that the gun lobby claims, actually have pitifully few control laws.

The Institute's study, a first-ever detailed analysis of the 50 states' laws (see www.soros.org/crime/guncontrol.htm) shows:

Thirty-five states have neither registration nor licensing of any type of gun. Only Massachusetts, among the 50, now requires both registration and licensing. Yet with a third of the guns used in crimes bought less than three years before the offense, registration/licensing might make a big difference.

Only two states — California and Connecticut — have banned private sale of assault weapons, ideal for mass homicides.

Thirty-one states have no waiting period on handgun purchases.

Eighteen states have no minimum age for possession of a rifle or shotgun. In North Carolina, says the study, a 12-year old needs parental permission to play Little League

baseball, but not to own a rifle.

Six states have no minimum age for a child to possess a handgun, notwithstanding outrages of gun-toting first-graders.

Forty-six states have no limit on how many guns a buyer can purchase at once — what a break for gun runners!

Making mincemeat of home rule, 40 states specifically forbid localities to enact laws controlling gun sale or use.

All in all, the Open Society charges, 42 states lack even "basic gun control laws" and "fall below the minimum standards for public safety." Only five — Massachusetts, Hawaii, California, Connecticut and Maryland — score at 40 percent or more on the institute's scale of 30 weighted gun control measures.

But would strong laws change things? Isn't it true crime is high in some states with tougher laws, lower in some with soft laws? State Sen. Vinton Cassidy, in Maine, a state with virtually zero gun restraints and high numbers of gun owners, says new laws would only "threaten the hunting traditions of Maine and waste the taxpayers' dollars."

So let's be honest: In today's complex world, gun laws are just one factor in the crime/suicide/violence equation. Families, values, policing, criminal penalties matter too.

But for the minor inconvenience of licensing and registering guns, adding gun safety features and then forbidding use by youth and unbalanced individuals, we'd surely save several thousand lives and avert as many searing family tragedies each year.

That has to be worth the trouble.

But states or feds — who'll do it? Each has far to go. One-sweep federal action sounds simpler.

But the great news of the year is that the states, albeit in fits and starts, have now begun to move.

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and at least five years of experience in government administration. Computer experience a plus. Resume with three professional references and salary requirements to: Sullivan County Personnel Department, P.O. Box 5012, 100 North street, Monticello, NY 12701, by May 31, 2000. Resume package not to exceed five single-spaced pages. An Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/V/H.

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CITY OF WICHITA, KAN.: (Population, 311,000) Annual Salary Range \$62,810-\$94,218. Wichita is the largest City in Kansas. Residents enjoy a central location, a diverse population, a stable economy and four distinct seasons. Quality of life amenities are excellent and the cost of living is very reasonable.

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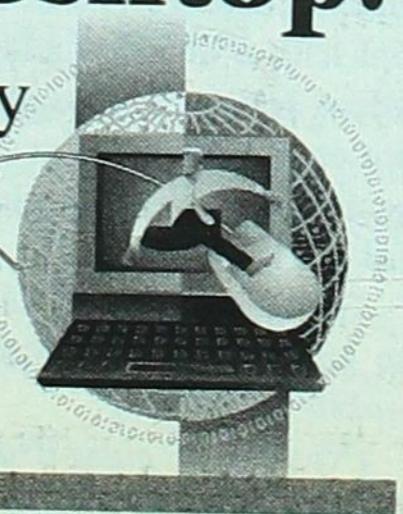
JUVENILE BUREAU DIRECTOR — TULSA COUNTY, OKLA.: Director of the Tulsa County Juvenile

See JOB MARKET, page 20

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JOB MARKET/CLASSIFIEDS

Continued from page 19

Bureau. Chief Administrator of the Court Services, Detention, Group Home and the county Juvenile Justice Center. Master's degree in related field and five years of progressive and diverse experience in Juvenile Justice Administration. Bachelor's degree and exceptional experience will be considered in lieu of Master's degree. Must have demonstrated leadership, excellent communication skills, a capacity to balance desires/interests of staff, clients, and the community, a demonstrated history of commitment to professional development and excellence. Demonstrated experience in all phases of personnel management and the budgetary process. Salary range \$55,160 to \$62,055. This position is currently available. Send letter and resume to Ms. Ann Domin, Tulsa County Court Administrator, 500 South Denver, Tulsa, OK 74103. Closing date 5/22/00. Equal Opportunity Employer.

MANAGER-LONG RANGE PLANNING — TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO: Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions, Number 2 position with 18-member planning department. Responsible for coordination of all long-range planning activities for the joint City-County Plan Commissions. Toledo and Lucas County (population 462,000) is a diverse area with a vibrant core city, developing suburban regions, some of the richest farmland in the Midwest, a great quality of life, and a renewed emphasis on long-range planning. Position offers the opportunity to work on wide ranging issues including urban redevelopment, challenges due to growth and farmland preservation. Toledo is completing its comprehensive plan and will shortly undertake a complete revision of its zoning code. Seeking a dynamic, motivated individual with a Master's Degree in Urban or Regional Planning or related field and six years of

planning experience with at least two of these years being in a supervisory capacity. AICP certification required. Salary \$48,500-\$68,500. Send resume by May 12, 2000 to Stephen J. Herwat — Director, at One Government Center, Suite 1620, Toledo, Ohio 43604, send via e-mail to stephen.herwat@ci.toledo.oh.us or fax to (419) 936-3730. EOE.

PROPERTY TAX DIRECTOR AND ENTERPRISE DIRECTOR — MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE: A search for two leaders, Minnesota Department of Revenue \$55,854 - 79,782.

Property Tax Director

This position provides direction, coordination and policy analysis of the ad valorem assessment and taxation of all real and personal property in Minnesota. This includes overseeing the scheduled process of administering the property tax system; the calculation and audit of

local government aids and credits; and the collection and analysis of property tax statistical data. The top administrative challenge for this position will be property tax reform for the State of Minnesota. The ideal candidate will have a thorough knowledge of property tax laws, regulations, and legal and administrative history; a working knowledge of the interaction between State and local financing mechanisms; the ability to utilize statistical information in decision making, formulating reports and analysis; and possess strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Minnesota Collection, Enterprise Director

This position directs the activities of Revenue's tax enforcement programs which are responsible for ensuring compliance with the tax laws and collecting government non-tax debt in a fair, effective reliable and cost efficient manner.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Annual Salary \$74,285 - \$111,428

The Human Relations Commission is searching for a dynamic and visionary leader to advance harmonious community relations, prevent inter-group tensions and reduce racial/ethnic violence. The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations is the oldest governmentally sponsored agency of its kind in the nation. Serving the 9.8 million residents of the region, the Commission is dedicated to promoting human relations and better understanding among the myriad of cultures, ethnic groups and diverse populations that make up the rich tapestry of Los Angeles County. The Executive Director is appointed by the 15-member Commission and confirmed by the five-member Board of Supervisors. Responsibilities include oversight for a full-time staff of 25 employees and a budget in excess of \$2 million.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities required in management and organization. Such management includes directing budget, personnel, fiscal, supply and other administrative functions, as well as line functions — AND — experience in coordinating or directing the coordination of programs involving improvement of inter-group relations, community relations or civil rights — OR — experience in developing viable community programs involving all segments of the community in such areas as housing, education, employment or community improvement.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS

- Proven record of managing and facilitating programs, public-private-community partnerships and collaborations related to human relations, inter-group relations, and/or hate crime.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the principles of organization and management necessary to analyze, evaluate, coordinate, and control a variety of management programs, practices, and systems in a clear and consistent manner.
- Experience working successfully with board of directors.
- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with program development, implementation, and evaluation in areas related to human relations, inter-group conflict and hate crime.



- Proven track record of leadership in organizing and coalition building among culturally diverse constituencies, both established and emerging, in an urban area.
- Demonstrated understanding of the importance of public relations with constituencies, key leaders, policy makers and the community.
- Committed to building a just and equitable society, while demonstrating no personal bias toward those from diverse backgrounds or circumstance or to those with divergent opinions.
- Possess high ethical standards of conduct and represent with equal diligence the interests of all diverse constituencies.

BENEFITS
The County of Los Angeles provides an excellent benefit package that allows employees to choose benefits that meet their specific needs.

Interested individuals are asked to submit résumé, salary history and a statement of qualifications interest **NO LATER THAN MAY 30, 2000** to:

Mr. Jerry Oldani, President

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Los Angeles County, Commission on Human Relations is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity at all levels of the workforce.

NOTICES

CONFERENCES

■ "People, Jobs and Transportation: Emerging Issues," a national forum sponsored by the **Community Transportation Association**, will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., June 5-6. Forum participants will examine the emerging trends and linkages among transit systems, workforce and economic development practitioners and businesses and will develop recommendations and a research agenda to strengthen the employment transportation field.

For more information, visit <http://www.ctaa.org/PJTconference/> or call Kerry Hardcastle at 202/628-1480, ext. 123, or e-mail: hardcastle@ctaa.org.

■ The International Association of Transportation Regulators (IATR) will hold its annual conference in Nashville, Tenn. Nov. 5-8. The conference will feature speakers, roundtables, panels and local updates on for-hire vehicle regulation. IATR is a professional association of officials overseeing licensing and regulation of passenger transportation services worldwide.

For more information about the IATR conference, contact Sammee Woods, Taxicab and Wrecker Licensing Board, 211 Union St., Nashville, TN 37201; Tel.: 615/862-6777; Website e-mail: www.iatr.org.

■ The Justice Department's Drug Court Planning Office has launched a Drug Court Planning Initiative (DCPI) to assist communities in the process of planning adult, juvenile and family drug courts. Technical assistance will be available free of charge.

The program will consist of a series of three workshops beginning in November 2000-2001. The workshops are free to all communities. The DCPI will pay for the workshop and travel costs (airfare, ground transportation, hotel and meals) for up to 10 people via federal travel regulations.

Further information on the program is available on the Internet at <http://ojp.ncjrs.org>.

PUBLICATIONS

■ The latest policy brief, from The

Urban Institute, "Child Support Offers Some Protection Against Poverty," states that child support reduces the number of poor children by 500,000. It also shows how states vary significantly in the percentage of children with a nonresident parent receiving the full amount of their child support order.

To order, call Alex Harrington at 202/261-5410.

■ "Local Government On-Line: Putting the Internet to Work," published by the **International City/County Management Association** (ICMA), explains how the Internet can be used to meet the expectations of citizens and business for timely, efficient services. The book contains lists of Internet and Intranet applications and tools, case studies and advice on planning, designing and implementing uses of new technologies. The cost is \$48.

To order, call 800/745-8780 or visit the ICMA online bookstore at <http://bookstore.icma.org>.

(Notices is compiled by Victoria Vickers, editorial assistant.)

The ideal candidate will possess a managerial background in collection and enforcement, have extensive experience and demonstrated success in business planning, have excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and be committed to providing top-notch service to diverse internal and external customer groups.

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CITY OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON CHIEF OF POLICE

(Starting Salary Range \$115,000 - \$135,000+ (Dependent On Experience) Plus Car)

The City of Seattle, Washington (population 540,000) is surrounded by one of the most scenic and pristine natural environments in the United States. It is consistently one of the top ten tourist destinations. The City has also been recognized as "one of the nation's most livable communities", "one of the best places in which to do business" and "one of the safest communities of its size for children and youth in the nation", according to several leading publications and professional organizations. Seattle is a collection of neighborhoods and distinct environments, small towns if you will, that combine into one of the most dynamic and diverse urban centers in the country. The diversity of its residents and responsiveness of government to the specific needs of its neighborhoods and citizens is one of the key ingredients that sets the "Emerald City" apart from other large metropolitan centers.

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) has been recognized as a national leader for its model Community Oriented Policing philosophy and efforts. Outreach to its various communities of interest, ongoing dialogue and citizen participation/involvement are important features which directly affect the method of operations for SPD. The Department has 1,971 employees of whom 1,261 are sworn, with civilian contingents providing administrative, communications, crime prevention, records, information technology and personnel support. The Department's operating budget for FY2000 is in excess of \$140 million with a significant capital budget for construction of a new Police Headquarters and Municipal Court facility as well as Precinct Stations during the next three years. Precinct Advisory Councils and Community Action Police Councils assist the Chief and SPD in identifying and meeting the needs of the community. The Chief reports to the Mayor and is confirmed by the nine-member City Council.

Requirements for this position include a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Administration of Justice, Criminal Justice, Criminology, Public Administration, or related field or equivalent experience; a Master's degree is preferred along with advanced management

education and training. Candidates should possess ten plus years of progressively responsible executive command experience serving in urban law enforcement agencies with attendant/related issues orientation. The most qualified candidates will have served in a community with a diverse population of at least 100,000+ residents. Service as a Chief, Assistant or Deputy Chief or a major unit Commander in a large agency will be viewed favorably. The candidates' backgrounds must demonstrate strong commitments toward positive community interaction, community oriented policing, diversification of the workforce, establishing extensive outreach programs, employee and citizen involvement in decision making, as well as an overriding concern for the welfare of the SPD workforce and all citizens of Seattle. Qualified professionals submit a resume, salary history and statement of interest. All résumés must be received NO LATER THAN 5:00 pm on May 19, 2000 and should be sent to:

Mr. Jerrold Oldani or Ms. Marcia Isenberg

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Or visit the City of Seattle Police Chief Search web site at: <http://ciyoseattle.net/esd/police/>

The City of Seattle and The Oldani Group, Inc. are Equal Opportunity Employers. Women and minorities are encouraged to make application for this position! Residency within the City of Seattle will be required.



City of REDMOND, Washington

Parks and Recreation Director

(Starting Salary Range to \$101,412 D.O.E.)

The City of Redmond, Washington (population 43,000+) is a vibrant and progressive community, which continues to experience strong economic growth and community diversification. Redmond is situated at the center of the Seattle area's high tech growth corridor and Microsoft, Nintendo of America, Safeco Insurance, Eddie Bauer, Spacelabs Medical and Physio-Control Corporation are among the "blue chip" companies calling the community home. Redmond has become "the City of choice" for many of the area's newcomers because of its superior educational, living and recreational environments. The City has over 1,350 acres of parklands in 35 developed sites and open space corridors and 25 miles of trail systems situated along Lake Sammamish and the Mercer Slough/Sammamish River, situated at the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range, Redmond offers unparalleled beauty, a convenient location and strong commitments to cultural arts, recreational and human services and preservation of the environment. This search is a replacement for a Director who will have served 32 years upon his retirement.

The Parks and Recreation Department has a full-time staff of 34 employees and over 200 seasonal personnel; its annual operating budget is \$6.7 million, with a six-year CIP in excess of \$17.5 million. Extensive recreational complexes and modern facilities, regional parks systems, waterfront sites and special recreational facilities provide outstanding amenities for residents and visitors alike. The focus of the new Parks and Recreation Director will be planning for the community's 10 and 20-year growth horizons; continuing parks and open space land acquisitions; and further refinement of recreational programs for all levels of the community (youth, seniors, special needs). Strong regional cooperative ventures must be maintained, and serving as a key member of the City's Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) will be an additional point of emphasis for the new Director. The Director reports to the elected Mayor and maintains close working relationships

with seven Councilmembers/Council members and members of citizen advisory boards and commissions.

Requirements include a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Parks/Recreation, Public Administration or related fields. A Master's degree in Public Administration or Parks/Recreation Management or similar fields is desired. Experience should include ten years' senior management experience developing leading edge programs over a broad range of recreation, social and human services programs; extensive grant funding, budget and financial management expertise; and strong skills in strategic planning, work/performance based assessment and measurement, team decision making and recreational programming implementation. Backgrounds must be demonstrated in coping effectively with the needs of high growth performance communities and the demands of community outreach programs. Interested individuals should submit a résumé, salary requirements and a statement of qualifications and interest **NO LATER THAN MAY 15, 2000**:

Mr. Jerry Oldani

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For more information, call Victoria Vickers, County News, National Association of Counties, 202/942-4256.

BUILDING COUNTIES IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM**Child Care****Welfare reform, more working parents
increase demand for safe, secure child care**

BY MARY ANN BARTON
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

After lots of dead ends, Julia, a struggling single mom on welfare in Catawba County, N.C., finally landed a job. Great, huh? The catch: It's a temp position that she has to start the very next day.

What's so bad about that? Finding child care on short notice for her infant and toddler. To qualify for subsidized care, her income and employment have to be verified before she can enroll them. "It's a Catch 22," explains Susan Parrish, daycare program supervisor for the Catawba County, N.C. Human Services Department.

So how can a county help? They found a way, with a simple program called Quick Care.

To qualify for subsidized care in Catawba, single parents cannot make more than \$12.65 per hour, 40 hours per week or approximately \$26,000 annually. For two-income families, it's \$45,060 a year. Parents pay 7 percent to 9 percent of their gross income.

But someone like Julia, and there are lots of them, according to Parrish, can't get verification of income and employment before starting a new position.

So instead of making a welfare recipient wait and possibly risk losing a job, the county decided to cut the red tape. With an OK from the county board, the income and employment verification rule was changed to give the parent 10 days to provide the needed paperwork instead of getting that information up front.

"We didn't give them the run-around," said Parrish, who is the mother of four-year-old triplets and their five-year-old big sister. "The end result is, they get a job. Our welfare recipient rate has dropped significantly (about 60 percent)."

The county administers a budget of \$6 million, provided through state and federal funding, for its subsidized child care, covering about 500 children who are cared for in child-care centers, pre-school programs, church-run programs, home-centered child care or before- and

after-school care or a combination.

The county tries to get the word out about its subsidized care and other child care programs, most recently with a plan to advertise on the back of receipts at the local K-Mart and Winn-Dixie supermarket.

In addition to helping welfare recipients find quality child care on short notice, counties across the country are also:

- grappling with inspecting licensed and unlicensed child care facilities and homes,
- working with their communities to retain and recruit child care workers in today's booming economy, and
- forging public-private partnerships to bring quality child care to their communities.

The scope of the child care issue

Across the country, 76 percent of children with working moms are cared for by someone other

See CARE next page

inside . . .**APRIL 17, 2000****Model County Programs page 3
For Ideas page 4****Frequently Asked Questions****What federal programs offer subsidized child care?**

The main federal program is the Child Care and Development Fund, which had a total funding of \$3.8 billion in 1999. Some states also use the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant and the Social Services Block Grant.

How many children need child care?

There are 30.4 million children with working parents. Of these, six million are infants and toddlers.

There are an estimated five million school-age children who spend some time during a typical week without adult supervision.

Does the federal child care subsidy serve all eligible children?

No, there are 14.7 million children who are eligible for federal child care subsidies, yet only 1.53 million were served in FY 1998.

Is the eligibility and payment for federal child care the same everywhere?

No, while it is available for children under the age of 13, and older children with special needs, states can determine eligibility up to 85 percent of the state median income. States also set the reimbursement rate and can charge a co-payment, both of which vary.

How much does child care cost?

Not surprisingly, child care costs vary widely by region, type of care, and the age of the child. According to a survey by the Children's Defense Fund, the average annual cost of child care exceeds \$3,000 for all states and exceeds \$5,000 for 17 states.

How much do child care workers get paid?

Not much. The average center-based teacher makes \$7 per hour. The average licensed family child care provider makes \$9,000 per year. An unlicensed provider makes less than \$6,000 per year.

CARE FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Child care's expense and worker turnover confound parents and providers

than their parents, according to the Urban Institute. (In 1970, it was about 30 percent.) And 41 percent of preschool children with employed mothers are in care for 35 or more hours per week.

About three million child-care teachers, assistants and family child-care providers in the country care for about 10 million children each day. Most of them (97 percent) are female and 41 percent have children of their own. One of the problems in today's economy is the high turnover rate in child care.

One-third of all child-care teachers leave each year for better jobs, according to the Child Care Bureau. Wages for family child care providers (who care for children in their homes) don't earn much: about \$9,528 per year after expenses, according to a study by Wheelock College.

But child care is expensive for those with low incomes. Families with annual incomes under \$14,400 who pay for care spend

ing programs to create more child care staff and working with the private sector to create cutting-edge quality programs for kids. The following details some of the ways counties are grappling with this complex issue.

Cracking down on unlicensed care in Broward County, Fla.

In Broward County, Fla., a special enforcement unit created to crack down on unlicensed child care closed down a home where 66 children were staying, including 18 children under age 5 who were locked in an upstairs bedroom during an investigation of the home.

The problem of rampant unlicensed child care homes in the county is due in part to a culturally diverse population unfamiliar with state and county regulations, says Shawn Lamarche, resource development coordinator in the Human Services Department.

tive," Lamarche said.

The initial start-up cost for the unit was \$216,640, which included the purchase of cars and computers. Lamarche has also recently put in a request for a public information officer to join the team, to help spread the word about child care regulations, through public service announcements and paid advertising.

How does the team find unlicensed situations? One way is by communicating with police and fire department officers, as well as zoning authorities, she said. "They are another set of eyes out in the community."

"We also act on tips—we have a hotline or we'll see an ad in the paper for babysitting and check it out," she said. Of 222 investigations last year, 22 unlicensed providers were uncovered. Some of them simply don't know about the regulations. Others know them, but choose not to follow them. It can mean the difference between a safe and unsafe environment with such hazards as unfenced swimming pools, uncovered electrical outlets and staffers with no CPR training, Lamarche noted.

work in today's economy mixed with a dearth of child-care workers (Fredericks has seen a 10 percent to 15 percent drop in the number of providers in the county in the past two years) is a scary situation, she said.

"With the new research on brain development and quality care-giving, we're caught in this crisis that will have tremendous impact in the future," she said.

To help offset the lack of child-care workers, Choices for Children is working with a local community college to train welfare recipients to become child-care providers.

included: a media campaign, a tightening of training requirements, financial incentives for child-care providers and additional training for workers.

Creating model care in King County, Wash.

In King County, Wash., Bellevue Community College is raising funds to build a model child-care and family learning center. The proposed 22,000-square-foot center will provide separate wings for infants as young as three months through kindergarten-age, as well as train-

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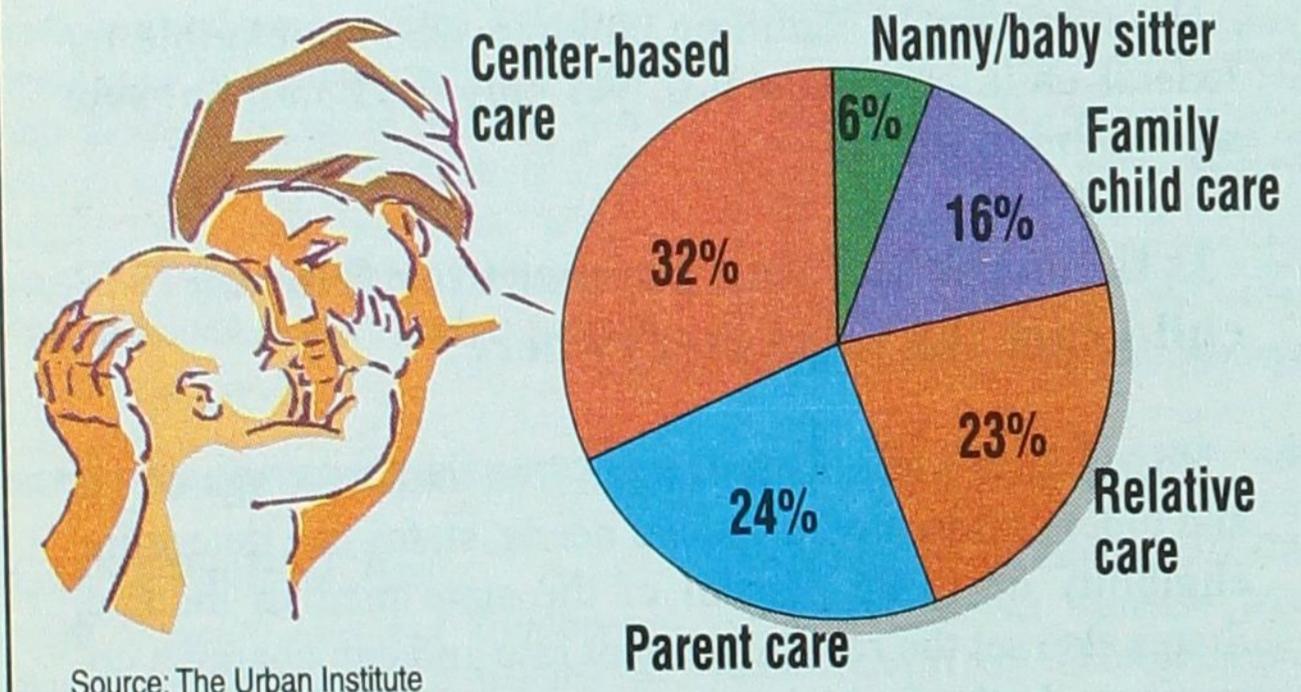
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How Many Children Are in Child Care?

76% of children with working moms are cared for by someone other than their parents.



25 percent of their income on child care, compared with 6 percent for families with incomes of \$54,000 or more.

Quality of care is another issue. A four-state study of quality in child care found only one in seven centers (14 percent) were rated as good quality, according to a University of Denver study. The National Research Council says that many children living in poverty receive child care that, at best, does not support their optimal development and at worst, may compromise their health and safety.

Counties are working to crack down on unsafe child care, fund-

"We compared ourselves to Hillsborough County (Fla.) and even though we're larger, they had four to five times more licensed child care providers," she said. "We saw enforcement as a priority."

The enforcement unit consists of three child development specialists who wear uniforms and drive in marked cars (but don't carry weapons).

Before the enforcement unit was created, nine other staff members had to squeeze in enforcement in addition to their regular duties of inspecting the county's licensed child care centers and homes. "We couldn't be proac-

Recruitment, retention 'one of our biggest problems'

Finding and keeping good child-care staff is getting more and more difficult in today's booming economy.

"It's one of the biggest problems," said Doris Fredericks, executive director of Choices for Children, a non-profit contractor for Santa Clara County, Calif., which helps welfare recipients place their children in child care and also makes the subsidized payments to child care providers.

"They move on to jobs that have more 'ladders.' And it's really difficult getting qualified people," she said.

Some of the child care centers that have openings for subsidized care can't fill them because their staff-to-child ratio would be too high (for preschoolers in California, it's either 10 to one or 12 to one, depending on the source of the facility's funding).

The combination of more people with children going to

"We have 17 people in the program right now," she said. The usual pay for a child-care worker in Santa Clara County is about \$10 to \$12, not "a real livable wage" for the single moms enrolled in the 10-month program, which is geared to them opening a child-care program in their own homes.

In Fairfax County, Va., employers also want the county to address child care.

A coalition of businesses wants county supervisors to launch a campaign to recruit child-care workers to ease the crunch: The number of in-home child-care providers with county permits has fallen 16 percent, while the population continues to grow by about 2 percent each year.

"Our community must recognize the early signs of what could soon become a crisis for working parents," said a report from the Employer Child Care Council, made up of representatives of some of the county's major employers.

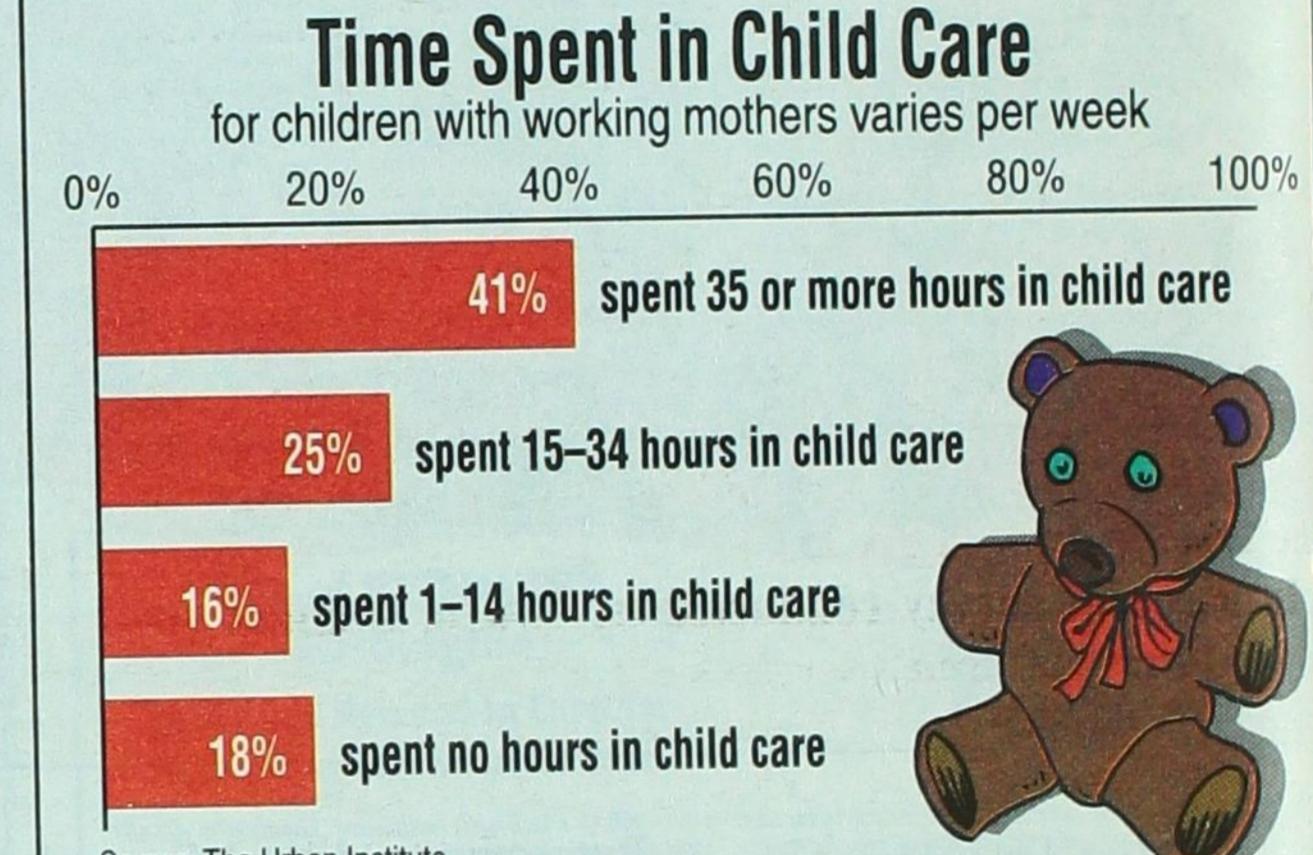
Some of its recommendations

ing for early childhood education (the college offers a two-year degree in early learning curriculum), parent education classes and resources for families and businesses.

More than \$2.8 million has already been raised from Costco, mass merchandiser, and the state. Costco families will use nearly half of the 200 child-care slots at the center, slated to open in early 2001. "Costco recognizes that strong families are the fiber of a healthy community," said Jim Sinegal, Costco CEO.

King County, along with the City of Bellevue and the City of Redmond, has kicked in \$70,000. Councilmember Rob McKenna is involved with the project.

He pointed out that the center will help families who work non-traditional hours. "It will meet critical need, particularly for those who work outside the 9 to 5 range," he said. If a business open from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m., what do you do about child care? We're taking a step to answer those needs."



Federal Resources for Child Care

BY MARILINA SANZ
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

There are several federal sources of funding for child care, including subsidies and tax credits. The major source of direct subsidies is the Child Care and Development Fund. This program has both entitlement and discretionary funds. In FY2001, the entitlement funds that will be available to states will be \$2.6 billion. The administration has requested \$2 billion for the discretionary program in FY2001, an increase of \$817 million.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant (TANF) can also be a source of funding for child care. States may use TANF funds directly and they can also transfer 10 percent of their TANF grant to the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). According to the Administration for Children and Families, states are increasingly using these two alternatives.

In 1998, they transferred \$636 million in TANF funds to CCDF. In the first two quarters of 1999 alone, they transferred \$510 million. In all, they spent \$259 million on child care directly from TANF funds in 1998.

The Social Services Block Grant (Title XX) is often a source of child care funding as well. Title XX is currently funded at \$1.775 billion, but it has been severely cut over the years and is scheduled to go down to \$1.7 billion in FY2001 as the result of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21).

In a recent survey conducted by NACo, counties reported that children's services are among the four most common uses of Title XX funds at the county level. This includes not only direct child care but also licensing and monitoring of child care facilities. In addition to the above mentioned transfer authority to CCDF, states can also transfer 10 percent of their TANF funds to Title XX. This authority is supposed to go down to 4.25 percent in FY2001 as a result of TEA 21.

Although not a child care program, Head Start is the largest source of federal funds for early childhood education. This comprehensive program provides not only early childhood education, but also nutrition, social services and health services, and has a strong parental involvement component. It is targeted to children in low-income families. Most of the program is used for children between the ages of three and five, but in 1995 Early Head Start was established to serve pregnant women, and infants and toddlers.

Head Start is currently funded at \$5.267 billion. The president has requested an appropriation of nearly \$6.3 billion for FY2001. Of this, 9 percent, or \$564 million, would be for the Early Head Start program.

Finally, the federal government also has a Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. Families can claim the credit if they paid for child care for a child under age 13 or for a disabled adult living with them. The family must also need the service in order to work or look for work.

They can claim from \$2,400 to \$4,800 depending on the number of children or adult dependents, and they will receive a credit between 20 and 30 percent depending on their income. This means that a family can get a credit or anywhere from \$720 to \$1,440 a year. A family that is eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit can also claim the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit provided that they earned enough money to have federal income taxes deducted from their paycheck.

Model County Programs

Henrico County, Va. Child Care Occupations

Demand for competent, well-trained child care providers is at an all time high. Henrico County is meeting the demand with its Child Care Occupations Program. The program, conducted by the county school system, trains high school students who are interested in careers in education or child care on proper child care techniques.

Child Care Occupations not only meets the needs of these high school students by providing hands on educational experience but also the needs of the community by offering an affordable morning and afternoon preschool situation to the community.

The program offers morning and afternoon sessions for toddlers to pre-K children in the community. During a typical preschool day, the children are exposed to activities in art, science, social studies, and fine and gross motor development. With the assistance of a licensed teacher, the high school students research, plan, and prepare the activities that they will teach the children.

During the program, the high school students learn to understand the growth and development of infants, care for exceptional children, food safety and child care regulations.

In addition to the valuable work experience, the high school students receive academic credit for participating in the two-year course. Seventy-five percent of the program's students are employed by the completion of the first year. One full time and one part time teacher are assigned to teach the high school students. The preschool is provided to any interested community member for \$25 a month.

For more information, contact: Janet S. Binns, Information and Community Services Director, 3820 Nine Mile Rd., Richmond, VA 23223: 804/652-3726.

Martin County, Fla. Golden Gate After School/Alternative Program (G.A.A.P.)

The Golden Gate After School/Alternative Program involves the Martin County government, community organizations and a local neighborhood association in providing after-school programming for children of the community.

The program began after members of the neighborhood expressed concern over the rise in juvenile crime in the community as well as the lack of supervision for neighborhood youth while parents were working.

G.A.A.P. activities serve youths ranging from 5 to 18 years old. The program operates Monday through Friday from 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. the critical hours for the occurrence of juvenile crime.

During summer, the program also operates from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The County Parks and Recreation Department coordinates the activity, which also involves such community organizations and government agencies as the American Red Cross, the County Sheriff's Office, the YMCA, the local art museum, and the Boys and Girls Club.

Each of the program partners is required to contribute programs or activities.

G.A.A.P. receives its funding through in-kind contributions and a grant from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. The cost for implementing G.A.A.P. for 265 participants is \$63,390 annually.

After this program was implemented the neighborhood saw a reduction in crime of 13 percent. The program reaches 265 children and has an average daily attendance of 40 children.

For more information, contact: Robert F. Denison, Parks and Recreation Director, 2401 SE Monterey Rd., Stuart, FL 34996: 561/288-5474.

Broward County, Fla. The Enforcement Unit

To ensure that safe child care is the norm rather than the exception, Broward County launched its Enforcement Unit to combat unlicensed child care facilities. The unit enforces licensure regulations, responds to complaints, initiates procedures against home operators that continue to violate ordinance standards and provides information to the community on licensure standards and the importance of maintaining licensure.

The Enforcement Unit not only inspects facilities as a result of complaints but they actively inspect facilities that advertise in newspapers or flyers and those facilities that attend licensing seminars.

The unit, in cooperation with the other agencies, encourages cooperative assessments of life, safety and regulatory issues and works closely with county departments responsible for code enforcement and public safety.

The Enforcement Unit has investigated an average of 211 complaints and has closed and fined 54 unlicensed/unregistered homes, facilities or religious/non-public schools since it began.

The program has also contributed to the licensure of approximately 81 homes and facilities. The total budget for one year for this program, including purchases of equipment such as two-way radios, pagers and camcorders, was \$216,640.

For more information, contact: Shawn LaMarche, Development Coordinator, Human Services Department, 2995 N. Dixie Highway, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33334: 954/537-2800.

For ideas: Try these references and resources

Organizations and Web Sites

American Public Human Services Association
www.aphsa.org
 810 First St., NE
 STE 500
 Washington, DC 20002
 202/682-0100

Annie E. Casey Foundation
www.aecf.org/publications/child/care.htm
 701 St. Paul St.
 Baltimore, MD 21202
 410/547-6600

Child Care Bureau
 Administration for Children, Youth, and Families
 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/
 Switzer Building
 Room 2046
 330 C Street, SW
 Washington, DC 20447
 202/690-6782

Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org
 25 E Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20001
 202/628-8787

Local Initiatives Support Corporation
www.liscnet.org
 National Child Care Initiative
 733 Third Avenue, 8th Fl.
 New York, NY 10017
 212/455-9800

MOST (Making the Most of Out-of-School Time)
 DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund
<http://dewittwallace.org>
 2 Park Ave., 23rd Floor
 New York, NY 10016
 212/251-9700

National Childcare Information Center
www.ncic.org
 243 Church Street, NW-2nd Fl.
 Vienna, VA 22180
 1-800-616-224

National Head Start Association
www.nhsa.org
 1651 Prince St.
 Alexandria, VA 22314
 703/739-0875

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC
 Wellesley College Center for Research on Women
 Wellesley, MA 02181
 781/283-2547

National School-Age Care Alliance
www.nsaca.org
 1137 Washington St.
 Boston, MA 02142
 617/298-5012

Save the Children Child Care Support Center
 1447 Peachtree St., NE
 Suite 700
 Atlanta, GA 30309
 404/479-4200

The Urban Institute
www.urban.org
 2100 M Street, N.W.
 Washington, DC 20037
 202/833-7200

U.S. Census Bureau Family Statistics Branch (Child Care Statistics)
www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/childcare.html
 Federal Center, Bldg. 3
 Washington, DC 20233
 301/457-2416

Publications

Care Around the Clock: Developing Child Care Resources Before Nine and After Five.
 Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, 1995.

Available only online at:
<http://nccic.org/pubs/carecloc.html>

Child Care Arrangements for Children Under Five: Variation Across States. New Federalism: National Survey of America's Families.
 The Urban Institute, March 2000.

To obtain a copy contact:
 202/429-0687

Child Care You Can Count On—Model Programs and Policies.
 The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 1998.
 Available only online at:
www.aecf.org/publications/child/afford.htm

Fact Sheet on School Aged Children's Out of School Time.
 National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Center for Research On Women, Wellesley College, January 2000.

To obtain a copy contact:
 781/283-2547

A Guide to Successful Public Private Partnerships for Child Care.
 National Child Care Information Center.

To obtain a copy contact:
 1-800-616-2242

The Hours That Children Under Five Spend in Child Care: Variations Across States. New Federalism: National Survey of America's Families.

The Urban Institute, March 2000.

To obtain a copy contact:
 202/429-0687

Leading the Way: Characteristics and Early Experiences of Selected Early Head Start Programs.

Mathematica Policy Research, December 1999.

Executive summary available online at:
www.mathematica-mpr.com/leadexec.pdf
 Or contact 609/799-3535

Long Term Outcomes of Early Childhood Programs.
 The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Winter 1995.

To obtain a copy contact:
 650/948-7658, or visit the Web site at:
www.packfound.org/index.htm

Making Child Care Better: State Initiatives.

National Conference of State Legislatures, October 1999.

To obtain a copy contact:
 202/624-5400

Making the Most of Out-of-School Time.

DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

To obtain a copy contact:
 212/251-9000

Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children.
 The Carnegie Corporation, 1994.

Copies may be obtained for \$10, including shipping and handling and must be prepaid by writing to:

Carnegie Corporation of New York
 P.O. Box 753
 Waldorf, MD 20604

Welfare Reform: Implications of Increased Work Participation for Child Care.

U.S. General Accounting Office, May 1997, and

Welfare Reform: States Efforts to Expand Child Care Programs.

U.S. General Accounting Office, January 1998.

To obtain a copy contact:
 202/512-6000 or visit the GAO Web site at: www.gao.gov

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doris@choices4children.org

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 Member
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rob.mckenna@metrokc.gov

Future hot topics

Workforce Development • May 15
Health Care Access • Aug. 28
Land Use Issues • Oct. 9
Communications • Dec. 4

If your county has a unique or innovative program that deals with any of these issues, let us know.

Call Bev Schlotterbeck: 202/942-4249.

This special insert in County News is sponsored by NACo's Member Programs and Services Committee, chaired by Edna Bell, Wayne County, Michigan commissioner.

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