



NACo's new officers pause for a photo July 15 at NACo's 84th Annual Conference in Clark County, Nev. (Left to right): Immediate Past President Greg Cox, San Diego County supervisor; First Vice President Gary Moore, Boone County, Ky. judge/executive; President Mary Ann Borgeson, Douglas County, Neb. commissioner and Second Vice President Larry Johnson, DeKalb County, Ga. commissioner. Photo by Denny Henry

Mary Ann Borgeson, Nebraska commissioner, takes reins at NACo

by **Mary Ann Barton**
editor

Douglas County, Neb. Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson was sworn in July 15 as NACo president in Clark County, Nev. at NACo's 84th Annual Conference. Borgeson took her oath of office surrounded by her family at the association's annual business meeting and tops the new four-person team of officers.

"My family has been there every step of the way — from my days as an X-ray technician to my early and very challenging first days as a county commissioner nearly 25 years ago," she told the audience.

"Back then, I was the first woman elected to chair the Douglas County Board, and today I stand before you as the 13th woman elected to serve as NACo's president. Lucky 13 right here in Clark County!"

"My love for county government and service to our citizens led me to seek office," she said. "Throughout my years of service, I have been guided by my belief to always do the right thing. No matter what political parties say, service to our residents has always been my North Star."

Just before voting began July 15 for NACo second vice president, candidate Christian Leinbach, a Berks Coun-

ty, Pa. commissioner, announced from the stage that he was dropping out of the race and throwing his support behind candidate Ray Jeffers, commissioner, Person County, N.C.

That narrowed the race to just Jeffers and DeKalb County, Ga. Commissioner Larry "LJ" Johnson. Johnson won the NACo second vice presi-

See CONFERENCE page 2

DeKalb County, Ga. Commissioner Larry Johnson elected NACo 2nd VP

From CONFERENCE page 1

dent race, receiving 1,421 votes or 61.14 percent of the vote to Jeffers' 880 votes or 37.87 percent. Twenty-three or .99 percent abstained from voting.

In addition to Borgeson and Johnson, the officers team also includes First Vice President Gary Moore, judge/executive of Boone County, Ky. and Immediate Past President Greg Cox, supervisor, San Diego County.

Borgeson was sworn into office by her son Rich, surrounded by members of her family, including husband Bob, son Ed and daughter-in-law Beth.

Her presidential initiative will explore how counties can

best serve the nation's aging population.

"By 2035, for the first time in America's history, the population of adults 65 and older will outnumber children," Borgeson noted. "From supporting home-based care and caregivers to building safe and accessible communities for people of all ages, counties are leveraging local, state and federal resources to help older adults and their families."

Borgeson was first elected to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners in 1994. She was re-elected to her sixth term in 2014. In 1997, Borgeson was the first woman elected to serve as




DeKalb County, Ga. Commissioner Larry Johnson (center) is congratulated on his NACo second vice president win. Photo by Denny Henry

chairwoman of the Douglas County Board and has served in this capacity for numerous years. Borgeson has served as chair of the NACo Health Services and Cyber Security

Committees and vice chair of the Large Urban County Caucus, Healthy Counties, Health Services Committee, and is a member of the International Economic Development, Arts

and Culture, Membership and Programs and Services Committees. Borgeson is past president of Women of NACo.

Also at the conference, NACo members adopted more than 100 resolutions.

The Clark County/Las Vegas conference attracted about 3,000 attendees. General sessions featured speakers David Kwong, an illusionist and Small Business Administration chief Chris Pilkerton. Other General Session speakers included Roy Spence, co-founder and CEO of the Purpose Institute and Jeanette Betancourt, senior vice president for U.S. Social Impact at Sesame Workshop. 

SNAP/STATS



PEACH SEASON

Late summer is a prime season for peaches.

The top peach-producing states in the country are:

STATE	1,000 TONS
California:	479
South Carolina:.....	66
Georgia:	26
New Jersey:.....	23
Pennsylvania:	17

Source: Statista

Q&A with NACo's new president

by Charlie Ban and Rachel Looker

Douglas County, Neb. Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson was sworn in July 15 as NACo's new president at the 84th Annual Conference & Exposition in Clark County, Nev. *County News* interviewed Borgeson at the conference, ahead of her year as president. She discussed why her initiative of helping the elderly is a very personal one and the international leaders who inspired her own leadership style.

How did you get involved with county government?

"My husband... he encouraged me to run. I knew nothing about politics really or county government, but he encouraged me to throw my hat in the

ringer. I was doing my undergraduate degree at UNO and we had to take a federal, state and local issue and do a paper on it and study the issue. At the time, Douglas County was looking at buying a horse racetrack and I couldn't quite figure out, not knowing all I know about county government, why'd the county want to buy a horse racetrack. That's what I did my paper on and my husband encouraged me to continue to look into it."

What was it about local government that grabbed your interest?

"I'm an X-ray technologist, so the medical side of things that county government was involved in, in terms of mental health, the general assistance primary health care and really just kind of the health and human services areas of county government. The county [level] is really where you touch

the lives of people every single day because of the health and human service aspect and the criminal justice aspect."

What do you hope to accomplish as NACo president?

"One, keep NACo running as smooth and great as it is. I'm

anxious to keep moving NACo forward. Hopefully, increasing the membership. We're at an all-time high right now — but continuing to do that. Then of course, my initiative which is working on the older adults, age-friendly counties as well as the care-giving aspect of taking care of older adults."

What got you interested in your initiative to focus on the nation's aging population?

"This is real personal. My mother has Alzheimer's dementia and my daddy always took care of her. Well, he ended up getting stage 4 lymphoma. I was thrown into that [caregiver] role and you get a different perspective when you are. I still have a family that I needed to take care of but now I was also taking care



NACo President Mary Ann Borgeson Photo by Leon Lawrence III

See PRESIDENT page 6

Kids top Sesame Street partnership

by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

A surprise guest took the stage at the July 15 General Session at NACo's Annual Conference, to represent NACo's partnership with Sesame Street in Communities.

Cookie Monster joined Jeanette Betancourt, who serves as the senior vice president for U.S. Social Impact at Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization of Sesame Street.

With counties investing more than \$58 billion each year in human services, Betancourt discussed the importance of supporting children and their families.

Sesame Workshop is a global educational organization that aims to help children grow smarter, stronger and kinder. Betancourt's main message focused on prioritizing early childhood in counties.

"Sesame Street shares the same mission that all of you have — to make a significant difference in the lives of children and families and particularly those most vulnerable," she said. Nearly half of the children in the country are living at or near the pov-



Jeanette Betancourt of Sesame Workshop speaks to NACo members July 15 at the Annual Conference in Clark County, Nev. Photo by Denny Henry

erty line, Betancourt said, and Sesame Street works to address these issues as well as shared commonalities by covering topics such as children with autism and children in military families.

"Keep in mind as counties, as leaders in what you do, what you're doing is setting the stage for the circle of care," she said. "That circle of care is basically how we mitigate the effects of trauma."

Sesame Street in Communities provides hope and resiliency through partnerships

and innovative content, she said. "Our goal is to help you use our brand for highlighting the most significant issues happening in children's lives," she said.

According to Betancourt, counties and Sesame Street working together brings more public awareness to the empowerment of circles of care within communities.

"Our approach is: How do we use our iconic relationship of 50 years to form comforting connections?" she said.

Betancourt said Sesame

Street in Communities highlights the most important issues where a child's voice is often silent, such as the topic of family homelessness, which 2.7 million children in the country experience.

"What we've done is used our wonderful characters and Muppets to help all of you represent the child's perspective and provide you tools that allow you to break these issues... to use this as a way to visibly identify this issue in your community," she told attendees.

Sesame Street in Communities has worked in Guilford and Transylvania counties in North Carolina to create initiatives to help connect the youth with services.

"Use Sesame Street as a tool to highlight the well-being, provide a force for a sense of hope and resiliency, but most importantly, partner together to improve the well-being of children," she said.

By working together, Betancourt said counties and communities will be able to "Sesamitize" the country. **CN**

SBA chief touts Opportunity Zones, US-Mexico-Canada deal

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Though Chis Pilkerton was pleased to report continued domestic economic growth, he and the Small Business Administration, where he serves as acting administrator, know that prosperity is not uniform.

He told NACo members at the Opening General Session July 13 that Opportunity Zones will be a game changer in the economic development community, particularly for disadvantaged areas.

"We know that not every community has benefited equally from our nation's booming economy," he said. "(This program) will create



Chris Pilkerton, of the Small Business Administration, addresses NACo members July 13 at the Annual Conference. Photo by Denny Henry

jobs and foster economic mobility, creating a pathway to the middle class for residents of distressed areas."

Governors have identified

nearly 8,700 areas in which people can reinvest capital gains into long-term economic development projects. Some opportunity zones, Pilker-

ton noted, are fairly close to prosperous areas, which underscores how readily investments can be made and progress seen.

He said the program could draw up to \$100 billion in private investment in distressed communities.

Pilkerton outlined other ways the Trump administration has supported small businesses and how they benefit counties, particularly through the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

"Reforms put forth in this deal are critical to creating an economic ecosystem that is simple, safe and easy for the American entrepreneur," he said.

"It makes e-commerce more attractive and easier for small businesses, while leveling the playing field in relation to their larger competitors," he noted.

"For the first time in history, there's a chapter in a trade agreement focused just on small businesses," he said.

Pilkerton noted that small businesses create jobs in all varieties of counties and serve a role unique from large corporations.

"Small businesses are the glue that holds communities together," he said. "They give communities their character, they sponsor Little League teams. They place ads in high school yearbooks, they serve as the local landmark." **CN**

Transition center offers ‘one-stop shop’ for released inmates

by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

In Clackamas County, Ore., inmates who are being released from the county jail don't have to look far to receive help transitioning back to life outside of prison.

The Clackamas County Transition Center is the first of its kind in the region and provides a wide variety of services for justice-involved individuals in a location that is hard to miss.

“We are right across the parking lot from the jail,” said Kelli Zook, the former Transition Center coordinator.

According to Clackamas County Chief Deputy Jenna Morrison, when inmates are released, they physically walk past the transition center on their way out of the Clackamas County Jail.

When the center first opened in February 2016, Morrison explained that staff from the transition center would stand outside the jail's gate and guide those who were being released to the facility. Three years later, more individuals are now familiar with its services, she said.

In Clackamas County, 300 to 350 individuals are released from jail each year, according to Morrison. She realized there was a need in the community to prepare those who were incarcerated for the next step once they are released.

“Our jail is much like any other jail. It feels sometimes like a revolving door,” she said. “The intent of the transition center was to maybe put at least a door jam in there and stop some of that as far as getting in touch with people while they're incarcerated and then having a place for them to go when they're released.”

The center sees between 100 and 120 individuals each month, according to Morrison.

Zook explained that initially, the center's goal was to reduce recidivism, but it soon became clear that it would fill more of the community's needs by

connecting clients to services. The center transformed into a service center that aims to prevent people from needing to go to jail while filling the needs of any justice-involved individual, such as family members of those who are incarcerated.

“We were really hoping to make it kind of a one-stop shop,” Zook said.

She added that the center is different than many other programs in different counties because it is not a reporting center, meaning anyone is able to walk into the center on a voluntary basis and receive services.

“People felt like it was sort of a safe place to come without being committed to doing something,” Zook said.

The center provides referrals to various treatment programs, housing programs and medical plans, hosts 12-step programs and AA meetings, distributes Narcan, offers bus passes, access to computers, employment services, hygiene products and food.

“It's really a place for people when they get out of jail to have a place to kind of say, ‘OK, let's take a breath and what's our next step?’” Morrison said.

“It's really a place for people when they get out of jail to have a place to kind of say, ‘OK, let's take a breath and what's our next step?’” Morrison said.

The center has a free GED program offered through the community college. According to Zook, the transition center has had a higher GED graduation rate than the college itself.

“That's been really neat to watch and to hear the stories from people who say, ‘I got my GED at the transition center and now I'm taking college classes,’” Zook said.

Other programs in the center include a charity quilting

program where women learn how to quilt. The quilts are later donated to the community.

“It's just something fun because it's not a correctional facility,” Zook said.

Morrison said that the center has good partnerships including with the county jail, the treatment community and the peer mentor community.

“People will come in with extraordinary problems and most places will be like, ‘yeah, we can't help you with that.’ That's not what the transition center is,” Morrison said, adding that the staff often spends days working with one person to get a problem solved.

Through the center's partnership with the jail, the jail's budget pays for the center's building and the maintenance. The transition center is responsible for paying the staff and certain contracts, such as the contract with the community college. When the center first opened, it was initially invested with justice reinvestment dollars. Now, the center

is being paid with carry-over funding that comes from having vacancies in positions, Morrison said.

She added that the jail would like the center to be open 24 hours per day instead of the current operating hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“We're hoping to maybe leverage the jail a little bit and get some expanded services and have them provide some of the staffing and the funding,” said Morrison.

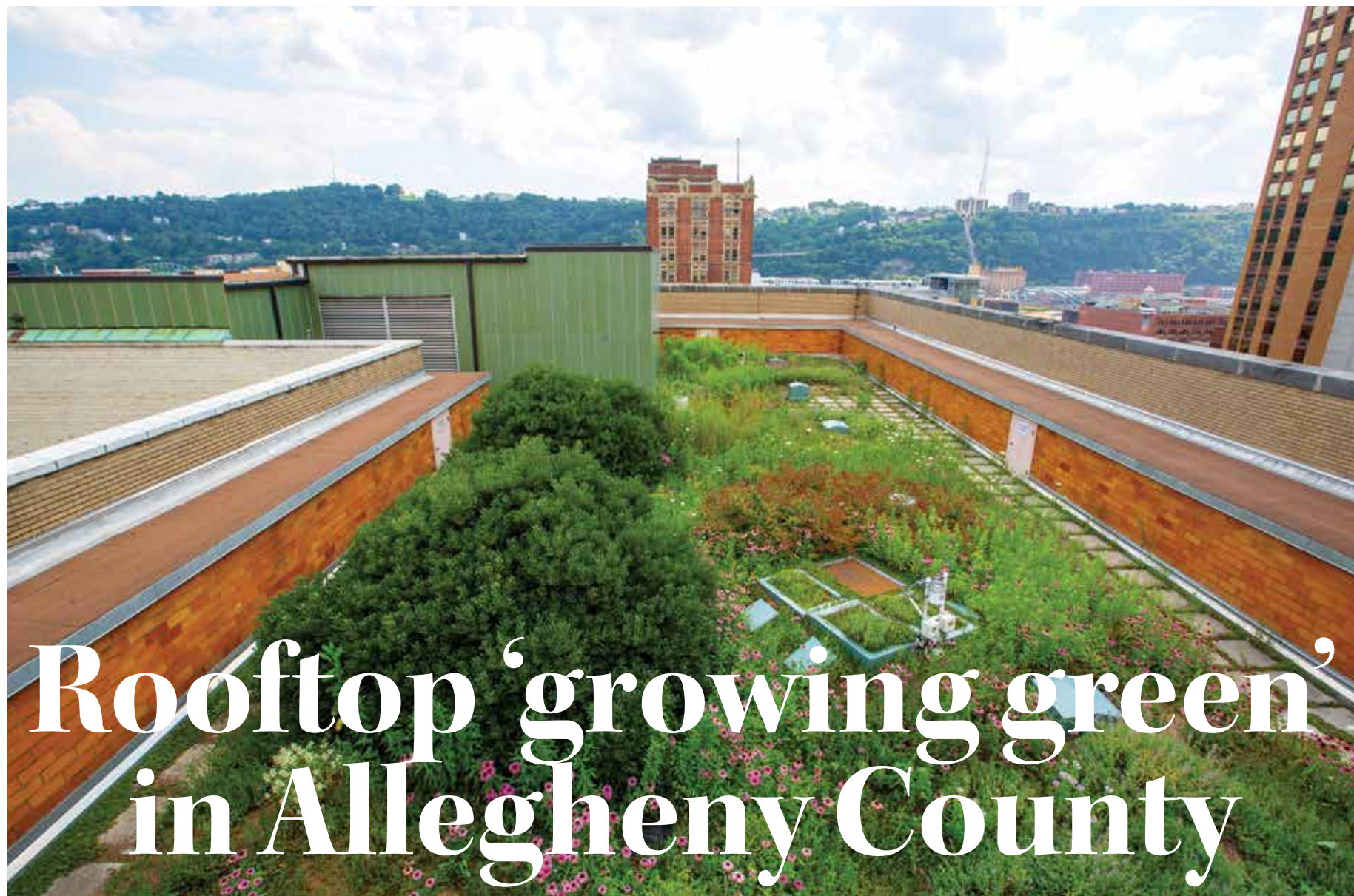
Zook said she hopes the center provides what people need the first few hours coming out of jail.

Morrison described the center as having a “seamless connection” from the jail to the transition center and then a “warm handoff” to the community.

“What we try to do is treat people with respect and dignity and try to help them either not go farther into the criminal justice system or try to take steps to get out of the criminal justice system,” she said. **CN**



The Clackamas County Jail (left) is located directly across the parking lot from the Transition Center (right). Photo courtesy of Clackamas County



Rooftop 'growing green' in Allegheny County

The 8,400-square-foot green roof sits on top of the county office building in Allegheny County, Pa. Photo courtesy of Allegheny County Photography

by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

On top of the county office building in Allegheny County, Pa., there's more than just concrete and tar.

In 2010, the county installed an 8,400-square-foot green roof on the 1930s-constructed building in downtown Pittsburgh.

Darla Cravotta, Allegheny County's director of community relations and special projects, helped to figure out a way to install the green roof.

Cravotta explained that the roof has two sides — the "control" side and the green roof. The ultimate goal of the project was to have the green roof act as a drainage system to hold water and keep it out of drains.

Nearly a decade later, the green roof has provided multiple benefits to the county.

On top of the county office building, there are different types of "green roofs" used to demonstrate how different

green roof pieces can be used on existing buildings.

Allegheny County's green roof features a mat filled with sedum, a type of plant that has a shallow soil depth of less than four inches. Other pieces on the green roof are described as "intensive" and "semi-intensive," which have varying soil depths. The "semi-intensive" green roof is between 6 and 7 inches of soil while the "intensive" green roof can be up to 10 inches deep.

The different types of green roofs are all incorporated in the same space on top of the county office building.

"We wanted to build the roof to demonstrate what you could do on top of an existing building," Cravotta said. "We did a variety of types of roofs on top so we could show people."

The roof can capture an inch of rain in a 24-hour storm, according to Cravotta. Depending on the green roof type, the soil depth and the rain storm, the roof can capture anywhere

from 20 to 100 percent of the rain.

"The green roof on the County Office Building has met and exceeded our expectations," said Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald.

Cravotta said the green roof has an impact on the reduction in the urban heat island effect, which is caused when surfaces such as rooftops or concrete absorb heat during the day and re-radiate heat throughout the day and night. This makes the city hotter and results in higher cooling costs.

On the side of the top of the building with the green roof, the temperature is usually cooler by 20 to 50 degrees, Cravotta said. With the temperature reduction, the costs for running the HVAC are lower.

"The very first year we saw that our costs for our electrical savings in the first year were \$80,000 because we put essentially an entire insulation on top of our roof," she said.

Green roofs also help in-

crease a roof's lifespan by protecting the surface from UV rays, which cause wear and tear over time.

"If you're a county and you have a budget, you're going to be extending your roof life two to three times," Cravotta said.

She added that the green roof helps with a major problem in Allegheny County — dealing with stormwater management — by collecting the rainfall.

"We wanted to demonstrate in an area that has a high concentration of concrete and existing older buildings, where you could install a green roof on top of a building," she said.

"The county's sustainability program really grew out of these efforts," Fitzgerald added. "The roof project was our first foray into seeing what impact we could have at the county."

Over the years, Cravotta said she has seen more biodiversity on the roof with an increase in bees, birds and has even seen a praying mantis.

"There's things happening on that roof that normally wouldn't happen on a flat, black tar roof," she said.

Cravotta said there are various ways to incorporate green space on the top of buildings, and that can vary, depending on a roof's loading capabilities. She said if the loading on a roof is minimal, a mat with sedum is an option that can help with stormwater management.

"The green roof is a way to help manage stormwater in cities that are experiencing and we all are — every city, every county — is experiencing this need to manage their water and a green roof is a way to do that and then also reap benefits especially on older buildings," she said.

Allegheny County continues to monitor the green roof by tracking its rainfall data and posting the information on the county website, Cravotta said, noting: "The county saw this as a really important investment for us." **CN**

'...I pride myself on listening to folks'

From **PRESIDENT** page 2


of my parents. On the flip side of that, I'm blessed that I'm able to do that because it got me thinking about our county employees. If I had a job where I was either tied to a desk, like a 911 operator, you can't just up and leave in the middle of your shift to go take your parents to a doctor's appointment or a treatment. It really got me thinking, 'How do we take care of the caregivers and make sure that we're giving them the things that they need to stay healthy and well?' By 2035, the population is going to be more people over the age of 65 than there are 18 year olds. We have some work to do to make sure that we are keeping our older

adults in their homes because that's where they want to stay, and make sure that where they're staying is safe for them and that their quality of life stays high."

What are the top issues you hear county officials talk about?

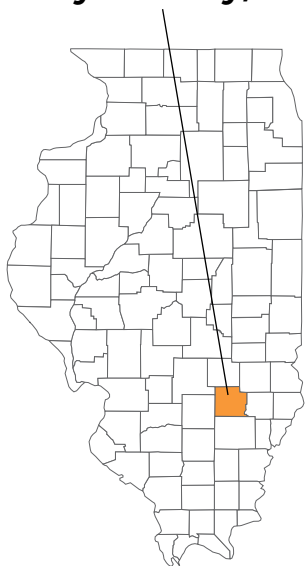
"The big one that everybody talks about a lot is our mental health and jails issue. It just seems to be growing and growing. Also, just mental health in general. We're seeing and hearing about people coming forward with those issues who are much younger. Of course, you have the whole environmental issues that we talk about, HR issues that we talk about — being able to keep employees."

What is your leadership style and who were your influences to make you the leader you are now?

"I loved watching Mother Teresa and Princess Diana. The reason is, they led with their heart. You can't be a good leader if all you want to do is dictate. You have to embrace the people. Let them help you to make you a good leader. I think I do a good job and I pride myself on listening to folks. I don't know it all and I don't claim to know it all. I want to learn from people. I work more as a team and you don't see 'I' in the word team." 

GET TO KNOW...

Clay County, Ill.



Welcome, Clay County, Ill.

Clay County is located in southeastern, Ill. The county was formed in 1824 out of portions of Wayne, Crawford and Fayette counties. **Clay County, named after Henry Clay, the ninth U.S. Secretary of State, has a county seat in Louisville.**

The county is divided into 12 townships. Flora is the largest city in the area and the Little Wabash River runs diagonally through the county.

Clay County features a wide range of attractions including a speedway,

steam engine train rides, camping and fishing. The former county jail in Louisville, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, hosts the Clay County Museum.

The county is known for its oak and ash lumber. Fields of Indian corn, tobacco, oats and hay grow throughout the county.



PROFILES IN SERVICE

MARY ANN BORGESON

NACo President
Board of Commissioners
Douglas County, Neb.



Borgeson

Number of years involved in NACo: 10

Years in public service: 29

Occupation: Douglas County commissioner

Education: Bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska at Omaha

The hardest thing I've ever done is: Watch my husband go through bilateral lung cancer.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Princess Di, Mother Teresa and Sean Connery

A dream I have is to: Own my own business.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Deep-sea fishing

My favorite way to relax is to: Get a massage

I'm most proud: My family

Every morning I read: Online newspapers, Facebook and Twitter

My favorite meal is: Chinese or Mexican

My pet peeve is: Kids wearing their pants down at their knees

My motto is: "A sign of a good leader is not how many followers you have, but how many leaders you create." — Mahatma Gandhi

The last book I read was: *Living Lies* by Natalie Walters

My favorite movie is: *Lovely, Still*

My favorite music is: Country

My favorite U.S. president: Teddy Roosevelt



You'd be surprised to learn:

I danced in "Dancing with the Stars Omaha"

BRIGHT IDEAS | CARVER COUNTY, Minn.

Library Story Times Teach Preschoolers STEM

PROBLEM:

Families in smaller communities lack resources and access to services for early learning opportunities.

SOLUTION:

Create curriculums that target preschoolers and provide resources for learning about STEM themes.

by Rachel Looker
staff writer

A county program is finding creative ways to teach preschoolers the importance of learning about science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

The preschool STEM Storytimes curriculum in Carver County, Minn. launched during the 2018 Summer Reading Program and targets children five years old and younger. The curriculum is a part of the programs held at the six different library branches in the county and incorporates four rotating kits for the science, technology, engineering and math themes.

The story times involve a librarian reading two or three age-appropriate, STEM-related books with rhymes, songs, fingerplays and other activities. After the traditional story time, preschoolers can interact with different stations that facilitate STEM activities and are related to the book.

Jodi Edstrom, Carver County Library branch manager at Chaska Library, explained how the library's youth services team became aware of a small grant that could be used to put together programming relating to STEM and early literacy.

"This group is really passionate about our early literacy work and working with young families in our county to try to get them opportuni-



Pre-schoolers play with cars in the "tape town" they created by placing colored tape on the floor as part of the engineering kit for STEM Storytimes. Photo courtesy of Carver County Library staff

ties as they advance and prepare for kindergarten and beyond," Edstrom said.

Youth Services Librarian Kristin Schneider came up with the template for the story time curriculums for each of the four kits. The librarians focused on ways to pair STEM concepts with the traditional story times.

The science curriculum focuses on magnets, the technology unit focuses on robots and coding, the engineering curriculum focuses on designing roadways and the math unit involves a countdown shape safari.

Edstrom helped create the engineering kit that features a pretend crawl-through car wash. She also created "Tape Town" for the unit where kids make their own roadways and ramps by putting different colored tape on the floor and use

"This group is really passionate about our early literacy work and working with young families in our county..."

— Jodi Edstrom

toy cars to drive through the pretend town.

Schneider explained how one of the activities for the technology unit, the code-a-pillar, teaches preschoolers about coding concepts and is paired with "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" book.

"The code-a-pillar was a huge hit and families just loved interacting with it," Edstrom said.

Carver County Library Director Heidi Hoks said other

libraries use STEM programming for school-aged kids, but Carver County's STEM storytimes focus specifically on preschoolers.

"The reason for targeting preschoolers is because we want to engage those kids who are more interested in factual pieces, who are more interested in nonfiction at an early age so they feel the library is for them," Hoks said.

During the summer of 2018, 32 STEM story times were facilitated, which surpassed the original goal of 10. Around 800 kids attended the story times.

The curriculums coincided with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress and Every Child Ready to Read practices that are promoted in the library.

"We did do some training prior to this project through our Minnesota Department of

Education where we brought some of those ideas and concepts back with us," Edstrom said.

The STEM story times are offered in all branches of the county library system and allow for a broader audience including families in more rural areas of the county. One of the goals of the program is to be accessible for all demographics and communities throughout the county, Edstrom said.


Hoks added that all of the STEM story times are free to the public, to be accessible to preschoolers from different areas of the county. To help increase the accessibility, county librarians also created curriculum sheets that are available for parents to take home for further early learning ideas.

"We really wanted to reach as many children and families as we could with this program," Hoks said.

While evaluating the story times, Carver County librarians found that over 80 percent of parents who completed surveys said the quality of the program was "excellent" and 100 percent said they would recommend the storytimes to others.

"People were really impressed with these," Schneider said. "I think it also showed them that the things that we did they could recreate at home in different forms which is the whole goal of this."

Hoks said the program is an exciting way to educate kids and get them excited about math, science and technology.

"I've seen so many kids' eyes light up when they're working on a nonfiction-based or factual-based component of story times," Hoks said. 

STEM Storytimes is the recipient of a 2019 NACo Achievement Award in the Libraries category.

LEADERSHIP EDGE

Wearing a Uniform Doesn't Make a Team

by Tim Rahschulte

Who's the best team? Not your favorite team but rather the best team. Maybe you're thinking of a sports team, a team of astronauts or a medical team operating in an emergency room. Maybe it's a political team, a military unit, your favorite nightly news anchors or a team of Olympians.

Whatever the team you're thinking of right now, its members didn't become great by chance or by wearing the same color scrubs or having the same patches on their uniforms or stickers on their gear. The difference between a group of loosely affiliated people and a high-performing team goes way beyond standard apparel or logos.

Any group of people aligned on achieving a purpose has the potential to be great. Any group has the possibility of becoming a high-performing team and realizing greatness. The potential and probability of that actually happening is contingent upon leadership. Realizing greatness is the product of leadership influence.

Among the best teams, there's a leader who has instilled trust, created a compelling direction and vision of the future, established clear roles and expectations and created a forum or process for active collaboration, feedback, dialogue, action and follow-through. It's like most everything in life: to achieve greatness, some assembly is required and when it comes to being the best team, it takes significant assembly on the part of the leader, as well as each member of the team.

Think about collaboration, for example. Whatever team you have in mind as being the best is no doubt made up of great collaborators. That doesn't just happen among the members of that team.



Great leaders intentionally design for collaboration to occur. Thornton May, the technology futurist and author of *The New Know*, argues that the essence of a team is intentional collaboration. In a recent article, he outlined three important lessons when it comes to establishing effective collaboration among team members.

First, leaders must recognize that collaboration cannot exist, nor can its value be realized, if there's an absence of desire to collaborate among the members. Second, leaders must understand the collaboration tools available for use and leverage them accordingly. Third, you've got to listen to everyone on the team and throughout the team's network to make collaboration effective. In other words, you've got to have members with a "team" attitude, not a "me"

attitude. The best teams are those that are more effective at giving and receiving assistance; they act (individually and collectively) as if everyone has a stake in the outcome. In other words, they don't confuse being right with getting it right.

If you've ever been part of a high-performing team, you know that the collective group cares less about any one of them being right and much more about making sure they get it right — whatever "it" is. It could be the right solution, the right communication at the right time or the right market move.


Any time you focus on being right rather than getting it right, you set up a negative competitive landscape and a zero-sum game. If you're familiar with economics, you know all about zero-sum

games — there's always a winner and a loser. If you're on a team in which members feel some will win and some will lose, you all lose every time.

A better approach is a team win: the team members either win together or they lose together. This approach fosters a culture in which people encourage one another, cheer for one another, and enable one another's success because the win of a teammate is a win for the team — a win for everyone.

Think about your team. Is it high performing? Is there room for improvement? If you're aiming for improvement, know that leadership isn't about wielding authority and leveraging positional power.

It's about effectively fostering the strengths of a collection of individuals and drawing those individuals

into a team in such a way that all their strengths can be expressed, optimized, and leveraged. The best leaders understand that they must give of themselves —relinquishing ego and control and listening actively and attentively — in order to empower their teams to yield the greatest outcomes. As you assess and hone your own leadership abilities, remember that true leadership is always in service to your team, not in furtherance of your career. Focus on others and align their strengths to the team's purpose. If you do this effectively, your career will naturally benefit. 

Tim Rahschulte is the CEO of the Professional Development Academy and chief architect of the NACo High Performance Leadership Program (naco.org/skills).

the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkeler

Summer is on a road trip, driving through a state she has never visited before. The destination is mapped by her smart phone navigation app and the calm voice tells her what turns are ahead. The longer she drives, the more the scenery and the roadways change, and the more reliant Summer becomes upon the confident voice. The directions are precise. The next morning, when rush hour traffic backs up on the freeway and the navigation voice tells her to merge too late for her to safely do so, she takes a different exit. “Recalculating” says the navigation, kindly reminding Summer that she didn’t exit as directed. And when Summer misses the left-hand turn to her hotel that evening, another recalculation takes Summer on a scenic trip, but gets her to her destination just a few minutes later.

Sometimes in work, we too need navigation. Perhaps we encounter a detour, but the navigation advises us we are still on the right track. Or perhaps the navigation is telling us to make a U-turn. We may not have realized we missed a turn, thinking all the while we were on Breezy Drive, when really, we were on Rainy Lane. And if we keep going this direction, we’ll be on Dismissal Way.

Employees finding themselves on the road to dismissal need two things: A calm and accurate voice letting them know they are no longer on the roadway desired and signs to help them see their location. In the ideal situation, the calm voice is that of a supervisor, giving coaching and direction. The street signs are documentation, describing how the employee has missed a turn and providing a map to the preferred road. Navigation

Recalculating the Road to Dismissal

apps don’t wait until we are incredibly lost to give feedback; the feedback is immediate and specific, so you know how to get back on the road. The same should be true for redirecting employees.

On Wednesday, Winston comes to HR with a large file folder. He tells his HR department, “I need to fire Michelle. Today’s error was the last straw.” The file folder contains documentation containing job descriptions, memos of expectations, email summaries of performance conversations, a work plan, written reprimands and a suspension. The documentation shows progressive discipline — all the road signs Winston showed Michelle to let her know that her performance was not successful.

What are some keys to providing effective navigation?

- First, acknowledge the behavior quickly, even if you need to discuss the issue at length later. Always address issues in private. “Michelle, you missed a deadline today and our team pitched in to meet the customer’s needs. I want to discuss this with you tomorrow.”
- Second, there are always

two sides to a story. Set a meeting time and ask for the employee’s perspective. “Michelle, thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. I’d like to hear your perspective on what happened yesterday afternoon.”


- Third, talk about impacts to customers and the team. Share your opinion and give the direct feedback that lets the employee know they are off track. Sometimes, this information is best shared with a transition phrase, the navigational equivalent of “recalculating.” It might be “I need to share with you,” “This is a learning opportunity,” or “This type of performance does not meet my expectations.”
- Fourth, ask what they learned, how they will prevent this from happening again, and how they will correct this situation. Let the employee share solutions without blaming others. Like the navigation voice, stay calm, factual and focused on the topic at hand.
- Fifth, summarize what you have heard, take time to reflect on the information, and follow up. Depending on previous behavior, time with the organization and previously established expectations, discipline may be required. This

is a good time to reach out to HR regarding policy and next steps.

Sometimes, supervisors use the “compliment sandwich” approach, where they start with a compliment, give honest feedback and criticism, then end with another compliment. This approach is problematic for a few reasons: First, the employee may only hear the compliments. Second, even if the employee hears the criticism, they may feel that the compliments outweigh the criticism. Third, leaving the meeting on the compliment may lead the employee to believe they do not need to change or alter their behavior. Sometimes it can be tempting to soften the conversation by using complimentary adjectives that do not align with the ultimate message of the conversation, such as “You do outstanding work You are being placed on administrative probation.”

Documenting the performance conversation with an informal email acknowledging the conversation, a note in a work plan, or with a disciplinary memo, ensures the central message was clearly communicated and heard by both parties. The document acknowledges that behavior

change must be made for the employee to be successful in the role. Strong documentation will include a clear opening sentence indicating the reason for the meeting, a specific example of the behavior that needs to change, the policy violation and the expectations for behavior moving forward. The document should be signed and dated by the employee with the signature line indicating receipt, not agreement. Often, employees appreciate a second chance to improve performance; they just needed to know which path they are on, the path to success or the road to dismissal.

The road of public service is like a great road trip — the journey, the people you meet, the friends you travel with and the things you learn and experience are as enriching as the destination, even if you missed a turn along the way. With honest navigation feedback and documented mile markers, we can ensure everyone on the team makes it to the destination. 

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



NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION



CALIFORNIA

The **SONOMA COUNTY** Library is **no longer charging late fees** for those who forget to return their books on time. A change in the countywide system will eliminate around \$880,000 in overdue fines, *The Press Democrat* reported. Lost fees will also be waived for anyone who returns a book in good condition. The changes aim to encourage patrons to visit libraries as well as help those who are struggling financially.

FLORIDA

• **HILLSBOROUGH, PASCO and PINELLAS COUNTIES** are **warning residents of a parasite** that has been found in Florida pools. The Florida Department of Health investigated nearly 300 possible and confirmed cases of cryptosporidium, which is spread through infected human or animal feces, WFTS-TV/ABC Action News reported. The parasite is invisible and can make swimmers sick for weeks.

• **MANATEE COUNTY** is creating a **new call center** called 311. The line would deter callers from dialing 911 by providing residents an option to find information and connect to different departments, *YourObserver.com* reported. Through the 311 program, operators are available to help

callers who aren't sure if dialing 911 is appropriate for the situation.

ILLINOIS

• An initiative in **KANE COUNTY** is **encouraging those struggling with drug addiction to seek help** without the fear of being arrested. "A Way Out in Kane" links residents with rehabilitative resource and treatment centers to reduce drug addiction and death rates throughout the county, the *Daily Herald* reported. Residents can call, walk in or visit the sheriff's office online portal to receive services.

• Officials in **LAKE COUNTY** are considering restricting or **banning the burning of leaves** and other landscaping debris, the *Daily Herald* reported. Members of the county board's energy and environment committee debated the issue. Those who support leaf burning say bagging leaves, raking them to the curb or hiring landscapers is too time-consuming and costly. Those who oppose the burning say the smoke pollutes



the air and is a health risk that causes breathing issues.

KENTUCKY

DAVIESS COUNTY has received funds to **establish a mental health court**, the *Messenger-Inquirer* reported. The mental health court would intervene during criminal court cases if the defendant is deemed to be suffering from a mental health issue. The court works to find treatment placements for those suffering from mental health illnesses. If the individual follows the treatment plan, the criminal charge would be discharged.

MARYLAND

Organizers say a program in **HOWARD COUNTY** is designed to serve more than **90,000 free meals this summer**. As part of the nutrition program, the county has doubled the number of locations where food will be served during the week and on week-

ends, WBAL-TV reported. The program aims to provide free food to families, specifically in the summer when the number of children suffering from hunger is higher.

MICHIGAN

Government jobs in **OAKLAND COUNTY** will **no longer ask applicants to disclose any criminal convictions**. The "ban the box" policy removes the question from county job applications that ask about a person's criminal history, *Detroit Free Press* reported. The policy aims to open up opportunities for convicted felons who have paid their debt to society.

MISSOURI

• The **ST. LOUIS COUNTY** Charter Commission is looking into a proposal that could allow for the **impeachment of county executives**. Presiding Officer Ernie Trakas drafted a proposal that would create an

impeachment process for the county executive. The previous county executive resigned and pleaded guilty to three felony counts, but under the current law, he could not have been impeached if he did not resign.

• The **ST. LOUIS COUNTY** council has unanimously approved to spend **\$1 million for body cameras** and in-car cameras for St. Louis County police, Fox 2 reported. The money for the cameras comes from the Proposition P tax hike for public safety. The county will be developing rules for using the cameras.

NEW YORK

Fed up with **neglected tax delinquent properties**, **ONONDAGA COUNTY** will seize control of those commercial and industrial properties and position them for development.

County Executive Ryan McMahon will create a new local development corporation called Onondaga County Accountability and Reinvestment Corp. to oversee the properties, coordinated by his chief of staff, economic development director and chief fiscal officer.

The County Legislature must approve any transfer of prop-

See NEWS page 11



MINNESOTA

The **RAMSEY COUNTY** Attorney's office is welcoming a new employee. Norie, a two-year-old **golden retriever**, will be **available for victims and witnesses** who visit the attorney's office for interviews. Norie is trained to put victims and witnesses at ease and will provide companionship to victims or witnesses of crime.

Norie, a two-year-old golden retriever, sits with Prosecutor John Choi.

Photo courtesy of Ramsey County Attorney's Office

From NEWS page 10

erty to the corporation; properties must be at least three years behind on tax payments.

NORTH CAROLINA

The state Senate's budget plan would eliminate school boards' ability to **sue county Boards of Commissioners** to get more money for school construction projects.

Last year, lawmakers removed school boards' ability to sue counties for more money to operate schools. Between 1997 and 2015, school boards used the funding dispute process 40 times, with lawsuits being filed in four cases.

"Counties have an obligation by statute to provide funding for school construction," Kevin Leonard, executive director of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, said in an interview. "It's not like they're not going to do it."

In North Carolina, counties are responsible for funding the building and renovating of schools. *The News & Observer* reported that both chambers are working on competing plans to provide state funding for school construction. County governments are providing \$3 billion a year to help operate schools while juggling many other funding needs.

NORTH DAKOTA

The state Legislature passed a bill **reorganizing county social services** in up to 19 multi-county "human service zones" and making about 140 county social service employees state employees. No employees or access points to services would be eliminated, *The Bismark Tribune* reported.

Counties with more than 60,000 residents may create their own zone. Counties have until Dec. 1 to form their zones. Full implementation of the zones is to be phased in by January 2021, when the next legislative session starts. Social services in North Dakota include child and family services and economic assistance.



OREGON

• **WALLOWA COUNTY** Commissioner Todd Nash fells a burned tree in the Umatilla National Forest, the site of a 2015 wildfire. Nash and Commissioner John Hillock joined U.S. Forest Service employees to **examine possible timber sales**. In this patch near Hoodoo Ridge, the interior of the trees indicated to Nash that the trees had about two years before deterioration set in.

Photo by Steve Tool/Chieftain

OREGON

• **UMATILLA COUNTY** commissioners approved an exclusive option agreement with the Northeast Oregon Water Association to **acquire rights to pump water** from the Columbia River to serve economic development needs at the former Umatilla Chemical Depot and to recharge the aquifer located there, giving farmers greater access to water for irrigation.

Such an opportunity to draw water from the Columbia River is extremely difficult to obtain from the federal government, the *East Oregonian* reported.

• With regional wildfires **wreaking havoc on locals' lungs**, the **LANE COUNTY** Regional Air Protection Agency has deployed a growing network of small air sensors at schools, parks and other places of interest, the *Register Guard* reported. Along with the air sensors around the population centers of the county, the authority also has additional sensors to compare coastal, mountain and valley air.

SOUTH DAKOTA

• The South Dakota Aeronautics Commission has approved state funding for **airport projects** in the seats of **KINGSBURY** and **JONES COUNTIES**. Kingsbury County's seat De Smet plans to add runway turnarounds that could someday link to taxiways. Jones County's seat of Murdo wants to build a 60-foot by 60-foot hangar. Both offer aviation maintenance programs.

• **PENNINGTON COUNTY** is home to the state's first **mental health diversion court** program. The court uses a problem-solving protocol to take people likely to be sentenced to prison because of criminal history and mental health and provide them with intensive probation, incentives and other tools for life. The Legislature has approved a second court in **MINNEHAHA COUNTY** set to begin in January 2020.

UTAH

• When the **SAN JUAN COUNTY** Commission met

in Monument Valley July 2, it was the first time the body had **met on the Navajo Nation**, KUER News reported. More than half of the county's population is Native American.

• The **WEBER COUNTY** Jail will **stop billing inmates** \$10 a day to defray incarceration costs, *The Standard-Examiner* reported. The process for tracking payment became cumbersome to the point where it wasn't worth the staff time and inmates often had trouble affording the fees. The pay-for-stay policy also hurt the sheriff's office when it tried to get federal grants for programs to rehabilitate inmates and help them reenter the community because charging inmates ran counter to the philosophy of the grant programs.

News from Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Rachel Looker. If you have an item for News From, please email cban@naco.org or rlooker@naco.org.



PLACER COUNTY, Calif.

The Placer County seal was adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors in 1959. The board paid George Mathis, an artist who resided in Nevada City, \$52 to release the title and claim of the design.

The seal can be found at the entrance of the county's main museum where it is hand carved as a large oak medallion.



On the left side of the seal, a shovel and pick symbolize the Gold Rush.

A grove of fruit trees represents the agriculture of the county.

On the right side of the seal, mountains and pine trees represent the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

The steam locomotive and railroad tracks in the center of the seal represent the Transcontinental Railroad.

If you would like your county's seal featured in "Behind the Seal," contact Rachel Looker at rlooker@naco.org.

Always on Guard



Albert

Network Security
Monitoring & Analysis

**Specialized threat identification
for U.S. State, Local, Tribal,
& Territorial (SLTT) government
entities.**

24x7 Security Operations Center

Unique SLTT-focused signature set

Cost-effective solution

Passive, fully managed intrusion detection system



Learn More

<https://www.cisecurity.org/services/albert-network-monitoring/>