



NACo's new leadership team takes center stage: (l-r) Bryan Desloge, president, Leon County Fla.; Roy Charles Brooks, first vice president, commissioner, Tarrant County, Texas; Sallie Clark, immediate past president through 2016, commissioner, El Paso County, Colo.; Greg Cox, second vice president, supervisor, San Diego County, Calif.; and Riki Hokama, immediate past president (2017), council member, Maui County, Hawaii. Photo by D. Hathcox

'It's a wrap' for 2016 Annual

By Bev Schlotterbeck
executive editor

Leon County, Fla. Commissioner Bryan Desloge is the new NACo president.

Delegates to the 2016 Annual Conference in Long Beach, Calif., elected Desloge to head NACo's executive team along with Roy Charles Brooks, commissioner, Tarrant County, Texas, as first vice president; and Sallie Clark, commissioner, El Paso County, Colo., as im-



The First Couple: Beth and Bryan Desloge Photo by D. Hathcox

mediate past president. In the only contested election, Greg Cox, supervisor, San Diego County, Calif., joins the executive committee as second vice president.

In his acceptance speech Desloge announced that his presidential initiative, tagged "The Counties Challenge: Brilliant Ideas at Work," will highlight the innovative programs and best practices of counties across the country. The concept was inspired by a former

Leon County administrator, whom Desloge said, "used to say our failures are front page news, but nobody talks about our successes."

"I want to talk about what are the best practices in county governments across the country, today," he said.

Delegates also approved changes to the American County Platform, NACo's policy "bible," and adopted more

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New resources, service projects make their debut at Annual



There was no dearth of volunteers to fill backpacks for Project Innocence, an L.A. County-based nonprofit that helps sexually-trafficked children heal from their abuse. NACo's NextGen caucus co-ordinated the community service project. Sponsors included Walmart, Nationwide, Aetna and L.A. County Supv. Don Knabe. Photo by D. Hathcox

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than 100 new or recently vetted policy positions such as support for extending federal Medicaid payments to detainees in county jails who have yet to go to trial and federal funding to help counties respond to Zika virus.

Prominent sports figures, a presidential scholar and corporate thought leaders keynoted at the conference's two general sessions. Attendees heard from basketball legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, long-distance champion swimmer Diana

Nyad, Pulitzer Prize winning author Jon Meacham and Esri founder Jack Dangermond.

Bookending the conference was the first-ever Opening Reception on Friday, July 22 complete with fireworks and tunes from the Legendary Mustangs featuring Riverside County, Calif. Supervisor John Tava-
gione and the closing Conference-wide Celebration Event, July 25, with special guest Alisan Porter, winner of The Voice, Season 10.

The Technology Summit, held semi-annually in conjunction with NACo's major



Fireworks welcome conference attendees at the Opening Night Reception. Photo by D. Hathcox

conferences, provided the setting for the release by NACo and Esri of an interactive opioid map which tracks the ep-

idemic. Esri, a premier conference sponsor, is a leading mapping and GIS data tools software developer.

The Opioid Epidemic map analyzes how counties, cities and neighborhoods compare to state and national averages. Site visitors can pinpoint incidents of reported overdoses, prescriptions and providers. And for those wishing to take action, the map has sections dedicated to education, steps to confront the issue and links to additional resources. To access the site go to <http://esriurl.com/OpioidEpidemic>.

The conference also set the stage for the announcement

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Conference sessions, service project address human trafficking fight

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of a new NACo strategic alliance and member benefit: US-PERS, short for United States Public Employees Resource Solutions. The new alliance between NACo and Optum, a health services company, was introduced by Margaret Kelly, Optum national vice president.

According to Kelly, the US PERS platform will initially deliver retiree services but eventually bring more health care solutions to meet the future needs of counties. USPERS will offer Group Medicare Advantage plans and Medicare Exchanges that are both viable options for county employers.

The NextGen Community Service Project, now a conference tradition sponsored by Next Generation NACo Network, supported the work of Project Innocence, a L.A. county-based nonprofit devoted to rescuing and restoring child victims of sex trafficking. Volunteers packed 150 backpacks with clothing, shoes, tablets, blankets and toiletries, Chris Lim, Saving Innocence director of partnerships, told the volunteers they were filling the packs "with hope, peace and protection."

Human trafficking was also on the agenda at the Women of NACo (WON) Leadership Network reception. Former

Congresswoman Linda Smith, who founded and is the current CEO of Shared Hope International, spoke about her organization's mission to prevent the conditions that foster sex trafficking, restore victims of sex slavery, and bring justice to vulnerable women and children. L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe also highlighted his county's efforts to assist victims of sexual trafficking.

NACo's popular educational workshops mirror the broad range of issues and responsibilities counties now face in an increasingly complex world. This year's Annual Conference selection was no exception. Attendees participated in sessions that examined ways to combat human trafficking; deal with the public health

threat from the Zika virus; protect employees and citizens from active shooters and manage data in strategic, meaningful ways.

In a twist on the workshop format — and new this year — the conference offered "County Talks." Located in the exhibit hall, the sessions showcased new products and services to benefit counties.

The annual Awards Luncheon spotlighted the 21 Best of Category Achievement Award winners. The NACo Achievement Awards program, now in its 46th year, is a non-competitive awards program, which recognizes innovative concepts that improve county governments.

Americans for the Arts honored Dow Constantine, King County, Wash. executive with its County Leadership in the Arts award.

In other award presentations: Evan Torres and Sean Jones from El Paso County, Colo., were Presidential Scholarship award winners. The Davenport Scholarship Fund and CH2M Hill sponsor the scholarships, which are awarded each year to college-bound students in the home county of the out-going NACo president.

NACo's 2017 Annual Conference will be hosted by Franklin County, Ohio, and held in Columbus, July 21-24. **CN**



Rebecca Little, Aetna senior VP, talks data at Tech Summit.
Photo by Leon Lawrence III



Better than Monopoly, but probably more stressful, "Let's Balance," a budget simulation game for county officials, required lots of attention at this July 24 workshop. Photo by D. Hathcox

Letter to the Editor: Helping W. Va. Counties

I am sure by now that most county officials around the country are aware of the devastating floods that hit West Virginia in June. Generous contributions and assistance have come into the state from all over the country and it is much appreciated. As all county officials know, recovery goes far beyond the initial emergency efforts. Rebuilding and recovery will take years.

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin has created a program that will focus on small business leaders who lost their businesses in the flood. The program, Rise West Virginia, is our state's long-term flood-recovery initiative aimed at strengthening impacted communities. Through RISE West Virginia, a public-private program is created to provide grants to small businesses affected by the recent flooding to help them rebuild in a way that promotes economic prosperity above and beyond pre-flood levels.

As all of you know, our small business owners are also our counties' community leaders, friends and neighbors. The small businesses that populate our communities and counties are more than storefronts. They have names; they have faces; the businesses have often been in families for generations.

Rise West Virginia received an early boost from Brad Smith, a native West Virginian and chairman and CEO of Intuit, one of the world's leading financial software companies. In addition to providing software and training for impacted small businesses through his company, Brad and his wife, Alys, have pledged a family donation of \$500,000 to our grant program.

The ultimate goal is to reach at least \$2 million from a combination of private donations and state dollars. Interested donors are asked to contact Sean Hill at the West Virginia Development Office, 304.558.2234 or sean.d.hill@wv.gov. More information can be found at www.wvflood.com and click on Rise West Virginia.

Grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded to eligible small busi-

nesses based on need and recommendations from a review committee. Consideration will be given to long-term viability and sustainability.

Through our connection with the National Association of Counties, the West Virginia Association of Counties is reaching out to our national county network and the organizations with which county officials are involved. Many people have asked, "How can we help?" This is one way of helping rebuild the small businesses that were the backbone of the 12 devastated counties and communities.

It's going to take all of us — from the county, state and federal governments to neighbors-helping-neighbors — to rebuild. RISE West Virginia represents an all-hands-on-deck approach to getting businesses back open and West Virginians back to work.

Thank you for helping to spread the word and provide an answer to the question, "How can we help?"

With best regards,

Leckta Poling

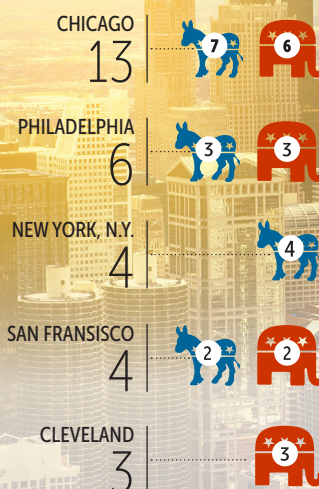
President, West Virginia Association of Counties
and

Patti Hamilton

Executive Director, West Virginia Association of Counties

SNAP/STATS

TOP NATIONAL PARTY CONVENTION SITES 1916-2016



Source: County News Analysis

Pokémon Go lures players to county services

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

Your kid, some libraries, a county clerk — and maybe even you. What might they have in common?

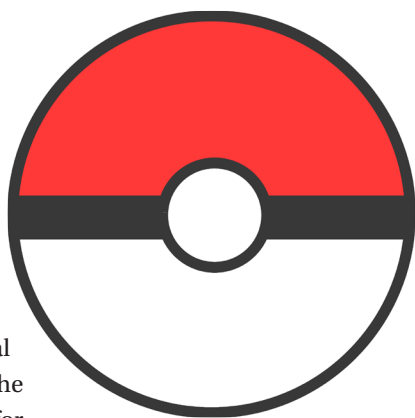
Hopping on the Pokémon Go bandwagon, and several counties are hoping to ride the game to greater recognition for county programs and services.

Libraries in Baltimore County, Md., a county clerk in Arkansas and the transit system in Los Angeles County have all fashioned events around the hunt for Pokémon characters.

In Maryland, it was an event to attract Pokémon players to 19 Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) branches. Craighead County, Ark. Clerk Kade Holliday used the game to entice potential voters to register, and L.A. County's Metro used it to raise transit awareness.

"The goal of it really was to capitalize on the phenomenon," said Julie Brophy, BCPL's adult services director, "and also to try to reintroduce the library to people who may not have been to see us in a while."

The location-and-time-based game uses a smartphone's GPS and clock to make creatures — to be captured — appear on a phone's screen



at locations corresponding to GPS coordinates.

It was an easy sell to the branches, Brophy said: There were employees at all but one of the libraries who were playing the game already, "so everybody wanted to be involved."

Over the course of about four hours on July 22, Brophy estimates that about 800 people participated, ranging in age from teens to middle-agers.

"We also saw some parents, probably in their 20s or 30s, bringing their young kids and then staying and doing other things." She added that staff were encouraged to talk up "atypical" library programs to people who may not be typical users — such as adult coloring nights and "after-hour recess" for adults, where they can reconnect with their inner child by playing games like hopscotch.

The libraries handed out Pokémon-themed stickers, and a pizza parlor near one branch offered a free drink with purchase in exchange for customers' stickers. "It was like a win-win for small businesses here too," she said.

"We're already thinking about in a couple of weeks doing something slightly different."

In Arkansas, Craighead County is the home of Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. So Holliday, the county clerk, whose duties include running elections, has no shortage of potential new voters.

But he said that 18 to 24 year-olds are underrepresented (60 percent registered) compared to other voting-age demographic groups, 80-plus percent of whom are registered.

Holliday, 28, isn't far from college age and remembers how college students' priorities can get hijacked.

"Being that I was just in college five years ago, you're so slammed with just everything being targeted at you and thrown at you nonstop — but it's the things where people actually reach out to you personally."

Holliday had been playing

Pokémon Go himself. He had seen how a local mall had attracted scores of people playing the game before he got the idea for a PokéStop Voter Registration Drive at the County Courthouse, held on July 23.

"I was out there the whole day," he said. "I caught Pokémon with them; I visited with them."

"We had 10 new people register to vote, and I'll say probably 25 or 30 people who came by and actually changed different little things on their registration — like updated their address and things like that, so that helps clean up data as well," Holliday said.

"I'm all about trying to find new and interactive ways to get people involved and get people registered and excited and enthusiastic about the voting process. It's something that's important to me, and I've kind of made that my mission here as county clerk."

The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority, Metro, runs the bus, subway and light-rail system. Anna Chen is a Metro public information officer. Part of her job includes monitoring social media.

"People were tweeting, like,

'Hey Metro, did you know there's a Pikachu (a creature in the game) on your bus?'"

A week later, the communications team decided to create a Pokémon Go Metro Twitter account, @PokemonGOMetro, and hashtag.

"It's a new game, so we thought it would really be kind of fun to join them and join this developing community," Chen said.

Metro has also used social media to warn game players to be alert while hunting Pokémon, especially around transit vehicles.

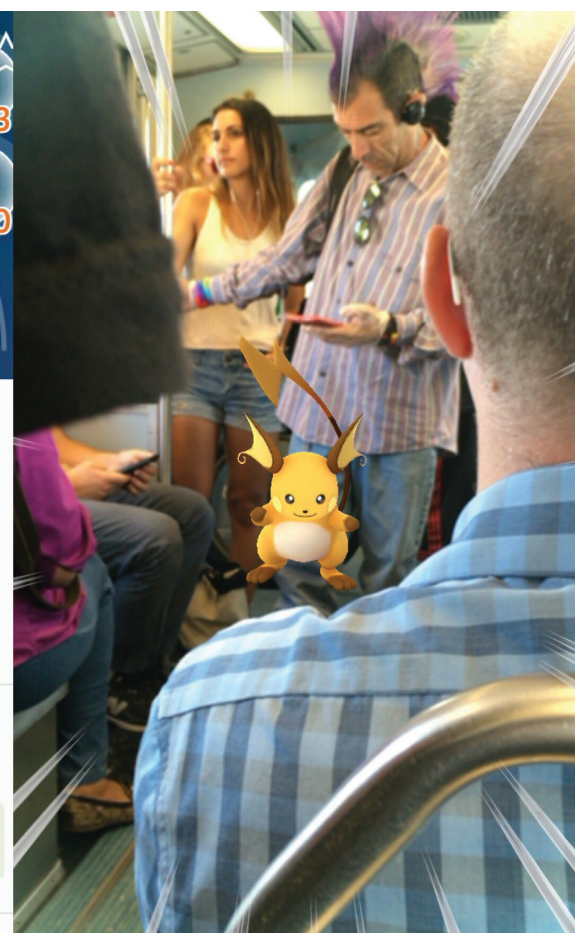
For three hours on July 31, five stations on Metro's Gold Line were part of a Pokémon GO Gold Line Takeover.

The fiercest Pokemon hunter was eligible to win a 30-day Metro pass.

Chen said the game is a natural tie-in with transportation.

"Anything that sheds a positive light on active transportation — getting people to walk and bike and explore their neighborhoods, and see how transit connections are made — is a benefit to us."

All three county entities have plans for future Pokémon-themed events linked to their missions. **CN**



Some riders of Los Angeles County's Metro system were already playing PokémonGo, so transit officials decided to use the augmented-reality game to promote transit. Photo courtesy of L.A. County Metro

Medical, criminal trends converge to create opioid and heroin epidemic

By Charlie Ban
senior staff writer

The opioid medication and heroin abuse epidemic has reached nearly every county in the United States, and as Sam Quinones tells it in *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic*, it was the convergence of two independent trends that crossed paths in the late 1990s.

Quinones spoke at a luncheon focused on the opioid drug epidemic July 22 during the Annual Conference, and earlier that day with County News. (See this story online at www.countynews.org to watch the video interview.)

The first trend was the rise of black tar heroin trafficking from Mexico starting in the '80s. The increasingly corporatized trafficking operation spread eastward, without the accompanying violence characteristic of the urban heroin scene.

"They were delivering heroin like pizza franchises," he told the luncheon audience. "They stressed customer service and went where there wasn't any competition. And they offered a product that was more pure than what was coming from Burma or Turkey."

The dealers were part of a non-centralized trafficking operation and all from a small town in western central Mexico, where a lack of economic mobility led many young men out of town, in hopes of making money to build houses for their families.

Drug cell operations reflected a professional approach that minimized risk by limiting the amount of heroin on each dealer, leaving police with little more than a light charge that would make prosecution, rather than deportation, more trouble than it would be worth. The cells stuck to rural areas and small towns, and did not get involved in turf wars that would draw the attention of law en-



Author Sam Quinones outlines how widespread opioid painkiller prescriptions primed the American market for Black Tar heroin. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

forcement or political pressure to stop it.

"The cells didn't just coexist, they shared inventory," Quinones said.

On top of that, heroin coming from Mexico was cheaper, than drugs from Colombia, Turkey or Southern Asia. It was almost much more potent, too, because it wasn't changing hands as much.

The drug cells spread to the eastern United States in the late 1990s, just as the market for heroin was building.

Meanwhile, a dramatic change in medical philosophy about using opioid painkillers for all manner of ills coincided with a pharmaceutical push to prescribe oxycodone, which is molecularly similar to morphine and heroin.

"A 101-word letter to the editor in the New England Journal of Medicine became the cornerstone, used as evidence to convince doctors that you could prescribe these pills for anything," Quinones said.

"The new addicts were either following the doctor's orders or getting into it recreationally. The pills take the tolerance to new heights, but then they can't afford it so they switch to cheap heroin.

"It was a new kind of drug trafficking meets a new type of

drug promotion."

Pain became the fifth, unmeasurable, vital sign, and doctors, both well-meaning and corrupt, began prescribing opioid-based medications such as oxycodone for various conditions not limited to chronic pain.

Pharmaceutical companies were aggressive in marketing opioid-based painkillers, buttressed by the extrapolated finding that opioids were largely non-addictive when administered in a clinical setting. But now patients were being sent home with dozens of pills and little oversight.

"You get this almost complete buy-in from hospitals; medical schools begin teaching it as part of their curriculum," he said. "All of this creates a massive opiate juggernaut that is an enormous amount of pills out there."

In *Dreamland*, Quinones wrote that prescribing a medication was more cost-effective for doctors, who wouldn't be reimbursed by insurance companies for therapy that did the same thing but took longer.

"No one understood that this would lead to heroin, I think," he said. "Most doctors want to do the right thing."

Corrupt and troubled doctors found employment in

shoddily-run pain management clinics, known as "pill mills" that required little diagnosis and had little oversight in most states.

Addicts and dealers could shop their prescriptions to different pharmacies without a prescription database to track drug use. Felons were not barred from operating these clinics, which became havens for doctors who couldn't get work elsewhere.

Quinones described a city in southern Ohio as having deteriorated into a opioid-based economy, in which cash was replaced by different dosages of oxycodone.

But as the cost of painkillers increased as addicts' tolerance increased, the market was primed for heroin to fill that need.

Throughout all of this, painkiller abuse and heroin use became a silent epidemic, in part because parents, who had come of age when heroin was an urban, "junkie drug," were driven by stigma to hide the causes of their children's deaths.

"They would say their son died of a heart attack, when it was really a heroin overdose," Quinones said. "(It happened in) rural areas, suburban areas, small and mid-sized towns... Parents should have been the

vanguard in getting the word out."

Although the scourge has changed economies, taken lives and ruined others, Quinones and many of the people he talked to saw hope in the potential for a change in the criminal justice system, now that there is political pressure on the epidemic.

And he saw government, and county government, playing a crucial role in holding the line and advancing ways out of the problem.

"Government has been the line between us and total opiate mayhem for the last 20 years," he said. "They were the ones fighting it when nobody wanted to talk about it, when no one cared... County government is the level of government that interacts most with the opiate epidemic: criminal justice, jails, county hospitals, coroners.

"If we're not going to arrest our way out of this, we have to find more treatment beds," he said. "Jail is the place to make this difference. You have people detoxing and thinking clearly for the first time in years, and they realize they want to make a change in their lives. Right now, this is when we push them into a predatory, boring, non-productive system and instead we could treat and rehabilitate people who wind up in jail."

Opt-in rehabilitation clinics in jails, he said, are the perfect chance to take idle inmates and give them a chance to heal. As he says, to not view jail as a parking lot.

"The infrastructure is there, because it's more expensive to build a jail and put in the plumbing than to do the programming to make this possible," he said.

"If that's the legacy of this epidemic, we may actually thank heroin someday." **CN**

See this story online at www.countynews.org to view the video interview.



Workshops tackle hard subjects



Amber Davies describes the services Saving Innocence provides for victims of human trafficking as Michelle Guymon looks on. Photo by David Hathcox

IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN YOUR COUNTY

WHO SPOKE:

Amber Davies, Saving Innocence

Michelle Guymon, Los Angeles County Probation Department

Eric Hooker, Long Beach Police Department

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

While Los Angeles County gets to play host to the annual conference, Supervisor Don Knabe has been using the bully pulpit to bring attention to a human trafficking, and the shifts in thinking needed to combat it.

"There's no such thing as a child prostitute; they're victims," he said. "These men aren't johns, they're child rapists.

"I always thought this was something that happened overseas, in Thailand, but it's happening (everywhere)."

Several participants in the system described how things work in L.A. County: that change continues with how the victims are treated, especially by law enforcement.

"We were doing broken-window theory, making arrests, and we thought we were doing a fantastic job," Hooker said. "The arrests are what we were looking for, but now instead of arresting them, we talk to them and see what happens. We tell them, 'We want to help you and see where we can take you from here.'"

Los Angeles County adapted its human trafficking protocol from a model in place in Washington state.

"California isn't a decrimi-

nalization state, but we wanted to treat this with a non-criminal response," Guymon said. "We decided that social service agencies would have 90 minutes to respond when an officer calls, and we try to honor that to show the victims that we will do what we say."

And it's necessary to have involvement from other departments and agencies, such as the nonprofit Saving Innocence, which supplies victims with supplies and advocates to accompany them for up to nine months after they are removed from the trafficking environment.

Davies said with the social workers spending most of their time coordinating services for the victims, Saving Innocence fills in a gap.

"This isn't the work of convenience," she said. "Some-



Darryl Stacy and Todd Gibson stress the importance of training all county employees to handle active shooter situations: Make any employee a potential leader in an emergency. Photo by David Hathcox

times the difference is made at 2 a.m. We have to show up at all hours. When they need somebody, us being there is what makes the difference, that's how they can start being able to make trusted relationships."

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BEST PRACTICES IN ACTIVE SHOOTER PREPAREDNESS

WHO SPOKE:

Tom Connell, senior product manager Tyco Fire Protection Products

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From WORKSHOPS page 6

Todd Gibson, retired Norman Oklahoma SWAT team officer; partner, Centurion Security

Robert Kagel, director of emergency services, Chester County, Pa.

Darry Stacy, commissioner, Cleveland County, Okla.

James Overton, chief of police for the University of Massachusetts at Boston

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

Mass shootings happened in the old days, just not as frequently. And now they're rightfully on the top of many minds in county government.

"If you don't train, it could be the end of your county as you know it," Stacy said.

Connell pointed out that the last 17 years have seen as many casualties of mass violence as the prior 100.

But he kept it in perspective.

"Just .03 people out of 100,000 people will die in an active shooter incident," he said. That said, "There is no way we can stop every person who really sincerely wants to do harm to his fellow man. We can prepare, we can plan how we're going to respond, how

fast, how effectively. In that response we can save lives that otherwise would have been lost."

That response has to be focused inward, Stacy said, "When things happen in seconds, the police are minutes away."

Kagel said counties should address the aftermath of an active shooter incident

"After two or five minutes, how are you going to bring structure to chaos?" he said. "What happens after the threat has been neutralized?"

He recommending designating shelter-in-place locations, developing reunification plans for staff, family assistance services and ensuring continuity of government operations

Overton said getting facts out ahead of the media is important, which he saw when one of the Boston Marathon bombers was erroneously reported to have been a student at his campus.

Gibson said the lowest level county employees have to be as well-trained as the commissioners, to the point where they can be the leaders if members of the public are trapped during an active shooter inci-

dent.

"The police officer certainly knows what to do," he said, but does the administrative assistant on the second floor know?

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ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A MEDIA STORM

WHO SPOKE:

Lori Hudson, communications and PR manager, Hillsborough County, Fla.

Jessica Beyer, Blue Earth County, Minn.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

A mock press conference highlighted the workshop. After Hudson advised attendees on how to respond in an emergency scenario, two guinea pigs volunteered to undergo a brief media training before fielding questions from pretend reporters.

Hudson had stressed to importance of preplanning for the type of known emergencies a county might face, from hurricanes to sinkholes to mass shootings. The workshop was conducted by the National As-



Mary McCarty, a former Florida county commissioner, tells the cautionary tale of how she unwittingly ran afoul of the law.

sociation of County Information Officers.

Among the keys to responding during a crisis are having the right messenger in the right place at the right time.

Other advice included:

- First, express sympathy and concern for the victims and their families.

- Stay in your lane; don't answer questions that rightly should be answered by someone with the proper expertise.

- Be prepared with the information you anticipate that reporters will ask about, such as the number of victims, extent of damage (if known or when known), protective actions for citizens and where residents can find assistance such as shelter.

- Determine the 3-4 key points you want to communicate to the media. Know in advance the things you won't say, things you'll say if asked and things you will not say, such as speculating about "what if" questions.

- Write out your key messages, practice speaking them out loud, and practice staying on-message.

NACIO has resources avail-

able for county public information officers and spokespersons at www.nacio.org.

Staff contact: David Jackson, djackson@naco.org

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP: LESSONS LEARNED TO KEEP YOU OUT OF PRISON

WHO SPOKE:

Mary McCarty, Mary McCarty Consulting

Denise Nieman, county attorney, Palm Beach County, Fla.

Herb Thiele, county attorney, Leon County, Fla., National Association of County Civil Attorneys

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

"Disclose, disclose and disclose some more" is the advice that McCarty, a former Palm Beach County Commissioner, gave county leaders. "The more you put on the public record, the more you're protected."

She learned the hard way. In 2008, McCarty pleaded guilty to federal charges of honest



"Reporter" Carolyn Marinan, Hennepin County, Minn., fires tough questions at county officials during a mock press conference at the workshop, Are You Prepared for a Media Storm?

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Panelists listen as Commissioner Steve Shelton (right), Scott County, Minn., recounts his county's successes in building a mutually beneficial relationship with a local Native American tribe.

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services fraud and was sentenced to 42 months in prison, of which she served 22 months.

"One thing that I know was that ignorance of the law is not a defense," she said. "What I didn't know was how many laws there were that you could be ignorant of."

She believed that when she voted on an issue that benefited the company her husband worked for — but didn't directly benefit her spouse — that there was no conflict of interests to disclose.

Speakers said that since 1985, Congress has systematically been doing away with the requirement for "criminal intent" in honest services fraud and other ethics violations.

"I always thought you needed to have committed a crime to be guilty of one," McCarty said. "I may have been stupid; I may have been careless, but I knew that I never ever set out to commit a crime."

During a question and answer session, a former prosecutor and district attorney said public officials are often the target of overzealous prosecutors. "As a former prosecutor," he said, "I can tell you there is a tendency (for some) to want

to be known in the papers for prosecuting and going after public corruption, and I've seen overzealousness — not by all but by some — and so there is a target on your back."

Staff contact: Akera Gamble, agamble@naco.org

BUILDING EFFECTIVE COUNTY-TRIBAL RELATIONS

WHO SPOKE:

Michael Black, U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs

Genevieve Jackson, commissioner, McKinley County, N.M.

David Rabbit, supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif.

Gary Shelton, commissioner, Scott County, Minn.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

Elected and appointed county officials shared their approaches to successfully working with Native American tribal governments within their counties. They also recommended strategies that might work for other communities.

Shelton provided examples of successful collaboration with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

in Scott County, Minn., where he is county administrator. The county and tribe worked together realign a road to better accommodate the tribe's plan to build a housing development. The parties reached a mutually agreeable solution whereby the county would pay to build the road and the tribe would pay to maintain it.

Shelton said that having a good working relationship with the tribe before the road issue came up was one of the keys to their success.

"It's very important to build those relationships when there aren't any issues," he added, "That kind of ongoing and active intergovernmental engagement will not only improve the communication and cooperation, but it can help you to address misunderstandings ... that may have developed over the years."

Scott County and tribal leaders meet at least monthly, along with all cities and towns in the county, school districts, state lawmakers and field staff from their representative in Congress, he said.

There are five federally recognized tribes in his county and two casinos, Rabbit said. "Our history has been mixed. I think initially we had some

adversarial relationships, a lot of that was due to gaming. But since then, I think we've really come to grips with sitting down and working through relationships ... and forming intergovernmental agreements that benefit both parties."

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STEPPING UP: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR REDUCING MENTAL ILLNESS IN JAILS

WHO SPOKE:

Vera Bradford, Los Angeles County, Calif.

Corrin Buchanan, diversion and reentry housing director for the Los Angeles County Health Agency

Whitney Lawrence, program manager for Community Supportive Housing- LA

Brooke Page, assistant manager, Clark County, Nev. Social Service

Colette Tvedt, director of public defense training, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

The national Stepping Up initiative is now in its second year, and gaining support, with more than 300 counties passing resolutions to seek ways to reduce the number of people with mental illness in their jails.

Speakers focused on the

importance of a supportive environment in which people with mental illness will land after being released or diverted from jails.

Tvedt pointed out that many of the charges the mentally ill face are misdemeanors, which don't come with public defenders.

"They're convinced to plead guilty because they're told they can go home that day," she said.

"Now they have convictions on their records, they have to pay fines and penalties and if they can't, they have to go to jail."

She added that they might then be facing long odds to get decent housing.

Instead, as Lawrence said, they bounce around the most expensive, and least appropriate, services a county offers, rarely getting the right treatment they need.

Buchanan said that that supportive housing must be an integral part of any diversion plan, along with a coordinated release plan.

"Recuperative care housing, medically-enhanced housing, stabilization housing, they all offer different levels of support for people with mental illness," she said. "It can be hard to find landlords who are into renting to people who were formerly homeless."

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See WORKSHOPS page 16



Whitney Lawrence talks about supportive housing options available for persons with mental illness. Photo by David Hathcox.



Top-tier speakers spark general sessions



Pulitzer Prize winner and presidential historian Jon Meacham compared elections past with this year's November's race. Photo by D. Hathcox

KAREEM ABDUL-JABBAR

The highest scoring player in NBA history, Abdul-Jabbar shared his thoughts on race relations, which he also explores in his latest book, *Writings on the Wall: Searching for a New Equality Beyond Black and White*, and reflected on his career as an athlete, author, actor and advocate for racial justice.

"Why write this book now?" Knabe asked. "I think I've been motivated to write on these subjects my whole life," Abdul-Jabbar said. "I paid a lot of attention to the civil rights movement when I was growing up in the '50s and '60s."

Hearing of the murder of Emmett Till in Mississippi "really got to me," he said. The turbulent times made him concerned for his own safety.

"The fact that attitudes that had been around for over 100 years really had a lot to do with that," he said. "It made me very aware of what we need to do in order to communicate with each other and do a better job of making this a great nation for all of our citizens."

Harking back to his playing days, Abdul-Jabbar fielded several questions from the audience about his college and pro basketball careers. Knabe also mentioned that Abdul-Jabbar has been nominated for a Presidential Medal of Freedom, and was to speak at the Democratic National Convention.

In closing, Knabe asked Abdul-Jabbar about his Skyhook Foundation (www.skyhook-foundation.org), whose mission is to bring educational opportunities to underserved communities. Its mission: "Give a kid a shot that can't be blocked."

After the general session, he signed copies of his new book.

You can learn more about Abdul-Jabbar's views and what motivates him in *County News'* current Leadership Edge column on page 10.

JON MEACHAM

Presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham analyzed the 2016 race for the White House in historical context and offered a few predictions.

The national contest between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump was about even when Meacham spoke, as the Democratic National Convention was just ramping up. Since then, Clinton has seen a substantial bounce in the polls.

Still, Meacham said, "People who think this is a slam dunk on either side I think are wrong, and I think that it's going to be a long fall."

He noted that both candidates have high unfavorable ratings. But he said that Clinton won't be able to win "simply by being not Trump."

As an historian, he took the long view of what brought Americans to the current state of divisiveness in politics, while extending hope by noting this isn't the first time this has happened.

"One of the things that I spend my time doing," he said, "is trying to figure out not why things are so bad right now, but trying to figure out how we got out of similar moments in the past."

In that vein, he harked back to other times of turmoil in American history, and how

presidents learned from their mistakes.

Perhaps most notably, he recalled how lessons from the failed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 informed President Kennedy's approach in de-escalating the potentially disastrous Cuban Missile Crisis the following year — which took America to the brink of nuclear war with the then-Soviet Union.

"The ability to say I got that wrong and I now need to do better is one of the hardest things for those who are in political life ... but many of us would not even be here if Kennedy hadn't learned from his mistakes," Meacham said. "The capacity to learn on the job is absolutely essential."

For both candidates, it's a "legitimate question" about how well they admit to their mistakes, he said. "And if you think that the Democratic nominee is really good at that, I have a private server I can sell you," he added, wryly.

Drawing parallels to the past, Meacham compared present-day divisiveness to that of the post-Revolutionary

War period. "The golden age of American life was ferociously divisive, ferociously partisan," he said.

"Partisanship is a perfectly fine thing, it's why we have a democracy... that's the nature of being a free society," he added. "It's reflexive partisanship that becomes an issue. If I disagree with what you're saying simply because you're the one saying it, then I'm foreclosing the possibility of reason and judgment and growth. We have to be able to listen to each other in a coherent and respectful way."

Governments work best when opposing sides are willing to compromise, he said.

Taking questions from the audience after his remarks, Meacham was asked to predict who will win the presidency. He said he often gets it wrong but that "the math favors the Democratic nominee."

Earlier, however, he said in the current age of anxiety over economic and social upheaval, it's "not inexplicable" that Donald Trump is the Republican nominee because he has given voice to many Americans who feel left behind.

Speaking to any elections officials in the room, he said, given the unfavorable ratings of both Trump and Clinton, the campaign will be a "ferocious" one. "So those of you who run the elections, lay in a lot of coffee because I think it's going to be a long Election Day."

JACK DANGERMOND

Esri president and co-founder Jack Dangermond showed assorted county officials at the Opening General Session what was possible with geographic information systems.

The software he pioneered is now at work in many departments in counties across the

See **SPEAKERS** page 10

GIS guru extolls the virture of mapping data for counties

From SPEAKERS page 9

nation, with applications ranging from real estate assessment databases to emergency management. “Mapping and GIS technology is becoming a kind of language that is essential for managing in a digital environment,” he said. “It’s a visual language that helps us look at and instantly understand things that we couldn’t understand with all of the written words and mathematical languages. This is a language for everybody — it touches everything.”

Throughout, Dangermond illustrated the impact geography, what he called “the platform for understanding and acting,” has on management.

“GIS is affecting the whole



Esri President Jack Dangermond talks maps. Photo by D. Hathcox

process of planning in economic development, from green infrastructure planning to urban design in terms of understanding before acting.”

He showed off how weather information can be adapted through GIS maps to predict how the rainfall will eventually flow downstream, and warnings for earthquakes hundreds miles away that could give people a chance to get to safety before the shocks reach them.

“Counties are using it in different departments to save money, save time, be better,” he said, “but the holistic aspect is something I particularly think you as elected officials need to know and understand; it’s right there to be captured and used.”

“We create geographic knowledge, understand it and then act in a more sensible way.”

Dangermond described the future of what is possible with GIS, as it is integrated into various new and existing technologies, including dynamic data.

“The world is becoming real time in digital space,” he said.

“You and I are living in an interesting time because everything is digital even though many of us claim we are not technical,” he said. “Underneath your feet, we’re learning how to measure everything that moves and changes. **CN**”

(Charlie Ban and Charles Taylor contributed to this report.)

DoE gives new boost to energy efficiency

The Department of Energy’s Better Buildings initiative, intended to increase energy efficiency in the nation’s homes, commercial buildings and industrial plants, has added a new set of Better Buildings accelerators — activities designed to demonstrate specific innovative policies and approaches that would accelerate investment in energy efficiency.

Initiated under President Obama’s 2013 Climate Action Plan, each accelerator is a targeted, short-term, partner-focused activity to address barriers to greater efficiency.

DOE launched three new accelerators in May, focused on Clean Energy for Low-Income Communities, sustainable Wastewater Infrastructure and Combined Heat and Power for Resiliency.

The Clean Energy for Low Income Communities Accelerator aims to lower energy bills in low-income communities through expanded installation of energy-efficient and distributed renewable energy sources. Although the primary objective of increasing clean energy installations in low-income communi-

ties is to help reduce energy costs, participation in the accelerator can bring a number of additional benefits, as energy efficiency can lower the overall need and costs for energy, and make buildings more comfortable. Distributed renewables (generated near point of use) can provide stable energy costs, promote economic development and improve the environment.

The Wastewater Infrastructure Accelerator will work over three years with state, regional and local agencies that are engaging with water resource recovery facilities in their jurisdictions to accelerate a pathway toward a sustainable infrastructure of the future.

The accelerator aims to spur the adoption of innovative and best-practice approaches in data management, technologies and financing for infrastructure improvement.

Partners will seek to improve the energy efficiency of their participating water-resource recovery facilities by at least 30 percent and integrate at least one resource recovery measure.

The Combined Heat and

Power for Resiliency accelerator will support and expand the consideration of combined heat and power (CHP) and other distributed generation (DG) solutions for critical infrastructure.

As a collaborative effort with states, communities, utilities, and other stakeholders, partners will examine the perceptions of CHP/DG among resiliency planners; identify gaps in current technologies or information relative to resilience needs.

They will also establish a value for CHP/DG in resilient operations in critical infrastructure; and develop strategies for communities to capitalize on CHP’s strengths as a reliable, high-efficiency, lower-emissions electricity and heating source for critical infrastructure.

Partners will collaborate with jurisdictional counterparts to establish a decision framework, documenting their process for replicability. **CN**

For more information on how to get involved in the Accelerators, send an information request at <http://go.usa.gov/x4Zfjk> or visit <http://go.usa.gov/x4ZfG>

WORD SEARCH

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DEKALB COUNTY, GA.

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

Created By: Charles Taylor

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE Liberal arts college in county

BATTLE OF ATLANTA Largely fought within DeKalb County

BROOKHAVEN County’s newest city (inc. 2012)

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE The eastern divide runs through county

DRUID HILLS Unincorporated community

EMORY UNIVERSITY Renowned research institution

FULTON West adjacent county

GWINNETT One of three “parent” counties

JOHANN DEKALB German Revolutionary War soldier, county’s namesake

LITHONIA Small city within the county

MARTA Regional rapid transit system

SOUTH RIVER Ocmulgee River tributary

STEPHEN DECATUR Naval hero and namesake of county seat (Decatur)

STONE MOUNTAIN City in the county

THIRD LARGEST Population rank among Georgia counties

LEADERSHIP
EDGE

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar shares his thoughts on a divided America

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who spoke at NACo's 2016 Annual Conference, reflects here on his experience as a noted athlete, writer and filmmaker.

Q: There must have been a lot of expectation on the basketball court because of your height. Yet, you've often said you weren't very good at first. What motivated you to become so good?

KAJ: My parents expected excellence from me. Not in a harsh or demanding way, but in a supportive way because they knew how hard the world was on black men and women. They wanted me to enter adulthood with as many tools for success as possible, both academic and athletic. Their support inspired me to do my best.

Your involvement with the Civil Rights Movement began at an early age. What are some of the experiences you had that led you to this commitment?

KAJ: Every person of color in this country has stories of discrimination, hate speech or even violence directed at them. It's hard for whites who've never experienced this to understand how it's a daily concern. It's like walking through an amusement park haunted house, knowing something's going to jump out at you, just not knowing when. Your nerves are always on alert. It's that general feeling of never feeling completely safe or valuable that prompted my involvement. Yes, there were specific moments that inspired me: meeting Martin Luther King, Jr., being accidentally caught up in a Harlem race riot and having to run for my life, and racial slurs



and taunts from the sidelines of basketball games. But my commitment is based on a deep regard for the U.S. Constitution and making sure we live up to the noble words we claim to love.

Your conversion to Islam in 1971 when you were 24 caused a lot of controversy. How did you deal with the backlash from the public?

KAJ: I'd already had some experience dealing with racial backlash and I'd seen what had happened to Muhammad Ali when he announced his conversion to the Nation of Islam (which is not at all what I'd converted to, though to most people who didn't know better, it was the same). So, I was somewhat prepared. I wasn't quite prepared for some of the resentment from other African Americans. The main way I dealt with it was to show everyone that my faith was genuine and to reach out to others in peace and openness. I focused on our common goal of bringing people together in tolerance and respect and in turn that's what I received. Most of the time.

Do you think professional athletes are under an obligation use their celebrity to address controversial issues?

KAJ: Yes, but with some caution. Athletes need to be sure about positions they take because once it's out in the public, it will be up for intense scrutiny. As it should be. Celebrity is not a free pass to spout any kind of nonsense. Be sure of your facts and the logic of your position before announcing it publicly. Once you are sure that your position is well-supported, you are obligated to use your renown to better the community.

How did you deal with the pressure of being a role model for people of color?

KAJ: That is one of the hardest — and most rewarding — challenges of my life. Any flaw I showed was sometimes magnified in the public's perception to indicate that all people of color were this way. But my successes were sometimes attributed to breaks I got because I was black. It's a Gordian Knot that all black celebrities must unravel for themselves. Yet, despite that, we can't shirk from going out there and speaking up for what's right. It's tempting for some to just nod and smile and express gratitude for what has been given them in the hopes they don't rock the boat or risk their popularity. But that's not being a role model to blacks;

that's being a role model that some whites want to promote to show everything's okay in America. No racism here. But things aren't okay. And it's the job of successful people of color to help make it okay.

You have been outspoken in your articles and your new book about how institutional racism has negatively affected our country, especially opportunities for African Americans. What are some of the solutions you propose to help move us forward?

KAJ: One solution is to make the public more aware of where the racism is and how it undermines not just opportunities for people of color, but for economy of the country. Polls show that many whites think they're more discriminated against than blacks, despite every reputable study ever done. That perception is deliberately perpetuated by those looking to gain political power off the backs of the fearful. The truth will empower everyone to fix our problems rather than pretend they don't exist. The man who ignores that crusty black, bleeding mole is not going to get better.

After retiring from professional basketball, you could have continued hanging around

sports like so many others have. But you chose to embark on a writing career in both fiction and nonfiction. What made you take on such a risk, knowing you could have flopped terribly?

KAJ: The most important ingredient to success is to not be afraid to fail. As Wayne Gretzky said, "You miss 100 percent of the shots you didn't take." The other important ingredients are preparation and passion. I've been writing my whole life, so I was prepared. Plus, I love reading and writing as much as I did playing basketball. I get to explore so many wondrous things. One day I'm writing about the Harlem Renaissance, the next I'm writing about how *The Game of Thrones* reflects our current political situation.

Much of your writing about pop culture and politics is about encouraging Americans to live up to the principles of the U.S. Constitution. Whether it's race, religion or gender, we seem radically divided as a country. What do we need to do to come together?

KAJ: Be less afraid. Less afraid of people who look different, or sound different, or eat different foods. Less afraid of people who love differently or worship differently. We're so afraid of losing what we have that we fail to embrace when change can make us stronger, more prosperous, happier. Thomas Jefferson once defended freedom of religion in America by saying, "But it does me no injury for my neighbor to say there are twenty gods or no God. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg." This same philosophy applies to so many things that divide us. Living in fear eats away at people until they will trade their ethics, their freedom, even their humanity for a false sense of security. **CN**



Members approve dozens of new policy resolutions with scant debate

NACo members adopted more than 100 policy resolutions at their Annual Business Meeting. What follows are the new resolutions adopted for the first time at the 2016 business meeting.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Oppose Inconsistent GMO Regulation

Issue: Lack of standardization of GMO regulations causing a checkerboard effect to localities causing different requirements

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports a comprehensive plan to address the co-habitation of genetically engineered and non-genetically engineered crops to provide a strong and robust agriculturally-based economy. NACo supports policies provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture that standardize or unify regulation of genetically engineered crops which alleviate the need for county or municipal governing bodies to regulate, investigate or enforce regulation of related ordinances or laws.

Urge USDA to Increase the Population Cap for Rural Development Broadband Grant Initiatives

Issue: To increase the population limits for USDA Rural Development Broadband Grant Initiatives

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) encourages the USDA to increase the population cap for Rural Development Broadband Grant Initiatives from 20,000 to 50,000.



Palm Beach County, Fla. Commissioner Priscilla Taylor, chair, Finance, Pensions and Intergovernmental Affairs Steering Committee, presents her committee's policy recommendations to the Board of Directors for their consideration. If accepted, they will be presented to the members for adoption. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND LAND USE

EPA's Efforts to Institute Numeric Water Quality-Based Effluent Limitations on Local Governments

Issue: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) seeks to tighten watershed-wide water quality standards on all localities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which will have implications on other counties across the nation

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) opposes efforts by U.S. EPA to institute localized numeric water quality-based ef-

fluent limitations or area pollution targets.

Compensatory Mitigation In-Lieu Fee Programs

Issue: Ensuring that mitigation programs occur in the watershed or region where the impact occurred

Adopted Policy: NACo believes that in-lieu fees for compensatory mitigation should be used in the watershed where the fee was collected.

Remove Salt Cedar from Rivers

Issue: Support congressional action to address the permitting process and funding for the removal of salt cedar, an invasive species, from rivers

Adopted Policy: NACo sup-



Public Lands Policy Steering Committee Chair Ron Walter, begins his report to the Board. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

ports federal legislation which would allow county governments to comprehensively remove the salt cedar from rivers within their jurisdiction.

Urge Congress to Provide Funding for Local Efforts to Address Sea Level Rise

Issue: Addressing the threat

posed by rising sea levels to the built environments of coastal communities across the country

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress to provide appropriate financial assistance and support to local governments for sea level rise

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related initiatives and projects that aim to develop adaptive solutions to the potentially devastating impacts of sea level rise.

Support the Use of Woody Biomass as an Energy Source

Issue: Urge the federal government to recognize that energy derived from woody biomass sources is renewable and carbon neutral

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports and encourages the further use of woody biomass energy sources, like wood chips and wood pellets, which are both renewable and carbon neutral.

Support Flexibility in the New Regulations on Migratory Bird Patterns and Environmental Permitting

Issue: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) is considering regulations to authorize incidental take of migratory birds, which will impact county owned infrastructure

Adopted Policy: The Na-

tional Association of Counties (NACo) urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to address local government as separate sector in the proposed Migratory Bird Treaty Act Incidental Take Permit rulemaking. NACo supports minimizing the regulatory costs to local government in acknowledgment of public health and safety functions. NACo encourages the USFWS to share best management practices.

FINANCE, PENSIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Preserve Municipal Investment Options and Access to Capital for Public Infrastructure and Economic Development

Issue: State and local governments rely on access to robust capital markets to finance the construction and maintenance of schools, roads, public transportation systems, affordable housing, airports and other important infrastructure projects. Money market funds facilitate that access by invest-

ing in short-term municipal debt that is normally held to maturity. That access has been put at risk by a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) rule that requires prime and tax-exempt money market funds offered to institutional investors to no longer use amortized cost accounting to operate on a stable net asset value (NAV) basis. Instead, beginning October 14, 2016, such funds would be required to use a floating NAV. Bipartisan and bicameral legislation has been introduced in Congress to permit money market funds that invest in the short-term debt of commercial entities and state and local governments to continue to use amortized cost accounting for valuing fund assets. The legislation would preserve money market funds as a source of liquidity and capital for the public infrastructure needs of our citizens.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress to enact S. 1802/H.R. 4216, the Consumer Financial Choice and Capital Markets Protection Act. The legislation will preserve communities' access to capital

and promote economic development by expressly permitting any money market fund with the choice to operate on a stable net asset value (NAV) basis if it adheres to certain requirements and restrictions. The legislation would not have any impact on the other changes to the regulation of money market funds that were adopted by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in 2010 and 2014.

Support U.S. Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program

Issue: Supporting U.S. Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports the U.S. Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Program and encourages county governments to participate in the 2020 LUCA program to ensure that all addresses in their communities appear in the Census Bureau's Master Address File. A complete and accurate address list will ensure that every household can be enumerated during the 2020 Census.

HEALTH

Extend Federal Medical Payments to Detainees in County Jails who are Pre-adjudicated

Issue: Extending federal Medicaid payments to detainees in county jails who are pre-adjudicated

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) seeks a federal legislative change to require the federal Medicaid program to contribute the federal Medicaid match for health and mental health care that is provided while a pre-adjudicated detainee is actually incarcerated.

Extend the New Medicaid IMD Payment Provisions

Issue: Extending new CMS IMD provisions to non-man-

aged care entities

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) requests that CMS extend the new Medicaid IMD payment provisions permitting up to 14 days per month of inpatient/residential care to IMD organizations that are not part of Medicaid managed care systems.

Urge Consultation with Counties on Zika Response Plans and Adequate Funding

Issue: Counties play a large role in preventing, preparing and responding to the Zika virus through multiple functions including public health education and surveillance, mosquito control and emergency preparedness

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges the Administration and Congress to require consultation with counties on federal and state Zika response plans and provide appropriate funding levels for Zika preparedness and response that do not divert funds from other public health priorities.

HUMAN SERVICES AND EDUCATION

Urge Congress to Amend the Family First Prevention Services Act

Issue: The Family First Prevention Services Act (H.R. 5456) would significantly reform Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance. It would deny IV-E foster care and adoption assistance eligibility to many children who are eligible under current federal and state laws, and, effective in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, provide new federal entitlement funding for optional foster care prevention services. It would also impose new federal requirements relating to congregate (group home) care that would reduce federal IV-E reimbursement and shift costs to states and counties. The bill was introduced on June 13, 2016, passed by the House on

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Lew Gaiter, Laramie County, Colo. commissioner, waits his turn to speak during a discussion on a policy resolution. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

From RESOLUTIONS page 13

June 21st under a rule prohibiting amendments, and placed on the Senate floor calendar on June 23rd under a similar rule which would not allow any amendments. This bill's impacts on children and families served by the child welfare system are too enormous to rush its enactment without any hearings or opportunity to amend it.

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress to amend the Family First Prevention Services Act so that it would not shift increased costs to states and counties by denying Title IV-E eligibility to children who would remain eligible for state or county-funded foster care and adoption assistance. In doing so, Congress should also provide states and counties with sufficient flexibility to serve and protect abused and neglected children as done currently under some state laws and through federal waivers to promote more effective ways of serving children at no additional cost. NACo further urges that the bill's prescriptive provisions intended to reduce the use of congregate care be amended so that states and counties already proceeding with similar efforts may continue to do so.

JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Amend the Equal Access to Justice Act

Issue: Proposed Resolution on the Equal Access to Justice Act

Adopted Policy:

1. Supports legislation that amends the Equal Access to Justice Act and the federal judicial code to require the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States to report to Congress annually on the amount of fees and other expenses awarded to prevailing parties other than the United States in certain administrative proceedings and civil action court cases (excluding tort cases) to which the United States is a party, including settlement agreements.



Lynn Padgett, Ouray County, Colo., offers her perspective as the Board discusses new policy recommendations. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

2. Supports requirements that such reports: (1) describe the number, nature, and amount of the awards, the claims involved in the controversy, and any other relevant information that may aid Congress in evaluating the scope and impact of such awards; and (2) be made available to the public online.

3. Supports legislation that directs the Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States to create and maintain online a searchable database containing specified information with respect to each award including the name of the agency involved, the name of each party to whom the award was made, the amount of the award, and the basis for finding that the position of the agency concerned was not substantially justified.

4. Supports legislation that requires the head of each federal agency (including, with respect to court cases, the Attorney General [DOJ] and the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts) to provide the Chairman all information requested to produce such reports.

5. Supports raising the EAJA reimbursement level to \$200 per hour, reflecting the market rate, so that those in need (i.e. veterans and small business) and



In the wings: NACo legislative staff and steering committee chairs.

those that are "directly and personally harmed" can afford a decent and marketable attorney.

6. Supports the institution of a \$7 million net worth cap regardless of tax exempt status to reduce the number of lawsuits filed by large nationwide fringe groups that profit from habitual lawsuits.

FEMA Implementation of Biological Opinion Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives

Issue: The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates the National Flood Insurance Program and a recently issued biological opinion (BiOp) from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) proposes that all development in floodplain causes jeopardy to endangered species (salmon)

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) recommends that FEMA's implementation of the Reasonable and Prudent Al-

ternatives (RPAs) be done after extensive input from local and state governments. Local land use laws and ordinances need to be evaluated in order to understand the protections that are already in place. NACo recommends that FEMA does not unnecessarily overreach in its implementation stage.

TRANSPORTATION

Regulate Air Ambulances under the Airline Deregulation Act (ADA)

Issue: Air ambulances cannot be regulated under the Airline Deregulation Act (ADA), and therefore are able to charge exorbitant rates

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) supports policies to remove air ambulances from the definition of "Air Carrier" in ADA or other policy to protect consumers from price-gouging and/or balance billing conducted by some air ambulance providers. NACo encourages

Congress to cause a thorough and complete study of Air Ambulance operations to be conducted.

Indian School Bus Route Maintenance

Issue: Tribal residents of counties whose regional road networks include primary access routes that are tribal dirt roads are denied access to education due to the failure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to enforce its own National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidance for categorical exclusions

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges Congress include language in Department of Interior (DOI) Appropriation bills directing the BIA to comply with DOI regulations for enforcement of NEPA, (43 CFR Part 46.210), BIA Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H), and DOI's Departmental Manual (516 DM 10.5), to adhere to all three NEPA compliance components:

1. Categorical Exclusion;
2. Environmental Assessment; and
3. Environmental Impact Statement.

Stress the Important Role of Counties in Establishing and Implementing Laws and Regulations for Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS)

Issue: Counties must have a seat at the table as Congress and the Administration develop and implement laws and regulations relating to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), i.e. drones

Adopted Policy: The National Association of Counties (NACo) calls on Congress and the president to consult and work closely with county officials and other local stakeholders as they consider new legislation and regulations addressing the emerging UAS/drone industry and to permit appropriate local regulations in any new legislation or regulation. We further urge the FAA to allocate additional seats on the Drone Advisory Council to counties. **CN**

BRIGHT IDEAS | JOSEPHINE COUNTY, ORE.

Music Program for Veterans Creates Community, Eliminates Isolation

PROBLEM: Vietnam-era military veterans often feel alienated from society at large.

SOLUTION: A music outreach program that unites them in a common purpose.

By Charles Taylor
senior staff writer

It all started at a veterans' art show in Josephine County, Ore. There wasn't any music, so Lisa Pickart, the county's veterans service officer, fetched a guitar from her car, came back and began to sing *Down by the River*.

When she was done, Bob Eaton, a Vietnam War combat veteran, borrowed Pickart's guitar and launched into *My Ol' Nam Hat*, a song he wrote about his and other Vietnam vets' experiences of coming home to less than a hero's welcome.

"His voice just compelled you to listen to his story," Pickart said recently. The encounter would inspire her to help create the county's Veterans Music Outreach Program (VMOP). "Me and the director of the Vet Center, both of us were watching him, and we're like, if we build it, they're going to come."

The program provides an outlet for veterans to perform together — for those with musical experience — and an opportunity for newcomers to learn. It costs about \$5,000 per year to run, largely funded by the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, Pickart said. That helps to pay for a guitar teacher from a local music store, a keyboard, drums, books and "basic" recording equipment. Participants can



Members of Josephine County, Ore.'s Veterans Music Outreach Program play a gig *al fresco*. VMOP gives military veterans, mainly from the Vietnam War era, a chance to socialize that they might not have otherwise because of reclusiveness or isolation. Photo courtesy of Josephine County, Ore.

also take voice lessons and learn how to write their own songs.

Veterans comprise about 10 percent of the southern Oregon county's population.

VMOC, strictly speaking, isn't a musical therapy program, which must be led by credentialed music therapists, Pickart said.

"We're not music therapists; we never claim to be," she added. "It's just a recreational music group. But the therapeutic component of this group has been huge. It just had a ripple effect; none of us even saw it coming."

The program began in 2011 with a handful of military veterans who met twice monthly. Before long, that number had grown to seven.

Today, about 20 veterans participate, and Pickart estimates that, all told, 40 to 50 people have been involved. As word spread and demand grew, the sessions expanded to four times a month.

But even word-of-mouth faced an uphill battle in en-

gaging vets.

"The veterans would say they didn't want to come; they hate being part of something with a bunch of people," she explained of often-reclusive vets.

"This program saves lives. Once I get here I don't want to leave. It's a safe environment and its fun."

— Bob Eaton

"But once they get there and start playing music, endorphins are released in your brain, and every time they leave, they leave happy; they were glad they came."

Eaton, who was an Army sergeant during the Vietnam War, has said, "This program saves lives. Once I get here I don't want to leave. It's a safe environment and its fun."

The more advanced group calls itself The DD214s, after

Defense Department Form 214, a certificate of release or discharge from active duty.

The less experienced performers are The DD215s, after another document. In addition to guitarists, the groups include singers and percussion players.

"They've become kind of brothers, kind of musicians-in-arms, so to speak," Pickart said. "And they show up, even when they don't want to show up, even when they don't feel good they show up, because they're a part of something bigger than themselves. And they don't want to let everybody else down."

The veterans don't just come from Josephine County but from neighboring counties, too. One man travels an hour-and-a-half twice a month to come to practices, she said.

Some older veterans have also begun mentoring younger vets — from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We really weren't expecting that. ... That has been huge, because for Vietnam vets, it gives them

another purpose," Pickart said.

The war-on-terrorism era vets aren't the only demographic to have become involved with the program.

"We have one World War II vet, and a couple of Korean vets that like to just come to listen, which is another unexpected outcome," she said.

The groups aren't just boys' clubs. Pickart said one female Vietnam veteran who died recently of ALS, came to the practices up until about a month before her death. "Even though she couldn't talk and she was in a wheelchair, she could still hit all of the notes on the piano."

Wives and sweethearts of the vets are also welcome to join in. They often come to sing with the group or play other instruments.

Pickart says she, too, has benefited from the program. Working in veterans services for almost 20 years can be a "high-stress job" — dealing with the U.S. Department of Veterans to help ex-service members get the benefits they're entitled to.

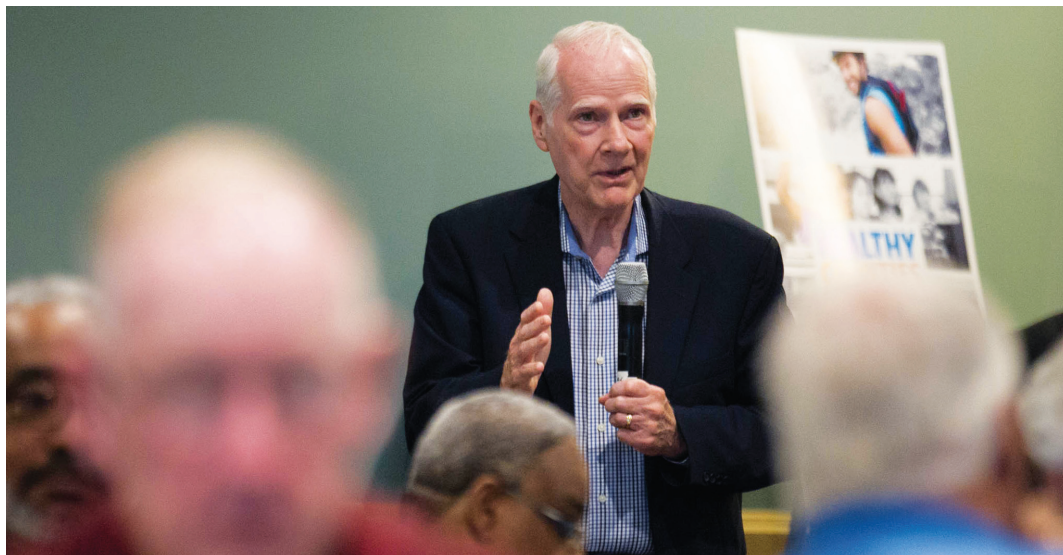
The music program allows her to be more than a "money fairy to these guys."

A guitar player since the age of 10, Pickart said the program has helped her to "evolve" in the area of music, which she loves. She also gets to share that joy with veterans who are "somewhat broken and help heal them as well."

"So it's been very powerful in the sense that not only does it help me to keep my head in the game and stay focused in my job, it just brings a little more light and dimension to what it is I do." **CN**

Bright Ideas features noteworthy and award-winning county programs.

Behavioral health services take telemed route



In advocacy mode, Ron Manderscheid, National Association of County Behavioral Health and Disability Directors, plugs the Mental Health Reform Act, pending in Congress. Photo by D. Hathcox

From WORKSHOPS page 8

CREATING CONNECTED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

WHO SPOKE:

Michelle Bennyhoff, County Behavioral Health Directors Association of California

Eric Brown, president and CEO, California Telehealth Network
Chuck Ingoglia, National Council for Behavioral Health
Dr. Monica Roots, Teladoc Behavioral Health

WHAT PARTICIPANTS LEARNED:

The telemedicine “train has left the station,” accord-

ing to Brown, especially as pertains to long-distance behavioral health diagnoses, treatment and consultations via electronic technology.

Bennyhoff said that telehealth is growing at the rate of about 200 percent annually.

Brown, whose agency serves as California’s telehealth resources center, said 24 states are in the process planning to implement community behavioral health clinic pilots.

Roots, who practices telemedicine, said the key issue in behavioral health is access, but there aren’t enough providers to meet the need. Not everyone is willing to go to a mental health center; telehealth can address that.

“We really need to meet people where they’re at. They want to be able access the care that they want, how they want it, when they want it and what kind of treatment they want,” she said.

Ingoglia said a recent report from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality concluded that behavioral telemedicine can be as effective as in-person visits.

Staff contact: Michelle Price, mprice@naco.org. **CN**

(Charlie Ban and Charles Taylor, senior staff writers, contributed to this report.)

DOLORES ORTEGA CARTER

Vice Chair
 Finance, Pensions and Intergovernmental Affairs
 Steering Committee
 Treasurer
 Travis County, Texas

PROFILES IN SERVICE

Number of years active in NACo: 20+ years

Years in public service: 29 years

Occupation:
 Travis County treasurer

Education: B.A. and M.A. Texas A&M University

The hardest thing I’ve ever done: Run for political office

Three people (living or dead) I’d invite to dinner:

Cesar Chavez, Frieda Kahlo, John F. Kennedy

A dream I have is to:
 Travel to the Holy Land.

The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: Travelling to the East Coast to explore the mansions and lighthouses on the Atlantic Ocean.

My favorite way to relax is:
 To watch *The Golden Girls*.

I’m most proud of:
 My community service work.

Every morning I read: Several newspapers online and the daily Catholic readings.

My favorite meal is:
 Fried chicken.

My pet peeve is: Putting gas in my vehicle.

My motto is: “Let go and Let God.”

The last book I read was:
Isabella, the Warrior Princess.

My favorite movie is: *Under the Tuscan Sun*.

My favorite music is: by the Rolling Stones.

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

My county is a NACo member because: Travis County recognizes the importance of county government in the lives of our constituents. Local governments are the first responders to address concerns within the county infrastructure and local laws. By working as a team with other counties of the U.S., Travis County can combine its resources that include initiatives, policies and efforts to provide solutions for improved emergency preparedness, transportation and public health for the betterment of our respective counties. I am so proud that Travis County is an important partner as a NACo member.

You’d be surprised to learn that I: believe in Bigfoot.



DEKALB COUNTY, GA.

Designed by: Jackson Bailey
 Introduced in: 1967

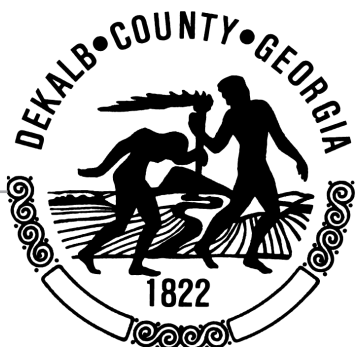
BEHIND THE SEAL

Though the two runners passing a lighted torch would seem to commemorate the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, the DeKalb County, Ga. seal was designed nearly 30 years before that.

“Well before the games were awarded to Atlanta,” said Burke Brennan, chief communications officer for the county who interviewed artist Jackson Bailey in 2004, shortly before he died.

Burke Brennan, DeKalb County chief communications officer, assisted.

(If you would like your county’s seal featured in “Behind the Seal,” contact Charlie Ban, senior staff writer: 202.942.4249 or cban@naco.org.)



The seal features two runners passing a lighted torch, which Bailey told Brennan symbolized the progress the region made over time.

Stone Mountain, now the state’s top tourist destination looms in the background

The fields represent the agriculture that characterized the now-suburban county in the ’60s when Bailey designed the seal.

MONEYMATTERS%

The Rest of the Story Homeownership at Record Lows

Joel Griffith
program manager, FSC

Sometimes a picture can speak a thousand words. So it is with the housing market. The second quarter saw a record broken, which few will be celebrating; homeownership sank to a 50-year low of 62.9 percent. This dismal record marked a continuation of a downward trend that began in 2004, at a record 69.2 percent.

The decline has continued almost unmitigated through the most frenzied days of the housing bubble, through the Great Recession, through the housing market recovery and during the seven-year-long economic expansion.

It's safe to say quite a few parents are experiencing the practical reality of this drop in homeownership. After all, many of those within the age demographic typically looking to buy a first home are instead returning from college to live in mom and dad's basement. According to new research from Pew, more young adults ages 18-34 are living with parents (32.1 percent) than either married or cohabitating (31.6 percent), or living alone or head of household (14 percent).

This is a historic first for the United States. And it's a stunning shift from 1960 when more than 60 percent of this demographic cohort lived with a significant other and only 20 percent lived with parents.

Is soft economic growth the primary culprit behind dramatically higher proportion of post-college adults living at home with parents and hence delaying real estate purchases? What is incontrovertible are the plunging levels of labor force participation for young-

er adults. For instance, more than one in four adults age 20 to 24 years are not even looking for a job. As we all know, obtaining a mortgage is next to impossible in such a circumstance.

Of course, having a job is only part of the equation in buying a home; affordability also comes into play. Although

interest rates remain at historic lows, housing costs have rebounded since the financial crises. The S&P/Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price Index declined more than 25 percent from the peak of the housing market boom in early 2007 until the post-crises bottom in early 2012. However, in just four short years, nearly the

entire decline has been erased, with the index soaring 30 percent. Since 2000, this measure of home prices has increased 80 percent — roughly twice the overall inflation rate during this same time frame.

As the shift to renting (in addition to living with parents) continues, ultra-low rental vacancy rates result. Last quar-

ter, the rate dipped to just 6.7 percent — down from more than 11 percent following the Great Recession, and lower than at any point in more than 30 years. And this tight rental market, has helped produce sharply rising rental costs — a jump of 20 percent since the recession ended in the middle of 2009.

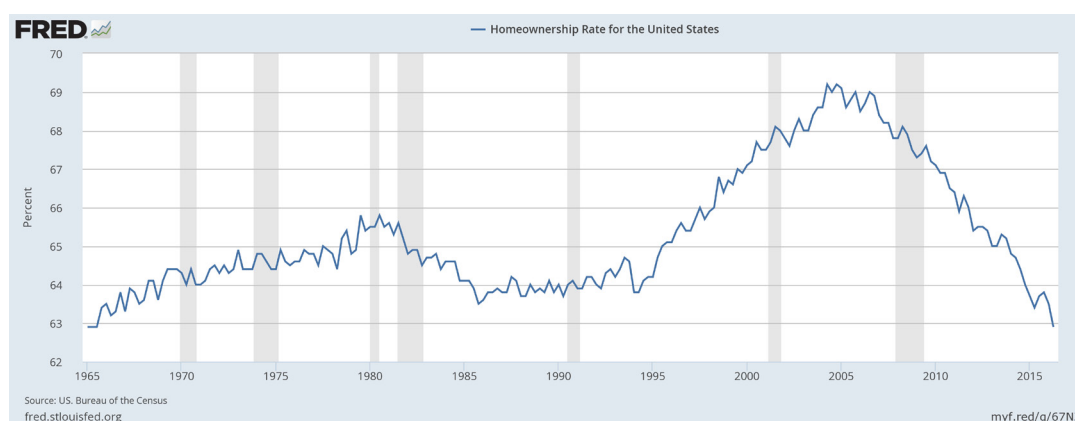
Current economic indicators do not seem to suggest a return to normality on this homeownership front. Residential construction spending remains more than one-third below the levels seen a decade ago. More disconcerting is the level of new privately owned housing starts.

This past decade realized the lowest number of housing starts of any other 10-year period in the past half century. After peaking at an annual rate of 2.3 million in January 2006, housing starts plunged to 400,000 by the end of the Great Recession. Now, seven years into the recovery, annual housing starts are barely half that level at 1.1 million. In fact, from 1960 through 2007, housing starts were only lower than present levels in three of those years.

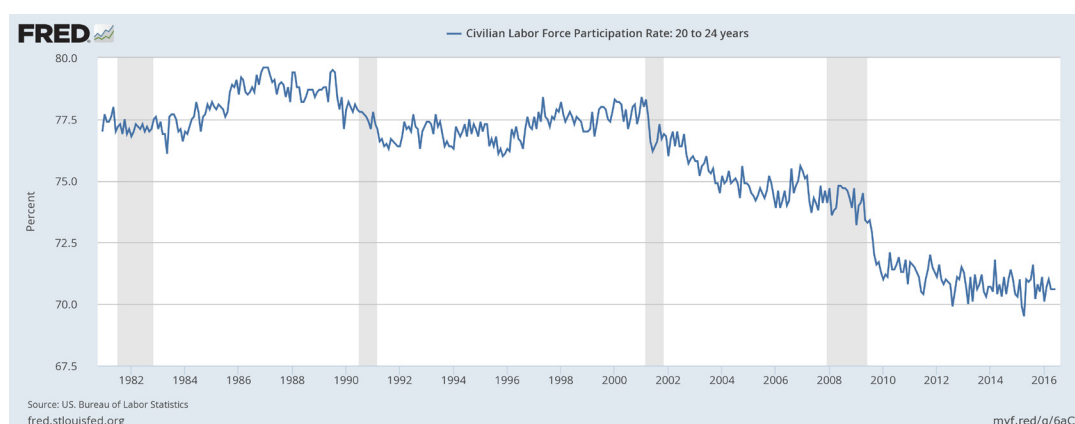
For many families, a personal residence is their single most valuable asset. Purchasing a home early in one's career can provide at least a foundation for retirement security with the forced equity building related to a long-term mortgage. As such, many economists are troubled by this decline in homeownership. Time will tell if an acceleration of economic growth reverses this trend. **CN**

(Joel Griffith is a program manager with the NACo FSC. You can reach him at jgriffith@naco.org.)

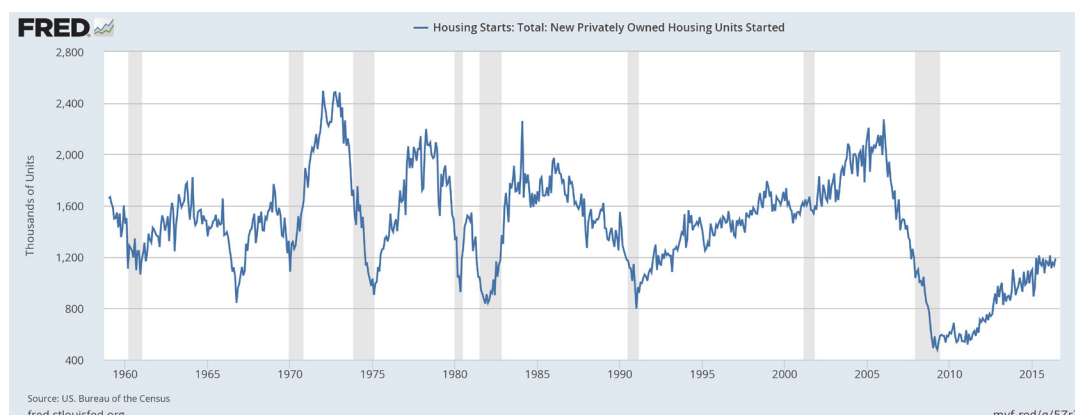
Homeownership Rates for the United States: 1965–2015



Civilian Labor Force Participation: 20–24 years



Housing Starts Total: 1960–2015



the HR DOCTOR

With Phil Rosenberg

Phil Rosenberg

America's Most Dangerous Foes

How very fortunate we are to live in the most amazing nation in the world — the one which combines the personal freedom for the individual to do nearly anything that doesn't hurt another, the political freedom to be able to have a role in the choice of leaders, especially at the local level, to be able to influence policy matters, serve on a jury or to vote.

Granted, there is great poverty, hunger, lack of affordable health care for millions, infrastructure trouble, homelessness, latchkey children and unequal opportunity for many — things we hear about every day. These sad civic failures also give rise to crime and disaffection. However, the great majority of Americans would certainly not think for a moment to emigrate and give up on America in favor of North Korea, many nations in Africa or the Middle East.

Campaign rhetoric notwithstanding, how does the greatness of America stay strong against our major enemies — those who are most likely to succeed in destroying that strength? Is it those who murder and destroy in the name of the Islamic State? Is it a nuclear-armed Iran or Russia? Is it North Korea ruled by the strangely behaving dictator with a bad haircut?

From over 40 years of executive government service, I hope to offer a clear and compelling short list of our greatest danger. There are two main “enemies.” They both are internal. They stem from within each of us. They can be defeated.

Every great nation and empire has stayed great for a long time because of a couple of factors. Likewise, every great nation or empire has declined and eventually fallen when these two criteria decay it from within — Greece, Rome, the British Empire, the former Soviet Union

and likely China are prime examples.

The first enemy is the lack of patriotism. Patriotism is, in my judgment, on the decline. I don't mean the patriotism that comes from dressing up as Uncle and Aunt Sam and staging a parade. I don't mean the blaring commercialism that is now broadcast nationally on Fourth of July TV “specials.” I do mean the day-to-day quiet sense of sacrifice for a higher cause.

A great nation thrives when the patriotism of an appeal to a higher cause and doing what is best for the whole nation trumps (if you'll pardon the expression) personal gain in terms of power or materialism. We have an abundance of the latter in our lives. We are increasingly selfish and self-centered. Those extremely watchful observers we call our children pick up on these tendencies and assume that we are role modeling how they should behave as they grow up. There are, of course, a huge number of exceptions. There still is a huge sense in our country of what Rotary International's motto wonderfully calls “service above self.” We see that in those volunteers who serve in the military even at the expense of stability or security in their personal lives. We see it displayed by dedicated law enforcement officers, nurses, teachers and so many more. The tiny minority of people who wear their uniforms and carry the badges but have lost that sense of service are often the results of failed HR policies in the cities and counties that hired or promoted them.

It is great fun, of course, to

attend a Fourth of July parade, invite neighbors over for barbecues and enjoy the majesty of the fireworks. However, patriotism also means being a student of history and looking back at what really represents the foundation of the things we celebrate. This includes how we got here as a great nation, what we had to overcome, what we struggle with today, and what we can do now so that our children and grandchildren can enjoy what we have enjoyed and in fact build on that.

America's greatness will decline and perhaps be lost forever if we don't pay the proper respect and attention to things that unite us rather than separate us and things we should all do to serve rather than being served. Much in our culture today is warped by our past success.

The other force which will destroy us if we are not very careful to recognize and interrupt it is our own arrogant pride. Our ancient Greek friends called it “hubris.” It is the idea that we are more invincible than we really are as a nation and as individuals.

Arrogant pride, perhaps we can call it “the sin of pride,” makes us think we are better than other people when we are not. It makes us think that the physical force employed by a bully is really the way to achieve a personal or national goal when it is not, or that a person may be better than another by virtue of things which science tells us make no difference whatsoever.

These include the pigment that affects the color of

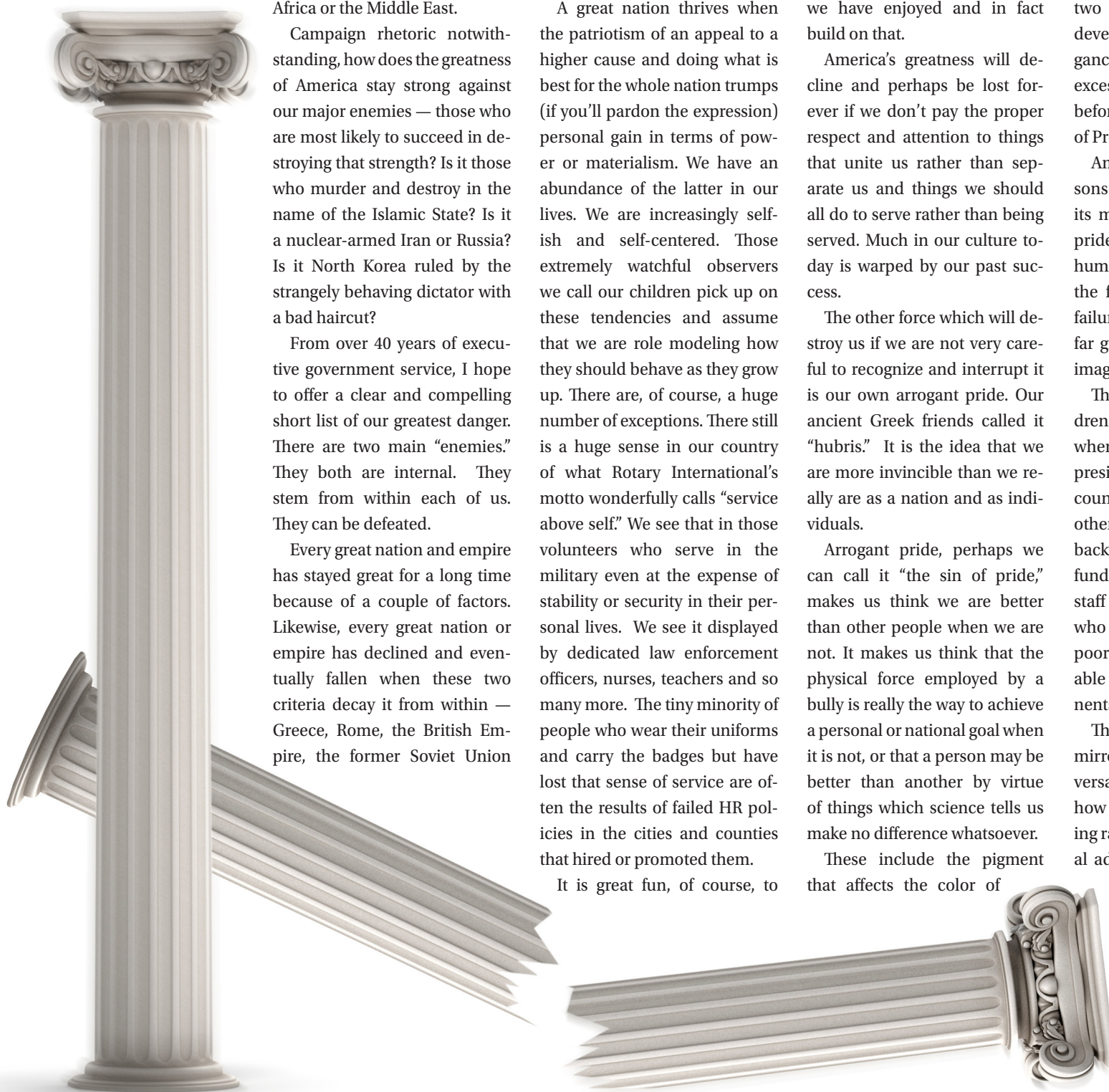
skin, a genetic makeup that turns my formerly striking dark hair into a mere gray remnant of its former self, or makes me suffer from a genetic malfunction. We think these things matter but, in fact, the more advanced we become in our search for security and survival, the more we realize that they should not make a difference in our thinking, our actions or our society.

The common bonds of service and sacrifice can defeat these two enemies. If only we could develop vaccines against arrogance and treatments for the excessive pride which “goeth before the fall” (thank you, Book of Proverbs).

America has so many reasons to be proud about all of its many achievements. Great pride without great service and humility, however, will lead to the failure of our country and failures in our personal lives far greater than what we might imagine.

This is the time of our quadrennial gladiatorial games when those who aspire to be the president or a governor, senator, county commissioner or seek other office battle it out, often backed up by hordes of lawyers, fundraisers, public relations staff and no doubt psychologists who help devise ways to create poor impressions or questionable allegations about opponents.

This is the time to look in the mirror and have a serious conversation with ourselves about how well we serve a higher calling rather than our own personal advancement. America will stay great as long as we keep appealing to and acting on what is best for the country and, thereafter at the micro level, ourselves. Into the future we will also be coming to think more and more of the world at large. **CN**



NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

CALIFORNIA

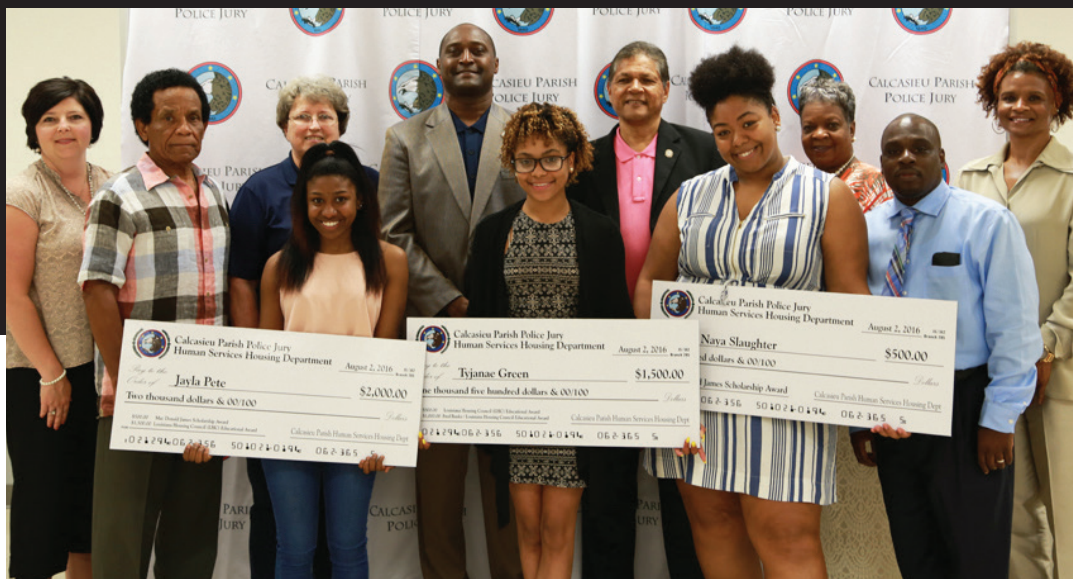
● **LOS ANGELES, SAN DIEGO and ORANGE counties** are urging gay men to take extra precautions due to a spike in “**invasive meningococcal disease**” among their populations.

The disease, caused by bacteria, can lead to death, even with early diagnosis and treatment. It is spread through close contact such as kissing, sharing drinking glasses, eating utensils, cigarettes or water bottles.

● A measure to use **marijuana tax** proceeds to fight home-

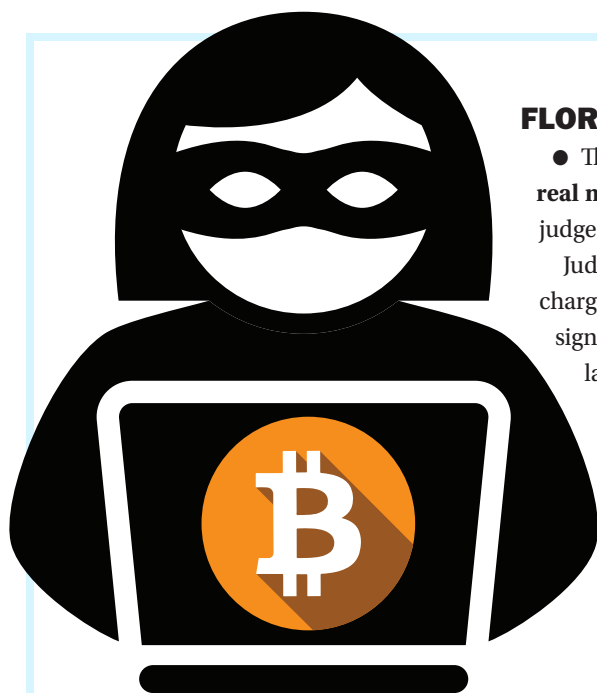
lessness won't be on the November ballot in **LOS ANGELES COUNTY**. The Board of Supervisors, which had backed a 10 percent tax on marijuana businesses' gross receipts, has decided it's a non-starter, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, who proposed the marijuana tax measure, asked her colleagues to pull it. She cited pushback from some homeless service and drug treatment providers who think the county shouldn't be seen as promoting marijuana legalization.



LOUISIANA

Jayla Pete, Ty'janae Green and Naya Slaughter, 2016 high school graduates in Calcasieu Parish, La., show off their big checks — college scholarships awarded by the parish's Human Services Housing Program. The awards go to high-achieving residents of federally subsidized housing who has either graduated from high school or is a head of household who has returned to school. The funds go directly to the student's school for tuition, books and related educational activities. Photo courtesy of Tony Guillory, Calcasieu Parish police juror



FLORIDA

● The virtual currency known as **Bitcoin isn't real money**, according to **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY** judge's ruling.

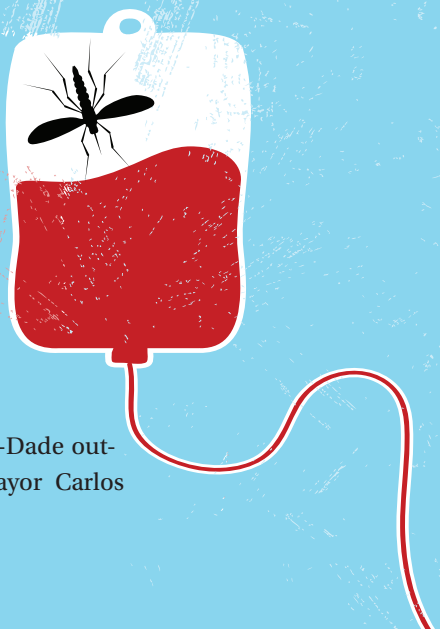
Judge Teresa Mary Pooler threw out felony charges against Michael Espinoza, a website designer charged with illegally transmitting and laundering Bitcoin valued at \$1,500, *The Miami Herald* reported.

“The court is not an expert in economics; however, it is very clear, even to someone with limited knowledge in the area, the Bitcoin has a long way to go before it is the equivalent of money,” Pooler wrote in her order dismissing the case.

● The Food and Drug Administration has allowed some blood banks to resume collections after ordering a halt on July 27 because locally acquired **cases of Zika** were reported in **BROWARD and MIAMI-DADE counties**, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

FDA has authorized the use of an unapproved lab test to screen blood for the virus. As of Aug. 5, a spokesperson for the agency said there had been no reports of the U.S. blood supply being tainted by Zika. Sixteen cases of Zika infection in Florida had been recorded by that date, according to the *Miami Herald*.

The Wynwood neighborhood, the focus of the Miami-Dade outbreak, is being sprayed with the pesticide Naled. Mayor Carlos Gimenez said early applications were successful.



IDAHO

The **TETON COUNTY** Board of Commissioners approved a resolution to formally oppose efforts to **transfer federal public lands** to the state of Idaho or local governments.

Public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service comprise 33 percent of Teton County.

“The Board of County Commissioners strongly supports federal ownership and management of public lands in Teton County and the incredible value of federal lands bring to our county's economy, recreation, heritage, and quality of life,” the resolution states.

Teton joins counties in Arizona, Colorado and Wyoming that have taken the same stance.

IOWA

STORY COUNTY supervisors have agreed to permit Dakota Access to cross the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail in the county to **build part of its pipeline**.

The pipeline company has promised to minimize inconvenience while providing every possible reassurance of safety. But some residents fear the construction will damage the trail and inconvenience its users.

Dakota Access also agreed to give the county's Conservation Board up to \$1.6 million to use for paving a four-mile section of the trail — funds that the board has discretion to use on other projects, according to *The Gazette*.

An attorney for Dakota Access, said if the supervisors had not approved the agreement, the company would have pursued eminent domain for an easement to cross the trail.

MARYLAND

Come November, voters in **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY** will decide whether to **expand the County Council** from nine members to 11. A ballot question seeks voter approval to amend the county's charter.

Each of the current councilmembers represents a district; the new members would be at-large, representing the entire county.

Proponents say at-large members, not beholden to a district constituency, can take the long view of what's best for the county of nearly 900,000 residents, *The Washington Times* reported.

But some critics say the measure is a ploy to circumvent term

ON THE MOVE

NACo OFFICERS, COUNTY OFFICIALS

NACo President **Bryan Desloge** addressed attendees at the Aug. 2 General Session of the South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) Annual Conference held this year on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort County.

Desloge also represented NACo at the County Commissioners Association of West Virginia's Annual Conference Aug. 7-9 at the Canaan Valley Resort in Tucker County.

NACo STAFF

● **Olivia Nedd** has joined NACo as a County Solutions and Services associate. She will provide a combination of professional and administrative assistance to the education, training and technical assistance programs for county officials on justice. Before joining NACo, Nedd was an attorney for Howard Criminal Justice Clinic where she advocated on behalf of clients charged with simple assault. Pri-

or to that, she was with Goler Teal Butcher International Moot Court. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Central Florida and a juris doctorate from Howard University School of Law.

● **Kevan Stone** is the new associate legislative director for transportation policy. Before joining NACo, Stone was a policy advisor for former House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John L. Mica (R-Fla.), where he assisted in transportation policy relating to highways, rail and aviation. Prior to coming to Washington, he worked in the private sector as the managing director of a successful small business. He holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Central Florida.

● Executive Director **Matt Chase** was among the panelists discussing county economies at the 49th Annual Conference of the South Carolina Association of Counties, held July 31 to Aug. 3 in Hilton Head, Beaufort County.

New NACo Member

GET TO KNOW...

El Paso County, Texas



Welcome, El Paso County, Texas

One of only two counties in the state of Texas to fall into the Mountain Time Zone, El Paso County, situated at the westernmost corner of Texas, was organized in 1850. The arrival of the first Spanish expedition at the Pass of the North (El Paso del Norte) in 1581 marked the beginning of more than 400 years of history in the El Paso area.

The community of Ysleta in El Paso County is the oldest town in Texas.

It was one of several agricultural communities started along the Rio Grande by Spaniards and Indians after the 1680 Pueblo Revolt. The Pueblo Revolt was the single most successful act of resistance by Native Americans against a European invader.

Today, more than 70 Fortune 500 companies call El Paso County their home, including Hoover, Eureka, Boeing and Delphi. The county is also an important entry point to the U.S. from Mexico.

Its population is approximately 836,000.

NEWS FROM

ACROSS THE NATION

From NEWS FROM page 19

limits, because councilmembers who are "termed-out" after two consecutive terms could run for an at-large seat.

NEVADA

CLARK COUNTY will now require a public hearing to deal with the **objectionable annexations** of properties throughout the county by the city of Las Vegas.

"As long as the city continues

to aggressively move forward with these annexations, we will continue to protest," said Commissioner Larry Brown. "Many residents know that we have tried many times to work with the city through negotiations, arbitration and mediations. This seemed like the next logical step the county could take — to bring it back to the judicial system and bring clarity to the situation."

The county can direct the city to remove the property from its jurisdictional boundaries, place any municipal taxes that would go to the city as a result of the annexation into a special fund to be held there and direct the

district attorney's office to seek an injunction or judgment in District Court.

Trouble has followed the expiration in January of an inter-local agreement that allowed county landowners to connect into city infrastructure without paying higher city tax rates, *The Review-Journal* reported.

The Legislature passed a bill barring cities from forcing unincorporated property owners into service areas, which prompted the Las Vegas City Council to define service areas as property within existing city limits.

NEW YORK

● **BROOME COUNTY** has made a \$10,000 donation to the Broome County Veterans Fly Fishing Program. The donation will fund travel and fishing instruction for county veterans through the County Veterans Service Agency, WICZ News reported.

● The **TOMPKINS COUNTY** Charter Review Committee has recommended giving some of the **sheriff's duties** to a commissioner of police, whom the county Legislature would

appoint, the *Ithaca Journal* reported.

Any change from an elected position to an appointed position would have to be approved by Tompkins County voters in a referendum. If it passes, an appointed police commissioner would perform criminal functions of the job, while an elected sheriff would hand civil duties and management of the Tompkins County Jail, which just lost a variance to house more inmates than it was designed to hold, WENY News reported.

If passed, the terms of sheriff and commissioner of police would begin Jan. 1, 2019. The department of police would also come into operation on that date.

OHIO

Refinancing debt on Paul Brown Stadium and Great American Ball Park could save \$65 million for **HAMILTON COUNTY** over 20 years. The county bonds, sold in 1996, are worth about \$376 million, the *Cincinnati Enquirer* reported.

WASHINGTON

The **KING COUNTY** Council

lifted a **moratorium on legal pot business** in unincorporated areas of the county.

Legal pot farms had to be 10 acres or larger in rural zones during the four-month moratorium, the *Seattle Times* reported.

WISCONSIN

A **rapid transit bus route** got the okay from the **MILWAUKEE COUNTY** Board, clearing the way for service between downtown Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Regional Medical Complex. County transportation officials will apply for a federal transit grant that would pay 80 percent of the costs of the nine-mile route, estimated at \$45 million.

A county consultant estimates 13 minutes of transit time would be shaved off the full length of the route between downtown and a county park-and-ride lot, the *Journal-Sentinel* reported. **CN**

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

NEW JERSEY

Animal welfare concerns have prompted **BERGEN COUNTY** freeholders to ban circuses and exotic animal shows on county property. That includes parades, carnivals, trade shows and any event in which animals have no permanent home or are removed from their homes for more than 18 hours at a time.

According to *The Record*, zoos, sanctuaries, rescue centers and educational programs featuring animals are exempt.

