

Counties try mobile voting

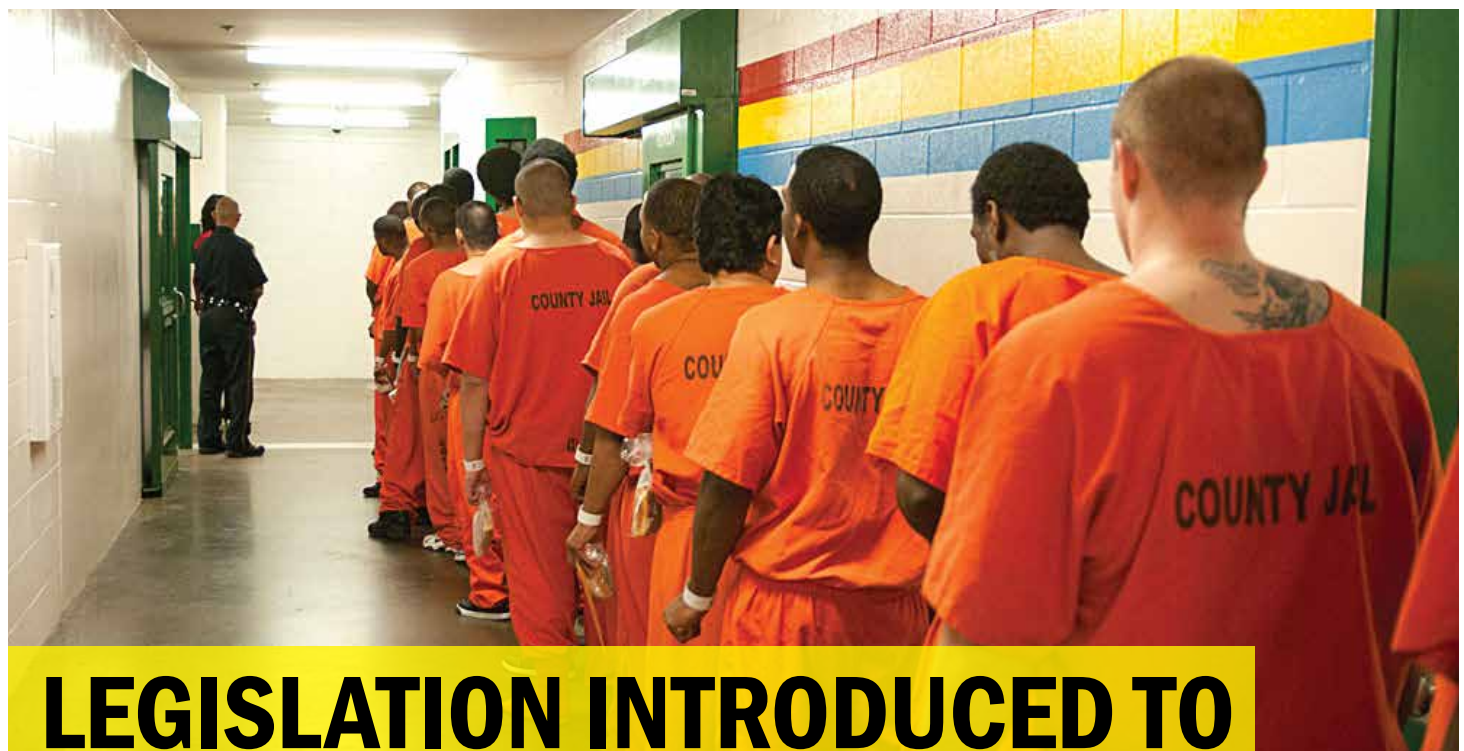
by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

Two counties in Oregon have introduced a mobile voting pilot program that allows those who are living overseas to vote in elections by using an app on their smartphones.

Jackson County and Umatilla County will be piloting the mobile voting option for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) voters, a group that includes active members of the Uniformed Services, their eligible family members and other citizens residing outside the United States.

“We need to be proactive in developing these technologies and being a leader in it instead

See MOBILE page 2



LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO PROTECT HEALTH BENEFITS IN JAIL

Photo by Todd Wiseman, courtesy of The Texas Tribune

by **Blaire Bryant**

Two new bills were recently introduced in the Senate that would amend the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy under the Social Security Act, to protect the right of pre-trial detainees to their federal health benefits.

Current law prohibits the use of federal funding from

Medicaid, Medicare and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for inmates in prison and jail. It also makes no distinction between pre-adjudicated detainees and convicted inmates.

Senators Ed Markey (D-Mass.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) have sponsored the Equity

in Pre-Trial Medicaid Coverage Act (S. 2628), a bill that would amend the Social Security Act to remove limitations on Medicaid coverage for pre-trial inmates of public institutions.

Merkley has also introduced the Restoring Health Benefits for Justice-Involved Individuals Act (S. 2626) which would further amend the Social Security Act to remove limitations on

Medicare, CHIP and Veterans’ Affairs health services benefits for pre-trial detainees in jails.

The introduction of these bills closely follows the recent two-day convening of the National Association of Counties and National Sheriff’s Joint Task Force on Health Care and Jails in Washington, D.C.,

See BILLS page 2

Longtime NACo member seeks county lapel pins

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Jim Healy can pinpoint exactly when he knew he wanted to be involved in NACo. Now he is hoping to collect roughly 3,100 other pin points.

“My first year on the (DuPage County, Ill.) Board, I went to the Annual Conference and knew

this was something I wanted to be involved in,” he said. “It was obvious it was a great organization and one my county should do more with.”

Healy, who is retiring from the DuPage County Board of Commissioners next fall, is putting the word out for counties across the country to send him their lapel pins that bear the county

names and seals. State associations, too. He would like to give that collection to NACo as a way of demonstrating, in physical form, how important the organization has been to him.

“I’ve always collected the pins, I like to trade mine for other people’s,” he said. “There are

See PINS page 3



'It is past time to end this unfair practice...'

From BILLS page 1

where they advocated for legislative action by urging members of Congress to support measures that would ensure care continuity and ultimately reduce rates of recidivism in local jails.

Task Force members have worked closely with congressional offices to develop these proposals and help elevate this issue on the national stage by bringing attention to the negative consequences of the federal policy and its impact on the individual, the community and local taxpayers.


"It is past time to end this unfair and discriminatory practice that not only exacerbates health issues like diabetes and

opioid addiction among individuals who would otherwise have access to their health care coverage, but it strains local budgets," Markey said in a statement.

"I've worked with counties across Massachusetts to call attention to this shameful policy and identify solutions, and I am grateful to my Senate colleagues for joining me in righting this injustice," he said.

Merkley noted that "the foundation of our judicial system is innocence until proven guilty. It doesn't make sense that Americans awaiting trial — half of whom have serious health conditions — are cut off from Medicaid, Medicare and veterans' benefits that they rely on to stay healthy, just be-

cause they are unable to pay bail. It's time for Congress to stand up for these Americans, by making sure they continue to receive the health coverage and treatment they need and qualify for."

Prior to receiving a floor vote, both bills will be referred to the U.S. Senate Committees of Jurisdiction. The NACo-National Sheriffs Joint Task Force is garnering bipartisan support for these two pieces of legislation and is in the process of identifying potential sponsors for these bills in the U.S. House. 

Blaire Bryant is an associate legislative director with a concentration on health issues, in NACo's Government Affairs department.

Ease of app equals high turnout?

From MOBILE page 1

of a follower and the only way you do that is by taking the chance," Jackson County Clerk Chris Walker said.

In Jackson and Umatilla counties, the pilot programs are collaborations between the National Cybersecurity Center, Tusk/Montgomery Philanthropies Inc., an organization that works to make voting easier and Voatz, a mobile election platform.

Only UOCAVA members are eligible to use the vote-by-mobile option in Jackson and Umatilla counties, but may still vote by mailing paper ballots.

Users download the Voatz app on a smartphone, register through the app and take a photo of a government ID (a military ID, passport or driver's license) and a video of their face to verify that it matches the ID. The app uses facial recognition and thumbprint verification to allow users access to the ballots to mark their votes.

Marked ballots go into a virtual lockbox at Voatz that can't be seen by the counties until Election Day, when the virtual lockbox is opened and the vote is recorded in a blockchain, a digital public ledger in a decentralized network. The county receives a copy of

the digital receipt of the ballot and election officials print off a physical paper ballot from the receipt and send it to the scanners, similar to the process of vote-by-mail ballots.

The two Oregon counties are not the first to pilot vote-by-mobile options. Utah County, Utah used the mobile voting option in a municipal primary that took place last August.

Utah County Clerk/Auditor Amelia Powers Gardner, who also sits on NACo's Telecommunications and Technology Steering Committee, said out of the 58 people who were eligible to vote using their smartphones, 22 people cast their ballot using the Voatz app — a 38 percent voter turnout, which was significantly higher than the 24-25 percent voter turnout for the general population.

"We ended up having a higher voter turnout with our registered UOCAVA voters than we did with our citizens and I'm guessing it's mostly due to the ease of using the app," Powers Gardner said.

She decided to pursue the mobile voting technology to increase efficiency and confidence in the election process. Tusk Philanthropies funded the pilot project which al-

See MOBILE page 3

SNAP/STATS

NOVEMBER IS 'ADOPT A SENIOR PET' MONTH.



Number of households with pets: 65 percent
Senior animals: Fastest-growing pet population
Pets adopted from shelters: 3.2 million a year
Animals entering a shelter: 6.6 million a year
Americans spend: \$72 billion on pets annually

Source: American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

CountyNews

President
Mary Ann Borgeson
Publisher
Matthew Chase
Chief Public Affairs Officer
Brian Namey

Editor and Senior Writer
Mary Ann Barton
Digital Editor and Senior Writer
Charlie Ban
Staff Writer
Rachel Looker
Design Director
Leon Lawrence III

ADVERTISING STAFF
Job Market/Classifieds representative
National Accounts representative
Mary Ann Barton
202.942.4223
FAX 866.752.1573

Published biweekly except August by:
National Association of Counties
Research Foundation, Inc.
660 N. Capitol Street, N.W. STE. 400,
Washington, D.C. 20001
202.393.6226 | FAX 866.752.1573
E-mail cnews@naco.org
Online address www.countynews.org

The appearance of paid advertisements in County News in no way implies support or endorsement by the National Association of Counties for any of the products, services or messages advertised. Periodicals postage paid at Washington D.C. and other offices.

Mail subscriptions are \$100 per year for non-members. \$60 per year for non-members purchasing multiple copies. Educational institution rate, \$50 per year. Member county supplemental subscriptions are \$20 each. Send payment with order and address changes to NACo, 660 N. Capitol Street, N.W. STE. 400, Washington, D.C. 20001.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to County News, 660 N. Capitol Street, N.W. STE. 400, Washington, D.C. 20001

(USPS 704-620) n (ISSN: 0744-9798)
© National Association of Counties
Research Foundation, Inc.



We are committed to getting County News on your desktop ASAP. Send your address corrections to cnews@naco.org.

From MOBILE page 2

lowed the county to use the Voatz app.

The mobile voting in August “ran very smoothly,” Powers Gardner said. “Every person who was eligible and wanted to vote with the app was able to.”

Utah County completed an audit with the National Cybersecurity Center after the election and opened it up to the public to include 10 citizen auditors. The county streamed the audit live on Facebook so no one could question if the footage was edited.

“Every single vote was verified as being true and counted as cast. It was completely clean,” Powers Gardner said.

For the upcoming election in November 2019, Utah County will become the first jurisdiction in the country to expand the vote-by-mobile option to disabled voters.

“If we can add the Voatz app to a device that [disabled voters] already learned and that’s already set for their unique needs and the ability to exercise their right to vote in a way that they feel comfortable with and that allows them independence, then I think they have that right,” Powers Gardner said.

She said they decided to pilot the Voatz app in Utah County because she believes it adds a level of security from the current UOCAVA voting methods of snail mail or email. The vote-by-mobile option is not dependent on waiting for mail to arrive on time and not reliant on insecure technology that is used when ballots are cast via emails.

“People nowadays do most of their banking online and if you’re trusting your money and your fortune online, then those same people want to be able to vote on their mobile device as well,” Powers Gardner said.

In Jackson County, after the November election, the county will complete audits to determine that there was no tampering in the system.

“I believe it is [secure] and again that’s why we do pilots.

It’s baby steps. It’s small steps forward,” Walker said.

The upcoming Jackson County election is a county-wide, non-federal, special election. The county sent 389 letters to eligible individuals who could vote using their smartphones. Umatilla County sent information to 63 eligible UOCAVA voters.

In Umatilla County, Elections Manager Kim Lindell said the pilot program for the vote-by-mobile option will gauge if Umatilla County voters want a mobile option.

“I think in the interest of voter turnout we’re going to have to start working on this and revising it and making it more and more secure and I think eventually it will be the way we go,” Lindell said.

West Virginia was the first state to offer mobile voting for UOCAVA members in a primary election followed by a mobile voting pilot in the City and County of Denver.

According to a release from West Virginia Secretary of State Mac Warner’s office, there was activity detected that may have been an attempt to gain access to the system during the state’s mobile voting pilot in 2018. The attempt was unsuccessful.

“Every safeguard designed for the system was very successful and worked as designed: to gain as much information as possible and protect the sanctity of the voters’ identities and ballots,” Warner said.

“Although the details of the investigation cannot be disclosed, we can say that no votes were altered, impacted, viewed or in any way tampered with.”

Powers Gardner says a possible hacking attempt does not question her confidence in the system.

“It’s quite the opposite,” she said. “Someone was trying to hack the system, they detected it, they blocked that person and turned the information to the FBI and the FBI confirmed that the person was not even close to hacking the election. To me, that’s fantastic that it was detected and stopped.” **CN**

Commissioner pines for pins

From PINS page 1

a lot of fabulous looking pins out there, it’s been fun. I figured I would tie that to my leaving. It might take me a year or two after I leave to get them all.”

Those interactions that would lead to pin exchanges have been central to his time with NACo, which has spanned various committee memberships, including chairmanship of the Transportation Steering Committee.

“I’ve been chairman of every steering committee there is in transportation,” he said. “That’s been my interest since Day One.”

Healy is a real estate attorney who was appointed to the DuPage County Board in 1998 and elected outright in 2000. Between earning an undergraduate degree in urban planning and starting law school, he worked for the Illinois Secretary of State. While with NACo, he has also been a member of the Defined Contribution and Retirement Advisory Committee, Resilient Counties Advisory Board, NACo Board of Directors, Membership Standing Committee and Large Urban County Caucus.

“It’s a place where county officials can get together to get things done,” he said. One of Healy’s proudest accomplishments is the increased cooperation between counties and freight railroad operators.

“A few decades ago, there was no relationship,” he said. “Over the last 10 years, the two sides have gotten incredibly close and work together for their shared benefit. Freight is big in my county,” which is due west of Chicago’s Cook County.

“If a car is derailed or has a fire, the fire chiefs and disaster response personnel can zoom in with a drone to see that number of the rail car and the cars near it, to see exactly what they’ll be dealing with when they try to put it out,” Healy said.

That information shows up in a database and smartphone app available to first respond-



DuPage County, Ill. Commissioner Jim Healy displays some of the lapel pins he has collected. Photo courtesy of Jim Healy

ers that allows them to look up the contents of rail cars for the purpose of emergency response planning.

“We know what’s in the cars around it in case the fire spreads. It’s all important information for counties to know because hazardous materials come through on trains all the time.

“It’s the culmination of a lot of relationship-building between the industry and NACo that has paid off for counties and shown what we’re capable of doing when we work together,” Healy noted.

“It’s an ability to do something really powerful,” he said. “It’s not until you’re at a Legislative Conference, sitting in those committees and going through the details that you see how we can affect change like this for all counties. Knowing that work goes somewhere motivates you.”

Healy’s NACo involvement has helped him on the state level. DuPage County is heavily urbanized, but friendships he made with NACo members helped him get to know rural counties’ challenges.

“My family spent four days at (former Commissioner) Jamie Dockett’s ranch in Meagher County, Mont. and I learned more in those four days about rural county challenges than I can count,” he said. “Her county is five times the size of DuPage,

but I have more people living in my subdivision.

“Now when I work with counties in Illinois with 20,000 people, I feel like I understand them a lot better.”

Healy also put his stamp on the Transportation Steering Committee. While serving as chairman, he allowed members from the National Association of County Engineers to serve on the committee and he facilitated bonding among committee members. He would encourage them to show up for conferences a day early for a dinner followed by karaoke singing.

“There are times we took over bars,” he said. “We had about 250 people in Kansas City, so many that people had to hang out on the sidewalk. It was wall-to-wall NACo people. Joan Murphy (Murphy, who died in 2016, served on the NACo Transportation Committee and was a Cook County Board member) sang, and she has a beautiful voice, so (former NACo associate legislative director) Bob Fogel and I got up to show people you could do it even if you couldn’t sing to save your life.”

Had Healy known he was going to start collecting pins, he would have taken those opportunities to get started. In lieu of that, counties may send their pins to: Jim Healy 835 McClintock Drive, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. **CN**

County libraries respond to e-book embargo

by Rachel Looker
staff writer

County libraries across the country are taking a stance against Macmillan Publishers' new policy when it comes to purchasing e-books.

The publishing company, one of the "big five" publishers, announced that starting Nov. 1, libraries can only purchase one copy of a newly released e-book and cannot purchase additional copies until eight weeks after its publication. The new policy applies only to e-books.

Macmillan CEO John Sargent said in a letter addressed to Macmillan authors that 45 percent of e-book reads are being borrowed for free from libraries.

With the new policy, the cost of a single copy of a newly released e-book will drop from the average price of \$60 to \$30, an action made by Macmillan in response to libraries' requests for lower prices.

"Our new terms are designed to protect the value of your books during their first format publication. But they also ensure that the mission of libraries is supported," Sargent said in the letter. "They honor the libraries' archival mandate and they reduce the cost and administrative burden associated with e-book lending. We are trying to address the concerns of all parties."

The American Library Association (ALA) denounced Macmillan's new policy and urged Macmillan to cancel the eight-week embargo.

In King County, Wash., the King County Library System (KCLS) decided to stop purchasing newly released e-books from Macmillan Publishers in response to the policy.

"It was a very reluctant decision made over many, many months," said King County Library Executive Director Lisa Rosenblum.

The county has a "holds to copy" ratio of 5-to-1, meaning for every five holds on a book or e-book, the library purchases one copy to ensure the wait time does not exceed three months.



The King County Library System will not be purchasing newly released e-books from Macmillan Publishers in response to their policy preventing libraries from purchasing more than one copy of newly released e-books for eight weeks. Photos courtesy King County Library System

When it comes to e-books, only one e-book can be loaned out to one user at a time.

"What it would mean is we'd have a title from Macmillan, we'd get one copy for 1.4 million people and only one copy could go out for three weeks," she said. "Our holds would stack to the point where we could have 1,000 or 2,000 holds for one book."

The library system has 50 libraries, serves more than one million residents and has been the top digital-circulating library in the country. Last year, patrons downloaded nearly five million e-books and audio-books.

"We offer digital equity," Rosenblum said. "We don't care if you're rich or poor. We offer the same equitable access to bestsellers."

She described how many people who read e-books are on fixed incomes or can't physically visit a library to check out paper copies of books.

"Macmillan's new model would in fact not allow them to have copies of books unless they would be willing to buy them and we don't believe that," Rosenblum said. "We don't believe people should have to buy books if they're willing to wait

for them."

She said libraries have to pay costs for e-books that are often four to five times higher than what the general public pays. Additionally, e-books are often metered, which means after a certain number of checkouts, the library has to re-purchase the e-book again.

"We're not getting away with anything," she said. "We're paying fair market price and I know we're paying more than the consumer does."

King County Library System will continue to purchase e-books from Macmillan if they are not embargoed, she said, and will continue purchasing physical books from the publisher.

In Sonoma County, Calif., Jaime Anderson, director of Collection Services for the Sonoma County Library, said the library has decided to wait until the seventh week of the embargo until they purchase a newly released e-book from Macmillan.

"We've decided to wait until week seven which isn't going to make people happy either because then it's going to look like we don't have that e-book title when it is available and out there in the world and the retail market," Anderson said.



She said the county initially purchases between 12 and 15 copies of an e-book to maintain their 4-to-1 hold ratio. In the last fiscal year, the Sonoma County library system had 277,000 e-book checkouts, which account for 10 percent of the library's circulation.

"If a new title comes out and you've got the money to buy it for yourself, that's great," said Sonoma County Library Director Ann Hammond. "But if you depend on your public library and the library doesn't have that title, I think that's an issue of fairness there."

Additionally, the Sonoma County Library Commission passed a resolution denouncing Macmillan's new policy, according to Reece Foxen, who chairs the Sonoma County Library Commission.

"We just felt Macmillan was looking more at the bottom line and money rather than community and people and actually failing to consider one of their major patrons which are libraries across the country," Foxen said.

The American Library Association has created a petition at ebooksforall.org for those who oppose Macmillan's new policy. As of last week, more than 130,000 had signed the petition.

"We hope Macmillan will change their mind. We would love to go back to buying bestsellers but until they do, I really feel we have to take a stand," Rosenblum said. "We have to push back and not be dictated by publishers when we feel like we're paying more than a fair price for the products they produce." **CN**

RURAL COUNTY MEMBERS TALK 2020 CENSUS AT RAC

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Although the census is carried out by the federal government, counties are critical partners in making sure every citizen is counted. In rural counties, where roughly 70 percent of the hard-to-count population lives, that is particularly true. Convincing as many of them as a possible to participate in the census is necessary for counties to maximize their share of federal funding and congressional representation.

In advance of the 2020 census, members of NACo's Rural Action Caucus spent part of the 2019 summit in Essex County, N.Y., dubbed "Bridging the Economic Divide," brainstorming how to best carry the 2020 census effort across the finish line. Attendees discussed subject areas that would affect or be affected by the census and how they could mobilize their counties to maximize responses.

"Most people trust their local leaders more than they trust their state leaders and even more than their national leaders, so a lot falls on your local leaders," said Cooke County,

Texas Judge Jason Brinkley, who added that participation by county leaders was not only necessary but ideal for drawing out census responses.

"We have to focus on the personal connections," he said. "We should find institutions they trust and use them to disseminate information about the census."

He also warned that that trust in local leaders was not unconditional and ensuring that information was accurate before being communicated to the public was crucial. Out of the right mouths, the funding argument could be persuasive, especially when the public's return on their taxes was at hand.

"If every citizen is worth \$3,000 in federal funding each year, and a 1 percent undercount for a county of 40,000 people is 400 people, over a decade, that's \$12 million," he said. "If that number gets out there, and we explain that it's a civic duty to fill this out, getting that information out is vital."

Skagit County, Wash. Commissioner Ken Dahlsted agreed that trust was necessary to getting residents on board. He also suggested mobilizing a com-



Coos County, Ore. Commissioner Melissa Cribbins makes a point; Andres Saavedra (LISC) is pictured at left. Photo by Charlie Ban

munity to do the best job possible could be a fun challenge, pitting them against neighboring counties.

"If you don't count them, somebody else is going to get your money," he said.

He also said that the connections and relationships counties make in establishing complete count committees to maximize census response could be maintained between each census and be an avenue for great civic engagement in non-census years.

Coconino County, Ariz. Supervisor Lena Fowler said that although counties typically must spend their own money on census outreach, it's better

to think of it as in investment.

"We can look at it as an unfunded mandate, but in the end how much money we get depends on how well we get people in our counties counted," she said.

She pointed out challenges that were specific to the tribal population, including multi-generational housing situations, languages that are not included in census translations and isolated tribes who straddle county and state lines.

Although the Census Bureau is not cutting back on accepting mail, telephone and in-person responses, rural county officials continue to view the bureau's prioritization of online

responses with skepticism, given their spotty internet access.

"There are a lot of older people who still look at computers with suspicion, even when their grandchildren order groceries online," she said.

Coos County, Ore. Commissioner Melissa Cribbins said that several factors might influence someone to not respond to the census. They included immigration status, privacy concerns, general apathy and distrust of the government.

"Ironically, some of the individuals who choose not to participate in the census are the ones who rely on assistance programs the most, including Medicaid, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food stamps) and Section 8 programs," she said.

She suggested counties leverage the trust those citizens have in other entities like churches, social service providers and other non-governmental organizations.

"We need to educate individuals on the need for their participation in the census and the relationship with federally funded programs that benefit from," she said. **CN**

Counties losing millennials, new business due to lack of internet

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

In a modern economy, internet connectivity is like oxygen. Without it, ideas that could catch fire are extinguished before they can spread.

Members of NACo's Rural Action Caucus, many of whom have spotty internet access and can speak from experience, discussed the limitations broadband access has on their economic vitality.

Vance Stuehrenberg, a Blue Earth County, Minn. commissioner, pointed out that for some, even thinking about internet service was a luxury.

"There are parts of northern Minnesota where they don't even have phone service," he



Ryan Streeter, Department of Homeland Security
Photo by Charlie Ban

said during the RAC Summit Oct. 11-12 in Essex County, N.Y.

"It's not just for traditional business, either," he noted. "Farmers, these days, their equipment is internet-based, and they have to be able to download fertilizer data and

seed data if the equipment is going to work as it's intended."

Lack of broadband access can be a scarlet letter for a community.

"New businesses, whenever they come to town, they ask 'What is your broadband access, what is your internet speed?'" said Cooke County, Texas Judge Jason Brinkley. "If that is not sufficient, they're probably going to look elsewhere."

And it's not just business.

"Whenever 20-somethings and 30-somethings are looking to come home and start a family, if you don't have internet access, they might move somewhere else, maybe a small town that does have internet," Brinkley said.

Connectivity can have a major impact on public safety and justice. In some places, even within buildings, sheriffs' deputies can't reach dispatch centers.

In Coos County, Ore., when a timber patrol deputy didn't return home at the end of a shift, a search and rescue operation found him, deceased, 12 hours later.

"We have an unincorporated area 15 miles away from anywhere else and a snowstorm knocked out their communications for a week," Coos County Commissioner Melissa Cribbins said. "There are a lot of times our security cameras can't connect in our own house."

She said just starting to get

connected is a challenge for some rural counties, with the cost of expanding services serving as an albatross.

"It's difficult to get them to come to the table," she said. "It's hard to find a good point of contact in telecom companies."

Though federal legislation to the same end has not moved, 11 states have established "dig once" policies for state road projects.

That policy requires road reconstruction to include placement of a conduit through which fiber optic cables can be run.

"We have a dig once policy in Carver County," said Carver County, Minn. Commissioner Randy Maluchnik. "It's just common sense." **CN**

Fork in the river challenges county's economic future

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Giles County, Va.'s defining characteristic is the New River, which flows for 37 miles through this part of southwest Virginia. It comes in and goes out, and so too do the county's residents, to get to work. The county is a cooperative part of the New River Valley, which includes counties in Virginia and southern West Virginia that work together and share the benefits, but at times, Giles County does have to look out for itself.

As it grapples with an aging population, questions turn to what this county wants to be and do. It has been a bedroom community, home to the cast and crew of "Dirty Dancing" in the 1980s and lately, a conduit through which goods, services and people pass. There's a limestone mine and plenty of outdoor tourism opportunities. But the county remains at a developmental crossroads.

"We have a large commuter population, they're going to Radford, Blacksburg or Christiansburg," said Cora Gnegy, the county's tourism marketing director. The neighboring city of Blacksburg is home to Virginia Tech and Radford University is in Pulaski County, to the south, both heavyweight employers. "At lunchtime in Pearisburg (the county seat), it's not hard to get a table at a restaurant because they aren't bustling, the jobs just aren't here."

Part of that is because of geography and topography.

Virginia's Mountain Playground is just that — mountainous. Add in that one-third of the county is part of the Jefferson National Forest, and that limits industrial development space.

"We're limited with large spaces that could be developed for sites," Gnegy said.

And although the county's population has remained at 16,000 - 17,000 residents for the last 60 years, it's a changing demographic.

"We have a stable population

but while our numbers have stayed the same, we're much older, so our average age is above 60," Gnegy said. "While we're still around 16,000 people, we've continuously gotten older, and that changes your workforce dramatically."

Giles County is left in flux, trying to figure out what economic growth to pursue and how best to prepare a workforce for those as-of-yet undetermined industries. Onward NRV, the New River Valley's economic development organization, has targeted advanced manufacturing, food processing and agribusiness, information technology and unmanned systems as primary industries it sees flourishing in the region, but Giles County remains less suited for many of those than others in the region.

"Do we keep pushing outdoor recreation, with the amenities and the assets that we have and develop around those? Or do we start building buildings and recruiting, doing things like more traditional economic development?" Gnegy said.

The county has capitalized on

what it has with the New River, maintaining 13 boat landings throughout the county.

Giles County sees opportunities for outdoor recreation gear manufacturers and attractions. The county has a few providers, but they are somewhat limited

"We have a stable population, but while our numbers have stayed the same, we're getting much older."

-Cora Gnegy

by capacity, so recruiting more outfitters, and a homegrown provider for equipment, is high on the county's list of priorities.

"Say you have a family reunion and want to go for a big bike ride," Gnegy said. "You could go to our outfitter but then you might only have enough bikes for half of your people. So, what do you do then? Go to Wal Mart and buy some bikes?"

Giles County's strategy has been to grow from within, encouraging entrepreneurship from residents and their friends.

"What I love about Giles is that there's an idea and it usually stems from a current business owner or resident that has been affected by it," Gnegy said. "We like to support them with the resources or the knowledge that we can as the county to build grassroots economic development."

A new resort along the river came from a connection the owner of the county's primary outdoors outfitter had with a friend looking for a place to build.

"That wasn't us out there recruiting at trade shows, that's just fostering opportunities," Gnegy said. "We supported them and that turned into an almost \$3 million investment in the county."

Regardless of what industries develop in Giles County, qualified workers will have to be a part of it. That's where the county's ACCE program — Access to Community College Education — comes in. The pro-

gram, now in its seventh year, covers two years of tuition at New River Community College. Funding, nearly \$900,000 over seven years, has come from the Muddy ACCE Race, a 5k obstacle race, heavy on mud. More than 3,000 students, one-third of Giles County's high school graduates over that time, have participated in the program.

"We're seeing 26 percent of kids going on to post-secondary education who weren't before," Gnegy said. "Even more students are aware that there's more out there for them if they want to take advantage of it."

By exposing Giles County students to more opportunities, the county may be able to anticipate what its best course forward is, again, by relying on those who know it best.

"There's an underlying feeling here that we don't have to be what we've always been, which has been very interesting," Gnegy said.

"Instead of working on equipment for coal, we're working on equipment for agriculture, and that could be a future in solar farming, or hydroponics." **CN**



Muddy ACCE Race participants help each other, and thanks to their entry fees, Giles County, Va. students. Photo by Alisa Moody for Giles County Tourism

County offers virtual ER service to Medicaid recipients



The ER Anywhere platform is part of a public-private partnership with United Concierge Medicine, Rensselaer County and CDPHP, a local insurance provider. Photo courtesy Rensselaer County

by **Rachel Looker**
staff writer

In Rensselaer County, N.Y., some Medicaid recipients who need medical assistance can now contact emergency medical providers to receive round-the-clock care from the comfort of their living rooms.

ER Anywhere is an online platform that connects patients to emergency medical providers 24/7 through phones, tablets or computers.

New York Medicaid reimburses live video telemedicine when used to deliver medically necessary care for patients in eligible locations, which includes a patient's home.

Rensselaer County Executive Steve McLaughlin said the ER Anywhere system is designed to provide faster service than what some patients may receive in a hospital emergency room (ER), while also cutting costs for the county.

Nationwide, local government contributes about \$28 billion to the non-federal share of Medicaid.

McLaughlin said the idea to implement the ER Anywhere system began when he had lunch with a mutual friend who introduced him to Keith Algozzine, CEO and co-founder of United Concierge Medicine. United Concierge Medicine is a virtual medical service that provides technology and a virtual emergency medical team

across the country, Algozzine said. During the lunch, McLaughlin discussed ways to save money on "medicabs," which serve as medical transports. Algozzine shared information about ER Anywhere, and the conversation evolved to "Why don't we start talking about offering this to our Medicaid recipients?" McLaughlin said.

ER Anywhere launched in the county on Oct. 3 as part of a public-private partnership with United Concierge Medicine, Rensselaer County and CDPHP, a local insurance provider. The ER Anywhere platform is CDPHP's product, Algozzine said, which United Concierge Medicine created for the insurance company and the county. Rensselaer County is not paying for the service.

"It's being offered by CDPHP and United Concierge because they are the providers. If we incur less costs, then they incur less costs," McLaughlin said.

Algozzine said this is the first time a county is combining the ER Anywhere service with county 911 services, emergency medical services (EMS) and an insurance company.

He views the virtual emergency room system as "reverse engineering" the standard process for when a person calls 911 and is transported in an ambulance to an emergency room in a hospital.

"Instead of ending with the

ER expertise in the hospital, which is the most expensive place to provide that care, we want it to start with the ER expertise," Algozzine said.

The app allows Medicaid patients with CDPHP access to emergency room doctors 24/7, 365 days per year. Users may download the app on their smart phone or tablet, use a web browser or make a traditional phone call to reach a virtual emergency medical team and can share photos or videos, video chat face-to-face or even text with emergency room doctors.

Through the app, doctors can write prescriptions, order labs or x-rays and make referrals, Algozzine said. He added that with the emergency medical expertise, doctors can triage patients and dispatch the county's EMS if it is determined to be a true emergency or more assessment is needed. If an ambulance is dispatched to a patient's home, emergency room doctors will remain on the line with patients until the ambulance arrives.

One of the most exciting things about the platform and the partnership, according to Algozzine, is even if a patient calls 911 and does not use the ER Anywhere platform, dispatchers can contact ER Anywhere doctors who can intervene when EMS arrives at a patient's home and triage the patient to see if they can be

treated at their home instead of at the hospital.

"Even if you don't [call the virtual ER], we can still get to you because of the ambulance at the county level," he said. "We're able to identify the patient and send an ambulance specifically with the goal of connecting with us and determining if they truly need to go to the hospital or not."

Currently, the county is training ambulance crews and fire departments on the new system and using advertising to inform Medicaid recipients that the ER Anywhere option exists.

"Instead of dialing 911, waiting for the ambulance to show up, going down there and potentially waiting in a very, very crowded ER, within seconds they're on the phone face-to-face with an ER doctor," McLaughlin said.

He said the ER Anywhere platform has the potential to save billions of dollars in the Medicaid system that are spent on doctor's visits, Medicab transports to take recipients to and from appointments and ambulance runs. In Rensselaer County, Medicaid bills are \$34 million per year, according to McLaughlin.

"We have a Medicaid cap of \$34 million. We're paying that regardless right now so what we're trying to do is hopefully in the future be able to lower

See ER APP page 14



HAMILTON COUNTY,
IOWA

The current seal in Hamilton County, Iowa is a replication of the county's original seal which dates back to the early 1860s. County supervisors discovered the original seal when flipping through papers in old minute books where the original seal was placed on some of the pages. In 2007, for the county's 150th anniversary, an updated version of the original seal was created and has been used since.

For the county's 150th anniversary, county officials created a four-foot wooden version of the seal that hangs in the courthouse and is surrounded by historical photos.



Hamilton County's seal, based off the original seal, features a moldboard plow, plowing dirt with a farm field in the background. The plow and field represent the strong agricultural background in the county.

The seal includes scales of justice, which relate to the county courthouse.

The date of 1857 is when the county was formed.

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

NACo County Explorer releases new statistics on elections

by **Stacy Nakintu**

It's election season across the nation, with counties administering and funding elections at the local level, including overseeing polling places and coordinating poll workers for state and local elections.


Looking back, during the 2018 general elections, more than 193 million people were registered and eligible to vote within jurisdictions where counties played a significant

role in election administration.

Between the 2016 and 2018 general elections, county jurisdictions processed more than 73 million registration forms.

More than 109 million voters in the 2018 general elections cast their ballots within jurisdictions where counties play a major role in coordinating elections, which is nearly 91 percent of voters nationwide. Counties achieved this notable undertaking by overseeing more than 151,000 polling

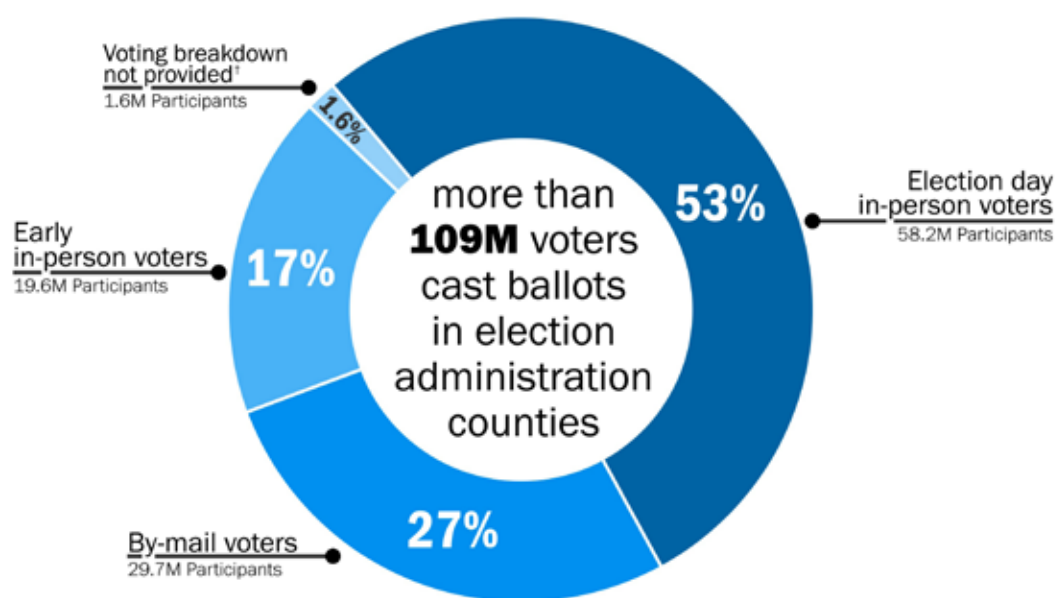
places and organizing more than 593,000 poll workers during Election Day.

To view your county numbers associated with this topic, visit NACo's County Explorer at explorer.naco.org. 

Stacy Nakintu is a research and data analyst in NACo's County Innovations Lab. Ricardo Aguilar, data analyst and developer and Teryn Zmuda, director of research and data, contributed to this report.

COUNTY ROLE IN ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

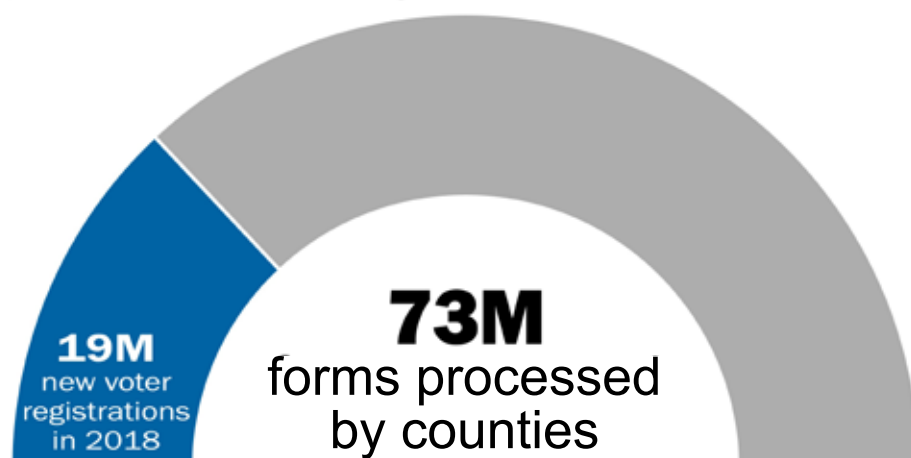
More than **109 million** voters in the 2018 general elections cast their ballots within jurisdictions where counties play a major role in coordinating elections – this is nearly **91 percent** of voters



Source: NACo analysis of the Election Administration and Voting Survey, 2018 - U.S. Election Assistance Commission

COUNTY ROLE IN VOTER REGISTRATIONS

Between the 2016 and 2018 general elections, county jurisdictions processed over **73 million** registration forms.

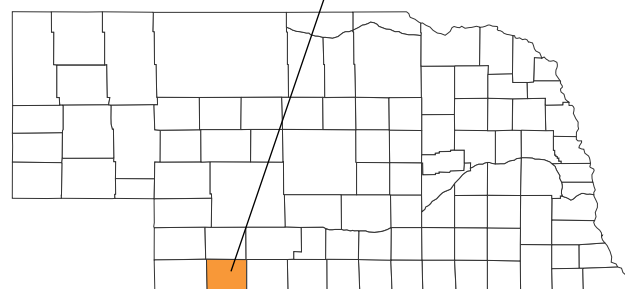


Source: NACo analysis of the Election Administration and Voting Survey, 2018 - U.S. Election Assistance Commission

Hire Quality Staff
@ Jobs Online
www.naco.org/jobsonline

**GET TO
KNOW...**

**Hitchcock
County, Neb.**

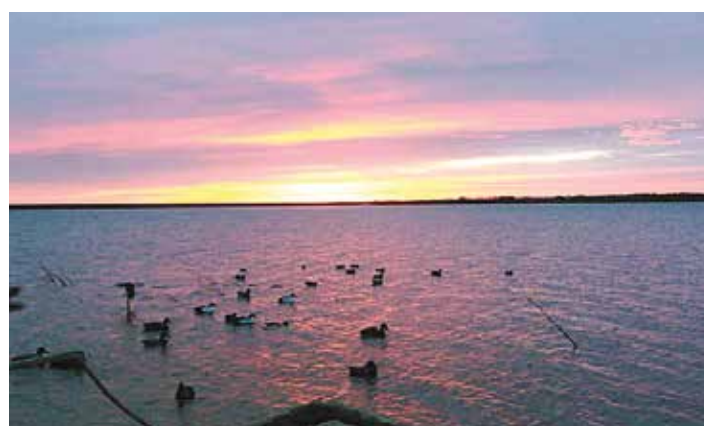


Welcome, Hitchcock County, Neb.

Hitchcock County is located in southwestern Nebraska and was formed in 1873. The 710-square-mile county has a population of around 2,900 and was named after Nebraska Sen. Phineas Warren Hitchcock. **Sioux Indians originally inhabited the area and used the land for buffalo hunting.**

When U.S. soldiers defeated the Sioux, cattle owners came to the area and the county became part of the Texas-Ogallala Cattle Trail. The Burlington and Missouri River Railroad extended its line through the area, bringing more people to the county. Settlers established towns including the current county seat of Trenton, named after Trenton, N.J.

The nearly 9,000-acre Swanson Reservoir State Recreation Area, located in the middle of the county, has fishing, boating, camping and hunting for residents and visitors.



BRIGHT IDEAS | POLK COUNTY, FLA.

Transition Program Reduces Recidivism Rates

PROBLEM:

Mentally ill inmates experience recidivism and lose access to psychotropic medications.

SOLUTION:

Provide support to inmates by connecting them to behavioral health providers and providing them with medications.

by Rachel Looker
staff writer

“The stars aligned” for collaborations among departments and agencies that led to the creation of a jail transition program in Polk County, Fla., Community Health Care Planner Cathy Hatch said.

The Helping HANDS program is for individuals with mental illness who are transitioning out of the local county jail and back into the community. “HANDS” stands for healthcare, access, navigation, delivery and support.

After Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd became aware of mentally ill individuals repeatedly cycling in and out of jail, his office and the county health and human service division formed a partnership to try to lower recidivism rates. Data revealed that 12 percent of inmates receive medications for mental health issues in jail and stop taking those medications when they are released.

While the county was researching possible jail transition programs, Polk County Fire Rescue was simultaneously researching a community paramedicine program that uses paramedics in proactive roles rather than reactive roles.

“Rather than rushing to 911 calls all the time, they [community paramedics] are out in the community doing a pro-active, more preventative type service,” Hatch said.



The individuals and agencies that collaborate as part of the Helping HANDS program attend community training. Photo courtesy Polk County

The two projects on jail transition and community paramedicine joined together to create the Helping HANDS program. In 2016, Polk County voted to continue a half-cent sales tax that provides health care for indigent citizens and generates \$46 million annually. The program is funded through this tax.

“We came together and realized we could use the community paramedic idea paired with the jail transition idea to come up with a plan for our people,” Hatch said.

The goal of the program is to identify mentally ill inmates who experience recidivism and connect them to behavioral health providers and ensure they have access to medication. Polk County staff attended NACo’s Stepping Up webinars where they identified the Assess, Plan, Identify and Coordinate model for jail diversion.

Eligible participants of the Helping HANDS program must be Polk County residents, below 200 percent of the federal poverty line, have had two or more arrests in the past 12 months and must be prescribed and taking psychotropic medications in jail.

“We realized we could use the community paramedic idea paired with the jail transition idea to come up with a plan for our people.”

The Helping HANDS program uses a data exchange between the jail and the Central Florida Behavioral Health Network to produce a list of potential clients who meet the eligibility requirements for the program.

Hatch said the county holds weekly staff meetings with up to nine different agencies to discuss who would be good candidates for the program. When a potential client’s name is called, information is shared from each agency, she said.

If the clients are accepted, a recovery peer specialist, who is an individual who has overcome their own mental health or substance abuse diagnosis, and a community paramedic are assigned to visit the client in jail to explain the program. The program is voluntary and if the client agrees, they are engaged in the program for the

remaining period of their incarceration.

Candidates who are eligible may also receive an email about joining the program through the jail kiosk system. Potential clients can sign the online form or fill out a physical form with a healthcare provider in the jail, Hatch said.

When the client is released, the community paramedic picks them up and takes them home while also picking up a 30-day supply of their psychotropic medications purchased from the jail pharmacy. The funds from the half-cents sales tax help pay for the medications needed, since inmates lose their Medicaid benefits upon entering jail.

“We are notified when someone is being released and we can actually ask the jail to put a ‘helping HANDS’ hold on that individual so they don’t release them until we can get there and pick them up,” Hatch said.

The community paramedic meets with the client the first week they are back in the community, performs a health assessment, explains their medication and assesses their home. The peer specialist and community paramedic work

to ensure the client is connected to a local behavioral health provider within 30 days after they are released.

After six to eight weeks, the program ends, but the peer specialist may stay in contact for support.

The first group of clients was enrolled in the program in June 2018. During this first year, Hatch said some clients needed medications beyond psychotropic medications to meet other health needs.

“This year, we’re buying all the medication they’re taking in jail no matter what it is as long as it’s under \$500,” Hatch said.

When looking at the three months before the program and the three months after the program for a small group of 36 individuals from May 2018 to March 2019, clients had an 89 percent reduction in the number of jail days, a 66 percent reduction in the number of 911 EMS calls and an 88 percent reduction in hospital emergency room utilization, Hatch said.

“We know that while they’re in the program the arrest rate is really low,” she said. “Once

WORD SEARCH

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, Fla.
Created by: Mary Ann Barton

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

ARCHITECTURE:

The county is home to the world's largest collection of art deco architecture.

ATLANTIC:

The county is located on the Atlantic Coast.

BEACHES:

The county's beaches are located in four parks.

BURGER:

The first Burger King opened in Miami, in 1954.

COPPERTONE:

The suntan lotion was invented in 1944 by a Miami pharmacist.

COURTHOUSE:

The county courthouse, a Classical Revival architectural style, was constructed between 1925-28 and is in use today.

DADE:

Created in 1836 and named after Francis L. Dade, a major in the Second Seminole War, the county was just called "Dade County" up until 1997.

EVERGLADES:

Located in the western half of the county, the national park makes up one of the nation's most extensive wilderness preserves.

NATIVE:

Miami gets its name from native tribes, Mayaimi, that lived in the area from the 1600s to 1700s.

POPULATION:

The county's population is about 2.75 million.

PORT:

The county is home to 35 shipping lines that sail to 100 countries.

SCUBA:

Scuba divers can see more than 50 shipwrecks when diving offshore.

SEAT:

The county seat moved from Juno to Indian Key to Miami.

TEMPERATURES:

The county's winter temperatures range between 74-63 degrees.

TOURISM:

Visitors account for 60 percent of the county's economy.

SEAT:

The county seat moved from Juno to Indian Key to Miami.

ON THE MOVE

NACO STAFF

- Associate Legislative Director **Daria Daniel** gave a legislative update at the National Association for County Community Economic Development Conference, held Oct. 13-16 in Pima County, Ariz.
- Associate Program Director **Nass-tassia Walsh** attended the Rural Criminal Justice Summit, held Oct. 17-18 in Dallas County, Texas.
- Executive Director **Matt Chase**, NACo FSC Executive Chairman **Bill Jasien**, NACo FSC Managing Director **Paul Terragno**, Chief Technology Officer **Rita Reynolds**, Executive Assistant **Jenny Hilscher**, Director of Strategic Relations **Jack Peterson** and Associate Legislative Director **Eryn Hurley** attended the NCCAE Annual Conference, held Oct. 21-25 in Maui County, Hawaii.
- Associate Program Director **Rashida Brown** attended the American Public Human Services Association Leadership retreat, held Oct. 25 in Suffolk County, Mass.


Daniel


Walsh


Brown

2020 NACo
LEGISLATIVE
CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY
29
THROUGH
MARCH
4
2020

Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.



JUST ANNOUNCED!

GENERAL COLIN POWELL

Former U.S. Secretary of State
Former Chairman of the
Joint Chiefs of Staff

naco.org/Leg

REGISTRATION
IS NOW OPEN!

NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION
of COUNTIES

NACo

SPONSORED CONTENT

How Counties Can Defend Against Cyber Threats with Network Monitoring

The world of network monitoring can seem a bit intimidating – especially for county governments. With limited resources and multiplying cybersecurity threats, government IT professionals need tools they can trust.



Albert
CIS Network Monitoring

There are a variety of solutions on the market offering to detect, alert, and mitigate against threats to local IT infrastructure. Albert is a passive IDS (Intrusion Detection System) and low-cost network monitoring service from Center for Internet Security, Inc.® (CIS). Albert Network Monitoring uses threat signatures to detect malicious activity such as policy violations or unauthorized access.

A passive IDS doesn't correct or modify functions on its own; instead, it monitors and analyzes network traffic activity. As packets travel across the network, Albert compares network traffic to known malicious activity. If a threat such as ransomware is detected, your organization is notified in less than six minutes so any potential vulnerabilities or compromises can be addressed.

THREAT SIGNATURES

Albert compares inspected network traffic against tens of thousands of threat signatures, and then sends alerts back to the CIS 24x7 Security Operations Center (SOC) for analysis when there is a match. For example, one month of Albert Network Monitoring for counties revealed multiple threat types including use of unauthorized applications, malspam, and outdated software vulnerabilities.

In addition to using known signatures, CIS develops custom threat signatures specific to U.S. State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) governments. These are based on advanced threat analysis, our CERT forensic cases, as well as member submitted and third-party threat data. Signatures are updated and distributed to every Albert sensor to ensure organizations receive the latest security monitoring.

THE THREAT DETECTION PROCESS

When a potential threat is identified, Albert generates an alert which is sent to the 24x7 SOC at CIS. A SOC analyst

reviews and validates the alert for malicious activity and notifies the affected organization if it is indeed malicious. SOC analysts are cybersecurity experts skilled in threat detection and best practices for remediation.

Here's how the process works:



Event notifications from the SOC include:

- System(s) affected
- Identified issue(s)
- Mitigation recommendations
- Traffic associated with the event

24X7 ASSISTANCE, UPDATES, AND MORE

The SOC has a 24x7 support hotline. Organizations using Albert also receive a monthly report which includes details about actionable alerts, ticket information, a review of the volume of traffic monitored and more. CIS manages every Albert sensor, including updates to the operating system, engine, NetFlow tools, and signature sets.

Albert Network Monitoring is available to U.S. State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) entities such as county governments, public universities, utilities, school districts, and emergency response services.

Learn more about this cost-effective network monitoring solution at <https://www.cisecurity.org/>.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

CALIFORNIA

• A lawsuit from the city of Oakland is preventing **ALAMEDA COUNTY** from selling its share of the **Coliseum Complex** to the Oakland A's. The city of Oakland's lawsuit alleges the sale of the multi-purpose stadium is illegal, *The Mercury News* reported. The Oakland A's planned to create housing, office and retail space, a park, restaurants and a tech campus as part of the complex. A judge issued a temporary restraining order against the sale. The city will argue why the county should not be allowed to sell its share during a Nov. 14 hearing.

• The Board of Supervisors in **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** approved a "road map" to encourage county residents to use electric vehicles. The county plans to install more charging stations and add more electric vehicles to the

county fleet. The road map's goals include reducing the use of gas-powered vehicles, providing incentives for county employees to own electric vehicles and collaborating with partners to increase electric vehicle use.

FLORIDA

• Residents in Longboat Key, a town which currently has two separate county governments, will get the chance to pick whether the town fully exists in **SARASOTA COUNTY** or **MANATEE COUNTY**, the *Bradenton Herald* reported. The one-county question will be included in an online survey administered in 2020. The redrawing of county borders must be approved by the Florida Legislature and governor.

GEORGIA

County officials in **DEKALB COUNTY** are putting into context a 30-foot-tall monument constructed for Confederate soldiers that is located outside the county courthouse, NPR reported. The monument's inscription calls Confederate soldiers men who were part of a "covenant keeping race." Commissioners voted to place a plaque alongside the monument that reads the statue was created to intimidate African Americans. Originally, commissioners voted to remove the monument, but a Georgia law states it must be visibly displayed.

IOWA

Counties in Iowa are making decisions to guide renewable energy construction. Supervisors in **MADISON COUNTY** passed a moratorium on wind turbine installations and county officials in **ADAIR COUNTY** are considering capping the number of turbines



Photos courtesy Miami-Dade County

FLORIDA

• In support of October being **Breast Cancer Awareness Month**, county departments in **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY** turned pink. County vehicles including police cars, buses and garbage trucks were painted pink to bring awareness to the fight against breast cancer. The county's Animal Services also went pink for breast cancer prevention at the county's Pet Adoption and Protection Center by selling pink T-shirts. The county has partnered with Making Strides Against Breast Cancer and has raised more than \$7 million since 2007 for breast cancer research.

that can be constructed, *The Des Moines Register* reported. The moratorium in Madison County applies to new solar energy installations and runs through October 2020 but may end earlier if a new ordinance is passed.

KANSAS

A new program in **WYAN-**

DOTTE COUNTY is providing car seats to families who cannot afford them. Eligible individuals must be Wyandotte County residents and meet other requirements to receive a car seat provided by the County Public Health Department, KSHB-TV reported. The program helps between 150-200 people per year.

MASSACHUSETTS

Commissioners in **DUKES COUNTY**, home to Martha's Vineyard, are considering

ILLINOIS

Inmates at the **COOK COUNTY** jail are planting, growing and harvesting crops that are part of the jail's own garden. The crops are sold to farmer's markets and restaurants around Chicago. According to ABC 13, inmates work to weed and maintain the garden to gain skills that are applicable to other jobs outside of jail.



charging visitors a fee for parking at State Beach, *The Martha's Vineyard Times* reported. Commissioners say the money from the paid parking could be used to pay for restroom facilities on other beaches throughout the island. Commissioners are considering metered parking and using stickers for full-day, full-season and year-round residents who live in the county. State Beach is a state-owned property but managed by the county.

MARYLAND

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY has launched a **short-term rental program**. Homeowners will now be able to list their properties on short-term rental sites after receiving approval from the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, WTOP reported. Thirty days is the maximum length of time for how long a property can be rented.

MICHIGAN

County employees in **KALAMAZOO COUNTY** will now get **paid for more holidays**. Commissioners voted to add general Election Day, Martin Luther King Day, Veterans Day and New Year's Eve as paid holidays, MLive.com reported. Kalamazoo County is the only county in Michigan to add Election Day as a paid holiday.

NEVADA

CLARK COUNTY plans to spend \$12 million to combat **chronic absenteeism and truancy** in schools by building four more Harbor Juvenile Assessment Centers. The county opened two such centers in 2016 to connect troubled youth to counseling, substance abuse treatment and other services, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reported. The county will also implement a support system, ranging from prevention to intensive support, depending on how many days of school a student has missed.

NEW YORK

LIVINGSTON COUNTY has launched a **mobility management trip planning website**.

Ride LivINgston uses "one-click" technology to identify trip options including public transportation, paratransit and taxi services. It facilitates access to transportation services with a specific emphasis on older adults, people with disabilities and individuals with lower incomes in need of specialized transportation services, the *Genesee County Express* reported.

Human service agency staff can also use it to plan trips on behalf of clients. By entering a point of origin, destination, time preference, trip purpose and preferred transportation mode(s), the website displays trip options — within Livingston County and to neighboring counties — along with the name of the transportation provider and contact information for each trip option.

The website was created in partnership with the Genesee Transportation Council, which provided federal funding, and a consultant.

NORTH CAROLINA

Families involved in the foster care system now have a place for **visitation** after **WAKE COUNTY** repurposed what had been a boys' group home. Before the Wake House was dedicated for that purpose, families had to conduct their visitations in a Wake Human Services office building. It's a home-like setting that allows for more privacy than the office building. It also includes an open kitchen, which allows families to cook and eat together, including a grill in the yard near a basketball hoop, Raleigh's ABC affiliate reported.

OHIO

Just before the first federal trial over their role in the opioid epidemic was scheduled to begin, **four pharmaceutical companies** reached a \$260 million settlement with

CUYAHOGA and SUMMIT

counties. The settlement covers drug distributors Ameri-sourceBergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson and Teva Pharmaceutical. The report said the settlement only covered the two Ohio counties acting as plaintiffs in the so-called bellwether or test trial, Reuters reported, and will not stop a multidistrict litigation effort that pools the more than 2,300 lawsuits by local governments against a larger number of defendants, including Johnson & Johnson.

OREGON

Food carts in **MULTNOMAH COUNTY** will have **new sanitation standards**. Previously, cart operators were responsible for several health measures, including supplying clean water, electricity, rodent control and wastewater dis-



posal. The new rules would shift some of the public health responsibility to the property owners. The ordinance would also require carts to be far enough apart to prevent fire from spreading. KPTV News reported that the exact sanitation rules are yet to be determined. The county, property owners and the people who run the carts will work together to craft specific guidelines. The rules are set to take effect January 2020.

PENNSYLVANIA

The **ALLEGHENY COUNTY** Council is considering creating a **public registry of oil and**

gas leases in the county.

The bill would require landholders to report where they lease property for fracking and oil drilling. The primary reason for a registry is to support the county's 130 municipal governments' attempts to develop and revise their state-mandated comprehensive zoning plans, and also improve their zoning ordinances. The state does not require oil and gas leases to be recorded with county real estate offices, WITF reported. The bill would mandate a \$75 fine on known violators for each lease that is not registered, and a \$150 fine for each subsequent violation.

VIRGINIA

What was slated to be a development of more than 3,000 homes will soon be-

See NEWS FROM page 14



UTAH

GRAND COUNTY commissioners passed a resolution imploring the National Park Service to reconsider its recent directive to Utah park managers to accommodate **"street legal" off-road vehicles** on park roads in Arches and Canyonlands national parks. Grand County is the primary gateway to those parks.

The resolution states that allowing ORVs in parks would have severe negative impacts on visitors' experience and "is incompatible with resource and wildlife protection."

Although off-road vehicles are generally barred from national parks, a Utah law enacted in 2008 authorizes all street-legal machines to travel public highways and roads.

The resolution urges that ORVs not be allowed into these parks until after existing congestion and its negative impacts on visitor experience have been addressed, the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported.

From NEWS FROM page 13

come property of HENRICO COUNTY, which is purchasing a 1,200-acre former farm along the James River.

Wilton Farm is now planned to be home to waterfront parks, school sites and a long-desired county history museum. The \$10 million purchase, paid for largely by a budget surplus, includes two sizable lakes and nearly three miles of river frontage, and will largely be preserved for parks and recreational use, Richmond BizSense reported. The developer received approval to build a mixed residential development back in 2004, but never went forward with it. The county will benefit from the developer's environmental studies and initial infrastructure, including several road improvements.



WASHINGTON

Starting in 2020, KING COUNTY will no longer accept plastic bags in recycling.

The processing stream for recyclables is not optimized to handle them, Pat McLaughlin, director of King County's Solid Waste Division told the Seattle Times. "They don't end up getting recycled and they become an inefficient barrier to the recycling process," and have to be cut out of the equipment on a daily basis.

The county is encouraging people to drop bags and plastic film with grocery stores and other participating retailers. Officials don't plan to penalize consumers who throw plastic bags in the garbage.

News from Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban and Rachel Looker. Do you have an item for us to consider? Contact cban@naco.org and rlooker@naco.org.

Program helps mentally ill

From HANDS page 9

they're discharged, it's a whole different story because they don't have as much hand holding and we're trying to improve that, and we are seeing some very promising results."

The Helping HANDS program is unique because of the use of peer recovery specialists and community paramedics that work together as a team, as well as the partners who agreed to sign data sharing agreements and releases of in-

formation, Hatch said.

"The purpose is to help people. There's a problem that needs to be solved," Hatch said.

"I think we really don't have any arguments that this program is needed no matter which side of the aisle you're on."

Polk County's Helping HANDS program for jail transition is the recipient of a 2019 NACo Achievement Award in the Criminal Justice and Public Safety category. **CN**

App aims for Medicaid savings

From ER APP page 7

that cap," he said. McLaughlin estimated that the ER Anywhere system could save the county \$4 to \$5 million per year once it is up and running.

"This is a massive amount of opportunity for savings here while still providing great care for our Medicaid recipients," he said.

Algozzine said when counties lack resources, they may not have other places to send patients besides the emergency room. He sees ER Anywhere

as a solution in rural counties where there may be only two ambulances covering a region.

"It's really a public health crisis that emergency medicine services, both the ambulances and the ERs, are overcrowded and strained and not only is it costing dollars, but it's costing lives," he said. **CN**

Telehealth policy information for all 50 states and the District of Columbia is available on the Center for Connected Health Policy's website at <http://www.cchpca.org/>.

PROFILES IN SERVICE

DONNA PETERSON

Board Member
Treasurer/Tax Collector
Payette County, Idaho

Number of years involved in NACo: Four

Years in public service: 25

Occupation: Payette County Treasurer

Education: Bachelor's degree in Business Management/ Human Resources, Graduate of NACo High Performance Leadership Academy

The hardest thing I've ever done is: Bury my cockapoo who was/is the love of my life after someone ran over him and didn't even have the decency to stop. Dexter loved unconditionally and when I was down, he knew it. When I was happy, he knew it.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: President Jeffrey Holland, President Gordon B. Hinckley (both of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) and my grandfather Millard Nolan.

A dream I have is to: One day build a cabin on our 6 acres on the Little Salmon River.

You'd be surprised to learn: I met my husband in judo class.

My favorite way to relax is to: Sit in my "she shed" and read a book.

I'm most proud of: My three daughters — Lyndsey, Michaela and Kyndall — who are strong women, great wives, great mothers and successful in their own way.

Every morning I read: Positive affirmations that I received in the Leadership Academy Program.

My favorite meal is: Meatloaf and baked potatoes (Idaho potatoes of course).

My pet peeve is: People who don't take responsibility for their actions.

My motto is: Let's not wait for tomorrow. Let's "get it done."

The last book I read was: *The Wal-Mart Effect* and *The Other Guy Blink: How Pepsi Won the Cola Wars*. Moral: If it works, don't fix it.

My favorite movie is: *The Upside*

My favorite music: Light country and anything Jason Mraz sings

My favorite U.S. president: Donald Trump. We have a strong workforce, strong economy and lower interest rates. Now if we can just get him to back off on his Twitter rants.



Peterson

My county is a NACo member because: We see the value of representation in Washington D.C. with Secure Rural Schools and PILT.



The most adventurous thing I've ever done was:
Took a judo class in college.

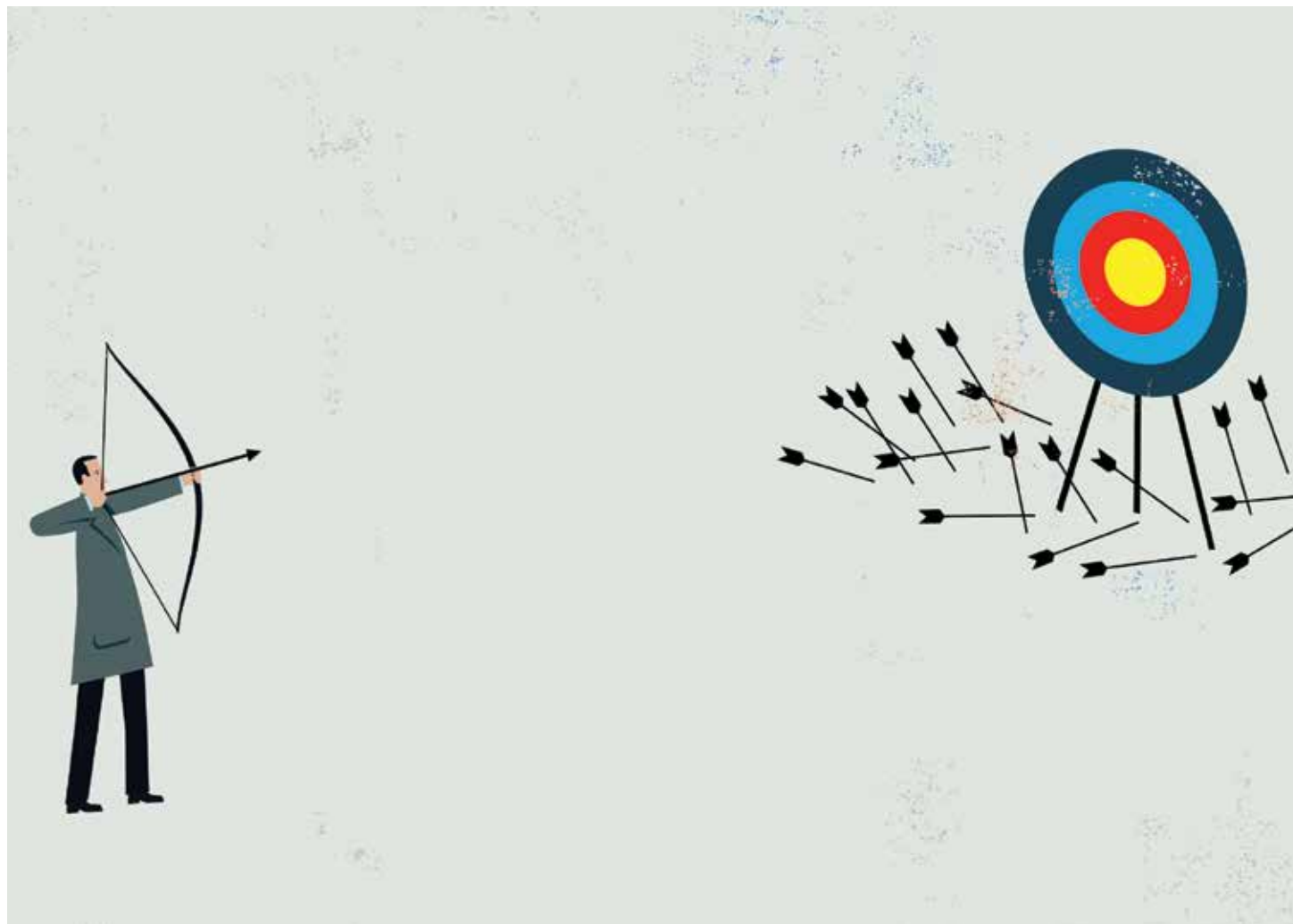
LEADERSHIP EDGE

There Will Be Good Days and Bad Days: Learn from Both

by Tim Rahschulte

Everyone wants to be great. But I am sure we can all agree that some days are easier than others. Some days we wake up, and our hair is already perfect, our clothes look great on us, we feel great, it's a sunny 75-degree day, the coffee we just brewed brings back experiences of a time in Spain when the coffee had just the right amount of richness under just the right amount of crema, the songs on our drive into the office are favorites, all the traffic lights are green in our favor, the office is abuzz with positive energy, all the work our colleagues promised would be done by today is done, our big presentation wows the investors, the dinner party that follows is just the right amount of joyous without getting out of hand, and the night is capped off with a full-bodied Meritage from Northern California as you peacefully sit at home and look at the cityscape aglow in lights and call it a day. It wasn't just a good day — it was a great day.

However, "great" isn't a word used to describe all our days or how we think of ourselves every day. Some days we wake up late because our phone's alarm didn't go off since the battery ran dead (stupid short-life battery!), which means we need to rush through our morning routine and miss our workout. We open a container of yogurt for a quick breakfast just to find a moldy science project has started growing inside (argh!), jump into the shower for two minutes, can't find anything good to wear and just throw on an old pair of khakis and a clean shirt, get to the platform just in time to see the train rolling away, and finally reach the office only to have a colleague point out the ripped seam in the back shoulder of the clean shirt (which could be due to excessive workouts cre-



ating bulging muscles beneath the shirt...but that would be a lie). The new product pitch we worked on all night for the big presentation today has been canceled and the product postponed indefinitely due to budget cuts. Not great! In fact, it's pretty bad.

We all have days like these. Some days are up, some are down. Other days it seems everything is working against us. You may remember from a previous article in this series that life's not fair.

If you're human (which I am going to assume), you've experienced good days and bad days.

In fact, when asked, most days fit into either of those two categories — some with immense joy and others with equally profound sorrow, some quite productive and others dogged by distraction, some faced with passionate procrastination and others with abundant enthusiasm.

We don't control all the variables that make up our experiences, but some things are going to go the way we intend (or possibly even exceed expectations), and some aren't going to measure up (or will be downright lousy!). We each have limits as well as potential within each of our days.

The positive in all this is that both good days and bad days, good moments and not-so-good moments, contain lessons — things we can learn from. It's more widely practiced to learn from bad days. A team that misses project targets, an outage that lasts longer than it should, the time you made a critical error that resulted in severe consequences, the moments of crisis that shake us, or any other experienced slump — all these will often cause immediate action to reflect on what went wrong so it doesn't happen again.

That's good learning and a part of good leadership. Some

might say a failure is only a failure if we don't learn something from it. But we also need to learn from the good days. What made it a good day? How can we repeat that experience? How can we take what worked and make it even better?

The key to learning is to develop learning consistency and to approach each and every situation as an opportunity to learn — whether you've had a radical success, dismal failure or something in between.

In other words, regardless the situation, go in as a learner. Leadership is not a reserved right for a select few. Leadership is a learnable set of behaviors and capabilities. It's an attitude. It's a mindset. It's a belief and determination to get better and better over time and with experience. As learned from Regis Mulot, the chief human resource officer at Staples, "The best leaders make every day a learning experience."

There's an adjacent rule here to point out in addition to learning from good days and bad and that is to always look for opportunities to learn, but don't dwell on opportunities missed. When learning from bad days, bad moments, and bad experiences, the value is in learning and moving on.

If we get stuck and dwell on the lessons of missed opportunities, we'll miss the next opportunity, which is certain to be right around the corner. So be constantly on the lookout for opportunities to learn — in both the good and the bad. Then take that learning and look for the next opportunity to apply it. **CN**

*Rahschulte is the CEO of the Professional Development Academy and chief architect of the NACo High Performance Leadership Program (naco.org/skills). He is the co-author of *My Best Advice: Proven Rules for Effective Leadership*.*

the HR DOCTOR

with Philpot & Winkler

Smartphones are a blessing and a curse. They keep you informed and they let you weigh in on all things in a timely manner, by phone, text and email. Need to know the committee recommendation, check in on an arising issue, watch a streamed Board meeting? You can do all of that on your smartphone at any time of the day or night, in nearly any location. Certainly, at times that blessing can feel more like an obligation. We've all heard how all this connection can ruin our work-life balance, so here's a different perspective: When you can't disconnect and are always available for every decision and direction, smartphones can negatively impact your team.

Smartphones impede your ability to develop and prepare the next generation of public servants. Before smartphones, supervisors, directors or elected officials generally were unreachable when they were on leave.

Because the supervisor was genuinely out of contact, they had to hand over the reins of the team to someone else's trusted hands. The supervisor had to brief the second in command of all the things that were going on and could possibly arise. The potential successor needed to be kept in the loop, know who to call, know what meetings to cover and how to step into the role even just temporarily.

Sure, the rising leader would have learning moments where the decision-making wasn't as smooth as it could possibly be. But the experience gave the person the opportunity to learn and grow, ideally preparing them for the next step in their career.

Here are six benefits your rising leader and your team

will receive when given the opportunity to act in your absence:

First, the potential successor is challenged to problem solve. They likely will not have all the answers when a unique situation arises, but without you around, they must figure out how to respond to the situation. The person gets the opportunity to look at all the different angles and consider the big picture.

Second, they are being given the opportunity to surround themselves with and collaborate with subject matter experts. Only together can we solve the biggest and most complex problems. That collaboration might be with other leaders, supervisors, directors or the rest of their team. It might be with people outside of their department and pos-

sibly even outside of the organization. They can learn who their mentors are and who their resources are.

Third, the individual will have to flex their communication muscles. In advance of the absence, the individual needs to understand what type of catastrophic events can't wait to be communicated until your return and know what decisions they have the freedom to make. This type of communication strengthens the expectations of the person and gives them freedom to be creative and innovative when situations arise. Strong communicators also can debrief you fully, upon your return, strengthening face-to-face communication as well.

Fourth, having to fully step into the role gives the potential successor the opportunity

to see if they enjoy that level of work. It gives them a seat at the table, and it allows them to briefly try the position on for size to see if it will engage them, motivate them, inspire them. It can help them recognize their strengths and what skills they need to improve upon to be fully competitive for the next step in their career ladder.

Fifth, removing the safety net of the accessibility of the supervisor requires the potential successor to spread their leadership wings. Perhaps they have attended leadership trainings and classes, or they've read several leadership books. But trying on their own leadership style and putting it into action gives them feedback and insight into where they need to adjust. It allows them to execute their style and

see which pieces of expert advice they plan to utilize, and those that don't fit when put into action. Additionally, they will know if supervision at the higher level is what they're really called to do.

Finally, leaving your potential successor completely in charge shows that you have trust in your team — that you have intentionally surrounded yourself with great people, given them the skills they need to be successful and that you believe in them.

Leaving another person in an acting capacity during your absence gives them the chance to expand their perspective and engage in the work in a different capacity. In fact, you may not want to limit this outstanding learning opportunity to just one person.

Maybe several people on your team could benefit from the chance to step up when you're away.

And what if they don't rise to the challenge when you are away on leave? It is an opportunity to consider what you need to do to prepare them for the role, what they need to do for themselves to prepare for the role and what tools and training they still need to put into their toolbox.

In the public sector, we don't select our successor, but rather train all those around us to be ready for greater opportunities ahead. We are preparing the next generation of public servants. We are giving them opportunities to learn and grow, not just theoretically, but in practice.

Someday you might win the lottery or, more likely, you'll simply retire. Allowing others to put their leadership skills into action, that's true succession planning. So, the next time you take a vacation, put away the smartphone and allow yourself to be fully present on your break. You'll be doing yourself and your employees a favor. **CN**

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

