



Transportation, housing programs highlighted at LUCC

by **Meredith Moran**
staff writer

County officials from across the country gathered at NACo's Large Urban County Caucus symposium Nov. 30-Dec. 3 in a meeting hosted by NACo President Denise Winfrey of Will County, Ill. to hear about solutions to some of their most challenging issues.

LUCC members heard from Polly Trottenberg and Erika Poethig, who shared their national expertise on transportation and housing, respectively, at a Dec. 1 LUCC business meeting to highlight federal programs and funding helpful to counties.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Eileen Higgins introduced Trottenberg, the U.S. Department of Transportation deputy secretary, as the keynote speaker.

"County governments own and operate nearly half of the nation's public roads and bridges and directly support over one-third of airport and transit systems that get people connected in every corner of the country," Higgins said. "...

While folks often think of interstate highways when considering the national transportation system, these highways

would be useless without the local bridges and roads that get us to them. Counties are a vital cog in a system that relies on functionality at all levels of ownership."

Trottenberg brought attention to programs, under The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, that counties can investigate for projects in their communities. "One thing I've heard from your colleagues today, and I hear often when I encounter officials, in big counties and in small rural counties, is that sometimes working with the federal government can be a challenge, and we want to find every possible way we can to make that easy for you and to focus again on not only transportation, but how we can help tie into what you need to do on housing, on economic development," Trottenberg said.

Trottenberg also highlighted The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program, which provides funding for localities that develop a comprehensive safety action plan to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries.

"We've had nearly 40,000 lives lost on U.S. roads [this

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County executives and others check out Amazon's electric delivery vehicles during a tour of Amazon headquarters at the NACo County Executives Roundtable in King County, Wash. (Front row, l-r): Matt Chase; Dave Somers; Barry Hyde; Armond Budish; Amy Budish; Lina Hidalgo; David Crowley, Bruce Dammeier and Denise Soto-Martinez. (Back row, l-r): Teryn Zmuda; Alan Berube; John Olszewski, Jr.; Matthew Meyer; Shaun Flanagan, Phil Armstrong and Gary Moore. Photo by Mary Ann Barton

Board approves legislative priorities

by **Mary Ann Barton**
editor

The NACo Board of Directors adopted 11 legislative priorities Dec. 2 during their meeting hosted by NACo President Denise Winfrey of Will County, Ill. The priorities are:

- Restore the balance of fed-

eralism and optimize intergovernmental partnerships.

- Seize legislative opportunities to improve the implementation of the American Rescue Plan Act's fiscal recovery funds.
- Successful implementation of the county-related provisions of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduc-

tion Act and the CHIPS and Science Act.

- Promote health equity by reforming the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy, passage of mental health, substance use treatment legislation and consideration of other criminal

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Moore County, N.C. investigates attack on electric power grid

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

An investigation is underway in Moore County, N.C., where the county worked for five days to mitigate challenges posed by the Dec. 3 loss of power to half the county following vandalism damage to two electric substations.

The next day, the county

declared a state of emergency, introduced a curfew and opened the county sports complex as an emergency shelter. Sheriff's deputies directed cars and county personnel delivered water and food to affected residents while Duke Energy worked to replace equipment that provided power to almost 50,000 people.

The next day, Moore Coun-

ty Sheriff Ronnie Fields called the damage an "intentional, willful and malicious act" and said that the substations were targeted with firearms. Federal and state law enforcement have joined an investigation to determine the culprit and motive behind the damage to the substations. No fatalities result-

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Grid attack leaves county in the dark

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ed from traffic issues caused by the outage, and deputies managed traffic control trying to keep order. Two highways traverse the county and Fields said many of those drivers were likely unaware of the challenges they'd encounter when they reached Moore County.

"With the power outage, traffic lights and streetlights out ... it was difficult to get through intersections and it was just a dangerous situation overall," said Josh Creighton, Wake County's emergency management director, who was on loan to Moore County during the outage.

"The curfew was a preventative measure to prevent any kind of looting or any activities like that from a law enforce-

ment perspective and it seems to have worked quite well," he said.

The curfew lasted until Dec. 8.

More than 50 people took shelter at the Moore County Sports Complex, which was receiving aid from the Red Cross, and the county distributed water to homes with inoperable pumps. The county's health department suspended the permits of all restaurants, tattoo artists and camps that were open and operating without a pre-approved emergency plan.

County administrative departments moved to the county's agricultural center, which had power Dec. 5, before returning to their normal office space. The county's transportation department limited its work to transporting patients

to dialysis, chemotherapy and radiation therapy appointments or to the sports complex shelter.

The county public safety department worked to help residents prepare for the restoration of power, including unplugging appliances that may have been running when the power cut out and reinforcing a message about food safety, regarding the short shelf life of unrefrigerated foods and medicines.

County Commission Chairman Nick Picerno and County Manager Wayne Vest met with residents Dec. 6 who were still without power, both in and out of the shelter.

"They are trying to reassess the needs of the public, talking to people and finding out what needs may be out there that we haven't been made aware of yet," Creighton said.

Picerno and his colleagues on the Board of Commissioners were sworn into their terms Dec. 5 in a county courthouse without power.

During a Dec. 4 press conference, then-Chairman Frank Quis urged residents to look out for one another throughout the outage.

"We can reach out, but we don't reach out to everyone and its incumbent on our citizens to reach out and be the solution here," he said. "Our citizens are resourceful people. Reach out to your neighbors, to those who you know may have needs."

Fields lamented that the outage was close on the heels of the economic damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic when assessing the long-term damage.

"We're just getting over COVID, now this," he said. "How's it going to hurt businesses and restaurants?" he mused. **CN**



White House senior advisor Lukas McGowan addresses NACo Board members Dec. 2 at the fall meeting. Photo by Hugh Clarke

McGowan talks housing, more

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- justice reforms.
- Secure the inclusion of county priorities in 2023 Farm Bill reauthorization.
 - Boost advanced broadband deployment and accessibility while preserving local decision-making.
 - Support full funding for Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program.
 - Promote county priorities and local decision-making in future U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal rulemaking.
 - Maintain election integrity and strengthen election worker safety.
 - Enhance community resilience through regional and local disaster preparedness.
 - Promote workforce and housing opportunities and supportive services for county residents to support economic recovery.

NACo Board hears from White House senior advisor

White House senior advisor Lukas McGowan told coun-

ty officials that the latest bills passed by Congress and signed by the Biden administration "require county partnerships."

One program that the federal government is partnering with counties on, he noted, is the Federal Communications Commission's affordable broadband connectivity program.

"This was a critical tool that was made much better by a consultation process with counties that really identifies where broadband access is falling behind," he noted.

"Where do we make investments in your counties to make sure that households and businesses have what they need?"

Housing is another top issue that McGowan said he hears about a lot from county officials.

"There is not a meeting I have with a county official where housing doesn't come up in some form or fashion," he said.

"Whether it's unsheltered homelessness, the high cost of rent and rent-burdened households, the creation of new affordable housing units...we're

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SNAP/STATS

WHEN DO MOST AMERICANS START SHOPPING FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

MONTH/DATE	PERCENT
Before the end of October	43 percent
Before Thanksgiving.....	25 percent
On or after Thanksgiving.....	19 percent
December.....	12 percent
January.....	1 percent

Source: National Retail Federation

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LUCC members hear about importance of maternal health equity

by **Meredith Moran**
staff writer

County officials who gathered for the LUCC Symposium Nov. 30-Dec. 3 heard about a disturbing trend relating to maternal health and discussed solutions for what they can do about it in their counties.

"It's more dangerous now for us to give birth than our parents and grandparents," said Paula Eiselt, director of "Aftershock," a documentary on the U.S. maternal health crisis.

"We're in America in 2022 and women and birthing people are dying in childbirth — we're the only industrialized country that this is happening in at these rates."

"America's urban counties play a prominent role in the lives of 160 million residents every day," said LUCC Chair John O'Grady, in opening remarks at the symposium. "We foster conditions for economic strength, build and maintain transportation systems and critical infrastructures, promote community health and well-being, champion justice and public safety and implement a broad portfolio of state, federal and local programs."

"My hope is that we can leverage this opportunity to learn from one another — exchange ideas and discuss solutions that we can take back home to our respective communities."

In addition to O'Grady, a Franklin County, Ohio commissioner, county officials at the symposium also heard from a panel on maternity health. Tarrant County, Texas Commissioner Devan Allen moderated the panel, which included Eiselt, Franklin County, Ohio Commissioner Erica Crawley and EverThrive Executive Director Chi Chi Okwu.

Eiselt discussed the creation of her documentary, "Aftershock," which is now stream-



NACO'S FALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & LARGE URBAN COUNTY CAUCUS SYMPOSIUM

ing on Hulu, and advocated for maternal mortality committees, the collection of more data surrounding the crisis and the incentivization of vaginal births over C-sections, which contribute to around 37 percent of severe maternal morbidity cases.

"There are statistics and credible articles that talk about this epidemic, but when you see it, you see the people, the vibrancy of these women lost, their faces, their dreams," Eiselt said.

"That's why we make films, so you can have a human-to-human connection — you understand the people behind the statistics."

The issue at the core of maternal mortality is the medical system not listening to women, particularly Black women, she noted, who are three

times more likely to die from a pregnancy-related cause than white women — and she focused on two women in particular, and also looked at the long-term impact of the maternal health crisis.

"It was really important to center the film on these two women because they shatter every stereotype that we're told of the reason for this crisis — it wasn't about their inherent health, it wasn't about access, it really was about not being heard and the systemic racism that's built into that system," Eiselt said.

"We also highlight and follow the families, the two fathers, that are left behind and I want to make a point of talking about that, because the title 'Aftershock' really talks about the ripple effect of a mother's death and how that affects a family, a community and our entire country."

Okwu discussed next steps in achieving birth equity, including the importance of growing and diversifying the

perinatal workforce, gathering more data on all women affected by maternal health complications — not just those who die — and access to doula care.

"We need to know [about] not just the people who have died, but the near misses," Okwu said. "I'm not in this work so that people can survive, I'm in it so that we can thrive. It's not enough for us to say 'Oh, they lived,' we want thriving parents ... There are issues with mental health, needing more support, issues of suicide, substance use — giving birth can be a very traumatic experience. It should not be, but it is, especially in our country, because we don't really provide the support needed to care for those giving birth in the ways that we need to."

Doulas are similar to midwives, but are not medical professionals — instead, they provide emotional, informational and physical support throughout pregnancy, birth and post-partum.

Studies have found that doula care reduces racial disparities, improves the health outcomes of birthing people and is even cost effective. One study out of Oregon determined that doula care saved \$91 million and led to 219,530

fewer cesarean-section births, 51 fewer maternal deaths, 382 fewer uterine ruptures and 100 fewer hysterectomies.

Doulas have only been available "to the wealthy, but it shouldn't be that way," Okwu said. "We've seen the presence of doulas really helps to reduce the anxiety around being at the hospital. As someone who is Black or brown, you experience racism within the healthcare system — at some point, you experience some sort of adverse effect there."

"So, having someone who can advocate for you is really important — having someone who has followed you throughout the journey to really provide that information to your healthcare provider who can be with you in the post-partum period and identify some of the warning signs [of complications related to pregnancy]."

Crawley echoed the importance of doula access, highlighting ROOTT (Restoring Our Own Through Transformation), a reproductive justice organization and doula collective in Columbus, Ohio and her recent sponsor testimony in the Senate for House Bill 142, which would allow Medicaid to provide reim-

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Filmmaker Paula Eiselt discusses maternal mortality at the LUCC Symposium. Others (l-r) are moderator Tarrant County Commissioner Devan Allen; EverThrive Executive Director Chi Chi Okwu and Franklin County Commissioner Erica Crawley. Photo by Hugh Clarke

County park departments double as outreach to homeless campers

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Out of sight but not out of mind for Adams County, Colo. parks and open space staff, encampments were ticking time bombs.

Behind screens of trees and vegetation, the communities of illegal campers were becoming a hazard. And every now and then, some would take a weapon and stop hikers in the park, demanding money to let them pass.

Others were vulnerable themselves to the elements and too far away from anyone who could render aid.

"It was dangerous for trail users, and they were all living within the flood plain, so if we had a flash flood, we could have seen potentially hundreds of people drown," Byron Fanning, the department's director, said of the situation that got out of hand three years ago, in 2019.

"When we did finally clear it, we found 150 propane tanks, so we were a mishap away from disaster, a forest fire or an explosion."

But as counties work to clear encampments in their parks and open spaces, they are trying to offer dignity and respect in the process, treating the interaction as a way to introduce people living outdoors to human services offerings. This takes on added importance as temperatures drop into the winter, posing both a threat to the health of people living outdoors and a rising risk of campfires spreading.

"It's not an easy issue and we're not solving it, but we are addressing it in a way that is respectful and supportive of the community of folks experiencing homelessness," Fanning said.

The 2018 *Martin v. Boise* decision by the Ninth Circuit bars governments from punishing unhoused people for sleeping outside on public property in the absence of adequate alternatives, setting a national precedent. But while local public lands often serve as the last ref-

uge of the helpless, the privacy they afford also keeps outside observers from being able to spot behavioral problems compounding. Creeks and streams that offer an alternative to plumbing can turn campsites into biological hazards when overloaded with waste.

And because the encampments are often so far off the

Board of Supervisors to pass an ordinance in August banning encampments along the American River Parkway, which has seen an extensive community of tents develop along the paved multi-use trail.

"We had been providing notices to vacate to campers all along," said Liz Bellas, director of Sacramento County's De-

"Once an area is cleared, if the same risks still apply, then we work to keep the area clear."

— Liz Bellas, director, Department of Regional Parks

beaten path, law enforcement is often not close enough to help when needed.

Sacramento County, Calif. counted six homicides in 2021 among residents of encampments along the American River Parkway, along with 170 fires in entire parks system throughout the year, most of which were likely manmade. In 2022, a woman visiting the parkway was raped and murdered in the park, and her alleged murderer lived in an encampment. Those conditions prompted the

partment of Regional Parks. "Once an area is cleared, if the same risks still apply, then we work to keep the area clear."

By establishing that the parkway is off limits for camping, the county can comply with *Martin v. Boise*.

Counties have developed procedures to formalize a process that gives campers ample time to move before their belongings are removed, while also getting results and limiting damage to park land.

Parks and Open Space Direc-

tor Kyla Brown said Riverside County, Calif. staffers typically get voluntary compliance when they prompt campers to move.

"In those cases, we try to educate folks and help them understand why the area they're in is not appropriate for them to stay in, what sensitive habitat might exist, what other risks might exist for them, but it would be from weather or animals or wildfire potential," she said.

If the campers spurn those overtures, they are given a two-week notice that their encampment will be cleaned, along with a 48-hour notice. The parks staff has the sheriff's office on hand for cleanings, with protocols to save any items that might be used for shelter or food.

"We try to make it less inviting to come back there — reducing cover and fire fuels," Brown said.

Riverside County Parks and Open Space meets every other month with local cities, water and flood control districts and

the Army Corps of Engineers to collaborate on funding opportunities for behavioral health resources and housing.

"We don't get our fair share of formula funding for resources like these, so we have to be creative and look for opportunities," she said.

Sacramento County coordinates visits from both law enforcement and navigators, who help introduce campers to the Department of Human Assistance (DHA) offerings.

"We tend to have them do their outreach prior to us going in and providing the notice to vacate," Bellas said.

"It's coordinated but it's separate because you want to maintain the trust of folks and for some people, bringing both groups together, the DHA side and the law enforcement side, doesn't help that situation."

In Adams County, Fanning said interactions between parks and open space staff and campers were strained before

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A tent rests behind trees along the American River Parkway in Sacramento County, Calif.

Photo by Hugh Clarke

LUCC members tour transportation, health centers



LUCC members hear about the services and programs the Will County Health Department offer on a Dec. 2 tour of the facility. Photo by Hugh Clarke

by **Meredith Moran**
staff writer



NACo's FALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & LARGE URBAN COUNTY CAUCUS SYMPOSIUM

NACo's Large Urban County Caucus (LUCC) members attended mobile tours of the United Bridge Partners' Houbolt Road Extension project, the BNSF Railway Intermodal facility and Lion Electric Manufacturing Nov. 30 and Will County, Illinois's health department and health center on Dec. 2.

Will County, Ill. is the largest inland port in the country. As a transportation hub, the county subsequently has to deal with things like clogged roadways and greenhouse gas emissions. The Nov. 30 mobile tour showed LUCC members the county's innovative projects that are in the works to increase convenience, efficiency and sustainability in transportation.

Houbolt Road is undergoing a 1.5-mile extension from U.S. 6 to Schweitzer Road with a new bridge over the Des Plaines River, which will reduce truck traffic on local roads and is providing construction jobs. LUCC members were given a run-down on the project's logistics

and stopped to check out the construction.

"We have all these containers and trucks, everything moving around, but in order to get to the highway, everybody has to go on these little side streets that were not designed to support that level of traffic, so our company is working together with CenterPoint properties and we're building this quarter mile bridge," a UBP representative told LUCC members. "We're making it more efficient to move goods in and out of this area, because the train yard could be as efficient all day long, but if you can't get those goods out onto the roads -- time is money, emissions are making an impact, so everything that we're doing is just making it much easier, faster, more efficient to move these things out to the highway."

Jennifer Rutledge, Rockdale County, Ga.'s executive director of government affairs, said she

would take information from the road extension project back to apply to her county, which is in the planning stages of a bridge project of its own.

"In Rockdale County, we are in the middle of building an overpass bridge over Interstate 20, which actually cuts our county in half, and it was very interesting to watch their bridge project as it's being constructed, because we are doing the same exact thing," she noted.

"They're a little further along than we are, but what I really appreciated was listening to the public-private partnership and the way that they're collecting the toll fees to kind of recoup some of that money, so I'm going to take that back and look into it, especially with our federal delegation and see if they can help us out with the same type of partnership or maybe some other ways to fund such an expensive piece of infrastructure."

Amid discussions around a national rail strike, LUCC members drove around the BNSF Railways Intermodal facility. Last year, 5.4 million intermod-

al shipments were transported on BNSF's rail lines instead of highways, reducing traffic and increasing efficiency. BNSF moves about 2.5 million new cars and trucks per year and transports enough grain to supply 900 million people with a year's supply of bread.

"Not only are we the biggest inland port for international [trade] here in North America, we also have the third or fourth most-busy auto facility," a BNSF representative said. "We like to call it 'window shopping' around here, but you can see about 9,000 bins and cars being loaded and unloaded on our facility -- we've got four tracks."

BNSF is currently working on expanding its technology with remote control, so that items can be moved from a joystick within an office to increase worker safety and speed up the process, he said.

LUCC members also heard about Lion Electric's sustainability solutions for transportation at its nearly 1 million-square foot manufacturing facility, featuring models of its all-electric urban trucks and shuttle/transit minibus, and

got the opportunity to ride in one of its electric school buses.

McPherson County, Kan. Commissioner Keith Becker said that he was particularly impressed with the Lion Electric factory.

"They're gearing up for the future is what they're doing," he said.

LUCC members tour Will County's health department

NACo President Denise Winfrey, a member of the Will County, Ill. board, gave the opening remarks in a presentation Dec. 2 on the county's healthcare programming. She highlighted the community's involvement in the county's new health department, which opened in 2020 and serves nearly 700,000 people from an 865-square mile area.

"Before we ever turned a shovel here, we had members of the community in to talk about what we're going to do, let them see the overall game plan, what the impact was going to be for the neighborhood

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LUCC explores ways to reduce community violence

by Meredith Moran
staff writer

Community violence intervention experts discussed strategies to reduce gun violence at the county level last week at NACo's Large Urban County Caucus symposium in Illinois, emphasizing the need for grass-roots movements that engage those identified as high-risk and provide support to those impacted by community violence.

Mecklenburg County, N.C. Commissioner George Dunlap introduced the panel, which included Eddie Bocanegra, senior advisor for community and gun violence prevention at the U.S. Department of Justice; Anura Shah, CEO and owner of consulting firm Beyond Force, which provides education and training on workplace violence prevention and crisis management; Derek Brown, founder of youth outreach organization Boxing Out Negativity and Julie Globokar, board chair of Boxing Out Negativity.

"Community violence intervention strategies have proven to be a vital tool in reducing gun violence in our urban counties, which has reached historic levels in recent years," Dunlap said. "CVI programs focus on reducing shootings by establishing relationships with people at the center of gun violence in our communities and support people at the highest risk of being victims or perpetrators of violence."

Bocanegra grew up in the West Side of Chicago in an area he refers to as "the 60623." He belonged to a local street gang in his youth, which led to him serving 14 years in prison for shooting and killing a rival gang member in retaliation for a shooting that paralyzed a member of his gang.

Through his personal experience and time spent at the DOJ, Bocanegra has found that there's often a disconnect between recommended community violence intervention policies and what actually takes place in a community, he said.

"In theory, things sound amazing, but the way they look in practice, particularly with communities and organizations on the ground that have been



Mecklenburg County Commissioner George Dunlap (far right) introduces a panel, which includes (right to left) Eddie Bocanegra, senior advisor for community and gun violence prevention, U.S. Department of Justice; Anura Shah, CEO and owner of consulting firm Beyond Force; Derek Brown, founder of Boxing Out Negativity and Julie Globokar, board chair of Boxing Out Negativity. Photo by Hugh Clarke

grossly underinvested to really provide adequate efforts of support services for its communities, and for its particular population — where do we start with that?" Bocanegra said. "You have communities, like North Lawndale, still recovering from the civil rights movement back in the 1960s.

"These are communities deeply affected by gun violence — the lesson in regard to my previous work is that we have an opportunity to really take some of the best science, some of the best models out there and to really think about, how do we support these organizations, these individuals, leaders, including government, to really be able to scale their services to continue to research their programs and to do it in such a way that really braids federal dollars in their local efforts as well?"

The disconnect that Bocanegra identified led to him developing and launching READI (Rapid Employment and Development Initiative) Chicago, an anti-violence outreach program that targets high-risk men in Chicago's South and West sides and offers them job and educational training, as well as cogni-

'Where can someone go in your county if they just need someone to talk to?'

tive behavior therapy.

In June, President Biden signed into law the country's most significant gun reform bill in decades, and in September, the Justice Department announced it would grant \$100 million toward reducing community violence. Bocanegra acknowledged these are great steps, but more still needs to be done, he said.

"One hundred million dollars when you spread it across 50 states — it's not a lot," Bocanegra said. "But it's a good start, to think about, what is the kind of evidence that we need to have to convince Congress that the populations that we're talking about today are worth the investment?"

Shah also discussed a disconnect in theory and practice, pointing to advocacy groups like Every Town, Giffords and Sandy Hook Promise and universities well-known for their CVI research, like Johns Hopkins and Washington University in St. Louis, while highlighting how there's not enough locally

focused efforts, like county support groups for those impacted by gun violence.

"They work on studies, they do important work, but many of these organizations are also focused on changing legislation and policy advocacy work versus actual boots on the ground victim-support services, so we have to think about it from that perspective," she said.

She urged county officials to put resources into not only fostering a sense of community around CVI, but to also provide support for the financial and physical ramifications of gun violence, like assisting with applications for victim's compensation funds, Social Security disability and home modification grants.

"Where can someone go in your county when they just need someone to talk to? ... Where can they go if they need a case manager with expertise in something like forensic social work to help them navigate the myriad of supports that they will need for a lifetime?" Shah

said. "Things like transportation to follow up with medical appointments, where can they go for this? Especially if they are newly wheelchair-bound, their life is going to be dramatically different.

"And above all else, what about mental health services like therapy, like counseling, specifically geared toward gun violence and violence prevention? Just think about it for a second in your county — where do those individuals go? Is there a one stop shop for this?"

Shah's long-term recommendation is for counties to create crisis clinics, she said.

"We need to establish an actual brick and mortar [location] that can serve as a central point of contact for support and resource pathway in a formalized way, which means funded," she said. "...We need a central entity that's going to take this issue on — we cannot leave this up to the victims. We cannot leave this up to their families. And we can't piecemeal this either — it's just too important and too big.

"It crosses too many lines of our social systems here to leave

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Elizabeth Archuleta discusses USDA programs

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about one-and-a-half million units in the hole in this country. Or allowing residents in your communities that important first step to personal home ownership.”

McGowan also touched on elections and the American Rescue Plan Act.

“In terms of elections and election infrastructure, there’s no story I don’t read where I don’t think of you and all of your teams who are really on the front lines.”

In 2023, McGowan stressed the importance of counties getting the word out about the “successful deployments” by counties of ARPA funds.

“I’ve said it before and I’ll say it again, we need to hear your stories of successful deploy-

ments, showing that you’re good stewards of the money... investing in transformative economic development, public safety, workforce, housing — whatever it is you’re doing, we want to hear about it.”

NACo Board members also heard from Elizabeth Archuleta, director of external and intergovernmental affairs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.


As a former county commissioner in Coconino County, Ariz., for 24 years, she said she liked to “keep up” with goings-on at NACo and enjoyed seeing new faces in the crowd.

Archuleta highlighted several USDA programs including changes to the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women and Children.

USDA is proposing changes

that allow for greater flexibility to accommodate personal and cultural food preferences and special dietary needs, she said.

Archuleta also noted the expansion of the Rural Partners Network in 17 communities. The Rural Partners Network (RPN) is an alliance of federal agencies and commissions working directly with rural communities to expand rural prosperity through job creation, infrastructure development, and community improvements.

Community liaisons will live and work in the rural communities they serve, allowing them to develop partnerships. The liaisons are full-time federal staff members assigned to give technical assistance tailored to each community’s need, Archuleta noted. 

‘Women are dying in childbirth’



EverThrive Executive Director Chi Chi Okwu makes a point during a discussion on maternal mortality. Photo by Hugh Clarke

From MATERNAL page 3

bursement for doula services along with offering the services in prisons.

Okwu spoke to what can be done at the local level, highlighting EverThrive’s partnership with local public health organization AllianceChicago, the Chicago Collaborative for Maternal Health, which worked with local communities that saw the highest levels of maternal mortality and conducted surveys to identify the primary barriers of receiving adequate access and care, including non-healthcare re-


lated elements like transportation and paid sick leave.

Crawley shared her own personal experience with maternal health complications following an emergency C-section, how she was brushed off by the medical system and how it’s shaped her priorities as a county commissioner.

“I happened to be lucky, but I was traumatized and I didn’t speak about my pregnancy until I ran for office in 2018,” she said. “If maternal and infant health were going to be my platform, I had to share my experience, but I had not

heard of anyone else who had had a traumatic experience like I had, so that’s how I’ve come to this work.”

Franklin County’s CelebrateOne, which launched the Health Equity Innovation and Birth Centers Initiative in 2021, can serve as a model for other counties, with initiatives like the Healthy Beginnings research project which assesses the impact of providing rental assistance with housing stabilization services to the county’s pregnant population.

Franklin County is investing \$1 million into CelebrateOne going into 2023. 

PROFILES IN SERVICE

BRENDA HOWERTON

NACo Board Member
Chair, Board of County Commissioners
Durham County, N.C.



HOWERTON

and the bodyguards having to pull me out of the water.

I’m most proud of: My accomplishments, my tenacity, my commitment to public service and my constituents.

My favorite meal is: Fish and strawberries.

My pet peeve is: Listening to people complain who don’t contribute to the change.

My motto is: Stand for the children and they will change the world.

The last book I read was: “The Political Determinants of Health”

My favorite movie is: “The Bible”

My favorite music is: R&B

My favorite U.S. president is: President Obama

My county is a NACo member because: NACo offers teaching, learning relationships and policy analysis.

Number of years active in NACo: 14 years

Years in public service: 14 years

Occupation: Executive Coach

Education: (BA) in Business Management; coaching degrees

The hardest thing I’ve ever done: Be a contributing member of society while dealing with the murder of my two sons.

Three people (living or dead) I’d invite to dinner: Mayor of Durham Elaine O’Neal, Michelle Obama and Shonda Rhimes

A dream I have is to: Finish my book.

You’d be surprised to learn that I: I am a mother who lost two wonderful children in my life by gun violence that I will never recover from, and that is why I am in public service.

The most adventurous thing I’ve ever done is: Going water-skiing when I could not swim,

MY FAVORITE WAY TO RELAX:

Soak in the tub with a glass of red wine.





LUCC members hear about infrastructure, housing, transportation



Polly Trottenberg, DOT deputy secretary, briefs county officials Dec. 1 at the LUCC business meeting. Photo by Hugh Clarke

From BUSINESS page 1

year], and as I always say, these are not just statistics, these are family, friends, neighbors, co-workers,” Trottenberg said.

“One thing I’ll note, and a lot of you all know this, we see that those fatalities are disproportionately on county roads. I think in some cases more rural than urban, but we recognize counties are incredibly close to this and we want to make sure that we’re working with some of the jurisdictions in this room right now to access these dollars.

“We encourage more so-

phisticated jurisdictions come in with a whole safety net, so you’ve done a data analysis where you’re seeing crashes or injuries and fatalities, you’ve really dug in on your data and have a comprehensive plan around how you want to tackle it. That can involve a redesign, education, driver behavior, you name it — we want to make sure we’re working with communities at whatever stage they’re in, in terms of improving safety on the road.”

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also devoted \$7.5 billion to EV (electric vehicle) charging and \$2.5 billion in discretionary

grant programs that counties should take advantage of, she noted.

“This is going to give you opportunities to come to us for the kind of charging infrastructure that you want to build,” Trottenberg said. “We recognize that for the interstates we’re putting in pretty standardized charging, but we know your localities and cities, communities, you want to look for things to create, maybe charging vehicles sharing vehicles, electric bikes, scooters — you name it.” Other funding opportunities for counties under the law include the airport terminals and bridge programs.

“These dollars can be used for adding new terminals, security systems, baggage, customs, enhancing ADA accessibility and you know, again, another place where we’re looking forward to working closely with you, we haven’t had these kinds of airport dollars before and it’s really exciting to start that process,” Trottenberg said. “We also have a lot of dollars now to invest in bridges ... we know that is another huge need for a lot of counties.”

Poethig, who is the special assistant to the president for housing and urban policy, referenced the Sixth Street Bridge

project in Los Angeles County, Calif., which will connect the street and trail across the river to provide more mixed use and extensive development.

She also spoke about housing accessibility and affordability, highlighting ways counties can take advantage of the Biden administration’s Housing Supply Action Plan.

“In Colorado, the DOT [department of transportation] has provided over \$24 million to construct three new mobility hubs in Mesa County that allow for accessory dwelling unit construction by right use in residential zoning districts, incorporate more manufactured housing as a viable affordable housing strategy and present more opportunity for multi-family units,” she said.

The administration is prioritizing access to housing and shelter that is well aligned to the houseless population’s needs, she said, and referenced a new initiative focused on unsheltered homelessness.

“We’re asking you to partner with us to ensure all levels of government are aligning to the strategies and using federal resources to strengthen your local approaches,” Poethig said.

“...I think counties are the most important integrator and creator of resources across housing, health justice and education to meet the needs of more residents.” **CN**

‘I think community collaboration is one of our biggest strengths here’

From MOBILE page 5

— we did not displace anybody to be here,” Winfrey said. “This had always been the campus — where we are now was the parking lot and the old building was where the parking lot is now over here, but we made sure they understood what the impact was going to be at every stage along the development and the growth of this place.”

Stacy Baumgartner, director of operations for the Will County Health Department and Community Health Center, said that the department’s central focuses are affordability and accessibility. A breakdown of the center’s patients showed that 50 percent are Medic-

aid-eligible, while 34 percent are uninsured.

“Our mission is to improve the health of the residents of Will County by providing access to quality, integrated medical, behavioral health and dental care through community collaboration, service and education,” she said. “I think community collaboration is one of our biggest strengths here. Our purpose is to fulfill the healthcare needs of individuals throughout our county, and as a federally qualified health center, our services aren’t limited to county residents. We’re able to see anybody who walks through our doors.”

Baumgartner is chair of Will County’s Mobilizing for Action

Through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Executive Committee. In its most recent cycle, the committee assessed the county’s health needs and determined four priority areas:

- behavioral health and substance use
- access to food and nutrition
- stabilizing the built environment
- access to healthcare

“We do a series of assessments, both internally and externally in the community, and we determine what the needs are of our community,” said Sue Olenek, WCHD executive director. “We have over 80 partners in the county that participate in MAPP — we use data, we do surveys. This past

cycle, we had surveys electronically, we did the QR codes, we also did paper because not everybody has a smartphone. We published it far and wide, and so we want to make sure that we reach everyone.”

Joseph Troiani, the director of behavioral health programs at the county’s health department, discussed the department’s mental health and substance use treatment programming, including its Narcan distribution program, the projects for assistance in transition from homelessness (PATH) program and pre-exposure prophylaxis program for those at risk of HIV. The department’s crisis intervention team training hopes to have as many

as 600 officers train as mental health specialists through American Rescue Plan funding, \$30 million of which the county devoted to healthcare.

“Over the last 10 years, we’ve seen the suicide rate in the United States go from 32,000 now up to about 72,000,” he said.

“We’ve also seen a significant increase in drug overdoses — doubling if not tripling ... *The Wall Street Journal* talked about a category five mental health crisis as a result of COVID and some of the things that were going on pre-COVID, and these programs that we have in place and the expansion of these programs are definitely there to go ahead and meet that need.” **CN**

BRIGHT IDEAS | SALINE COUNTY, Kan.

County Upgrades Contact System for Client Offenders, Probation Officers

PROBLEM:

People who are arrested often fail to appear for court-ordered hearings, services and treatment.

SOLUTION:

Add an instant-notification system for client offenders and their families.

by **Meredith Moran**
staff writer

Saline County, Kan. Community Corrections has implemented a program with the software tool UPTrust that has shown increases in court appearance rates and strengthened communication between high-risk, high-need offenders and their probation officers.

UPTrust allows for messaging within the application and sends reminders for court hearings, as well as other services like mental health or substance use treatment appointments. Prior to the county department utilizing the platform, communication between probation officers and clients regarding court hearings and services was done through letters and phone calls and even sometimes resulted in supervisors having to track down a client's friends and families if they failed to appear.

"It matches where we're at as a society in 2022 — it's just giving more opportunities to communicate," said Andrew Pellant, Saline County Community Corrections pre-trial supervisor. "It was important when we brought it on that everybody understood that we're not taking away accountability from the client — they're still going to be expected to follow through and go to court, go to treatment, go to the office appointments, we're just finding ways to help aid them to make it there."



The Saline County Community Corrections staff pauses for a photo outside of the 28th judicial district office. Photo courtesy of Saline County

The county's need for a system like UPTrust was apparent because it found that the largest contributing factor in failure to appear warrants was a lack of communication. The department first heard about the UPTrust platform because the New York City Public Defender Office used it to send court reminders to their clients, so they reached out to the platform and had it tailored to the needs of community supervision, Pellant said.

Because the program was launched in October 2020, it helped make communication much more seamless in the county's adjustment to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pellant said.

"This generation, you're just trying to reach them on the level that they're comfortable with and this program has allowed us to do that, especially when we talk about COVID," Pellant said. "COVID started right when this program was coming out, so when our courts shut down and we had to do a lot of important communication with our clients,

'It matches where we're at as a society in 2022.'

- Andrew Pellant, Saline County, Kan.

letting them know what's going on [was important].

"The courts moved to video court, so then we had to help relay, 'Here's the app, here's the passcode to get into court, here's how you do this,' so I think us having the program when we did was almost vital in getting through that really bad part of the pandemic."

The department has found that its drug and alcohol clients who experienced relapse are often more comfortable talking about it via text, so the application's structure has led to more openness from clients, Pellant said.

"I think it's more comfortable, it's hard when you're in recovery," Pellant said. "People in recovery will usually relapse several times, and so I think if they build a relationship with their officer, with the treatment court judge, then

when mistakes are made for whatever reason, it can be embarrassing, so they'd rather let the officer know via text than have to say it face-to-face."

Pellant said he thinks the app has strengthened relationships between supervisors and their clients because it's established a more around the clock sense of support. Many supervisors have also used the application to send out daily messages of encouragement.

"Usually, they come into the office and we don't see the struggles they have outside the office, so, even if they don't text or message us, just them knowing that we're available has been helpful, especially for our drug court clients," Pellant said. "I think if you expect somebody to really get into that type of personal, professional relationship with

you to where they need to trust that you have their best interest when it comes to making decisions about helping them in recovery, you can't be an 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. probation officer -- I just think you lose that credibility, even if you have good intentions.

"And so, I think them knowing that, 'Hey, if I'm in relapse mode at 11 o'clock at night on a Friday, I'll always have access to my officer,' is helpful."

While Pellant is aware of other communication tools used for probation services, he said UPTrust has been the best fit for the county because of its cost effectiveness and accessibility. Pellant said he's helped Reno County, Kan. utilize UPTrust and that its easily replicable for other counties and departments.

"I've been to a couple national conferences and there's a lot of different variations out there, but nothing quite like UPTrust," Pellant said. "The ones that I've seen are attached to a big database platform, which is very expensive and cumbersome ... When you work for government agencies, you have certain sums of money that you get, whether it's what you're given by your supervision, like the Kansas Department of Corrections for us, or it's grant funding you apply for, but it's limited, so you always have to be mindful of the cost."

Lowering the department's failure to appear rate helps clients become more engaged in their cases and improves their outcomes, both in the immediate and long-term, Pellant said.

"This is kind of the unsaid thing, but when you have somebody in custody for so long, they are more likely to enter into a plea deal just so they can get out of jail ... If we assess people and we get them

See PROBATION page 12

LUCC, Fall Board Meeting in Pictures

All images by Hugh Clarke



Tarrant County, Texas Judge Glenn Whitley takes in the applause Dec. 2 from fellow NACo Board members. A past president of NACo, Whitley is retiring this year after 26 years in office. Douglas County, Neb. Commissioner Mary Ann Borgeson is to his right; Tarrant County Commissioner Roy C. Brooks is behind him.



Franklin County, Ohio Commissioner Erica Crawley makes a point Dec. 1 during a discussion on maternal mortality.



USDA's Liz Archuleta, director of intergovernmental affairs, addresses the NACo Board Dec. 2. Archuleta previously served as a Coconino County, Ariz. commissioner.



LUCC Chair John O'Grady of Franklin County, Ohio pauses for a laugh during the kick-off of the 2022 LUCC Symposium in Illinois.



Clermont County, Ohio Commissioner David Painter asks a question.



Isanti County, Minn. Commissioner Susan Morris takes the microphone at the NACo Board meeting.



(L-r): NACo CEO/Executive Director Matt Chase; Tarrant County, Texas Commissioner Roy C. Brooks, NACo President Denise Winfrey and Tarrant County, Texas Judge Glenn Whitley pause for a photo at the Board meeting.



Grant Veeder, auditor and commissioner of elections, Black Hawk County, Iowa, delivers a limerick Dec. 2 at the end of the NACo Board meeting.

Parks often a 'last refuge' for homeless

From *HOMELESS* page 4

the county started its trail ranger program.

"We were asking our parks employees, who are typically mowing and picking up trash and spraying weeds, to confront these people experiencing homelessness and move them on with the Sheriff's Office backing them up," he said. "We started experiencing turnover because they just didn't want to do it and then the supervisors and even the director before me were doing it because they didn't want to ask their people to handle those situations."

The rangers led the way on enforcement, explaining the rules of the parks and developing relationships with the campers, accompanied by staffers from the county's department of Community Safety and Well-being, who offer support from the county's human services agencies.

"Now we're able to be proactive as soon as we see encampments, the ranger service

immediately makes contact and addresses the situation and they're able to move it on quickly," Fanning said.

While LaFortune Park in Tulsa County, Okla. forbids overnight camping, it is welcoming to all users, and offers amenities of kindred spirit to its origin. The park was originally the county's poor farm.

"Historically speaking, that land has been serving the citizens of Tulsa County for many years in lots of different versions," said Vince Trinidad, director of Tulsa County, Okla.'s parks and recreation.

"Before FDR's alphabet soup programs, that was the place that if someone didn't have a place to live or couldn't afford to live any place else, they could go there and you know one of the social programs was you could live there; they had a clinic where you could raise farm animals, you could raise crops... and so it was really serving citizens for many years, prior to it being a park and a green space."

The county's department of social services offers a free pharmacy, which also supplies non-medical essentials. Social service department staff know they can find clients in the park, but Trinidad knows that his staff has a good relationship with people in need there, whether they're making use of the Wi-Fi stations or washing their clothes in the bathrooms.

"I'm super proud of our ability to allow that because they might not have any place to turn," he said. "We go inside and they're very respectful, sometimes they apologize, but we tell them that's why these facilities are here. While we're talking, we ask if we can put them in touch with our social services to help them out, but we rarely have a conflict with any of our patrons."

"A lot of it is awareness and training for our staff. We try to continually update our staff to make sure that they can ask the right questions to be inviting, because these are Tulsa County citizens we're talking to." **CN**

ON THE MOVE

NACo STAFF



Childs

● **Jade Childs** has joined NACo as a communications specialist in the Public Affairs Department. She was previously a communications associate for Bishop McNamara High School in Washington, D.C. and an account coordinator for Shift Communications. She earned a B.S in Journalism and Mass Communication from North Carolina A&T University.

'We're trying to break barriers'

From *PROBATION* page 9

out of jail, we can get them not only services, but then reminders and we can communicate in different ways to help them not only appear for court cases, but then follow up with whatever else they've got going on," Pellant said.

"It's just all about community wellness, putting them in a situation where they can reestablish themselves as important figures in their families, because that's also going to have collateral effects."

"If there are children involved, they're less likely to find themselves in the criminal justice system if their parents are involved [in their lives], and it goes on the other end — if their parents are not involved, or they're involved in addiction or in the criminal justice system, then they're more likely, so we're just trying to break all those barriers." **CN**

2023 NACo LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

>> *February 11-14*
>> *Washington D.C.*

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Intervention a ‘proven tool’ to reduce gun violence

From GUN VIOLENCE page 6

this up to a fragmented system, so it can be the start of your formalized method of delivering these prevention and recovery services.”

Boxing Out Negativity is an example of a grassroots organization that has found success in Cook County, Ill. The youth boxing program on the West Side of Chicago was created by Derek Brown, who was born and raised in the area. He joined a gang in his teens, which led to him going to prison at the age of 17.

Since 2009, Brown has devoted his life to youth outreach in the hopes that he can prevent others from having similar experiences to his own, starting Boxing Out Negativity and funding the program in its early years himself so that local youth could participate free of charge. Since then, the initiative has received funding from organizations

like the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority and The Chicago Fund for Safe and Peaceful Communities.

The organization goes beyond boxing, offering meditation circles, bringing in local mental health experts and hosting other events, like Bike Out Negativity and Street Love Rides.

“It’s a true community within a community taking a holistic approach to supporting physical, mental and spiritual wellness in a family-like environment, centered on positivity,” Globokar said. “Coaches can have an incredible impact on individuals’ lives, but people are complex and it moves beyond sport.

“It’s one thing to build a connection with a kid building proper technique, but to truly take the time to step back and have meaningful conversations and to have shared experiences and shared meals and outings and all those things just builds

an entirely different level of connection and influence.”

Brown shared one of the organization’s success stories and said he thinks initiatives like Boxing Out Negativity are the way to help fight a national issue on the local level.

“This one kid was recently shot, he was highly gang-involved,” Brown said. “He didn’t come to us right after he got released, but it was about three months later -- at that time he was using PCP, drugs, all of the above and he got jumped in the streets. He came to Boxing Out Negativity with the intentions of enhancing his fighting skills... but what he learned was in order to learn how to box you have to become your greatest self.

“...The man that we’re speaking about is now an employee of ours, he’s a coach. This is the model that we can just put all over -- if somebody like Derek Brown can do it, anybody can.” **CN**

GET TO KNOW...

Hancock County, Ohio

Welcome, Hancock County, Ohio!

Established in 1820, Hancock County was named for John Hancock, the first person to sign the Declaration of Independence. Its county seat, Findlay, was designated as Flag City, USA by the U.S. House of Representatives in 1974. In the 1960s, John Cooke, a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, moved to Findlay and started a flag fund, purchasing 14,000 American flags for the city’s residents and businesses to fly on National Flag Day. Findlay now has a Flag City monument and in 2019, the Hancock Historical Museum displayed the only 13-star American flag available for public viewing in existence, which is believed to have flown over Fort Independence in Boston during the Revolutionary War.

Hancock County measures roughly 534 square miles and its population is around 74,920, according to the 2020 census. Interesting facts about the county include:

- For three months in the early 1960s, Hancock County was the only community in the world where touch-tone telephone service was available.

- Warren Harding, the nation’s 29th president, placed third in a cornet competition hosted by Findlay at the Ohio State Music Festival in 1884.
- Prior to the Civil War, the county seat served as a stop on the Underground Railroad for enslaved people escaping to Canada.
- Hancock County natives include race car driver Ray Harroun, the first Indianapolis 500 winner, and composer Tell Taylor whose song “Down by the Old Mill Stream” has been used in media for almost a century including in the television shows “All in the Family,” “Happy Days” and “The Simpsons.”
- Marathon Petroleum and Cooper Tire and Rubber Company are headquartered in the county.
- Founded in 1836, *The Courier* is Hancock County’s hometown newspaper.

“Get to Know” features new NACo member counties.



WORD SEARCH

NORTH SLOPE BOROUGH, Alaska

Created by: Alyxa Hawkins

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

AIR: The Borough is mostly only accessible by flight. There is one roadway into the Borough, but it is used mostly as a freight corridor.

ALASKA: North Slope Borough is located at the northernmost point of the state of Alaska.

BASIN: This Borough is named for the Alaska North Slope basin, a region located on the northern slope of the Brooks Range and along the coast of the Arctic Ocean.

BOROUGH: During the Alaskan Constitutional Convention in 1950, it was decided that instead of being called counties, these county-equivalent areas in the state would be referred to as Boroughs.

DARK: Because of its northernmost location, parts of the Borough see upwards of 60 days of darkness throughout the year.

GALLAGHER: The Gallagher Flint Station Archaeological Site is a National

Historic Landmark located in North Slope Borough. When discovered in 1970, it gave off a radiocarbon date showing evidence of the oldest human activity then known within the state of Alaska.

NORTHERN: North Slope is the northernmost county or equivalent in the entire United States.

OIL: The development of oil throughout North Slope provides the Borough with most of its stable operating revenue.

PERMAFROST: In this area, only the surface layer of the tundra thaws regularly and most soil is permanently frozen year-round.

POPULATION: As of the 2018 U.S. census, this area has a population of 11,031.

SIZE: The Borough has a total area of 94,796 square miles.

REFUGE: North Slope Borough features two national wildlife refuges including Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

UTQIAGVIK: Utqiagvik serves as the borough seat for North Slope, as well as being its largest city.

WHALING: Whaling serves as the most important subsistence activity to the coastal villages within the Borough.

WILDLIFE: North Slope Borough is the only local government in Alaska to assume management of its wildlife resources. They monitor wildlife stocks and perform scientific research as a way of fostering better management of local species.

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

ARIZONA

• The **NAVAJO COUNTY** Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to allocate \$1.3 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Justice toward **overdose prevention**. The County Overdose Prevention and Engagement program will test for substance abuse for those booked into a jail and offer intervention and access to support services to those who show high risk of overdose. Navajo County Attorney Brad Carlyon told *The Arizona Republic* that the hope for the program is to reduce some of the strain on the county's emergency rooms, which are small and often understaffed. The county is also looking at ways to incorporate housing assistance into the program.

CALIFORNIA

• **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** is set to launch a **"Care Court" system** next year that will allow county courts to order treatment for those experiencing homelessness who are struggling with severe mental illness, like schizophrenia. If a first responder, family member or clinician refers a person to the program, a civil court judge will establish treatment,

including medication, support services and a housing plan.

"At the end of the day, when someone is lying on the street, clearly suffering in their own feces, clearly not able to take care of themselves, I don't think it is compassionate or humanitarian to leave them in that condition," County Board of Supervisors Chair Nathan Fletcher told KFMB-TV. "We've got to find a way to get them some help. Then, when they're clear-minded, they can make decisions in terms of what they want to do when they move forward."

FLORIDA

• **VOLUSIA COUNTY** has implemented a pilot program to prevent **dune erosion**, installing a Tiger Dam to act as a temporary seawall following the storm surges caused by Hurricanes Ian and Nicole. A similar system was used in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina.

"You've got a lot of tourism that comes out here that they're going to end up losing a lot of money," said Jim Bujeda, deputy director and



ALASKA

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH Emergency Services helped **rescue a 500-pound baby moose** that had gotten trapped in a basement. The moose fell into a basement window after trying to eat some surrounding vegetation. It was tranquilized so that it could be carried out by six responders, but then wandered back out into the wild once the sedative wore off.

Florida SERT chief for the Florida Division of Emergency Management. "You have a lot of homes that have been destroyed as you saw further down the coastline and we're trying to stop that. We're trying to get this community back on its feet."

ILLINOIS

• **MCHENRY COUNTY** is entering a yearlong partnership with **The Animal Legal**

Defense Fund to increase monitoring, training and support of the county's handling of animal cruelty cases. The Collaborative Response Project will involve veterinarians, law enforcement and prosecutors and provide resources for case investigation and veterinary forensics. The Animal Legal Defense Fund chose to partner with McHenry County, which conducted 300 animal cruelty investigations last year, out of other county applicants from across the country.

"In today's law enforcement landscape — with budget cuts, staffing shortfalls and redistribution of service priorities — animal cruelty investigations may be deprioritized," said Stephen Wells, Animal Legal Defense Fund's executive director. "The Animal Legal Defense Fund is launching the Collaborative Response Project to support a multidisciplinary response to animal crime and ensure necessary investigations take place through a partnership between local law enforcement agencies and a community veterinarian."



MINNESOTA

• **OTTER TAIL COUNTY'S Organics Recycling and Backyard Composting programs** have prevented over 200,000 pounds of food waste since they were launched in March. The Organics Recycling Program supplies carts, bins, compostable bags and collection and hauling services for 22 schools, healthcare sites and restaurants in the county. The Backyard Composting Program is on a smaller, more individualized scale, but studies have found that backyard composting cuts household waste by up to 25 percent. The program provided 500 county residents who were willing to compost for a year with bins.



COLORADO

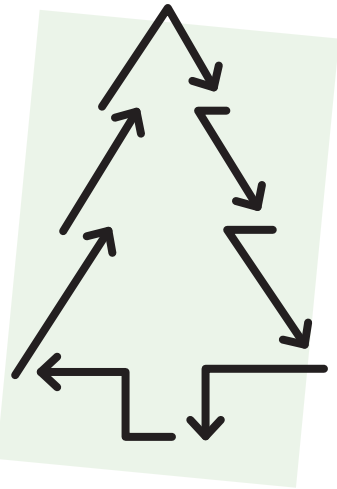
MESA COUNTY's Child Care 8,000 program expands existing childcare centers and approves new ones in

the county's effort to fill gaps in childcare and reach 8,000 spots for children ages 0-13. The program has helped Landmark Christian Preschool, one of the

program's pilot sites, stay afloat and has also allowed for new centers to open, like Danielle's Childcare.

"[Child Care 8,000] allowed the county and the homes and the centers to work together to work through some issues and get staffing needs figured out, get employment needs figured out, get licensing issues figured out, and to have everyone work as one entity rather than an 'every-one for themselves' type of deal," said Landmark Director Lauren Weber.

From NEWS FROM page 14



MISSOURI

• **JEFFERSON COUNTY** is gearing up for the aftermath of the holiday season with a **Christmas tree recycling program** that will run from Dec. 26 to Jan. 16. Recycled trees can be used as mulch or act as an erosion barrier along a shoreline, but Jefferson County plans to use them in its county parks.

NEVADA

• Owners of dogs deemed dangerous by **WASHOE COUNTY** law enforcement or animal services have more opportunities to reclaim their dogs under the county's new **dangerous dog ordinance**. They previously had to build specific, custom enclosures at their homes determined by the animal's size, but now need only purchase a 10-by-5-foot kennel.

NEW YORK

• The record mid-November snowfall in Buffalo prompted **ERIE COUNTY** to announce a **travel ban** for a majority of the county while crews cleared up to 80 inches of snow that fell over a three-day period.

OHIO

• An exercise for the **FAIRFIELD COUNTY** auditor's office staff has become the county's **Map of the Month**. Every month, a member of the county's GIS/mapping team chooses a theme and creates a map for that month. Themes have included Fairfield County's hauntings and spooky legends and the locations of the coun-

ty's Christmas tree farms.

OREGON

• **DESCHUTES COUNTY** is offering commercial property owners a program to obtain 100 percent long-term, fixed-rate financing for **energy efficiency**, renewable energy, water conservation and seismic rehabilitation projects.

• The **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (CPACE) program** seeks to make substantial energy efficient improvement projects become more affordable and accessible by offering longer terms than are typically available for conventional financing.

• Months after **WASHINGTON COUNTY** voters ratified a **ban on all flavored tobacco products**, a local circuit judge overturned the ordinance, ruling that such a ban would have to come from the state, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported.



TEXAS

• **HARRIS COUNTY** deputies



NEW YORK

"Some birds weren't meant to be caged, their feathers were just too bright." While a pheasant's drab plumage does not quite match the letter of a Shawshank State Prison inmate's musings, **inmates** at the **SENECA COUNTY** Correctional Facility still learned the spirit of the lesson. They raised 50 of the birds, which were released in October on state-owned and protected land. Mental health professionals told the *Finger Lakes Times* that the program is therapeutic.



VIRGINIA

More than 70 years after a student walkout started the legal process that culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, **PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY** has **updated its seal** to reflect its part in history. Artist Richard C. McClintock updated his 2004 seal design to add Robert Russa Moton High School, the all-Black high school where students protested inadequate and unsafe school conditions, to the center of the seal, replacing the old county clerk's office from a prior location, the *Cardinal News* reported.

will staff two locations where buyers and sellers can **exchange goods** under supervision during the holiday season.

The constable's office does not endorse or criticize transactions made online or through social media and is not responsible for the validity of transactions and will not be involved in the business conducted among participating parties. Deputies will be on hand to maintain order in the event of a dispute.

UTAH

• **WASHINGTON COUNTY** will join with **IRON COUNTY** to create a satellite of Utah's

inland port. The port's main hub is in northern Utah, with a "hub and spokes" model devised for the rest of the state. These satellites are to be built in areas that have major freeway or rail connections – Iron County has both.

VIRGINIA

• **FAIRFAX COUNTY** has integrated 48 strategies into its first **climate resilience plan**. Resilient Fairfax aims to mitigate the risks associated with impacts such as flooding, extreme heat and severe storms. The plan includes a climate projections report; an audit of existing policies, risk assessment and an interactive climate map viewer.

• **PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY** employees will be able to negotiate union contracts after the Board of Supervisors passed a **collective bargaining ordinance**. The county Board will conduct a 90-day review period to address additional changes that would make the ordinance more inclusive of workers left out, such as part-time workers, WAMU News reported. Employees will not be authorized to strike, though.

Charlie Ban and Meredith Moran compile News From Across the Nation. Contact cban@naco.org and mmoran@naco.org.



PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY, Va.

Prince George County, Va. was established in 1703 by the state legislature.



The shield pictured in the county's seal is the Cross of St. George.

Featured on the seal are the Prince of Denmark, whom the county is named for.

Also featured is a dogwood blossom, Virginia's state flower.

Cardinals, the state bird, sit atop a pine twig to represent the county's forest industry and an anchor is in reference to the James and Appomattox rivers.

Underneath the shield is the Latin phrase "Semper Libertas" and "Always Liberty," which is featured to show how much the county's early settlers valued independence and personal freedom.

Would you like to see your county seal featured? Contact Meredith Moran at mmoran@naco.org.

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