

NACO National Association of Counties

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Freshmen bring county credentials to Congress

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



From Lewis County, Ky. to Honolulu, they're coming to Washington — one by way of American Samoa. They are the freshmen members of Congress who were former county-elected or appointed officials.

Twenty-eight recent or former county officials ran for the House of Representatives; a dozen of them won: four Republicans and eight Democrats. Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), a former Dane County supervisor, moved up from the House to the Senate.

They bring to Capitol Hill a range of experiences — from entrepreneur and physician to business



Photo by Jim Philipps

Rep.-elect Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-N.M.), a former Bernalillo County commissioner, speaks with NACo staff (pictured: Ed Rosado, legislative director) during a visit to NACo offices Nov. 12. She was in town for freshman orientation, preparing to take her seat in Congress in January.

Sandy causes headaches for local elections officials

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

While thousands of New Jersey and New York residents made sense of their fortunes following Hurricane Sandy's landfall, county clerks and boards of elections were looking to the future — a presidential election seven days away.

In Monmouth County, N.J. one of the worst-affected counties in the state, County Clerk Claire French's staff was still working to count ballots a week after Election Day, an effort that was expected to last another week.

The 18-hour days of election week have now given way to 10- and 12-hour shifts. If the power outages in various polling places weren't enough, the storm's effect on the population added a layer

of complexity and extended the electoral uncertainty.

Diaspora throughout New Jersey because of the storm motivated the lieutenant governor to extend overseas voter status to anyone who had been displaced, allowing them to submit provisional ballots that would be mailed to their home county. Postal service backups meant the statutory deadline to receive ballots would be extended 13 days after Election Day.

The Monmouth County clerk's office shares the emergency services building, so French's staff had lights and electricity. The building became a refuge, for most county workers who had no power at home.

"We were so isolated, especially since our power at home was out,"

executive and military veteran (see "sidebar headline").

CountyNews caught up with three new members, either before they left home, or while in Washington for orientation, and asked how their county service would translate to Washington.

A few candidates for unexpired terms have already taken office in the 112th Congress. Thomas Massie (R), former judge executive of Lewis County, Ky., is one of them, as is Donald Payne Jr., a former Essex County, N.J. freeholder. They were on the ballot twice — running for both unexpired and full two-year terms.

"I would like to see fewer strings

attached when the federal government interacts with local governments," said Massie, 41, an engineer and businessman with two degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "I call my two years of service in local government my associate's degree in local government. I really do think it's going to help me to be a better congressman having served in local government." He spent nearly two years as county judge executive.

Before running for that office, he said, "I was the guy that showed up and complained at the local meetings. I tell people I was the dog

See **FRESHMEN** page 7

Congress tackles daunting task as lame duck session starts

By MARILINA SANZ
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

In what is being called the "status quo election," President Barack Obama became the first president since FDR to be re-elected with a higher unemployment rate than on the date of his inauguration, and Congress remained under current control, albeit with some gains for the Democrats.

Congress came back for a lame duck session the week of Nov. 12 with the challenging task of avoiding the so-called fiscal cliff of automatic budget cuts known as sequestration and a slew of expiring tax cuts and other provisions. Some of these provisions include unemployment benefits, the payroll tax cut, the automatic rate decrease for Medicare providers (known as the "Doc fix") and the alternative minimum tax patch.

Both the president and House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) have expressed a willingness to compromise, and there was a summit scheduled at the White House, but there are a lot of questions about whether they will be able to reach an overarching deal during the lame duck session.

Time constraints are always an issue. Yes, Congress came back, but the first week was expected to be devoted to House Republican leadership elections and then Thanksgiving recess kicked in. House Democrats were expected to

See **LAME DUCK** page 8

Quick Takes

2012 Presidential Election Top Voting Counties

	Votes
Los Angeles County, Calif.	2,330,792
Harris County, Texas	1,185,478
Miami-Dade County, Fla.	873,985
San Diego County, Calif.	814,638
Bexar County, Texas	511,435

Source: Politco.com

CountyNews Features

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N.J. counties face tough questions, long road after Sandy

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Like most other New Jersey residents, Monmouth County Freeholder Director John Curley spent Hurricane Sandy huddled in his house, hoping for the best.

When he emerged, he was relieved to learn nobody in his county had died in the storm. But as he surveyed the damage, it sunk in just how powerless he was.

"When people come up to you as if you have some godlike ability to correct it all with the snap of the finger ..." he said as his voice trailed off. "That's just heartbreaking. Kids are freezing, older people have dirt smeared on their faces, digging what's left of their homes out."

The scene replays as counties assess Sandy's impact across the state. Officials are trying to assess damage to their infrastructures and figure out how much they'll be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They're adjusting to the sudden increase in operating expenses,



Photos courtesy of Morris County, N.J.

The Morris County Courthouse lost a 40-foot-by-70-foot section of its copper roof.

which was unexpected for pretty much all of them.

Emergency management personnel and first responders are searching for their third and fourth winds and they try to bring the state back to working order.

John Donnadio, the executive di-

rector of the New Jersey Association of Counties, said the storm couldn't have come at a worse time, given the presidential election and the varying temperatures.

"Right now, we have more questions than answers," he said. "We don't know what's reimbursable through FEMA, and we don't know the overall impact on our economy."

Donnadio pointed out that some communities were wiped out completely, which will transform some counties' real estate base.

"It will revolutionize some counties' economic development plans," he said.

A few weeks after Sandy hit and disrupted power to 92 percent of Monmouth County, life is starting to get back to normal. For as many as a few hundred county residents, though, normal may soon become living in Fort Monmouth, a military installation closed in 2011 that was returned to use for long-term housing for displaced New Jerseyans.

More than 700 Monmouth County residents had been staying in county shelters, though Curley said he expects many of those people would move in with family members. He's not sure if his county will even retain its approximately 630,000 residents.

"We really don't even know the number of people who have been displaced, some go on to the live permanently somewhere else, some may come back," he said.

Donnadio feels one of the paramount issues for many affected counties will be emergency management plans with respect to human services, particularly housing.

"Our counties are going to need a long-term plan for shelter operations and related expenses," he said. "People are coming to us to house them, but at some point our counties are going to run out of money."



William "Hank" Lyon, a Morris County freeholder, helps keep an eye on Sandy's effects in the county's Emergency Operations Center.

Curley toured Monmouth County in a pickup truck that took him places his sedan never would have reached. The sight of the borough of Union Beach shocked him and left him reaching for ways to describe the devastation.

"I'm not sure if it looked like Hiroshima or a snowstorm on the moon," he said, describing sand blown every which way over houseless foundations and scattered wreckage. Ghost towns, eerily scored by the sound of wind as if whipped through a forest of plastic bags still hanging inside a dry cleaner's with broken windows.

Sandbags remained on the doorstep of a house and door, both of which had been washed away. At the very least, Curley knew the sandbags didn't budge.

A month too late to be of help preparing for Sandy, the New Jersey state association had planned an emergency management preparedness summit for December.

As the state moves ahead and rebuilds, Donnadio said a common interest from counties has been to improve their relationships with utility companies. Power company PSEG lost service for 1.9 million of 2.2 million customers in New Jersey, which rankled many and caused complications as counties prepared for the election.

The storm caused damage to countless county buildings — two courthouses in particular. Morris County's courthouse, listed on the national and state registers of historic places, lost a 40-foot-by-70-foot section of its copper roof, among other roofs damaged in the storm. Glass domes on Passaic County's courthouse and county administration buildings were also damaged.

Though plenty of humans were affected by the storm, animals also

had to deal with the disruption. When Cape May County's zoo lost power, fear spread that the World of Birds exhibit would be at risk. County Communications Director Lenora Boninfante said none of the animals were hurt in the storm, all were moved inside and cared for by zookeepers, and the damage to the zoo was limited to downed trees.

Profiles in Service



» Stanley Chang

NACo Board Member

City Councilmember

City and County of Honolulu

Years affiliated with NACo: 2

Years in public service: 2

Occupation: lawyer

Education: Harvard College, 2004; Harvard Law School, 2008

The hardest thing I've ever done: learn Mandarin

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Winston Churchill, Lord MacLehose (Governor of Hong Kong, 1971–82) and Jeremy Lin

A dream I have is to: help make Hawaii a better place for future generations.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: have never surfed.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: hiked a live volcano in Guatemala.

My favorite way to relax is: reading.

I'm most proud of: what my parents have accomplished as immigrants who came to the U.S. with nothing.

Every morning I read: *The New York Times*, *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, *Civil Beat* and *Politico*.

My favorite meal is: in Hong Kong or Taiwan.

My pet peeve is: intellectual dishonesty.

My motto is: "Faster, higher, stronger."

The last book I read was: *Game Change*.

My favorite movie is: *The Godfather*.

My favorite music is: top 40 all over the world.

My favorite president is: Franklin Roosevelt.

CountyNews

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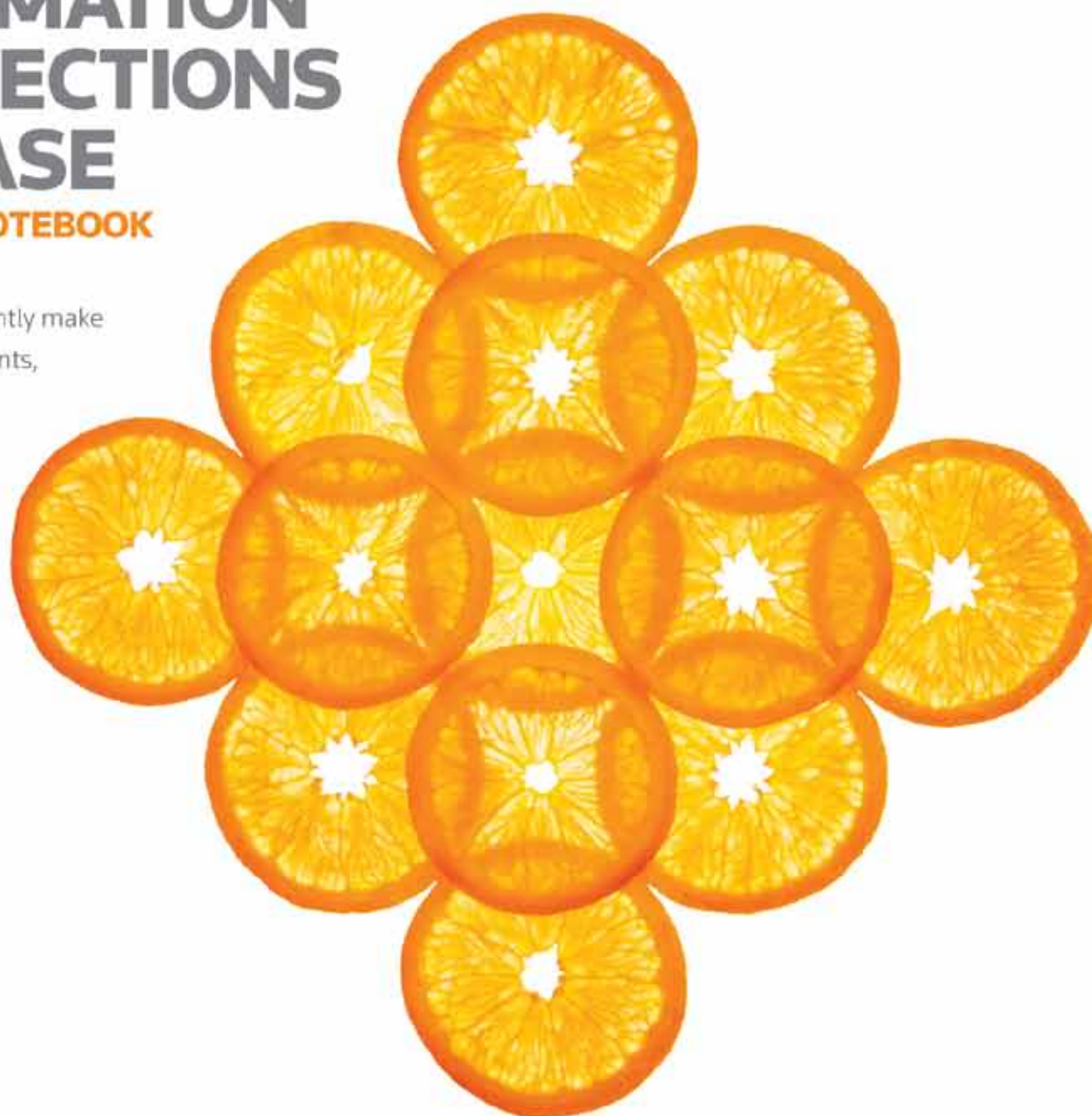
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'Only an earthquake and tidal wave were missing,' quips one election supervisor

SANDY from page 1

French said. "We never listened to the radio, didn't watch TV, didn't have time to read newspapers. I kept up with what was going on when I talked to other county clerks."

Other county departments assigned staff to work in the clerk's office, which swelled to 20 people from the normal five with computers plugged into every available outlet. The overall staff for the election grew to 60, with 20 apiece also coming from the board of elections' and the superintendent of elections' offices.

County workers visited shelters with ballot applications and returned the next day with the ballots. The usual trickle of walk-in voters ballooned to more than 4,000, which meant long lines in cold weather over three days of early voting.

"It's a presidential election year, so everyone wanted their vote to be heard," she said.

Given the power outages that topped out at 90 percent of the county, polling places had to consolidate where they did have electricity, meaning as many as seven voting districts could have converged on one spot.

Complicating matters for French was that she was running for her office this year, and her canvassing efforts left her feeling distracted, and the stress of the situation began to wear on her.

"When I'd knock on a door, I was half tempted to ask if I could use their shower," she said.

As the emergency ballots came in through the mail, it became apparent they were unable to be scanned, so staffers had to transcribe the votes onto a ballot that

could be scanned, delaying the results further. French is unsure if the \$12,000 worth of replacement ballots she had to order will be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency because they were necessitated by gubernatorial executive orders related to the storm.

At this point, French said she hoped to have results confirmed by early December. As much as her office has had to react to the storm and its effects, she thinks it would be unwise to plan elections in anticipation of a similar storm.

"There's no way you can be prepared for something of this magnitude," she said. "It would be a waste of time and personnel to design a system around a 100-year storm like this."

Meanwhile, in Nassau County, N.Y., on Long Island, Election Commissioner William Biamonte called the week "Murphy's Law on steroids."

"The only things we were missing were an earthquake and tidal wave," he said.

One week before the election, 200 of the county's 275 polling places lacked power. Five days after that, half were still in the dark. With no assurances from the power company that electricity would be restored, Biamonte got nervous. His county of more than 900,000 registered voters typically had a 70 percent turnout for presidential elections, with 74 percent in 2008.

"Once Gov. (Andrew) Cuomo put the hammer down (Nov. 1) and prioritized getting power back to poll sites, we had some movement," he said. "Those two-hour battery backups wouldn't have made it."

Biamonte's office went into a war-room mentality and constantly checked each polling place for power and preparedness, eventually having to move only 40.

The last big hurdle was recruiting and training 700 replacement poll workers to do the work of 5,500 regulars, most of whom had evacu-

Sandy's impact on elections in W. Va., Md.

When Terry Payne went to bed on Oct. 29 without power, the Webster County, W.Va. clerk expected to at least be back in the office the next day, regardless of Hurricane Sandy's effects.

What she didn't expect was almost four feet of snow that surprised the Mountain State and trapped her in her driveway for three more days, three crucial days leading up to the 2012 general election. At least 28 of West Virginia's 55 counties saw snowfall, with the heaviest along the Allegheny Mountains, which extend into Maryland and Pennsylvania.

"My husband plowed the driveway, but the secondary roads were impassable," Payne said. "All we could do was wait for the snow to melt or the plows to reach us."

When she finally reached the powerless courthouse Friday morning, she and her staff worked diligently to sure that despite losing three days of early voting, Webster County would have an election as planned.

In the end, Payne's husband continued to help shoulder much of the effort for the election. He made rounds to polling places with gas for generators and heaters to keep the poll workers comfortable while she and her staff made sure the voting machines were ready to go. All told, the effort went smoothly and the Payne said the county's 46 percent turnout was better than she expected, given that many voters didn't have electricity and were dealing with plenty of distractions.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine it would be like this," she said, "I hope and pray it never happens again during an election."

In adjacent Randolph County, Clerk Brenda Wiseman said turnout was actually up to 54 percent an increase from the mid-30s, which she attributes to voters wanting to spend some time in a warm building, even if it meant waiting in line.

Garrett County, Md.'s election went off without too much of a hitch, extending early voting one day to make up for two days that were lost during the storm. Garrett borders West Virginia and got some of the snow. On the other side of Maryland, despite high water levels in the resort town of Ocean City, election operations in Somerset County were not terribly affected, the effects limited to a suspension of early voting for two days when county buildings were evacuated.

ated or had lost contact because phone service was out.

"We put together some makeshift classes over the weekend to train them," he said. "They came through for us in what was probably a very busy time in their lives. We probably dropped by 150,000 votes (down to approximately 54 percent turnout) but the election happened."

Morris County, N.J. fared a bit better, but rather than the deluge of

water, Clerk Joan Bramhall found herself bracing against a digital flood.

"Emails," she said. "Emails all the time. It was overwhelming."

She estimated more than 1,900 email ballots came into her office following Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno's executive order to expand email and fax voting, and for counties to extend their deadline for receiving those votes.

"We didn't have quite enough time to prepare for receiving all of the votes, but we just kept at it until we made a dent," she said. "We're doing the best we can. As soon as that order went out, wooom!, we started getting them."

The positive side, those increased avenues for voting helped Morris County reach what Bramhall believes to be a record turnout, at 60 percent, so far.

**See this story at www.naco.org/countynews to see New Jersey Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno's executive orders relating to election policies in Sandy's wake*

Word Search

DeSoto County, Fla. Facts

Learn more about this featured county in 'What's in a Seal?'

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- ARCADIA (central city)
- CARLSTROM (airbase during WWII)
- CATTLE (important part of settling and economy)
- CHARLEY (hurricane that hit in 2004)
- CHARLOTTE (surrounding county)
- CITRUS (important crop to county)
- FLORIDA (state where county is located)
- GLADES (surrounding county)

- HARDEE (surrounding county)
- HERNANDO (namesake Spanish explorer)
- HIGHLANDS (surrounding county)
- MANATEE (surrounding county)
- RAILROAD (brought wealth to county)
- RODEO (popular sport in county)
- SARASOTA (surrounding county)

Created by Christopher Johnson

In Case You Missed It

News to use from past County News

» Presentation shows impact of budget sequestration on counties

NACo has produced a PowerPoint presentation on the pending federal budget sequestration process and its potential impact on counties. Because the Congressional Super Committee failed to reach an agreement on deficit reduction in November 2011, sequestration is now scheduled to begin on Jan. 2, 2013

To view the presentation on sequestration, visit www.naco.org/newsroom/Documents/Sequestration101.pdf.



When you see the "web" icon in a story, there's more information available in the online edition of County News at www.naco.org/countynews. Check it out!

NACo prescription discount card surpasses \$500 million saved

It is not every day someone hands you \$50 while purchasing your prescription medication. Or is it?

A Florida media outlet recently reported how Tammy Harris, a resident and employee of Brevard County, Fla. overheard the conversation of a woman who couldn't afford to pay the \$72.50 for a prescription not covered by her insurance. "The woman dumped her purse on the counter, looking for money, before Harris stepped up and offered her a Brevard County card, a free prescription discount card available to the county's uninsured and underinsured residents," the publication reported in September. "It saved the woman \$50 on her total bill."

"She cried," said Harris, community resources and development supervisor for Brevard Housing and Human Services. "She hugged me and said she knew there was good karma around her," according to *FloridaToday.com*.

The scene was made possible thanks to the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program. Brevard County is one of more than 1,400 of the nation's 3,068 counties participating in the program, which this month surpassed \$500 million in savings for

American consumers since its inception nearly eight years ago.

The average savings per transaction is 24 percent, according to NACo. Most important, however, is the actual dollar savings at the point of sale and how those savings can add up month after month for many American families. Depending on the prescription, savings per purchase range from less than \$10 to as much as \$20, \$30, \$40 and even more than \$50.

"This program puts cash right back into consumers' pockets thanks to their local county government and the National Association of Counties," said NACo President Chris Rodgers, commissioner, Douglas County, Neb. "Saving American consumers more than \$500 million on their prescription costs is an enormous milestone for our program, and NACo is extremely proud."

The savings are impressive: \$24.3 million saved in Montgomery County, Md.; \$15.9 million saved in Indianapolis-Marion County, Ind.; \$10 million in Snohomish County, Wash.; \$7.2 million in Wake County, N.C.; \$6.5 million saved in Maricopa County, Ariz.; \$6.2 million in Palm Beach County, Fla.; \$6.1 million in



"This program puts cash right back into consumers' pockets thanks to their local county government ..."

Oakland County, Mich.; \$2.8 million in Fulton County, Ga., and \$1.9 million in Cook County, Ill.

Rural counties with populations of fewer than 50,000 are saving big as well: \$546,000 saved in Culpeper County, Va.; \$341,000 saved in Buffalo County, Neb.; \$184,000 saved in Baxter County, Ark.; \$179,000 saved in Brookings County, S.D.

and \$119,000 saved in Humboldt County, Iowa.

Savings are not exclusive to the contiguous 48 states: More than \$609,000 in cold, hard cash has been saved in Kenai Peninsula Borough, Alaska, while residents in Honolulu City-County are saying "mahalo" for more than \$3.6 million in savings.

The free discount card has many benefits: It is easy to get one. There are no forms to fill out. The card can be used by those who do not have insurance or by those who have prescriptions not covered by insurance. The card may be used by any resident, regardless of age, income or existing health condition. Everyone is eligible, and one card is good for the entire family.

Further, all commonly prescribed prescription medications, including many pet medications, are eligible for a discount. The card is accepted within a national network of 65,000 pharmacies including all the major chains such as Wal-Mart, CVS/Pharmacy, Walgreens, Giant, Safeway and Rite Aid. The participating pharmacies also include the majority of community-based, independent pharmacies.

Residents can find out if their

county participates in the program by visiting www.nacorx.org. A discount card can be printed directly from the same website. Information is posted on the website to learn where residents can locate the nearest participating pharmacy. Assistance with the discount card program is also available by calling toll-free 1.877.321.2652.

"Just as Ms. Harris was in the right place at the right time to assist her fellow county resident, participating NACo-member counties are positioned to offer the free discount cards and significant savings to families during these challenging economic times," Rodgers said. "It's truly as if someone hands you cash each time you're standing at the pharmacy checkout register."

The NACo Prescription Drug Discount Card Program was created in late 2004 as a 17-county pilot program in partnership with CVS Caremark to provide a valuable membership benefit to counties. The NACo Board of Directors made the program available to members nationwide in May 2005.

For more information, contact NACo's Membership staff toll free at 1.888.407.6226 or agoldschmidt@naco.org.

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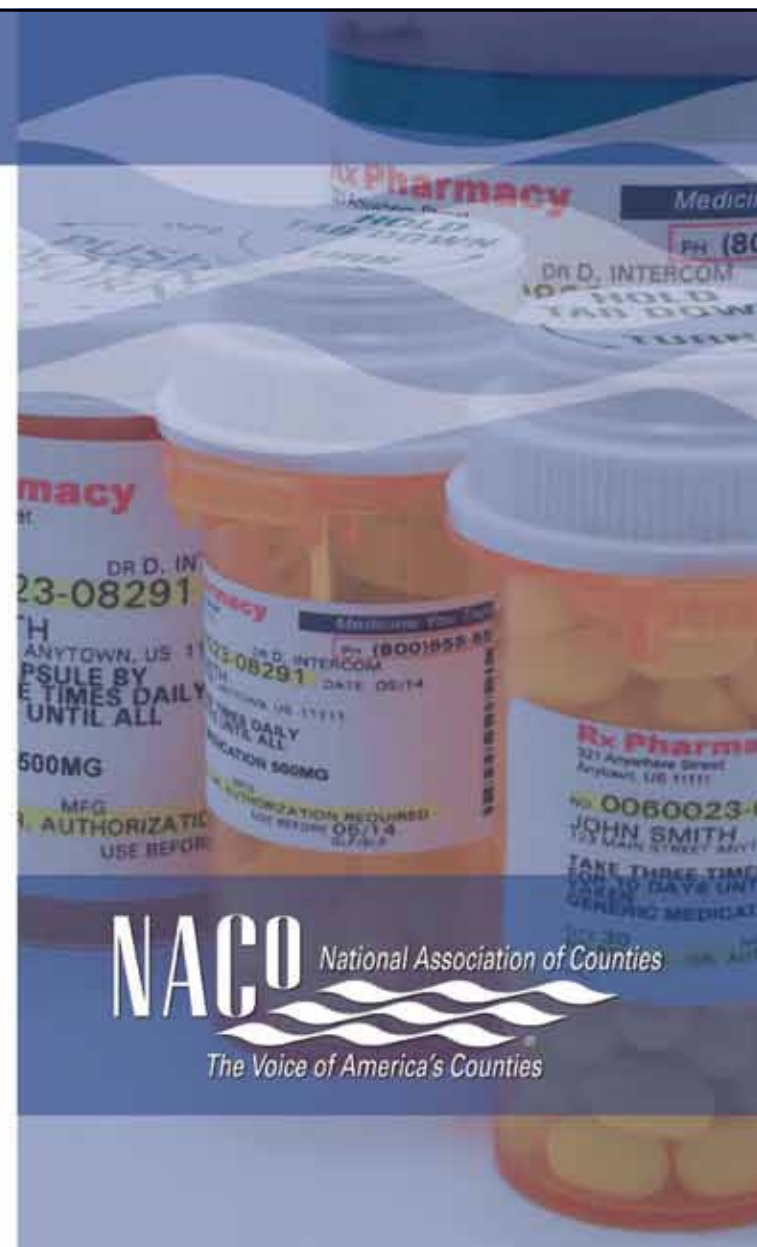
As a NACo member, not only are you able to help your uninsured and underinsured county residents, but you also have a choice to receive a marketing reimbursement fee to help your county as well.

Contact Andrew Goldschmidt, Director, Membership Marketing at 1-888-407-6226 (NACo) ext. 221 or Ilene Goldberg, Membership Coordinator at ext. 291, or visit www.naco.org for program information.

Operated by CVS Caremark.

This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies.

Rev 11.12



NACo's Rural Action Caucus sets 2013 priorities

By Erik Johnston

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Reauthorization of the farm bill, relief from unfunded mandates and a renewed focus on rural health care and substance abuse are all concerns for rural county elected officials.

NACo's Rural Action Caucus (RAC) leaders recently met to analyze the political landscape and decided to focus its advocacy efforts in 2013 on five key issues:

- relief from unfunded mandates with a focus on opposing pending EPA regulations that could entail greater federal regulation of water and dust

- reauthorization of the farm bill with a focus on rural development

- renewed focus on improving rural health care and substance abuse programs with emphasis on rural veterans and youth

- implementation of the key rural provisions of the Surface Transportation Law (MAP-21), and

- reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act, and payment in lieu of taxes (PILT), which are critical to communities with public lands.

This year's meeting was led by RAC Chair Doris Karloff, supervisor chair, Saunders County, Neb.



Photo by Erik Johnston

Staff from the St. Landry Parish Solid Waste Disposal District demonstrate to RAC Steering Committee members the ability of their newly constructed "biogas" facility to fuel portions of the parish fleet through waste-to-energy conversion.

and hosted by the Police Jury Association of Louisiana and the parishes of Evangeline, St. Landry and Rapides.

"It's important that leaders representing the nation's rural counties work closely with our partners in state and federal government to promote economic growth and find

practical solutions to our common challenges," Karloff said. "Working through NACo's Rural Action Caucus is an important collective effort of rural county leaders to try to improve the lives of families living in rural communities."

Participants also provided input on NACo's strategic planning pro-

cess and discussed best practices, solutions and innovations that can be replicated by other rural communities, such as "smart justice" system reforms and food system improvements. Other issues discussed include the potential effects of sequestration — looming automatic, across-the-board federal spending

cuts — and the rural implications of the Nov. 6 election results.

"I'm proud of the bipartisan advocacy work that RAC accomplished in 2012, especially the inclusion of streamlined environmental permitting and greater inclusion of rural areas in the surface transportation reauthorization (MAP-21)," said Linda Langston, NACo first vice president. "Despite these and other successes, the brutal fact is that we are facing a very challenging year ahead of us as we face sequestration and the fiscal cliff. We need RAC's voice more than ever to educate Congress and the administration about the specific challenges facing rural counties."

Participants toured a Cajun food processing plant and the Cameron International facility in Evangeline Parish, and learned about the partnership between the parish and these local businesses on job creation efforts. Cameron International is a leading manufacturer of oil and gas drilling equipment.

RAC members also toured the St. Landry Parish Solid Waste Biogas Facility. Staff from the offices of Louisiana congressional members participated in the tour of the county solid waste facility and sat down with RAC members for a roundtable discussion on RAC's priorities.

NACo provides resources to help counties buy 'green'

By Cindy Wasser

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATE

County agencies are obligated to use taxpayer money responsibly and provide services in an efficient and harm-free manner, and many are re-interpreting their role to evaluate purchases for efficiency and environmental impact.

NACo has identified more than 200 counties that are currently purchasing environmentally friendly — or green — products, half of which are guided by a formally adopted policy.

Robust county green-purchasing programs are typically guided by a county-wide green purchasing policy (often times called an environmentally preferred purchasing policy), involve committed staff from multiple departments or agencies, and serve as a model for the community through online information, community events and media outreach.

Martin County, Fla. Commission Chair Ed Ciampi is committed to greening the internal operations as a way to demonstrate leadership to the



community. In his role, Ciampi has led initiatives to retrofit park and ball field lighting and extend recycling services. "When I was running for office four years ago, I ran on a platform of economic development and 'green,'" he said. "I wanted the county to lead by example. I knew that we couldn't ask citizens to participate in green programs if we weren't doing the same activities internally."

To help counties move forward with green-purchasing goals, NACo has created numerous resources to help them find green products, evaluate environmental claims, establish policy and communicate success.

NACo's Green Purchasing Toolkit is a comprehensive online

resource for counties looking to get started with green purchasing. The website features detailed information on Finding Green Products, Common Eco-Labels and County Staff Engagement best practices. The toolkit contains many sample materials that can be downloaded and adapted by county staff, including inventory-assessment tools and model policies, press releases and annual reports.

The Success Stories section includes detailed case studies that highlight how other counties developed green-purchasing programs, including challenges and lessons learned.

The toolkit is regularly updated; new sections about purchasing methods and elected officials involvement will be added in early spring 2013.

Visit the Toolkit at www.naco.org/greenkit.

NACo staff can provide one-on-one tutorials of the toolkit contents and customized recommendations on getting started.

For questions that require specialized expertise beyond the toolkit tutorial, NACo staff can

Get recognition for your green purchasing efforts

NACo's County Green Purchasing Policy Map includes links to green-purchasing policies and short case studies that highlight leadership involved in establishing robust county green purchasing programs. Nearly 100 policies are linked to the map currently, all of which can be downloaded and adapted for use in other communities.

The map can be found at www.naco.org/greenpurchasing. To add your policy to the map, contact Cindy Wasser at cwasser@naco.org or 202.942.4274.

connect members with a team of county purchasing experts willing to share their experiences through peer consulting. The team includes purchasing directors and environmental purchasing analysts from several diverse counties, including Fairfax County, Va.; Multnomah County, Ore.; Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, N.C.; San Joaquin County, Calif.; and Alameda County, Calif.

Sorting through the market to find high-performing green product alternatives at a price that is comparable to conventional products

can be a challenge. To address this, NACo and project partner, the United Soybean Board, offer free soy bio-based products to counties willing to test the products over a month's time and provide feedback. Product packages (approximately \$100 worth of products) include cleaners, degreasers, lubricants and soy-ink remanufactured toner cartridges.

To receive a selection sheet for the bio-based product demo or to request a toolkit tutorial, contact Cindy Wasser at cwasser@naco.org or 202.942.4274.

Freshmen reps set sights on job creation in 113th Congress

FRESHMEN from page 1

chasing the bus; I never intended to get on the bus.”

As chief elected official of Lewis County, population 13,269, Massie said he reviewed every phone bill, utility bill and contract to root out savings. He expects to bring that same focus to Congress. “What I discovered is that there’s waste everywhere, and if you’re not finding it, you’re not looking. I believe the same thing is occurring in our federal government,” he said.

He attributes his ability to crunch numbers to his electrical and mechanical engineering background. “I can focus for long periods of time at what other people would think are very boring things.”

Massie wasn’t the GOP establishment’s choice for northern Kentucky’s 4th District seat; he won with strong tea party backing and endorsements from Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) and Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas). However, *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, in its endorsement of Massie, wrote, “Although linked to the tea party, Massie is likely to be an independent thinker in Washington.”

Unlike Massie and Payne, Michelle Lujan Grisham (D) must wait until January to take her seat in the 113th Congress. Until earlier this year, she was a Bernalillo County, N.M. commissioner for two years. Lujan Grisham, 53, also brings

SpeedRead » » »

- » Tea party-backed rep from Kentucky likely “independent thinker”
- » New Mexico rep-elect eyes Armed Services Committee
- » Former N.J. county freeholder already sworn in for 112th Congress

state government experience with her. She served as New Mexico’s secretary of health, and director of the state’s Agency on Aging.

“She knows local and state government, and I think she’ll be a good advocate for local government, for counties in particular,” said Paul Gutierrez, executive director of the New Mexico Association of Counties.

During a visit to NACo Nov. 12, Lujan Grisham said: “My experience as an elected county official in Bernalillo County gave me a unique opportunity to understand that the priorities of local government are really the priorities of my constituents at large.

“And today, while we recognize we’ve got to put people back to work, we’ve got to invest in the economy; that means infrastructure investments,” she added. “Where that’s happening all across the United States... local government is making that happen, but they’ve lost their federal partner.”

Lujan Grisham is an attorney and has run a small health and long-term care consulting business. A member of a political family, she is the niece of Manuel Lujan, who served as secretary of the interior for President George H.W. Bush, and her grandfather was New Mexico’s first Hispanic Supreme Court chief justice. Bernalillo County is the state’s most populous with a 2011 estimated population of 671,000; Albuquerque, the state’s biggest city is the county seat.

Asked about committee assignments of interest, she said Armed Services was first. The county is home to Kirtland Air Force Base and Sandia National Laboratories, which she called “lifelines” of her district’s economy. She’d also be interested in budget and tax reform issues. And — no surprise — she has a “passion for health care reform,” which she also sees as a potential economic engine.

Regardless of geography or party affiliation the new House members interviewed see the economy as a top priority.

Rep.-elect Tom Rice (R) was Horry County, S.C. council chairman prior to being elected to represent the state’s the new 7th Congressional District in the northeastern corner of the Palmetto State. A tax attorney, he’d like to bring that expertise to Washington, along with his county perspective.

“My primary goal on County

Council and my primary goal here is going to be to spur economic growth and job development,” he said. “I think that helps county government; I think it helps state government, city government, the federal government and everybody.” He has expressed interest in any of the House committees that deal with the “financial aspects of government,” such as Ways and Means or Banking.

While Horry County, which includes Myrtle Beach, constitutes 38 percent of his district’s population, the district comprises parts of seven other counties: Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Marion and Marlboro.

Jobs, Rice said, are priority one. Marion County’s unemployment rate is the highest in the state, 17 percent; Marlboro’s is “about 15

percent.” “Horry County (population 269,291) has the lowest wages among large counties in the country, so there’s a lot of work to be done,” he said.

County Council president was his first elective office; he was encouraged to run by friends and party officials.

It was a job that gave him “a good foundation in the realm of politics, helped me with building consensus and helped me with issue prioritization.”

Those skills should stand him, and his fellow first-timers in Congress, in good stead in Washington.

**The online version of this story at www.naco.org/countynews includes a video from an interview with Lujan Grisham during her visit to NACo on Nov. 12.*

Years of county experience headed to Congress

Of the 12 new members of Congress with ties to county government, seven served as recently as this year. In addition to Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-N.M.), Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) and Tom Rice (R-S.C.) (profiled above), they are:

- Tulsi Gabbard (D), council member, Honolulu, consolidated city-county, 2nd Congressional District
- Donald Payne Jr. (D), freeholder, Essex County, N.J., 10th Congressional District
- Eric Swalwell (D), deputy district attorney, Alameda County, Calif., 15th Congressional District
- Ami Bera, M.D. (D), chief medical officer, Sacramento County, Calif., 7th Congressional District

Freshmen Facts

Gabbard, 31, is of Samoan descent and will be the first Hindu member of Congress. She volunteered for tours of duty with the Hawaii Army National Guard in Iraq and Kuwait. “She’ll work especially well across the aisle,” according to Stanley Chang, Gabbard’s City Council colleague and NACo board member. “She is a very hard worker, always well prepared, focused and extremely easy to work with.” She has been a member of NACo’s Next Generation Network.

Payne, 53, was elected to fill the unexpired term of his late father, Rep. Donald Payne, who died in March, and the two-year term that begins in January. He served six years as a county freeholder and was also president of the city of Newark’s City Council.

Swalwell, 32, worked in Washington, D.C. from 2001–02 as an intern for Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-Calif.). He caught the political bug via student government at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Bera, 47, is a physician. He challenged incumbent Rep. Dan Lungren (R-Calif.) in 2010 and lost by 7.9 percentage points. In this year’s rematch, votes were still being counted late last week, but Bera was leading 51.11 percent to 48.89 percent as of Nov. 16. Lungren, however, had yet to concede.

Other new members of Congress with recent county service are Chris Collins (R), Erie County, N.Y.’s county executive from 2008–11, and Dan Kildee (D), Genesee County, Mich.’s treasurer from 1998–2009.

Those with more distant county service are: Susan Brooks, former deputy mayor of Indianapolis, Marion County, 1998–99; Mark Pocan, a Dane County, Wis. supervisor from 1991–96; and Joyce Beatty, who was director of Health and Human Services for Montgomery County (Dayton), Ohio for 10 years early in her career, according to *The Columbus Dispatch*.

Snapshot of county ballot initiatives shows reorganization, taxes in frame

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Although the composition of the federal government changed little after the general election, voters going to the polls in local elections helped effect change in county governments through a variety of ballot initiatives.

Although several form-of-government transformations failed in South Carolina, Illinois and Idaho, the McLean County, Ill. recorder’s office has been eliminated by popular vote and its functions will now be carried out by the county clerk’s office.

Nebraska had several counties vote to change their governments. The assessor and register of deeds will be consolidated in Douglas and Hall counties, and the county clerk and the clerk of the district court will be consolidated in Boone County.

At least 24 counties considered changes to their governments. City-county consolidation efforts failed in Indiana, where Delaware County and the city of Muncie, and Vandenberg County and the city of Evansville, put the issue to vote.

Orphans court judges in Maryland will have more qualifications to meet to serve in Baltimore and Prince George’s counties.

Voters in 28 states considered 174 statewide measures, some of which affected counties. Maryland law got tougher on public officials accused of crimes. They will be removed if found guilty, or if they plead guilty or no contest to a felony; they will be barred from reinstatement. In Louisiana, the legislature can now deny benefits to public employees found guilty of a felony.

Oklahoma voters braced against property tax increases by voting to limit them to 3 percent, down from

the current 5 percent. Nationwide, three states and at least 16 counties offered voters a chance to limit tax increases.

Other statewide initiatives would have an effect on counties. California’s shifting of low-level offenders to county jails in 2011 strained county budgets, but Proposition 30’s passage, which establishes a seven-year tax on residents making more than \$250,000, will help fund jails, along with other responsibilities shifted from the state.

Some statewide referenda affected counties’ road budgets, like in Arkansas. A half-cent sales tax over the next 10 years will fund \$350 million for county road improvements.

Virginia counties will now be able to exercise eminent domain only when the property is used for public purposes, eliminating “takings” from counties’ economic development toolkits.

Election season's end means a return to business at hand

LAME DUCK from page 1

hold their elections after Thanksgiving. That would leave nearly five weeks to get something done, not counting Christmas recess, to avoid the sequestration.

In addition to time constraints, the reality is that both sides are still quite far apart on their vision for deficit reduction. Even if the so-called grand bargain is reached, it's likely to look more like a grand blueprint, leaving the details of tax and entitlement reforms for next year. This scenario could also include a delay on sequestration and a short-term extension of expiring provisions.

Other Pending Issues for the Lame Duck Session

Disaster relief — in the form of a supplemental appropriation — for the states affected by Hurricane Sandy is also top on the agenda. It could become part of an omnibus appropriations bill that funds the government through the remainder of FY13. The current continuing appropriations bill is in effect through the end of March, but leadership seems inclined to go for a catchall bill that could serve as a vehicle for other legislation.

Congress could also deal with the farm bill, but there are wide differences in the funding for the nutrition title. The House has a much lower funding level for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), aka food stamps, than the Senate, and there are some in the House who want even larger cuts. This may be another area where a short-term extension is a possibility and it could be attached to an omnibus spending bill.

Some supporters of transportation programs have suggested that any deal on the “grand bargain” include an increase in funding for the highway and transit programs. MAP-21, the surface transportation reauthorization legislation that was enacted last summer, did not include an increase in the federal gasoline tax because of opposition to such an increase from the Obama administration and most of the congressional leadership.

There is some history of deficit-reduction packages being better places to include gas tax increases than highway-transit reauthorization bills, in part because such an increase would be just one of a list of tax increases or reforms, but also because if done on a bipartisan basis it would happen almost two years before the next congressional election.

The Temporary Assistance for

SpeedRead » » »

- » To avoid sequestration, Congress must get something done in the next five weeks prior to Christmas break.
- » No major changes expected in leadership of either chamber.
- » Disaster relief — in the form of a supplemental appropriation — for the states affected by Hurricane Sandy is also top on the agenda.

Needy Families Block Grant is set to expire at the end of March. It could also be part of an omnibus bill.

What Else to Expect?

If comprehensive tax reform is not achieved in a grand bargain before the end of the year, which is the likely scenario, it will be the leading debate on the Hill in 2013. Tax-exempt municipal bonds and the deductibility of state and local taxes are just two examples of provisions that will be on the table for discussion.

One other noteworthy issue is the online sales tax legislation — The Marketplace Fairness Act. Although bill sponsors are vocal in their wishes to pass it before the end of the year, its path is unclear in the lame duck. If Marketplace Fairness does not pass this year, it is likely to play a part in the overall tax reform debate next year.

Entitlement reform, of course, looms large in the new Congress as part of deficit-reduction efforts. Potential Medicaid changes would be the biggest concern to counties. NACo is also concerned that the Social Services block grant could fall victim to cuts in entitlement reform.

The payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) program, Secure Rural Schools-federal timber revenue sharing payments, and the Fiscal Wildlife Service Refuge Revenue-Sharing program will all need to be addressed as well as funded in the 113th Congress.

With the continued emergence of the Hispanic vote, immigration reform is another issue that could have a potential for bipartisan agreement. The president wants to make this a priority next year, and several Republicans are also calling for action. The Senate is expected to act first. There is a difference of opinion on whether reform should be comprehensive or incremental, with the president and the Senate Democrats preferring the comprehensive approach and House majority leadership leaning toward incremental steps, but at least there is room for negotiation.

On the administrative side, the

Environmental Protection Agency is expected to issue several rules over the next few months. These could include “waters of the U.S.” guidance, national air quality standards for particulate matter and municipal separate stormwater systems.

Leadership Changes

There are no major changes expected in the leadership of either chamber. The only exception in the Senate is the need to replace retiring Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.). Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas) is expected to be the top contender for that post. Cornyn has been very good on some issues of interest to counties, such as child support enforcement.

If Rep. Jeb Hensarling (R-Texas) becomes the chair of the House Financial Services Committee, there will be a vacancy for the chair of the Republican Conference, with possible contenders including Rep. Cathie McMorris Rodgers (Wash.) and Rep. Tom Price (Ga.). On the Democratic side, Rep. Xavier Becerra (Calif.) may take over as caucus chair, replacing outgoing chair Rep. John Larson (Conn.).

In the Senate, there are several chairmanship positions available to Democrats due to retirements, including the following:

- **Budget:** current Kent Conrad (N.D.), potential Patty Murray (Wash.)
- **Energy and Natural Resources:** current Jeff Bingaman (N.M.), potential Ron Wyden (Ore.)
- **Homeland Security:** retiring Joe Lieberman (Conn.), potential Tom Carper (Del.)
- **Indian Affairs:** current Daniel Akaka (Hawaii), potential Maria Cantwell (Wash.)

There are several possible changes among Senate ranking GOP members, due both to retirements and Republican Conference term limits, which include:

- **Appropriations:** term-limited Thad Cochran (Miss.), potential Richard Shelby (Ala.)
- **Banking:** current, Shelby (could move to appropriations), potential Mike Crapo (Idaho)
- **Commerce:** retiring Kay Bailey Hutchison (Texas), potential Jim DeMint (S.C.)
- **Environment and Public Works:** term-limited James Inhofe (Okla.), potential David Vitter (La.)
- **Health, Education, Labor and Pensions:** term-limited Mike Enzi (Wyo.), potential Lamar Alexander (Tenn.)

• **Homeland Security:** term-limited Susan Collins (Maine), potential Tom Coburn (Okla.)

In the House, the most watched

race for committee chair is that of Homeland Security, where Rep. Peter King (N.Y.) is term-limited and Rep. Candice Miller (Mich.) may get the nod over Rep. Mike Rogers (Ala.), making her the only female to chair a House Committee. Rep. Paul Ryan (Wis.) is expected to get a waiver from the caucus rules and remain as chair of the Budget Committee. Other possible chairmanship changes include:

- **Judiciary:** term-limited Lamar Smith (Texas), potential Bob Goodlatte (Va.)
- **Natural Resources:** current Doc Hastings (Wash.) (could move to Rules), potential Rob Bishop (Utah)
- **Rules:** retiring David Dreier (Calif.), potential Pete Sessions (Texas) or Hastings
- **Transportation and Infra-**

structure: term-limited John Mica (Fla.), potential Bill Shuster (Penn.)

The only major change among House Democratic ranking members is expected in the Appropriations Committee due to the retirement of Norman Dicks (Wash.). Reps. Nita Lowey (N.Y.) or Marcy Kaptur (Ohio) are considered potential replacements.

In addition to the potential committee leadership changes, the Senate Finance Committee, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee will have several vacancies due to retirements and losses.

Finally, there may be additional reshuffling, especially if any senators are tapped to fill Cabinet vacancies.

NACo analyzes results of presidential election

By BEVERLY A. SCHLOTTERBECK
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

With the presidency, 33 senators, 435 House members, 11 governors and 6,000 state legislative seats up for grabs earlier this month, the nation's political base was primed for significant change.

In the end, though, most analysts agreed there were no significant alterations to the body politic. Nonetheless, there was a lot to be learned about the nation's political landscape by digging a little deeper into Election Day numbers.

“U.S. Election Insight | 2012,” NACo's comprehensive analysis of the elections, contains straightforward facts and figures as well as interesting anecdotes or twists to the numbers.

Similar in format to the recent sequestration presentation NACo released in late October, the nearly-60-slide PowerPoint presentation about the 2012 election focuses on nine areas and was produced by a NACo cross-departmental team.

The first section, 2012 Election Landscape, suggests that if there's anything to be learned from the 2012 election it's this: It was the most expensive (\$7 billion in campaign spending) and most “tweeted” event (31 million on Nov. 6) in U.S. history.

The results in the presidential race were pretty well split geographically with Republican contender Mitt Romney winning 59 percent of communities with populations of 10,000 or fewer. Meanwhile,

President Barack Obama took seven out of 10 of the nation's most populous counties.

U.S. Senate and House elections each merited a section. Montana's Senate race added up as the most expensive ever at \$40 million, and like Indiana and Ohio races for Senate seats, may also have had its outcome influenced by third-party candidates. In the House, the new freshman class and new second-termers will account for one-third of the chamber in the 113th congressional session. The House elections section also examines the impact of redistricting and reapportionment on House races.

The next three sections drill down to the state and local levels, scanning the gubernatorial and state legislative election outcomes. They note that Republicans netted one new mansion, and in nine state legislatures party control changed hands. The county segment reports on the number of county officials past and present who won congressional seats. It also details shifts in voting patterns and turnout.

The final two sections look at state ballot trends in 2012 and the road ahead, which feature tips on building and maintaining relationships with the new 113th Congress.

The presentation, 2012 Election Landscape, can be accessed online or downloaded by going to www.naco.org. For more information or questions, contact Ed Rosado, legislative affairs director: erosado@naco.org or 202.942.4271.

Model Programs From the Nation's Counties

Jefferson County, Texas

Court Program Reins in Scofflaws, Bolsters Respect for the Court

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER



On paper, the Jefferson County, Texas Justice of the Peace court should have been rolling in cash. In reality, though, despite the number of warrants issued increasing, its collection rate was decreasing. The Justice of the Peace court hears misdemeanors, traffic violators and small claims.

It confounded Judge Brad Burnett and his clerk, Marissa Phillips. Hurricanes Rita, Humberto and Ike caused the Gulf Coast county to get several extensions on a state-mandated collection improvement program for counties with 100,000 people or more. When the state program was enacted, though, the court staff not only found it to be

onerous and time consuming, but also not terribly effective.

"Good enough wasn't good enough," Burnett said of the state's improvement system. "We wanted to improve our collections, improve our customer service and improve people's impressions of the court."

What he and Phillips found was a gap in defendants' understanding of the court system and their financial obligations. They also found that a few improvements in the court's collections process could go a long way toward bridging that gap, improvements they enacted in August 2011.

It started with improving initial communications with defendants about paying their fines and giving them easy payment options. The initial letter to defendants, sent upon court receipt of the ticket, was revised to include more information about payment plans. That would help

keep the obligation fresh in their minds and help encourage prompt payment. Also, acquiring a credit card machine helped bring the court into the modern era, Phillips said.

"We give them no excuse not to pay their fines," she said. "They can pay on the spot with a credit card or start a payment plan."

A major improvement in developing payment plans was negotiating them in private, where the defendant could not be influenced by other defendants' pleas and rationales for extensions.

"Some would hear another de-

fendant claim they needed 30 days to pay, so they'd ask for it too, whether or not they needed it," Phillips said. "We can personalize their plans to their pay schedule and try our best to get everything paid off before 30 days are up, rather than starting then. The faster they pay, the better for everyone."

A local high school's video production class helped Phillips and other clerks create an instructional video to be shown to defendants. Not only does it describe the process for paying fines, but the actors demonstrate appropriate courtroom

behavior, such as silencing cell phones and removing hats.

"That gave the students some real-world experience, to help us with that," Phillips said. "It also gets a lot of the routine questions out of the way so our clerks can do other work."

"And the attitude in the courtroom has changed, too," Phillips added. "The video shows people the courtroom is serious and judge needs to be treated with respect."

Outside the courtroom, though, the mood lightens. As the clerks work with defendants to craft realistic but aggressive payment plans, they develop friendly relationships with some.

"We've seen some good relationships come out of it," Phillips said. "I see one woman who routinely gets parking tickets at the grocery store, and she came over to let me know she had paid them all off. People are giving high fives after their fines are paid off, it's pretty exciting. They're proud of what they've done to pay off their obligations."

It also means the court is bringing in the money it is owed. The collection rate in December 2011 hit 81.9 percent, compared to January 2010's 72 percent. In January 2012, the court disposed more cases than it took in. Though prompt payment means less late fine revenue, the county is netting generally 33 percent more, in part because it does not need to incur additional expenses pursuing scofflaws. The improvements cost nothing, thanks to the in-kind technical contribution from the high school class.

Burnett is not only pleased with the financial results, he sees increases in court staff and defendant morale.

"They understand we're not big bad government, and we try to help them not feel helpless about their situation," he said. "Their late fees and collection fees aren't making these fines spiral out of control, and everyone ends up happier when it's just off of their plates."

Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights award-winning programs.

**See this story online at www.naco.org/countynews to watch the video produced by the Jefferson County Justice of the Peace Court.*

The H.R. Doctor Is In

It's Hard to Say Goodbye

We took our last walk together early in the morning. The end was peaceful. I was with her when the very caring vet, Dr. Slava, gave her the final injection. My friend, my pet for over 16 years, Kamala, The HR Dog, had been losing weight for months, had great trouble getting up or lying down. She hardly ate. She and I agreed that the time for suffering should end.

A great dog gives more than she gets. She needs to be part of a pack. We need the companionship of another species. It's a tradeoff that's been going on for thousands of years. It's a good deal for both parties. We get a faithful friend who loves us no matter what we do or how stupid we can be. She gets to "belong" and to have a mission: to love and be loved.

Kamala was with me nearly every day. She slept at the foot of my bed. She helped raise our daughters and teach them unconditional love. She even helped me write these articles with her advice and either an approving cold nose and lick, or a critique by reminding me that it was time to stop working and go out and have some fun. She warned us when strangers approached and was often first to greet them and let us know that they were OK. She even intervened on occasion to protect me from rather



Kamala

menacing dogs approaching.

Kamala was a noble representative of the Humane Society. Of "mixed parentage," she was probably a boxer-Rhodesian ridgeback mix. While we were congratulated for having rescued her as a tiny puppy, it was really she who did the rescuing. Sixteen years of love and commitment saves a person and a family when they need a friend or are feeling sad.

You lived well and you gave much. We will always remember you and always miss you. To paraphrase the last line from the folk song "Old Blue" — "when I get to heaven first thing I'll do, grab my horn and call for you."

Phil Rosenberg
Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor • www.hrdr.net

What's in a Seal?

» DeSoto County, Fla.
www.co.desoto.fl.us



DeSoto County was founded May 19, 1887. It was named for Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto, whose name was also honored in Hernando County.

The county originally included several present-day counties until 1921, when the Florida Legislature broke them up to create Charlotte, Glades, Hardee and Highlands counties.

During World War II, DeSoto County operated the Carlstrom Field Air Base, which provided training for both American and British pilots. Twenty-three British pilots were killed while training at the base and are honored at DeSoto County's Oak Ridge Cemetery. In 1945, the base turned out its last cadets and was decommissioned. It was sold to the state of Florida for one dollar and converted into a mental health facility known as G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital. The hospital has since been converted into a facility for juvenile offenders.

The seal features county founder Hernando de Soto in the center surrounded by agriculture, a rodeo scene, citrus groves and community. Prosperity, Tranquility and Progress are the three words along the bottom illustrated by the four symbols.

(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Christopher Johnson at 202.942.4256 or cjohnson@naco.org.)



News From the Nation's Counties

►ALABAMA

• Charles Beasley's chances for winning back his **BIBB COUNTY**, Ala. commission seat seemed to evaporate when he died on Oct. 12. The one-term commissioner's legacy, however, will include a **posthumous win** over the man who unseated him four years earlier.

"Maybe it's a respect thing," his widow Sarah said. "Maybe there were some people out there who didn't know."

Commission Administrator Mark Tyner said he expects the local Republican Party to recommend a replacement candidate to the governor, who will then make an appointment to fill the empty seat, the *New York Daily News* reported.

• The U.S. Supreme Court will hear **SHELBY COUNTY's** challenge to a provision of the **Voting Rights Act** that requires certain states with a history of racial discrimination to get federal approval before changing their election procedures.

Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 requires all or some jurisdictions in 16 states with a history of racial discrimination in voting to get Justice Department "preclearance" before making any elections-related change such as redrawing lines or implementing voter identification requirements.

The justices said they will examine whether the formula determining which states are covered is outdated because it relies on data that is now 40 years old.

Shelby County Attorney Frank "Butch" Ellis said the election of black residents to several political positions, including mayor, despite 85 percent of the population being white, indicates Section 5 is now unnecessary.

"The South is not the same old South that it was," Ellis told *al.com*.

►CALIFORNIA

The adult entertainment industry plans to sue to overturn Measure B, an initiative **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** voters approved that **requires adult performers to wear condoms** while filming sex scenes. Measure B passed 56 percent to 44 percent Nov. 6.

It requires adult film producers to apply for a permit from the county Department of Public Health to shoot sex scenes. Permit fees will finance periodic inspections of film sets to enforce compliance.

The adult film industry, which is largely centered in the San Fernando Valley in suburban Los Angeles, says the requirement is unnecessary since

the industry already polices itself by requiring performers to undergo monthly tests for HIV and other infections, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

In a letter sent to the county Board of Supervisors, the industry also requested that it be involved in discussions as to how the county will implement the requirements. It will also explore moves to neighboring states as soon as possible.

►COLORADO

SUMMIT COUNTY officials are worried that a new plan proposed by state transportation officials will **hurt tourism**.

The Colorado Department of Transportation wants to shift Summit County into the agency's West Slope region, grouping it with **EAGLE COUNTY** and western Colorado for funding and planning on highway projects.

Regions share a budget for highway projects as well as engineering and leadership teams.

According to the *Summit Daily*, Summit County officials are worried about being separated from the Eisenhower Tunnel group and the Interstate 70 mountain corridor that connect ski areas to Denver International Airport and the Rocky Mountains' Front Range market, because operations tend to run less smoothly across regions.

►FLORIDA

The **Florida State Harley-Davidson Group** has decided to bring its annual fall rally back to **OKALOOSA COUNTY**, where it was held in 2010 and 2011.

County commissioners have approved a \$25,000 sponsorship for the rally through the county Tourist Development Council.

H.O.G. Rally organizers estimate the event will draw 2,500 visitors and generate 4,625 room nights at local hotels. If the organization meets that projection, the sponsorship will increase to \$30,000.

►KENTUCKY

GARRARD COUNTY Emergency Medical Services now has one of only two **bicycle medical units** in Kentucky.

The five trained paramedics can respond to emergencies on ATV trails or at special events when foot and vehicle traffic make it difficult to get ambulances through. In some instances a traditional ambulance may be necessary, but the swift response of a trained bike medic will increase a patient's recovery chances.

With about \$1,500 of donated



Photo courtesy of Prince George's County, Md.

►MARYLAND

Could this have been how Michelangelo got started? A young **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY**, Md. artist tackles her panel in a mural intended to grace the William Paca Elementary School. The community-wide event Nov. 10, which also featured food and entertainment, was part of County Executive Rushern L. Baker III's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative. Prince George's County Art in Public Places and a local radio station hosted the event.

funds, the department purchased two bicycles, each outfitted with full life-saving equipment, and training for the five bike medics. Only about \$150, for uniforms, came out of the county's budget. To qualify as bike medics at the state level, each person had to bike three miles in 18 minutes through significantly hilly terrain.

►MARYLAND

Some lanes on busy roads in **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** could be converted to **dedicated bus lanes**. County transportation planners hope the lanes will persuade commuters to take the bus and reduce the number of cars on the roads of this Washington, D.C. suburb. Most proposed lanes would be on roads that run north and south, the *Washington Post* reported.

The County Council would have to approve the proposal.

►MONTANA

RAVALLI COUNTY commissioners approved a **natural resource policy** they say will help guide the county in future dealings with public lands managers, including the U.S. Forest Service.

The policy was initially written by a group of citizens mostly concerned with the economic and environmental impacts of national forest management in and around the Bitterroot Valley.

Commissioners point to federal environmental law they say opens the door for the county to have a

special seat at the table under the term "coordination," *The Missoulian* reported.

►NEW YORK

To combat a rise in suicides, **SUFFOLK COUNTY** Executive Steven Bellone has created the **Suffolk County Military and Veterans Suicide Prevention Taskforce** under the auspices of the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency.

Military and veteran suicides are a topic of national interest, but the number has been on the rise locally, according to county officials.

"As Suffolk County endeavors to provide outreach, services, access to programs and other resources and tools for our veterans, we have recently observed an increase in suicide deaths," Bellone said. "We have convened a taskforce of highly regarded professionals to join Suffolk County in addressing this issue with the desire to best serve our veterans."

The task force is charged with identifying ways to overcome obstacles that prevent or delay veterans from identifying and accessing treatments and to provide an opportunity for veterans to be an active part of that process.

►OKLAHOMA

LEFLORE COUNTY commissioners could revisit a plan to place a **Ten Commandments monument** on courthouse property but have tabled it temporarily. Not all commissioners were present at the Nov. 5 meeting

at which a citizen asked that it be reconsidered. Plus, Commissioner Lance Smith said he wanted to confer with the district attorney's office, according to County Clerk Kelli Ford.

The county approved a local city mayor's initial request for the monument in April 2009, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reported, but scrapped plans after a federal appeals court later ruled that a similar monument at neighboring **HASKELL COUNTY's** courthouse constituted a government endorsement of religion.

►OREGON

You might expect Multnomah, the state's largest county and home to Portland, to be the top recycling county. But according to a state survey, **LANE COUNTY** had the highest recycling rate last year — 61.5 percent, the *Statesman Journal* reported.

The waste was diverted from the landfill through a range of recycling options. **MARION COUNTY** was second at 60.8 percent. The Portland metro area placed third at 59.3 percent.

According to the state Department of Environmental Quality, last year Lane County residents threw away 215,728 tons of waste but recycled or otherwise recovered 269,316 tons.

►SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLESTON COUNTY's

Research News

Shedding Light on Homeless Youth

Children make up more than 20 percent of the homeless population across the United States. That is more than 1.3 million children and account for the fastest growing segment of the homeless population. November is National Homeless Youth Awareness Month which sheds light on the difficulties encountered by children and youths who experience homelessness.

Children become homeless for a variety of reasons. More recently, families who considered themselves financially secure were hit with unemployment, foreclosure and other

difficulties that caused financial hardships and homelessness.

Many adolescents choose to leave home because of family conflicts or to escape abuse, but many later find themselves living in dangerous situations on the streets. In addition, one in four former foster care children becomes homeless at some point during the four years after exiting the foster care system, according to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

Youths who experience homelessness for any reason face many hardships. They are at risk for

depression, suicide and other mental health problems and a high chance of physical illness. Once on the streets, they frequently develop substance abuse disorders and have encounters with law enforcement. They are also likely to fall behind in schooling.

The federal government's strategic plan to end homelessness specifically mentions children and youths. In the report "Opening Doors: The Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness," the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness states that identifying the most vulnerable homeless youths in the community and targeting services to reach this population is important for the agency's goal of ending and preventing homelessness among

youths.

Hennepin County, Minn. and the city of Minneapolis partnered with local and state agencies to create a long-term plan to address homelessness by emphasizing prevention, housing and improved service delivery for the entire homeless population, including young adults. One program, called Street Works, provides outreach services for youths and young adults living on the streets and those placed in adult shelters. Through this outreach, they are connected with county services that target the needs of this unique group to give them treatment, education and training to move to a stable living environment. In addition, the county targeted youths "aging out" of foster care

with housing, financial education and emergency assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless.

The county also ensured that all aspects of its plan to address homelessness were being evaluated. The Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness partnered with the University of Minnesota to evaluate changes in the causes of homelessness of youths and adults. Through this partnership, professors and students also assisted in creating research methods to assess the effectiveness of current county programs. This piece of the program set up a framework for conducting research to evaluate the effectiveness of programs over the long term.

See RESEARCH page 12

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers and Officials

• NACo President **Chris Rodgers** spoke about his presidential initiatives and NACo legislative priorities at the Nevada Association of Counties Annual Conference in Carson City Nov. 13–15.

» NACo Staff



Deborah Cox

• **Deborah Cox** is the new deputy legislative director (Telecommunications and Technology) in the legislative department.

Before joining NACo, Cox served as director of government relations and legislative affairs for the National Association of Development Organizations. Cox is currently working towards a master's degree in political communication at Johns Hopkins University. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Liberty University.

• **Tony Jamison** has been promoted to sales associate in the County Solutions and Innovations Department. Jamison has worked as membership assistant since 2011.

• **Erik Johnston**, associate legislative director, served as a panelist at the Farm Foundation Forum — "What the 2012 Elections Mean for Agriculture, Food and Rural Policy" — at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Nov. 14.

• **Maeghan Gilmore**, program director, spoke on the Affordable Care Act's impacts of local governments and exhibited on behalf of membership at the Alaska Municipal League Annual Conference in Anchorage Nov. 12–16.



Tony Jamison

» Coming Up

• **Bev Schlotterbeck**, executive editor of *County News*, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Colorado Counties, Inc. Winter Conference in El Paso County Nov. 26–28.

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director of membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the California State Association of Counties Annual Conference in Los Angeles County Nov. 27–30.

• **Ilene Goldberg**, membership coordinator, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Kentucky Association of Counties Annual Conference in Louisville-Jefferson County Nov. 28–30.

• NACo Past President **Kaye Braaten** will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Iowa State Association of Counties Fall School in Polk County Nov. 28–30 and the Association of Minnesota Counties Annual Conference in Stearns County Dec. 2–4.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Prosecutors drop pot-possession charges

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

Economic Development Department received a Silver **Excellence in Economic Development** Award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) for a paid advertising campaign for communities with populations of 200,000–500,000.

"Charleston is widely known as a beautiful and historic tourist destination," said J. Steven Dykes, the county's economic development director. "The new campaign sends a strong message that Charleston County is also a premier place to do business." It included a new logo and an ad campaign as a prelude to developing the department's website.

Jay Moon, IEDC chair, said the economic development department is using "cutting-edge, effective practices" that can be replicated in other communities.

► SOUTH DAKOTA

A **mountain pine beetle epidemic** affecting **LAWRENCE COUNTY** has been likened to a "slow-burning forest fire" by the state's governor, Dennis Daugaard (R). But he said don't look for much help from Pierre, the state capital, citing budget constraints for FY14.

The issue will remain a part of budget discussions, "but it is unlikely I will be able to offer additional funds to Lawrence County," Daugaard said in a letter to Lawrence County Commission Chairman Bob Ewing.

He said, "We've exhausted our local resources to the point where

we'd like to see the state step in and help. We do feel that if we lose the battle with the bugs, it's going to affect on a very large scale the tourism industry."

► VIRGINIA

So-called payday loan operators might not be fewer in **CHESTERFIELD COUNTY**'s future, but they could be farther between.

County staff has drafted restrictions on how close these **high-cost instant loan facilities** can be to each other, to be considered by the Board of Supervisors, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported. The proposal would increase the minimum separation from 2,000 feet to one mile.

It defines alternative lenders as businesses that provide "short-term, high-interest personal lending services" other than banks, credit unions, or savings and loan associations. No alternative lenders currently exist in the county, but four car title lenders or payday lenders have zoning applications pending.

► WASHINGTON

• Misdemeanor cases of **marijuana possession** will be dropped in Washington's two largest counties after voters approved Initiative 502 (I-502) earlier this month.

KING COUNTY dropped 175 cases and **PIERCE COUNTY** will drop an as yet undetermined number, according to prosecutors from the counties, the Associated Press reported.

I-502 makes possession of an ounce or less of pot legal for anyone

21 years or older after Dec. 6. It passed with 55 percent of the vote.

"Although the effective date of I-502 is not until Dec. 6," King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg said, "there is no point in continuing to seek criminal penalties for conduct that will be legal next month."

Colorado voters also approved recreational use of marijuana on Nov. 6.

• Now that Referendum 74 has cleared the way for same-sex marriages, counties are preparing for what could be a wave of license applications, the Associated Press reported. The law takes effect Dec. 6.

Vicky Dalton, the **SPOKANE COUNTY** auditor, is the designated point person for preparing the state's 39 counties for **same-sex marriage**. Couples are required to fill out a county application and obtain a license for the marriage officiant, and a certificate of marriage contract must be recorded by the state.

"We're going to have two waves hit us at the same time," she said.

Demand may spike on Dec. 6 and Dec. 7 in large, urban counties, Dalton said, as couples rush to get their licenses and certificates in advance of Dec. 12 — 12/12/12 — which is expected to be a popular wedding day for the novelty of its date.

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

Financial Services News

Retirement Plan Participants Can Save More in 2013

One of the key advantages of participation in the 457 plan offered through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program is tax-deferred contributions. Federal law allows workers to defer income taxes to encourage retirement savings. Of course, taxes will be paid eventually. Withdrawals from tax-deferred accounts are taxed as ordinary income.

There are caps on how much an individual can contribute annually. The Internal Revenue Service revises or confirms the maximum contribution limits annually, and the limits go into effect on Jan. 1 of the new year.

The contribution limits going into effect for 2013 are:

- \$17,500 under age 50
- \$23,000 for age 50 or older, and
- up to \$35,000 for the Special 457 Catch-up.

The take-home pay reduction may be significantly less than what's contributed. The nearby table shows how a paycheck may be affected by

making maximum contributions to the NACo Deferred Compensation Program in 2013.

If a county worker also participates in a 403(b) or 401(k) plan, he or she may contribute up to the maximum in that plan in addition to the plan offered through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, effectively doubling the tax-deferral limit.

Benefits of NACo Program Participation

Being able to invest tax-deferred income over the long term is just one benefit that may be available to county workers who participate in the NACo Deferred Compensation Program. It offers other features that may make participation advantageous. Among them are:

- lower pricing for program options and services than may be found elsewhere
- the opportunity to plug a retirement income gap before it forms

Maximum Deferrals and Paycheck Impact Table

Pay frequency	Under Age 50		Age 50+ Catch-up		Special 457 Catch-up	
	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact
Weekly (52 pays)	\$336	\$252	\$442	\$331	\$673	\$504
Biweekly (26 pays)	\$673	\$504	\$884	\$663	\$1,346	\$1,009
Semi-monthly (24 pays)	\$729	\$546	\$958	\$718	\$1,458	\$1,093
Monthly (12 pays)	\$1,458	\$1,093	\$1,916	\$1,437	\$2,916	\$2,187

Source: IRS Announces 2013 Pension Plan Limitations, IR-2012-77, Oct. 18, 2012

NOTE: The table rounds contributions down to the nearest dollar to avoid over-contribution; and assumes a 25% tax rate, that you make tax-deferred contributions and that you qualify for one of the maximum 2013 deferral limits.

- service from Nationwide Retirement Solutions, a leader in public employee retirement plans
- educational workshops that can help participants better prepare for retirement
- one-on-one meetings with non-commissioned retirement specialists, and
- no tax penalty, regardless of age, for withdrawals after leaving employment.

Federal law requires a deferral change request be made in the calendar month prior to the month it becomes effective. For example, deferral changes effective in February must be requested in January.

Investing involves market risk, including possible loss of principal. Nationwide retirement specialists can help county workers understand market risk and strategies that may help them deal with it. In addition, ordinary income tax will be applied to

withdrawals. Nationwide representatives cannot offer investment, tax or legal advice. County workers should consult their own advisors before making any retirement plan decisions.

County employees who are interested in obtaining more information about the opportunities available through participation in the NACo Deferred Compensation Program should contact a Nationwide retirement specialist, or call toll-free at 877.677.3678.

Employers increase awareness of deferred comp program

Providing the NACo Deferred Compensation Program to workers can be an important benefit — but only if they know about it. Nationwide provides promotional tools for county employers looking to help their employees become more aware of the opportunities of deferred compensation plan participation, including tax deferral. Nationwide knows county employees; it has been working with counties and their employees for more than 37 years.

To learn more about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program and how promoting deferred compensation can benefit county employees, contact Lisa Cole by email at lc@naco.org or phone at 202.942.4270.

So What's the Limit?

Of course, each person's maximum limit is the contribution amount that matches his or her budget and comfort level. To help county employees decide what that amount might be, Nationwide Retirement Solutions — administrator of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program — provides the *On Your Side* Interactive Retirement Planner on its website, www.nrsforu.com. In as little as 10 minutes, workers can identify a level of contributions that they may be comfortable with, and then increase their contributions to that level.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) makes payments to the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACo RMA LLC and the NACo Financial Services Center Partnership (FSC) for services and endorsements that NACo provides for all its members generally related to Nationwide's products and services sold exclusively in public sector retirement markets. More detail about these payments is available at www.nrsforu.com. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are each a Registered Municipal Advisor and do not recommend the purchase or sale of securities and do not hold or maintain funds or securities. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC act as third party marketers/solicitors. NACo RMA receives fees from NRS for such services. Thirty-seven state associations of counties are members of NACo RMA LLC and as such receive quarterly distributions from it. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are NOT affiliates of Nationwide Investment Services Corp. or Nationwide Retirement Solutions. Retirement Specialists are registered representatives of Nationwide Investment Services Corporation: Member FINRA. In MI only, Nationwide Investment Svcs. Corporation. © 2012 Nationwide Retirement Solutions. Nationwide, the Nationwide framemark, Nationwide ProAccount, and *On Your Side* are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. NRM-9484AO-NX (12/2012)

Awareness month highlights problem

RESEARCH from page 11

Seminole County, Fla. has witnessed an increase in homeless children in the county school system similar to what is being seen nationally. The Department of Education reported a 13 percent rise over the previous year in the number of students across the county experiencing homelessness. Only three children in the school system were homeless in Seminole County in 2003, eventually increasing to 904 students in 2010. Through a grant, the Families in Transition Program provides support for children as families struggle to find housing.

A program liaison works with individual schools as well as non-

profits and local businesses to assist in locating housing for families. The program ensures stability in school by providing transportation from the children's new location to the school of origin.

As many children struggle with homework while in shelters or temporary housing, the program also provides tutoring to students in need. Additionally, the program offers students free breakfast and lunch and school supplies as needed. It caters to the unique needs of homeless students and creates an open dialogue between parents, students and local services available to assist during this time of need.

When officials in Hillsborough County, Fla. noted that children represented 16 percent of the home-

less population in the county, they implemented an initiative to give these children priority access to early childhood services. The children are placed in the Head Start program, offering an easily accessible learning environment that gives them an array of developmentally appropriate activities and services.

In addition to ensuring schooling for the children, this program also gives parents and family members support and flexible funds that can be used to meet short-term emergent needs such as transportation, housing and job training in order to end the cycle of homelessness for these families.

(Research News was written by Kathryn Murphy, senior research associate.)

Job Market & Classifieds

BOROUGH MANAGER – KODIAK ISLAND BOROUGH, ALASKA

Salary: DOQ plus generous benefits package

Incorporated in 1963, Kodiak is the second largest island in the United States and is home to the nation's largest Coast Guard Base. Situated in the northern Gulf of Alaska, the picturesque island enjoys a maritime weather influence. Commercial fishing, seafood processing, rocket launch, recreational hunting, fishing, tourism, and government largely make up the economy of Kodiak. \$32 million budget; 44 F/T employees.

The Manager serves as the Chief Administrative Officer and reports to the seven-member Assembly. The Manager enforces Borough laws and ordinances, administers policies of the Assembly, manages budget and capital

improvements program.

Requires bachelor's degree in business/public administration or a closely related field from an accredited college or university and five (5) years' experience as a municipal administrator; Alaska experience a plus. A combination of education, training, and experience will be considered in lieu of educational requirement. Must possess strong financial background and experience with grants and legislative matters. Residency required.

For application packet, contact: Nova Javier, MMC, Borough Clerk, at 907.486.9310, email njavier@kodiak.ak.us. Send application and supplementing documentation to: Kodiak Island Borough Attn: Nova Javier, MMC 710 Mill Bay Road Kodiak, AK 99615. Application deadline: Wednesday, Nov. 21. EOE.