

## Dallas County takes on Ebola

By BEVERLY SCHLOTTERBECK  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Almost two months ago, the nation got its first look at Ebola patients. Two Americans, diagnosed with the disease in Liberia, were brought to Emory University in Atlanta for treatment. They were released healthy and relieved about three weeks later.

In late September, the World Health Organization predicted 1.4 million deaths from the Ebola outbreak in Africa.

Oct. 1, the first patient to be diagnosed in the United States with Ebola showed up in Dallas County, Texas. Ebola had breached American shores.

The Dallas County Department of Health and Human Services (DCHHS) and Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins are now the boots on the ground: Jenkins pushing hard to calm fears, prevent hysteria, stop any spread of the disease and DCHHS teaming with the CDC and the Texas Health Department in tracking persons who may have had contact with "Patient 0" as he is called at Texas Presbyterian Hospital. So far, they've identified more than 100.



AP Photo/Tony Gutierrez

Dallas County Health and Human Services Director Zachary Thompson (l) and Christopher Perkins, D.O., M.P.H., Medical Director/Health Authority with DCHHS, leave an apartment unit at The Ivy Apartment Complex Oct. 2 in Dallas. Dallas County officials have ordered family members who had contact with the patient diagnosed with the Ebola virus to stay inside their home.

## Younger Langenhahn lengthens his line's legislative legacy

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Jacob Langenhahn has entered the family business.

Not dairy and ginseng farming. As a freshman in college he was elected to the Marathon County Board of Supervisors in 2014, the same body to which his father, Keith, belonged for 24 years.

"It's something to be very proud of," said Keith, who left the County Board in 2011 to work for the Wisconsin Counties Association as a field services representative. "Supervisor gets to be a seven-day-a-week job, and Jacob grew up with all of that."

Initially, that commitment drew Jacob's ire.

"When I was young, five or six, it was a letdown when he'd be gone,"

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## Grants target domestic-violence homicides in three counties

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

More than 20 years ago, Sheila Moore predicted her murder in a letter to the editor of the local newspaper in Pitt County, N.C., but there was nothing the sheriff's office could do about it. She had taken out restraining orders against her ex-husband, but no crime had been committed.

Not until her ex showed up one morning outside her workplace and fatally shot Moore and himself.

"Sheila's death was an impetus here in the county, starting with the criminal justice system," said Sgt. John Guard. In the years that followed, a special domestic violence court was established — and the

sheriff's office started a unit to deal with the issue in 1997.

At a time when domestic violence in the NFL has dominated the headlines, now comes word that Pitt County and two others across the country have been awarded \$650,000 each from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to test best practices and evidence-based models to address domestic violence homicide prevention.

Pitt County, Contra Costa County, Calif. and Cuyahoga County, Ohio were selected from among 12 jurisdictions to participate in DOJ's Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Demonstration Initiative (DVHPDI). The Borough of Brooklyn, N.Y. was also chosen. The dozen localities had previously

been awarded \$200,000 in 2012 during phase one of the initiative.

"We have some model practices to address domestic-violence-related homicide, and we want to find out what works on the ground in communities ... and find out how we can replicate it across the country," said Bea Hanson, principal deputy director of DOJ's Office on Violence against Women (OVW).

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and nationwide, about 1,200 victims of domestic violence — sometimes also called intimate partner violence — are murdered each year, according to the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, which pio-

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# Rural Colorado county nears high-speed Internet connection

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Life's a little slower in rural San Juan County, Colo. But soon, that won't refer to its Internet service.

Left out of a state contract that connected county seats statewide to fiber optic cable, the county of less than 700 permanent residents finally is about to receive Internet access the likes of which it has only dreamt.

"There was never really a full explanation," said Commissioner

Peter McKay about the state project's (Multi-User Network for Telecommunications) failure to serve San Juan. "They kept saying, 'Don't worry, we'll get to you,' but then that started becoming excuses that we were the most remote, the most difficult to reach."

In mid-to-late October, fiber will be extended to the San Juan County School District in Silverton, the county seat, part of a public-private partnership called EAGLE-Net, which will link all of Colorado's public schools to broadband Internet.

Once it is connected to the school system, a fiberring built to link county government buildings will tap in, at no cost to the county.

At 11,200 feet, San Juan County has the highest mean elevation of any county in America, and the cost of extending a cable to reach its sparse population — spread two per square mile — isn't cheap. "There's no business model that says these 700 people are worth it," McKay said.

Add to that, the county's population can swell by 1,500 during ski

season, as tourists flock to Silverton Mountain, a popular resort, six miles from Silverton.

Meanwhile, awaiting the build out, a microwave tower is providing temporary Internet service, said County Administrator Willie Tookey, and it can be overtaxed when cellphone-toting tourists arrive and compete for bandwidth. "Basically, because everything — Internet, cell phones — goes through that tower, if traffic gets too high, things slow down," he said.

"Our economy is tourism-based," Tookey said. The July 4 weekend saw so much traffic that cellphone calls were spotty at best. "It would have been a problem in an emergency," he added. "The sheriff's department was a little nervous."

Finding a solution wasn't as simple as waiting for EAGLE-Net to come along.

"We didn't have the clout financially or resources to battle (the

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## Counties will test two approaches to curbing domestic-violence homicides

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neered the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) model, which Pitt and Contra Costa will use. It teaches law enforcement officers how to screen domestic violence victims to determine whether their lives are at-risk through asking a standardized series of questions. Based on responses, a victim can immediately be referred to appropriate services.

Generally, the protocol consists of 11 questions, such as: "Has he or she ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon?" A "yes" answer will result in an on-the-spot referral to a domestic abuse support group.

"The LAP model specifically allows me as an officer to respond to a call where no crime may be alleged — where our traditional response would be we clear (the scene), there's nothing we can do; we can't arrest," Guard said.

"For me that cultural shift of going from, well there's not a violation of the law so I can't do anything, to 'Ma'am, based on your answers, people in similar situations as you have died is huge,'" Guard said.

Cuyahoga County will test a different approach, the Domestic Violence High Risk Team (DVHRT), pioneered by the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center in Massachusetts. It focuses equally on victim safety and services, and offender accountability.

The county's Witness/Victim Service Center will pilot the strategy in two Cleveland police districts. To assess risk, they'll work together from incident report through arrest, prosecution, sentencing and the offender's release, county officials said — to enable victims to make safe decisions throughout the process.

"This sets up a system that once we've identified a case and come together, we can add pieces to the conversation," said Linda Johaneck, CEO of the Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center



Photo by Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector, reprinted with permission

Deborah Monroe, a domestic violence survivor, shares her story of an abusive relationship during a candlelight vigil at the Pitt County, N.C. courthouse Oct. 1 to mark the start of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

in Cleveland. "Something as simple as victim notification has been an issue for our county; an offender may be released from jail and the

**“ In domestic violence, especially deaths, we talk about if it's predictable, then it should be preventable. ”**

victim never finds out.”

Guard, who has trained police departments to better recognize the signs of potentially fatal domestic violence, said both approaches “have the right answers;” it's just a matter of “reaching across the silos” and sharing the pertinent information.

“In domestic violence, especially deaths,” he said, “we talk about if it's predictable, then it should be preventable.”

The Justice Department picked pilot communities that had laid a foundation for the work in phase one — and for their diversity. Pitt County has 168,000 residents; Contra Costa is home to 1.05 million, Cuyahoga's population is 1.28 million and Brooklyn's is 2.5 million.

“The four communities that we chose have the partnerships that are necessary,” Hanson said — “both real commitment from law enforcement in those communities as well as the partnerships that they need with community based organizations.”

Another factor was the jurisdictions' “readiness to move forward in terms of implementation.”

Contra Costa was well prepared to meet that criterion. It has had a Zero Tolerance for Domestic Violence (ZT) program since 2001, initiated by the Board of Supervisors, said Devorah Levine, who manages the county's effort. It's a public-private partnership to reduce domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse and human trafficking.

“Already we've been pretty suc-

cessful through the network we have,” said Supervisor John Gioia, who has been on the board since 1999 and helped approve the ZT program.

“We're seeing an increase in the number of survivors receiving restraining orders; we're seeing an increase in the number of law enforcement reports that are prepared for domestic violence calls,” he said. “We're seeing a reduction in the recidivism rate in the Domestic Violence Court.”

The county, in partnership with the city of Richmond, Calif., plans to build a family justice center where services for victims of violence and domestic violence — such as police and community-based organizations — are co-located. Three such centers are planned throughout the 716-square-miles county.

Gioia, who is president of the California State Association of Counties, added that Contra Costa has served as a model for the rest of the state.

To fund its ZT initiative, he explained, Contra Costa was the first county in California to place a fee on vital records like birth and death certificates or marriage licenses. Levine said this generates about \$300,000 per year to fund the program, and other counties have followed suit.

The grantees hope that successful

demonstration projects will mean that no victim of domestic violence ever has to, in effect, write her own obituary again.

“I look forward to working with the other partners in this project,” Pitt County's Sgt. Guard said — “those that received the awards as well as our mentors that are going to be brought in to guide us and put us on the path to success in the Pitt County community.”

“Here's the deal for me, as a career cop for 22-plus years, I love it because it is a perfect vehicle to be the impetus for a cultural shift within the law enforcement community.”

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Quick Takes

BEST AFFORDABLE FALL FOLIAGE COUNTIES (BASED ON HOTEL RATES)

1. Bell County, Ky.
2. Rabun County, Ga.
3. Jackson County, Ore.
4. Crow Wing County, Minn.
5. Apache County, Ariz.

Travel and Leisure, Best Affordable Fall Foliage Travel





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# NACo to help coal-country county leaders plan for economic diversification

NACo and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation have announced a new partnership to support county and regional leaders in coal-reliant communities with retooling their economies to become more resilient to changing conditions.

NADO and NACo, with the support of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), will assist counties and regions affected by the contraction of the coal industry to identify opportunities for economic diversification and asset-based economic development.

According to a recent analysis prepared by NACo, 196 counties in 27 states in the U.S. were coal-producing economies in 2012. These counties are home to more

than 13 million residents and over 6 million jobs.

Combined, coal-producing counties generate a GDP of more than \$636 billion and contribute a significant portion to the economies of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Kentucky and Wyoming.

Additionally, many other regions and counties are economically reliant upon the coal industry, whether they house power plants or facilities that process and transport coal, or contain other coal-related infrastructure and activities that provide jobs and revenue.

Counties and regions that have been reliant upon the coal industry for generations are now experiencing the effects of the industry's downturn. According to the U.S.

Energy Information Administration, coal production in the U.S. was down more than 7 percent in 2012 from 2011 levels.

Smaller communities are particularly hard-hit and face prolonged difficulties in expanding economic opportunities, addressing high poverty rates and associated community challenges. For example, data show that:

- Coal-producing counties posted lower economic recovery rates when compared with county economies nationwide in 2013.
- On average, coal-producing counties had very weak job expansion (at 0.6 percent growth) and slow economic output growth (1.1 percent, less than half the growth rate of all the 3,069 county economies) in 2013, and

- Unemployment rates remained above 10 percent in 26 coal-producing counties in 2013, with rates as high as 14 percent to 16 percent in some counties (while the national unemployment rate in 2013 was 7.2 percent).

In 2015, NACo and the NADO Research Foundation will host a series of intensive, hands-on workshops designed to boost the innovative potential of counties and regions seeking to grow and diversify their economies.

Counties and regions will be asked to form teams to apply to enter the program; selected entrants will participate in one of a series of workshops guided by expert facilitators and economic development practitioners.

The goal of this effort is to work with counties, regions and

communities seeking to generate creative solutions to dealing with economic distress.

The competition will be open to all regions and counties in the U.S. that are economically linked to the coal industry, including those that are coal-producing as well as home to significant concentrations of coal processing and related facilities.

Look for more information on this program in the coming months. NACo and NADO Research Foundation anticipate rolling out the application in January 2015, and hosting four workshops throughout 2015.

*Questions? Contact Kathy Nothstine, NACo program director, at [knothstine@naco.org](mailto:knothstine@naco.org) or Megan McConville, NADO Research Foundation program manager at [mmcconville@nado.org](mailto:mmcconville@nado.org).*



## Profiles in Service

Joan P. Garner

Chair  
Healthy Counties Advisory Board  
Commissioner, Fulton County, Ga.

- Number of years active in NACo:** four
- Years in public service:** four
- Occupation:** consultant
- Education:** master of arts – organizational communication and bachelor of arts – English
- The hardest thing I've ever done:** hike the Inca Trail sick for three of the four days
- Three People (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** Michele and Barack Obama, Nelson Mandela and Maya Angelou
- A dream I have is to:** travel to Australia and New Zealand.
- You'd be surprised to learn that I:** love to knit.
- The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** travel the Middle East and hike biblical sites.
- My favorite way to relax is:** spending time with my partner.
- I'm most proud of:** serving my community as an elected official.
- Every morning I read:** The Daily Word and the local newspaper online.
- My favorite meal is:** I am a foodie so I like a lot of things. Maine lobster is high on my list.
- My pet peeve is:** people misspelling my last name.
- My motto is:** "Life is long, live in the present."
- The last book(s) I read was:** *The Measure of a Man* by Sidney Poitier and *Things I Should Have Told My Daughter* by Pearl Cleage.
- My favorite movie is:** I can't decide between *The Butler* and *The Color Purple*.
- My favorite music is:** jazz.
- My favorite president is:** Jimmy Carter.
- My county is a NACo Member because:** there is value in networking with peers from around the country, learning best practices and participating in the array of services offered by NACo.

## County police disarm Civil War shell days before battlefield tour

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Thanks to cooperation between Henrico County, Va. police and the National Park Service, a recent Civil War commemoration went off without a hitch — instead of with a bang from “live” ammunition.

It was a textbook example of local-federal interdependence and cooperation.

On Sept. 27–29, Henrico County and Richmond National Battlefield Park (RNBP) marked the 150th anniversary of the Battle of New Market Heights and related skirmishes. During the period, the Park Service was to lead walking tours of an area where, just days earlier, staff and volunteers found a 12-lb. explosive round with its fuse intact, Park Service officials said.

“We were the first responders called to the battlefield park to check out this cannonball,” said Lt. James Bandy, public information officer for the Henrico division of police. It was the first incident involving Civil War artillery that he could recall in his 18 years with the county.

The RNBP and Henrico police have a memorandum of understanding to provide each other with mutual aid at no cost, according to Chief Ranger Tim Mauch. So Henrico’s explosive ordnance team was called in to secure the area, remove the shell, and eventually, explode it at its nearby firing range.



Henrico County, Va. police were called to a local Civil War battlefield after National Park Service staff found this 150-year-old unexploded artillery shell along a path where tours would be given just days later.

“When we need help, we can call on them; when they need help, they can call on us, Mauch said.

Whether in this case, the shell posed a real threat is anyone’s guess. “These unexploded shells have black powder in them. It depends on how wet or dry the black powder is. It depends on what kind of contact,” Bandy said. “Normally, it would need some kind of heat or machinery or something, knocking it around.”

Mauch said Henrico police and fire routinely provide assistance on park land, though usually on are more routine emergency calls.

“We have a great relationship with them — also between our interpretive staff and Henrico parks and recreation for special events and that type of thing.”

Beth Stern, RNBP’s chief of interpretation, said the park service collaborated with the parks department to help it stage a recent reenactment of the Battle of New Market Heights on county-owned land, near where the battle actually took place.

“We’re working really closely with the county to share this part of the county’s story and our nation’s history,” she said.



## COMMENTARY

# Sharing Responsibility for Online Security Is a Collective Effort

## NACo launches webinar series for October's National Cyber Security Month



By COMMISSIONER CHRIS RODGERS  
NACo CYBERSECURITY TASK FORCE CHAIR



It's never too early — or too late — to educate people about safe online behavior.

The world is more interconnected today than ever before, with more connectivity comes more responsibility. Government, private industry, educators, law enforcement and you are needed to make the Internet safer and more secure.

October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) and NACo is joining with the Department of Homeland Security and its partners across the country to highlight the importance of cybersecurity and online safety in a series of webinars.

Understand the risks, learn how to spot potential problems and consider how your online actions can impact the nation's collective security. Online safety and security are shared responsibilities, and we each have

an obligation to protect our identities and our information online.

Take these simple actions to help keep you, your identity and your information safe online:

- set strong passwords with eight or more characters and a combination of numbers, letters and symbols
- don't share passwords with anyone
- keep your operating system, browser and other critical software optimized by installing updates
- limit the amount of personal information you share online
- use privacy settings to avoid sharing information widely, and
- be cautious about what you receive or read online; if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

NACo is participating in NC-SAM in an effort to do our part to make the Internet safer for everyone. First up: a series of webinars aimed at expanding and enhancing your cybersecurity expertise.

*Oct. 15: Critical Infrastructure and the Internet of Things*

The Internet underlies nearly every facet of our daily lives and is the foundation for much of the critical infrastructure that keeps our nation running. The systems that support electricity, financial services, transportation and communications are increasingly interconnected. The Internet of Things — the ability of objects and devices to transfer data — is changing the way counties use technology. This webinar will highlight the importance of

protecting critical infrastructure and properly securing all devices that are connected to the Internet.

*Oct. 22: Managing Secure Software Development and Outsourced Technology Services*

In the deployment of enterprise technology, counties are becoming more dependent on third parties to build and manage critical infrastructure and applications. Though it can be difficult to manage and secure what one cannot see, counties remain liable for the performance and security of their applications

and other technologies, even when built and deployed by outside vendors. This webinar will give insight on ensuring secure software development, as well as securing other county systems housed and/or managed by third parties.

*Oct. 29: Cyber Crime, Cyber Bullying and Law Enforcement*

The ever-increasing threat of cyber-crimes is a reality for most individuals and organizations. Counties are no exceptions. They have encountered a number of cyber-attacks in recent years. Cyber-

crimes, too, have been aided by the rapid growth of social media. The goal is to bring awareness to and educate local governments on how to combat cyber-crimes. In addition, we will focus on cyber-bullying and its impact on counties.

Registration is free.

Also on tap: A specially produced podcast featuring a case study on a cyber-attack on a county and its response will air Oct. 31.

\*To register for the webinars, access this article online at [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org)

### SAMPLE PROCLAMATION



## Cyber Security Awareness Month • October 2014

<Name of County >

**WHEREAS** counties recognize the vital role that technology has in our daily lives and in our future, whereby today many citizens, schools, libraries, businesses and other organizations use the Internet for a variety of tasks, including keeping in contact with family and friends, managing personal finances, performing research, enhancing education and conducting business; and

**WHEREAS** counties understand critical infrastructure sectors are increasingly reliant on information systems to support financial services, energy, telecommunications, transportation, utilities, health care and emergency response systems; and

**WHEREAS** the use of the Internet at the primary and secondary school levels in <INSERT THE NAME OF COUNTY> enhances the education of youth by providing them access to online educational and research materials; and at institutions of higher education, the use of information technology is integral to teaching and learning, research and outreach and service; and

**WHEREAS** Internet users and our information infrastructure face an increasing threat of malicious cyber attack, significant financial and personal privacy losses due to identity theft and fraud; and

**WHEREAS** the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has established the Office of Cybersecurity and Communications and devoted resources within it solely to support the strengthening and securing of the country's cyber infrastructure at the state, local, tribal, and territorial levels; and

**WHEREAS** the Stop.Think.Connect.™ Campaign ([www.stopthinkconnect.org](http://www.stopthinkconnect.org) or [www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect](http://www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect)) is a national effort coordinated by a coalition of private companies, nonprofits and government organizations to raise awareness about cybersecurity among all digital citizens, helping them to stay safer and more secure online; and

**WHEREAS** the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, a division of the nonprofit Center for Internet Security, provides a collaborative mechanism to help state, local, territorial and tribal governments enhance cyber security; and  
<INSERT YOUR COUNTY IT PROGRAM/OFFICE NAME> provides a comprehensive approach to help enhance the security of this <NAME OF COUNTY>; and

**WHEREAS** maintaining the security of cyberspace is a shared responsibility in which each of us has a critical role, and awareness of computer security essentials will improve the security of <NAME OF COUNTY> information infrastructure and economy; and

**WHEREAS** the U.S. Department of Homeland Security ([www.dhs.gov/cyber](http://www.dhs.gov/cyber)), the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center ([www.msisc.org](http://www.msisc.org)), the National Association of State Chief Information Officers ([www.nascio.org](http://www.nascio.org)) and the National Cyber Security Alliance ([www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org)) have declared October as National Cyber Security Awareness Month; and all citizens are encouraged to visit these sites, along with <YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT IT PROGRAM/OFFICE NAME URL> and Stop.Think.Connect ([www.stopthinkconnect.org](http://www.stopthinkconnect.org) or [www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect](http://www.dhs.gov/stopthinkconnect)) to learn about cyber security; and put that knowledge into practice in their homes, schools, workplaces and businesses.

Now, therefore, I, \_\_\_\_\_, *Chief Elected Official* of the <Insert County Name> do hereby proclaim the month of October 2014 as:

**Cyber Security Awareness Month** in the <Insert name of your County>.

## In Case You Missed It

### News to Use From Past County News

#### ► 'Waters of the U.S.' comments due Oct. 20

Earlier this year, the EPA and the Corps of Engineers released a proposed rule — Definition of Waters of the U.S. Under the Clean Water Act — that could dramatically expand the range of waters that fall under federal regulation.

Comments to EPA are due Oct. 20. It is critical that all counties, regardless of how the proposal may affect them, weigh in with their analysis. For information on submitting your comments, go to NACo's Waters of the U.S. website at [www.naco.org/wotus](http://www.naco.org/wotus).

#### ► Register now for Transportation and Infrastructure Symposium

County leaders will explore noteworthy practices from around the nation at the Symposium on America's County Transportation and Infrastructure Dec. 3–6 in Maui County, Hawai'i. The event — a signature piece of NACo President Riki Hokama's presidential initiative — will highlight trends in global freight movement, innovative transportation and more.

To register by Nov. 2, visit [www.naco.org/transportation](http://www.naco.org/transportation). For more information, contact Kathy Nothstine at [knothstine@naco.org](mailto:knothstine@naco.org) or 202.714.8245.

# 'E-backpack' seeks to improve foster care communication

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Foster kids can move from placement to placement, but sometimes vital information doesn't take the trip with them.

Lack of documentation can lead to over-immunization of children or gaps in the health care they're provided. Likewise, too much paperwork can make it nearly impossible for a child or caregiver to ferret out important information.

Ventura County, Calif.'s Foster Health Link intends to solve that problem with an "electronic backpack" of data, accessible through a Web portal that consolidates access to social services and medical records, and eventually, court and school data.

Once implemented, the system will be the first of its kind in California, Barry Zimmerman, director of the Ventura County Human Services Agency, and the partners hope it can serve as a model that can be replicated in other counties, inside and outside the state.

A public-private partnership, Foster Health Link will enable those who provide services to the 1,000 children in the county's foster care system

to share information electronically, according to the Children's Partnership, a nonprofit that is working on the project.

"We have information that's in the child welfare systems and information in health care systems that don't necessarily intersect," Zimmerman said. "In a foster environment, oftentimes, information either is lagging or outdated or is difficult to get to a caregiver in a timely way."

The system will initially share information between authorized health and child welfare agencies. Eventually, the plan is to also allow foster parents, older foster youths and those emancipated from care to access or even input data into the system.

"We've done a proof of concept phase and a proof of functionality," Zimmerman said, "and we're in the final stages of developing the webpage and interfaces to roll it out on a large scale." He's eyeing a first quarter of 2015 to launch a prototype system. It's expected to cost between "a couple of hundred thousand dollars to a half-million dollars."

Zimmerman said privacy and security issues have been worked out in the planning phase of the project. "The source systems will still have their protocols and pro-

tection around the data, so we're not transporting data into a new environment," he said, "so we feel as secure as the sources systems' data structures are." Once a person logs out of the Foster Link system, it will not retain the data it aggregated.

He added that concerns about the security of medical information also have been addressed. "Part of the first phase of the whole project was to go through all the legal requirements and the issues associated with HIPAA, the right to reproductive information. We've worked through a tremendous amount of that effort in the first phase."

Ginny Puddefoot is director of health information technology initiatives for vulnerable youth at the Children's Partnership. She's

worked with Zimmerman and other partner agencies over the past five years or so.

"Our role has sort of been to bring [an information technology] vision and partner in every way possible with Barry and with the other community partners in Ventura County," she said — "anything from identifying potential funding sources to being on the steering committee and providing some policy insight."

The partnership has documented what can happen when a foster child's records reside in silos. Missing or inaccurate information about vaccinations, for example, has led to some children being over-immunized as many as 15 times.

It also cited the example of a 16-year-old girl in a group home

who had completely lost touch with her biological family. By sifting through a three-foot-tall stack of files at a county office, a court-appointed special advocate for the teen was able to find contact information for the girl's aunt, which resulted in their being reunited.

Had the information been available electronically, Puddefoot said, the family connection could have been made sooner.

"The basic philosophy that we're going with is we're trying to equip those who are responsible for foster children with as much information as possible that's easy to access to be best informed on how to take care for a child," Zimmerman said. "That's what the electronic world is providing."



## Online Public Records Request System Cuts Response Times

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

The thing about public records is, most of the time they'll never see the light of day. But when somebody asks for them...

With that in mind, Maricopa County, Ariz., with more than 3.9 million residents, is ready for the roughly 1,000 annual public records requests that the county's Department of Transportation and Flood Control District receive to make order out of the chaos that exists in departments with such high data volumes.

Cynthia Robinson, the county transportation department's custodian of records, saw all kinds of requests come across her desk, usually in paper form.

"People wanted to know when a road was last swept, if we had the asphalt to pave a road, the traffic light sequencing reports," she said. "There was a wide gamut of what people wanted to know, but the point was they wanted to know it."

With five days between receipt of a request and a response, Robinson and her staff often spent a lot of time apprising citizens of the status of their requests.

"Plus we'd either be mailing the records and having to process their check for the postage or requiring



that they come in to pick them up," she said. "If somebody drives to our office from a long way away in bad traffic, they're not going to be in a good mood when they get here."

The time- and labor-intensive nature of the process wore on Robinson, and so in 2011, the department's information technology staff developed a Web-based interface for managing records requests, one that allowed users to skip the mail completely and ultimately receive their requested materials faster.

It wasn't just the elimination of the transfer, either. The new system made entire segments of the process more efficient.

"Once someone hits submit on the form, it automatically sends the requests to me and the records specialist, on our computers and phones," she said. "We were getting real-time requests and didn't have to wait until we got back in the office to start working on it. We weren't tethered to our desks and could get started right away."

The system's reference numbers

allowed users to get status updates automatically.

"I can't tell you how many status request calls I've gotten at 4:45 p.m. on a Friday," she said. "Since we put the system online, I haven't gotten a single status request call. And they know where in the pipeline their request, for example, we're waiting for the subject expert to respond. They know their request isn't lost in a big dark hole."

In addition to the stress it relieves from Robinson and her staff, she said, it improves the constituents' lives by accelerating their requests. The average response time, once five days, is down to two days for 98 percent of requests. That comes from a blending of steady reduction of paper records and the relative sense of immediacy that comes with an electronic communication about a request.

The programming was all done in-house, with development costs coming in at roughly \$9,000.

The next step is to create an online survey that goes along with the request form.

"Our users probably have a lot of great ideas we haven't thought of that would help us do our jobs better," Robinson said. "Hopefully we can use this to hear some of them."

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### WORD SEARCH

#### Erie County, N.Y. Facts

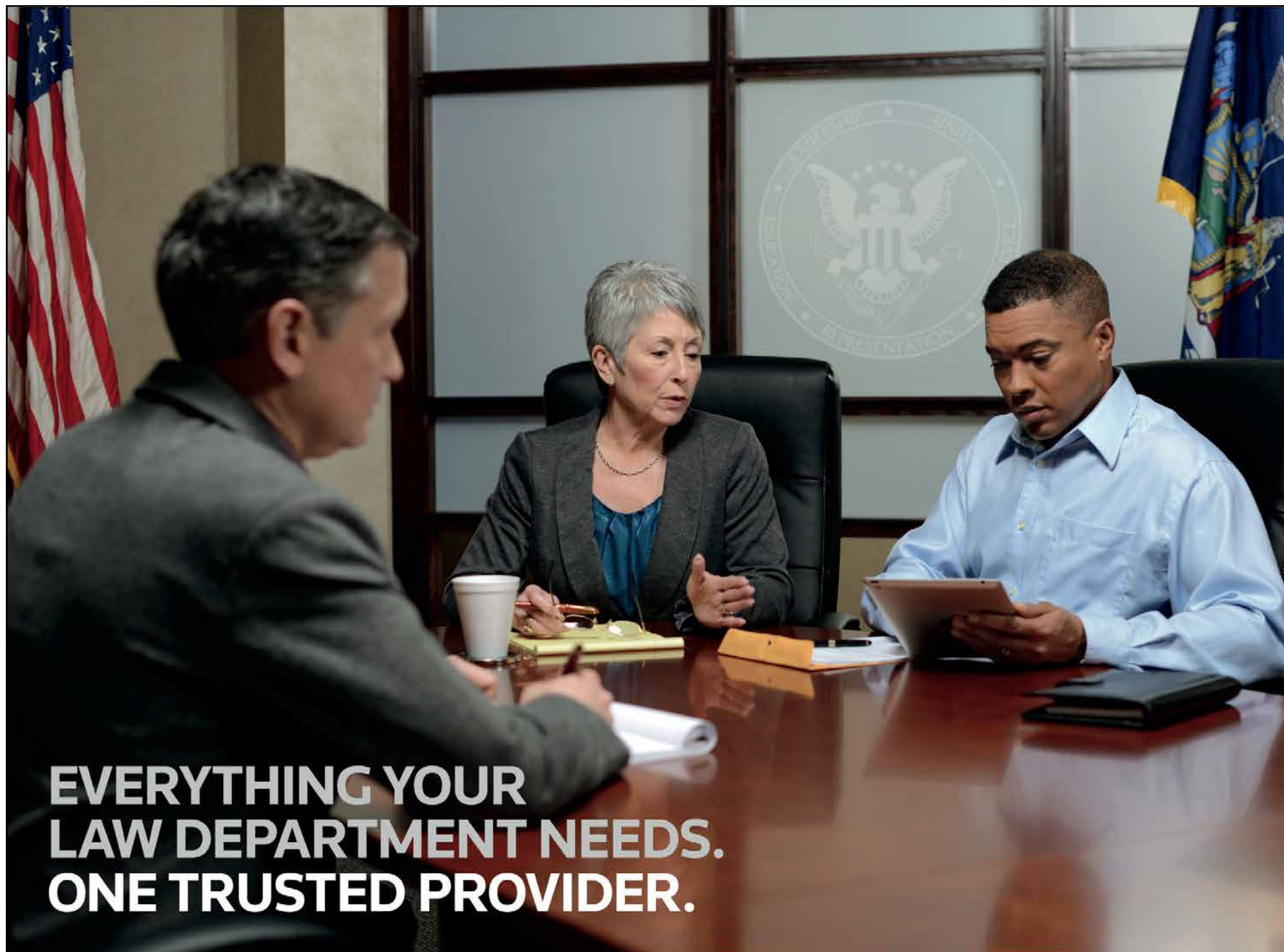
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**APPALACHIAN** (mountains run through county)  
**BILLS** (NFL football team)  
**BUFFALO** (city located in county)  
**CATTARAUGUS** (south adjacent county)  
**GENESEE** (east adjacent county)  
**LAKE ERIE** (county named after)  
**NIAGARA** (north adjacent county)

**ONTARIO** (Canadian province that borders county)  
**SABRES** (NHL hockey team)  
**FOURTEEN** (number of towns in the county)  
**THIRTY** (number of school districts in county)  
**WESTERN** (location in the state of New York)

Created by Christopher Johnson





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# Jacob Langenhahn serves Marathon County, Wis. in father's former seat

LANGENHAHN from page 1

Jacob, 19, said. "I thought County Board was a terrible thing — it took my dad away. It wasn't until I learned what the county government did in elementary school that I got an appreciation for where his time went."

As Jacob grew up, Keith said he was always eager to represent his class or his school.

"He's always been a good advocate when his role calls for it," he said. "Now he's taking it to the next level."

When Jacob started attending the two-year University of Wisconsin-Marathon County in 2013, he had his sights set on a degree in public administration, thanks, in part, to familiarity with the role that he gained through Keith's work. He planned to live his life like a normal student, working his way through school with a goal of no debt when he graduates.



Between Jacob (l) and his father, Keith, there are 24 years and six months worth of experience on the Marathon County, Wis. board.

It took all of four months before those plans changed.

When Keith's board successor, Todd McDonald, decided not to seek reelection, Board Chairman Kurt Gibbs came to Jacob suggesting he run.

"I've known Jake his entire life and I knew he had a little interest," Gibbs said. "I told him, 'If you're looking at administration, there aren't many better ways to learn it than to get exposed to the legislative side.' We

had a large board (38 members), so there wouldn't be too much pressure and he'd be great at it."

As it turned out, nobody else ran. He cleared it with college Dean Keith Montgomery—the county owns the campus buildings—and coordinated his class schedule so he could accommodate meetings.

With Montgomery's blessing, Jacob gathered his 50 signatures and waltzed into office unopposed.

"I told him to be careful when it comes to conflicts of interest, being a student and the county owning the buildings," Montgomery said. "But as long as he balances his responsibilities, he'll be fine."

Jacob participated in the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS), along with fellow sophomore Yee-Leng Xiong, who was elected to the D.C. Everest School Board.

"I look at them as two WIPPS participants who kept the program going to the next level — elective office," Montgomery said. "That's one of the reasons we have a leadership program like that."

And Jacob has plans for the next level. Nothing nefarious.

"I don't have any Frank Underwood ambitions," he said, referring *House of Cards'* Machiavellian protagonist. "I just want to learn and put everything together, and really understand government."

At the end of the school year, he'll leave the Marathon County campus to commute to the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point to finish his bachelor's degree.

"My dad told me, 'Until you hit that first meeting, you don't know what you're in for,'" he said. "But I got there and I loved it. And it's perfect. This is way better than being in any class. I always wanted to go into politics but didn't know when I'd do it, but I learned that's what I wanted when I saw the kind of guy my dad was in this role."

"In public office, you get to see someone's true values — how they prioritize what's on their plate and if they can be fair. That's the kind of supervisor I want to be."

He serves on the environmental resources committee, parks commission and land conservation zoning board.

"So much is a headfirst learning experience," he said. "Learning 100 terms involved in zoning — that was harder than studying for any test."

He generally wants to ensure the county maintains a fair taxation policy and the zoning ordinances are fair, universal and transparent. Specifically, he's embroiled in learning the comprehensive plan and its implications for his district as the

board revises the plan.

Gibbs is pleased with what he's seen out of the junior Langenhahn.

"He has great enthusiasm and really knows his way around the county already," he said. "Some of that rubbed off from his dad, but he definitely has a feel for all of this. If I had 36 other supervisors like him, I'd have a breeze of a time."

He's part of the turnover that Gibbs pointed out has replaced almost half of the board over the last two elections.

"We have four supervisors under 40, it's definitely the youngest board I've been around here," he said.

And Jacob Langenhahn? He's settling in outside of the board room. After speaking at a community event in September, the Langenhahn family went out to dinner, when two women stopped him to ask if he was the young man who gave the speech that night.

After talking to them, he rejoined his family at the table, where his dad had an observation.

"You're a little young for them," he said with a grin.

## Broadband Internet hits rural Colorado

HIGH-SPEED from page 2

contractor) or the state," McKay said. "So we turned to public relations."

The county took its case to the State Public Utilities Commission and lost. But San Juan gained allies in U.S. Sen. Mark Udall (D) and then-Sen. Michael Bennett and Gov. John Hickenlooper (D). "What we lacked in economic clout, we had in support from our representatives (advocating on our behalf for inclusion)," McKay said.

When the cables are connected to the school building Oct. 6, things won't be ready to go just yet, but it will be a major victory for the little county in the mountains.

"We're hoping to get it lit up by November, and get the county offices hooked up by early 2015," McKay said.

The county will lease out one of the 47 cable fibers to a private Internet service provider, which will manage the linkups to existing private homes and businesses, Tookey explained.

Then comes the effort to get a redundant line into town.

"Once we have that, we'll have the security to start trying to attract some businesses, like data storage, that rely on knowing there's a second Internet line for a backup," McKay said. "This could help the county grow a little."

## After we retire, will we cut back or cut loose?



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# STATE → TO → STATE



TEXAS



*What issues are driving state associations' legislative agendas? What are the latest and most persistent challenges your county colleagues in other states are facing? What looks to be looming on the horizon?*

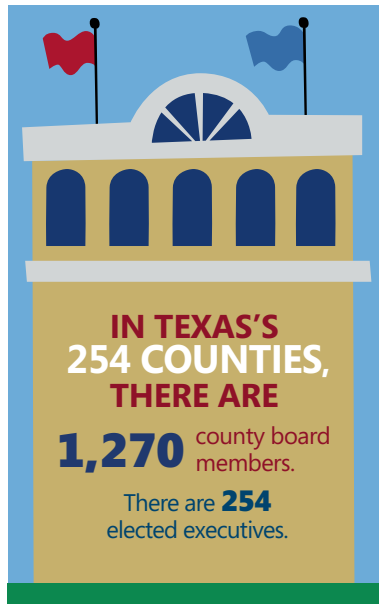
*State-to-State explores these questions and helps keep you in touch with your fellow leaders across the country.*

## Texas



The chambers of the biennial State Legislature may be closed now at the Texas Capitol in Austin, but that doesn't mean there's no apprehension among Texas' political class. "What's really got everybody treading water are the November elections," said Gene Terry, Texas Association of Counties executive director.

No matter who wins the top four statewide offices that are up for grabs, they will be new to the job. "All of the leaders in the races, to date, have served in the Texas Legislature, but the greater question is how will they function in their



new roles," Terry said.

Likewise, Texas' 254 counties will probably face a significantly different Legislature when the new session begins. The 2013 session already boasted the largest freshman class in decades, and Terry expects them to be joined by another wave of new faces.

That's a problem on two fronts, he explained: The rules are pretty

arcane and needing to learn them slows down the process; plus a large group of freshman and second-term lawmakers "shifts the power base as well to more seasoned legislators.

"We don't know how they will perform in their new roles as committee chairs."

But some things hardly ever change. Terry expects conservative state legislators in the next session to be looking at reducing property taxes.

There are three star players in the Texas taxing drama (and a few bit players, as well, such as utility districts). In order of revenues received: school district taxes — account for 60 percent to 70 percent of total tax bill — then cities and finally counties. Counties have little impact on a resident's overall tax bill, Terry points out, "yet, counties get lumped into this big mess," he said.

He used his own tax bill as an example. He pays twice as much in taxes to his municipal utility than he does to Travis County. Coincidentally, he added, "We've been on water rationing, so I'm not even getting my money's worth there."

Mixing it up with property tax naysayers takes a Herculean effort because "there are not more than 20 people in Texas who understand how the property tax works. It's like trying to describe an algebraic equation in French," Terry said.

Out in the field, communication technology looms as a new challenge. Rural counties have a problem communicating via the Internet, he said, adding that as Texas urbanizes there's an effort at the state level to capitalize on the benefits the Internet provides. Recent eFiling legislation is one example.

"The state needs to understand that not everyone has the capacity or ability to deal with mandates in technology," Terry commented. "The whole state doesn't look like Dallas and Houston and Austin."

One bright spot on the horizon for Terry is the speaker of the House, Joe Strauss. "He's a shining light, really reasonable and a pleasure to work with."

Terry paused and then said: "At the end of the day, who knows what's going to happen."

*(Beverly Schlotterbeck, County News staff, compiled to this report.)*

## Financial Services News

# How Will You Spend Your Retirement – Carefully or Carefree?

Nationwide challenges county workers with that question in its new National Save for Retirement Week campaign. Promotional materials point participants to website tools such as the On Your Side Interactive Retirement Planner and to Nationwide Retirement specialists, who are geared up to help participants take the uncertainty out of their retirement.

Sponsored by the National Association of Government Defined Contribution Administrators (NAGDCA), National Save for Retirement Week runs Oct. 19–25. Its goals are to:

- make employees more aware of how critical it is to save now for their financial future
- promote the benefits of getting started saving for retirement today, and

• encourage employees to take full advantage of employer-sponsored retirement plans by increasing their contributions.

Nationwide's campaign is designed to spur participants to discover the things they can do now through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program to become more sure that their resources are more likely to last through retirement.

County human resources and benefits staffs, using the week to promote the NACo Deferred Compensation Program as an employee benefit, can invite the Nationwide Retirement specialist to assist. Counties not leveraging the week are encouraged to con-

tact their Nationwide representative to develop plans for promoting the program as a great way to prepare for and live in retirement.

Employers wanting to learn more about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program in general should contact Lisa Cole by email at [lc@naco.org](mailto:lc@naco.org) or by phone at 202.942.4270.

Public employees who are interested in getting more information about the opportunities available through participation in the NACo Deferred Compensation Program should contact the Nationwide Retirement specialist serving their county, or call Nationwide at 877.677.3678.

*(Financial Services News was written by Bob Beasley, communications consultant, Nationwide Retirement Solutions.)*

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NRM-12794AO-NX (08/2014)

## What's in a Seal?

### ► Erie County, N.Y.

[www.erie.gov](http://www.erie.gov)



Erie County was established in 1821, created out of Niagara County. The county is named after Lake Erie, which comes from the Erie tribe of Native Americans who lived south and east of the lake before 1654.

It's the most populous county in the state outside of the New York City metropolitan area. The county also lies on the international border between the United States and Canada, bordering the Province of Ontario.

The Erie Canal, completed Oct. 26, 1825, originally ran 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo at Lake Erie. Built to create a navigable water route from New York City and the Atlantic Ocean to the Great Lakes, the canal helped New York eclipse Philadelphia as the largest city and port on the Eastern Seaboard. Today, the route helps with transporting goods across the state.

The seal features a sunrise over the Appalachian Mountains with the Erie Canal to the south and the city of Buffalo to the west. A 1776 American Flag crosses the seal to signify New York's status as one of the original Thirteen Colonies

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

## Nationwide Reintroduces NandEagle Logo

For nearly a half-century, the Nationwide brand was represented by a logo featuring a drawing of an eagle in flight superimposed over the letter N. Research shows it remains one of the most iconic images in America.

In resurrecting the "NandEagle" logo, Nationwide is surrounding its most recognizable asset with a deeper commitment to personal service that excels. It's a commitment that has made Nationwide a leading provider of public sector retirement plans for 40 years.

County employers and employees can expect that leadership to continue for many years to come. As the slogan says, "Nationwide is on your side."



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# News From the Nation's Counties

## ► CALIFORNIA

• A \$3.52 million federal grant will help **SAN DIEGO COUNTY** tackle **health disparities** in populations with high rates of chronic disease in the city of San Diego, specifically communities with higher rates of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

The County Health and Human Services Agency will lead the implementation of Healthy Works: Public Actions to Prevent Obesity, Diabetes, Heart Disease and Stroke and work with the city, UC San Diego's San Diego Division of Community Health and Be There San Diego.

In San Diego County, three behaviors — poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and smoking — lead to four diseases (cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and respiratory illness) that are responsible for more than 50 percent of local deaths.

• Five sheriffs **held a summit** to discuss threats to their counties and how to communicate more effectively with the public.

**DEL NORTE, GLENN, HUMBOLDT, MODOC and SISKIYOU counties** sent representatives to a public meeting where they discussed their roles in issues including jail population due to realignment, illegal land use that diverts and pollutes water resources, wildfires devastation, and solutions to public safety issues in rural counties, the *Times-Standard* reported. The counties are rural, sparsely populated and heavily forested.

## ► COLORADO

The **JEFFERSON COUNTY** Task Force on Marijuana is recommending that the Board of Commissioners **not allow any marijuana businesses** in unincorporated parts of the county.

The volunteer task force released its 134-page report and presented it to the board recently. The recommendation read that the licensing of marijuana establishments is "not consistent with the safety, health and welfare of the citizens of Jefferson County," the *Denver Post* reported.

Jefferson County placed a moratorium on marijuana businesses in July 2013 after the passage of Amendment 64 in November 2012. That moratorium is set to expire Feb. 1, 2015 unless more action is taken. The county also voted in April to prohibit marijuana clubs and to limit cultivation.



Courtesy of Henrico County, Va.

## ► VIRGINIA

• **HENRICO COUNTY** recently marked the 150th anniversary of the **Battle of New Market Heights** — a significant Civil War battle for the role played by African-American soldiers serving in the U.S. Colored Troops — with reenactments and living-history exhibits Sept. 27–28.

The event featured more than 1,000 re-enactors from around the country recreating three battles fought in Henrico: New Market Heights and Fort Harrison, both of which took place on Sept. 29, 1864, and the Second Battle of Deep Bottom, fought the previous month that year.

Fourteen African-American soldiers received the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award, for their heroism in combat at New Market Heights. Two white officers serving in the U.S. Colored Troops earned the award that day as well.

## ► INDIANA

**HAMILTON COUNTY** brides-to-be get a lot for their money when they decide to wed in their home county, according to a wedding survey by NerdWallet.com.

The personal finance website took into account median household income and the cost of wedding essentials, such as venues, catering and attire in its survey on **wedding affordability**.

The average cost of a wedding in Hamilton County — \$45,864 — cuts into about 54 percent of a Hamilton County couple's annual income, but in **MARION COUNTY**, couples spend about 90 percent of their yearly earnings to pay for the big day, for an average cost of \$38,434, the *Indianapolis Star* reported.

The cheapest place to get married is **HICKORY COUNTY, Mo.**, where the average cost of a wedding is about \$31,747, according to NerdWallet.com.

## ► KANSAS

Animal response teams from **BUTLER, SEDGWICK, HARVEY and WILSON counties** participated in a two-day **large animal rescue-training course**

held by Butler County Emergency Management.

It was a way to teach technical rescue techniques for animals like horses to a group that is primarily volunteers. Part of the training included learning how to handle several real-life rescue situations like mud or ice rescues or pulling a horse out of a wrecked trailer. The teams used a 600-pound horse dummy to practice harnessing, pulling and loading a large animal that may be hurt, KWCH News reported.

## ► MARYLAND

**Human trafficking** could take a hit in **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY** if new tactics planned by the County Council are effective.

Two pieces of legislation will seek to ban the hourly rental of hotel rooms in the county and require hotel operators to provide training to employees on how to identify human trafficking activities and victims.

A county working group charged with studying and combating the problem has been able to identify about 130 cases of human trafficking in the county since 2013, the *Washington Times* reported. The group reported that two hotels still

rent by the hour and are a magnet for prostitution and accounted for the "lion's share of the problems."

The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force has called the state a "hot spot" for trafficking because of proximity to Interstate 95, and the bus stops and truck stops that populate the corridor. Traffickers ferry victims between the major metropolitan cities connected by the interstate.

The idea for the legislation came from discussions with county police and hotel owners about what tactics might work best to discourage sex trafficking.

## ► NEW YORK

**NASSAU COUNTY** Executive Edward Mangano and District Attorney Kathleen Rice will host

a **Gun Buy Back** event this month.

Weapons will be purchased using asset forfeiture funds from the county Police Department and the D.A.'s office. They'll pay \$100 cash for each operable rifle that's turned in, \$200 for every handgun and \$400 apiece for assault rifles.

In the past, the buyback program has taken about 3,500 guns out of circulation "before they fell into the wrong hands," Mangano said.

## ► OHIO

Area animal rescues are increasingly saving canine lives in **LUCAS COUNTY**. The county's animal shelter has experienced **record-high save rates for the dogs**, according to the *Toledo Blade*.

Through Aug. 31, the shelter had adopted out, transferred to rescue or returned to owners 1,482 (61.7 percent) of the 2,402 dogs brought to the shelter this year.

Shelter Director Julie Lyle credited several factors, including longer shelter hours, donated funds for medical care and more space for adoptable dogs. Another major factor has been the shelter's ability to transfer dogs to 60 breed-specific rescue partners.

In 2008, under a previous director's leadership, the shelter saved 1,042 of 3,774 dogs — 27.6 percent. The save rate has climbed steadily since then.

## ► PENNSYLVANIA

The **COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA** is on the record opposing a proposed state law to require **additional notice of public meetings**.

Under House Bill 2408, public bodies would have to provide at least 24-hours' notice in advance of regular meetings, in addition to existing notice requirements under the state's sunshine law. The notice would also have to include the meeting's agenda, and items not listed on the agenda could not be acted upon, except for in certain emergency situations.

See **NEWS FROM** page 11

**NETWORK WITH NACo**

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# The H.R. Doctor Is In

## Lessons from the Apartheid Museum

I dictate this article soon after a visit to the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, South Africa. It has been a bit over 20 years since the world saw amazing demonstrations of courage and society-changing events. A legal and social system based on institutionalized racism and discrimination was replaced by elections and a sprint towards representative democracy.

In a partnership that was thought of as unthinkable only a few years earlier, then-President F.W. de Klerk, the chief administrative of-

ficer of the apartheid system, and Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned head of the African National Congress, created a partnership of bravery, vision and wisdom. With a few pen strokes the apartheid injustices were eliminated in the legal system. Those changes ranged from small, individual symbols of injustice, such as separate toilets and drinking fountains, to the huge apartheid components such as separate homelands based on race. The way was paved for the monumental evolution of a whole

society. This was my fourth visit to Africa, and I saw continued progress and continued challenges facing the country.

Eight years ago we visited a school for tiny children far out in a tribal area. At that time we noted the lack of a fence around school, never a good thing even without wild animals. We noted the lack of drinking water and toilet facilities, and in some cases children who were clearly not well and lacking clean clothes or even shoes. One of two classrooms had a collapsed roof and was unusable. Though we helped a bit with some underwriting of a teacher salary and school supplies, that was a grain of sand compared to the beach-sized needs we saw. Yet, we also saw a spirit of pride, progress and optimism in the children and the teacher.

This time we found the school with a new roof, fresh and bright paint job, a fence, a fresh water supply, a toilet and two hot meals a day for the children. Their clothes were clean and they all had shoes. They greeted us with joyful singing and dancing and, in turn, were met by us with hugs and smiles. There had been a huge turnaround in the school, although much remained to be done. The atmosphere of pride and progress was very much still there. The school and these beautiful children represent a metaphor for change, realism and optimism



“When something is so very wrong that walking by is unprofessional and unethical, it is time to stop and do something to help improve the situation.”

characteristic of a wonderful and diverse country.

When something is so very wrong that walking by is unprofessional and unethical, it is time to stop and do something to help improve the situation. In bureaucracies we prize the staff loyalty of working “within the system.” In the vast majority of cases this is an effective

way to help bring about change, albeit incremental and slow.

But great things can happen quickly if organizational leaders are willing to be innovative, sometimes take a risk, and adopt innovations suggested by staff members, especially the bright dynamic persons just beginning their careers. This is true even inside what might otherwise be regarded as a stodgy and inflexible bureaucracy. What is required are positive leaders to be in place as mentors and role models.

However, when that quality of leadership does not persistently demonstrate a commitment to do the right thing for the stakeholders and to take the necessary risks — when personal arrogance or narrow partisanship is primary — a swamp of complacency will prevent real progress. That is when it becomes a time to take another lesson from Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk.

Covering the wall at the Apartheid Museum is one of Mandela's quotes and part of his philosophy: “Sometimes one must go public with an idea to push a reluctant organization in the direction you want to go.”

In other words, when there is a compelling and just cause, and established channels and leaders are unwilling or incapable to even consider change for the better, simply surrendering is not good enough.

Simply accepting the status quo, going with the flow or just putting up with it is never the right thing to do. This is as true for bullying at school, sexual-harassment at work or domestic violence, just as much as it is for world-wide issues when the inhumanity of barbarity or extremism is allowed to go unchecked.

Future HR Doctor articles will explore the many behavioral similarities between animals, including lion, leopard and more gentle antelope and birds and their human friends. What would it be like if we elected or appointed some of these creatures to public office? Perhaps we already have in some cases.

Finally, one last and wonderful safari moment: As we ended an 18-hour airplane trip (yes, in “economy comfort” seats), the truly wonderful words of the Homeland Security officer as we cleared Customs echoed in our minds and our spirits: “Welcome Home!”

  
Phil Rosenberg

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## NACo on the Move

### ► NACo Officers and Officials

• NACo Executive Director **Matt Chase** spoke about NACo to the general assembly of the New York State Association of Counties Fall Seminar in Erie County Sept. 23.

### ► NACo Staff

• **Emilia Istrate**, research director, spoke about how Montana Counties and MACo can use NACo research materials in their advocacy efforts, policy-making and engagement with the media at the Montana Association of Counties Conference in Flathead County Sept. 23.

• **Nicholas Lyell**, senior research associate, presented the County Intelligence Connection 2.0 at a panel on “Web tools for data analysis” at the Association of Public Data Users Conference in Washington, D.C. Sept. 16.



Nicholas Lyell

*On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson, editorial assistant.*

## Dogs run for Salt Lake County mayor's office

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

“The requirement to publish an additional 24-hour notice would be an unnecessary and unfunded mandate on public bodies,” CCAP said, “the requirement to include an agenda in the published notice would significantly increase the advertising costs; and the prohibition of official action on non-advertised agenda items would prevent local governments from promptly responding to time-sensitive issues.”

### ► SOUTH DAKOTA

Elected officials from **LINCOLN** and **MINNEHAHA** counties and the city of Sioux Falls met recently for a first-ever discussion of how the **three governments can better work together**, the *Argus Leader* reported. Sioux Falls is the Minnehaha County seat — and the

state's most populous city — which also extends into part of Lincoln County. They are looking for ways to increase communication, share resources and save money.

The 15 county commissioners and city councilors focused on three areas that present challenges or opportunities: jail overcrowding, GIS mapping and planning. They intend to meet over the coming months to work out the details of how they can collaborate.

### ► UTAH

Does Fido have what it takes? Can Fifi wield a mean pair of oversized ceremonial scissors at ribbon cuttings? **SALT LAKE COUNTY** Mayor Ben McAdams and the county Animal Services division plan to find out during the **2014 Canine Mayor Elections**.

“Caninedates” must live in Salt

Lake County, but voters don't have to. The event is a fundraiser for Salt Lake County Animal Services and all proceeds will benefit its Injured Animal Fund.

The top (vote-getting) dog will serve a two-year term and attend special events with McAdams, ABC 4 Utah reported.

### ► WISCONSIN

**MILWAUKEE COUNTY** residents who need to get a **photo identification card to vote** on Nov. 4 will receive some help from the county.

Recently, the County Board unanimously approved a resolution to provide free bus rides to the Division of Motor Vehicles for persons needing to obtain the ID cards. An estimated 91,000 of the county's 948,000 residents need a government-issued ID to cast

a ballot, according to Supervisor Khalif Rainey.

He said the U.S. 7th District Court of Appeals' decision to reinstate the Wisconsin's voter ID law, requiring photo ID, has “created chaos,” the *Journal Sentinel* reported. Many of the people in need of DMV-issued IDs also have difficulty finding affordable transportation to DMV offices, he said.

“It amounts to a poll tax, and we need to do everything in our power to see to it that people get the necessary identification to allow them to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed right to vote,” Rainey said.

*(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](mailto:ctaylor@naco.org) or [cban@naco.org](mailto:cban@naco.org).)*



# Dallas response models textbook example of public health departments in action

## EBOLA from page 1

Dallas County is the lead agency for the investigation and containment of the disease, Jenkins announced at a news briefing Oct. 2. At that same time, he indicated that Dallas County public health officials had ordered the quarantine of four of the patient's family members, who were not abiding by the order to remain in their apartment under observation.

In a recent interview, *County News* discussed the role of a local health department in the event of an Ebola outbreak with Jack Hermann at the National Association of City and County Health Officials, (NACCHO). Hermann is the senior advisor and chief of NACCHO's Public Health Program.

So far, the events unfolding in Dallas mimic his description of local health department responses — down to the order to quarantine from the county's health director.

In August, when the word Ebola moved out of medical textbooks and onto Google searches, local health departments began gearing up to deal with a frightened public, Hermann said. The presence of patients with Ebola in the United States set off a considerable amount of fear in the general public and among health care workers — fears that were communicated to local health departments.

"Local health departments found themselves in a situation where they either had to respond to the questions and fears, or prepare themselves to respond to questions from the media and public," he added. "That required them to develop rich communication messages to help alleviate fear."

In Dallas, the day the CDC confirmed the Ebola diagnosis, Sept. 30, the county issued a health advisory to "Dallas County Medical Providers and Laboratory Staff" directing them to follow certain CDC and locally generated protocols. It also advised them that DCHHS was working with the CDC and state health department to identify all persons who had close personal contact with the patient.

The next day, top state and local officials including Jenkins, DCHHS Director Zachary Thompson and the county's Health Authority/Medical Director, Dr. Christopher Perkins, faced an anxious media.

To emphasize the message presented by both Thompson and Dr. Perkins — that Ebola cannot be contracted unless symptoms are present — Jenkins said he intended to visit the apartment complex and talk to the people

in the neighborhood where the Ebola victim visited, unafraid of contracting the virus.

Hermann said that concurrent with delivering a public media message, the local health department will begin, to put procedures and plans in place — bring together different departments, the epi-

miology section, for example, who would be responsible for investigating a potential outbreak; and public affairs staff to help craft messages to the communities that had questions and concerns.

Local Dallas media reports have shown flyers and other materials that are being distributed to Dallas

residents, with information about the disease.

When Hermann was asked about the role of the county elected official in a disease outbreak, his answer conformed pretty closely what has been unfolding in Dallas.

"It's very, very important that the county officials at the community

level have a very close relation with their public health department and legal counsel for the county," he said. "They should know what are the legal authorities the public health officer has in that jurisdiction. ... People are looking at them, asking them 'county executive, what are you going to do now?'"



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**NATIONAL CYBER SECURITY AWARENESS MONTH**  
 promotes cyber security through events and initiatives.

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Throughout the month of October **NACo** will be highlighting the issue of cyber security in *County News*, on the NACo website and on the NACo social media channels.

We hope you will join our efforts to promote this issue. Online safety and security are shared responsibilities; together we can positively impact our online community.

[www.naco.org/cyber](http://www.naco.org/cyber)

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