

U.S. Communities switches office supplies vendor

The U.S. Communities-administered office supplies contract has been awarded by the County of Los Angeles to Independent Stationers, Inc.

Independent Stationers is a cooperative of 250 locally owned independent office supply dealers. The new office supplies contract, effective Sept. 1, 2010, replaces the contract formerly held by Office Depot. Office Depot chose not to bid on the new Los Angeles-U.S. Communities contract.

"NACo is excited about this new office supply contract under our U.S. Communities program," said Larry Naake, NACo executive director. "We have always tried to

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Photo by Victoria Goodman

From county fairs to arts and crafts festivals, this is the season for special events in the great outdoors. One of the artists at Howard County's "PAINT IT!," a community outdoor painting event, takes her turn at capturing an outdoor scene.

PAINT IT! premiered last month in Howard County, Md.'s historic county seat of Ellicott City. The weekend attraction drew artists and visitors alike to the town and culminated in a gallery opening of the finished work. The outdoor "paint out" was a collaborative effort between the Office of Tourism & Promotion and the Howard County Center for the Arts, and was designed to both draw visitors to the town and expose the public to the creative process and the importance of the arts within the community.

Congress returns from summer break; don't expect too much

Now that school is back in session, Congress has returned to Washington, D.C. to do the public's business. The first lesson for this fall session is that there will be very little accomplished before the break for the Nov. 2 elections.

The political climate in the nation's capital is very contentious, and both parties are pursuing strategies that will lead to gridlock. That said, NACo's legislative staff has compiled its best prognostication as to what Congress may tackle in the next month.

The one thing that must be accomplished before Oct. 1 is funding the federal government for some period beyond the elections. Most likely this is going to be a continuing resolution to a date somewhere into the future. Without this, the federal government would have to shut down.

Labor and Employment

After several attempts to move H.R. 5297, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) filed a series of cloture motions to set up votes on a small business bill on Sept. 14. The bill would provide \$12 billion in tax breaks and expand credit access for small businesses through a \$30 billion lending fund.

Public Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, legislation granting fire fighters and police officers minimum collective bargaining rights by establishing minimum standards for state collective bargaining laws, may receive consideration.

Although the bill was recently incorporated by the U.S. House of Representatives into a larger supplemental appropriations bill — H.R. 4899 — it, along with numerous other provisions added by the House, was subsequently removed

by the Senate. Senate leaders have indicated that they plan to consider the Cooperation Act before the end of the year. There is a possibility the bill will be amended to the Small Business Lending Bill.

New Stimulus Effort

President Obama unveiled a new stimulus effort, Sept. 8, that includes extending tax cuts for the middle class and providing tax breaks for small businesses. The president proposed \$180 billion in infrastructure spending and business tax breaks aimed to boost the nation's economic recovery and appease voter concern over the recession. To cover the \$130 billion cost over the next decade, the president said he would close billions of dollars in tax breaks that encourage companies to create

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Counties eye state ballot questions

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Citizen activism may be taking a bit of a holiday this year: There are just 43 citizen initiatives that qualified for this year's Nov. 2 ballots. The number usually hovers around 100, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

The issues run the gamut — from measures to legalize medical marijuana in Arizona and South Dakota, to laws that prohibit mandatory participation in any health care system. Overall, 150 measures qualified for the November ballot in 35 states, which include legislatively referred questions, citizen initiatives and constitutional amendments. (The final number may be lower as some questions faced legal challenges.)

Of greatest concern to counties are the ballot measures that directly affect county purse strings or local authority such as property tax-related questions.

In Indiana, Question 1 would add property tax caps to the Indiana Constitution. The cap is already in effect by statute; it limits tax bills to 1 percent of assessed value for homeowners, 2 percent on agricultural land and 3 percent for commercial property.

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QuickTakes

5 Least Economically Stressed Counties

	Stress Score
1 - Ward County, N.D.	3.16
2 - Burleigh County, N.D.	3.68
3 - Brown County, S.D.	3.90
4 - Buffalo County, Neb.	4.16
5 - Ford County, Kan.	4.47

Source: The Associated Press Economic Stress Index, July 2010

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ANALYSIS

Are You Ready for 'Digital Goods' Taxation?

By **JEFF ARNOLD**
DEPUTY LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

As you are reading this are you thinking, "What in the heck are digital goods?" Have you ever downloaded an audiobook, watched a TV program on your smart phone or downloaded an "app" to your iPhone? If you have, you have been dealing with digital goods.

There is little doubt that in this century how goods and services are received in changing. Education is being delivered over the Internet. One of the largest universities in the country doesn't even have a campus (It does, however, have a football stadium, home of the Arizona Cardinals.)

Devices such as Amazon's Kindle have changed the way people read books, newspapers and other reading



Jeff Arnold
Deputy Legislative Director

material. Smart phones, regardless of brand or operating system, have made digital content, goods and services available 24/7 and in a mobile environment.

One of the new battles facing Congress — probably in the next

session — will be over legislation that would preempt new taxes on intangible products and services, known as digital goods. In this session, Reps. Rick Boucher (D-Va.) and Lamar Smith (R-Texas) have introduced H.R. 5649, a bill to promote neutrality, simplicity and fairness in the taxation of digital goods and digital services.

Neutrality, simplicity and fairness are in the eyes of the beholder. The bill would effectively limit local governments from taxing any of these digital goods and services differently than the taxation of tangible products, such as books, records and videos. There are currently 23 states that have some form of taxation of digital goods, by statute, department of revenue decree, or case law. They vary from state to state.

Although the actual revenue impacts have yet to be calculated, congressional intervention in local taxing decisions could create a "slippery slope" for other industries looking for similar congressional action to limit local authority. NACo has not taken a specific policy position on this legislation to date, but has always opposed preemption of local authority.

Counties must begin to look at their tax structures as they relate to communications services and content. Most tax laws are based on antiquated regulatory structures that existed in a monopoly environment of a single phone company. That is not today's world. Without changing the tax structure and rates based on the new competitive environment, local revenues will shrink, competition will be stifled and small businesses could bear a larger tax burden.

This legislation is a work in progress. It is not a panacea. But local officials need to be aware that this is but a first shot in a protracted battle over whether counties retain local taxing authority, or allow Congress to dictate counties' revenue sources and subsequently reduce their ability to serve constituents with the programs they need and want.

NACo Past President Gil Barrett dies Aug. 15

By **CHARLIE BAN**
STAFF WRITER

Gil Barrett was ready to throw his political career in the trash.

As he faced a recall vote in 1989 as chairman of Dougherty County, Ga. commission, he stood his ground defending the land purchase for a landfill he argued benefited the county. He withstood the recall and was vindicated when the landfill provided vital infrastructure for the county's growth.

Barrett, NACo president from 1973 to 1974, died Aug. 15 at the age of 87, after more than 40 years on the County Commission, spending 20 years as chairman. "He really cared about this county and wanted to do everything he could to promote its growth," said County Clerk Barbara Ingram. "You could tell his passion the way he was able to talk people into supporting his positions. He was never forceful, always respectful, but very convincing."

He also served as president of the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia from 1981 to 1982. In 1975, President Gerald Ford appointed Barrett to the Federal Commission on Paperwork, and President Ronald Reagan appointed him to the federal Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations in 1982 and 1985.

Barrett joined the County Commission in 1959 and served as



Gil Barrett, 1923-2010

chairman from 1979 until he retired in 1998.

His tenure included a significant influence on his younger colleagues, especially current board Chairman Jeff Sinyard.

"He was such a mentor to all of us," Sinyard said. "I first joined the commission when I was 30, and the lessons he taught me early on about how to serve the people — I don't think I would have been an effective elected official without them."

Sinyard said Barrett's gift was seeing how Dougherty County fit into the state and national level.

"He was a master at using the resources and building relationships, being able to make a call and make good things happen — or keep bad things from happening," Sinyard said.

"They don't make them like that anymore."

Several human service programs approaching Sept. 30 expiration

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jobs and profits in other countries. This is not likely to pass.

Human Services

There are several human services programs that are set to expire Sept. 30:

- the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant
- the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF) that was created as part of ARRA, and
- the authority to use Child Support Enforcement incentive payments as matching funds.

The TANF reauthorization is expected to be a simple one-year extension of current law, which might also include the child support enforcement restoration and the TANF ECF extension. It is very likely that these extensions will be included in a continuing resolution.

Tax and Finance

The Senate has signaled that it may be willing to attempt to pass a package of tax-extendors during the next few weeks. The Build America Bonds program would be part of the package and exemplifies concerns over costs of the extendors package.

Although the program has provided local governments with added flexibility in times of fiscal stress, the cost to extend the program beyond the end of this year is a tough sell.

Agriculture

Food safety legislation moved one step closer to consideration in the Senate with the introduction of a bipartisan managers' amendment before the August recess, but hurdles to the bill's passage remain in controversial Democratic amendments.

The Food Safety Modernization Act, S. 510, provides FDA with expanded access to food facilities to prevent tainted food from reaching the public and increases the agency's overseas presence. However, the managers' amendment does not address controversial Democratic amendments from Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that would ban the use of bisphenol-A, a common plastic additive known as BPA, and from Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), to exempt food producers that generate less than \$500,000 in sales per year or sell food directly in a farmers' market from new regulations.

NACo supports the bill's provisions that help strengthen support for local food safety efforts and improve the safety of imported food, especially through the inspection

of foreign food facilities. The nationwide egg recall that occurred in August has bolstered the prospects of passage before the fall election. The bill is similar to H.R. 2749, the Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009, which passed the House by a wide margin in July 2009.

Transportation

Congress has been working on an airport reauthorization bill since 2007. While the House and Senate have passed their respective bills, working out a compromise has been a challenge. Many differences have been resolved yet several remain and may very well jeopardize getting a final bill to the president prior to the November elections.

The two most contentious issues are an increase in the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC), which local airports can levy to raise funds for capital improvements, and allowing more flights to the western part of the U.S. from Washington's Reagan National Airport. The current PFC limit is \$4.50 per flight segment. The House bill raises that limit to \$7,

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CORRECTIONS

National County Government Month is celebrated in April. Due to an editing error, an incorrect month was listed in the article by NACo President Glen Whitley in the Sept. 6 issue.

Flood insurance program up for renewal

CONGRESS from page 2

while the Senate legislation does not include any increase. More flights from National Airport to the West is supported, not surprisingly by Western state senators and opposed strenuously by Virginia senators who see additional flights creating more congestion and noise in northern Virginia where National Airport is located.

President Obama recently proposed \$50 billion in new spending for transportation as a way to improve the nation's infrastructure and to create additional jobs. It is quite unlikely that this proposal will be enacted prior to the November elections.

It is unclear whether this would be folded into the reauthorization of the federal highway-transit program or whether an effort will be made to pass it as a separate piece of legislation.

Justice and Homeland Security

Over the next month, both the House and Senate are expected to enact their versions of the FY11 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) budget.

In the House, the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee approved its version of the legislation in June, but the legislation has yet to be approved by the full House Appropriations Committee. In the Senate, the Senate Appropriations Committee has approved its version of the legislation (S.3607), and the bill is set for legislative action on the Senate floor.

While both full chambers have not yet moved to approve the legislation, Congress and the president have routinely enacted this appropriation bill detached from any supplemental or omnibus measure.

Also, Congress will be poised to enact legislation to extend the life of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) within the next month. Set to expire on Sept. 30, the NFIP has continually been faced with brief periods of termination, and Congress has enacted short-term authorizations to extend the program. Since Hurricane Katrina, Congress has sought to overhaul the program and enact a long-term authorization for the NFIP. However, provisions concerning whether to add wind damage coverage, raise the maximum coverage limits and

forgive the program's debt have remained controversial, stalling reform efforts.

Since expiration of the NFIP hinders the ability to write and renew flood insurance coverage for businesses and residents, and adversely impacts or delays thousands of real estate closings, Congress will likely enact a reauthorization of the NFIP program either before or shortly after the Sept. 30 deadline.

On the criminal justice side, there is an excellent chance that the House and Senate will reauthorize the Second Chance Act before they adjourn for the election with technical changes that NACo supports—including the allowance of pre-trial assessments.

The National Criminal Justice Commission Act, which NACo also supports, has already passed the House and the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is expected to be considered after the election in the lame-duck session to avoid any political posturing.

As expected there is a lot up in the air, and lots of speculation as to what Congress may attempt to take up in the next few weeks. Stay tuned.

D-Block push on tap

NACo and other associations representing state and local government will be supporting the public safety communities' push to get legislation passed that would reallocate an additional 10 megahertz (MHz) of 700 MHz spectrum for a public safety broadband network.

Just before the summer recess, Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.), chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, introduced S. 3756, which would require the reallocation and provide funding authority to begin the build-out of the network. All of the "Big Seven" organizations and the Pub-

lic Safety Alliance will be working to get additional co-sponsors and to push the Senate for consideration. There will be a hearing on Sept. 23 in the Commerce Committee on the legislation.

Sens. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) also introduced legislation reallocating the D-Block. Similar legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.).

It will be very difficult to get this legislation passed before the upcoming election, but it may be considered if there is a lame-duck legislative session.

In Case You Missed It ...

News to Use from Past County News

► The County Intelligence Connection (CIC)

The County Intelligence Connection targeted data solutions, a new NACo website feature, is especially designed for those looking to know more about counties. This new service makes analysis easy, providing a range of geographic, demographic, economic and infrastructure-related data at the county level.

To see the full range of information, visit www.naco.org. Click on "Get the Latest County Data" under the Research and Publications tab.*

* Subscriptions are available for non-NACo members.

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

Profiles in Service



» Shirlee Zane

Vice chair, NACo Health Steering Committee
Supervisor, Sonoma County, Calif.

Number of years active in NACo: two

Years in public service: since January 2009

Occupation: represent Sonoma County's most urban district on the Board of Supervisors; chair, Solid Waste Task Force; co-chair Health Action Committee; and director, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Sonoma County Transportation Authority and Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART)

Education: B.A., speech pathology and audiology, Chico State University; M.A., theology, Trinity Divinity School; M.A., marriage, family and child counseling, Sonoma State University

The hardest thing I've ever done: running for supervisor against a three-term mayor, surviving a 15-month campaign where over \$1.1 million was spent, and winning by 10 percent after having never run for office before

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Jesus, Teddy Roosevelt and Winston Churchill

A dream I have is to: spend one to three months studying and painting at The Chicago Art Institute.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: am an old cowgirl.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: live and work in Caracas, Venezuela for 16 months and jump a freight train.

My favorite way to relax is: oil painting in my studio.

I'm most proud of: providing 1,000 daily hot, nutritious Meals on Wheels to seniors for 10 years, and creating a loving home and family.

Every morning I read: our local newspaper, *The Press Democrat*.

My favorite meal is: dry gin martini with extra olives, any kind of pasta, a Caprese salad, a great steak and dark chocolate lava cake.

My pet peeve is: people who whine and see themselves as victims so as to avoid responsibility for their actions.

My motto is: "Speak boldly and carry a great lipstick!"

The last book I read was: *The Help*, by Kathryn Stockett about racial prejudice in the 1960s.

My favorite movie is: *Schindler's List*.

My favorite music is: classical and Celtic.

My favorite president is: Teddy Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln and the First Woman President.

New U.S. Communities supplier has local focus

OFFICE from page 1

offer nationally priced contracts that are delivered through locally based suppliers. This partnership with Independent Stationers and its extensive dealer organization provides us with a very aggressively priced contract as well as an opportunity to use local dealers in our communities."

The new contract delivers innovative office supply solutions to public agencies nationwide. Independent Stationers was established in 1977 and is an industry-leading office supplies provider with advanced distribution capabilities located throughout the United States. Below are some of the benefits offered under the new contract with Independent Stationers:

- locally based service, sales and support via more than 250 local office supply dealers
- opportunities for participating public agencies to save money and support local business, create local jobs and enhance the local tax base
- opportunities to meet and exceed locally established goals for participation of minority- and women-owned businesses (MWBE)

- national distribution and delivery

- access to over 19,000 office supplies products

- online ordering, next-day delivery, no minimum order limits, e-payment options including p-card, EDI and ERP integration

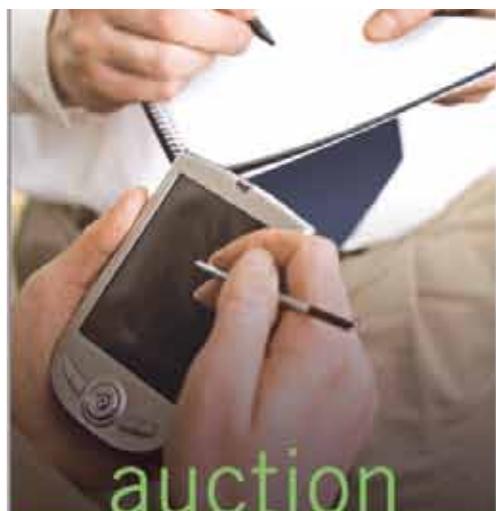
- free delivery
- a fixed price contract to facilitate transparency and public agency pricing audits

- electronic ordering and volume purchase rebates, and

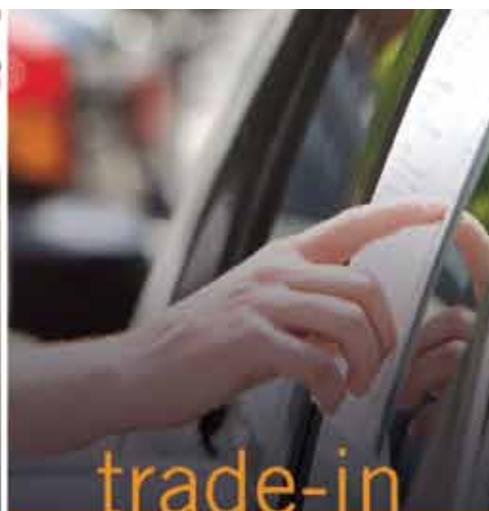
- access to a competitively solicited contract awarded by Los Angeles County, providing Independent Stationers' best overall pricing and primary offering guarantee to protect the interests of all participating public agencies

To learn more about the products and solutions provided under the new U.S. Communities' office supplies contract, please visit <http://uscommunities.isgroup.org> or call 1.877.872.8599.

(Financial Services News was written by Nancy Parrish, director, NACo Financial Services Corporation.)



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Pa. county sues state capital city over incinerator debt

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Dauphin County, Pa. is suing its largest city — Harrisburg, the state capital — to compel the financially troubled city to meet its obligations on defaulted bonds for a municipal incinerator. The county is third in line as a guarantor of the debt and has already paid \$3.41 million since May 2009.

Harrisburg has failed to make \$8 million in payments this year that it guaranteed on behalf of the Harrisburg Authority, which oversees the waste-to-energy incinerator.

“While we are committed to working with the city on a responsible solution, we have an obligation to also protect the interests of the other 39 municipalities in Dauphin County,” said Jeff Haste, a Dauphin County commissioner, in a statement announcing the court action.

The county is a co-guarantor with the city on \$107 million of the authority’s bonds, according to the lawsuit filed Sept. 13 in the county’s Common Pleas Court. In addition to making the \$3 million-plus payment, the county was notified last month that it would be asked to cover \$34.7 million in short-term notes for the incinerator due Dec. 15.

The lawsuit also asks a judge to

appoint a receiver for the Harrisburg Authority, which has been unable to function because it lacks quorum of members, who are appointed by the city.

On Sept. 12, Gov. Edward Rendell (D) announced the state would expedite \$4.3 million in payments owed the city to help it meet a Sept. 15 debt payment, saying that to al-

low a missed bond payment “would devastate not only the city, but the school district, the county, and Central Pennsylvania’s reputation as a great place to live...”

Amy Richards, a spokeswoman for Dauphin County commissioners, called Rendell’s action and the suit “a last-ditch effort.” “Certainly we’d prefer to negotiate and work on

restructuring and refinancing that debt, but at this point that hasn’t happened,” she told *County News*.

Some members of the Harrisburg City Council have been throwing around the “b” word — bankruptcy. But Rendell said that such talk should be off the table until all other options have been explored and exhausted.

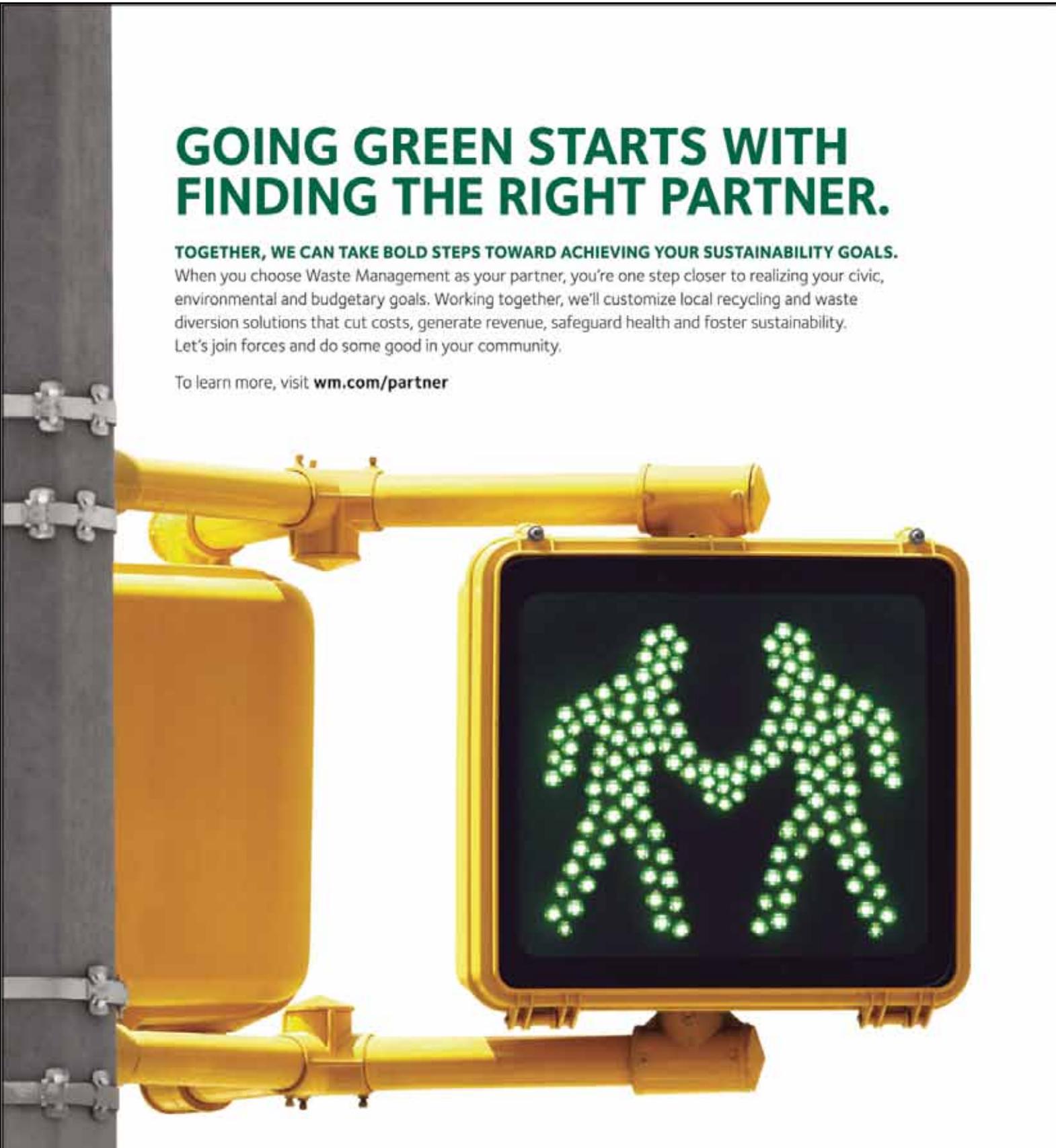
Haste said in the statement: “We continue to hold out hope that the city will begin to work with the other parties to develop a responsible solution to their debt crisis. It is disappointing that the city has not even acknowledged our ... most recent offer to develop a plan to address the refinancing of the December 2010 payment.”

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'Pot' prop raises concerns

BALLOT from page 1

Those limits can be exceeded only with voter approval.

However, a simple majority of voters could enshrine the statute in the state's constitution, according to David Bottorf, executive director of the Association of Indiana Counties. And polls show that's likely to happen.

"Most if not all counties will lose property tax revenue because of this property tax cap," he said, "And our biggest concern about it is that it's going into the constitution, and it really hasn't had the opportunity to be in effect long enough to ascertain whether it's a good public policy."

"It's a really specific policy, and usually the constitutions are saved for more general policy," he added.

Following is a sampling of measures from around the country that counties are closely watching. As is often the case, California leads the pack — with nine initiatives. Colorado and Washington each have six, and Oregon has four. Florida, Massachusetts, Missouri and Montana each have three initiatives on the ballot, according to NCSL.

California

Proposition 22, the Local Taxpayer, Public Safety, and Trans-

portation Protection Act, has been characterized as a way to stop the state from raiding local funds used for transportation, redevelopment, and local government projects and services.

But opponents say that by protecting redevelopment agency funding, it leaves safety net services at risk. "Because we [counties] provide those services on the state's behalf, we're concerned about the impacts to those services," said Jean Hurst, legislative representative, revenue and taxation, California State Association of Counties (CSAC).

CSAC's board of directors took no position on the measure, Hurst said, but it did strongly oppose two other propositions. "Prop 26," she said, "is terrible." It makes it harder for local governments and the state to impose various mitigation fees on companies — for example, fees assessed on chemical manufacturers to offset the costs of responding to chemical spills.

The association also opposed Prop 19, which would legalize marijuana for personal use. "The problem is that it leaves the regulatory scheme open to cities and counties. So cities and counties would have to independently

See BALLOT page 7

Model Programs

FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

Wayne County, Mich. Becomes Hollywood of the Great Lakes

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Moviegoers can relate a few recent films to Detroit and Wayne County, Mich., mainly the work of natives, documentarian Michael Moore and rapper Eminem.

Although "Roger and Me" and "8 Mile" drew American moviegoers' attention to the region, more recently Wayne County has played host to more than two dozen movie crews over the past two years, more than the prior 27 years combined.

"Detroit 187," premiering Sept. 21 on ABC-TV, is now filmed in Wayne County, after shooting its pilot in Georgia.

In 2009, 30 theatrical movies, including box-office draws "Whip It!" and "Up in the Air," plus four TV movies, were filmed in Wayne County. Clint Eastwood's high-profile "Gran Torino" was filmed there in 2008.

At the center of this turnaround is the Wayne County Film Initiative, which has managed a recruitment campaign aimed at producers and offered various incentives to encourage filmmakers. The initiative's website, www.reelwc.com, consolidates various benefits available to filmmakers, including tax incentives, a video of shooting locations and eligibility guidelines.

"Our best outcome is getting repeat business from studios and producers," said Michael Mosallum, Wayne County's director of film initiatives.

"The more we can transition from having companies fly in their own crews to them hiring local workers, the better. We have a wealth of talent here in skilled labor, and it's easy for auto workers to transition into film technicians with the right training."

He singles out "Detroit 187" as a prime time example of what he's after. "They shoot nine months out of the year here — that's pretty much a full-time business in Wayne County," he said.

"Detroit 187" Executive Producer David Zabel seems to be following Mosallum's script. "There



Photo courtesy of Wayne County, Mich. Film Initiative

"Red Dawn" director, Dan Bradley, coordinates his crew while filming in Wayne County, Mich.

are a lot of benefits to shooting in Detroit," Zabel said during a summer press tour. "Included in that is that there is a bit of an infrastructure forming of crew members. ... We are filling out our crew with a lot of locals. ... And hopefully in the long run what will then happen is that a lot of the locals who are working at midlevel positions are going to get better at these jobs and rise up and be doing more of the key department-head work as well."

Meanwhile, the county program provides free production space to some independent filmmakers, in hopes that it will entice them to hire local workers for their crews.

The Michigan Film Incentives provides a number of tax credits for production companies that spend at least \$50,000 in the state. Wayne County offers its own incentives, including a land bank, brownfield redevelopment tax credits along with Environmental Protection Agency grants for site assessments. New workers for films, 50 in-state workers and 100 out-of-state workers, trigger additional tax breaks.

The program doesn't cover news programs, sports, advertising productions or talk and game shows.

"We have an array of assets, the city of Detroit being key, but we also have great relationships with local municipalities," Mosallum said. "What producers can't find in the city they can find somewhere else in the county."

Mosallum said Clint Eastwood not only filmed Gran Torino in

Wayne County, but changed the script to set the story there. Though many projects filmed there are set in the Detroit area, Wayne County has doubled for other locales, including Paris, Russia and particularly Boston, for the upcoming Hillary Swank movie "Conviction."

Mosallum cites "Conviction" as his favorite project thus far because it gave him a chance to get his feet wet coordinating a large range of projects to support the filming.

He said the initiative did not have economic impact data for Wayne County alone, though the state film office projects that by 2012 total direct production expenditures will climb to \$187.7 million. These expenditures will likely produce 2,922 jobs with annual income of \$189.5 and total state output of \$335.6 million.

"We got a nice letter after last summer's 'Red Dawn' remake, saying the Wayne County Film Initiative is what brought them here, so we know we're making an impact there."

All on a budget consisting of one position—Mosallum's.

(Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights Achievement Award-winning programs. For more information on this and other NACo Achievement Award winners, visit NACo's Web site, www.naco.org ▶ Research & Publications ▶ Find Solutions ▶ Model County Programs.)

What's in a Seal?

» Pike County, Ky.
www.pikecountychamber.org



Located at the easternmost tip of Kentucky in the coalfields of the Cumberland Mountains, Pike County covers 786 square miles, giving it the distinction of being Kentucky's largest county by land area. Its nearly 68,000 residents make it the 11th most populous county in the state.

Pike County was founded on Dec. 19, 1821. The county was named for Gen. Zebulon Pike, the explorer who discovered Pikes Peak. Between 1860 and 1891, the Hatfield-McCoy feud raged in Pike and in bordering Mingo County, W. Va. On May 6, 1893, Pikeville officially became a city and the county seat.

The county's largest industries are services and mining. At nearly 35 million tons per year, Pike County's coal accounts for almost 25 percent of Kentucky's total coal production, and the county is one of the world's top producers of bituminous coal.

Surprising to many is the fact that Pike County is Kentucky's third largest banking center, with financial institutions and holding companies with more than \$1 billion in assets.

The seal displays the greatest resource, coal, along the bottom while the words "People Our Greatest Resource" outline the middle where a coalminer is thanked for his dedication.

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

Colorado measure would invalidate citizen-approved tax increases

BALLOT from page 6

create their regulatory structure," Hurst said.

Colorado

Colorado Counties Inc. (CCI) has taken positions opposing four statewide ballot questions, three of them related. Amendments 60 and 61, and Proposition 101 deal with taxes and affect counties. "These would have a significant impact on county revenues," said NCSL Senior Fellow Jennifer Bowser.

Amendment 60 would change Colorado's Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) law. "It would cancel all of the existing voter-approved property tax questions. Any local government, including counties ... that had taken the limits off property taxes by voter approval, those election decisions are repealed," according to John "Chip" Taylor, executive director of CCI.

He added counties are also concerned that the amendment requires existing tax-exempt enterprises and authorities to start paying property taxes.

Amendment 61 requires local governments to get voter approval for any kind of debt. Currently, counties can finance projects with voter-approved revenues or existing budgets.

"[It would make] the process of financing infrastructure much more cumbersome and difficult for counties," Taylor said.

Louisiana

Louisiana parishes are hoping the second time will be the charm for a ballot measure — a constitutional amendment — the Louisiana Natural Resource Severance Taxes, Amendment 2. It would decrease the amount of taxes kept by the state on the severance of certain natural resources, including oil and natural gas, and increase the maximum amount of such tax revenue that goes to the parish where the resource was extracted.

The increased payments would be triggered in any year when severance tax collections are forecasted to exceed what was collected by the state in FY08 – 09.

"Parishes will benefit greatly if passed and the 'trigger' language hits," said Roland Darte, executive director of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana. A similar measure has failed before, but Darte said voters might be supportive this time, in light of what the state has been through with the BP oil leak and offshore drilling embargo.

New Mexico

New Mexico's Amendment 2 seeks to expand term limits from eight years to 12 years for county officials.

Forty-four states allow unlimited terms for elected county officials, according to the New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC). But in New Mexico, county commissioners, assessors, clerks, probate judges, sheriffs and treasurers are limited to two consecutive terms. They can serve eight years, and after two years

out of office can seek a different office — or seek the same office four years after leaving office.

NMAC's view is that the amendment "strikes a balance between those who want to ensure that a county officer will not take advantage of incumbency and those who recognize the value of having public

officers who are experienced and knowledgeable."

Paul Gutierrez, NMAC executive director, said longer terms are particularly needed in more rural counties to ensure continuity. "There are just smaller populations, fewer people that are willing to go into public service." In some places, he

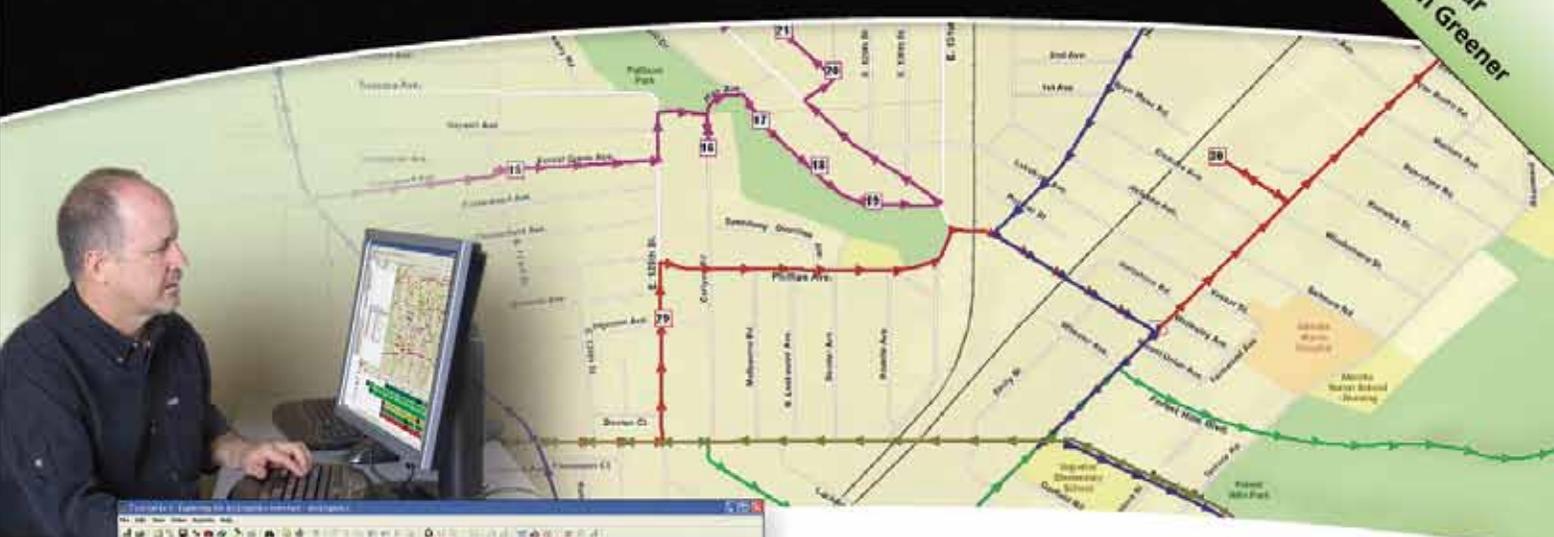
said, "literally some counties are begging people to run for an office."

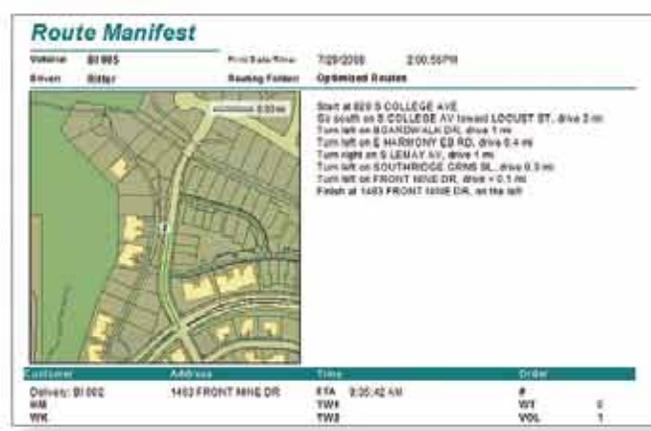
Gutierrez said a poll two years ago showed the issue not doing well, with 70 percent against extending term limits and 30 percent for.

"It's going to be an uphill battle particularly with the anti-incumbent mood of the country," he said.

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News From the Nation's Counties

► CALIFORNIA

SAN DIEGO COUNTY supervisors are proposing changes in how they'd like to allocate funds under the county's **\$5 million Neighborhood Reinvestment Program** each year.

Funds would only go towards one-time needs that serve public purposes and the one-time purchase of items that "increase the quality of life in neighborhoods," the *Union Tribune* reported.

Recipients would have to recognize the county as a whole for its donations, rather than singling out individual supervisors. Under the program, supervisors can distribute funds to local nonprofits at their discretion.

► COLORADO

A judge has ordered state officials to give **JEFFERSON COUNTY** commissioners more input about **where a major power line will run** through the county.

District Judge Loren Tucker of Boulder ruled recently that the state Department of Environmental Quality had not done enough to get county input on the best route for a 500 kilovolt Mountain States transmission line proposed by NorthWestern Energy.

The *Montana Standard* reported that county commissioners sued the DEQ to force the agency to listen to their concerns about the line's location.

Tucker says he ruled in favor of the county after the DEQ argued that it was not required to consult with local governments while planning. Tucker says that's contrary to state law.

► FLORIDA

• The **HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY** Criminal Justice Office's Bully Busters initiative won the **Silver Circle Award** from the

City-County Communications & Marketing Association.

Judges said the program is evidence of how one person's vision can rally an entire community, to meet a need with a sustainable outcome. The Bully Busters program and the Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee were both created by Hillsborough County Commissioner Rose Ferlita in August 2009 after news broke of an alleged sexual assault at a county middle school.

Bully Busters is completely funded with grants and donations, including \$50,000 provided by the Sheriff's Office.

• The **PALM BEACH COUNTY's** Commission on Ethics has recommended that county commissioners lift the restriction on **county employees** working **part-time** at companies that have contracts with the county, as long as their bosses agree that the job does not pose a conflict of interests. They also would be required to seek a formal conflict of interests opinion from the ethics commission.

The way the regulations are written, said Alan Johnson, the ethic panel's executive director, there was no way for an employee to ask the ethics commission for permission to work a part-time job with a company that does business with the county, the *Palm Beach Post* reported.

► GEORGIA

BIBB COUNTY commissioners will ask residents of Lustful Court to consider a petition to **change the road's name**.

Commissioner Lonzy Edwards, a minister who represents the area, said he's gotten several complaints about the road name. "Lots of improper behavior occurs all over, everywhere, but to encourage it,



Photo courtesy of Hamilton County, Tenn.

A child climbs out of the cab of an electrical service vehicle during **HAMILTON COUNTY, Tenn.** Parks and Recreation's Touch a Truck Day. The event gave children the opportunity to observe and have hands-on interaction with a variety of trucks, service rigs and other motorized vehicles.

seem to condone it with a name like that?" he said.

The oldest house on the street was built in 1969. No one seemed to know why the name was picked, though road names are picked by developers, who often name them after children or pets. The street sign has been replaced many times, the *Macon Telegraph* reported, so a name change might provide some savings.

► INDIANA

• **DELAWARE COUNTY** commissioners created a **local public defenders** authority.

The public defender program, proposed by Chief Public Defender Jack Quirk, would create a board to oversee public defender functions, currently overseen by local judges. The commissioners would appoint one member of the board, while the judges would appoint two.

The program, used in some other Indiana counties, is based on a state law and would mean that the state would reimburse the county 40 percent of the program's \$1.37 million annual cost.

• **PUTNAM COUNTY** will start a **job-search class** for people owing child support. Two nine-week sessions will be offered each year in the commissioners courtroom.

"Many of these people don't know how to apply for jobs; they

don't know how to get a GED," Prosecutor Tim Bookwalter said.

Many of the offenders have a background in construction, an industry hit especially hard in recent years, the *Greencastle Banner-Graphic* reported.

Bookwalter hopes the judges will incorporate the classes into the court orders for people struggling to pay support.

► KANSAS

SEDGWICK COUNTY officials are considering placing **mentally ill inmates** into a separate section of the jail.

Sheriff Robert Hinshaw says the inmates' mental illnesses could be better managed if they are housed together. The *Wichita Eagle* reported that in June, 330 of the 1,520 inmates at the jail were considered mentally ill, with 11 considered dangerous if not medicated.

► MICHIGAN

OAKLAND COUNTY Animal Control **confiscated 13 horses** from a Rose Township farm and issued their owner a ticket for 19 counts of animal cruelty.

Acting on a tip, animal control officers initially visited the owner's farm to investigate allegations that 19 horses were undernourished. After confirming the information, Oakland County Animal Control officers advised the owner to im-

prove the condition of her horses by the time of their next visit.

The owner failed to improve the condition of the horses, despite repeated warnings. In the end, one of the horses had to be put down, but the owner was able to place five of the 19 horses in the care of new owners.

► MISSISSIPPI

• **FORREST COUNTY** set **new safety requirements** for oil companies' tanks and wells. The *Hattiesburg American* reported that companies must install perimeter fencing around sites, post appropriate signage and provide 24-hour telephone numbers in case of emergencies. The ordinance will affect 100 tanks and oil wells throughout the county.

The action comes nearly a year after two Carnes teenagers were killed during an explosion of an oil-holding tank near their home. According to the newspaper, parents and friends of the teens urged the board to adopt the measure during a public hearing.

• **HINDS COUNTY** might have **found a deal** on 300 voting machines.

The machines, from Pennsylvania, would cost about \$125,000 including shipping, about a tenth of what the county would pay for new machines, because Pennsylvania is trying to unload excess machines.

Supervisors decided to delay the purchase, while the board's attorney and the county purchasing clerk research bid laws. The issue may come back before the board at its next regular meeting in a couple of weeks. They would be in place for the 2011 primaries for state and county offices.

• **RANKIN COUNTY** supervisors ordered that **construction be stopped immediately** on a Buddhist worship center, claiming the building violates county ordinances.

It is a house trailer, which has been added onto with conventional construction and there is another house trailer adjacent to it.

The Board of Supervisors told WLBT it has only given the Buddhists permission to add a porch.

"The only permit that they have got is to build a 6-by-10 (foot) porch. Anything they have added to that other than the porch will have to come down," said Wood Brown, president of the board.

NACo on the Move

» NACo Staff

Andrew Goldschmidt, director of membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of NACo membership recruitment and retention at the Association of Indiana Counties Annual Conference in LaPorte County, Ind. Sept. 27-29.



Andrew Goldschmidt

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Keep up with NACo online ...

WWW.naco.org



Research News

Celebrating September

For some, September elicits thoughts of fall leaves, football and cooling temperatures.

To others, it also invokes thoughts of college savings, yoga and coupons. September is one of the most popular months for official month observances, including National College Savings Month, National Yoga Month and National Coupons Month. Counties across the country are recognizing some of the many monthly observances with activities for residents.

Pinal County, Ariz. is celebrating National Library Card Sign-up Month with a costume contest at local library branches.

Residents of all ages can dress up like their favorite literary character and have their picture taken with their library card at a local library branch. Participants can also take the picture themselves and upload it

to the library's Flickr account. The photographs will be displayed on the library website, Facebook and other media. Participants are also eligible for a drawing to win a tour of backstage and costume shop areas of the Arizona Theater Company.

National Preparedness Month is spurring Polk County, Iowa to provide residents with vital information about creating an emergency plan and surviving a disaster. With many extreme weather situations in the past year — from blizzards and snowstorms to flooding — the Polk County Emergency Management staff is reminding residents of the need to prepare before a disaster. Using Facebook, Twitter and reaching out to the local newspaper, staff covered a variety of topics in preparing for an emergency such as organizing an emergency kit, making family or business emergency plans,

preparing for the needs of pets during an emergency, and reacting to emergency sirens. September is the month to ensure the community is prepared for a disaster.

September is one of the most popular months for official month observances ...

This year marks the 27th anniversary of Baby Safety Month. Many counties, including Marquette County, Mich., provide baby safety information about childproofing homes carefully so children can safely explore. The month-long national campaign serves to raise awareness of keeping babies safe both inside

and outside the home, and to help increase awareness for consumers about the safe use and selection of toys and other products for babies and kids. The safety tips include crib safety, electrical outlet covers, cabinet and drawer latches, and other important childproofing actions.

National Mushroom Month is celebrated in Chester County, Pa. with the 25th Annual Mushroom Festival. The Mushroom Festival promotes the mushroom, educates consumers about the health benefits of mushrooms, and promotes tourism in Southern Chester County.

The area has long been known as "The Mushroom Capital of the World," with over 65 percent of the mushrooms consumed in the United States grown in the southern Chester County area. A portion of the proceeds from the festival, which features culinary events, growing

exhibits, farm tours and children's entertainment, are used to provide grants to local and regional charities.

For a sweeter side of the September celebrations, a popular attraction at the county fair in Stark County, Ohio is the beehive to promote National Honey Month. The Stark County Beekeepers' Association educational exhibit features a live observation hive in Plexiglas. In addition, the exhibit also sells honey sticks and candy, gives away honey samples, and displays beekeeping equipment. Americans consume nearly 1.5 pounds of honey per person per year. With more than 300 varieties of honey in the United States, residents can find an assortment of local types of honey at the fair and at farmer's markets and local grocery stores.

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

The H.R. Doctor Is In

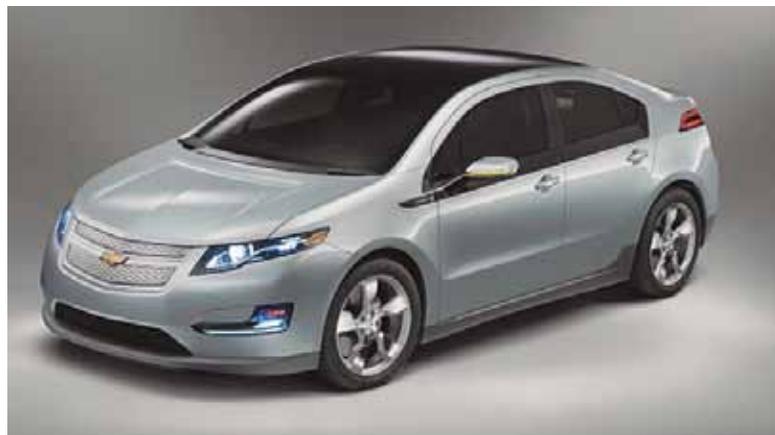
RE-VOLT

Great changes begin with a compelling vision different and better than the past, the courage to stare down opposition and the ability to enlist the support of others. I don't mean political changes. I don't even mean those wonderful life-changing milestones, such as anniversaries or that first new baby, new job, promotion or retirement. I mean world-shifting changes.

The 19th century saw the beginnings of such a revolution featuring the replacement of animal power with machine power, and the substitution of an industrial economy for an agricultural one. Certainly that major shift resulted in changes to the way we lived our lives, including large concentrations of people in cities, mass transportation systems and, ironically, even greater advances in agriculture than had been seen in the prior hundreds of years.

A subsequent shift has also brought major changes. The 20th century saw the emergence of a service economy, and a silicon chip society. We are still not finished seeing how this grand change will play out in our lives and lives of our descendants over several generations.

That said, some areas remain in a time warp: our continued reliance on fossil fuel to power our way of life, not seeing a better vision or acting on the opportunities for long-term



beneficial change will lead to weaknesses and failures that could have been avoided.

The HR Doctor would like to offer a suggestion to help avoid these revolting developments — a suggestion in which local governments can be agents of change on a national, if not global, scale. This revolt against our current habit of fuel waste could take the form of a letter from NACo to the president, every member of Congress and to GM. It could read something like the following:

"Dear GM, Congratulations to your company on the development of the all-electric vehicle called the Volt which will be released soon. Even though Chevrolet will produce only a tiny number of Volts in the first year, the new car will

need tinkering and assessment by purchasers and repair facilities in its initial year to correct issues that will only surface as many people start driving it around.

Certainly many of the first production run will be gobbled up by the 'early adopters' with the money to buy one even before it starts down the assembly line. We in local government, however, know of an absolutely brilliant proving ground — well beyond what individual drivers will provide to you in the many follow-up surveys and focus groups which will follow the first sales.

How about a Treaty of Alliance between GM, the Federal government, and local governments throughout the country, perhaps titled 'Recharging the Public Service.'

The arrangement would set aside

several thousand new Volts for local government use at a federally subsidized purchase or lease price. This would be an offset to the initial higher price of the vehicle as well as initial maintenance-cost questions in the early production models.

The result would be that a hugely diverse workforce would be providing service to the public with highly visible, energy-efficient, innovative technology in a way which is simply not economically viable for struggling local governments without a partnership. For our federal friends, the arrangement would enable people all over America to see a tangible example of efficiency every day thanks to positive federal involvement. It will demonstrate that the use of alternative energy is real and practical.

The alliance would provide GM with focus groups and organizational feedback about the vehicle in many different operating scenarios. It would help local governments provide visible publicity for an energy-saving agenda. Potential Chevy customers would see the Volt in action every day. The approach could be far more of a win for all the parties than the 'Cash for Clunkers' program, popular as that was.

At the moment, the Volt would not make an effective police pursuit vehicle. However, for most of

the rest of the public workforce, which drives gas-consuming sedans around in the conduct of business, it would be ideally suited to its predicted 400-mile range and the need for recharging stations.

Over time, as the Volt proves itself and the price comes down, its use in government would also expand.

Do you like the idea? Congress might very well like it since, besides the obvious "green" value, local jurisdictions in every congressional district could be involved. No two of the three partners suggested in this article can make the arrangement work. It would truly take the courage of three stakeholders to launch something visionary, non-traditional and compelling.

After all, if the feds can buy a controlling stake in General Motors, producing traditional vehicles, surely it can provide a limited subsidy for a project which could well be (pardon the expression) the "engine" to create great value on several important fronts, including environmental and public service enhancement. Thanks for listening, dear recipients!

Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor • www.hrdr.net

Nassau County, N.Y. may investigate 'grade betting' website

NEWS FROM *from page 8*

There is a Hindu house of worship in Rankin County, also down a narrow road, but it has met all county zoning requirements.

► MINNESOTA

WINONA COUNTY now prohibits any of its employees from staying at hotels that offer adult movies.

The Winona County Commissioners just approved a new "clean hotel" policy that forbids employees from staying at such properties. The commissioners said pornography leads to sexual and domestic violence, and that they hope to pressure hotels to drop these services.

The county commissioners believe Winona is the first county in the country to pass such a regulation.

"I think it just sends a message that 'no' this is not OK," Commissioner Mena R. Kaehler told ABC News. "The way you send a message to businesses is through their bottom dollar."

The county's move follows an unsuccessful push in the Minnesota legislature to pass a similar law for all state workers, also sold as an effort at reducing sexual violence. The measure did not make it out of a House committee.

► MONTANA

PARK COUNTY officials will finally have a meeting with the Department of Environmental Quality to discuss concerns about a **mine cleanup project** about which they say they have had little to no input.

Local leaders say they've had insufficient input on a plan to haul tens of thousands of tons of contaminated mine tailings next summer from Montana over the scenic Chief Joseph Highway, one of Park County's steepest and most serpentine highways. Toxic pollutants from the tailings left at a defunct gold mine are leaching into Soda Butte Creek and flowing into Yellowstone National Park.

Commercial trucking through Yellowstone is prohibited by park policy, and the only other route besides the Chief Joseph Highway is over the 10,974-foot Beartooth Pass and along the Beartooth Highway, which has even more switchbacks and steep grades.

► NEW JERSEY

A new public-private partnership will enable the **ESSEX COUNTY** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs to increase its re-

cycling efforts, reduce its operating costs and create a new recurring source of revenue, saving the county approximately \$450,000.

The county has signed a two-year agreement with a Summit, N.J. firm to operate a **composting facility**. The parks department will deliver the leaves it collects from the county's 20 parks to the site free of charge. Hiring a private contractor will save disposal and transportation costs to remove the material and costs to purchase products.

► NEW YORK

NASSAU COUNTY Legislator Dave Denenberg has called for an investigation of a website that **allows students to bet on their own grades**. *Ultrinsic.com* lets students wager money on individual class grades and their semester grade point average.

The website offers several wager options, including "course incentive," "multicourse incentive," "semester incentive," "4.0 GPA incentive," "course insurance" and "semester insurance." Students can bet on whether they'll receive an A or B in a particular course or in several courses during a semester or during their entire college career.

"Just the thought of encouraging kids to gamble on their grades should anger parents and kids," Denenberg said. "Please note that, Ultrinsic wins when our children fail."

He plans to propose a law to ban wagering on scholastic grades and scores in the county.

► OREGON

CLACKAMAS COUNTY commissioners have appointed a special committee to review **personnel policies** of the Sheriff's Office and the Department of Employee Services.

The Board and Sheriff Craig Roberts recently announced plans to establish the committee. Its goal is to address any shortcomings in employment policies or procedures that have contributed to recent incidents of misconduct by individual members of the Sheriff's Office.

Commissioners began to scrutinize Sheriff's Office's personnel policies after a sheriff's sergeant killed his wife, two of her friends and himself last year, *The Oregonian* reported.

Sheriff Craig Roberts said he "welcomes this review."

► TEXAS

The **HARRIS COUNTY** Commissioners Court has approved an emergency plan to spend \$13.6

million to **buy 2,325 electronic voting machines** and supporting equipment to help replace machines destroyed in a fire Aug. 27 (*County News*, Sept. 6).

"Your polling place is going to be open early and on Election Day (Nov. 2). You'll be able to vote conveniently as you're accustomed to doing," County Clerk Beverly Kaufman said, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

Despite her assurances, 16 Democratic state senators and representatives have asked the U.S. Department of Justice to oversee an emergency plan for voting. They expressed concerns that some polling places might not be available to "racial and language minorities" due to a lack of equipment.

The cause of the fire had not been determined.

► UTAH

State law doesn't allow **DAVIS COUNTY** to **ban the discharge of firearms** in an unincorporated foothill area of the county, so the county has reversed its prohibition on the activity.

The County Commission unanimously passed the ban last month in response to residents who said their hillside homes had been hit by stray ammunition. Subsequently, gun rights advocates pointed out that state law does not grant counties such authority.

State law already prohibits hillside shooting in the direction of inhabited areas, but the law is hard to enforce, a county attorney told the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

► VIRGINIA

Congratulations to **CHESTERFIELD COUNTY**, whose website, *chesterfield.gov*, has been named the **best website among counties** by the Center for Digital Government. The organization recognized state and local governments across the U.S. for being leaders in digital delivery.

Chesterfield's site edged out Pinellas County, Fla. Rounding out the top five were Oakland County, Mich., Maui County, Hawaii and Park County, Colo. The top 10 also included counties in California, New York, Texas and Washington. For a list of all winners, go to www.centerdigitalgov.com/survey.88.

"The winners' innovative use of the Internet to continue delivering citizen services despite tight fiscal constraints is inspiring," said Cathilea Robinett, executive director of the Center for Digital Government.

This is the 15th year that the Center for Digital Government

has analyzed entries for innovation, functionality, efficiency and economy.

► WYOMING

FREMONT COUNTY is appealing a recent federal court order to **abandon at-large voting** for county commissioners, according to the Associated Press.

Earlier this year, U.S. District Judge Alan B. Johnson ruled that Fremont County's at-large voting system diluted the Native American vote, thereby violating federal law. The Wind River Indian Reservation is located in the county and

is home to the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes.

The suit was filed by a group of Native Americans, assisted by the American Civil Liberties Union and others.

Commission Chairman Douglas L. Thompson disagrees with the judge, saying single-member districts would segregate Indian voters.

(*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 e-mail ctaylor@naco.org or cban@naco.org.)

This Month in ... County News

County News celebrates NACo's 75th Anniversary with a look back at the issues and events that affected counties over the past several decades.

★ September ★

1982

NACo President Richard J. Conder announced the creation of the Alliance for Business and Counties, a program aimed at strengthening the bonds between the public and private sectors to make county government run more efficiently.

The program presented a six-point plan to:

- identify and give national publicity to examples of productive county programs
- build cooperative relationships between local business leaders and county officials to exchange ideas
- provide a systematic plan for identifying successful management programs in business and government
- plan to identify and eliminate unproductive rules on all levels that burden business and local government
- identify and analyze alternatives to direct county financing of programs and facilities, and
- identify those functions of local government that are subject to particular stress and suggest responses that can be made available to all local governments.

1984

Members of the NACo Community Development Steering Committee, represented by Baltimore County, Md. Chairwoman Barbara Bachur and former Fairfax County, Va. Chairman Jim Scott, and the National Association of County Community Development Directors met to discuss housing and community development issues with members of Congress and officials from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Office of Management and Budget.

The meeting focused on a proposal to qualify urban counties for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds without encumbering cooperation agreements, the need for additional CDBG housing funds and the link between the tax code and housing policy.

1994

The U.S. Senate passed a \$30.2 billion anti-crime bill that authorized funding for six years in a balance of preventive and punitive measures. The major elements of importance to counties were retained, including \$5.5 billion in prevention programs, \$7.9 billion for corrections, \$8.8 billion for community police and \$1.2 billion for courts.

(*This Month in County News* is compiled by Charlie Ban, staff writer, and Christopher Johnson, editorial assistant.)

Financial Services News

Why Workers Don't Participate in Supplemental Retirement Plans

According to researchers at Dartmouth College, there are three basic barriers to long-term saving, especially participating in employer-sponsored retirement programs, such as a deferred compensation plan.

- I don't know where or how to start saving.
- I don't make enough to save, and
- I'd rather buy that (fill in the blank) today.

Employers and plan providers may be uniquely qualified to help workers overcome all three.

Not Knowing Where to Start

Researchers found that employees can be overwhelmed by "the process." From daunting paperwork that comes with enrollment to the sheer quantity of questions on each form, workers often find they cannot decide and never enroll in the plan.

County employers have two main opportunities to help employees start saving. The first is when

new hires are welcomed aboard. By providing them easy-to-understand information about the benefits of their deferred compensation plan, as well as streamlined forms when they receive other benefits information, employers can show how committed they are to helping employees achieve lifelong financial security.

That commitment may be reinforced by asking new hires to join the plan before they receive their first paycheck.

The second opportunity is during benefits enrollment periods and related employee events. Again, by highlighting plan participation as employees are considering other benefits, employers give them the chance to include long-term needs in their decision-making process.

Believing They Do Not Have Enough Income

Most public-sector deferred compensation plans make entry easy by allowing low minimum contributions. However, employees may not realize that.

They may also need help understanding how, especially early on, just a few dollars a week invested through deferred compensation can grow to a tidy sum at the end of a 30-year career. And if the employee is disciplined enough to increase contributions every time they get a raise the potential for growth is even greater.

Just as many counties are juggling fiscal restraints, tight budgets mean individual employees need to make trade-offs. By helping employees understand the advantages of deferred compensation, they may be more willing to brown-bag it or bring in a thermos of home-brewed coffee (or make other trade-offs) so they can budget contributions to their deferred comp account. County leaders can encourage this preferred behavior by modeling it themselves.

Not Having Enough Self-Control

According to the Dartmouth researchers, evidence shows that

employees are less likely to delay participation if they are given a plan — rather than left to their own devices. Employer programs that make enrollment and contribution increases automatic can help employees overcome their own inertia.

But the Dartmouth research suggests even plan sponsors who are not ready to adopt "automatic features" can help employees find their way to a potentially more financially secure retirement — by mapping the path for them: have materials prepared with "default decisions" already filled in. The fewer the choices employees need to make, the more likely they are to enroll and participate.

What County Employers Can Do

For decades, the National Association of Counties has provided a wealth of resources that member counties can use to encourage workers to save for retirement. NACo members can access many of these resources online through

the NACo website, www.naco.org. These tools can help counties encourage employees to overcome the three barriers to saving identified by the Dartmouth researchers.

NACo's Deferred Compensation Program was developed and has been provided for more than 30 years by Nationwide Retirement Solutions and NACo. It has offered county employers a way to address their employees' need for additional income in retirement through quality education, online resources and personal service.

For additional information about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program or help putting the educational resources to work in your county, please contact Lisa Cole lcole@naco.org or 202.942.4270; or contact Louie Watson WatsonL2@Nationwide.com or 614.854.8895.

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

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September 23:	Seven Habits Series: Seek Win/Win
September 29:	The Price is Right: Using Free Social Media Sites to Stay Connected with your Constituents
October 21:	Seven Habits Series: Listen to Understand
November 18:	Seven Habits Series: Synergize for Power

NACo webinars on the calendar for Fall 2010

For more information and to register go to www.naco.org/webinars

September 28:	Making the US Department of Energy's EECBG Grants Work for You
September 30:	Making Rural Roads Safe. Understanding Retroreflectivity in Signs and Road Markings
October 7:	Exploring Carbon Credit Revenue from County Parks and Open Spaces
October 14:	How Smart Growth Can Put Your County on a Path to a Green Economy
October 19:	Rural Counties and Health Reform: Opportunities for Improved Care
October 28:	Green IT Strategies that Save your County Money and Protect Resources
October 28:	Justice for all: Effective County Juvenile Justice Efforts
November 9:	Save Money through Green Purchasing. Enter NACo's 2011 County Green Office Competition