

NACO National Association of Counties

# CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

VOL. 45, NO. 14 ■ July 15, 2013

## Tarrant County, Texas hosts NACo's 78th Annual Conference: County Solutions and Idea Marketplace



Phot courtesy of FortWorth.com

Ft. Worth puts on a Texas roundup for a taste of the Old West at the Stockyards Station.

### CountyNews Features



County officials from across the country will meet July 19–22 at the 2013 NACo Annual Conference: County Solutions and Idea Marketplace in Tarrant County, Texas to establish national policies affecting counties and work collaboratively to find innovative solutions to challenges facing American communities.

More than 2,000 elected and appointed county officials, exhibitors, presenters and guests will participate in the conference at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Implementation of the

See **MARKETPLACE** page 2

### More Why Counties Matter! v2.0

NACo will release an expanded version of its popular *Why Counties Matter!* infographic at the 2013 Annual Conference: County Solutions and Idea Marketplace in Tarrant County, Texas, July 18–22.

In bold, colorful fashion, the new eight-page version shows the dynamic impact that county government has upon the lifeblood of America's communities. It features data about transportation networks, public health, hospitals, courts and corrections, public safety and much more.

Copies will be available at the conference and can be downloaded from NACo's website after July 18 at [www.naco.org/counties\\_matter](http://www.naco.org/counties_matter).

## State, local tax issues stay hot in Congress

By MICHAEL BELARMINO  
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



Although there may be growing pessimism that the 113th Congress will achieve any significant legislative accomplishments, nothing has stopped either chamber from producing noteworthy developments in the world of state and local taxes.

First, in a positive development for state and local governments, a bipartisan letter to House leadership in support of the tax exemption for

municipal bond interest led by Reps. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.) and Randy Hultgren (R-Ill.), garnered more than 130 representative signatures. NACo worked closely with congressional staff to move this effort forward and commends counties for reaching out to their representatives on such a critical issue to state and local governments.

The letter, which will be sent to Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-Ohio) and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.),

See **TAXES** page 10

## Outgoing President Rodgers describes NACo experience



Chris Rodgers

**Q:** What did you find most interesting or exciting?

I was excited to travel to the member states and have the opportunity to learn firsthand about the issues affecting their counties. It was exciting to represent such a respected organization. To be

See **RODGERS** page 9

**Q:** How would you describe your year as NACo president?

It was amazing. One of the most memorable experiences I have had in my elected life. It would not have been possible without the support of my family, the people of Douglas County (particularly District 3), my fellow Douglas County Board members, and the NACo staff and membership.

**Q:** What was the most challenging part of your role as president?

The travel and balancing home, my real job at Creighton University, and my responsibilities as a Douglas County commissioner.

### INSIDE



The latest County News' Hot Topics report focuses on county resiliency in the face of natural and man-made disasters > **Special Report** NACo names winners of National County Government Month competition > **Page 2**

N.C. commissioner plants food oases in the food deserts of Rowan and Cabarrus counties > **Page 8**

A year later, as fire raged again, one county used lessons learned to diminish its impact > **Page 8**



# NACo announces 2013 NCGM Award program winners

By JIM PHILIPPS

MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER

NACo has announced the 2013 National County Government Month Award program winners.

The award recognizes those counties that sponsor outstanding public outreach programs about county government during the month of April. This year's theme was Smart Justice: Creating Safer Communities.

An independent panel of judges selected the following six counties for their outstanding outreach programs about county government services and programs during the month of April under the Smart Justice theme:

## Metropolitan Counties

- 1st place—DeKalb County, Ga.
- 2nd place—Hidalgo County, Texas

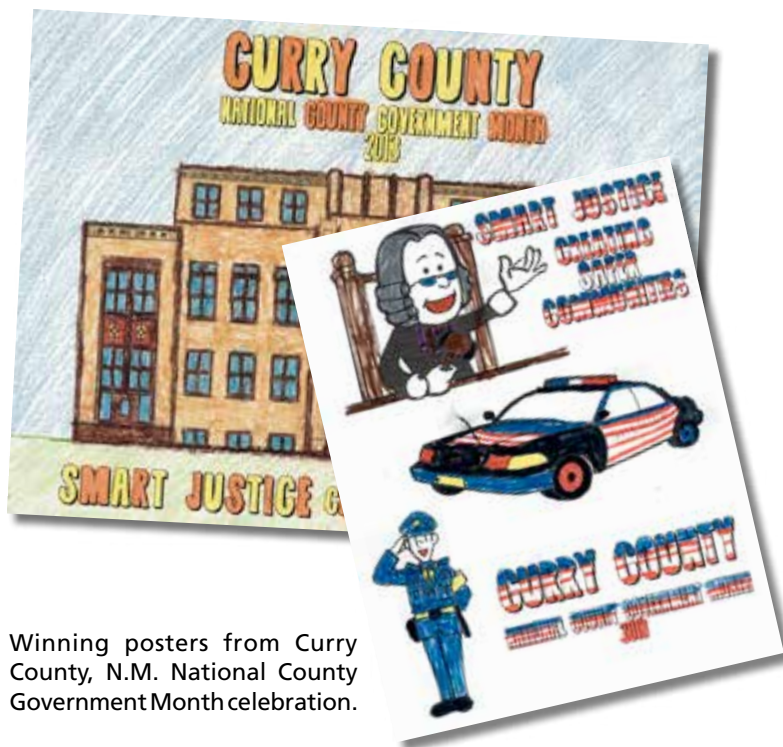
## Suburban Counties

- 1st place—Manatee County, Fla.
- 2nd place—Chatham County, Ga.

## Rural Counties

- 1st place—Blue Earth County, Minn.
- 2nd place—Curry County, N.M.

NACo President Chris Rodgers, who made Smart Justice a priority



Winning posters from Curry County, N.M. National County Government Month celebration.

of his presidential term, praised the six winning counties for conducting effective public awareness programs to educate residents about the important role and functions of county government.

"All of the county promotional programs entered in the contest were excellent," said Rodgers, commissioner, Douglas County, Neb. "I congratulate the six winning counties and commend all the counties for taking advantage of the opportunity to effectively educate

the public about the responsibilities counties have and the programs and services counties provide."

The following are summaries of the winning entries:

## Blue Earth County, Minn. (1st – Rural)

**Program:** The county planned a variety of activities and methods to share information about work counties do.

**Description:** Activities included: NACo's Why Counties

Matter video displayed on homepage of the county website; Citizens Academy Sessions; Teddy Bear Check-up Clinic; story times at the library with county officials; and guided tours of the county justice center. The County Board was fully engaged in the planning and participation of the events and promotions. Local newspapers, television and radio stations covered NCGM activities.

## Manatee County, Fla. (1st – Suburban)

**Program:** The county celebration of NCGM included a variety of delivery methods designed to create awareness, provide information and opportunities for government involvement at any levels.

**Description:** The county used its website to feature daily public safety and wellness tips from a variety of county programs. Tips included information on its Probation Services Special Response Team, enjoying local beaches and the health department's used-syringe collections. All related press releases were posted on the county website. Tours of the Marine Rescue Center, Public Safety Complex, Agriculture and Extension, Probation Services, Drug Court and Animal Services were offered.

The featured event was The Smart Justice Showcase held on the lawn of the courthouse in downtown Bradenton. The showcase included exhibits, entertainment and food. Animal adoption fees were waived and bus service was free one day to encourage citizens to "Try Transit."

## DeKalb County, Ga. (1st – Metro)

**Program:** The county promoted four programs under the NCGM Smart Justice theme: DeKalb Police Chief Swearing-in Ceremony and Community Visits; Searching for Our Sons and Daughters; Finding DeKalb County's Missing; STOP. LOOK. WALK: A Lesson in Crosswalk Safety; and Voices Against Violence: A Teen Talk Show Taking a Stand Against Youth Violence.

**Description:** Nearly 200 busi-

ness and civic leaders, county officials and employees, elected officials and citizens were invited to the swearing-in ceremony. The video PSAs featuring local missing person cases, as well as the crosswalk safety demonstration and youth violence programs were promoted through news releases, the county website, electronic newsletters and public service announcements and programming on DeKalb County Television and its YouTube channel.

## Curry County, N.M. (2nd – Rural)

**Program:** The county held several events for NCGM.

**Description:** Events included a pre-K through third-grade coloring contest; a fourth-grade through sixth-grade poster contest; a seventh-grade through 10th-grade essay contest; and the County Manager for a Day contest for high school junior and seniors. Winners received valuable prizes donated by local businesses and were congratulated in person by county officials.

The Manager of the Day contest winner spent a day shadowing the county manager which included a 7 a.m. radio broadcast. The county

See AWARDS page 4

## HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to lead panel discussion at general session

MARKETPLACE from page 1

Affordable Care Act and protection of the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds are key issues to be discussed during the four-day event.

NACo President Chris Rodgers said NACo's annual conference is the most important gathering of the year for county officials.

"The County Solutions and Idea Marketplace offers the best opportunity for leaders in county government to determine our federal legislative priorities and set a course of action to meet the challenges facing the communities we serve," Rodgers said. "We are pleased that Secretary Sebelius will join us at this critical time as the nation prepares for historic changes in our health care system."

Featured guest speakers at the conference's general sessions include U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius; J.R. Martinez, army veteran, actor,

author and motivational speaker, and Matthew K. Rose, chairman and CEO, BNSF Railway Company.

Conference participants are also attending a variety of educational workshop sessions to gain greater understanding of issues affecting county government such as environmental benefits and immigration reform.

Sebelius will open the July 22 General Session with remarks about implementation of the Affordable Care Act, followed by a panel discussion entitled "Where is Health Care Going? The Public Sector Impact." The panel will be composed of former Health and Human Services secretary, Utah Gov. Michael Leavitt; Dr. Richard Migliori, chief medical officer for United Health Group and Los Angeles County Supervisor Don Knabe; and Timothy McBride, Ph.D., professor, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis.

Rodgers said NACo's efforts to protect the tax-exempt status of

municipal bonds will be a major issue of discussion. NACo released important new research last month on the impact of changes to the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds on counties and their residents. The paper explores the unique characteristics of municipal bonds, such as the locally driven nature of municipal financing and its focus on infrastructure.

Featuring profiles of 45 counties, the study provides estimates of the impact of proposed changes to the tax-exempt status of municipal bond interest on counties.

Another priority issue will be cyber security, an issue Rodgers made a NACo priority this year. Cyber security workshops will discuss tools and best practices that county officials can implement to protect counties against cyber-attacks.

\*For more information on the conference, view this article online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).

## CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

**President** | Chris Rodgers  
**Publisher** | Matthew Chase  
**Public Affairs Director** | Tom Goodman  
**Executive Editor** | Beverly Anne Schlotterbeck  
**Senior Staff Writer** | Charles Taylor  
**Staff Writer** | Charlie Ban  
**Graphic Artist** | Jack Hernandez  
**Editorial Assistant** | Christopher Johnson

## ADVERTISING STAFF

**Job Market/Classifieds representative**  
 Christopher Johnson

**National Accounts representative**  
 Beverly Schlotterbeck

(202) 393-6226 • FAX (202) 393-2630

Published biweekly except August by:

National Association of Counties

Research Foundation, Inc.

25 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.

STE. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630

**E-mail** | [cnws@naco.org](mailto:cnws@naco.org)

**Online address** | [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org)

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

Mail subscriptions are \$100 per year for non-members. \$60 per year for non-members purchasing multiple copies. Educational institution rate, \$50 per year. Member county supplemental subscriptions are \$20 each. Send payment with order and address changes to NACo, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

**POSTMASTER:** send address changes to

County News, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.,

Ste. 500, Washington, D.C. 20001

(USPS 704-620) ■ (ISSN: 0744-9798)

© National Association of Counties  
 Research Foundation, Inc.

**NACo** National Association of Counties

## CORRECTION

The vote allocation totals for Indiana, Maine and Mississippi that appeared in the June 17 issue of County News, "2013 NACo Voting Credentials," were incorrect. The correct totals are: Indiana—204, Maine—53; Mississippi—136.



There's a reason it's  
called a 5 Iron.

### **Iron = Strength.**

No golfer hits the course without a five iron. And no community should start an infrastructure project without ductile iron pipe.

Ductile iron pipe is strong—ten times stronger than PVC. It is reliable, easy to install and it creates none of the laying and tapping headaches associated with PVC. And ductile iron has environmental advantages—while PVC production creates toxins that have caused some cities and corporations to ban it, iron pipe is made from recycled and recyclable materials and uses less energy in pumping. That's why thousands of communities trust the strength of ductile iron.

Join the club.

**Iron Pipe. It's What America Was Built On.**

**DUCTILE IRON PIPE  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

[IronForAmerica.com](http://IronForAmerica.com)



# County Solutions: NACo curriculum proves popular with teachers

By TOM GOODMAN  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

Students in schools across the country are learning about county government through a curriculum that NACo created in partnership with iCivics.

County Solutions, a nine-step educational program, has students learn about their own county, current events and then develop an action plan to resolve a community issue.

Launched in 2012, it has been used by 4,400 teachers nationwide. Teachers use the lesson plan for as many as five classes that have an average of 20 students, meaning the curriculum is reaching thousands of students across the country.

The program of studies comple-

ments Counties Work, the online game about county government that NACo and iCivics launched in July 2011. It continues to be a hit with students. Counties Work, which allows students to run their own county, has been played 390,000 times by more than 319,000 unique players.

The County Solutions curriculum allows students to create a fictional county and develop a community action plan. In a series of lessons, students learn about current events, the role of local government and the outreach methods available to average citizens working to influence public policy.

To assist teachers, the program offers a public policy flow chart that is helpful in showing the “big-

ger picture,” fun facts activity sheets, graphic organizers and other helpful resources. Students who have gone through the “County Solutions” curriculum have expressed how much fun they had, and that they were inspired to get involved in their own communities.

“iCivics is an ideal partner and offers a fantastic way for students to learn about county government,” said Matt Chase, NACo executive director. “iCivics has been an invaluable leader in fostering a better understanding of civics and how counties improve the quality of life for young people and their families.”

Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor founded iCivics in 2009 to address the growing lack of awareness among the American public of exactly how their government works. iCivics has become the nation's most comprehensive, standards-aligned civics curriculum that is available for free on the Web.

iCivics works closely with experts in law, technology and education to develop, publicize and market its games and materials ensuring that they are used by teachers and kids in schools and homes across the country. It offers everything from high-tech video games to traditional resources to best meet teachers' needs. A variety of content is provided for teachers and students that is specific to learning standards across the country.

“County Solutions and Counties Work offer a great opportunity to prepare our youth for the future,” Chase said. “As a leader in your county, we ask you to encourage educators to use County Solutions to illustrate the importance of civic participation.”

iCivics has found that games and civics are a natural fit. Games are a unique media format that contains animating systems and rules — the very heart of what is needed to understand about government and society. It has games on the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government as well as on the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and citizenship and participation. Counties Work is the only game on state or local government.

The county game and curriculum can be found on the iCivics website at [www.icivics.org](http://www.icivics.org) or through links on the NACo website at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

## NCGM winners receive free annual conference registrations

AWARDS from page 2

hosted a joint City-County Luncheon, which featured representatives from the local schools, Cannon Air Force Base, city of Clovis, Clovis-Curry County Chamber of Commerce, the Eastern Plains Council of Governments, Clovis Community College and Curry County. The county also organized a speaking event at Clovis High School.

### Chatham County, Ga. (2nd – Suburban)

**Program:** The county partnered with the Youth Futures Authority and the Board of Education to present the Smart Justice Expo-Teen Maze to 9th grade students from local high schools. The Teen Maze allowed the students to participate in impaired driving simulations and sobriety tests.

**Description:** About 200 9th graders from local high schools participated in addition to other citizens. The maze was held at the county library, County Board members along with juvenile court judges spoke to the groups in attendance. The event was promoted by posting information on the county's website, print ads in local newspapers, posts on Facebook and radio announcements. The event received television and print media coverage.

### Hidalgo County, Texas (2nd – Metro)

**Program:** The county promoted several programs under the NCGM Smart Justice theme, including the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, Veterans Treatment Court and the county drug court program. Also, students were able to “shadow” court and district clerk staff performing their daily

responsibilities and activities and a district clerk open house was held.

**Description:** The county promoted all events and activities via traditional and social media outlets, including sending a media advisory to invite television, radio and print media to each of the activities, promoting and covering each event and activity and posting on the county website, Facebook and Twitter accounts. A press release was sent to all media outlets at the culmination of the month. The individual activities and NCGM month in general garnered positive media response and coverage.

The first place winners received two free NACo conference registrations and an award plaque. The second place winners received one free NACo conference registration and an award plaque. All contest entries received a certificate of appreciation.

All six counties will be recognized at the July 21 NACo Award Luncheon held at the NACo 2013 Annual Conference: County Solutions and Idea Marketplace in Tarrant County, Texas.

Rodgers thanked the National Association of County Information Officers (NACIO) for again serving as NCGM Award Program judges.

“NACIO is a valued NACo affiliate whose officers and members devote much time and communications expertise each year to NACo members through excellent educational workshops and webinars,” Rodgers said. “Their hard work, professionalism and commitment to effective public communications in local government is appreciated.”

All contest entries can be viewed at [www.uscounties.org/cfiles\\_web/nccgm2013/nccgm\\_award\\_view.cfm](http://www.uscounties.org/cfiles_web/nccgm2013/nccgm_award_view.cfm)

## Profiles in Service



### » Stephen J. Acquario

NACo Board Member

Executive Director

New York State Association of Counties

**Number of years active in NACo:** 24

**Years in public service:** 24

**Occupation:** executive director—general counsel, New York State Association of Counties

**Education:** B.A. State University of New York at Potsdam; J.D. Albany Law School

**The hardest thing I've ever done:** raise a family.

**Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** Jesus, Abraham Lincoln and my grandfather (I never met my father's father).

**A dream I have is to:** visit Europe with my wife, Lisa-Ann.

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** enjoy cooking meals from scratch.

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** become a certified scuba diver.

**My favorite way to relax is:** yard work.

**I'm most proud of:** my boys, Stephen Jr. (13) and Jack (11).

**Every morning I read:** My email and electronic stories of county-related issues from across the state.

**My favorite meal is:** Veal Milanese, with linguini and white clam sauce on the side.

**My pet peeve is:** wasted talent.

**My motto is:** “If it is worth doing, then it is worth doing right.”

**The last book I read was:** *Proof of Heaven* and various *Dr. Seuss* books with my kids.

**My favorite movie(s):** *Top Gun*, *The Miracle*, *Field of Dreams* and *The Black Stallion*.

**My favorite music is:** the music of Frank Sinatra.

**My favorite president is:** Abraham Lincoln.

**NACo** National Association of Counties

## WASHINGTON WATCH

Federal News for the Nation's Counties

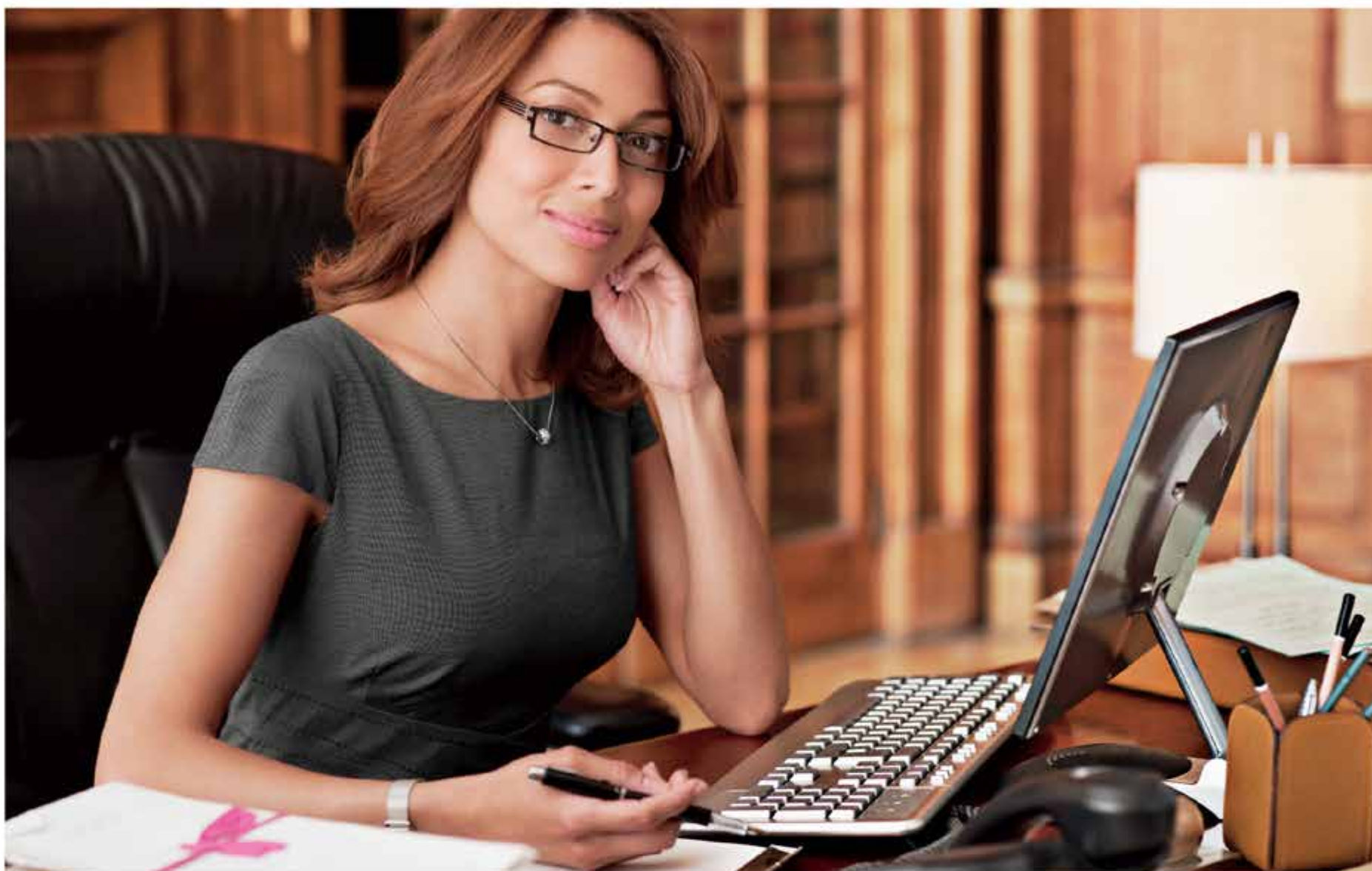
# CountyNews

**ALERTS**

Subscribe today to have either (or both) delivered electronically to your email.

[www.NACo.org/subscribe](http://www.NACo.org/subscribe)





## THOMSON REUTERS CONCOURSE MAKES MANAGING LEGAL MATTERS EASIER. AND YOU MORE PRODUCTIVE.



**Introducing Thomson Reuters Concourse™, a matter-based suite of solutions that works the way you do.** Designed for government law departments, Concourse helps you organize all matter-related information in one intuitive place, share documents, assign tasks, track deadlines, create legal holds, and collaborate more efficiently with colleagues. Concourse integrates seamlessly with WestlawNext® and Microsoft® Outlook®, and also allows you to access matter-related information straight from your mobile devices.

Learn more at [about.concourse.thomsonreuters.com/gov](http://about.concourse.thomsonreuters.com/gov).





# Georgia county takes lead in age-friendly network

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



Bibb County is in transition. It's one of the latest Georgia locales to consolidate with a city inside its borders — Macon, the county seat.

As that transformation proceeds, it will happen with a focus on making the eventual Macon-Bibb County a more “age-friendly” place to live, work and play.

Bibb County and Macon were the first U.S. localities to become part of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities, an affiliate of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities Program.

“It puts us out there as being sort of a trailblazer in terms of looking to make sure that our area is one that is accommodating for people to live in,” Bibb County Board Chairman Samuel F. Hart Sr. said. “I think the age-friendly piece helps us to send that message.”

The program currently has 137 participating communities — including Westchester and Chemung counties in New York — in 21 countries. The effort was launched in 2006 to help cities prepare for rapid population aging and increasing urbanization.

Communities that are part of the network have committed to doing an assessment to set the benchmarks they'll use to measure their age-



Photo courtesy of AARP

Dan Burden, executive director of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, leads a walking tour in Bibb County, Ga. in August 2012 as participants shade themselves from the sun. It's part of a larger effort to make Bibb and Macon, its county seat, more age-friendly. Elements include promoting “complete streets” that enable safe access for all users for all ages and modes of transport.

friendliness in eight “domains.” Among these are having a variety of housing options for older residents that provide the ability to “age in place”—and safe, affordable modes of private and public transportation.

Macon-Bibb formed a Citizens Advisory Council — comprising volunteers, county officials, and members of the business, nonprofit

and service communities—that has met three times since the area joined the network in 2012. They have two years to develop a three-year action plan based on the findings of their baseline assessments and to identify indicators for monitoring progress against the plan.

In years 3 through 5, participating communities must implement an AARP-approved action plan,

and submit a report after the fifth year that demonstrates goals that have been achieved.

Kevin Barrere is the county's public affairs officer. He's been assigned to help assess park and recreational facilities, which thanks to a special purpose local option sales tax, passed in 2011, will benefit from an infusion of money for improvements.

“Let's say we're rebuilding a park or doing a rec center,” he said. “Let's think about how that ties in with age-friendly, and how we can use what we've learned from here moving on.”

As a result of the effort, Hart noted that architects and planners have been asked to pay special attention to making facilities senior-friendly, including adding “passive” recreational opportunities. He added that the county will work to “attract and accommodate broader age groups.”

There is no fee to join the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, according to AARP. Jeanne Anthony directs U.S. age-friendly program out of the association's Washington, D.C. office. She said the collaboration between Bibb County and Macon are a model.

“When we undertake a lot of work, we think about regionalism as opposed to individual communities,” she said, “and this seems to be a pretty cool example of that.”

Myrtle Habersham is an AARP volunteer in Macon, who Anthony describes as a “spark plug” because of her enthusiastic leadership in the local age-friendly network.

She has advice for other counties that might be interested in launching similar efforts in their communities: “First of all, doing their research about why there is a need; look at your demographics in your locale — then approaching your leaders, because you need their support. From that point on, working with them in setting up the councils and all.”

There is a business case for being age-friendly, Habersham said, adding that over the next 19 years, 10,000 baby boomers are expected to retire each day nationwide. “You're talking about people with experience, money—who can volunteer some of their time that the community can benefit from.”

Other communities are beginning to take notice of that potential. When an Augusta-Richmond County, Ga. commissioner learned about Bibb County's effort, Habersham said, he contacted state AARP leaders. She helped give a presentation to the Augusta-Richmond Commission last month, explaining the nuts and bolts, and benefits, of the program.

Anthony said any community can contact AARP or the WHO about joining the age-friendly network.

*\*To learn more about AARP's age-friendly community program, see this article at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).*

## Fund created to assist families of 'Yarnell 19'

An Arizona education organization has launched a long-term, statewide, community-giving effort aimed at providing the financial assistance necessary to meet the full-range of education needs of the children and families of the 19 hotshot crew members who died fighting the Yarnell Hill wildfire.

The Prescott Granite Mountain Hotshots Memorial Education Fund will provide the 13 children, three unborn children, and the spouses and fiancées of the crew members all reasonable assistance with education-related expenses throughout the children's school-age years. The goal is to raise \$5 million.

A fund has been established with Wells Fargo and the public is invited to make tax-deductible donations at any Wells Fargo branch using

account number 8008516158.

In addition, checks to the Prescott Granite Mountain Hotshots Memorial Education Fund, with account number 8008516158 noted in the memo line, may also be sent to the fund's fiscal agent, the Arizona School Boards Association, at 2100 N. Central Ave., Ste. 200, Phoenix, AZ 85004, for deposit into the account.

In addition to the comprehensive Prescott Granite Mountain Hotshots Memorial Education Fund, a complementary scholarship endowment fund for the children of the Granite Mountain Hotshots and other fallen firefighters was recently established by the Arizona Community Foundation and the Yavapai County Community Foundation. Yarnell is in Yavapai County.

## Eight Domains of Livability

AARP's Age-Friendly Network targets improvements in eight domains that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. They are:

- **Outdoor spaces and buildings** – availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities.
- **Transportation** – safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation.
- **Housing** – a wide range of housing options for older residents; the ability to age in place; and other home modification programs.
- **Social participation** – access to leisure and cultural activities; opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people.
- **Respect and social inclusion** – programs to promote ethnic and cultural diversity as well as multigenerational interaction and dialogue.
- **Civic participation and employment** – the promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in the formulation of policies relevant to their lives.
- **Communication and information** – the promotion of and access to technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family.
- **Community support and health services** – access to homecare services, clinics and programs to promote wellness and active aging.

Source: [aarp.org](http://aarp.org)



**NEW**

## NACo HEALTH DISCOUNT PROGRAM



**VISION LASIK**  
DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING  
**PRESCRIPTION LAB**  
DIABETIC SUPPLIES  
**HEARING & MORE!**

NACo Health Discount Program offered exclusively for NACo Member Counties provides medical discounts and additional savings for NACo member county residents.

**Learn more during the NACo 2013 Annual Conference & Exposition  
at the Fort Worth Convention Center:**

**Workshop:** Sunday, July 21st, 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.  
Arena Room: 121E

**Marketplace:** Visit booth #619  
Exhibit Hall B-D



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

The discount health program is NOT insurance.



# County used lessons from one fire to fight another

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

A lot can happen in 72 hours. Sheriff Terry Maketa figures that in the case of the Black Forest Fire in mid-June in El Paso County, Colo., it could have meant losing more than 1,000 homes.

Not quite a year after the Waldo Canyon Fire destroyed 346 homes in the county to becoming the most destructive in state history — the county faced another blaze, this one starting in a heavily populated residential area.

With time even shorter to protect lives and property, this year he had help from military helicopters dropping up to four times the amount of water that lightweight aircraft could muster. It was thanks to a clarification on

federal policy change that waived the requirement that local resources be exhausted before military aircraft are deployed.

"This initial aerial attack bought us a lot of time," Maketa said. "We were able to keep the fire from spreading. We didn't have that at Waldo Canyon."

He predicted the fire could have done twice the damage — 511 homes were destroyed and 28 were damaged — had the aircraft not been available.

Though more homes were lost than during the Waldo Canyon Fire, Dennis Hisey, chairman of the county's Board of Commissioners, said the county's response was more effective this time.

"It might not appear based on the losses that it did us much good, but our first responders kept it

from spreading west into Colorado Springs, which would have been devastating," he said.

While the affected residents recover, the county is relaxing certain land-use rules, like the length of time a mobile home can be located on property, and reducing fees associated with rebuilding on property damaged by the fire.

It was one of many changes since the Waldo Canyon Fire that helped the response to the Black Forest Fire.

"The more you do it, the more efficient you become," Maketa said. "The experience helps guide you, but with fires, you learn that they'll do the opposite of what you expect."

Hisey said the short time between the two fires meant that

officials from various agencies were used to working together.

"Unfortunately, they were so close together that nobody's phone number had changed," he remarked.

This time, the county had its joint operations and communications center set up within a few hours, with enough parking space and computer network capacity for volunteer agencies and several insurance companies to set up on site.

The county tried to speed up release of information on the status of homes, which helped calm residents and buy the county some goodwill.

"Talking to people last year, I found out pretty quickly that not knowing whether your home was alright was sometimes harder than

learning it had been destroyed," Maketa said. "We tried to put out as much as we could to dispel any rumors and comfort a lot of displaced people."

Facebook and Twitter directed people to a dedicated Web page that held a document listing addresses and their conditions — appears unaffected, some damage and total loss. That meant contracting with an outside server to handle waves of Internet traffic.

That effort went a long way to buying patience from residents, Maketa said.

"When we're still working in an area but people can see their neighborhood but not see any flames or smoke, they wonder why they can't go home," he said. "I

See FIRE page 9

## County commissioner launches mobile farmer's market

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

An oasis of fresh fruits and vegetables is sprouting in the "food deserts" of Rowan and Cabarrus counties in North Carolina. And Rowan Commissioner Jon Barber, in his role as a local businessman, is helping to lead the way.

### SpeedRead » » »

- » Low County Health Rankings spark mobile farmer's market idea
- » County has nine "food deserts"
- » Companion foundation created to promote local agriculture

Barber is founder of Mobile Farm Fresh, a nonprofit that recently began selling fresh produce at three tent sites in areas of Rowan designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as food deserts — low-income communities without major grocery stores or whose residents, lacking transportation options, have to travel a mile or more to access fresh foods.

"We had some people who wanted to take their concerns for the health of our citizens, their passion for their agriculture and their strong belief in volunteerism and do something," he said. Barber grew up on a farm in the county and now owns and operates a for-profit farmer's market in Salisbury, the county seat.

But it was as a county commis-

sioner that he received the "wake up call" a few years ago that spurred him to action. When the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation released its first County Health Rankings (CHR) in 2010, Rowan County ranked 62nd on overall health outcomes while neighboring Cabarrus County was ninth.

"When it comes to County Health Rankings data, we continued to slip further and further behind our peer counties," Barber said. He felt that put his county, about 45 miles from Charlotte, at a competitive disadvantage for attracting economic development. The 511-square-mile county in North Carolina's Piedmont region has a population of 138,000.

He said the number of food deserts in the county doubled between 2006 and 2010, based on USDA data. Mobile farmers markets are one of the strategies outlined in CHR's Roadmaps to Health and are recommended by the North Carolina Public Health Department, he said.

Beginning with volunteers, Barber hopes to eventually secure a bus that can be retrofitted into a rolling, one-aisle grocery store that can make stops in each of the county's nine food desert areas. Mobile Farm Fresh is seeking grant funding and hoping a locality might donate a past-its-prime transit bus to the cause.

The Community Care Clinic was one of the inaugural locations where the market set up July 1. Krista Woolly is executive director of the clinic that provides free medical and dental care, and a pharmacy under one roof — funded by grants



Photo courtesy of Mobile Farm Fresh

A customer checks out the produce at one of four mobile farmers market sites that debuted July 1 in Rowan and Cabarrus counties in North Carolina. The goal is to bring fresh, locally grown foods to the area's food deserts.

and donations, she said. Many of the patients seen there suffer from chronic conditions such as obesity, diabetes and hypertension, which can benefit from healthy diets.

"We really, really want to treat these people and get them healthy and stable," Woolly said, "but one of the reasons they are where they are is because of maybe life choices or lack of money to eat healthy."

"What I'm hoping this does for our patients is help provide them with an equal or lower cost way to eat healthy." She also plans to promote the market among her staff and other medical providers in the area. "We're going to shop there because we've got to all be partners in this; I can't preach good health and exercise if I'm not doing

it myself."

In addition to Mobile Farm Fresh, Barber also founded another nonprofit, the South Eastern Economic Development — or SEED — Foundation. It's part economic development commission, part agribusiness council to promote locally grown foods, the role of agriculture in the region's economy, food security and healthy outcomes. Members include farmers and merchants. "Farming is valued as central to our heritage and our future," said Joe Fowler, a SEED board member. There are 983 farms in Rowan County with an average size of 118 acres, according to USDA.

Barber sees SEED as a collaborator in highlighting the role local agribusiness can play in addressing

public health.

"The SEED Foundation is there to help build a very vibrant, local and regional food system," he explained. "And then once that system is established, then the more they produce, the more that's going to be available to these food deserts, or to our local restaurants, to our local schools, to our health organizations."

Barber would ultimately like to see the Mobile Farm Fresh and SEED Foundation concepts take root statewide. Along with providing healthy foods, he said education is also essential. The market on wheels will include an "education resource center" that offers tips on how to select the best produce, how to prepare it and recipes.

"It's one thing to now be able to have access to healthy fruits and vegetables," he added, "but then, what do you do with it?"

In addition to crediting the County Health Rankings, Barber said he has received "tremendous support" from the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute, a partner in the health rankings effort. Both provide counties with examples of how communities can take action to address their health challenges.

"We wouldn't be where we are without their support. They have been a valuable resource."

For information about the mobile farmer's market in Rowan County, contact Barber at 704.223.1637 or [info@mobilefarmfresh.com](mailto:info@mobilefarmfresh.com).

(\*See this story online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews) for additional information about Mobile Farm Fresh.)



# County gets creative with resourceful development

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Envisioning ways to create jobs and revitalize businesses in communities usually doesn't involve stormwater or sewage projects.

However, planners in Martin County, Fla. realized that a stormwater and sewer project could spur private investment that would not only provide vital infrastructure but also create jobs and revitalize a neighborhood.

"This project serves as a model to make sure the needs of the community are met," said Nakeischea Smith, community development specialist for Martin County Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and manager of the Bonita, Clayton and Delmar (BCD) Streets Sewer Project.

Its goal was to increase the availability of basic sewer services in the county's Golden Gate neighborhood, which relied heavily on septic tanks. The construction required a near-complete replacement of the area roads, so the CRA conducted extensive public outreach to find out improvements the residents would want to see incorporated into a new design.

With the help of the Martin County neighborhood advisory



Photos Courtesy of Martin County, Fla.

Before and after: wider sidewalks and additional on-street parking (r) are part of the finished product in Martin County's BCD Streets Sewer Project. The new features make the streets safer and more accessible for everyone.

committee, Smith and the CRA went door-to-door to meet with property owners to accommodate their views in the final design. The outreach ensured local businesses and residents were included in the planning and design process.

The finished product included roads featuring wider sidewalks, pedestrian medians, landscaping and additional on-street parking. The new features made the streets better to accommodate everyone using the road, including pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, transit users and drivers.

Many local property owners have since updated the interior and exterior of their properties to coincide with the street makeover and have enjoyed the increased on-street parking as well as improved access. The redesigned streetscape is intended to draw private reinvestment and business activity to this underutilized area, while improving local infrastructure and stormwater treatment capabilities.

The BCD project was made

possible through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). This provides communities around the country with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

"I suggest counties think outside the box," Smith added. "Have a project where you can pull multiple sources of funding. Sometimes a plan needs to be stretched and not be one dimensional."

## SpeedRead » » »

- » Local businesses and residents included in planning and design
- » Goal of project: to increase availability of sewer services in a historic neighborhood
- » End result featured wider sidewalks, pedestrian medians, landscaping and more on-street parking

## Rodgers' achievements include NACo's first Cyber Symposium

RODGERS from page 1

president during this phase of the organization's growth, as we work to build one of the premier trade organizations in the country, made it exciting to be at the "decision-making table."

### Q: What advice would you give your successor?

Respect the history of the organization, but don't rest on it.

Challenge the membership...constantly and find your NACo voice.

### Q: What are you most proud of?

Being part of the committee that chose Matt Chase as executive director. I believe it will be looked at as one of the pivotal points in NACo history.

### Q: What's next for Chris Rodgers?

Supporting the new president and looking for ways to be relevant once my days as an officer have ended. I would love to be part of a national think tank on the issues of re-entry, health or cybersecurity.

### Q: Final thoughts?

It has been an honor to be the NACo president. That sums it up the best. I sincerely thank the membership for this opportunity, and the NACo staff for all the support.

FIRE from page 8

think getting as much information as we could out there bought us some understanding."

The sheriff's office spread evacuation news by going door-to-door, and with each house, deputies could record what kind of response they got and enter it into a database that helped expedite missing persons reporting.

"That really helped speed it up," Maketa said. "Questions about 120 families were down to 14 in a few hours. It made the job of locating them a lot faster for us."

The Waldo Canyon Fire spread quickly, and the Black Forest Fire was accompanied by winds reaching 45 miles per hour. It motivated the county's warning that if a resident sees smoke, it's time to move.

Black Forest Fire Department Chief Bob Harvey called June's fire the worst he had seen in more than four decades of service. His department responded to the fire first, but when the county took over the suppression effort, his crews switched to protecting buildings.

That was made easier, he said,

by communities undertaking fire mitigation efforts such as removing excess brush, which could serve as fuel to help fire spread quickly. Open spaces, like parks or areas that had been cleared after Waldo Canyon, helped his crews protect neighborhoods.

Hisey said the county is willing to expand hours for its mulching center if demand drives it.

"Fire mitigation will be much more effective if entire neighborhoods do it," he said. "I think it's a situation where some peer pressure might be useful in getting people to mitigate their properties."

He also suggested having teams from different jurisdictions perform training exercises together, especially if they have mutual aid agreements.

"If you're going to be working together, you might as well practice

in that same environment," he said.

Maketa said, along the same lines, that first responders should be equipped for other duties they might perform. While firefighters were deployed to help control the blaze, his deputies did more evacuation and rescue. His office is spending \$30,000 to equip deputies with flame-retardant clothing and breathing apparatuses.

There were still lessons to be learned from the Black Forest Fire. Maketa wants to program traffic signals for longer cycles favoring evacuation routes, because deputies on traffic duty were eventually needed elsewhere. Harvey said the difficulty getting fire engines into some neighborhoods has convinced him that smaller, more maneuverable vehicles, despite their reduced water capacity, could be more useful.

## Quick Takes

### Hottest counties during the summer

Avg. Daily Temp.  
June – Aug.

Maricopa County, Ariz.	93°F
Clark County, Nev.	90°F
Dallas County, Texas	85°F
Travis County, Texas	84°F
Bexar County, Texas	84°F

Source: CurrentResults.com

## Join the NACo Network...



fb.com/NACoDC  
twitter.com/NACoTweets  
linkedin.com/in/nacodc  
youtube.com/NACoVideo





# County Innovations and Solutions

Miami-Dade County, Fla.

## Online Employee Map Helps Accelerate Return After a Storm

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

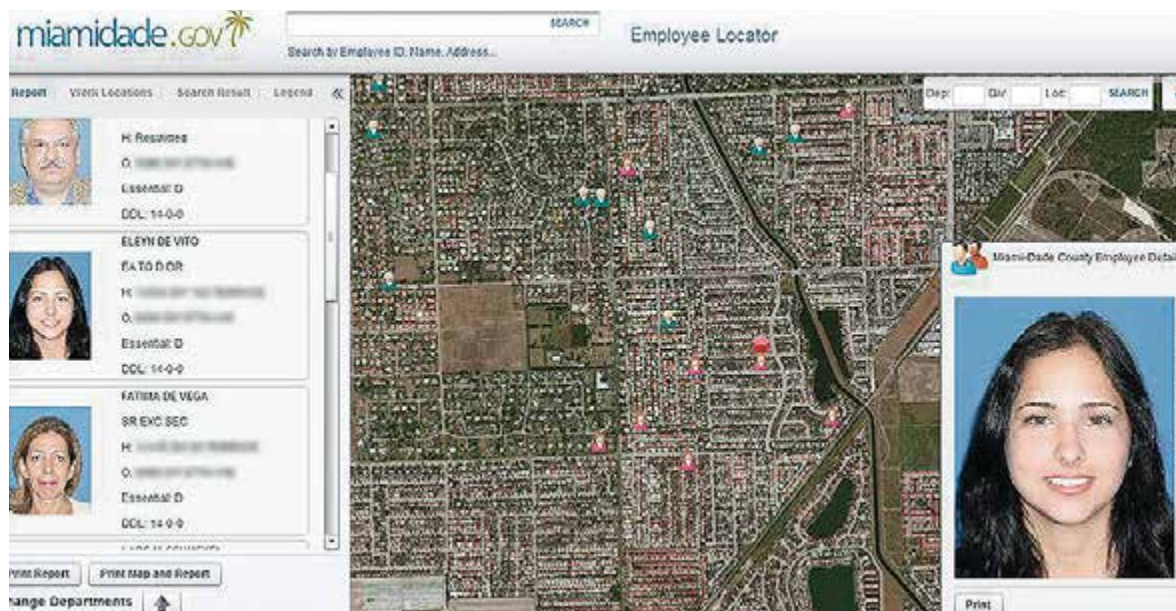
Miami-Dade County knows something about disruptive hurricanes.

Its location on Florida's Atlantic coast makes it the welcome mat for many summer storms, which invariably disrupt operations while the danger passes. As soon as it's safe to come out, the county's services have to be up and running.

"As soon as there's a hurricane alert, the county goes into a different mode—day-to-day work freezes," said Mary Fuentes, the information technology department's director of enterprise solutions. "When things go back to normal, we're usually looking at a different situation than before the alert."

Power lines down, some roads impassible, and undoubtedly many of the county's 26,000 employees dealing with some kind of personal crisis makes that return to normalcy less of a reflex and more of a puzzle.

"We recognize that employees



The Miami-Dade County, Fla. Employee Locator replaces dozens of paper maps depicting where staff members live and work. Employees' records include their skill sets, so they can be dispatched from home if needs arise.

are going to have a lot of their hands after a hurricane, so many departments have to improvise," Fuentes said. "We need to know who can do what and where they are."

For years, the county's then-54 departments printed out annual maps listing employee homes,

which got expensive and time consuming for larger departments, sometimes taking a full day to complete. Reading the maps themselves was also a challenge, but the county was able to adapt its existing technology to create a comprehensive employee locator system that saved

money and time, was easier to use and more effective.

Only one department has requested a paper map of employees' homes since the system was integrated in 2011, and moreover because the maps are part of the county's GIS system, they can be

accessed anywhere with Internet connectivity.

By importing data from the county's employee directory into a GIS map, each department can overlay the path of a storm over its data to see which employees are likely to be affected and how the department's resources can be deployed as the county recovers. "The maps include more information about employee skills, so we know if there's something in an area that requires a radio technician who can do something specific, we can search and find the closest employee that has those skills."

Department directors have access to their own staff, though deputy directors, because they often work with other departments, have access across departments.

If transportation becomes an issue, Fuentes said, it can be easier for directors to help organize carpools for employees to help them get to work sites.

Luckily, since it was deployed, the county's employee locator system has not been called into action yet. In the meantime, it has served other purposes, most usefully as a way for directors to get to know employees. The county recently consolidated its 54 departments into 25, leaving 25 department directors with many new staff members.

"Many people were asking for a kind of yearbook when we consolidated," Fuentes said. "This does the job. And it lists employees by workplace, too, so if a director is heading out somewhere, it's easy to find which employees they'll meet when they get there."

Employees are prompted to check and verify their personal information annually, so the database is up-to-date.

Because Miami-Dade County already had a functioning GIS system, the costs to implement the program were limited to staff time spent programming. Starting such a program from nothing would cost approximately \$139,000, for website costs, software licenses and hardware.

## Tax reform effort starts with blank slate

TAXES from page 1

urges them to support municipal bonds and to oppose proposals that would cap or eliminate the tax exemption for municipal bond interest.

Next, in what can only be characterized as an interesting development, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) announced their next step in the effort to reform the tax code. Their plan essentially starts with a blank slate, meaning all tax preferences, including the exemption for municipal bond interest, and the deduction for state and local taxes, will be removed from the tax code. The committee leaders then requested their fellow senators to submit legislative language or detailed proposals that makes the case for tax preferences that should be included in a reformed tax code.

Both Sens. Baucus and Hatch

### SpeedRead » » »

- » Bipartisan letter to House Leadership in support of the tax exemption for municipal bond interest garnered more than 130 representative signatures
- » Sens. Baucus and Hatch announce next step in the effort to reform the tax code
- » Rep. Lofgren has introduced another bill, the Wireless Tax Fairness Act of 2013 (H.R. 2309), that would preempt state and local tax authority

acknowledge, however, that the blank slate should not be viewed as the end goal. But the question remains unanswered whether more revenue is expected from any potential reform or if any prospective revenue, instead, will be used to push down rates, reduce the deficit or perform a combination

of both. This issue still divides the two parties.

Nonetheless, counties are urged to contact their senators to stress that the tax exemption for municipal bond interest is important to county government since it finances critical needs such as infrastructure.

Finally, moving us to the other end of the spectrum in a negative development, Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) has once again introduced a bill, the Wireless Tax Fairness Act of 2013 (H.R. 2309), that would preempt state and local tax authority. Similar to legislation passed by the House in the 112th Congress, the bill prohibits states or local government from imposing any new discriminatory tax on mobile services, mobile service providers, or mobile service property for five years upon enactment of the legislation, essentially preventing counties from imposing rates that current state law may allow them to. Although

the House passed the bill in the previous Congress, it never saw any action in the Senate.

Prior efforts were opposed by NACo, along with other state and local government groups. Opposition efforts will likely be revived again for the current legislation.

In addition to the preemption concern, opponents of the bill are also troubled by the lack of data demonstrating that this legislation, which would intrude on state and local authority, is even necessary. Furthermore, the bill would essentially create preferential tax treatment for the wireless industry and threaten the fiscal health of states and local governments as other industries will likely seek similar protections.

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) is also leading similar efforts in the Senate with the introduction of S. 1235.

*\*To view a copy of the letter, see this article online at [www.naco.org/countrynews](http://www.naco.org/countrynews).*

*County Innovations and Solutions highlights award-winning programs.*



# Financial Services News

## Nationwide Answers Need for Help with Fiduciary Services

In today's demanding regulatory environment, smaller counties might find themselves struggling to keep up with their responsibilities to the deferred compensation plans they sponsor. This may be especially true when it comes to their fiduciary responsibilities with regard to the investment options they offer through the plan.

Nationwide Retirement Solutions has responded to this need with a new service designed specifically for smaller plans. Because Nationwide is the provider of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, this new service is available to county employers that sponsor the program — at no additional cost to the plan sponsor or participants.

"The investment marketplace has become a lot more complicated in recent years," said Eric Stevenson, senior vice president, Nationwide Retirement Solutions. "While larger plan sponsors may be able to afford a customized solution to meet their plan's investment fiduciary needs, smaller counties usually have more limited resources. For them, it can be especially challenging to keep up with the various types of investment options available to their plans, even as regulators are increasing their scrutiny over governmental plans.

"Through our new Investment Fiduciary Services provided by Morningstar Associates, LLC, we're providing plan sponsors with something they haven't had access to before now: assistance with their investment fiduciary responsibilities from a recognized leader in the industry."

**First-to-Market Fiduciary Help**

Investment Fiduciary Services can help smaller county plan sponsors with plan assets between \$500,000 and \$25 million to mitigate their risk by providing them with investment recommendations from an objective third party, a diversified menu of investment options and written acknowledgment by Morningstar Associates of its fiduciary role.

Indemnification if Morningstar Associates breaches its duties include sample investment policy statement, quarterly plan performance report, annual summary report and monitoring, and due diligence of investment options.

**Why Morningstar Associates?**

Morningstar Associates is a leading provider of independent investment research. They have been offering this service for 10 years, and currently provide this program to over 6,800 retirement plans with more than \$17 billion in assets under management\*.

"Morningstar Associates' primary strength is their ability to comprehensively analyze and select managed investments and to combine them effectively," Stevenson says. "They use their investment knowledge to build, manage and monitor an investment lineup that can help plan sponsors fulfill their investment fiduciary obligations, and help participants structure an efficient, well-diversified portfolio."

**How the Program Works**

Morningstar Associates' investment professionals oversee the entire lineup construction process. This involves understanding the characteristics and investment objectives of retirement plans, selecting asset categories that both provide broad-based diversification and investments they believe are high quality and should work well in combination, and monitoring the investment lineup on an ongoing basis. Keep in mind that diversification does not assure a profit or guarantee against loss in a declining market.

"Few programs offer the depth of expertise, objectivity and service that Investment Fiduciary Services offers," Stevenson said. "Counties can benefit from knowing that their plan's investment selection will follow a prudent process, which includes identification of what Morningstar Associates believes to be high quality funds, and ongoing monitoring of the funds in the plan."

Investment Fiduciary Services provided by Morningstar Associates is available at no additional charge to plan sponsors and participants of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program. County plan sponsors seeking more information about this new and innovative service from Nationwide Retirement Solutions should call 877.677.3678, option 3.

To learn more about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, and how promoting deferred compensation can benefit county employees, contact Lisa Cole by email at [lcole@nacorma.org](mailto:lcole@nacorma.org) or phone at 202.942.4270.

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

\*Data as of 12/31/12. Includes Morningstar Associates and Ibbotson Associates. Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) makes payments to the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACo RMA LLC and the NACo Financial Services Center Partnership (FSC) for services and endorsements that NACo provides for all its members generally related to Nationwide's products and services sold exclusively in public sector retirement markets. More detail about these payments is available at [www.nrsforu.com](http://www.nrsforu.com).

Investment advisory services are provided by Morningstar Associates, LLC, a registered investment advisor and wholly owned subsidiary of Morningstar, Inc. Neither Morningstar Associates, LLC nor Morningstar, Inc. is affiliated with Nationwide or its affiliates. The Morningstar name and logo are registered marks of Morningstar, Inc.

Retirement Specialists are registered representatives of Nationwide Investment Services Corporation: Member FINRA. In Mich. only, Nationwide Investment Svcs. Corporation. Nationwide Retirement Specialists cannot offer investment, tax or legal advice. You should consult your own counsel before making retirement plan decisions.

© 2013 Nationwide Retirement Solutions. Nationwide, the Nationwide framemark, and On Your Side are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. NRM-9736AO-NX (06/2013)

## Word Search

### Tarrant County, Texas Facts

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

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

- CATTLE (drove early economy)

DALLAS (adjacent county)

DENTON (adjacent county)

EDWARD H TARRANT (General county is named after)

ELLIS (adjacent county)

FORT WORTH (county seat)

GLEN WHITLEY (County Judge)
- JOHNSON (adjacent county)

OIL (drove early economy)

PARKER (adjacent county)

RANGERS (major league baseball team)

ROY BROOKS (Commissioner)

WISE (adjacent county)

Created by Christopher Johnson

During the Conference,

## Stop by the Social Media Tech Room

(Room 103 A/B)

Strategy • Analytics • Education • Tools

Experience one-on-one learning with a fellow county official or NACo staff, who will show you how simple it is to get started with social media and answer your questions.

Contact Matthew Fellows at [mfellows@naco.org](mailto:mfellows@naco.org) or [@NACoTweets](https://twitter.com/NACoTweets) using [#NACoAnn](https://twitter.com/NACoAnn).



[@NACoTweets](https://twitter.com/NACoTweets)  
[#NACoAnn](https://twitter.com/NACoAnn)  
[#NACoNewbie](https://twitter.com/NACoNewbie)  
(For First-timers)



[www.youtube.com/NACoVideo](http://www.youtube.com/NACoVideo)  
Access NACo's video library



[www.facebook.com/NACoDC](http://www.facebook.com/NACoDC)  
Current NACo developments, links and photos

NACo National Association of Counties  
The Voice of America's Counties







# News From the Nation's Counties

## ► ALABAMA

The **outdoor tornado warning system** in **MADISON COUNTY** has been upgraded to be site-specific, so not every siren across the county will be sounded for every tornado warning.

The Huntsville/Madison County Emergency Management Agency purchased the system for \$88,000 and can now tailor the county's 121 outdoor siren alerts to match areas in the track of storms as determined by the National Weather Service office in Huntsville. It matches the outdoor warning system to the polygon warning area identified by the weather service.

Madison County is also the only area in north Alabama with the technology to create a targeted warning area, the *Huntsville Times* reported.

## ► ARIZONA

The **MOHAVE COUNTY** Board of Supervisors is lifting the ban on **guns in the county's 10 libraries**. The board had previously removed a ban on weapons at the county administration building.

The *Mohave Daily News* reported a citizens advisory committee had supported keeping the ban, arguing that an unstable armed person could get agitated and pull out a weapon.

## ► CALIFORNIA

Complaints about the conduct of **U.S. Forest Service law enforcement officers** have led **EL DORADO COUNTY** Sheriff John D'Agostini to suspend their authority to enforce state laws.

Sheriff's spokesman Lt. Tim Becker said the sheriff had received multiple complaints from citizens regarding the Forest Service officers' actions, and while D'Agostini doesn't have the authority to discipline them, he does have the authority to revoke their permission to enforce state law.

The California Penal Code states that officers of the U.S. Forest Service "have no authority to enforce California statutes without the written consent of the sheriff or chief of police in whose jurisdiction they are assigned."

Six officers, supervised by a patrol captain, are assigned to the Eldorado National Forest along with two crime investigators, special agents who handle long-term investigations, the *Sacramento Bee* reported. The sheriff's action does not affect the officers' authority to enforce federal laws.

With termination of the agreement, he said, Forest Service officers will no longer be authorized to issue citations for vehicle code violations, such as speeding, driving without

headlights after dark or having expired registration, on forest lands or adjoining property.

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's overturning of state Proposition 8, which banned **same-sex marriage**, counties across the state have seen sudden increases in marriage license applications. **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** received 606 online applications for marriage licenses over the weekend after the ruling, compared to 123 applications the weekend prior, the *Los Angeles Times* reported. KTVU reported that **SANTA CLARA COUNTY** had issued 86 marriage licenses to couples by late afternoon July 2, more than double the average 40 licenses the county issued on an average day before of the Supreme Court ruling.

It was the first time in five years that most same-sex couples could marry in California.

The **RIVERSIDE COUNTY** Board of Supervisors is preparing to hear an ordinance lifting many of the restrictions preventing **food truck operators** from expanding their menus.

"This would give our residents access to the kind of mobile food operations they enjoy in **LOS ANGELES** and **ORANGE counties**," said Supervisor Kevin Jeffries.

He said the law's prohibitions on what can be served from food trucks make the trucks uncompetitive with operators in neighboring counties and are generally anti-business.

The supervisor is seeking to allow mobile vendors to engage in "full-service food preparation on a daily basis" in unincorporated communities.

## ► COLORADO

A survey by Northwest Colorado Council of Governments members could mean big improvements in local and regional **broadband service in the mountainous regions**.

It will help build an information base for a plan that will help the region leverage sufficient access to broadband in **EAGLE, GARFIELD, GRANT, JACKSON, MOFFAT, PITKIN, RIO BLANCO, ROUTT** and **SUMMIT counties**, plus the city of Glenwood Springs and town of Carbondale.

Pitkin County Assistant Manager Phylis Mattice, who sits on the regional steering committee for the broadband effort, said the goal is to develop a blueprint outlining action steps local governments can take to improve access to broadband in the

region, the *Aspen Business Journal* reported.

## ► INDIANA

**CLINTON COUNTY** took a tilt at windmills earlier this month when it passed a non-binding motion to keep the **county wind-farm free**, according to WLFI-TV. County Council President Skip Evans said he has been approached by more than 100 people — some even as he as mowing his lawn — asking the county to forswear wind farms.

"I tell you, it's not about money, it's about people with me," Evans said. "It's about all the citizens of Clinton County, not just those who stand to profit," Evans said.

He left the door open a crack, though, for wind farm development should enough of his constituents show an interest in them.

## ► MAINE

Lawmakers have approved a commission to examine costs and funding associated with the **unified county jail system**.

The Legislative Council approved eight study commissions to meet during the summer and into the fall, one of which will review costs of the county jail system and Board of Corrections.

Each of the 15 county jails operated independently until lawmakers created a consolidated system in 2008 and created a Board of Corrections to manage it. Since then, board members have floundered under the weight of muddled authority and a lack of state funding, the *Portland Press Herald* reported.

The commission will try to clarify how to fund the board and how those funds should be distributed to individual counties. By default, the process should clarify the board's authority over individual jails. The commission also will look at how counties treat additional revenue other than what is provided by state and county property taxes.

## ► MARYLAND

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY** will become one of the first jurisdictions in Maryland to implement a two-track system for responding to **child abuse allegations**.

The system takes a softer tack for cases deemed low-risk, prescribing training to help improve parenting skills and reserving the child abuse registry for more serious allegations. Appearing on the registry could have a variety of consequences, from not being hired for jobs involving children

to being barred from chaperoning a school trip.

The plan will be rolled out across the state in five phases over the next year, with **FREDERICK, WASHINGTON, ALLEGANY** and **GARRETT counties** on the horizon.

Of the 28,000 cases of child abuse statewide in 2012, nearly 60 percent were unsubstantiated or involved neglect — things that would likely be handled differently with the new system, *The Washington Post* reports.

## ► NEW JERSEY

The set of **health initiatives** created by **SOMERSET COUNTY**'s wellness committee was named a finalist in the Corporate Achievement category in the 2013 *NJBIZ* Healthcare Heroes awards program. The program aims to lower the county's self-insurance costs.

The committee has provided seminars on developing exercise routines and has offered stress management classes, according to the website My Central Jersey. The county played host to a Healthy Employees Day with experts on hand to address topics

on eating nutritious foods, practicing yoga techniques, scheduling flu shots and joining a gym, to name just a few, he said. Nine teams of employees have lost almost 400 pounds as part of the 2013 Get Fit Challenge.

## ► NEW MEXICO

**DONA ANA COUNTY** commissioners have clarified the purpose of a proposed county-run center to help **mentally ill county residents**. Some board members felt it was necessary before the public votes yes or nay on July 30 for a sales tax that would pay to run the facility.

The main mission of the Crisis Triage Center, they said, will be to temporarily house mentally ill residents in the custody of law enforcement — for their own protection or the safety of others, the *Las Cruces Sun-News* reported. There had been confusion about whether the center would accept walk-in patients, which some residents favored.

County Commissioner Billy Garrett said there's a possibility that the

See **NEWS FROM** page 13

# What's in a Seal?

► **Tarrant County, Texas**  
[www.tarrantcounty.com](http://www.tarrantcounty.com)



Tarrant County, one of 26 counties created out of the Peters Colony, was established in 1849. It was named for General Edward H. Tarrant, commander of militia forces of the Republic of Texas at the Battle of Village Creek in 1841.

Tarrant County's roots lie in the "Old West," and much of its heritage can be traced to the era of the cowboy and the cattle drives that passed through the county. Tarrant is one of 254 counties in Texas which were originally set up by the state to serve as decentralized administrative divisions providing state services and collecting state taxes.

Texas counties commonly have a seal or symbol to identify the county unofficially. Many have adopted symbols with the lone star, live oak and olive branches in the center. Some counties have maintained "The State of Texas" at the top, while adding the county name below, while others have replaced "The State of Texas" with the county name, with some adding the year of county establishment at the bottom.

A notable exception is Harris County, which instead uses a symbol with the flag of Texas in the center, which is based on the five-pointed star.

Tarrant's seal is modeled after the State of Texas seal with "Tarrant County, Texas" along the top and three stars along the bottom.

(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).)



## Ohio county gives low-income water customers price break

NEWS FROM *from page 12*

center's mission could be expanded in the future.

### ►NEW YORK

**ERIE COUNTY** is saving money on office supplies, thanks to a donation program with local companies.

County Clerk Christopher L. Jacobs estimated that nearly 5,000 pens disappear annually from the county's auto bureaus, a cost he tabbed at \$1,500. Following the success of its military discount card program — which entitles veterans to discounts at local merchants — Jacobs solicited pen donations from participating businesses and received 10,000 pens, enough for the entire year. The County Legislature passed a resolution allowing the county to accept donated pens.

"Somebody suggested we just attach the pen to a clipboard," Jacobs told the *Buffalo News*. "Well, we tried that a couple of years ago, and people started stealing the clipboards."

### ►OHIO

A discount program for low-income water and sewer customers has been authorized by the **FRANKLIN COUNTY** Board of Commissioners.

The **Low Income Water and Sewer Discount Program** will offer 20 percent off on charges for water and sewer usage to customers who meet income guidelines.

"We always look for ways to assist Franklin County families that are struggling," Commission President John O'Grady said. "This program does that and will help ensure that families are able to keep their utilities turned on throughout the year."

The initiative is part of an agreement between the county and the city of Columbus, from which Franklin County purchases some of its water. The city also treats some of the county's sewage. About 17 percent of the county's 1.2 million residents live below the poverty line. The city has agreed to help provide this discount for county residents, county officials said.

To qualify, customers must either already participate in an assistance program such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance or Home Energy Assistance, or have incomes below the federal poverty level.

### ►WASHINGTON

• **CLARK COUNTY** Commissioners recently passed a **Job Creation Resolution** to combat high unemployment in the county. It will streamline the permitting process,

and waive all application, service, review and traffic impact fees.

"We successfully made the changes that put out the welcome mat for employers," Commissioner David Madore said. The resolution was scheduled to take effect on July 15.

The county, hit hard by the 2008 recession, has had an unemployment rate of more than 15 percent and underemployment topping 10 percent every month from December 2008 to May 2013.

• The five members of the Cascade Mountains Consortium — **CHELAN, KING, KITTITAS, SNOHOMISH** and **SPOKANE** counties — held the first **joint helicopter training** of its kind in the state last month. All but Kittitas have county-owned choppers.

Training objectives included familiarizing Sheriff's Office search and rescue teams, and fire rescue teams, from Chelan and Kittitas counties on advanced helicopter operations — and providing networking opportunities, officials said.

"Just being able to get together, meet all the pilots, the flight crews and know who we're working with out in the field and in the mountains, just builds a better relationship," Cpl. Ellis Nale, Kittitas County Sheriff's Office, told KNDO-TV.

The Cascade Mountains Consortium provides rapid "all-hazard" helicopter response teams to partners in the Pacific Northwest in response to large scale natural disasters or acts of terrorism.

• Until it can adopt zoning regulations, the **PIERCE COUNTY** Council has temporarily banned growing, processing and selling **marijuana**. The ban will also last until the state issues permanent licensing rules.

The statewide initiative that legalizes possession of marijuana for those 21 or older directed the state Liquor Control Board to set up a system to license the production, sale and processing of recreational marijuana. Those rules are expected to be completed by Dec. 1. The county's temporary ban codifies current practice until it can develop rules.

The county's ordinance does not address collective gardens for medical marijuana for which no permits have been issued, according to the *News Tribune*.

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

## The H.R. Doctor Is In

# A Practical Alternative to Getting Something Done in America

Daring to write anything with the words "gun control" in it represents a true act of bravery on the part of the HR Doctor. America is the gun culture capital of most of the world. The right "to keep and bear arms" was felt to be so powerful to achieving the compromises needed to create a new nation that the Founding Fathers included it in our fundamental national document. It is a subject that has bred intense controversy and debate over the last generation in particular.

It is hard to argue that when enemy invasion forces arrive, armed with flintlock muskets and pistols, it would be appropriate to the defense of the nation that armed citizen militias and the tiny professional army march out to confront them. However, when you fast-forward to an era of high-powered semi-automatic military weapons, laser sights, ammunition that can pierce most everything and other weapons innovations, it certainly appears reasonable to seek some kinds of minimum control.

Perhaps people convicted of violent crimes should be barred from owning an arsenal of battlefield nuclear weapons, even if Uncle Harry sold or gave them the weapons, or even if they were bought at a neighborhood gun show. You know, the one being held close to the elementary school.

Perhaps we might consider doing something about the 3D printing of pistols and other explosive devices. You may well know people in your neighborhood whose behavior would worry you if you saw them at Office Depot buying a 3D printer — something we will all be able to do sooner than you think.

The HR Doctor proposes an approach to violence reduction which I have not heard being raised and which is practical and cost effective for every jurisdiction in the United States. I believe it would be extraordinarily effective. I can envision the NRA's officers actually sitting down to lunch with the officers of the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence and emerging in common support of this one particular idea. It would not violate Second Amendment rights

but, in fact, would reduce the risks and liabilities of guns in the hands of persons of limited behavioral maturity.

This idea is to make mandatory in every K-12 classroom in the United States a course taught annually — not just one lecture — on civility and nonviolent dispute

**The self-esteem part of maturity seems to be lacking in many of the behaviors of children and grown-ups who believe that solving problems should require bashing somebody else ...**

resolution. Imagine unleashing our innovative and competent teachers to help children, including those just beginning elementary school, to come to understand that violence hurts everyone in society. Children would learn that there are ways to disagree with others without harming or threatening them.

The self-esteem part of maturity seems to be lacking in many of the behaviors of children and grown-ups who believe that solving problems should require bashing somebody else in an assault by acting on impulses to do harm. There are ample

lessons from history, psychology, criminal justice and medicine to create a powerful curriculum.

The horrific damage that can be done by one individual armed with large magazine weapons, but not armed with psychological or behavioral balances needed to act responsibly all the time, can scarcely be imagined. We see results when small schoolchildren are massacred in Connecticut, patrons at a theater killed in Colorado, a member of Congress shot down while visiting constituents in Arizona, or prosecutors are murdered in Texas.

In short, no place and no person is immune from the powerful negatives of weapons available virtually everywhere in a culture dominated by the thrill of real or imaged violence portrayed so "well" in the media. I challenge readers to watch one evening of prime-time television and try to count the number of times weapons, especially handguns, are fired.

The forces rallying against even reasonably sounding restrictions, such as mandatory background checks for everyone — even those who purchase weapons at gun shows — are believed by many to be so powerful that standing up against them would be counterproductive for elected officials, even in local government.

The most recent effort champi-

*See H.R. DOC page 14*

## Job Market & Classifieds

### ■ COUNTY MANAGER – DOÑA ANA COUNTY, N.M.

*Salary:* DOQ.

Doña Ana County was established in 1852 and is the second-most populated county in the state. The county seat, Las Cruces, has been ranked as one of the fastest-growing communities in the United States for the past decade. The county comprises 3,804 square miles in south-central New Mexico, and borders El Paso County, Texas, to the east and southeast and shares an international border with the state of Chihuahua, Mexico, directly south. It borders Luna County to the west, Sierra County to the north and Otero County to the east.

There are many physically diverse areas within Doña Ana, including mountain ranges, valleys and deserts. Las Cruces is home to New Mexico State University, as well as Doña Ana

Community College. The population has risen dramatically since 1900 and is expected to continue to grow at a rapid pace (4–6 percent) during the next 20 years. This translates to a 2020 population of more than 300,000 people. The primary areas of growth will be in the Las Cruces metropolitan area and in the southern sector of Doña Ana County. Doña Ana County's 800+ employees are proud participants in the national Character Counts! initiative to promote ethics in the workplace.

Visit [www.donaanacounty.org](http://www.donaanacounty.org) for more information. The county manager reports to a five-member board of commissioners and supervises 29 departments with an annual operating budget of approximately \$145 million.

Complete job posting, application and deadline information at [www.donaanacounty.org/jobs](http://www.donaanacounty.org/jobs).



## Research News

# Starving for Change

Food insecurity, or hunger, is a problem that affects families in counties across the country.

Restricted access, limited or inconsistent availability of nutritionally adequate food—food insecurity—is a national problem. Fifty million people are food insecure in the United States, of which 17 million are children. Where many factors contribute to a household's access to food including income, unemployment or cost, the federal government pays special attention to household income and determines a household eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—more commonly known as food stamps—based on this indicator.

However, more than a quarter of food-insecure individuals have incomes higher than the eligibility threshold for most food assistance programs, creating an even greater need for additional solutions to this challenge.

The issue of food security has transcended the federal level and caught the attention of NACo and its members. NACo conducted a webinar on regional food systems in June that facilitated a conversation among county officials and with federal stakeholders about innovative local food solutions and access to food.

Here are some examples of county innovative solutions in pro-

moting local food systems featured in the webinar.

In 2008, county supervisors in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, formed the Pottawattamie County Local Food Council, which consists of growers, distributors, health care providers, elected officials, grocery retailers and culinary professionals. Its goal is to enhance the health and economic vitality of the community and provide resources to assist start-up local food operations.

The Pottawattamie Board of Supervisors pledged to provide financial support and staff at a rate of \$30,000 a year for five years to the council. In this way, the county would help fulfill the demand for

fresh food—estimated at more than 80,000 pounds of fresh produce a week for Council Bluffs, Iowa alone—and help local growers.

In 2011, Franklin County, Ohio founded the Franklin County Local Food Council (FCLFC) to connect growers with consumers and support a resilient local food system. In 2012, the FCLFC surveyed the community about the current state of the local food system and potential areas of growth. The assessment showed that lack of convenient access to food was the biggest obstacle facing the community.

Based on the results of this survey, the FCLFC worked with other local food councils in central Ohio and convened a working group that established the Central Ohio Local Food Plan. The common strategy

encourages local governments to support the growth of local farms.

As these examples show, counties collaborate with a wide range of public and private stakeholders to increase their communities' access to food and in the process, become more resilient. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture offers grants to local governments and nonprofit organizations to create facilities that provide residents with access to locally grown food. By encouraging local and regional food systems, county officials can help feed their residents, boost their local economies and in the process, make their communities more resilient.

*(Research News was written by Anya Nowakowski, research assistant, County Intelligence Connection.)*

## Peaceful resolutions better than violence

H.R. DOC from page 13

oned by President Obama came up short as not enough members of Congress chose to vote in favor. There appears to remain no reduction in the power and glory supporting the concept that the Second Amendment is verbatim sacred and should not be tread upon in any way.

Guns are seen by many, with full-court National Rifle Association encouragement, to be a necessary protection in 21st century America. It is not protection against invasion by the soldiers of another nation or even by space aliens, but rather by the people who live just on the other side of the boundaries of our gated communities, or just on the other side of town.

The idea of resolving disputes peacefully should receive even greater honor and emphasis than the approach of confrontation and

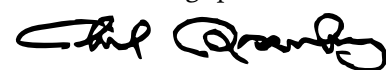
threat. The lack of this emphasis plays out in school rooms and playgrounds in the form of bullying, in office meeting rooms and break rooms in the form of sexual harassment and race discrimination, and in police interrogation rooms and in courtrooms. It also certainly plays out in prison cells, which are home to millions of Americans.

One of the root causes, in this author's opinion, of domestic violence, workplace violence, child abuse and elder abuse can be found not only in a society-wide overdose of testosterone and arrogance, but in the lack of a balancing presence of tools and techniques as alternatives to using violence at home, at school and work. "No child left behind?" Actually every child is being left behind when we don't use the power of learning to reduce a risk so serious that every child may be affected by it.

The idea of mandatory curriculum in this area of behavior is every bit as important as it is to mandate courses in science, math and sports. Not everyone can be hailed as a hero because of their actions on the football team, but every child can and should be hailed as a civilization hero by learning that too much violence is present in the lives of too many people. Unless we take practical and definitive steps to reduce the over reliance on violence to solve problems, the greatest country in the world might well be something future generations will remember as history, and not as their contemporary reality.

This author has no doubt that the idea of mandated and compelling instruction on nonviolent alternatives in interpersonal relations would cost a tiny fraction of what it costs financially to continue increasing the inmate population. It will cost only a fraction of what the psychological cost and medical trauma is to victims of violence, and those who love them and work with them.

Finally, even Congress, which would likely split along party and ideological lines in passing a resolution honoring National Puppy and Kitten Day, could very likely muster a substantial majority of votes to support local school districts, cities, counties and states in implementing the initiative of alternative dispute resolution through peaceful means.



Phil Rosenberg  
The HR Doctor • [www.hrdr.net](http://www.hrdr.net)

## In Case You Missed It

### News to use from past County News

#### » NACo WEBINAR: NACo Dental Discount Program

**Wednesday, July 31, 2 p.m.–3 p.m. EDT.** NACo offers a discount dental card program exclusively for member counties. The program provides 5 percent to 50 percent savings on most dental procedures including routine checkups, cleanings, dentures, root canals, crowns and more. This plan is not insurance, but is a discount plan where everyone is accepted with unlimited use.

Hear a presentation from key NACo staff and representatives of the program administrator, Careington International Corp. on how you can easily implement this program to help your county's residents with their dental needs.

For more information, visit [www.naco.org/dentalwebinar](http://www.naco.org/dentalwebinar) or contact Andrew Goldschmidt at [agoldschmidt@naco.org](mailto:agoldschmidt@naco.org).

## NACo on the Move

### » NACo Staff

• **Paul Beddoe** has been promoted to deputy legislative affairs director. Since 2000, Beddoe has been an associate legislative director, being the lead for all aspects of federal public lands policy development until 2008. From 2008 to present, he was the lead advocate for federal health policy, including health reform. Beddoe will be responsible for assisting **Deborah Cox**, legislative affairs director, in managing the legislative staff and directing the activities of the department.



Paul Beddoe



Arlandis Rush

• **Arlandis Rush** has joined the Legislative Department as NACo's new associate legislative director. He will handle the lobbying responsibilities for Justice and Public Safety, and Large Urban County Caucus. Rush has spent the majority of his professional career focused on justice and public safety issues in urban and suburban communities. He most recently worked as the senior legislative and policy consultant for Hoskins & Associates.

• **Therese Dorau**, County Solutions and Innovations program manager, presented as part of a panel discussion at the National Association of Regional Councils Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Pa. June 25. She spoke about strategies for communicating climate change topics when making decisions at the local level.

• **Tom Goodman**, public affairs director, made a presentation on the benefits of NACo membership to the Spotsylvania County, Va. Board of Supervisors June 25.

• **Alyssum Pohl**, NOAA Digital Coast Fellow, gave a presentation about her fellowship's main project at NACo—the peer-to-peer coastal county network—at the NOAA Coastal Services Center meeting in Charleston County, S.C. June 25–27.

### » Coming Up

• **Karina Golkova**, membership assistant, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the 2013 Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma Summer Safety Conference in Cleveland County, Okla. July 31–Aug. 1.

*On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.*