



2014 NACo Legislative Conference early bird registration opens Dec. 3

Plans are moving ahead fast for NACo's 2014 Legislative Conference. Registration is set to open Dec. 3 and the speakers' line-up is taking shape. The honorary co-chairs of *No Labels* — a growing citizens' movement of Democrats, Republicans and Independents — and the writer of a must-follow Washington-based Twitter feed will headline the Opening Session March 4, 2014.

Honorary *No Labels* co-chairs, former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman (R) and Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W. Va.), will engage in a dialogue during the Opening Session that delves into breaking down the structural problems that push the nation's leaders apart and how the existence of common goals can drive across-the-aisle solutions.

No Labels, dedicated to promoting a new politics of problem solving, has already established a group of more than 85 members of Congress focused on seeking common ground and fixing the nation's problems. This new attitude is what *No Labels* is all about.

Also speaking at the Opening Session will be Mike Allen, chief



Mike Allen, Politico

White House correspondent for Politico. *TIME* magazine named Allen's Twitter feed as one of the top 140 feeds shaping the day's debate, calling him "the Virgil of the beltway, leading the rest of us hapless Dantes through the inferno of America's political universe."

Vanity Fair named Allen to its 2011 (#39) and 2012 (#19) Top 50



Former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman (R)

New Establishment and Powers That Be list. He is also the creator of the daily newsletter, *Morning Money*, which gives readers the political intelligence on the intersection of Washington and Wall Street.

Prior to joining Politico, he worked at *TIME* magazine where he was their White House correspondent and spent six years at



Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W. Va.)

The Washington Post where he covered President Bush's first term, Capitol Hill, campaign finance and the Bush, Gore and Bradley campaigns of 2000. Before turning to national politics, he covered schools and local governments in rural counties outside Fredericksburg, Va. for *The Free Lance-Star*.

Public safety buffer zone at issue in Supreme Court case

By LISA SORONEN
STATE AND LOCAL LEGAL CENTER

How local governments can provide for the public's safety may be decided in a U.S. Supreme Court case limiting how close protesters can get to abortion clinics in Massachusetts.

The Supreme Court will decide in *McCullen v. Coakley* whether a Massachusetts statute prohibiting speech within 35-feet of a reproductive health care facility violates the First Amendment. The State and Local Legal Center (SLLC) has filed an amicus brief in the case.

While only two other states regulate speech within a specific distance of reproductive health care facilities — Colorado and Montana — many local governments use buffer zones in numerous contexts. The SLLC's brief points out that how the court rules in this case could affect state and local government's ability to

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FCC sets Feb. 11, 2014 as effective date for inmate call rate reform

By YEJIN JANG
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has announced that Feb. 11, 2014 will be the effective date for rules adopted in the 2013 Report and Order that regulate the amount inmates may be charged to use calling services.

In its announcement, the FCC states that it adopted the rule changes to "bring high interstate inmate calling service (ICS) rates into compliance with the statutory mandate of being just, reasonable and fair. This action is intended to bring rate relief to inmates and their friends and families who have historically been required to pay above-cost rates for interstate ICS."

As of the effective date, providers' rates for interstate inmate calling services must fall at or below rate caps of \$0.21 per minute for debit and prepaid interstate calls and \$0.25 per minute for collect interstate calls.

The FCC also established a "safe harbor" rate of \$0.12 per minute for debit and prepaid interstate calls and \$0.14 per minute for collect interstate calls; a safe harbor rate is a rate that will be assumed lawful unless and until the FCC issues a finding to the contrary.

ICS providers whose rates fall within the safe harbor rate will not be required to provide refunds in any complaint proceeding. The order affects all "correctional facilities" that provide an interstate inmate calling service which

includes prisons, jails and immigration detention facilities.

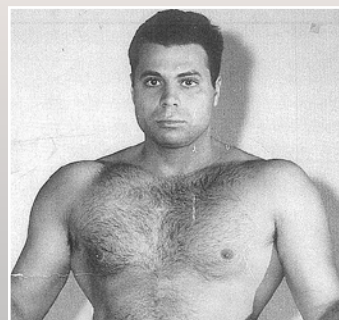
The order also requires that all interstate ICS rates, fees and ancillary charges must be cost-based. Costs that are "reasonably and directly related to the provision of ICS are recoverable through ICS rates." Recoverable costs include cost of capital (reasonable return on investment); expenses of originating, switching, transporting and terminating ICS calls; and costs associated with security features.

Costs that are not recoverable include site commission payments, costs related to general security features of the correctional facility unrelated to ICS, costs to integrate inmate calling with other services such as commissary ordering;

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House Financial Committee hears flood insurance testimony

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

House committee hearings on legislation that would delay implementation of flood insurance reforms for four years gave a main supporter the chance to describe what the law's changes would mean.

Michael Hecht, Greater New Orleans, Inc.'s president and CEO, testified before the House Financial Services Committee Nov. 19. His organization coordinates the Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance, which opposes the current Biggert-Waters Act and what it and the law's sponsor call "unintended consequences."

He encouraged passage of H.R. 3370, the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, and told committee members that the law — as passed — would render insurance for many properties unaffordable. Its Senate companion bill is S. 1610.

Hecht said that new, incomplete flood maps, shaky actuarial calculations and revocation of grandfathered approval have led to "massive rate increases for policyholders

who have built as the government told them and have no history of flooding."

The Biggert-Waters Act aims to make the government's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) solvent, after eight years of debt.

"NFIP rates suddenly jumping as much as 3,000 percent in the middle of a mortgage — when the owner had no reason to anticipate this unaffordable increase when the original contract was signed — utterly contradicts typical insurance practice and reasonable expectation," he said. "To implement the Biggert-Waters Act as it currently stands would be economically unwise and morally unjust."

In some places, measures have already been put in place to protect properties that traditionally flood. The Biggert-Waters Act negates many of those efforts, especially if they were not undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers. Cass County, N.D., for example, sees regular flooding from the Red River. County Administrator Keith Berndt said that county residents have been alarmed by the news of what the Biggert-Waters Act will mean for

their insurance premiums, but are confused as to why it would happen.

"Around Fargo, people have had their eye on the flood insurance program since the '70s," he said. "We're prone to flooding, but we have measures to deal with it. We elevate basements and the first point water can get in is the first opening. Now the new laws say the bottom of the basement is at risk, even if water can't get in there. That's lowering people's thresholds eight feet in most cases."

Berndt said many of the houses around Fargo, Cass County's seat and population center, have been built to higher flood standards. On top of that, the changes to flood insurance policy would further penalize the program's golden goose.

"We understand the actuarial base program and looking at the records, North Dakota is actually a money maker for the program," he said. "We're hearing a lot of concerns. We're in the midst of drafting flood map right now but we're also working on a \$1.8 million diversion program for the river. We don't know how this is all going to end up."

National Flood Insurance Program

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, covers 98 percent of flood insurance policies nationwide. Since 2005, the NFIP has gone steadily into debt, reaching \$20 billion in 2013.

The Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act was part of Congress' reauthorization of NFIP in 2012 and included three components that will drastically increase flood insurance premiums.

- Grandfathering will be phased out — houses that had previously been built to code are now in violation, according to new flood maps;
- Mapping will only recognize remediation work performed by the Army Corps of Engineers — unaccredited levees and pumps not placed by the Corps don't figure into risk calculation and
- Actuarial information will be used that create dramatic and sometimes prohibitive changes in premium cost — some as high as 3,000 percent.

St. James Parish, La. President Timmy Roussel said that up to 100 homes in his parish could wind up with drastic increases in their flood insurance premiums.

"Houses that were paying \$600 a year for their premium could end up owing \$20,000," he said.

'Nuclear option' paves way for historic filibuster reform

By MIKE BELARMINO
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

On Nov. 21, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) orchestrated a historic change to the rules of the U.S. Senate. The move is generally the result of years of frustration and squabbling over confirmations for executive branch appointees and some judicial nominations.

The change the Senate voted to implement lowers the once 60-vote threshold required to invoke cloture and overcome filibusters on those nominations. Nominees for the Supreme Court would still need the three-fifths vote to limit debate on their selections and the change does not alter the filibuster rules governing legislation. The new rule will now be in place regardless of the party in control of the Senate or the White House.

Talk of filibuster reform has

been around for years, with some senators calling for radical change of the chamber's tradition even though wholesale change will be a tougher fight. However, given the number of nominations from the Obama Administration whose confirmations were in limbo due to the previous requirements, the tipping point was apparently reached earlier in the week. Reid pointed to the fact that nearly half of all executive and judicial nominations that have ever been filibustered in U.S. history occurred during the Obama Administration as proof for the need to utilize such drastic measures.

The use of the so-called nuclear option to institute the change is one many have called for the majority leader to use in recent years, but a maneuver he has for the most part resisted. It allows for making changes to Senate rules via a simple up-or-down vote. The

threat of this option or some variation of it has been used by the majority party since the 1970s and has resulted in some changes to Senate practices. Roughly 18 changes in Senate procedures since 1977 have resulted, according to Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), a vocal advocate of filibuster reform.

What this could mean for counties is not readily apparent. Some recent nominees that were affected by the previous rule included individuals tapped to head agencies like the Central Intelligence Agency or the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. For those, the impact is broader in scope.

But where some impact could be more tangible for counties would be for judicial nominations for open seats at the U.S. District Court level. Some feel the reformed rule now makes it easier to create the environment where federal judges can influence policy well past the end of the administrations that appointed them. This is especially true for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit (D.C. Circuit), which commonly hears appeals to federal agency decisions or regulations that have a wide impact.

FCC also seeks comments on proposal to regulate intrastate inmate call rates

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internal and external messaging; and personnel costs to manage inmate commissary accounts.

The prison-jail private phone call system is estimated to be a \$1.2 billion per year industry.

The new regulated rates affect only out-of-state calls. Intrastate calls, by far the bulk of calls, are not subject to the FCC's established interstate safe harbor rates and rate caps.

However, the FCC is now seeking information with which to establish rates at the intrastate level through its Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FNPRM) process. It is especially looking for comments on the claim that the difference between jails and prisons accounts for the variance in cost of service and further seeks comment on how to define "jails" and "prisons."

It also seeks comment on whether jail inmates have different communication needs and calling practices than those in longer-term facilities like prisons, and whether any differences apply uniformly to all jails, smaller jails or to jails with certain characteristics.

Counties that wish to comment on these issues should contact NACo associate legislative

director, Yejin Jang at yjang@naco.org. Counties that wish to file directly with the FCC can submit comments through the FCC's electronic comment filing system (ECFS). The proceeding number for this issue is 12-375. Note that all comments submitted through ECFS will be made public within a few business days.

The effort to regulate inmate call charges began nearly 10 years ago when a grandmother from Washington, D.C., Martha Wright, petitioned the FCC for relief from what she characterized as exorbitant long-distance calling rates from jails and prisons.

On Nov. 21, the FCC Wireline Competition Bureau denied last-minute petitions to suspend the order or postpone the intrastate rulemaking proceeding.

In July, NACo's Board of Directors adopted a resolution supporting the ability of county jails to recover the cost of providing inmate-calling systems. NACo also supports providing a cost model that recognizes the difference between prisons and county jails.

**For links to the FCC proceedings docket and Report and Order on Inmate Calls see this story online at www.countynews.org*

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Budget conferees face Dec. 13 deadline to fund government

NACo holds briefing on county priorities at stake in negotiations

By MARILINA SANZ

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

While private talks between House Budget Chair Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) and Senate Budget Chair Patty Murray (D-Wash.) continue, no agreement on FY14 funding levels has been announced by the 29 budget conferees charged with reaching an agreement by Dec. 13.

The current Continuing Resolution (CR) (H.R. 2775) funding the federal government expires Jan. 15, 2014 at which point there could be

another government shutdown, as well as another round of sequester cuts that would significantly affect defense spending.

House and Senate appropriators are growing concerned at the slow pace of negotiations. On Nov. 18, House Appropriations Committee Chair Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) and all 12 appropriations subcommittee chairs sent a letter to budget conferees, asking them to decide on FY14 spending levels as soon as possible. The letter warns that if an agreement on the budget is

not reached in the first few days of December, appropriators may not have sufficient time to conduct the appropriations process before the Jan. 15 deadline, when the current CR expires.

House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) announced on Nov. 21 that he is preparing another continuing resolution that would fund the government through April 15 and would give the Appropriations Committee more time to finish the funding process. The new CR would include the second round of

sequester cuts, which would amount to \$20 billion.

NACo has held numerous meetings with budget conferees to stress the importance of county priorities in budget talks, including the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and potential changes to Medicaid.

Additionally, NACo held the first of a series of “Why Counties Matter” briefings on Capitol Hill on Nov. 19. The briefing focused on “Local Priorities at Stake in Federal Budget Negotiations” and featured Commissioner George Hartwick of

Dauphin County, Pa., Supervisor Michael May of Prince William County, Va. and NACo Executive Director Matt Chase.

Hartwick focused on the role of counties in health and human services, particularly the impact of cuts to programs such as Medicaid and the Social Services Block Grant. May focused on the role of counties in transportation and infrastructure and the impact that proposals to change the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds would have on counties’ ability to finance projects.

County road projects recognized with national awards

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Driving can be dangerous for many reasons, especially during the holiday season. Two counties have come up with award-winning ways to reduce travel risks.

The Roadway Safety Foundation and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recently recognized Mobile County, Ala. and Genesee County, Mich. with National Road-

way Safety Awards for their efforts to make roads safer.

With help from the Alabama Department of Transportation (ADOT), James Foster, traffic manager, Mobile County Engineer’s Office, identified the 10 rural roadways within the county that were rated highest in the state for run-off-the-road crashes. These roadways, totaling 68 miles, had experienced 224 run-off-the-road crashes between 2005–2008, resulting in seven fatalities and 152 injuries.

Foster and ADOT implemented a low-cost pilot program in 2009 with the installation of one-directional, white raised pavement markers (RPM) adjacent to the white edge-line stripe. This improves sight recognition and guidance along risky stretches of highway.

Based on crash data from 2009–2012, the 68 miles of roadways using this plan have gone from 224 crashes to 33, seven fatalities to zero, and 152 injuries to 10. The average crash reduction was lowered by 85.3 percent.

“We have a duty to operate and manage our roadways to make them as safe as possible,” County Engineer Joe Ruffer said. “As a result of the pilot project, RPMs are now included in most roadway projects in the state of Alabama.”

The Genesee County Road Commission (GCRC), who maintains more than 1,813 miles of roadways, recently developed a Safety Improvement Plan for county roads that was funded jointly by the commission and the AAA Foundation for Traffic

Safety, sponsored by the U.S. Road Assessment Program (usRAP). The plan was based on the usRAP tools software, which identifies infrastructure improvement needs for safety. Elements include shoulder paving, pedestrian crossings and road-surface improvements.

“Our top priority is the safety of motorists in Genesee,” Road Commission Manager John Daly said. “Partnering with the AAA

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 (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
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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)

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Buffer zones enhance public safety, prevent congestion

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regulate speech to protect public safety in many situations.

For example, a Kansas City, Mo. ordinance prohibits panhandling within 20 feet of an ATM, and a law in Nashua, N.H. provides specific, limited location restrictions on handbill distribution, based on the “unique layout” and heavy public use of City Hall.

Lower courts have upheld buffer zones to prevent congestion at special events (like circuses), places

that regularly draw crowds (like the Washington D.C. metro), and in the face of large-scale protests (like the World Trade Organization conference). Lower courts have also upheld restrictions on protests near funerals to protect vulnerable mourners, who are similarly situated to those seeking a variety of medical care at reproductive health care facilities. These buffer zones and many others may be in jeopardy if the court rules against Massachusetts.

Massachusetts had a long history of protesters outside reproductive health care facilities, including, in the 1980s, people chaining themselves to clinic doors and property. In 2000, the Massachusetts Legislature adopted a law allowing protesters to come within six feet of those entering a clinic within an 18-foot buffer zone around the clinic. Massachusetts’ law was modeled around a similar law that the Supreme Court approved in *Hill v. Colorado*.

The 2000 law did not work very well in Massachusetts. Protesters would crowd six feet from a clinic door making entry into the clinic

difficult. So in 2007, Massachusetts adopted a 35-foot fixed buffer zone around clinics.

The 1st U.S. Circuit Court held that the Massachusetts statute is a constitutional regulation of speech because numerous communication channels remain available to protesters.

The Supreme Court will decide in this case whether Massachusetts’ fixed buffer zone violates the First Amendment. It has also accepted

the question of whether it should overturn *Hill v. Colorado*.

The SLLC’s brief was joined by NACo, the National League of Cities, the International City/County Management Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the International Municipal Lawyers Association.

Oral argument has been scheduled for Jan. 15, 2014. The Supreme Court will issue an opinion in this case by June 30, 2014.

In Case You Missed It

News to Use From Past County News

» NACo releases new ‘Economic Resilience’ publication

A new NACo publication, *Strategies to Bolster Economic Resilience: County Leadership in Action* highlights eight counties — Augusta-Richmond, Ga.; Brookings, S.D.; Cuyahoga, Ohio; Garrett, Md.; King, Wash.; Maui, Hawaii; Prince George, Va. and Rutherford, N.C. — that are applying innovative approaches to economic development to bolster economic growth and improve community quality of life.

For more information, please visit www.naco.org/resilientstrategies or contact Jen Horton at jhorton@naco.org or 202.942.4274.

Quick Takes

Top 5 County High-Tech Spots

Based on Tech Jobs Index

- 1 – San Francisco County, Calif.
- 2 – San Mateo County, Calif.
- 3 – Santa Clara County, Calif.
- 4 – Madison County, Ala.
- 5 – Utah County, Utah

Bureau of Labor Statistics, October 2013

Profiles in Service



» Buddy Boe

Member, Justice and Public Safety Committee
Chief Administrative Officer
St. Charles Parish, La.

Number of years active in NACo: 2

Years in public service: 3.5

Occupation: Government

Education: bachelor's degree, Tulane University

The hardest thing I've ever done: run a half marathon

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: my wife, Benjamin Franklin and Winston Churchill.

A dream I have is to: skydive.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: run for office.

My favorite way to relax is: read a book while smoking a cigar and having a glass of whiskey.

I'm most proud of: my lapel pins and book collections.

Every morning I read: BBC News headlines.

My favorite meal is: Bacon wrapped filet mignon prepared by my wife with baked romaine topped with parmesan and bacon.

My pet peeve is: people who attend meetings without anything upon which they can write down tasks and action items.

My motto is: "Live your life so you'll never regret."

The last book I read was: *Two Treatises of Government* by John Locke.

My favorite movie is: *The American President*.

My favorite music is: country.

Outgoing County Council president well-trained to handle disputes

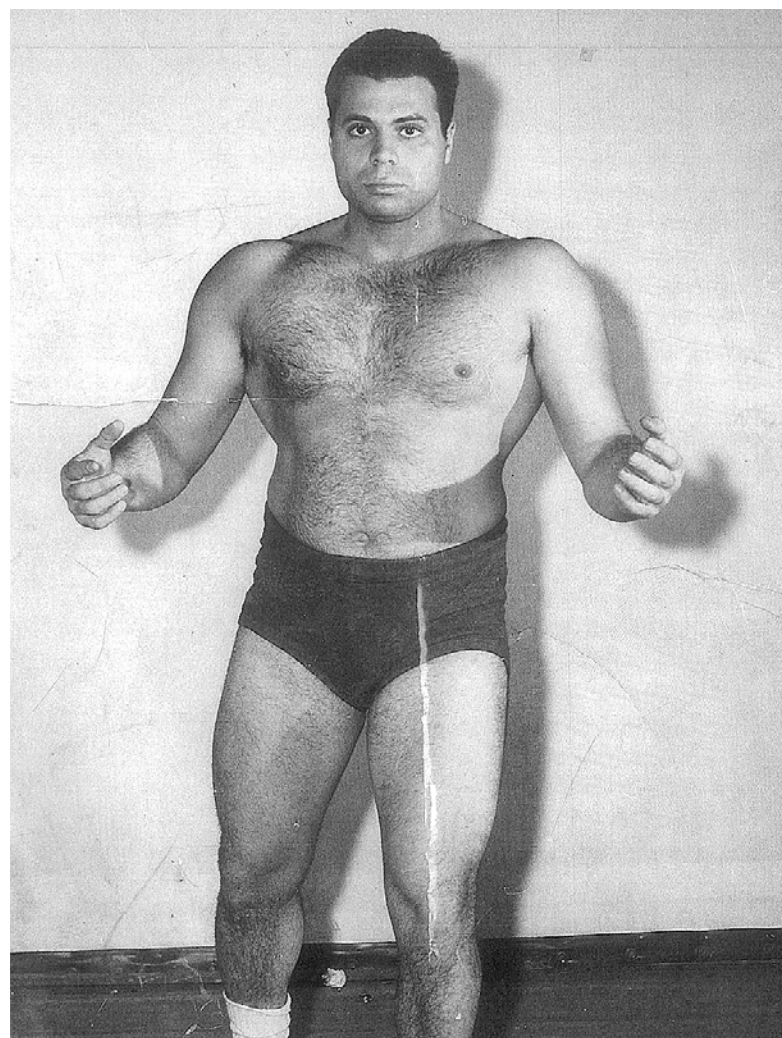
By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

While serving as president of the Allegheny County, Pa. Council, Charles Martoni keeps himself out of heavy discussions. He saw himself as a kind of referee, who moves things along, but he has some skills to settle disagreements. Some skills he's acquired after more than 40 years in elected office, some he learned in a different arena.

"When I was in the Army (he spent two years serving in Alaska), I was a boxer and I thought I had a potential to be a good one," Martoni said. "There weren't too many opportunities, though, the sport was on the way out. But I liked to work in the ring, and I had a chance to wrestle professionally."

Before he made his debut, he trained nearly every day for two months, sparring with famous wrestler Bruno Sammartino and a young man named John DeFazio, who would later join Martoni on the County Council. On the circuit, Martoni traveled across the country wrestling under a variety of nicknames, including "the Cannonball."

It was a more realistic style of wrestling than is promoted today, he said.



Archive photo courtesy of Charles Martoni

Charles "The Cannonball" Martoni wrestled professionally, decades before being elected to the Allegheny County Council when it was first formed.

"It was a show, there's no question about that, but it was a little more realistic. Fewer gimmicks — we'd get in the ring and do some moves that would get the crowd going. It wasn't about competing, so we wanted to put on a good show, but one the audience could enjoy."

All the while, he worked at a U.S. Steel blast furnace making iron that would be sent down the Monongahela River and made into steel. But when the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) opened for business in 1966, Martoni decided to apply — both for a job and as a student. Working in the financial aid office and studying for an associate's degree, he began a long association with the school that continues to this day.

A G.I. Bill recipient, Martoni was well suited to help what turned out to be scores of Vietnam War veterans who took their benefits to CCAC. The dean of students later asked him to help out in the college's counseling department, so after earning bachelor's and master's degrees in history, he earned another master's in counseling, balancing his administrative workload with teaching one or two U.S. history courses.

"I've taught at least one history

course each term since I've been there," he said. "There's always been room for studying our history, even in a vocational curriculum."

He later became the dean of students and earned a degree to match — a doctorate in higher education. In 2008, he was named president of the same CCAC campus where he started his higher education career.

"We've had a lot of opportunity to do nice things for people here," he said of the college. "It's a chance to change lives. It's amazing what an education will do for a person's career and self-regard."

All the while, he served on his school board and municipal council, until Allegheny County's 1998 home rule charter referendum passed, restructuring county government and forming the County Council. Martoni made the cut for the first council and has been there ever since.

He recently won a fifth term in office, but doesn't plan to pursue the council presidency again.

"If you want to be a good president, you lose your ability to get involved in discussions and legislate," he said. "I'd like to get back to being able to be more vocal about things, instead of staying above the fray."

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Firehouse lobbies safe havens for those in danger

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

“To protect and serve” is usually thought of as a police motto. But increasingly, fire departments are doing just that by providing non-fire and non-traditional services to their communities—also aimed at the safety and security of citizens.

Many fire stations double as safe houses for endangered children and safe surrender sites for mothers to bring healthy, unwanted newborns—no questions asked—under state safe haven laws. Since 1997, Los Angeles County has also had a Safe House Program, which provides a temporary safe haven in firehouses for any child or adult facing a threatening situation.

Arlington County, Va. has taken the concept a step further—using a little basic technology—and has created a secure Safe Haven Lobby in five of its 10 fire stations. It’s available even when the firehouse is empty because firefighters are out on a call.

Anyone who believes they’re in danger can enter a fire station lobby and press a button that automatically locks the outside door, places a

direct call to the county’s Emergency Communications Center (ECC) and activates a security camera. The person can stay until help arrives or the ECC can unlock the door if the caller says the threat has passed.

“We want anyone who thinks they’re in physical danger ... to come to the firehouse for help,” said Lt. Sarah Marchegiani, spokeswoman for the Arlington County Fire Department (ACFD). “That’s great, but if nobody’s at the firehouse or if the physical threat is right behind them, we want a safe space for them.”

It’s part of a trend toward diversifying fire department services and outreach, according to Jon Hansen, executive director for the Oklahoma Council on Firefighter Training, who has written about ways fire departments can demonstrate their added value to the community.

“Stress your multiple-use applications. Think about ways in which certain sections or equipment can do double-duty,” he wrote in a June 2012 blog post for firefighteration.com, the website of *FireRescue* magazine. “Fire stations can function as official safe havens, which



Photo courtesy of Arlington County (Va.) Fire Department

Pressing the red button sets off a chain of events that provide security for anyone seeking refuge from danger: it locks the exterior firehouse lobby door, places a call to 911 and activates a camera.

is increasingly important as crime typically increases during poor economic times.”

The Safe Haven lobbies in Arlington were an outgrowth of a “re-engineering” process the fire department undertook in the 1990s, said Ed Plaughter, who was fire chief at the time and is now retired.

He said the county manager challenged the department to look ahead to 2020. “You were supposed to look at your facilities, look at your programs and see what realignments needed to be made, particularly capital investments.”

As a result, ACFD sought ways to make better use of its buildings. Prior to the safe lobby idea, fire officials decided to make space for the police department in its new and renovated stations, since the 26-square-mile county (pop. 207,000) doesn’t have police substations. “So we put a police office in every redone fire station,” Plaughter said, “so that a police officer could go there and do work, meet with community members there.”

“We also said, ‘What else can we provide for the safety and security of our citizens?’” Around that same time there were nationwide efforts to brand fire stations as “safe places.”

Marchegiani said the department began installing the lockable lobbies in 1999, and the most recent one was built in 2011. Construction costs account for an “estimated” \$12,000 of renovation or building a new station, she added. To put

that in perspective, two recently built stations in Arlington County cost about \$7 million each.

Jim Schwartz, the county’s current fire chief, said, “It’s not a great deal more investment; it’s just about how do you think about your space in being more effective to support community need.”

He said ACFD is willing to be a resource for other departments who might be interested in the concept.

“I think the key for fire departments is to recognize that in almost all situations they are going to have a space that we made the safe room as part of their construction, as part of their design features,” he said. “You’re going to have a lobby or vestibule of some kind. The newest facility that we have, the lobby is 135 square feet; that was going to be there anyway. All we’ve done is add a little bit of technology and security features...”

Marchegiani didn’t know of any recent instances of the lobbies’ being used as safe havens, however, Plaughter recalled one from his time as chief; he retired in 2004. “During my tenure, it was actually used by a lady who was trying to elude somebody,” he said.

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- Advanced search tools to filter results based on category, eligibility, funder type, state and search term
- Comprehensive descriptions for each grant, including funder and funder type, summary of the program, history of funding, contact information, external resources and a range of additional information

WHERE IS IT?

- To access the tool go to www.nacogrants.org.
- Alternatively, go to www.naco.org, and under "Solutions Center" tab and click on "Find a Grant." Select "NACo Grants Clearinghouse," and begin searching!

Learn more about NACo membership at www.naco.org/membership.

Road projects, programs recognized for excellence

ROAD AWARDS from page 3

Foundation for Traffic Safety and using the usRAP tools software, we were able to make sure all roadway safety issues were addressed in this plan.”

National Roadway Safety Award recipients were evaluated on three criteria — innovation, effectiveness and efficient use of resources. Program categories included infrastructure improvements, operational improvements, and program planning, development and evaluation.

The FHWA and the Roadway Safety Foundation present the biennial Roadway Safety Awards to programs and projects across the nation exhibiting excellence in roadway design, operations and planning.

**See this story at www.countynews.org to learn more about road safety and these winning county programs.*

STATE ➡ TO ➡ STATE

★ ARIZONA ★ MONTANA ★

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

State-to-State, a County News feature, will explore these questions and help keep you in touch with your fellow leaders across the country.

Arizona

Fighting funding shifts while respecting the troubles the state is weathering is a balancing act for the County Supervisors Association of Arizona.

“We’ve had to figure out what the most important policy items are to make a point about,” said Craig Sullivan, CSAA’s executive director. “The state is hurting too, so we have to pick our battles.”

Those battles are outlined in the association’s legislative agenda,

which focuses on eliminating a shift of highway revenue from the state’s 15 counties, returning counties’ share of lottery revenue and stopping counties’ requirement to pay to house violent sex offenders at the Arizona State Hospital.

“This funding shifting isn’t always legitimate policy, and we have to reverse it before it becomes ingrained and people resort to saying, ‘that’s how it’s always been done,’” Sullivan said. “Many of these shifts leave us with no capacity to make up for what we’ve lost, because of caps on taxes.”

The lingering effects of the recession are weighing on most counties, thanks to the lag in the decreases in property tax revenues.


“We’re expecting anemic growth in property tax revenue, so this will affect us for a while,” Sullivan said. “County employees haven’t been getting pay increases in years, so retention is becoming a problem, too.”

Federal uncertainty continues to unnerve Sullivan and his members, because 83 percent of the land is the state is federal or tribal.

“PILT (payments in lieu of taxes) and Secure Rural Schools are always a concern for us,” he said. “We obviously want to see these programs protected.”

On a positive note, after years of conflict, local governments and the Legislature seem to have found common ground on policy matters, a collaborative spirit Sullivan

COUNTY MANAGEMENT



IN ARIZONA, THERE ARE
61 elected county board members and elected executives.
There are no elected county executives

IN MONTANA, THERE ARE
183 elected county board members and elected executives.
2 are elected county executives

The Big Sky State’s 56 counties are most concerned with retirement systems and funding of programs, according to Harold Blattie, executive director, Montana Association of Counties (MACo). “We’re one of the few states where the retirement system is in the black,” he added.

The State Legislature shepherded through HB 454 that fixed the financial shortfalls of the retirement system by reducing the guaranteed annual benefit adjustment from 3 percent to 1.5 percent as of July 1, with the possibility of further cuts if pension system liabilities are less than 90 percent funded. If left untouched, the system would have gone bankrupt in 2032.

Away from the state capital in Helena, counties and State Legislature interim committees are looking at the study of public lands, potential occupational diseases for firefighters, electronic records management and water policy. All of these committees have until September 2014 to draft any bills they want to introduce in the 2015 state legislative session.

“These interim committees help keep the legislature on track in their bi-annual sessions,” Blattie said. “It also gives the counties a voice about where the pressing issues are.”

The next session is slated for January 2015.

(Charlie Ban and Christopher Johnson, County News staff, contributed to this report.)

Word Search

Ashe County, N.C. Facts

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

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

ALLEGHANY (adjacent N.C. county to the east)
APPALACHIAN (mountain range that runs through county)
BIG GLADES (battle in revolutionary war fought in county)
CHEROKEE (first inhabitants)
CREEK (first inhabitants)
GRAYSON (adjacent Va. county to the north)
JEFFERSON (county seat)
JEFFERSON POST (twice weekly publication)

JOHNSON (adjacent Tenn. county to the west)
NEW RIVER (one of the oldest rivers in the world, flows north)
NINETEEN (number of townships in county)
PETER JEFFERSON (established a line between North Carolina and Virginia in 1749)
SAMUEL ASHE (former governor of North Carolina the county is named after)
SHAWNEE (first inhabitants)

Created by Christopher Johnson

NACo’s Smart Justice Initiative will address juvenile justice reform

By JIM PHILLIPS
MEDIA RELATIONS MANAGER

NACo is expanding its Smart Justice Initiative to address juvenile justice reform in partnership with the MacArthur Foundation’s Models for Change juvenile justice reform initiative. Models for Change promotes evidence-based practices at the state and local level to make juvenile justice more fair, effective, rational and developmentally appropriate.

NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative will build county leadership capacity, expertise and commitment for juvenile justice reform across the country. Written

attributes to Republican majorities in both chambers.

Montana

The Montana Legislature has a bi-annual, 90-day session from January to April. With limited time, there is not much room for discussion or debate.

publications, webinars and learning labs at sites around the country will help NACo educate county leaders on effective ways to improve public safety and support juveniles.

Local governments hold the primary responsibility for ensuring the delivery of services to prevent and address juvenile delinquency. As the chief provider at the local level in health, social services and juvenile correction, county governments are at the forefront of constructing comprehensive strategies to provide for public protection as well as the services necessary to make a positive impact on individuals and communities.

“NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform Initiative aims to provide

counties with the information and tools necessary to foster positive change in their communities,” said NACo President Linda Langston, supervisor, Linn County, Iowa. “We are most pleased to partner with the MacArthur Foundation and Models for Change throughout 2014 to promote proactive and effective strategies to keep our communities safe and assist young people both inside and outside our local justice systems.”

For more information about NACo’s County Juvenile Justice Reform initiative contact Kathy Rowings at 202.942.4279 or krowings@naco.org. To learn more about Models for Change, visit www.modelsforchange.net.

Strategies to Bolster Economic Resilience

County Leadership in Action



The National Association of Counties has released a new report that suggests counties, regions and communities that can foresee, adapt to and leverage changing economic conditions are best positioned to attract and grow new businesses, retain skilled workers and promote a high quality of life. *Strategies to Bolster Economic Resilience: County Leadership in Action* features eight case studies demonstrating how some county leaders are pursuing innovative strategies to create healthy, safe, vibrant and economically resilient communities. From crafting economic visions and supporting new business ventures, to training local workers and assisting entrepreneurs, county leaders and their partners are approaching economic development in compelling new ways. **Read the report at www.naco.org/resilientstrategies.**

**For more information, contact
Kathy Nothstine, NACo program director,
at knothstine@naco.org or 202.667.8807.**

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



County Innovations and Solutions

San Bernardino County, Calif.

Protocol Overrides State Law on Stroke EMS Transport

BY CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Strokes do not fit the bill of “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” In fact, the time immediately after a stroke is when victims are most vulnerable to permanent brain damage, making prompt medical attention crucial to recovery.

In 2011, San Bernardino County, Calif., took the lead in fostering better outcomes for the many stroke patients that came to county hospitals. The county used its membership in the Inland Counties (San Bernardino, Inyo and Mono) Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA) to develop a protocol for quickly identifying stroke patients who access 911 and transporting them to the appropriate care centers.

The Neurovascular Stroke Receiving Centers specialty program focuses on getting possible-stroke patients to the hospitals best suited to treat them. Patients’ outcomes are significantly better if they receive treatment to break apart blood

clots soon after a stroke has been diagnosed.

“There’s been a big push nationally to address the risk of strokes, and we saw an opportunity to start a program,” said Ron Holk, an ICEMA emergency services nurse specialist. “There are some hospitals better equipped and staffed to handle strokes than others.”

With a battery of tests, first responders can start to evaluate the patient ahead of an official diagnosis while in the ambulance.

“We’ve lowered the age range down to 40, because younger people are suffering strokes more,” Holk said. “Once we figure it out, they can divert to the nearest stroke center and activate the stroke team there.”

That’s a significant change the new stroke protocol has effected. Ordinarily, state law directs ambulances to take patients to the closest hospital, but if the patient is likely to have had a stroke, that policy is overruled.

“It means taking them a farther distance for the best care,” said Christine Yoshieda-McMath, EMS

nurse specialist for specialty care programs. “That might be a stroke center in Los Angeles County or Riverside County, too.”

Those hospitals must be accredited as primary stroke centers by the Health Care Facilities Accreditation Program and demonstrate 24/7 readiness, with physicians who are available within 30 minutes of a stroke alert. Four are in the three-county ICEMA area.

It took a year to get all six hospitals on board, Yoshieda-McMath

said. A heavy emphasis on gathering statistics is laying the foundation for in-depth analysis.

“We’re able to benchmark locally and regionally with hospitals with stroke centers, but there isn’t standard data nationally, yet,” Holk said. “Until then we can track our own hospitals’ results.”

In the year since the program was implemented, 80 percent of patients with stroke symptoms at those six hospitals had arrived by ambulance and been seen by doctors 20 minutes

faster than emergency department walk-ins.

“People are getting life-saving care faster and it’s preventing the impact of strokes from being much worse,” Yoshieda-McMath said.

Though the program costs nothing to the county, each participating hospital pays roughly \$20,000 to staff its stroke center and prepare equipment.

County Innovations and Solutions highlights award-winning programs.

Financial Services News

IRS Encourages Workers to Save for Retirement

One of the key benefits of public employment is the availability of programs that help workers to be financially prepared when they retire. Defined benefit programs provided by employers exemplify that benefit. But few pension programs are designed to provide all the income workers may need in retirement.

The federal government recognized that challenge many years ago and encouraged public employers to sponsor supplemental retirement programs such as the NACo Deferred Compensation Program. A key advantage of these plans is their tax-deferred contributions, which means the amount that take-home pay is reduced may be significantly less than what is contributed.

Of course, the IRS does not want these plans to become abusive tax shelters, so federal law caps how

much an individual may contribute in a given year. The limits for 2014 are:

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

What’s your limit?

Each person’s maximum contribution needs to align with his or her budget and comfort level. To help county employees decide what that amount might be, Nationwide Retirement Solutions—administrator of the NACo Program—provides the *On Your Side* Interactive Retirement Planner on its website, www.nrsforu.com. In as little as 10 minutes, workers can identify and initiate a comfortable contribution level. For example, deferral changes to become effective in February must be requested in January.

What about risk?

There’s always risk when investing. In fact, it’s possible to lose money by participating in a deferred compensation plan. Not investing—or not investing enough—for retirement is a risk as well. Historically, investing over the long-term such as for retirement, has tended to reduce market risk. However, past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Individuals seeking to put risks into perspective may contact a Nationwide Retirement specialist. As representatives of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, they can help workers understand the risks they may face and strategies that may help them deal with them.

See FSNEWS page 11

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers, County Officials

• NACo President **Linda Langston** spoke about NACo and membership as well as its legislative priorities at the Association of Oregon Counties Annual Conference in Lane County Nov. 21. Langston also spoke about her resiliency presidential initiative at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Annual Conference in Dauphin County Nov. 24.

» NACo Staff

• **Jamie Richards** has been named the new NACo administrative assistant. Previously, Richards was administrative assistant with the Maine Education Association supporting the Governance and Government Relations Departments. She will assist Karen McRunnel with the day-to-day activities of NACo’s executive department.



Jamie Richards

» Coming Up

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director, membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the County Commissioners Association of Ohio Annual Conference in Franklin County Dec. 8–10 and the Nebraska Association of County Officials Annual Conference in Douglas County Dec. 11–13.

• **Alex Koroknay-Palicz**, membership coordinator, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership at the Association of Minnesota Counties Annual Conference in Hennepin County Dec. 9–11.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Maximum Deferrals and Paycheck Impact

Pay frequency	Under Age 50		Age 50+ Catch-up		Special 457 Catch-up	
	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact	Maximum Deferral	Paycheck Impact
Weekly (52 pays)	\$336	\$252	\$442	\$331	\$673	\$504
Biweekly (26 pays)	\$673	\$504	\$884	\$663	\$1,307	\$980
Semi-monthly (24 pays)	\$729	\$546	\$958	\$718	\$1,458	\$1,093
Monthly (12 pays)	\$1,458	\$1,093	\$1,916	\$1,437	\$2,916	\$2,187

This table shows how a paycheck may be affected by making maximum contributions to the NACo Deferred Compensation Program in 2014. If a worker also participates in a 403(b) or 401(k) plan, he or she may contribute up to the maximum in that plan as well as the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, effectively doubling the tax-deferral limit.

Source: IRS Announces 2014 Pension Plan Limitations, IR-2013-86, Oct. 31, 2013

NOTE: The table rounds contributions down to the nearest dollar to avoid over-contribution; and assumes a 25% tax rate, that the participant makes tax-deferred contributions and (s)he qualifies for one of the maximum 2014 deferral limits.



News From the Nation's Counties

► CALIFORNIA

• **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** supervisors voted to build and maintain a \$6.2-million **teen health center** at one of its high schools. The health center will be open to Los Angeles Unified School District students and provide physical exams, immunizations, mental health services, birth control and family-planning services.

A contractor will operate the center. The county paid to build a community health center at a middle school under a similar arrangement in 2008, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

• **ORANGE COUNTY** may **hold adults accountable** for underage drinking on their property.

The Social Host Ordinance would establish a \$750 fine for a first offense and handle future offenses as misdemeanors. The Board of Supervisors will consider the ordinance, which has support from the sheriff, in early December.

Property owners who lease their land or act as landlords would not be held accountable for underage drinking if they were unaware of it, *Rancho Santa Margarita Patch* reported.

► FLORIDA

A Florida state legislator has introduced a bill that would allow county and city governments to **regulate smoking at local playgrounds**.

House Bill 309, introduced by Rep. Katie Edwards, would amend Florida's Indoor Clean Air Act to provide authorization to local governments to regulate smoking.

"House Bill 309 codifies what some local governments have already put into practice through local ordinances," Edwards said. "Many local governments in Broward County were surprised to learn that state law pre-empts the regulation of smoking to the State of Florida."

The bill is backed by the **FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**, the Florida League of Cities and the American Lung Association of the Southeast. A companion bill has been introduced in the state senate.

► GEORGIA

An automated phone-call campaign by the Atlanta Tea Party Patriots has **inundated COBB COUNTY Commission phones**, shortly after a plan was announced for the county to provide subsidies for construction of a new stadium for the Atlanta Braves.

More than 150,000 county households began receiving recorded messages from members of the group informing them of the county's \$300



Photo courtesy of DeKalb County

DeKalb County Interim CEO Lee May (l) and Commissioner Lee Watson test the strength of the glass-like surface the county is testing as an alternative to plywood on vacant houses.

► GEORGIA

Betting that it will cut down on crime, **DEKALB COUNTY** is starting a pilot project to **replace plywood on boarded up houses** with something that looks like a window — but isn't.

A heavy-duty glass-like surface has withstood assaults from baseball bats and sledge hammers and may be a viable alternative to the plywood that is required for all vacant homes by county code. That includes more than 10,000 foreclosed homes in the county.

If the pilot proves successful, commissioners will consider changing county regulations to require the owners of vacant houses to use the product, WABE News reported.

million contribution to the project, directing them to call five different commissioners and offering to automatically connect recipients to county government offices. The calls started a week before the County Commission was set to vote on the deal. It passed Nov. 26.

The calls have jammed the commission's phone system.

County spokesman Robert Quigley described it as a denial of service. "We're unable to let anyone who's calling in with regular business, or needs assistance from the commissioners, to get through," he told the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. Phones are jammed up. Voicemails are filling up."

► ILLINOIS

Some **WILL COUNTY** workers were **ordered back on the job** in the second day of their strike after a state labor board ruled their jobs essential to county services.

The Illinois Labor Relations Board ruled that deputy coroners, 911 dispatchers, health inspectors and communicable diseases investigators could not strike. The ruling also declared an electrician at the county jail provided essential services, and in emergency cases, a Sheriff's Department locksmith could also be compelled to return.

It is the first time since the late 1970s that county employees have taken to the picket lines. The county is using temporary workers to provide services during the strike, the *Chicago Tribune* reported.

► KANSAS

• Many Kansas counties and cities took advantage of a **six-month exemption** to 2013 legislation allowing concealed weapons to be carried in state and municipal buildings, a period that runs through Dec. 31.

A building can continue to be exempt if it has security measures in place to protect people in the building from falling victim to gunfire. The *Hutchinson News* reported counties could also develop security plans for exempt buildings and file for an extended four-year exemption.

The exemption period would enable local governments to determine how they would fund the security plan, though some governments already have concluded the cost would be prohibitive and won't seek the extension, according to the League of Kansas Municipalities.

For example, **BARTON COUNTY** estimates it would cost between \$225,000 and \$250,000 to implement security procedures.

• An **automatic mutual aid agreement** between **MIAMI** and **FRANKLIN** counties will provide emergency response services to remote areas of both counties. Some areas of each county are accessed by emergency response stations in the other county. The formal agreement is the culmination of seven years of discussions between the two counties, the *Osawatimie Graphic* reported.

► NEBRASKA

GAGE, JEFFERSON and **SALINE** counties are in the early stages of considering a **regional jail agreement**. Officials from the three southwest Nebraska counties met in November to discuss the possibility.

Talks covered issues such as the age, condition, inmate capacity and operating expenses for each county's jail, the *Beatrice Daily Sun* reported.

Gage County Sheriff Millard "Gus" Gustafson said the counties foresee mutual benefit in sharing a jail facility. The counties are concerned about how future public safety needs will be met while also maintaining other infrastructure.

► NEVADA

PERSHING COUNTY and organizers of the annual **Burning Man counter-culture festival** have

reached an agreement over fees the county sought to increase.

Black Rock City LLC (BRC) alleged in a lawsuit that fees charged by the county for providing law enforcement services rose from \$66,000 in 2006 to \$154,000 in 2011, and to just shy of \$400,000 for 2012, ABC News reported. About 65,000 people from across the globe attended the festival last year — held the last week in August — on federal land in the county's Black Rock Desert.

The agreement estimates Burning Man will pay \$240,000 a year over 10 years to the Pershing County sheriff's office for security and other services. BRC had challenged the constitutionality of a new ordinance requiring the company to pay the county \$1.50 per attendee.

► NORTH CAROLINA

The seven counties that make up the High Country Council of Governments (HCCG) are developing a regional bike plan to link the counties. The counties, in the northwest corner of the state are **ALLEGHANY, ASHE, AVERY, MITCHELL, WATAUGA, WILKES** and **YANCEY**.

The Watauga County Board of Commissioners was among the latest to approve the plan — unanimously. It calls for the North Carolina Department of Transportation to make bicycle-facility improvements whenever it undertakes highway projects such as widening or resurfacing, the *High Country Press* reported.

The High Country Regional Bike Plan has two parts: creating recreational routes in each of the counties to promote tourism; and listing specific recommendations for facility improvements that will connect the towns and other major destinations in the region.

► OREGON

Tobacco retail outlets would be required to buy business licenses under an ordinance being considered by **LANE COUNTY** health officials.

According to *The Register Guard*, the program would target youth tobacco use, in part by using license-fee revenue to beef up enforcement against retailers who sell tobacco to minors.

Oregon is one of 13 states that don't require **business licenses for tobacco products sellers**. While several Oregon cities require such licenses, no counties do.

The H.R. Doctor Is In

It Takes More than Tea Bags...

Imagine being a pediatrician or perhaps a psychiatrist. The guardian of a child makes an appointment to see you to discuss the behavior of her little one. The behavior is characterized by fighting and bullying, calling other people names, not accepting responsibility and focusing only on the selfish expectations of me and mine.

The behaviors also include not listening to other people or being willing to accept ideas and beliefs that are different from the child's personal view of the world. So what would you do, Doctor? What would you prescribe?

It is likely that you would begin by asking a lot of questions and maybe interview the child yourself to verify that the reported behaviors were not exaggerations. You would certainly be likely to ask during the interview about the child's home life and if he might be using drugs, getting bullied, being a bully or getting into grandma's hidden stash of whiskey.

The child might be in a state

of belligerent denial that anything is wrong. There would be a lot of whining and crying about wanting to leave the doctor's office immediately and go home.

Your conclusion might well be that the child has behavioral issues, which you feel would require behavioral management drugs and a regimen of regularly scheduled therapy sessions. You might well tell the guardian to make sure that the child gets the medication regularly and schedule another appointment.

On the other hand, if the guardian had no insurance for the child, the appointments might be further spaced and the child referred to an indigent health clinic, likely paid for by county government.

The symptoms just described really describe that collective, expensive and recalcitrant "child" called the United States Congress. The symptoms are common to members of both parties, especially to the small number of particularly right and

righteous people who seem unwilling to compromise unless they get to take the football home with them.

There is widespread agreement that the Congress of the last few years has been disagreeable, dysfunctional and potentially disastrous. The time wasted in anti-compromise, unwillingness to focus on the common good for the greatest number of citizens, and inability to get on well with their fellow members of Congress, let alone members of the Administration, including the president, hurt the country. It squanders perhaps our most precious resource — time. It allows a buildup of unrest about problems that need solving. The overriding goal seems to be standoff and disagreement rather than the discovery of acceptable solutions.

The branches of the American federal government were created deliberately to prevent too much power from flowing into the hands of individuals. The structure was built around separation of powers, advice and consent, and checks and balances.

The latter now seems to be at least as much blocking and tackling (without helmets) as it is around checking and balancing.

The Founding Fathers were brilliant at preventing a new King George from ruling America. They recognized, however, that the essential fundamental foundation necessary for the government to function is the notion of compromise. Even if the issue *du jour* is distasteful, the members of Congress and the presi-

dent must appreciate that millions of people are listening in through the key hole as they transact the public's business. Coming together is what makes America great. Persistent failure to do so harms everyone in the long run.

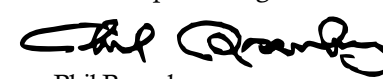
No one likes deficit spending as a way of life. No one wants their taxes to go up. No one wants the federal government to grow to the point where my three-acre sanctuary in central Florida becomes the focus of NSA surveillance without extremely good reasons. No one, however, wants a crippled government, incapable of effective action on profound subjects because this or that faction is overly fractious.

When the zeal of a particular view brings any of us to the point where we cannot imagine thoughtfully considering the views of other people and creatively seeking out accommodation, the result is a form of the very extremism that invariably leads to harm in a democratic and diverse society. It can result in the shutdown not only of the government but of the fundamental notions of compromise, common good and dialogue which make America work.

If you were a Founding Father or Founding Mother today, how far do you think you could get toward creating the compromises necessary to forge a fractious set of colonial interests into a powerful and successful nation? I doubt that we are capable, I'm sad to say, of such magnificent innovation today with the attitudes and dysfunctional behaviors of those in the institution of Congress who have forgotten how to spell compromise.

The super-problems of our society today, involving science, religion, health, economy, defense, education and so much more demand cooperation. As with the poor behavior of a child, which began this article, perhaps the intervention of trained pediatricians and behavioral experts, not to mention caring parents doing adult day care for Congress is required.

Solving the problems of today and tomorrow requires the responsibility of leaders — those who unite — rather than high-ego, single-minded "demanders" of particular agendas. I believe it is time to stop drinking the tea served up by those in Congress with no compromise agendas.


Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor • www.hrdtr.net

Many benefits accrue to using NACo program

FSNEWS from page 9

Other benefits

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

- lower pricing for options and services than you might find elsewhere
- educational workshops that can help workers better prepare for retirement
- online account management
- website that fluidly adjusts content to fit a PC, smartphone, tablet or smart TV
- service from Nationwide Retirement Solutions, a leader in public employee retirement plans
- one-on-one meetings with non-commissioned Retirement Specialists and
- no tax penalty, regardless of age, for withdrawals after leaving employment.

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

Employers wanting to learn more about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program should contact Lisa Cole by email at lc@nacorma.org or by phone at 202.942.4270.

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

Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) makes payments to the National Association of Counties (NACo), NACo RMA LLC and the NACo Financial Services Center Partnership (FSC) for services and endorsements that NACo provides for all its members generally related to Nationwide's products and services sold exclusively in public sector retirement markets. More detail about these payments is available at www.nrsforu.com. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are each a Registered Municipal Advisor and do not recommend the purchase or sale of securities and do not hold or maintain funds or securities. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC act as third party marketers/solicitors. NACo RMA receives fees from NRS for such services. Thirty-seven state associations of counties are members of NACo RMA LLC and as such receive quarterly distributions from it. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are NOT affiliates of Nationwide Investment Services Corp. or Nationwide Retirement Solutions. Retirement Specialists are registered representatives of Nationwide Investment Services Corporation: Member FINRA. In MI only, Nationwide Investment Svcs. Corporation. Nationwide Retirement Specialists cannot offer investment, tax or legal advice. Consult your own counsel before making retirement plan decisions.

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NRM-9916AO-NX (12/2013)

What's in a Seal?

» Ashe County, N.C.
www.ashecountygov.com



Ashe County, N.C. was founded in 1799 with Jefferson as the county seat.

Prior to the 18th century, Ashe County's history is somewhat obscure. The Cherokee, Creek and Shawnee nations hunted, fished and battled within the region. In 1749, Peter Jefferson led a surveying party to establish a line between North Carolina and Virginia, as early settlers and visitors alike were unsure as to whether they were in one or another.

In 1752, Bishop Augustus Spangenberg, head of the Moravian Church of America, made the first recorded visit in search of 100,000 acres of land for settlement. References to hunting expeditions date back to the 1770s, David Helton being one of the earliest, and Daniel Boone certainly being the most recognizable.

During the Revolutionary War one skirmish was fought in Ashe County. It is called the "Battle of the Big Glades." The battle was fought in July 1780 between a force of Americans, led by Capt. Robert Love, and a force of 150 British Loyalists on their way to Charlotte to join Lord Cornwallis, the British commander in the southern colonies. The Americans prevailed.

The seal shows the New River, one of the oldest rivers in the world, and one of the few major rivers in the United States to flow north instead of south, east or west. The Appalachian Mountains are also shown with the year 1799, the year of establishment.

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

Twelve counties to receive drug trafficking control funding

NEWS FROM *from page 10*

Lane County health department officials say the proposal is still in its early stages; they've yet to suggest what fees or penalties would be imposed. County Commission approval also would be needed.

Of cities in the county, Eugene charges an initial \$55 license fee, and a \$35 renewal fee; Springfield charges \$77 initially and \$50 on renewal.

► VIRGINIA

The Public Private Partnerships Office in **FAIRFAX COUNTY** has cooked up a **holiday charity gift-giving** mix that benefits county nonprofits. The "12 Ways of Giving" features creative ways to honor the holiday spirit by donating to nonprofits in someone's honor.

Some suggestions include donating to the county library system through Amazon, supporting the "Buy a Brick" program to end homelessness; helping victims of domestic violence through the county's Law Enforcement Foundation; and buying a park bench or planting a tree through the county park foundation. Best gift of all — the gift of time donated through the Fairfax County Volunteer office.

You can learn more about the program and maybe be inspired to start your own by visiting www.fairfaxcountypartnerships.org.

► WASHINGTON

Flood waters rising in **KING COUNTY**? There's an app for that — developed by King County and funded by the county Flood Control District.

The app provides **real-time flooding info** for the Skykomish, Snoqualmie, Tolt, Raging, Cedar, Green and White rivers and Is-saquah Creek.

"It tells you what's currently happening, and it also tells you what to expect in terms of the best available forecasts," said program manager Ken Zweig. "It only takes a few clicks to get to the river of interest and the gauge of interest."

The app shows current river flows, flood stage data and forecasts plus real-time flood phases. Hydrographs make it easy to see several days of river data and forecasts. Data from U.S. Geological Survey, National Weather Service and Northwest River Forecast Center are downloaded every 10 minutes. Information provided in the app can also be accessed on computers via the Web.



Photo courtesy of Cuyahoga County, Ohio

► OHIO

Ernesto Pacheco Jr., a **CUYAHOGA COUNTY** sheriff's deputy, recoils from an unidentified woman's defensive maneuver during a recent training session of the county's **Strategies Against Violent Encounters** (S.A.V.E.) Initiative. The Sheriff's Department, working with the county's Witness-Victim Services Center, conducted four, free self-defense seminars across the county focused on awareness and ways to avoid or address violent incidents. The program was a collaboration of County Executive Ed FitzGerald, the Sheriff's Department and the Cleveland NAACP.

► AROUND THE NATION...

Twelve counties in nine states have been designated by the White House Office of the National Drug Control Policy as **High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas**.

The designation will enable counties in California, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, North Dakota, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia to receive federal resources to coordinate and develop drug control efforts among federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement officers.

The newly designated counties are **HUMBOLDT COUNTY**, Calif.; **CECIL** and **FREDERICK counties** in Maryland; **FORREST COUNTY**, Miss.; **ROCKINGHAM COUNTY**, N.C.; **WILLIAMS COUNTY**, N.D.; **FLORENCE** and **HORRY counties** in South Carolina; **BRADLEY COUNTY**, Tenn.; **DICKENSON** and **ROANOKE counties** in Virginia and **WYOMING COUNTY**, W.Va.

(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.)



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