

# RAC advances rural interests in Washington



Photo by Bev Schlotterbeck

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack (center) tells Rural Action Caucus (RAC) members that he cannot intervene to stop sequestration's impact on Secure Rural Schools funds. Also pictured are RAC Chair Doris Karloff and NACO Immediate Past President Lenny Eliason.

By **ERIK JOHNSTON**  
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Reauthorization of the farm bill with robust rural development funding, protecting the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds and opposing unfunded federal mandates were among the legislative priorities that members of NACO's Rural Action Caucus (RAC) advanced before members of Congress and Administration officials during "fly-in" advocacy efforts, April 23–25, in Washington, D.C.

Each year, RAC identifies the most pressing issues facing rural America and brings them to the attention of key Administration officials and members of Congress. This year's priority issues include:

- relief from unfunded federal mandates, such as expansion of federal regulation under the Clean Water Act, which would burden rural taxpayers and counties with significant costs
- opposition to efforts to change the tax-exempt status of municipal

See **FLY-IN** page 9

## Past flood lessons make Midwest counties more resilient to disaster

By **CHARLES TAYLOR**  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Lake County, Ill. lived up to its name when torrential spring rains in April brought unprecedented levels of high water to parts of the county that rarely experience flooding.

"We received 5–6 inches within a few days, and already the river levels were high and the ground conditions were not capable of taking in that much extra rainfall," said Kurt Woolford, flood operations manager for the county's Stormwater Management Commission. Early estimates put the damage to public facilities and infrastructure at \$5 million, he said.

This wasn't the first time at the rodeo for Lake or the counties in Michigan and Indiana that also flooded last month. They've been inundated before, albeit to lesser and varying degrees. For them, however, the past has served as prologue in teaching lessons that have made them more disaster-resilient and better able to cope with the recent floods.

Like Cook County to the south, Lake County also abuts Lake Michigan, and it has more than 160 bodies

of water within its borders. Since Lake County's last major flooding in 2004, the county applied for and received a \$161,000 stimulus grant in 2010 to do more detailed, airborne laser mapping, known as LiDAR,

See **RESILIENCE** page 2

## CountyNews Features

## Cyber symposium touches on technology's integration into daily life

By **CHARLIE BAN**  
STAFF WRITER

Though NACO's policy positions are regularly determined by county officials with years, or decades of service, President Chris Rodgers' presidential initiative addressing cybersecurity came from a four-year-old.

Three years ago, his son was playing with the family computer and inadvertently accessed what Rodgers thought was secure information. It revealed to him how vulnerable that information was in

a rapidly connected age, one that has only become more complex since his cyber security awareness program's inception.

"Once we went into Iran with cyber, I knew it was here to stay," he said, referring to a joint U.S. operation with Israel to disable an Iranian nuclear site in 2012.

Rodgers' effort culminated in the two-day-long NACO National Cyber Symposium at the Peter Kiewit Institute at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, in Douglas

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# Baucus retirement could drive tax reform push

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Though Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) will retire at the end of his term, any consequences for the fate of the tax exempt status of municipal bonds, as part of the overall tax reform effort, remains unclear.

Baucus and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) have launched a process for the committee to consider options to reform the nation's tax code.

The lack of a re-election fight in 18 months will likely motivate Baucus to make an all-out effort to rewrite the tax code, but specifics to that extent are uncertain.

President Obama's recently released budget proposal commits the first numbers to paper to address possibilities for how municipal bonds will be treated. His plan makes reference to a 28-percent cap on certain tax benefits, including income from municipal bonds. Such a cap would increase the borrowing costs to local governments. The cap would also apply to outstanding bonds, whereas recent discussion of revoking tax-exempt status entirely has applied only to newly issued debt.

NACo Associate Legislative Director Mike Belarmino said the president's plan is essentially a non-starter for many in Congress, but it can serve as a starting point for budget negotiations, and the

## SpeedRead » » »

- » President Obama's budget proposal includes a 28-percent cap on tax benefits
- » Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus' retirement may speed tax reform efforts
- » Senate Finance Committee will wait for House to pass tax reform legislation

Senate's resolution suggested such a possibility.

"The biggest challenge is that the Administration is looking at ways to raise revenue, and tax-exempt

bonds look like low-hanging fruit," he said.

The finance committee is holding weekly meetings, while in session, to examine various components of tax reform. The Senate will almost certainly wait for the House to pass its tax reform legislation, observers say.

The House Ways and Means committee recently finished a public comment period on tax reform that was initially due for report in early May, but the high volume of comments may delay that by a few weeks. None of the 11 working groups were assigned to examine municipal bonds, though a few different areas touched on them.

The most effective way for county

officials to address the issue is to contact their members of Congress to express their concern for the current, uncapped tax-exempt status of municipal bonds, Belarmino said.

"We've gotten some traction from congressional staff that their bosses 'get it,' they don't think of tax-exempt bonds as a loophole," he added. "It's not a majority, but it's a start."

Douglas County, Nev. Commissioner Lee Bonner took counties' case to Congress during the Rural Action Caucus fly-in in April.

"I talked about what (tax-exempt bonds) do for our counties, how much the exemption saves the citizens," he said. "That's the main thing, it saves our citizens money."

He framed the tax exemptions in terms of helping promote economic development.

"We need infrastructure improvements to drive development, and to do that we need an inexpensive source of financing, the kind municipal bonds have been for so long. If we can improve our infrastructure and attract development, it will help us grow our economy."

Pointing out that rural areas grow faster after a recession because of lower costs of living, Bonner said this could be the time for Douglas County, along the California border, south of Lake Tahoe, to capitalize on the economic trends and grow.

"Only if we have reasonable financing," he said. "If we have to pay more for build jails, roads and other infrastructure, it will limit our growth potential."

The Large Urban County Caucus members will also advocate for the tax exemption during the caucus' May fly-in.

## Resiliency a valuable trait for counties to possess, cultivate

RESILIENCY from page 1

said Keith Caldwell, manager of the county's GIS mapping division.

The new GIS data, which included one-foot topographical contours — previously available data showed two-foot contours — predicted that more than 4,000 parcels in the county could be affected. That level of detail, Caldwell said, is "almost unheard of at the county level. Typically that's a municipal level of accuracy."

"Having the ability to target these areas to send your personnel resources out... brings all kinds of efficiencies to the operation to respond effectively to the citizens," he said.

Woolford added that the county was also able to provide communities, residents and businesses with maps that showed the degree of inundation predicted for their areas. "As the high waters came up, we had phone calls, and they confirmed that these maps are pretty accurate; this is exactly the area that flooded," he said.

For the first time, having more precise mapping data enabled the declaration of disaster areas to be made from the emergency operations center (EOC) rather than through "boots-on-the-ground" field surveys, Woolford said.

County Board Chairman Aaron Lawlor said the county has also taken advantage of federal grants and state grants to do land buyouts in flood-prone areas. Just last month, the County Board approved the use of grant funding to demolish a school in the central part of the county that has flooded multiple times "to basically help ameliorate flooding in future events," he said.

The hard science of improved



Photo courtesy of Lake County, Ill.

A change of prepositions: This structure "at" Lake County, Ill.'s Channel Lake was "in" the lake for a time during April flooding that hit several Midwestern states.

mapping wasn't the only technological advance Lake County took advantage of since the last major flood nine years ago. It wasn't until in 2006 that the now-ubiquitous social networking platform, Twitter, would be created. Lawlor used his personal account to relay information from his visits to flooded areas. "While I was doing that, I took the opportunity to tweet pictures of the damage around the county," he said.

### A Little Farther South

In Indiana, Hamilton County — near Indianapolis — also experienced flooding in April. Two men were killed there when their vehicles were overcome by rushing floodwaters.

Thomas Sivak, executive director,

Hamilton County Emergency Management, said his county experienced "a historical rain event." Pre-disaster, a community's resiliency — its ability to return to normal — depends on preparedness, he said, and post-disaster, it hinges on recovery. One of the keys to coping and recovering is the nonprofit community, including social and safety net service providers.

"One of our big deficiencies that we see across the area, and across the country, is the preparedness of nonprofits," he added. "And we see that a lot of our nonprofits are partners, but what are their plans to continue operations in the event that a disaster were to happen?" To address this, the county is continuing to "pay forward" its lessons learned.

"We've identified that we need to do a working plan-writing seminar to bring these nonprofits together and to talk with them about continuity of operations, and actually help them write their plans," Sivak said.

His department will test the concept in two-day pilot program May 16–17 by bringing in subject-matter experts to lead representatives of local nonprofits through the process of creating a disaster plan. One hope is that the sessions will also provide an opportunity to build relationships and learn who the key players are — before a disaster strikes.

"At the end of the day (they) create a network," Sivak said. "The subject-matter expert is going to give them their contact information when they're done."

## Quick Takes

### Top 5 Most Popular Vacation Spots in the U.S.

(Based on revenue, sites)

- 1 – Yellowstone National Park
- 2 – New York City, N.Y.
- 3 – Washington, D.C.
- 4 – San Diego, Calif.
- 5 – San Francisco, Calif.

U.S. News and World Report Travel, 2013

## CORRECTION

The Web address was incorrectly listed in the St. Louis County, Minn. seal published April 22. The correct address is [www.stlouiscountymn.gov](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov).



# Air traffic controller furlough ended

By ROBERT FOGEL  
SENIOR LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Several days of pain for air travelers and pressure from the airlines encouraged Congress and President Obama to approve a fix to sequestration to keep all air traffic controllers on the job. Sequester had required the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to cut \$637 million, part of which resulted in furloughs for air traffic controllers.

The legislation approved by the Senate on April 25, the House on April 26 and signed by the president on May 1, provides authority to move \$253 million into the FAA account for controllers thereby ending the one-day-every-two-weeks furloughs for 15,000 air traffic controllers that resulted in flight delays due to a daily staffing reduction of 10 percent of the controllers.

These furloughs began on April 21, and by the time FAA returned the controllers to fulltime status on April 28, an estimated 7,194 flight delays had occurred that were sequester related.

The funding to put controllers back to work fulltime will be shifted from the Airport Improvement (AIP) Fund account. The AIP program in FY13 provides \$3.35 billion in grants to public airports for capital

improvements.

Rather than cutting AIP entitlement payments to airports, the \$253 million will be taken from unspent entitlement funds airports returned to the FAA.

Under normal circumstances

these returned funds would be redistributed. The good news is that county airports will not lose funds; the bad news is that some will lose the opportunity to receive additional AIP funds. The AIP program is funded mainly through the passenger ticket tax as

opposed to general fund revenue.

The other aviation sequestration issue is the announced closing of 149 privately operated but federally funded air traffic control towers effective June 15. There appears to be enough money, \$25 million, available

in the controller furlough legislation to avoid the closures, but no specific requirement was given to FAA to use this money for that purpose. Whether this happens is likely to be a political decision made by the Obama Administration.

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## CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

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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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# May 6 Senate vote for Marketplace Fairness Act

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

The Marketplace Fairness Act of 2013, strongly supported by NACo, is expected to come up for a full Senate vote after members return from recess on May 6.

Just before leaving Washington, senators voted 63–30 on April 25 to end debate on the bill that has wide bipartisan support. Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) announced that evening a deal had been struck that includes a final vote on the bill's passage and a vote

on an amendment that delays the implementation of the legislation for six months.

The Obama Administration supports the bill, as do online behemoth Amazon.com and Wal-Mart. The measure includes a small seller exception, exempting businesses with less than \$1 million in remote sales in the previous calendar year.

"This bill levels the playing field between merchants and local brick-and-mortar businesses," said Matthew Chase, NACo executive director, "and addresses lost revenue that counties rely on to keep

American communities healthy, vibrant, safe and fiscally sound.

"This is not a new tax," he added, "but a better way to collect sales and use taxes on online sales already owed."

During the Senate recess, it was expected that the lawmakers would further take the pulse of their constituents back home on the issue. States lose more than \$23 billion annually from online and catalog sales that can't be collected from retailers that don't have a physical presence in the state, according to the National Governors Association.

In a letter to *The Journal Times* newspaper, Mayor John Dickert of Racine, Wis. wrote that four Wisconsin counties surveyed between 2011 and 2013 lost more than \$1 billion in tax revenue.

Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), one of the bill's chief patrons, said in a statement April 26: "...I don't want to see a situation where other (state or local) taxes will have to be raised to cover basic local services because these out-of-state and online retailers are not collecting the sales tax that is owed on their products."

*(Mike Belarmino, associate legislative director, contributed to this report.)*

## Some Background

State and local governments have watched Internet sales skyrocket, going from 1.6 percent of all retail sales in 2003 to nearly 6 percent in 2012, according to U.S. Department of Commerce. Total e-commerce sales for 2012 were estimated at \$225.5 billion, a 15.8 percent increase over 2011.

With a few notable exceptions, all those sales are tax-free since states and localities cannot, by law, require online retailers — unlike bricks and mortar retailers — to collect the taxes that are due.

The history of efforts to collect taxes on so-called "remote" sales began even before e-commerce took off. Two U.S. Supreme Court decisions about mail catalog sales left catalog retailers off the hook for collecting sales taxes unless they had a physical presence in the states where their customers lived. One of the decisions, however, did open a door for Congress to lift the restriction on collecting state and local taxes from out-of-state retailers.

As e-commerce began to grow in the mid-to-late '90s, Internet service providers and retailers sought legislation that would impose moratoriums on state and local taxes on Internet service and commerce. NACo opposed the effort since the legislation would have provided a "massive federal preemption of state and local taxes," according to a 1998 NACo Fact Sheet on Internet Taxation Bills.

Eventually, a three-year-only moratorium was enacted in 1998 on new taxes on Internet access. The bill, the Internet Freedom Act, has been re-authorized several times since and is set to expire in 2014.

The issue of allowing states and localities to require Internet retailers to collect sales taxes remained unresolved. The legal opinions in the two Supreme Court cases held sway, and efforts to make it easier for online retailers to determine and collect taxes through a program called the Streamlined Sales Tax Project advanced slowly.

The Marketplace Fairness Act, first introduced in the last session of Congress, is the first significant bipartisan effort to capture — according to some estimates — billions of dollars in tax revenues.

## Profiles in Service



### » Evelyn L. Kolbe

NACo Board Member

Commissioner  
Oceana County, Mich.

**Years affiliated with NACo:** 10

**Years in public service:** 40 years with 12 of those years serving as a county commissioner

**Occupation:** retired nurse, practice administrator

**Education:** B.S., University of Michigan

**The hardest thing I've ever done:** was to tell my family that I was diagnosed with cancer. Although it is an incurable form of lymphoma, I recently had a blood and marrow transplant possibly giving me several additional years of quality life, and things are going very well (see my motto).

**Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** my dad Walter Ballagh, my brother David Ballagh and my husband Ed.

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** am thankful for my cancer because it has given me the awareness that life is fragile and we must live each day to the fullest, and make memorable and productive time for family and friends.

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** while in Kenya, I took a hot-air balloon ride over the Maasai Mara during the wildebeest migration, landed for a champagne brunch on the Mara among the animals.

**My favorite way to relax is:** curl up on the couch in front of the fireplace and read a book, listen to music, or watch something of interest on TV.

**I'm most proud of:** our family of 6 adult children, 11 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

**My favorite meal is:** any meal shared with family and friends.

**My pet peeve is:** people who always have a lot to say but never listen.

**My motto is:** "Take life one day at a time because God has a plan and I am in it."

**The last book I read was:** *His Love Endures Forever* by Beth Wiseman.

**My favorite movie is:** actually a Masterpiece Classic series named *Downton Abbey*.

**My favorite music is:** country and Gospel.

**My favorite president is:** JFK.

## NACo announces new partnership with Better Futures Enterprises

### *Team-up will advance cost-saving, smart justice practices*

NACo and Better Futures Enterprises, formerly known as The NetWork for Better Futures, have launched a partnership to advance smart justice reforms that will promote better outcomes for male offenders returning to communities from jail or prison, enhance public safety and use public dollars more efficiently.

Each year more than 9 million individuals cycle in and out of county and local jails and an additional 700,000 are released from state or federal prisons, according to the Federal Interagency Reentry Council. Without strong family ties or other support systems, many of these individuals are ill-prepared to return to their communities and end up back in the criminal justice system.

"NACo looks forward to our new partnership with Better Futures Enterprises to develop

and share innovative ways for counties to assist individuals with a successful transition to their community following their release from jail or prison," said NACo President Chris Rodgers, commissioner, Douglas County, Neb. Rodgers has made smart justice a 2013 NACo priority. "The goal is to help counties use their existing resources more efficiently to break the costly cycle of incarceration, release, incarceration, release."

Better Futures Minnesota, a project of Better Futures Enterprises, is a social enterprise that was established as a demonstration pilot in 2007 by a team of Minnesota's leading health care, housing, workforce, community corrections and human service practitioners.

The new strategic partnership is being funded in part by a grant

by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. NACo will provide information, resources and assistance on how this model might potentially address some of the issues NACo members face with a high-risk, reentering population.

In addition, an advisory board of county officials and other community leaders from across the country will be convened to provide feedback on the model.

"We are excited about collaborating with county leaders from across the country interested in re-engineering how essential services are organized, delivered and financed in their communities," said Steve Thomas, president and CEO of Better Futures.

*For more information contact Mae-ghan Gilmore at [mgilmore@naco.org](mailto:mgilmore@naco.org) or 202.942.4261 or Marcia Soto at 612.455.6133 ext.125.*

# MEMORANDUM

**TO:** NACo Members  
**FROM:** First Vice President Linda Langston  
**DATE:** April 26, 2013  
**RE:** 2013–2014 Presidential Leadership and Committee Appointments



Looking ahead to my year as NACo president, I want to take this opportunity to let you know about the appointments that I will have the privilege of making to NACo's leadership team. These appointments are for one-to-three-year terms and membership on some of these committees has specific requirements. Following are the appointments along with the qualifications required for each.

Please complete an online application if you are interested in being considered for a presidential appointment to any of the following committees or to the NACo Board of Directors.



First Vice President  
Linda Langston

## Steering Committee Leadership

The 11 steering committees will each have a leadership team consisting of a chair, an appropriate number of vice-chairs, and subcommittee chairs and vice-chairs. Those applicants who have been active members of the steering committee will be given preference in consideration for these appointments.

The applicant should be willing to help coordinate leadership conference calls, develop the meeting agendas and testify before Congress if necessary. These appointments are for one year.

## Caucus Steering Committee Leadership and Members

The Rural Action Caucus Steering Committee and the Large Urban County Caucus Steering Committee will each have a chair and an appropriate number of vice-chairs and committee members. Applicants who have been active members of these caucuses will be given preference in consideration for these appointments. These appointments are for one year.

## At-Large Appointments to the NACo Board of Directors

Each president appoints 10 at-large directors to the NACo Board of Directors for a one-year term. These appointments are to add balance to the board with respect to any inequities between urban and rural, gender, geography and

minority representation. As with our communities, our strength is in our diversity. These appointments are for one year.

## Standing Committees

- *Finance Committee* advises the officers on the annual budget of the association before it is presented to the Board of Directors and provides oversight on other financial issues as directed by the officers. (Appoints three members for a three-year term with a background in finance and/or investment.)

- *Information Technology Committee* advises the officers on information technology issues and provides oversight on NACo information technology projects. (Appoints the chair, two vice chairs and 22 members for a one-year term.)

- *Programs and Services Committee* advises the officers regarding the development and evaluation of programs and services for NACo members. (Appoints the chair for a one-year term and eight members for three-year terms. Selects one or two vice-chairs from the membership of the committee.)

- *Membership Committee* actively recruits and retains member counties, parishes and boroughs in order to increase NACo's total membership. (Appoints the chair and vice-chairs for a one-year term.)

## Ad Hoc Committees

- *NACo Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee* provides oversight to the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, administered by Nationwide Retirement Solutions. (Appoints the chair and vice chair each for a one-year term from among the committee membership

and five members from entities that participate in the NACo Deferred Compensation Program for a three-year term.)

In 2013, the open slots are for three appointed county officials, one elected county official and the executive director of a state association of counties that is a member of NACo Registered Municipal Advisor, LLC.

- *NACo Financial Services Center Advisory Committee* helps to administer existing programs such as US Communities, the Public Finance Authority, defined contribution and post-employment health plans and develops new programs that deliver value-added services, enhanced benefits and reduced costs to counties. (Appoints 10 members for a one-year, renewable term, as follows: county administrator or county executive; county clerk; two county commissioners or supervisors; county purchasing manager; county treasurer or finance officer; two state association executives; NACo first vice president; and one member from county government.)

- *Arts and Culture Commission* demonstrates how the arts can be used by county officials to promote economic development and provide solutions to many of the challenges that they face, through workshop sessions, field trips and special publications. (Appoints the chair, vice-chair and 25 members for a one-year term.)

- *Green Government Advisory Board* provides information, guidance and support to the NACo Green Government Initiative. (Appoints the chair, vice-chair(s) and members.)

- *Healthy Counties Advisory Board* provides information, guidance and support to the NACo Healthy Counties Initiative. (Appoints the chair, vice-chair(s) and members.)

- *International Economic Development Task Force* facilitates the exchange of information, ideas and resources and guides NACo programming, concerning county-level engagement in international economic development activities. (Appoints the chair, vice-chairs and members.)

- *Veterans and Military Services Committee* engages NACo and its members to develop and highlight county best practices and policies

## Steering Committee Membership

**IMPORTANT:** Steering committee membership is not a part of this application process. The NACo president appoints only the steering committee leadership. The state associations of counties are responsible for nominating the general steering committee members. If you are interested in becoming a member of a steering committee you must contact your state association directly.

### STEERING COMMITTEE EXCEPTION: LUCC and RAC

The president appoints the membership of these steering committees as well as the leadership. They are included in the appointment application.

that promote innovative programs, services and benefits for our nation's military, veterans and their families. (Appoints the chair, vice-chairs and members.)

- *Cybersecurity Task Force* promotes cybersecurity awareness and education to better protect county government networks and residents; to disseminate information regarding services and programming from federal partners directly to county government policy makers and IT professionals; and to advocate for cybersecurity education opportunities and training during NACo conferences. (Appoints the chair, vice-chairs and members.)

The Presidential Appointments Application Form must be com-

pleted by everyone who wants to be considered for a leadership or committee appointment on a steering, standing or ad hoc committee for the 2013–2014 presidential year.

The application form is available online at NACo's website, [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org). You will find it under "About NACo" ► "Committees and Caucuses" ► "Presidential Appointments."

The deadline for submitting your application is Wednesday, June 5. I look forward to receiving your application and to your active participation in NACo.

Please direct any questions you may have to Karen McRunnel at 202.942.4238 or by email at [kmcrunne@naco.org](mailto:kmcrunne@naco.org).

## Word Search

### Dorchester County, S.C. Facts

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

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

**BAMBERG** (adjacent county)  
**BERKELEY** (adjacent county)  
**CHARLESTON** (adjacent county)  
**COLLETON** (adjacent county)  
**CONGREGATIONALISTS** (protestant churches which established Dorchester's settlement in 1696)  
**GROVER** (village in the county)  
**JOSEPH KOGER JR** (owner of oldest residence in county)

**JUSTICE** (part of county motto)  
**ORANGEBURG** (adjacent county)  
**PROSPERITY** (part of county motto)  
**SERVICE** (part of county motto)  
**SOUTH CAROLINA** (state the county is in)  
**ST GEORGE** (county seat)

Created by Christopher Johnson



# Counties at the table on ocean policy plan

By CHARLES TAYLOR  
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



There's an old saying: "If you're not at the table you're on the menu." When the National Ocean Council developed its National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan, counties pulled up two chairs.

Kristin Jacobs, Broward County, Fla. mayor, chairs the council's Governance Coordinating Committee, and Joan Patricia Murphy, Cook County, Ill. commissioner was a member.

"County governments, through this plan, are no longer on the menu," Jacobs said. "We were at the table, and I think it's such a great step forward for us."

The plan was released in April, and according to the White House, it "describes the actions the federal government will take to improve the health of the ocean, coasts and Great Lakes, which support tens of millions of jobs, contribute trillions of dollars a year to the national economy, and are essential to public health and national

## SpeedRead » » »

- » Plan addresses economic, environmental and security issues
- » Feds to support local level partnerships
- » Great Lakes included in oceans plan

security."

Plan highlights include supporting partnerships with local governments and the private sector to leverage limited resources; assessing the vulnerability of communities and ocean environments to climate change and ocean acidification; and expanding and improving the discovery of and access to non-classified federal data, including ocean and coastal maps to support local, tribal, state and regional decision-making.

The section of greatest interest to counties is probably "Local Choices." It outlines strategies for dealing with issues such as the effects of ocean acidification on shellfish growers in the Pacific

Northwest, invasive species in the Great Lakes and the effects of algae blooms on human health in the Gulf of Mexico.

"The recommendation that says they want to help us develop our science and give us those resources so we can better fine tune our local needs, I think is one of the most important outcomes from this plan," Jacobs said.

"When they give us their expertise, we get to kind of use that expertise as we need to, and they gain an understanding of us and our resources and our issues, and we're stronger all the way around."

Murphy was a vocal advocate for the Great Lakes — often not thought of by the lay person in the same context of oceans. But she noted that the lakes have about 20 international ports, a fact not to be ignored in a plan that has a "safety and security" component.

As the plan stated, "This includes effective planning for and response to emerging threats to our ports and harbors from illegal human activities, climate change, and extreme weather events and other natural disasters."

"We know that the oceans are becoming more acidic," Murphy said; "we know that climate change has a huge effect on our waters. What they're trying to do is put forth an implementation plan that will help us track what is happening to prepare for the future."

The council was established under the National Ocean Policy, which was created by Executive Order 13457 in July 2010. It consists of 27 federal agencies, departments and offices that worked together to share information and

streamline decision-making. The plan was developed over a two-year period

Murphy called the National Ocean Council "a phenomenal idea." "The governance coordinating committee that is putting all of this together, and is working with those that sit on the council itself, are doing a wonderful thing for our country," she said.

(\*To access the National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan, see this article online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).)

## In Case You Missed It

### News to use from past County News

#### » WIR Conference Program-at-a-Glance Posted

Register today for NACo's 2013 Western Interstate Region Conference May 22–24 in Coconino County (Flagstaff), Ariz. Sample workshop sessions include Smart Justice Practices and Cost Savings Measures, Beyond Civility: Communication for Effective Governance, and Forest Health: The Economics of Treatment vs. Large-Scale Forest Fires.

To learn more, visit <http://www.naco.org/meetings/participate/WIRConference>.

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\*Average savings 24%. Savings may vary by drug and by pharmacy. Operated by CVS Caremark. This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies. 106-9003NC55(03) 02.13





# Cyber Symposium panelists stress preparation, sharp focus on what needs protection

By CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

The inaugural NACo National Cyber Symposium in Douglas County, Neb. brought together experts in cyber policy and technical execution who shared salient points on protecting counties' information systems.

Greg Anderson, Douglas County, Neb. chief information officer, suggested anyone involved in cyber planning reject the notion of living a peaceful life.

## SpeedRead » » »

- » Sweat the small stuff in cybersecurity
- » Add in security cost when quoting prices for system upgrades
- » Federal cybersecurity legislation will not be a "cure all"

"You want to sweat the small stuff," he said. "Counties aggregate data, and hackers are looking for pools of this information. It's just what they want."

The important distinction, he said, was separating public information from private and protecting that private information.

"You can't protect all of the information on your systems, but you don't have to," he said. "Counties aren't private businesses, in fact a lot of information should be publicly available anyway. Focus on what is unique to your databases and protect it, because you can't protect everything."

Protecting information often means spending money to do so, and early awareness of what that will require helps maintain trust between the professionals responsible for ensuring digital security and the elected officials watching the budget.

"The biggest mistake people make is that they budget the IT costs, but after the fact realize they should secure it," he said. "The key thing is to make sure any proposal to implement new technology includes security cost; it's not an afterthought."

Strong, regularly changed passwords were almost universal suggestions from panelists on easy ways to beef up security. University of Nebraska Omaha professor Robin Gandhi suggested giving every county employee a diary

expressly to keep long, complex passwords offline but accessible to them, under physical lock and key, allowing employees to create more complex passwords they don't have to remember.

"Security is a chain, and that chain ends when you enter your password," he said. "You shift the problem but take it out of the digital realm. No hacker's going to find it. I don't trust (online) password managers."

As for federal cybersecurity legislation, Jack Beard, University of Nebraska Lincoln law professor, was skeptical. He said federal cyber legislation was unlikely to pass because businesses don't want to share, don't want to bow to new regulations.

"They might on their own (do something to protect themselves) but to be told to do something brings in the Chamber of Commerce (which fought against cybersecurity legislation)," he said. "It's ironic because no entity has been attacked by Chinese hackers as repeatedly as the Chamber of Commerce, but that doesn't change their lobbying position."

Tom Gregory, an advocacy lead at U.S. Strategic Command, didn't see a silver bullet coming out of any potential federal cyber legislation.

"We have laws against larceny but I still lock my door," he said. "Just having legislation doesn't give us a whole lot. If you're under-resourced and undermanned now,



Photos by Charlie Ban

U.S. Strategic Command Advocacy Lead Tom Gregory says federal cyber security legislation alone wouldn't help counties that were not on the ball already with their information systems, as his colleague Kerry Kelley looks on.

and the federal government's going to give you a whole bunch more information, what are you going to do with it? It's probably not going to help you that much."

Justin Kolenbrander, a supervisory special agent at Omaha's FBI Cyber Task Force, said that although counterterrorism is still the FBI's number one priority, cyber crime touches nearly every violation. And, the bureau is getting more aggressive in response, prosecuting cyber criminals.

"There has to be attribution,"

he said. "The days of us doing rope-a-dope in the United States of America and us saying 'yes, we're just going to keep getting hammered' are over."

That said, Kolenbrander characterized cyber criminals as lazy, moving on in a hurry if their efforts to crack a system were met with the slightest resistance, and said the number of truly diabolical cyber criminals was pretty small.

"Anything that's created as a consumer benefit, these guys will bastardize, so that's a good

place to start looking for weak points," he said. "Anything you can do to frustrate their automated processes is going to help scare them off."

The most important thing that every county employee can do, he said, is to not click on anything that isn't easily recognizable as being from a trusted source and to notify someone immediately if something seems amiss.

NACo First Vice President Linda Langston said the rural-urban divide in America's counties is a pretty neat distinction for counties that do and do not have specialized information technology experts.

"If they do, it's someone who splits time working on mental health," she said. "It's not a skill set many rural counties can afford to recruit."

Her question to the panel addressing the threat in today's cyber environment carried a lot of weight and summed up the entire symposium, "How do you (craft) an education program that walks the fine line between scaring the heck out of people and inspiring them?"

Chris Hobbs, chief technology officer for the state of Nebraska, said knowing what employees' jobs are and what data they have access to, is crucial to understanding how certain secure data is at risk, given the lines of responsibility for that data.

CSS.NET President and CEO Lisa Wolford strongly advised having annual security audits, and, if it is affordable, continuous monitoring. And, she warned counties that disgruntled employees posed a risk.

"Your bigger risk are people inside the network," she said. "People are click-happy; you also have employees that are unhappy, vindictive. People don't want to think that's true, but they exist."

In terms of educating the workforce, Ernest McDuffie, lead at the National Initiative for Cyber Security Education, said community colleges, while overlooked before, are becoming a destination for retraining opportunities, especially employees averse to committing to a graduate degree program.

U.S. Strategic Command's Tom Gregory said the best way to simulate the results of a cybersecurity breach was to try to do daily tasks without the benefit of Internet resources.

"You find out pretty fast how important it is and how much you need to protect it," he said.



Justin Kolenbrander, a supervisory special agent with the FBI Omaha Cyber Task Force; Gary Blackburn, U.S. Strategic Command, and John Watters, chairman and CEO of ISight Security discussed "Operating in Today's Cyber Environment: What is the Threat?"



# RAC delegation meets with White House rural policy team



Photo by Bev Schlotterbeck

Bath County, Va. Supervisor Claire Collins asks a follow-up question of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. Looking on are (l-r) Polk County, Ore. Commissioner Craig Pope; Ouray County, Colo. Supervisor Lynn Padgett; and St. Clair, Ala. Chairman Stan Batemon.

By BEVERLY SCHLOTTERBECK  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

RAC steering committee members spent an hour with senior members of the Administration's Rural Council and another hour with Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack discussing economic development, municipal bonds and sequestration issues on day two of their April fly-in.

The two-hour session gave RAC members significant access to top rural policy players in the Obama Administration. They learned about the president's rural policy agenda and brought their most pressing issues to the Administration's attention.

Doug McKalip, senior policy advisor for rural affairs, White

House Domestic Policy Council, led the discussion off by pointing out that the farm-sector economy has grown significantly over the past three years, yet rural counties face continuing population declines and account for 90 percent of the so-called "persistent poverty" counties. Driven in part by these disparities, the White House Rural Council has divided its work into three parts — quality of life, financial issues, and jobs and stimulus.

First up was Wayne Ting, policy advisor, National Economic Council (NEC). The NEC advises the president on U.S. and global economic issues. Ting said the administration is looking for ways to bring manufacturing back to rural areas to help stem the outmigration of young people. It also wants to "incentivize" rural

schools to include financial studies in an effort to protect against predatory lending practices in the housing market that affected rural areas just as much as urban ones.

Josh Barnes is the disaster recovery coordinator at the Economic Development Administration. Since many natural disasters occur in rural areas, he is interested in how best to integrate or link federal, state, local and private resources to boost an area's resilience. "We can do better at leveraging and integrating resources," he said.

Tax policies and job creation figured prominently in Don Graves' presentation. Graves is the executive director of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness in the U.S. Treasury Department. He detailed a number of initiatives and funding programs available to support community banks and business development, including a small-business-lending fund of \$4 billion to support community banks. As an incentive to the banks, Treasury will charge lower interest rates for banks that increase their lending.

He directed RAC members to the website, [business.usa.gov](http://business.usa.gov), which is a one-stop shop for all government resources. He said

# FEMA releases new electronic version of Stafford Act

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has produced an updated electronic version of the Stafford Act. These highlights and new features include all changes to the Stafford Act since 2007 including the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) of 2013.

The Stafford Act constitutes the statutory authority for most federal disaster response activities especially as they pertain to FEMA and its programs.

The electronic document has also been optimized for portable tablet devices in an e-booklet form. Some of the formatting features include:

- from the Table of Contents, you can click on the statute name or number and jump to the statutory text

- from any page with the statutory text, you have two navigation options (in addition to simply scrolling)

- click on the words "Stafford Act" at the top, you'll return to the Table of Contents page

- click on the Title number at the top, you'll be returned to the start of that Title in the document (i.e., while in Section 408, click "Title IV" and you'll jump back to Section 401).

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act is a federal law designed to bring an orderly and systemic means of federal natural disaster assistance for state and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to aid citizens.

This updated booklet replaces the 2007 report and will only be available online.

To download a copy of the April 2013 booklet, visit [www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3564](http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=3564).

## The Most Popular U.S. County Names

Washington  
31 COUNTIES

Jefferson  
28 COUNTIES

Franklin  
26 COUNTIES

Jackson  
25 COUNTIES

Lincoln  
24 COUNTIES

## Limerick Corner

Another timely verse from Grant Veeder, auditor, Black Hawk County, Iowa and NACo Board member. Veeder has been penning limericks for NACo and state association meetings since 2011.

The latest presidential suite lodger  
Is six-foot nineteen-inch Chris Rodgers.  
We hope this young guy  
Who stands up so high  
Won't stomp on us little old codgers.



# RAC pushes farm bill reauthorization, PILT, substance abuse treatment

FLY-IN from page 1

bonds which are a well-established financing tool used by state and local governments for infrastructure and capital needs, such as the construction or improvement of schools,

roads, highways, hospitals, bridges, water and sewer systems, and ports

- reauthorization of the farm bill that supports mandatory funding for conservation, renewable energy, rural development and beginning farmers/ranchers programs

- securing federal funding for payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) and Forest payments to counties, and

- renewed focus on improving rural health and substance abuse programs with a focus on rural veterans and youth, including efforts

to protect Medicaid and supporting the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant.

A highlight of the RAC fly-in included a meeting with the co-chairs of the bipartisan Congressional Rural Caucus, Reps. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.) and Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.), to discuss bipartisan solutions to rural challenges and opportunities. RAC members also met with officials from the EPA, the Department of Transportation and had a dialogue with the White House Rural Council moderated by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

RAC, chaired by Supervisor Doris M. Karloff, Saunders County, Neb., is a bipartisan coalition of rural

elected officials from across the country striving to enhance the quality of life in rural counties through effective federal legislation. Nearly two-thirds of the nation's 3,069 counties are designated as rural.

County leaders from these rural areas are dedicated to solving many critical issues impacting rural life and development, including infrastructure development, broadband deployment, development of new rural clinics and hospitals, road and bridge construction and maintenance, and business development opportunities.

For more information, contact Erik Johnston at [ejohnston@naco.org](mailto:ejohnston@naco.org) or 202.942.4230.



Photo by Matt Fellows

NACo First Vice President Linda Langston (l) stresses the importance of municipal bonds as a key financing tool for rural counties during a meeting with staff from the Congressional Rural Caucus (CRC). With her are: (clockwise) Josh Jackson, legislative director for CRC Co-Chair Rep. Adrian Smith (R-Neb.); Person County, N.C. Commissioner Ray Jeffers; Dinwiddie County, Va. Supervisor Harrison Moody; NACo Immediate Past President Lenny Eliason; Kaitlin Wolf, CRC staff lead for Co-Chair Rep. Mike McIntyre (D-N.C.); and RAC Chair and Saunders County, Neb. Supervisor Doris Karloff.



Photo by Daria Daniel

Person County, N.C. Commissioner Ray Jeffers (left) and Dinwiddie County, Va. Supervisor Harrison Moody (right) weren't just talking peanuts with Rep. Randy Forbes (R-Va.), but you'd never know it from this photo.

## Vilsack: Secure Rural Schools funds are subject to sequester

RAC PANEL from page 8

the Treasury Department, as a result of its work with post-Superstorm Sandy businesses, has concluded that current business loan programs for disaster victims are "not very helpful." He told RAC members, "We want to build new disaster business recovery programs."

Jay Jensen, associate director for land and water with the Council on Environmental Quality, touched on efforts to streamline the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, environmental review process, impact of the drought and the recent release of National Ocean Policy (see story, page 6), which, he said, provides an organizing framework for coastal issues.

At the end of the Administration presentations, RAC members raised several issues with the Rural Council representatives. Athens County,

Ohio Commissioner Lenny Eliason, immediate past NACo president, delivered the muni-bond message. He said Administration proposals to tamper with the tax-exempt status of muni-bonds represent a significant danger to all county governments. "It's the biggest threat we face."

Graves responded that the Administration has been clearly hearing the message on muni-bonds and said RAC members should continue to press their case with Congress.

Vilsack joined the delegation for the second hour of the meeting and almost immediately tackled the contentious issue about counties needing to return some Secure Rural Schools funding because of the sequester. "I don't have a great deal of discretion in this. Because we paid out the money in 2013, the funds are subject to sequester. That's the law," he said.

Sequestration's impact on USDA

should be mitigated by steps the department took that enable it to avoid staff furloughs, he said.

Meanwhile, the department faces three primary challenges: the agricultural work force and its intersection with immigration reform, the decline in rural population and climate change.

Vilsack said comprehensive immigration reform is necessary to guarantee a continued agricultural labor force. "We're not going to be able to deport these people. This begs for comprehensive immigration reform."

He highlighted the programs the department has launched to rebuild rural counties such as America's Great Outdoors Initiative and support for bio-based products. While maintaining an adequate agricultural workforce and rebuilding rural economies are short-term goals, in the "long, long term," Vilsack said USDA needs to focus on new ways

to deal with a changing climate.

After Vilsack's remarks, RAC members raised issues about broadband access and funding in rural counties, immigration reform and environmental regulations.

RAC Chair Doris Karloff gave

high marks to the Rural Policy Council meeting. "The meeting with Vilsack was tremendous. It is critical that our federal representatives hear directly from county leaders and this was a great roundtable opportunity."

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# Appeals Court rules EPA can overturn Clean Water Act permits

By JULIE UFFNER

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



The U.S. Court of Appeals in D.C. ruled April 23 that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the authority to overturn existing Section 404 Clean Water Act permits. This case will have implications for any local government that holds a current Section 404 discharge permit.

*In Mingo Logan Coal Co. v. EPA,*

the Corps gave a Section 404 permit to Mingo Logan to discharge “fill materials” from its mountaintop operations into three close-by streams. Three years after the permit was issued, EPA revoked the discharge permit to two of the three streams arguing that downstream

water issues were not addressed.

While the Corps oversees the Section 404 dredge-and-fill permit, EPA has veto authority. Prior to the permit issuance, EPA expressed concerns about the impact to downstream waters; however, ultimately EPA chose to allow the

Corps to approve the permit. Mingo Logan unsuccessfully argued in the appeals case that EPA did not have the authority to reverse a permit once issued.

The case now will be sent back to the lower court, which just last year, ruled in favor of Mingo

Logan. The lower court must now decide whether EPA acted in a way consistent with the Administrative Procedures Act (APA).

*\*To view the Appeals Court decision, see this article online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews).*

## First meeting convenes on CWA affordability

Representatives from NACo, the National League of Cities, U.S. Conference of Mayors and EPA convened to discuss Clean Water Act (CWA) water affordability issues. This dialogue will play a key role in determining how local governments invest in water and wastewater infrastructure.

This meeting stems from EPA's January 2013 memo on Assessing Financial Capability for Municipal CWA Requirements. In the memo, EPA directed its regional offices to consider local financial capacity when developing compliance schedules in order to meet Clean Water Act responsibilities.

The meeting, April 29, focused on expanded use of benchmark indicators of affordability such as increasing arrearages, late payments, disconnection notices, service terminations and uncollectable accounts. The group also discussed how to maintain consistent policy implementation at the regional offices.

Future meetings will continue to examine and determine factors that affect a county's capacity to comply with Clean Water Act regulations.

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**NACo** National Association of Counties



# Expert: Cyber attacks as depicted in movies are 'very unlikely'

CYBER from page 1

County, where he serves as a county commissioner.

"Sometimes you catch lightning in a bottle and you couldn't have done it better than this week, with cyber legislation on the House floor," he said. "There's a whole lot that scares people but also a whole lot of opportunity."

NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase echoed that this effort to stress cyber competence was only beginning.

"This isn't a one-year wonder," he said.

Will Pelgrin, now the president and CEO of the Center for Internet Security, was serving as chief technology officer for the state of New York on Sept. 11, 2001.

"We all recognize this as a horrible physical attack, but what most don't realize is what a cyber attack it was as well," he said. "Our circuits went dark that day, mission-critical operations could not be performed. We thought we had redundancy; we thought we had owned some infrastructure, but we found out we didn't own some of the paths we paid for."

He said the physical and cyber infrastructure is deeply linked and counties should not stop thinking that way.



Photos by Charlie Ban

(left) Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman (R) addresses attendees at the inaugural NACo National Cyber Symposium in Douglas County, Neb. April 18. (right) "If someone tells you they can prevent a cyber attack, kick them out of your office," said Will Pelgrin, president and CEO of the Center for Internet Security.

"We can never unwind again," he said. "You need to understand both, because if you don't you're going to miss another piece of the pie."

Also, he warned against vendors promising the world with the cybersecurity programs and said it was easier to crack a security system than defend it.

"If someone tells you they can prevent a cyber attack, kick them out of your office," he said.

Cheri Caddy, the director of

Cyber Policy Integration and Outreach for President Obama, demystified the threat of cyber crime, as it has been depicted in popular media, including a recent James Bond movie.

"It's less flashy but still very troubling," she said. "High-impact events, like you see in movies, represent extreme situations and are very unlikely."

More probable results of cyber security lapses include persistent intrusions into information sys-

tems, violation of privacy, theft of services, and degradation and denials of service.

She said the responsibility for guarding against and responding to cyber attacks could not fall solely on any level of government, and added that the federal government's role was best compared to disaster response. That could include convincing other countries to address cyber criminals within their borders, and at this point the federal government was more inclined to

use policy to that end, rather than technical means.

Nebraska Gov. Dave Heineman (R) called lax cybersecurity the biggest threat to economic and national security. "Think a decade out," he said. "You think we're dependent (on technology) now? When I think about protecting the homeland and the challenges we may face, they won't necessarily be what we expect from a military attack."

He said every level of government is expected to protect citizens in the digital realm.

"Technology knows no boundaries," he said. "Our military personnel can't operate with their pinpoint accuracy we've come to expect without full use of technology, and our ability to operate if someone took down financial systems, energy grids, day-to-day operations of every company in this room, let alone government, is compromised."

Jodi Chapin, AT&T's director of state and local government marketing, said the most effective way to describe the entirety of the threat posed by cyber crime was to frame it in a narrative. Doing so helps the audience understand an issue's evolution.

"Focus on storytelling," she said. "We're really moving out of the information age and into the conceptual age, it's going to be an incredible skill set to start teaching."

## NACo on the Move

### » NACo Officers, County Officials

• NACo Executive Director **Matthew Chase** spoke about NACo and "Why Counties Matter" at the Association County Commissioners of Georgia 2013 annual meeting in Chatham County (Savannah) April 29.



Matthew Chase

### » NACo Staff

• **Stephanie Osborn**, director of strategic initiatives, and **Alyssum Pohl**, NOAA Digital Coast fellow, participated in a Digital Coast Partnership meeting at the NOAA Coastal Services Center in Charleston County, S.C. May 2-3. The Digital Coast provides counties and others with tools and resources to use geospatial information to build resilient coastal communities.

• **Therese Dorau**, CSI program manager, spoke on strategies for facility and energy management staff to effectively communicate energy data to local government leaders to attendees of FacilityDude University in Horry County (Myrtle Beach), S.C. April 22. FacilityDude is a Green Government Initiative corporate sponsor.



Therese Dorau

### » Coming Up

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director, membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the New Jersey Association of Counties annual conference in Atlantic County May 8-10.

*On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.*

## NACo's Smart Justice Initiative helps you ...

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# Model Programs

McHenry County, Ill.

## Health Department Pushes Awareness of Bat Rabies Risk

BY CHARLIE BAN  
STAFF WRITER

Something was missing in the attitude McHenry County, Ill. residents had toward bats.

They let bats out of their bedrooms when they were trapped inside. Children thought nothing of playing with a bat they found. Repeated infestations went without being reported.

Considering bats are by far the most frequent carrier of rabies in Illinois, the McHenry County Health Department had a large, but elusive, task at hand to reduce the risk of public exposure to rabies. The health department as a whole had to communicate the danger and how to mitigate it, and put together a system to coordinate the efforts.

"Nobody had taken the initiative to warn people about what bats could mean to their health," said Mary Lou Ludicky, the county's communicable disease coordinator. "Our large bat population means we have to let people know that even though they're common around a rural county like ours, they pose a danger."

In 2010, when the state's number of rabies-positive animal tests hit 117 — the highest in 22

Department reported concern from the public about the rabies threat from raccoons and skunks but not bats.

"Bats are our rabies threat, and the more we can educate people, the more we can avoid painful and expensive treatment when they became potentially exposed to rabies," Ludicky said.

The response spanned the entire health department, with different divisions tackling unique tasks, though all stressed the rabies hazard bats posed:

- The department's administration developed a database to track all bat-related complaints.
- The public information division publicized the rabies risk.
- The environmental health division contacted landlords and schools that have had repeat bat incursions to follow up on fixing problems.
- The division of veterinary health, animal control, responded to bat removal requests, and
- The communicable disease section determined whether bats had come in contact with humans or pets. This includes coordinating with emergency room doctors to inform the health department in case a patient reported a bat bite.

"Bat teeth are razor sharp but so small," said Deborah Quackenbush, the health department's spokeswoman. "If you're looking right around the area of the bite, you usually can't see it, they heal so fast — within a half hour."

Often, people woke up to find a bat in their room but had no idea whether they had been bitten.

"They find a bat and open a window to let it out," Quackenbush said. "If we can't test the bat, we don't know if it has rabies."

She added that the education push to the public included emphasis on not crushing bats' skulls, because their brains are what the rabies tests would examine.

The general public awareness campaign took the guise of an



Photo courtesy of McHenry County, Ill. Health Department

Students explore a "bat cave" built by the McHenry County, Ill. Health Department to teach them about bat habitats.

interactive "bat cave" that makes the rounds to county schools. The cave simulates bat's habitats and included facts geared toward school children.

Ludicky said the public's

general attitude toward bats has shifted to being more wary and respecting the danger they pose.

"People are taking them seriously, and that's good," she said.

"Even though they are scared of bats more than they used to be, that fear is less painful and expensive than post-exposure (treatment). For people who don't have health insurance, being bitten by a potentially rabid bat is a major expense."

In addition, supply of rabies vaccine can be erratic, so a rash of rabid bat bites could come during a shortage. An estimated \$12,000 went to cover staff time to develop the educational materials for the program, and Ludicky said it has been worth it to change the public's attitudes and awareness about bats and their rabies threat.

Since the program started in 2007, the number of post-exposure treatments given has dropped steadily, which the health department points to as the program's ultimate measure of success.

"If we can save people the cost and the pain, our efforts are successful," she said.

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

## Research News

### Surveys Say: Americans Trust Local Government the Most

In the midst of heated Congressional debates this month, recent polls show that Americans have more faith in local government than in states or federal government.

According to a recent poll conducted by the National League of Cities (NLC), 37 percent of the respondents identified local legislators as the level of government which they trust the most to address issues that matter in their lives. In contrast, 22 percent selected state government and 12 percent expressed confidence in the federal level.

Another survey released this month by the Pew Research Center reached the same conclusion about the nation's sentiment toward various levels of government. According to the poll, 63 percent of participants have a favorable view of local government — six

percentage points above state government and 35 above the federal government.

Local government has consistently ranked as a top performer since Pew began this poll in 1997. In fact, Pew recorded only two instances in which the local level fell short of first place. Both occurred at major spikes in the federal government approval rating in 2001 and 2003.

The level of trust in local government does not significantly depend on whether the respondent is a Republican, Democrat or independent. Republicans trust local government the most, followed closely by independents and Democrats, according to NLC. The Pew survey also showed that local government ratings were the least partisan. While a respondent's political affili-

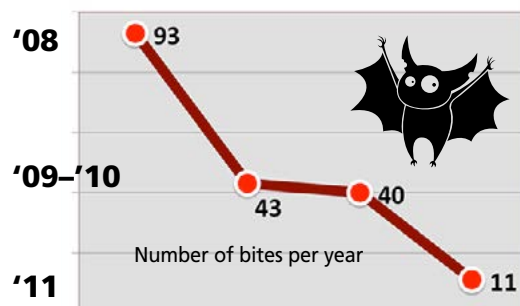
ation was an important factor when evaluating the federal government, party lines were irrelevant for local jurisdictions.

What does this mean in this day and age of political divisiveness?

While party politics may interfere in Congress, there is little room for partisanship in local government. County officials must cooperate to implement policies that directly affect their residents. They are the "boots on the ground" government and the familiar faces working to satisfy local needs every day. These polls reiterate the importance of county governments to the American public and reaffirm Americans' faith in local leaders.

*(Research News was written by Britany Gada, research intern.)*

#### Bat Bites Exposure Treatments McHenry County, Ill.



years — all of the positive results came from bats, and McHenry County led the state with 22. That's largely due to the county's number of stables, aging barns and generally older homes that help bats expand their habitat outside of the woods. Those structures serve as the perfect shelters — dry, warm and, because many homes developed gaps in exterior walls, typically accessible.

The McHenry County Health





# News From the Nation's Counties

## ► ARIZONA

Cities and counties that hold community gun buyback events will have to **sell the surrendered weapons** instead of destroying them under a bill Gov. Jan Brewer (R) signed into law.

**MARICOPA COUNTY** Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, a Democrat who champions the buyback events and survived being shot in the buttocks at the end of a 1997 Board of Supervisors meeting, sent a letter to Brewer urging a veto, the Associated Press reported.

The bill “would force the resale of guns that would otherwise never have been used for violence,” she wrote. “How many lives would be lost through the use of weapons our citizens hoped to be removed from the hands of criminals?”

A second bill signed by Brewer on April 29 bars cities, towns and counties from collecting or maintaining any identifying information about a person who owns or sells a firearm.

Brewer is a former Maricopa County Board of Supervisors chair.

## ► CALIFORNIA

• For the next six months, **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** residents will not be charged a \$3 monthly maintenance fee for their transponders — devices that track toll-lane usage and fees as part of the county’s “congestion pricing” experiment on the 110 Freeway.

Drivers must use the toll lane at least four times a month to avoid the maintenance fee. Some carpoolers and solo motorists who used the lanes infrequently said the monthly charge discouraged them from buying the \$40 transponder, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

Metro Express Lanes’ operators will determine whether the number of users rises while the monthly fee is suspended, as well as the effect on the project’s income, which totaled about \$3 million in the first three months of operation.

• **SACRAMENTO COUNTY** supervisors have taken greater control over how the county spends state funds to **manage criminal offenders**. It could mean a greater share of money going toward rehabilitation of inmates and probationers.

The supervisors previously thought an advisory body had primary budget authority, but county counsel said nothing in the law precluded supervisors from exercising their constitutional right to enact budgets.

The state started diverting lower-level offenders and funds to counties



Photo courtesy of Hennepin County, Minn.

Participants begin their lap around the concourse at the Minnesota Twins’ Target Field, May 1. **HENNEPIN COUNTY**’s Public Health Department, the Minnesota Twins and other community partners sponsored the fifth annual Step To It Challenge. The challenge is a friendly competition that uses walking and other physical activity to help people improve their health and get outside after a long winter.

in 2011 to reduce its prison population. Since that time, Sacramento County has faced criticism for spending most of its funding on incarceration and supervision.

The state law mandating the switch in responsibility says county supervisors could only reject plans from Community Corrections Partnerships with a supermajority vote.

## ► FLORIDA

• **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY** is demanding the Miami Beach Community Health Center **repay \$580,000 in federal funds** after a county review found unsupported and inaccurate bills were submitted, the *Miami Herald* reported.

A majority of the center’s funding comes directly from the federal government, but part of it also comes from a smaller grant that is administered through the county. The county found that, in some cases, the center lacked documentation for charges billed to the county. In other cases, the documentation submitted didn’t match the charges billed to the county.

• **PASCO COUNTY** plans to **sue international motocross star** Chad Reed to stop him from using his 63-acre compound for training and go-kart racing.

The county’s legal staff say Reed has continued to race motocross bikes at the complex even though he forfeited the conditional-zoning permit for the track. County commissioners were set to revoke the conditional-use permit for Reed’s motocross track in March when he thwarted them by transferring ownership of the entire 63-acre compound to a trust for his two children, according to the *Tampa Tribune*.

Last year he built a mile-long paved go-kart racing track on the property and started racing 250cc-engine shifter go-karts with friends. Neighbors complained about the noise, and county zoning officials said the karts were not allowed on the site without a conditional-use permit.

Reed originally was granted a conditional-use permit in 2004 for a four-acre training track on his property. Six years later he expanded it to 24 acres without a permit.

## ► MARYLAND

• Residents in **FREDERICK COUNTY** can now watch live broadcasts of Board of County Commissioners meetings on their mobile devices. Viewers can tune in to live and archived meetings of the County Board, Planning Commission, a wide variety of boards and commissions, *This Week in Frederick*

County, special features and even press conferences.

The county is able to provide this new service thanks to a recent upgrade of its video streaming site.

• **MONTGOMERY COUNTY** may **pare back its tax on plastic bags**. A bill introduced to the County Council would limit the tax just to food stores, and also repeal the tax on plastic bags used for take-out food. In the past, Councilmember Roger Berliner has said he thinks the tax was not intended for bags given out at department stores where shoppers purchase larger items like bedding and cookware.

The county collected more revenue than forecast during the first year of the tax — \$2 million instead of the \$1 million estimate — a sign that shoppers weren’t quite ready to abandon their plastic bags for reusable ones, according to WAMU News.

## ► MICHIGAN

In a legal decision that could cost **MACOMB COUNTY** jail guards thousands of dollars, the Michigan Court of Appeals **reversed a 2012 court injunction** blocking increased out-of-pocket health care costs dictated by a law signed by Gov. Rick Snyder (R).

The court ruled that Macomb County Circuit Judge Edward Servitto was wrong in January 2012 to issue an injunction blocking the county from collecting insurance payments from employees while union negotiations continued. It has meant corrections officers have avoided paying up to \$388 monthly since Servitto issued his injunction. That might mean that the county declares that those officers owe the county more than \$6,000.

The result could be back pay in reverse, the *Macomb Daily* reported.

## ► NEW JERSEY

• Freeholders in **GLOUCESTER COUNTY** have voted to void **inmate-housing shared service agreements** with other counties in favor of establishing direct contracts.

In March, county officials announced plans to close the county jail and to pay **CUMBERLAND** and **SALEM** counties via shared service agreements to house its adult male prisoners.

Gloucester freeholders changed the plan to address Salem County’s concerns that the state’s shared service laws left Salem correctional officers vulnerable to layoffs. This had been an impediment to Salem County’s participation, according to the *South Jersey Times*.

Using direct contracts for the services will sidestep the seniority provisions in shared service laws.

## ► NEW YORK

The **SUFFOLK COUNTY** police officers who patrol the waters off Long Island recently received specialized training in **how to spot boozy boaters**.

They recruited volunteers who were willing to get a little tipsy so that officers could study their physical reactions and responses, WABC-TV reported. The volunteers were observed in a classroom setting, not in boats on the water.

“It’s all to get them above the legal limit of 0.08 percent to display the physiological signs cops can use as probable cause for an arrest,” said Officer Charles Boyle, Suffolk County Police Department.

“We really need the real live intoxicated people so we can do the standardized field sobriety testing in a real-life atmosphere,” Boyle said.

## ► OHIO

The Amish of Hardin County and **HARDIN COUNTY** health officials have reached a compromise over **rules for wells and outhouses**



# The H.R. Doctor Is In

## Preview of Coming Attractions

The NACo 2013 County Solutions and Idea Marketplace (also known as the annual conference) in Tarrant County, Texas July 19–22 promises to be a spectacular event, well-attended and full of learning opportunities. NACo Executive Director Matt Chase and the conference host committee are working to create quite a memorable event.

These kinds of opportunities for sharing, seeing how it's done in other counties around the United States and bringing back valuable takeaways make the costs of attendance well worth the general fund outlays even in times of financial stress. These pressures make times

of engaging with others all the more valuable.

In all humility, and despite the use of words like “spectacular” or “memorable event,” there will be two workshops presented by the HR Doctor. For the tiny, but distinguished group of HR Doctor article readers (you know who you are) this will provide a chance for not only attendance at fast-paced, humorous workshops, but a chance to meet individually for some clinical and private chats about issues of concern to you in your specific counties.

The workshops are part of a “grand bargain” with NACo for a workshop at every national

**We work with and through others to make great things happen.**

conference — with speaking fees waived — to help give back to my county friends. The phrase “grand bargain” is used advisedly since it evokes memories of failure when used anywhere near the word “Congress.”

Nonetheless, the content of the workshops will be a laser beam pointed directly at county officials

to help insure their success back home. One key point will be that every executive, certainly including county officials, must also be HR professionals in order to be most successful.

We work with and through others to make great things happen. We work amidst a rather staggering array of laws, regulations, demands and pressures full of HR liabilities. How do you do great HR? What can you do to make sure that your own county is able to meet these challenges? How can this be done with little cost and maximizing local resources? The issues are complex, but perhaps surprisingly, there are field-tested

ways of managing them regardless of the county's size.

The second workshop will be a joint effort by The HR Doctor and a very good friend who is a world-class expert in the personal protection of top government and business executives. Christopher Hagon comes from the United Kingdom and spent more than two decades at Scotland Yard, retiring with the rank of superintendent. For years, Hagon was responsible for the close personal protection of the queen and other members of the royal family. He now heads a world-wide incident management and executive protection organization.

Together we will look at risks, liabilities and measures to mitigate threats to elected and appointed officials, and family members in order to “put off the day” when something bad happens. The horrors of the murder and acute injury of public officials and family members have been in the news repeatedly recently. We all think about it whether we admit it or not. Dialing 911 after the fact is not enough. Carrying a personal nuclear weapon is not enough. This workshop will help us balance our security concerns with our obligation to be accessible to constituents, employees and the public generally.

I hope to see you in Texas and to help you any way I can. Just look for me... I'll be the one in the big hat.



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

## Arlington County, Va. jail gets 'thumbs-up' review

NEWS FROM *from page 13*

at new Amish homes, *The Columbus Dispatch* reported.

Last year, the Kenton-Hardin Board of Health said it no longer would exempt the Amish from rules requiring potable wells and watertight tanks under privies. It grandfathered existing homes but was enforcing the requirement on new construction.

Two homes were condemned April 10, and their residents were facing eviction within weeks if they did not comply.

Health officials said one homeowner has designed a cap for his well, and it has been conditionally approved. The Board of Health also said families could design and build their own watertight tanks under their outhouses, but a county engineer will have to inspect and approve them.

### ► PENNSYLVANIA

Age 50 is the new 60 for CUMBERLAND COUNTY senior centers. The county's six centers have **lowered their minimum membership age** requirement to the half-century mark.

The centers' offerings range from exercise, consumer and health education classes to bingo and line dancing, according to *The Patriot-News*.

“This generation of adults understands that physical activity is the number one thing that people of all ages can do to help prevent disease and maintain good health, said Deb Micklo, senior center coordinator. “And they are looking to remain

active and healthy.”

Some fees will be required for members ages 50 through 59, such as \$5 for lunch and charges for some exercise programs.

### ► TEXAS

A tip submitted through the HARRIS COUNTY Sheriff's Office's **iWatchHarrisCounty mobile app** led authorities to an illegal marijuana-growing operation worth about \$2.5 million and the arrest two men.

Deputies said a resident submitted information about one grow-house operation where law enforcement officials found 269 hydroponic marijuana plants and another where they found 297 plants, the *Houston Chronicle* reported.

iWatchHarrisCounty is a free smartphone app launched in 2011 that allows the public to report suspicious persons or activity anonymously, anywhere, any time. For more information, visit [www.iWatchHarrisCounty.com](http://www.iWatchHarrisCounty.com).

### ► VIRGINIA

A positive experience at the ARLINGTON COUNTY jail prompted one inmate to **write a rave review on Yelp**.

“At no time did the officer violate any of my constitutional privileges and even gave me a juice box after I said I was thirsty,” Wendi L wrote. “If you're going to get arrested, do it in Arlington County.”

The review was mentioned on Comedy Central's *Colbert Report*. See this story online at [www.naco.org/countynews](http://www.naco.org/countynews) to see a clip of the show

and to read the Yelp review.

### ► WASHINGTON

More than 600 people who purchased annual parking passes for six CLARK COUNTY regional parks and boat launches will receive letters from the county **offering refunds**.

County commissioners recently voted 2–1 to eliminate the fees, the majority saying they were an impediment to low-income users and stifled economic growth.

The general fund now will pay for the \$325,000 annual shortfall that will result from removing the fees, which range from \$2 to \$8, according to *The Columbian*.

Commissioner David Madore had made the fees a campaign issue during his run for office last year. “Finally, we are doing something good for the community,” he said. “We are restoring the free use of our parks.”

Opponents said the move would shift the cost of parking from the facilities' users to all county residents through the general fund.

The county operates 88 sites, including parks, natural areas and trails, Public Works Director Pete Capell told *The Oregonian*. Twenty-four of those have parking areas, but only six charged for parking.

### ► WISCONSIN

Hoping to forestall state action, the MILWAUKEE COUNTY Board has **adopted a reform plan** of its own. The State Legislature is devising a more comprehensive measure that's expected to be voted on this month, the *Journal Sentinel* reported.

The County Board's plan would cut supervisors' pay 20 percent, eliminate half the board's staff, and require supervisors to receive training on their proper role. It also would seek approval from the state to cut supervisors' current four-year terms in half and redistrict the county into fewer districts, decreasing the board's size.

The State Legislature is proposing larger cuts to supervisors' pay. It's also considering a number of changes that would limit the County Board's role in labor negotiations, contracts and land sales.

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

## Job Market & Classifieds

### ■ COUNTY MANAGER – LINCOLN COUNTY, N.C.

Salary: DOQ.

Lincoln County (79,313 population). Responsible to five-member Board of Commissioners and serves as chief administrative officer for 22 departments (665 full time employees) with an annual operating budget of \$114 million.

Located in the foothills of the Piedmont Region of North Carolina adjacent to Lake Norman, Lincoln County is a fast growing county 30 miles northwest of Charlotte. More information about the County may be obtained through our website, [www.lincolncounty.org](http://www.lincolncounty.org). Current manager is retiring June 30.

Minimum requirements include a master's degree in public administration, public policy or related field; ten or more years of progressively responsible experience in local government administration; or equivalent combination of education & experience. Successful candidate must be an innovative leader with strong interpersonal skills and a proven ability to effectively interact with elected officials, employees, and citizens.

Salary commensurate with experience and qualifications. Obtain applications on the county's website and submit with letter of interest and resume to: Lincoln County, Attn: Clerk to the Board, 115 West Main Street, Lincolnton, NC 28092. Deadline: Open Until Filled. EOE.





## Conference Speaker



Our closing session will be on Monday, July 22, and just one of the highlights of this session is a presentation by J.R. Martinez.

In 2003, Martinez suffered severe burns to 34 percent of his body after his Humvee hit a roadside bomb in Iraq. He currently is a spokesperson for Operation Finally Home, an organization that builds mortgage free homes for disabled veterans and is also involved with Phoenix Society for burn survivors. Recently, J.R. Martinez won season 13 of "Dancing with the Stars" and was on the cover of People Magazine and was one of the magazine's 25 Most Intriguing People of 2011.

Register now at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).

# July 19–22

Fort Worth Convention Center  
Fort Worth-Tarrant County, Texas

NACO *National Association of Counties*

# 2013 County Solutions and Idea Marketplace

The Annual Conference of the  
National Association of Counties





## Financial Services News

# NACo-Nationwide Scholarship Winners: Start Saving for Retirement Early

The eighth annual NACo-Nationwide Scholarship Essay Contest demonstrated a significant understanding of the importance of preparing financially for retirement.

Lisa Cole, director of the NACo Financial Services Corporation, said this year's entries were strong: "Nearly 136 students responded, and the answers they gave developed an impressive list of actions and strategies to help Americans to take responsibility for their retirement."

Graduating high school seniors whose parent or grandparent actively contributes to a 457 plan offered through the NACo Deferred Compensation Program were eligible. They were asked to write a short essay describing why it is important for public sector employees to start early when saving for retirement.

The students were not asked to consider what risks that long-term saving may entail, but it's worth



2013 NACo-Nationwide scholarship winners (l-r): Zachary Jesse, Samuel Stetkevich, Kennedy VanRavestein and Brandon Zimmer.

keeping in mind that investing involves market risk, including possible loss of principal.

These four seniors will each receive a \$2,000 scholarship from Nationwide and NACo. The excerpts from their submissions suggest that these students have a strong grasp on the subject.

The winning entries were submitted by:

### Zachary Jesse – Cook County, Ill.

Zachary argues that the best reason for starting to save for retirement early is it involves long-term investing, which allows employees to take more risk with their investments while they are younger. This level of risk could mean more financial gains.

Another reason, he says, is the advantage of compounding: Whatever gains employees earn can be automatically invested back into their retirement accounts. By starting younger, they can make more money because they have time on their side. If they are consistent with this approach, by the time they are in their 50s or 60s they will not have to commit more money from their paycheck to meet their financial dreams.

Zachary plans to enroll in Loyola University Chicago as a film and digital media studies major. His father, Kevin Jesse, is employed by the Cook County Adult Probation Department.

### Samuel Stetkevich – Riverside County, Calif.

For Samuel, being a high school student offers lessons in long-term planning. Some students wait until their junior year to get serious about college and by this time, their GPA cannot be brought up to the standards required by the college of their choice.

Similarly, if someone waits until they are 50 to begin planning for retirement, they have lost too much time and cannot bring their investments up to the standards required to sustain their lifestyle in retirement.

Everyone is presented with options through life. It is up to each

individual to capitalize on those opportunities to plan their future.

Samuel has been accepted at 30 colleges across the United States and will likely attend one of the universities in Southern California, pursuing a major in psychology. His mother, Mary Stetkevich, is employed by the Riverside County Department of Mental Health.

### Kennedi VanRavestein – Roanoke County, Va.

Kennedi agrees that the primary benefit of saving early for retirement is the impact of compounding, which allows earnings to be reinvested to potentially earn even more.

But she also foresees medical advances increasing individual lifespans. Longevity data over the past 50 years makes it reasonable to assume that individuals graduating from high school this year can expect to live 10 to 15 years longer than their grandparents.

This additional 10 to 15 years makes early saving and planning even more important so that individuals do not outlive their savings.

Kennedi plans to attend James Madison University and major in biology before pursuing a career in physical therapy. Her mother, Brandi Vernamonti, is employed by the Western Virginia Regional Jail.

### Brandon Zimmer – St. Charles Parish, La.

Brandon concedes that until he decided to apply for the NACo scholarship, he hadn't thought much about retirement and how to plan for it.

However, he has worked part-time over the past two years and invested some money to help

defray his costs for college. This experience has allowed him to see how investments can grow, even through market swings.

He understands the concept of becoming more conservative with investing as individuals get closer to retirement. If employees start saving for retirement early, he says, they can put their money in more secure funds as they get close to retirement to make sure they have money to supplement their defined benefit pension plan.

Brandon plans to attend Louisiana College in Alexandria, La. where he has an offer to play football for the Wildcats. His mother, Sandra Zimmer, is employed by St. Charles Parish.

### Scholarship Honors 33 Years of Partnership

Nationwide sponsors the NACo-Nationwide Scholarship to recognize its over three decade continuing partnership with NACo and its member counties. The NACo-Nationwide Scholarship is just one of the services arising out of this partnership.

For additional information about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, please contact Lisa Cole by email at [lcoble@naco.org](mailto:lcoble@naco.org) or phone at 202.942.4270; or contact your Nationwide representative by calling 877.677.3678.

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

## What's in a Seal?

### » Dorchester County, S.C.

[www.dorchestercounty.net](http://www.dorchestercounty.net)



Dorchester County was founded in 1897 and was named for its first settlement area, which was established by Congregationalists in 1696. These settlers applied the name "Dorchester" after their last residence in Dorchester, Mass.

The primary focus of the seal is the old bell tower of St. George's Anglican Church located at the site of Colonial Dorchester. This is the last remaining archeological and architectural feature of Dorchester. The bell tower represents the heritage of the county going back to the town of Dorchester, its link to Dorchester, Mass. and the historical link to Dorchester, England.

The live oaks symbolize the richness of the old forests and the longevity of the tree relates to the heritage of the county.

The circle of leaves symbolize magnolia leaves and link together the hands of all the citizens of the county for a common purpose. The motto, "SERVICE, JUSTICE, PROSPERITY" represents the goals of county government. The founding year, 1897, is underneath the bell tower.

*(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).)*

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NRM-9701AO-NX (05/2013)