

NACO National Association of Counties

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

VOL. 44, NO. 15 ■ August 6, 2012

Farm Bill reauthorization remains in limbo during recess

By **ERIK JOHNSTON**
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR



Congress has left for the August recess without finishing work on the Farm, Food and Jobs bill which expires on September 30.

A five-year reauthorization passed the full Senate and the House Agriculture Committee on a bipartisan basis in June and July, respectively.

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QuickTakes

States with the Highest Economic Growth Potential

- 1) Louisiana
- 2) Virginia
- 3) North Dakota
- 4) Ohio
- 5) Utah

Business Facilities, 2012

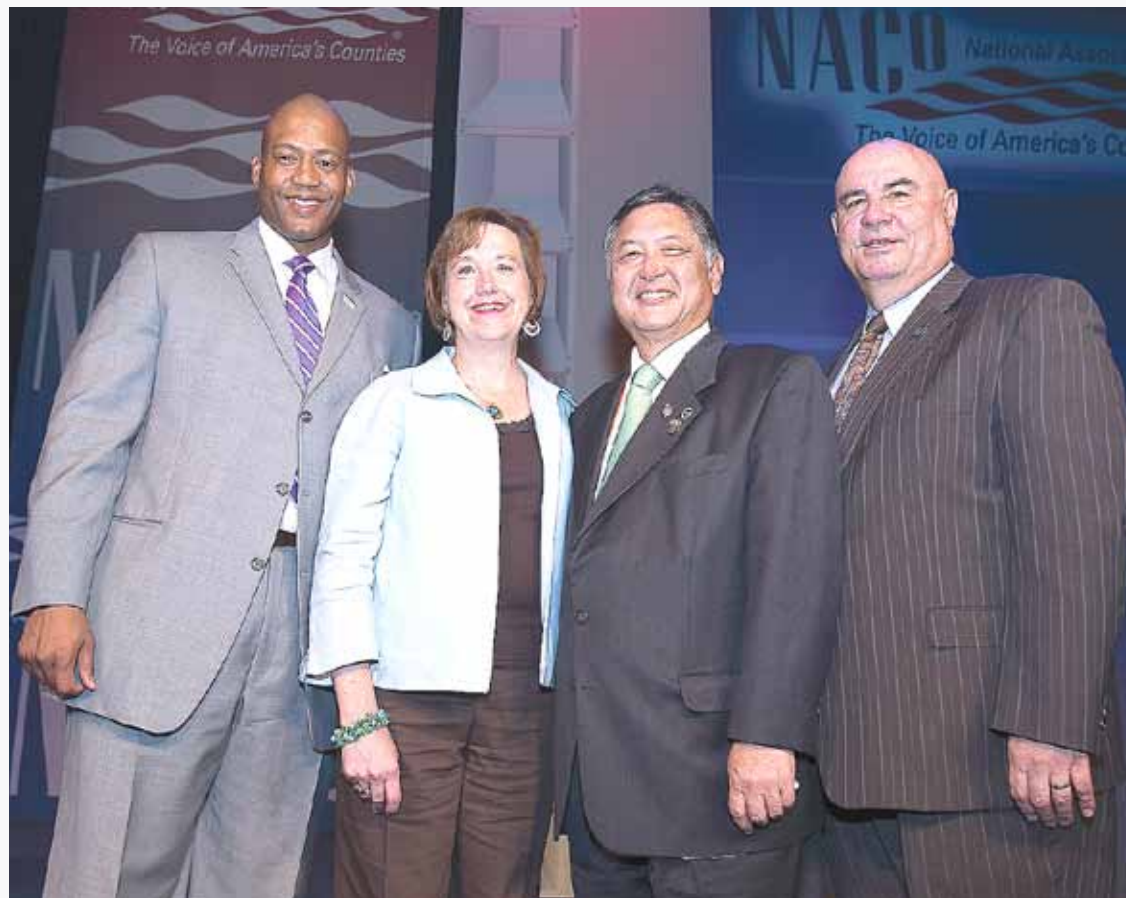


Photo by David Hathcox

NACO's 2012 leadership team takes center stage at NACO's Annual Conference. (l-r) Chris Rodgers, president; Linda Langston, first vice president; Riki Hokama, second vice president; and Lenny Eliason, immediate past president. A full conference report, including a photo review, begins on page 10.

Rodgers takes on NACO presidency; Hokama elected second VP

By **BEVERLY SCHLOTTERBECK**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Two major events marked NACO's 2012 Annual Conference: the election of a new NACO leadership team and the announcement of a new executive director to succeed 21-year veteran Larry Naake.

Douglas County, Neb. Commissioner Chris Rodgers took over as NACO president after his election at the Annual Business Meeting July 17 in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pa. Also elected to the officers' team were First Vice President Linda Langston, Linn County, Iowa supervisor; Second Vice President Riki Hokama, council member, Maui County, Hawaii,



who ran unopposed for the only contested seat; and Immediate Past President Lenny Eliason, Athens County, Ohio.

NACO's Board of Directors also approved the selection of Matthew D. Chase as the next NACO executive director. Chase, 41, joins NACO from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), which represents the nation's local government-based regional planning

and development organizations. He has served as NADO's executive director since 2003 and will begin his stint at NACO on Sept. 17.

This year's conference also featured the debut of a NACO Conference app that could be downloaded onto smartphones and iPads. The app connected conference attendees with workshop schedules, conference events, maps and local restaurants and other information related to the conference.

Another app-related item was introduced to conference attendees, this one at NACO's pre-conference Technology Summit. The NACO App Store, now in

See **CONFERENCE** page 26

Chase, new NACO exec.

Matthew D. Chase has been named NACO's new executive director. Chase will assume the executive director role at NACO on Sept. 17.

As executive director, he will serve as the spokesman for NACO and America's counties; advocate before federal policymakers with aligned organizations and partners; and promote counties and county issues to the media on behalf of NACO's more than 2,400 members.

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Matthew D. Chase

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See County News coverage of NACO's 77th Annual Conference and Exposition » **Page 10-24**

Annual survey shows shift to the GOP among elected county officials » **Page 2**

What's the impending Fiscal Cliff mean for counties » **Page 3**

County requires manufacturers to dispose of expired prescription medication » **Page 4**

CountyNews Features

Survey: County elected officials trending more Republican

Two-thirds of local leadership see nation on 'wrong track' politically

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER



The gap between Republicans and Democrats has widened significantly among the ranks of county elected officials since 2004, according to NACo's 2012 National Survey of County Elected Officials.

Fifty-two percent of those polled self-identified as Republican versus 31 percent Democrats. In 2004 and 2008 — both presidential election years — the figures were closer at about 40 percent each.

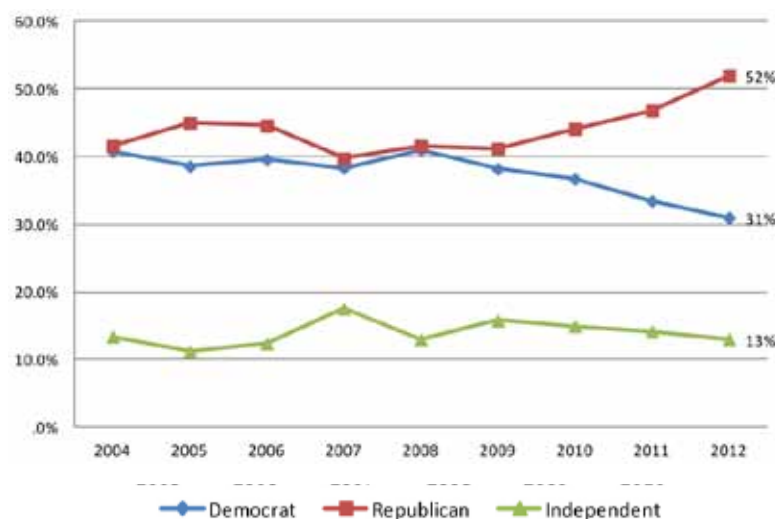
At the same time, respondents overwhelmingly (80 percent) said partisan differences in Washington are more of a problem today than in the past. However, despite county officials' increasing division along party lines, a majority responded that partisanship among county elected officials is not a problem. Not all elected county officials are required to declare a party affiliation to run in their respective states, however, many personally identify with a party.

Sixty-six percent of respondents identified themselves as very conservative (28 percent) or conservative (38 percent), while 12 percent said they were somewhat or very liberal.

A random sample of about 500 elected county leaders was interviewed for the telephone survey June 1–18 on issues such as the economy, budgets and politics. This is NACo's ninth such survey.

"The data this year showed that national-level partisan politics have reached the local level," said Jacqueline Byers, NACo's director of research. "In addition, more coun-

Party Affiliation of County Elected Officials, Since 2004



ties than ever before are struggling with their governmental structure as they try to adapt to their new fiscal realities."

That adaptation includes a belief that local government should be more entrepreneurial. Two-thirds of the respondents (66 percent) said that government ought to be run like a business; 29 percent believe government's mission makes it too different to be run in that manner. The entrepreneurial approach, perhaps not surprisingly, was much more accepted among Republicans (76 percent) than among Democrats (51 percent), but in each case, a majority favored the approach.

This year, 67 percent of respondents said the nation's politics and policies are on the wrong track, while 26 percent said things are heading in the right direction. The percentage of "wrong track" responders is at its highest since 2008, when 71 percent of those polled shared that view.

Responses correlated with party affiliation; of those saying the country is on the right track, 8 percent were Republicans, 17 percent independents and 61 percent Democrats.

County elected officials see the economy and joblessness as the most important problems facing the nation today, with concerns about the federal government's ability to function effectively close behind.

Fifty-four percent of those polled this year referenced the economy, jobs or the recession in response to an open-ended question about the most important problem facing the United States today. Concern about these issues was strongest in the South (61 percent). Thirty-four percent of those responding said federal government ineffectiveness was the biggest problem.

As county spending has contracted during the recession and recovery, officials were asked whether cuts they have made are permanent; 47 percent

believe they are. Those surveyed also were asked whether these cuts "ought" to be permanent: 42 percent said "yes," while 44 percent replied that the cuts ought to be restored.

Survey Highlights

- Views of the national economy are largely unchanged since 2009; in the most recent survey, 89 percent rated the economy as fair or poor. However, views of the localeconomy have steadily improved over the past two years with 43 percent rating it excellent (5 percent) or good (38 percent). Counties' assessments of their fiscal health are at their highest since 2006. On a scale of 1 to 10, county elected officials rated their fiscal health at 6.7 on average. In 2011, it was 6.4.

- Fifty-two percent of respondents believe that counties are likely to move toward a fee-for-services model of financing; while 48 percent find this to be an inappropriate model for funding county services. Another option for counties to provide services is by contracting with the private sector. Two-thirds of county elected officials (66 percent) favor contracting with private firms to deliver county services; 26 percent oppose such contracts.

- Fifty-one percent of respondents said that they are not too concerned (35 percent) or not concerned at all (16 percent) about their county's ability to replace the skills of retiring county employees. Representatives from smaller counties expressed a slightly higher level of concern about replacing skilled workers than did those from larger counties.

- Forty-one percent of county elected officials believe that their

constituents understand very little about county government, and they give public schools poor marks for educating students about civics and the role of local government.

Demographics

On the whole, county commissioners are getting younger; this year the average age of respondents was 60 compared to 62 in 2011. Among other statistics, the 2012 survey found that respondents were 89 percent white, 7 percent black, 2.4 percent Hispanic, 1 percent Asian and 3 percent other. Eighty-eight percent of respondents were male and 12 percent female.

The county elected officials in the 2012 survey have worked in county government, in some capacity, an average of 12 years. They have been in their current role for just over 8 years on average, although a plurality (41 percent) has served less than 5 years.

**For a link to the full survey report, see this story online at www.naco.org/countrynews.*

CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

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Published biweekly except August by:
National Association of Counties

Research Foundation, Inc.
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(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630
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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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Chase worked with planning and development organizations

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He will also direct the operations, initiatives and staff of the association.

The announcement came as NACo members gathered in Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), Pa. for the association's 77th Annual Conference and Exposition.

"I am thrilled that Matt has accepted the offer to become our executive director. His talents will enhance our efforts to represent counties in Washington and continue to improve the connection between NACo and our local county elected officials," said Lenny Eliason, NACo immediate

president and Athens County, Ohio commissioner. "Matt's experiences at National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) have prepared him to succeed at NACo and keep the shine on our 75-year legacy as the representative of county officials nationwide. Matt has big shoes to fill replacing our retiring director, Larry Naake."

"It is a great honor to be joining the NACo team. The association and its membership of county officials are essential leaders in preparing America for a better future," Chase said. "NACo has an incredibly talented group of leaders, members and staff who are dedicated to improving the quality

of life, public services and economic conditions across the country. I look forward to furthering the association's proud legacy of advancing the goals of our nation's counties."

Chase joins NACo from NADO, which represents the nation's local government-based regional planning and development organizations, where he has served in a number of capacities including executive director, legislative affairs director and deputy executive director. He began his career with the Professional Managers Association. He holds a bachelor's degree from Hartwick College, and a master's degree in political management from The George

Washington University.

"I personally want to thank Larry Naake for his 21 years of service to NACo and the extraordinary leadership he has provided to our organization and local governments across the country," Eliason said.

"Larry guided NACo through some very difficult times and has built it into a very successful organization. We will miss his leadership and wish him well in the next chapter of his life. I know that Matt is looking forward to building upon the strong foundation that Larry has built and is eager to lead all of the talented and dedicated staff of NACo to fulfill our important mission."

HHS announces TANF work requirement waiver

By MARILINA SANZ

ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The Administration for Children and Families recently released a memorandum announcing states could waive work requirements for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) — a waiver of Sec. 1115 of the Social Security Act under the TANF Block Grant. This is the first time that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has opened TANF to waiver applications.

“HHS is encouraging states to consider new, more effective ways to meet the goals of TANF, particularly helping parents successfully prepare for, find, and retain employment,” the memo stated. It would allow states test “alternative and innovative strategies, policies, and procedures that are designed to improve employment outcomes for needy families.”

While the waivers may be for a particular county or group of counties, the applications must still go through the state.

The waivers would only apply to section 402 of the program, which is

the only section of the TANF law that permits waivers. The department has nonetheless determined that work requirements can also be waived, because “section 402(a)(1)(A)(iii) requires that the state plan ‘[e]nsure that parents and caretakers receiving assistance under the program engage in work activities in accordance with section 407.’” Areas that cannot be waived would include time limits and prohibitions against participation, such as the five-year waiting period for legal immigrants.

Waivers would also include better coordination with workforce development and post-secondary education, and extending the amount of time job search and vocational education could count toward meeting the work requirements, among others. NACo has long advocated for greater flexibility in these areas.

The decision to issue the waiver availability is the result of consultations the department conducted over the course of more than a year

in response to a presidential instruction to find ways to make federal programs more flexible. As part of that process, Administration for Children and Families met with NACo’s Human Services and Education Steering Committee and the National Association of County Human Services Administrators during NACo’s 2011 legislative conference.

The announcement has become quite controversial, especially the work requirement waiver proposal.

House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp (R-Mich.) and Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) sent a letter to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sibelius stating that the department does not have the authority to issue waivers on the work requirements. They subsequently introduced legislation July 18 (H.R. 6140, S.3397) to block the HHS announcement. This issue will be a bone of contention in the next attempt to extend TANF, which expires Sept. 30.

Analysis

The cliff – a train wreck waiting to happen

By EDWIN ROSADO

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

Congress is about to leave for its annual vacation called “August recess.” Many members face serious challenges at the ballot box back home. So besides attending the political conventions, maybe not as many “fact finding” missions will be held this year and more time will be spent in the district or state.

Timing is everything, and during

this recess month a key question to ask members while home is, “What are you going to do about the impending budget crisis?” We are riding the fiscal train aimed straight for a cliff.

A year ago, Congress was still dealing with the 2012 budget and was short by approximately \$1.2 trillion to meet budget estimates and revenue-raising figures. Its answer was to pass a budget with strings that required the establishment of a special committee with sweeping powers who could

come to agreement on addressing budget deficits. And if they could not, mandatory cuts would be divided equally between defense and non-defense spending. We all know that this “super-committee” disbanded in November never reaching an agreement.

The “cliff” is the perfect economic storm. It is the coming together of a series of economic deadlines that must be addressed and happen to be occurring almost

simultaneously — a potential train wreck waiting to happen. The first ledge of the cliff is the expiration of the Bush tax cuts which are set to end on Jan. 1, 2013. The Bush cuts include popular tax breaks such as the marriage penalty, limitations on personal exemptions and itemized deductions, refundable credits, marginal tax rates, estate tax, capital gains, dividends, the

See **CLIFF** page 24

When population
growth strains
service delivery,
you've got a problem.

Between 2000 and 2010, Loudoun County's population grew by roughly 84%, making it one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. At the same time, recession-era budget cuts prevented the county from bringing on staff to maintain pace with this growth.

“Laserfiche has allowed us to simplify case management and ease the burden on our overworked staff. In addition, we're **saving approximately \$51,000 a year** on office supplies alone,” says Susan Pratt, Fiscal Manager for the Department of Family Services.

Additional departments within Loudoun County using Laserfiche to increase efficiency include the Assessor's Office, Building & Development, Environmental Health and the Controller's Office, among others.



Visit laserfiche.com/loudouncounty to download the Loudoun County white paper.

Court rejects state limits on local regulation of oil, gas industry

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

A Pennsylvania state court has struck down a provision of a new law that would have banned localities from using zoning to restrict oil and gas operations in the state's Marcellus Shale.

In a majority 4-3 opinion, the presiding judge wrote that by requiring municipalities to violate their comprehensive plans for growth and development, "the law violates

substantive due process because it does not protect the interests of neighboring property owners from harm, alters the character of neighborhoods and makes irrational classifications."

The ruling largely impacts the state's townships — which have "primacy" in zoning matters, according to Doug Hill, executive director of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP). However, some counties in the state are responsible for zoning in their

townships that don't have local regulations.

Lycoming County is one such jurisdiction; it handles zoning for 18 of its 52 municipalities, Planning Director Kurt Hausammann said. Luzerne County is another, handling planning and zoning for 23 of its 76 municipalities.

"For zoning the counties and the local municipalities are the foot soldiers," Jim Bobeck, chairman of the Luzerne County Council, told the *Times Leader*. "They are the

closest link with the land itself and should have the ability to choose what their land uses are as they assess the risks."

At issue was Act 13, passed in February of this year with the backing of CCAP and the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors. Counties supported it because it provided environmental protections and two kinds of industry-funded impact fees that would flow back to county and township coffers to deal with any negative oil and gas industry impacts. CCAP was not a party to the lawsuit challenging the law's constitutionality. The suit was brought by townships in Allegheny, Bucks and Washington counties, an environmental group and a physician.

Hausammann is pleased with the outcome because the county had amended its zoning ordinance in 2011 to deal with oil and gas industry impacts — with the industry's participation. Lycoming

County has issued 147 oil and gas permits since January, the most of any county in Pennsylvania, he said.

"As a county, we were supportive of Act 13 because of the economic benefits that it provides to our county and our municipalities," Hausammann said. "However, we are pleased that the environmental provisions and the impact fee provisions were upheld while overturning the zoning provisions — because we felt that we have a very good zoning ordinance in place. But we can live with it either way."

The governor plans to appeal the court's decision to the state Supreme Court. He said, "The provisions struck down by the Commonwealth Court are critically important for job creators who are employing more than 240,000 Pennsylvanians, for landowners seeking to exercise their property rights, and for local governments looking for guidance on how they may reasonably regulate oil and gas operations."

First-in-nation disposal mandate targets pharmaceutical companies

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER



Prescription drugs have helped countless people over the years, but they have also posed a myriad of dangers. Expired pills in medicine cabinets can be taken by accident. Teenagers have raided them for so-called "pharm parties." Flushing or trashing pharmaceuticals can harm the environment.

Counties and local governments across the United States have coordinated prescription drug collections. But Alameda County, Calif. has gone a step further; its Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a Safe Drug Disposal Ordinance late last month, the first of its kind in the nation.

It requires drug companies to pay for collection and disposal of prescription and over-the-counter medications if their products are distributed within the county. County officials met with pharmaceutical representatives while going through drafts of the ordinance and settled on a \$1,000-a-day fine for companies that don't participate, though the companies could also manage county-approved collection plans of their own.

The ordinance requires that any medications, regardless of the producer, must be accepted by the collection programs. It also prevents drug companies from charging a specific point-of-sale fee to recoup the costs of their collection programs. Several pharmaceutical companies can collaborate on a collection program, proposals for which are due next June.

"I am proud that we've found a more sustainable policy solution that promotes good will and corporate social responsibility," said Supervisor

Nate Miley, president of the Board of Supervisors. "The community's growing demand for more permanent and convenient medication disposal sites goes far beyond what the county can fund and operate on its own."

The county had previously paid close to \$330,000 to dispose of drugs culled from 28 collection points. The Food and Drug Administration recommends collection of expired medication as the best disposal method.

According to Alameda County Household Hazardous Waste Programs, about 1.5 million of the county's residents have as much as 681 tons of unwanted drugs stockpiled in medicine cabinets. Poisoning is also the fastest rising cause of accidental death among older adults in the county particularly from prescription and illicit drugs.

Of the \$186 million in profits generated annually by drug companies in Alameda County, officials say the projected cost of a comprehensive program producer-funded program would be about 1 cent for every \$33 of pharmaceuticals sold in the county.

The program is modeled on one British Columbia, Canada. The county's Medication Education Disposal Safety Coalition (MEDS), a local grassroots organization, brought it to Miley's attention and partnered with his office to bring the legislation forward. MEDS is concerned about senior safety issues and prescription drug abuse by adults and children.

"They let me know that throwing medication away wasn't a viable solution, that we really had to get on the pharmaceutical companies to contribute to the cleanup," he said.

In discussions, Miley said the drug makers never changed their attitude that medication could be safely disposed of by grinding it up and

mixing it with coffee grounds or cat litter — an FDA-approved disposal method if no medicine take-back program is available.

"It could still infiltrate the water supply," Miley said. "I got a thorough education over the last few years about drug disposal."

The San Francisco-based environmental group Clean Water Action (CWA) has lauded the ordinance as a good way to prevent water contamination by prescription drugs. "This ordinance is the low-hanging fruit that gives us something that we can do now to help avoid medication waste from getting into our environment at the source," said Andria Ventura, a CWA spokeswoman. "It makes financial, environmental and social sense."

Though the pharmaceutical company representatives who opposed the ordinance were not open to revising their stance, Miley said the meetings with them earlier this year gave the county's attorneys a chance to sharpen the ordinance, considering some of the issues drug manufacturers raised that could derail the law in court.

"Holding our breath and we anticipate a lawsuit," he said. "We're waiting to see where they'll poke their finger. They might try to get the Drug Enforcement Administration involved, or the state public health director, because it involves hazardous materials. If we can get buy-in from other counties, though, we might be able to force the state's hand into taking this seriously."

San Francisco, San Mateo and Contra Costa counties have contacted Alameda County about adapting the ordinance to their needs.

**To read Alameda County's drug disposal ordinance, see this story online at www.naco.org/countynews.*

Profiles in Service



» Paul J. Pearce

NACo Board Member
County Chairman
Skamania County, Wash.

Number of years active in NACo: 6

Years in public service: 7.5 years – county commissioner; 28 years – law enforcement and 4 years – marine corps

Occupation: county commissioner

Education: A.A. law enforcement, Washington State Executive Certification; 2008 County Leadership Institute graduate

The hardest thing I've ever done: marine corps boot camp

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Colin Powell (a proud life well lived), Bobby Kennedy (a magnificent life cut short), and Theodore Roosevelt (many lives lived in one).

A dream I have is to: get a law degree.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: was pursuing a theology degree when I became a cop.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: working undercover five years on narcotics and biker gangs.

My favorite way to relax is: reading a good historical book.

I'm most proud of: my kids Justin and Nicoleta.

Every morning I read: way too many emails.

My favorite meal is: original recipe with mac and cheese.

My pet peeve is: people who don't know how to properly participate in a large meeting.

My motto is: "If you don't face into the wind you'll end up blown about by it." – Dan'l Boone

The last book I read was: *Eisenhower in War and Peace*.

My favorite movie is: *The Breakfast Club*.

My favorite music is: nearly everything Garth Brooks.

My favorite president is: George Washington, who very few of us know anything about and who defined the presidency.

Subcommittee approves FY13 Labor-HHS-Education Approps

By PAUL BEDDOE, DESEREE GARDNER
MARILINA SANZ
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORS

The House Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee approved its draft FY13 appropriations bill July 18. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its 2013 bill in June, but Congress is not expected to act on a final bill before adjourning in October.

The bill would fund the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) at \$68.3 billion—\$1.3 billion below this year's level, \$2.7 billion below the Senate bill and \$1.8 billion below the president's budget request. It would also provide \$12 billion for the Department of Labor, which is \$497 million below FY12 levels, and \$72 million below the president's FY13 budget request. The Department of Education would be funded at \$70 billion, \$1.1 billion below FY12 and \$2.9 billion below the president's request.

The subcommittee chairman, Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-Mont.), highlighted the bill's denial of funds for Health and Human Services (HHS) to implement programs and policies authorized in the Affordable Care Act (ACA). "This committee cannot repeal 'Obamacare' directly," said Rehberg in his opening statement. "But we can prevent it from being further implemented with taxpayer dollars we have jurisdiction over. The legislation therefore prevents the Secretary of Health and Human Services from using any funding in this bill to continue to implement Obamacare. It also rescinds unspent funds that have already been made available in the health care law itself. These dollars are directed to other, higher priority programs." These cuts would amount to \$8.6 billion in FY13.

Despite the overall reduced funding levels, two programs that were extremely vulnerable, the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) (\$1.7 billion) and the Community

Services Block Grant (CSBG) (\$712 million), survived unscathed. SSBG had been targeted for elimination in the House Budget Reconciliation bill, and the president's budget recommended a 50 percent reduction in CSBG. The Senate bill also protects both programs. Other

program highlights include:

Labor and Employment

- **Workforce Investment Act Title I Grants to States:** \$2.6 billion in funding for WIA Title I grants to states, which includes Adult (\$769 million), Dislocated Worker (\$1

billion) and Youth (\$824 million) grants. The bill allocated \$123.6 million to the Dislocated Worker National Reserve Fund. These numbers are consistent with current funding and the Senate bill.

- **Job Corps:** \$1.5 billion for the Office of Job Corps.

- **Wagner Peyser Grants to States:** \$679 million for Wagner Peyser Grants to States.

- **Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS):** \$262 million for VETS, which is \$3 million

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NRM-8971AC-NX1 (7/12)

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Budget Control Act will impact 2013 domestic programs



Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) released a new report July 25 outlining the effects of automatic cuts to programs under the jurisdiction of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies, which he chairs.

The cuts — set to go into effect on Jan. 1, 2013 — referred to as “sequestration,” were imposed by the Budget Control Act as an incentive for the bipartisan, bi-cameral committee created by the act to come up with a plan to reduce the deficit.

Since the committee failed to reach agreement, sequestration is adding to the worries over the “fiscal cliff” that will confront the lame duck Congress after the election.

In his foreword to the report, Harkin observed that most of the discussion has focused on cuts to Pentagon spending. He wrote, “The defense industry has highlighted the potential impact of an across-the-board cut on defense-related jobs and services.

“Some members of Congress are now demanding that we exempt the Pentagon from sequestration, either by finding offsets for the defense cuts only or by making non-defense programs bear the full brunt of the entire \$1.2 trillion in cuts.”

The report assumes a 7.8 percent across-the-board cut to non-defense discretionary spending in FY13 and estimates the effect of sequestration on programs administered by the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, including a state-by-state analysis. It also estimates the effect on jobs, where possible.

The report estimates, for instance, that under sequestration the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant would cover 169,375 fewer admissions to substance abuse treatment across the country in FY13 than under current appropriations levels.

Sen. Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), the subcommittee’s ranking Republican member, said in a statement that he shared Harkin’s general concern over the impact of sequestration on programs under their jurisdiction. Questioning the report’s assumptions, Shelby called on the Obama administration to explain how it intends to implement sequestration.

“We simply have too little definitive information to know if these numbers are accurate,” Shelby said. “The only thing we do know is that agencies, programs and states will have some flexibility to determine how reductions are taken and that all cuts will not necessarily lead to layoffs.”

NACo strongly supports a balanced approach to deficit reduction and opposes making non-defense discretionary accounts that support county services bear a disproportionate share of budget cuts.

**See this story at www.naco.org/countynews for links to Sen. Harkin’s report and Sen. Shelby’s statement.*

Appropriations bill denies ACA implementation funds

APPROPS from page 5

above the president’s request. The funding will support the administration’s request to eliminate the \$15 million Veterans Workforce Investment Program. The bill also provides increased funding for the Transition Assistance Program, which provides job training and job search assistance to transitioning service members seeking civilian employment.

The bill provides no funding for the Workforce Innovation Fund, and retains the Community Service Employment for Older Americans program under the Department of Labor’s, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) purview. The president’s budget request proposed a transfer of \$448 million for the Community Service Employment for Older Americans program to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Health

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** Allocates \$5.75 billion for CDC, which is \$66 million more than this year. CDC’s funding includes an \$84 billion increase for Public Health Preparedness and Response which would support local public health departments and other county all-hazards preparedness activities.
- **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS):** The CMS program management account is funded at \$3.5 billion, \$409 million below this year’s level. It also zeroes out funding for the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, which plays a key role in implementing the ACA.
- **Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA):** Community Health Centers would be level-funded at \$1.5 billion, but would include a \$300 million rescission of previous year funding authorized by the ACA. HRSA’s rural health programs would get \$139 million, \$1.4 million more than this year.


The bill would not only extend long-standing restrictions on federal funding for abortions, but also would cut all funding for Planned Parenthood unless it certifies that it will not provide abortions.

Human Services and Education

- **Administration for Children and Families:** In addition to providing current funding for SSBG and CSBG, the bill also maintains last year’s level for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) at \$3.4 billion. Head Start would receive \$8 billion, an increase of \$45.5 million, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) would receive \$2.3 billion, an increase of \$25 million. The Senate bill includes the same level of funding for LIHEAP and Head Start, and \$2.4 billion for CCDBG.

as FY12. Special Education Grants to states would increase by \$500 million for a total of \$12.1 billion. The senate numbers are slightly higher. The maximum Pell Grant award would increase to \$5,635 as required by law. The bill would eliminate several programs, including the Race to the Top competitive grants, which the Senate does not eliminate.

CBO releases Affordable Care Act cost estimates



The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released two new cost analyses of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). One report estimates the cost of implementing the ACA, factoring in the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling that the Medicaid expansion would be optional for states, and the other estimates the cost of repealing the act.

CBO now estimates that the ACA health insurance coverage expansion provisions will cost the federal government \$1.16 billion over 11 years versus the \$1.25 billion it projected last March for that same period, for a net savings of \$84 billion. The savings result from lower Medicaid enrollment due to states opting out of the Medicaid expansion. Some individuals who would have been Medicaid-eligible are expected to enroll in federally subsidized health insurance coverage through the new exchanges, but those cost increases would be more than offset by the projected drop in

Medicaid costs.

Due to the Supreme Court’s decision, CBO also predicts that 6 million fewer people would be covered by Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by 2022. CBO estimates that 3 million more people will have coverage in the exchanges, and 3 million more people will remain uninsured.

CBO predicts that H.R. 6079, the Repeal of Obamacare Act, passed by the House on July 11, would increase the federal budget deficit by a net of \$109 billion over 10 years. CBO reasons that eliminating ACA spending — Medicaid expansion, exchange subsidies, public health and other expenses — would reduce the deficit, but that the net deficit reduction would be outweighed by eliminating the ACA’s taxes, fees and penalties.

The estimates were released July 24.

**See this story at www.naco.org/countynews for links to CBO’s reports.*

Word Search

Swift County, Minn. Facts

Read more about Swift County in “What’s In a Seal?”

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

- AGRICULTURE** (main industry)

APPLETON (water power site)

BENSON (town, trading center for railroad in 1869)

CAMP LAKE (town)

DEGRAFF (trading center for railroad in 1869)

FAIRFIELD (town)

FARMING (main part of agriculture in county)
- HENRY SWIFT** (Gov. of Minn. in 1863)

KERKHOVEN (trading center for railroad in 1869)

RAILROAD (reached county in 1869 through four trading centers)

RANDALL (trading center for railroad in 1869)

SWIFT FALLS (water power site)

Created by Christopher Johnson

Enterprise content management system clears way

By JUDGE JUSTIN W. LEWIS
HILL COUNTY, TEXAS



Judge Justin W. Lewis
Hill County, Texas

County officials must figure out how to meet the needs of their constituents while providing transparency into government processes. But with shrinking budgets, staff reductions and disparate systems handling information throughout county departments, officials struggle to simply maintain services.

Faced with a similar scenario, officials in Hill County, Texas knew it was time to take action. With a 10 percent budget cut within the last two years, the county needed an enterprise-wide technology solution that offered fast and easy access to information. They also needed one capable of giving management insight into business processes and that was inexpensive to maintain.

With support from the Commissioners Court, Hill created a solution it could use in any county

office to streamline processes and leverage existing investments — an enterprise content management (ECM) system.

Prior to ECM, document retrieval for some records could take hours, explained Sharon Camarillo, IT director for Hill County. Staff typed the same information into different systems and copied paper files multiple times so each department could find information. This

tied up staff with duplicative efforts and expensive paper costs.

With ECM, all documents — no matter the department or location — are stored in a single, central database, providing staff with instant access to the information they need.

"As the custodian of the records, it was important for officials to have complete control of the documents. Files that may have taken hours to retrieve are now retrieved in seconds," said Camarillo, adding each elected official determines the security level for content access.

ECM also reduced costs associated with paper documents. Now that the majority of county departments have information access, printing and transporting documents are no longer necessary to share information, according to Camarillo. In the courts, for example, Hill County staff view and print documents without ever leaving their keyboards, speeding up the legislative process and freeing staff time for more important tasks.

"Before the courts had electronic access, staff had to call the district clerk's office to get a copy," she

ECM Snapshot in Hill County

Size: 36,000 constituents

Location: Hill County, Texas

Departments Using ECM:

- Treasurer
- District clerk
- Elections
- IT department
- Sheriff's office
- Auditor
- District court
- County judge

dexing information, which hindered reporting. Now, with a centralized document repository and additional indexing fields available, data is easier to locate.

In addition to easing budget reductions, ECM also enables the county to comply with the Texas Transparency Project, which requires government agencies to track state spending so constituents see how funds are dispersed. According to Camarillo, by the end of the year, the county plans to extend its ECM solution so constituents can easily access all public records.

"Our focus is having information at everyone's fingertips," she said. The county will provide free access to public records while charging for other services. "We'll generate revenue while providing transparency."

With ECM, Hill County reduced its use of paper, and automated processes, resulting in faster service to its 36,000 constituents. In the future, the county plans to use its ECM system to create an entirely paperless government with additional Web and mobile applications, providing anytime, anywhere access for all staff and the constituents they serve.

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www.naco.org



NACo Prescription Discount Card Program

CONGRATULATIONS!

2012 NACo Prescription Discount Card Outstanding Program Champion Award Winners

Kirby Bessant, VP, CVS Caremark presented awards to:



Valerie Brown
Supervisor
Sonoma County, CA



Allan F. Angel
Levy Court Commissioner
Kent County, DE



Lu Barron
Supervisor
Linn County, IA
(not present at award ceremony)



A special award was presented to Larry Naake, Executive Director, NACo, in recognition of his leadership of the NACo Prescription Discount Card Program since the program's inception.

Who will be the program champions in 2013? It could be you!



To learn more about the program, go to www.naco.org/drugcard or scan the QR code.

Operated by CVS Caremark.
This is NOT insurance. Discounts are only available at participating pharmacies.

Rev 08.12

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

Pretrial justice project expands to include communication strategies

By MEGHAN LEVINE
JUSTICE ASSOCIATE



On any given day, approximately two-thirds of jail inmates are held in a pretrial un-convicted status—at a cost of \$9 billion per year. Though the majority of this population is considered “releaseable,” they remain incarcerated due solely to their inability to post bail.

Jails throughout the nation have become increasingly expensive to operate and overcrowded, and counties are increasingly being forced to make difficult decisions to maintain due process and public safety in a cost-effective manner. Many counties have found that pretrial justice reforms, such as assessing risk can successfully reduce their jail populations and lower jail spending without compromising public safety.

Despite these positive results, communicating the need for pretrial reform has proved difficult for two main reasons. First, the majority of the public, though familiar with the criminal justice system, is unaware of how the pretrial process works. Second, until recently, very little public polling data existed on what worked in communicating the need for pretrial reform.

Recognizing this, one of three subcommittees in the Department of Justice’s Pretrial Justice Working Group (PJWG) has been asked to “[advance] pretrial justice policymaking through public discourse, public opinion and media coverage.” The group was formed in response to Attorney General Eric Holder’s 2011 call for national pretrial justice reform and is led by the Pretrial Justice Institute.

The Communications Subcommittee, of which NACo is a member, meets quarterly and has been working with Lake Research Partners and the Campaign Workshop in their use of focus groups, a national telephone survey, interviews with elected officials, and a poll of online activists to research effective communication strategies

and develop messaging and ad campaigns around them. To learn more about the Pretrial Justice Working Group, its subcommittees and their activities, visit <http://pretrial.org/working.html>.

Preliminary results of this research were recently highlighted at NACo’s Annual Conference in the workshop, “Communicating the Struggle between Due Process and Public Safety.” Panelists included Tim Murray, executive director of the Pretrial Justice Institute; Cherise Fanno Burdeen, chief operating officer of the Pretrial Justice Institute; and Sheriff Stan Hilkey, Mesa County, Colo. The workshop explored this polling data to look at what words resonate with the public and identified which messages are



Photo by David Hathcox

Mark Kraft, Douglas County, Neb., questions panelists at a workshop on due process and public safety.

most influential. Although this research is continuing, all work and reports are expected to be completed by September. Through a newly obtained grant with the Public Welfare Foundation, NACo plans to expand its programming opportunities and publications in the area of pretrial justice and communication strategies.

To obtain additional information regarding NACo’s pretrial justice programming, contact Meghan Levine at mlevine@naco.org or 202.942.4279.

**To learn more about the workshop, slides from the presentation are available on NACo’s Criminal Justice Web page, under the “Trainings” section.*

NACo urges multiyear reauthorization of Farm Bill

FARM BILL from page 1

Instead, the House appeared poised to pass a disaster assistance package at publication deadline after being forced to pull a one-year extension that NACo and many other groups opposed. The severe drought facing much of the nation, including more than 1,369 counties designated as drought disaster areas, is adding to the urgency for passage of farm policy that provides certainty to the nation’s producers and the communities where they live.

NACo opposed the House’s one-year extension because it eliminated mandatory funding for NACo priority programs

in rural development, renewable energy and beginning farmer and rancher development. The extension would have kept agriculture and nutrition program funding levels constant for one year. However, agriculture and nutrition programs would then likely face even greater cuts than currently proposed in any reauthorization debate next year.

The supplemental disaster assistance package, which is also included in both multi-year bills, is paid for in the House extension by cutting NACo-supported conservation programs.

NACo will continue to advocate for passage of a multiyear Farm Bill reauthorization this year that maintains funding for all titles of the Farm Bill, especially

rural development programs. This outcome is still possible if Agriculture Committee leaders are allowed to conference the Senate-passed multiyear reauthorization with the House disaster assistance package. Leaders can then create a compromise bill based on the Senate passed S.3240 and the House Agriculture Committee-passed H.R. 6083.

Action Alert: Contact your congressional delegation during the August recess and urge them to pass a multiyear reauthorization of the Farm Bill this year and to maintain mandatory funding for rural development, beginning farmer, renewable energy, nutrition and conservation easement programs in any conference negotiations.

House and Senate Proposals Differ in Treatment of NACo Supported Programs

The House Agriculture Committee passed the Federal Agriculture Reform and Risk Management Act (FARRM) (H.R. 6083) July 12. The House measure, which was approved by the committee 35 to 11, would amend and extend a number of major programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including those addressing farm income support, food and nutrition, land conservation, trade promotion, rural development, research, forestry, energy, horticulture and crop insurance, through FY17.

Like the Senate bill, the House measure repeals or consolidates more than 100 programs. The House bill would reduce overall spending by more than \$35 billion while the Senate bill cuts overall spending by \$23 billion. The main funding difference between the two bills is that the House bill achieves the majority of savings by cutting about \$16.5 billion from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the food stamps program). The Senate bill (S. 3240), which was passed on June 21, cut about \$23 billion in total spending, with \$4.5 billion in savings coming from food stamps. NACo opposes cuts to nutrition programs and will work to minimize cuts in any potential conference.

NACo is also working to oppose the major cuts to the Rural Development title found in the House bill. The current House bill includes only \$50 million in mandatory funding for rural development and cuts authorization levels by \$1.5 billion over five years, which represents a 66 percent cut in mandatory funding and 50 percent cut in authorization levels. The Senate bill maintains the majority of authorization levels and provides \$115 million in mandatory funding.

During the committee’s 15-hour mark-up, the House Agriculture committee considered about 100 amendments to the legislation, including several NACo-led amendments which reflect the

county priorities in the Rural Development title. Rep. Mike McIntyre’s (D-N.C.) amendment to provide \$50 million in mandatory funding for the rural water and wastewater infrastructure backlog was rejected by a voice vote. An amendment offered by Rep. Terri Sewell (D-Ala.) that would have required the Secretary of Agriculture to give priority to economic development projects undertaken through a collaboration of stakeholders that reflect local priorities was rejected (26–18). NACo spearheaded a letter signed by 70 national organizations in support of these amendments and in opposition to the cuts found in the House bill. NACo will continue to work to improve the Rural Development title in any potential conference.

The Senate bill includes NACo-supported policy changes to rural development programs which make authorizing language clearer, simpler and more effective for rural counties. The House bill provides two important policy changes that will simplify application forms and improve program metrics like the Senate bill, but does not include broader bipartisan NACo-supported policy changes. Specifically, NACo is working to support Senate provisions which will allow USDA to focus resources on strategic community and economic development plans on a multijurisdictional basis and a new technical assistance authority for the Essential Community Facilities Program.

The House bill provides no mandatory funding for the critical programs found in the Energy Title, while the Senate maintains \$800 million in mandatory funding for energy programs. The House bill does include the provisions of H.R. 872, which prevent the EPA from regulating pesticides under the Clean Water Act. NACo supports mandatory funding for the Energy Title and the inclusion of regulatory relief from increased pesticide regulations.

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Technology Summit touts county collaboration

CONFERENCE

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT



County collaboration was the main topic of discussion at NACo's 2012 Technology Summit, which showcases county CIOs and officials discussing issues ranging from technology-based economic development to the new NACo App Store.

NACo GIS Committee Chair and Hennepin County, Minn. Commissioner Randy Johnson kicked off the summit by proclaiming that technology investment by county governments is the only way to meet citizen needs in today's economic climate.

"We all see how technology helps counties," he added. "What we need to do is share our breakthroughs so everyone can benefit."

Among the speakers were Norm Jacknis, director, Cisco Systems Inc., who moderated a session on technology-based economic development. He advised that video communications will be the true game-changer and said companies and county governments that fully exploit video networks will separate themselves from the pack. He emphasized collaboration's direct relationship with innovation and how networks facilitate this phenomenon.

San Mateo County, Calif. Councilman Robert Ross offered a real-world example of Jacknis' assumptions by describing the county's partnership of government, education and vendors. The partnership, called the Economic Development Growth Enterprise

(EDGE), serves as a dynamic, knowledgeable catalyst that accelerates the growth of existing businesses and the formation of new ones.

Phil Bertolini, deputy county executive and CIO of Oakland County, Mich., led a session on the NACo App Store, a cloud-based application library that allows NACo members to share government-solutions knowledge across traditional borders. It was developed in partnership with NACo, Oakland County and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments to improve county government services by sharing technology with other county government agencies, via one central location.

Bertolini explained that the store provides counties a way to identify and more easily share services across the nation using VersalCode, a proprietary technology developed by Oakland County that enables Web access using any type of device.

After lunch, four speakers presented ways counties can use document management systems to make their offices faster, better and save money. Mary Soroka, administrator of special projects, Allegheny County, Pa., spoke about the county's OnBase system at the Department of Human Resources. Using this system, officials do not need to duplicate forms and can share them saving 2.5 hours per day in document searches. Lori Higdon, senior business systems analyst, Clark County, Nev., talked about File360, a document managing system that has increased productivity with reduction in retrieval time. Currently, Clark County has 28 of 36 departments using this



Photos by Jack Hernandez

Harold Tuck (center), San Diego County, Calif., displays his NACo Technologist Lifetime Achievement Award with NACo President Lenny Eliason (l) and First Vice President Chris Rodgers at the Technology Summit.

system with the rest expected to join by next year.

The summit concluded with a discussion on cloud-based services. With a population of 36,000, Summit County, Utah eased its IT demands with cloud-based Microsoft Exchange. The county's on-premise

legacy email system was more than 10 years old, required a lot of time and maintenance, and was not accessible on mobile devices.

"With the increase in mobility of smartphones and mobile workers, we needed to update our entire system while making sure items

were backed up," said Ron Boyer, director of Information Technology, Summit County.

*Resources from the 2012 NACo Technology Summit are available at <http://www.naco.org/meetings/participate/Pages/TechSummitAnn2012.aspx>.

Workshops include veterans town hall, county-wide issues

CONFERENCE

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

NACo's Annual Conference provides excellent workshops for learning timely and relevant information about issues important to county government. The following report highlights educational sessions from the 2012 conference.

Sunday, July 15

Creating, Improving, Sustaining Volunteerism in Your County

Who spoke:

- **Greg Castano**, Volunteer Arlington administrator, Arlington County, Va.
- **Bryan Desloge**, commissioner, Leon County, Fla.
- **Christine Nardecchia**, Volunteer Services administrator, Dublin, Ohio

What participants learned:

With the current national economic outlook, the call for volunteers has recently taken on a new

sense of urgency. Castano and Desloge, were among four panelists discussing ways counties can use volunteerism to build on existing

programs. They talked about the newly released NACo Volunteer Toolbox publication.

Castano spoke about how counties can implement, manage and sustain volunteers, using the example of the volunteer center in Arlington. Desloge went over what volunteerism does for counties in terms of disaster recovery. Leon County trains volunteers to be ready when any type of disaster strikes.

"Volunteerism is what makes a good community a great community," Desloge said.

(Staff Contact: Sarah Sunderman, ssunderman@naco.org, 202.942.4228.)

Counties in the Global Economy: Strategies to Attract International Tourism

Who spoke:

- **Bill Baker**, associate, Total Destination Marketing, Tualatin, Ore.
- **Joel Secundy**, vice president

See **WORKSHOPS** page 17



At the Tech Summit, Council Member Don Couch (l), Maui County, Hawaii, confers with David Ching, the county's first assistant managing director.



Photos by David Hathcox

Willie Gentry, Louisa County, Va. learns about the care and feeding of volunteers in the workshop, "Creating, Improving and Sustaining Volunteerism in Your County."

International tourists want to see more than Disneyland

WORKSHOPS from page 10

for strategic outreach, Brand USA, Washington, D.C.

• **Suzi Pegg**, vice president for international development, Allegheny Conference on Community Development, Pittsburgh, Pa.

What participants learned:

The United States' first unified tourism marketing effort doesn't feature the Washington Monument, New York City or Disney World.

That's because, according to Secundy, people worldwide are generally aware that the country exists, but only have a 2 percent clarity as to what it's all about.

As the country recovers from what has been called a lost decade of international travel, Secundy's organization, funded through private money and a portion of a federally levied fee on international travelers, is working to ensure that more than the familiar destinations are emphasized.

Baker said international tourists are interested in ordinary American life more so than the typical destinations.

"They want to go and experience the white picket fences," he said. "They want to go eat at Denny's. I'm serious."

He said the key to promoting to visitors was looking at a county from a visitor's perspective and figuring out what natural attractions can



Denny Wright, Sioux County, Iowa (l) and Clint Farlee, Ziebach, S.D. closely follow a discussion about the implications of the changing health care environment.

best be emphasized, with the caveat that some places aren't suited for tourism. Also, integrating sustainability practices attracts visitors from countries with sophisticated ecological tendencies.

Pegg said that several counties' combining their efforts to market a region can build a strong identity. One such effort went a long way to reestablishing a direct flight to Europe from Pittsburgh International Airport.

For Pegg and the Allegheny Conference, marketing the Pittsburgh region to international travelers and businessmen involves the same tactics — introducing them to the people and taking them on a trip

through the Fort Pitt Tunnels, at the end of which the entire downtown area bursts into view.

"Take them through the tunnels, and they're sold," she said.

(Staff contact: Stephanie Osborn, sosborn@naco.org, 202.942.4235.)

Untangling the Safety Net: Implications of the Changing Healthcare Environment

Who spoke:

• **Don Polzine**, executive director, Gulf Bend Center, Victoria, Texas

• **Leon Evans**, president and CEO, Center for Health Care Ser-



Joel Secundy, Brand USA, offers his take on strategies to attract international tourism during a workshop on counties and the global economy.

vices, Bexar County, Texas

• **Jim McDermott**, CEO, MHMR, Tarrant County, Texas

• **Melissa Rowan**, health care policy director, Texas Council of Community Centers

What participants learned:

Texas has the highest rate of uninsured residents of any state in the nation, and Gov. Rick Perry (R) has said the state won't expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act.

The speakers discussed what that will mean for counties largely in the arena of mental health and stressed the connection between behavioral and physical wellbeing. "A lot of

them have chronic medical conditions," Rowan said of those with mental health and substance abuse issues. In Texas, about 50 percent of adults with mental illness served by community behavioral health centers have Medicaid, Rowan said.

Managed care will play a greater role in the future for the uninsured, and Rowan said Texas' community behavioral health centers are already beginning to focus more on medical outcomes versus the number of patients seen.

"It's not just saying that we served 100 people — it is not going

See **WORKSHOPS** page 18

Economy, returning troops take center stage in workshops

WORKSHOPS from page 17

to be enough in the future," she said. "We're going to have to say, of those 100 people, here's what happened to them; here's what their health outcomes look like."

The Texas Council has formed a health care opportunities workgroup to prepare for the changing environment. It already has developed a managed care training curriculum for all levels of staff. "We've also brought in national consultants to look at the way we do our business and tell us how we can be more efficient," Rowan said.

Evans, McDermott and Polzine largely focused on how the diversion of the mentally ill from jails to proper treatment is benefiting the health of clients and the bottom lines of detention facilities.

(Staff Contact: Paul Beddoe, pbeddoe@naco.org, 202.942.4234.)

Jobs and Capital: Economic Development 2012

Who spoke:

- **Lindora Baker**, vice president, Caddo Parish, La.
- **Phil Lentendre**, program manager, Public Finance Authority
- **Erik Pages**, president, Entrenworks Consulting, Arlington County, Va.
- **Jo-El Quinlan**, senior vice president, team leader, Longhorn Steakhouse-Darden Restaurants

What participants learned:

Most of a community's job growth and capital investment comes from businesses already located there. Quinlan was among the panelists who discussed what it takes to create jobs, who creates those jobs and what counties can do to access capital.

She spoke with attendees about what her company looks for when building restaurants to create jobs. Looking at different aspects such as demographics or economic vibrancy helps decide whether a restaurant would thrive and create jobs in a particular community.

Pages talked about what counties can do to create jobs using entrepreneurs through "angel" investors, affluent individuals who provide capital for a business start-up. He also stressed that job creation takes time. "You're not going to create jobs overnight," Pages added. "It has to be a long-term county strategy."

(Staff Contact: Peter Torvik, ptorvik@naco.org, 202.942.4240.)

Messages that Resonate: Speaking with One Voice about Our Values

Who spoke:

- **Parag Mehta**, political strategist, Washington, D.C.



Thomas O'Neill, Peoria County, Ill. (center), and Major Coleman, St. Helena Parish, La. (r), follow up with Erik Pages, Entrenworks Consulting in Arlington County, Va., a workshop speaker at "Jobs and Capital: Economic Development 2012."

What participants learned:

Elected officials should govern the same way they campaign in one key respect: develop a unified message about their values and communicate that message — repeatedly, said Mehta, a Washington, D.C.-based communications expert who worked for Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, and Republican and Democrat candidates.

In a highly interactive session, he used examples from presidential campaign ads to show the value of staying on-message, connecting with your audience and giving them a sense of your vision.

This requires a "message frame," he said. "A message is something we say ... a slogan, a pithy few lines on a bumper sticker or in a speech. A message frame is a way of talking about a whole set of ideas" — and why they matter.

He encouraged county officials to bring the spirit of the campaign into governing by framing issues as campaigns do — by contrasting your position to the status quo, conveying a sense of urgency about why a change is needed and laying out a vision of how to get there.

"You don't win someone over by proving that you're smarter than they are, you win someone over by connecting with their values, by connecting with their core beliefs," Mehta said. As an example, he wouldn't defend social security solely based on facts such as a 25-point plan to save it. With that or any other issue, he said, first you have to have a conversation about why it's important.

"People in this country — when they think about politics, when they think about elections — they don't make decisions based on the brain," he said. "They make decisions based on the heart and based on the gut. That's where you have to get them."

(Staff contact: Karon Harden, kharden@naco.org, 202.942.4277.)

Counties in the Global Economy: Growing Agricultural Trade in Your Community

Who spoke:

- **Paula Brooks**, commissioner, Franklin County, Ohio
- **Patrick Kerrigan**, senior advisor, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.
- **Tim Hamilton**, executive director, Food Export Association of the Midwest USA and Food Export USA-Northeast, Chicago, Ill.
- **Sheldon Jones**, vice president, Farm Foundation, Chicago, Ill.

What participants learned:

Brooks made economic recovery sound so simple. "If we could double our exports,



Presentations at the workshop that focused on growing agricultural trade in counties drew a question from Rick Miller, Franklin County, Wash.



Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County, Ala., asks a question at an educational session exploring governance changes prompted by the "new normal."

we could solve this recession," she said.

That goal, articulated by President Obama in his 2010 State of the Union address, has potential in the agricultural sector. Obama wants that goal met by 2014, which led to the formation of the National Export Initiative. Kerrigan introduced the program, plus the Foreign Agriculture Service as resources for farmers hoping to export their crops.

Hamilton said Canada and Mexico make good export partners for businesses just entering international markets, whereas China is best for advanced exporters. Europe is not a fertile trading ground right now, though.

The U.S. food industry's primary competitive advantages lie in its quality, consistency, innovation and safety.

"We hear about food safety problems because we have such tough standards," he said. "Otherwise you can buy pretty much anything in the United States and assume you're going to be okay if you eat it. You can't get that everywhere."

Jones said China's recent decision to start importing corn was a positive for American farmers.

He said although grain consumption has decreased, animal protein in both meat and dairy is increasing.

(Staff Contact: Stephanie Osborn, sosborn@naco.org, 202.942.4235.)

Monday, July 16

NACo Town Hall: Our Troops Are Coming Home — Are We Ready?

Who spoke:

- **Sallie Clark**, commissioner, El Paso County, Colo.
- **Leon Evans**, president and CEO, the Center for Health Care

Services, Bexar County, Texas

• **Gilbert Gonzales**, director, communications and diversion, Center for Health Care Services, Bexar County, Texas

• **Mark Refowitz**, interim director, Health Care Agency, Orange County, Calif.

• **Maureen Robles, R.N.**, Veteran's Behavioral Health coordinator, Orange County, Calif.

• **Dan Weisburd**, writer and producer, "Another Kind of Valor," Toluca Lake, Calif.

What participants learned:

Counties increasingly are addressing the unmet needs of veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom — due to multiple deployments — are facing different challenges than their comrades from previous wars.

Attendees heard from county leaders on the front lines of helping vets to re-enter their communities and participated in the discussion. "Sometimes, it's harder to be left behind than it is to leave," said Clark, referring to military dependents. Counties are also helping families cope with service-related issues, she and other speakers said.

Weisburd showed several segments from "Another Kind of Valor," a docudrama he produced that illustrates the range of problems counties may have to deal with — from post-traumatic stress disorder and domestic violence to lack of housing and jobs.

Evans, Gonzales, Refowitz and Robles discussed why veterans coming home with behavioral health problems are often reluctant to seek the help they need. Reasons may include fear of jeopardizing post-military careers because of seeking

See **WORKSHOPS** page 19

Workshops address rural roads, cybersecurity, aging

WORKSHOPS from page 18

help for mental health issues, and the “warrior mentality.” They also cited examples of how they’re engaging veterans in wrap-around supportive services.

(Staff Contact: Jim Sawyer, jsawyer@naco.org, 202.661.8868.)

Towards Zero Deaths: an Ample Goal for Our Nation's Rural Roads

Who spoke:

- **David Brand**, county engineer, Madison County, Wis.
- **Brian Roberts**, executive director, National Association of County Engineers

What participants learned:

The Towards Zero Death (TZD) initiative is a national strategy counties can use to establish a common vision of what the nation's safety culture should be pertaining to rural roads. Roberts discussed the basics behind the TZD initiative and key components of a successful program.

He spoke about how counties can start on the road to zero deaths by focusing on implementing safety improvements while improving the existing infrastructure of rural roads.

Brand said county officials can enhance and apply safety solutions on their roads from updating signage to using lane separators.

“TZD is a commitment to a culture where zero deaths are the norm,” Roberts said. “This is an opportunity for counties to have a lasting impact.” Currently, TZD is implemented in 22 states.

(Staff Contact: James Davenport, jdavenport@naco.org, 202.661.8807.)

Governance Changes to Respond to the 'New Normal'

Who spoke:

- **Mark Hackel**, chief executive officer, Macomb County, Mich.
- **Hannes Zacharias**, county manager, Johnson County, Kan.
- **Paula Sanford**, faculty, Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.

What participants learned:

Hackel still doesn't have an office, more than 18 months into his tenure as Macomb County, Mich.'s first chief executive officer. He is continuing to see gaps in the county's transition plan to a smaller board of commissioners accompanied by an executive.

At the same time, he's overseeing a county that is growing at twice the rate of others in Michigan, in stark contrast to neighboring counties in the Detroit area.



Jim Young, Veteran's Services officer, Vernon County, Wis., comments at the Town Hall meeting on county readiness to meet the needs of returning troops.

Our Commissioners' Information Was Hacked: Real Counties' Stories

Who spoke:

- **Stephen Acquario**, executive director, New York State Association of Counties, Albany, N.Y.
- **Douglas Dvorak**, supervisory special agent and program manager, Federal Bureau of Investigation's InfraGard, Washington, D.C.
- **Steve Hurst**, director of security services and technology, AT&T, Pittsburgh, Pa.
- **Bill Mertka**, manager, Next Gen Integrated Command and Control, Global Services, Motorola Solutions, Schaumburg, Ill.

What participants learned:

With a horror story from a hotel that the New York State Association of Counties used for a conference, Acquario put the fear of the Internet into the audience.

A 10-month security breach at the hotel exposed untold numbers



NACo educational sessions always draw lots of questions from the audience: Joe D. Carpenter, Gaston County, N.C., takes his turn at the microphone as Lin Hintze, Custer County, Idaho waits his turn.



Dan Weisburd describes the filming of his docudrama, “Another Kind of Valor,” which was shown at the Town Hall Meeting on returning troops.

of customers' credit card numbers to hackers, which included 1,000 NYSAC conference attendees' data.

Outside of New York, many other counties have been the victim of online information theft, including Rutherford County, Tenn.; Salem County, N.J.; Barrien County, Mich.; and Lake County, Fla.

Dvorak introduced audience members to the InfraGard program, an information sharing program aimed at preventing online information theft.

Hurst said that online attacks are getting so sophisticated that they look for specific information from specific people. The most effective way to combat such attacks is to have finely tuned awareness about what is happening in a computer system and



Mary Pat Hancock, who serves as chairwoman of the Genesee County, N.Y. legislature and president of the New York State Association of Counties, asks a question about Internet security in the workshop “Our Commissioners Information Was Hacked.”

make it an ongoing effort.

“It shouldn't be a lot of boredom punctuated with panic when something happens,” he said.

Mertka advised taking a holistic approach to data security, which includes watching out for the safety of mobile devices, which are becoming the new battleground.

There won't be any easy resolution to this struggle either.

“The bad guys are always smarter than the good guys, it seems,” he said.

(Staff Contacts: Jerryl Guy, jguy@naco.org, 202.942.4229; and Bert Jarreau, bjarreau@naco.org, 202.942.4248.)

Tuesday, July 17

Planning for Health and Support Needs of an Aging Population

Who spoke:

- **Mae Carpenter**, commissioner, Senior Programs and Services, Westchester County, N.Y.

Erin Hennessey, director, business development, Health Dimensions group, Minneapolis, Minn.

Julie Jarvis, director, planning and program development, Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, Cleveland, Ohio

What participants learned:

By 2030, more than 70 million Americans will be over the age of 65, and in an era of shrinking federal dollars, counties will have to bear more of the burden for their care, workshop speakers said.

Spending on aging supports and services has been declining at time when it is needed most — since the onset of the “Great Recession” in 2007, Jarvis said. Most communities have only been able to “hold the line” regarding resources, programs and policies to meet the needs of the 65-plus population, she added, citing the most recent Maturing of America survey (www.n4a.org/files/MOA_FINAL_Rpt.pdf) data from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

Westchester County, N.Y. has been achieving impressive results in meeting a range of elders' health, housing and other needs by tapping into community resources such as nonprofits, corporations, churches and community-based organizations, Carpenter said. Persons 85-and-older are the fastest growing segment of the county's population, which has as many elderly people as school-age children, she said.

“As you are all experiencing cutbacks in public funds — and yet your population is aging — we've got to rely more and more on each other.”

(Staff Contact: Anita Cardwell, acardwell@naco.org, 202.942.4247.)

O'Connor, 'Game Change' authors among conference speakers

CONFERENCE

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

Featured speakers at the Annual Conference's general sessions were as varied as the nation's counties: A retired Supreme Court justice; son of an Oklahoma football great; the governor of Pennsylvania and political pundits were some of the featured speakers. Following is a review of the general sessions' headliners.

Sandra Day O'Connor

American students are falling behind in their knowledge of civics, and it's as much a cause for alarm as lagging math and science scores, retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor told county officials at the Opening General Session July 15.

"Statistics show this problem is real and it's undeniable," she said, adding that two-thirds of American students scored below proficiency on the last nationwide civics assessment test.

"Only about one-third could name the three branches of government, let alone say what they do," she added. "Less than one-third of eighth graders could identify the historical purpose of the Declaration of Independence, and it's right there in the title."

O'Connor is addressing the problem through iCivics, a nonprofit she founded after leaving the high court that provides online civics education resources for students and teachers — including educational games and lesson plans. NACo partnered with iCivics to create the "Counties Work" and is working on a second game called "County Solutions."

She encouraged conference attendees to spread the word about Counties Work and other iCivics games when they return home. "Be a champion for a better democracy and a more informed citizenry," she said. "With your help, we can re-engage the young people in our country."

Jay Wilkinson

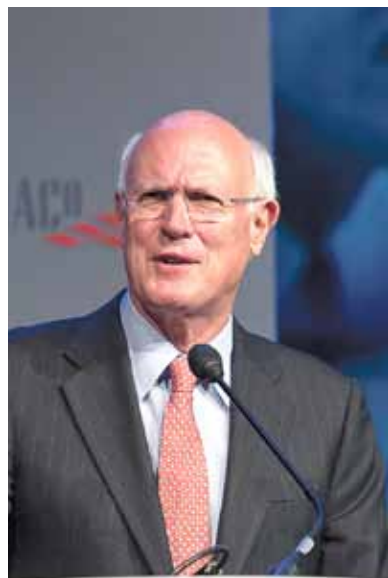
Greatness runs in the Wilkinson family. Jay Wilkinson's father Bud was a championship football coach for the University of Oklahoma 1947–1963, where his record 47 straight wins still stands. But above all things, he was a caring father. It is his letters to Jay which form the framework for the book "Dear Jay, Love Dad: Bud Wilkinson's Letters to His Son."

Wisdom, guidance and love are the core principles of the book which also infuses a sense of purpose, integrity, commitment and passion in others. In the book, Wilkinson shares 47 letters his father wrote to



Photos by David Hathcox

Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor takes the stage.



Author Jay Wilkinson

him revealing a deep love for his son, as well as the philosophy and values that led to remarkable success in sports and in life.

He concluded the session urging all county officials to reinforce these core principles in everything that they do.

"It doesn't matter what your job is, it is doing your best at all times with dignity and respect," Wilkinson said.

Gov. Tom Corbett

Gov. Tom Corbett (R) claims Pittsburgh as his hometown and he proudly welcomed NACo delegates to "the only city with a front door" during his welcoming remarks at the conference. Delegates, he said, "should find our city a good place to trade ideas."

One new idea embraced by the state and its counties Corbett highlighted involved a new state process for funding human services, which are administered by the state's counties. The state has begun directing counties to eventually consolidate seven funding streams for particular



Gov. Tom Corbett, Pennsylvania

social services into one block grant that will allow them to prioritize and direct funding to the areas of greatest need.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack

Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, a frequent visitor to NACo conferences, announced USDA's move to a streamlined drought assistance process and outlined the department's new framework for rural prosperity during his remarks before delegates at the July 16 general session.

Rural prosperity rests on the four pillars, or cornerstones, of production agriculture, bio-based products, expansive local and regional food systems, and conservation and forestry, Vilsack said. In each category, he noted the progress that has been made or the resources that have been added since the current administration took office. For example, he pointed out that over the last three years agricultural exports have been at their highest level ever, and there's

been a decline in oil imports from 62 percent four years ago to 45 percent currently. He attributes the decline in oil imports partly to an energy policy that includes renewables such as bio-based fuels.

He spoke about the need to preserve rural values and support returning veterans who embody those values. "We value service in rural America. When you grow up in a rural area you realize you can't keep taking from and not giving back."

"Sometimes," he added, "we take our freedom and liberty for granted. These young people don't. We must make the case to keep young people in rural areas. The good news is that we have the cornerstones in place."

(*See this story at www.naco.org/countynewsforlinkstomoreinformationaboutthestreamlineddroughtassistanceprocess.)

Mark Halperin and John Heilemann

Political journalists Mark Halperin and John Heilemann brought their years of acquaintance with President Barack Obama and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney to bear on the upcoming election at the July 16 General Session.

The consensus between the authors of the *Game Change*, which chronicled the 2008 presidential race, was that the 2012 election would hinge on whether the narrative remains on jobs and the economy. If that is the case, and the race becomes a referendum on the Obama administration, Romney will prevail. Halperin said if the Obama administration succeeds as George W. Bush did in 2004 in depicting Romney as unqualified, Obama would win a second term.

Halperin has covered Romney since before his race for a Massachusetts U.S. Senate seat, and remarked that his long career in business and politics without collecting a number of enemies spoke to a likeability that, while potentially an asset, would be hard to expose to the electorate.

Heilemann noted that Obama did not have a particularly warm personality, but displayed remarkable political savvy that



U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack

has allowed him to make his moves at the right time to win victories in the 2008 election and the Affordable Care Act's passage.

In contrast to that race, Heilemann said the 2012 race would be more an effort to turn out each party's base, rather than growing the electorate, as Obama did in his first presidential race.

As for vice presidential selections, Heilemann was confident Vice President Joe Biden would remain Obama's running mate, and Halperin has a hunch Romney would pick Ohio Sen. Rob Portman.

"He's not going to go with an exciting pick," he said. "He's going to say, 'We're adults and we know how to fix the economy.'"



Game Change authors Mark Halperin, editor-in-chief of *TIME* magazine, and John Heilemann, national affairs editor at *New York* magazine take questions from the audience about the 2012 Presidential Election.

Resolutions set NACo policy agenda for coming year

CONFERENCE AFTER-ACTION REPORT

In addition to platform revisions, county officials adopted a number of new policy positions dealing with issues from storm water regulations to auditing requirements. Following is a list of the newest policy resolutions adopted at the NACo Annual Business Meeting, July 17.

Community and Economic Development

■ Middle Market Companies

Issue: Supporting Middle Market companies

Adopted Policy: NACo supports sound policies that enhance access to capital and reduce redundant regulations to allow Middle Market companies to thrive and support economic recovery across the U.S.

■ American Community Survey

Issue: Continued funding for the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS)

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress to provide funding in the FY 2013 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies



(l-r) Tim Josi, Tillamook County, Ore., President Lenny Eliason and David Ferdinand, parliamentarian, confer on correct procedure for an upcoming vote on a Public Lands policy resolution.

Appropriations Bill for the ACS because it provides vital economic, social and housing estimates from America's counties, cities and towns, congressional districts that are not provided anywhere else.

■ New Markets Tax Credit Extension Act of 2011

Issue: Authority for the Treasury Department to allocate New Markets Tax Credits (NMTCs) which expired on December 31, 2011

Adopted Policy: NACo supports "The New Markets Tax Credit Extension Act of 2011" (H.R. 2655, S. 996), which would extend the NMTC program for five years (through 2016) and provide \$5 billion in annual allocation authority. In addition, the legislation would provide an exemption from the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) for investments in NMTC, affording such investors the same favorable treatment as

other tax credits, including the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and the Historic Tax Credit.

■ Finalize Regulations on Government-Sponsored Entities' Duty to Serve Obligation for Manufactured Housing

Issue: The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), which is the conservator of the Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSE) Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, has yet to finalize regulations proposed on June 7, 2010 which would specify the circumstances under which the GSEs would receive credit under their "Duty to Serve" obligation for manufactured housing.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges the FHFA to promulgate final regulations with respect to the GSE's duty to serve obligation for manufactured housing.

■ Responsible Homeowner Refinancing Act

Issue: Supporting The Responsible Homeowner Refinancing Act of 2012

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress pass the Responsible Homeowner Refinancing Act

Environment, Energy and Land Use

Federal Stormwater Regulations

Issue: Support thoroughly vetted, cost effective and regionally appropriate Federal Stormwater Regulations.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prior to promulgating or expanding Federal Stormwater Rules to consider and incorporate public, state and local governments' comments; provide flexibility to incorporate geographically-specific and cost effective requirements; and conduct a study that includes a comprehensive cost benefit analysis.

■ Reduction and Cleanup of Marine Debris

Issue: Encourage clean-up of marine debris

Adopted Policy: To address the exponentially increasing problem of marine debris, NACo:

- Supports the passage of the "Reauthorization of the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act" and/or similar legislation;

- Supports increased funding to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to provide additional resources for:

- Grants to coastal counties for beach cleanup efforts;
- Funding for derelict fishing gear removal; and
- Research on the effectiveness

See RESOLUTIONS page 22

NTSB only suggests, doesn't rule

CONFERENCE AFTER-ACTION REPORT

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

The National Transportation Safety Board sent a representative to meet with members of NACo's Transportation Steering Committee for the first time, and Mark Rosekind hoped, for their sake, it would be the only time.

"I'm one of those people you hope you never meet again," Mark Rosekind intoned as he introduced the Transportation Steering Committee to the NTSB, on which he sits.

His organization is responsible for investigating non-military transportation accidents, with more than 132,000 investigations since its formation in 1967. Although it has no regulatory or enforcement powers, 82 percent of the more than 13,500 recommendations it has made over that time have been accepted. The NTSB aims to determine the cause of accidents and figure out what lessons can be translated into policy recommendations to prevent



Photo by Jack Hernandez

Mark Rosekind, National Transportation Safety Board, illustrates a point at the Transportation Steering Committee meeting.

the same problems from recurring. "We don't want 100 percent acceptance, it would make it look like our recommendations are too soft,"

he said. "The worst thing is for us to see a situation that could have been avoided thanks to what we learned happened somewhere else."

Rosekind said that policy recommendations can be best enacted with strong laws, education and highly visible enforcement. But he also stressed that the NTSB had no role in determining liability in accidents.

"It's all about prevention, that motivates our focus on cause," he said. "We're aren't trying to place blame."

Lee Munnich, secretary-treasurer of the Mileage-Based User Fee Alliance addressed the chang-

ing face of transportation funding, particularly the need for increased gas taxes to not only keep pace with the increase in transportation

costs, but also the improvements in automobiles.

"It's a very good system, but as cars are getting more fuel efficient, the gas tax brings in less money," he said.

He suggested that thinking of transportation as a utility would frame the issue in a way laymen would understand and identify.

"The public seems to agree that people need to pay for roads based on how much they use them," he said. "They just don't understand how transportation infrastructure is funded."

NACo Senior Legislative Director Bob Fogel summarized the path of the transportation bill, passed just two weeks prior after 10 extensions.

With the elimination of earmarks from the legislative process, he said, the money for formula-based funding increased.

One of the striking omissions in the bill was the lack of funding for the federal bridge program. "I've never heard remarks from a member of Congress or a representative of a presidential administration that didn't mention the deplorable condition of the country's bridges," he said.

CONTACT@US



"Contact Us" provides members with information and answers!

www.NACo.org

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

Resolutions comprise NACo's American County Platform

RESOLUTIONS from page 21

of off-shore clean-up methods; and

- Supports federal legislation and/or regulations to encourage states and localities to educate small businesses and consumers about the significant environmental harm of single-use plastic bags and the benefits of county-wide bans and to institute such bans.

■ Delay in Issuance of Oil and Gas Drilling Permits

Issue: Issuance of drilling permits in Gulf area and waters

Adopted Policy: NACo strongly supports domestic energy production and recognizes that U.S. independence from foreign oil also requires expanded alternative and renewable resources and U.S. independence from foreign oil. NACo urges the Obama Administration to safely and thoughtfully release permits in a timely fashion, so as to begin to overcome the devastation to our economy.

Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs

■ Single Audit Requirements

Issue: Federal Single Audit Requirements

Adopted Policy: NACo supports efforts to increase the basic minimum requirements on local governments receiving federal assistance, with an additional exception for when federal disaster assistance is the reason that an entity exceeds the threshold.

Human Services and Education

■ Using State Retained Earnings as Matching Funds for the Child Support Program

Issue: Restoring the ability to use State Shared Retained Earnings (SSRE) as matching funds for federally mandated Child Support services under the Social Security Act, Title IV, Part D (IV-D)

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the Child Support Protection Act. The Child Support Protection Act will allow State and County Child Support programs to be self-sufficient instead of requiring a 33 percent general fund subsidy.

Justice and Public Safety

■ Managing the Federal Cost Share in Response to Disasters

Issue: Management of federal cost share in response to disasters

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress to include the follow-



Brenda Arnold, assessor, Laramie County, Wyo., reviews the list of policy recommendations the NACo Board of Directors meeting.

ing language in any revisions to the Stafford Act. "The federal cost share reimbursable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) shall be the same for federal agencies under direct federal assistance (DFA) as it is for applicants self-performing or contracting the work."

■ An Arbitration Panel for FEMA Public Assistance

Issue: Permanent option for local governments to request arbitration by an independent review panel for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA)

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress and/or the appropriate

federal agency to amend the Stafford Act to ensure that local governments can request the use of alternative dispute resolution, including arbitration by an independent review panel, to resolve disputes relating to FEMA eligible PA.

■ FEMA Project Worksheets

Issue: Allowing applicants and sub-applicants to draft their own Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Project Worksheets

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress and/or the appropriate federal agency to include the following language regarding project worksheet (PW) development in any revisions to the Stafford Act:

"FEMA will allow applicants and sub-applicants to write their own large and small project worksheets at their own discretion. All of the costs associated with drafting project worksheets will be covered as eligible costs under FEMA's Direct Administrative Costs (DACs)."

■ Reauthorization of the Pilot Program for the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act

Issue: The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Pilot Program for the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act has expired



Thomas Murphy, Penn State Marcellus Center for Outreach and Research, addresses members of the Water Quality Subcommittee of the Environment, Energy and Land Use Committee.

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress to reauthorize the expired pilot program for debris removal from the Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act.

■ Supporting the Tax Crimes and Identity Theft Prevention Act

Issue: Misuse of taxpayer identity

Adopted Policy: NACo urges Congress to pass legislation supporting action to reduce tax crimes and identity theft; require the Secretary of the Treasury to take necessary action to correct a tax return or tax information affected by the misuse of a taxpayer's identity within 90 days after receiving notice of such misuse from the taxpayer or government identifying the fraud; and increase efforts to prevent and deter such crimes. Increase coordination between all relevant agencies and levels of government.

■ Continuous Alcohol Monitoring for Pre-Trial Populations

Issue: Address jail overcrowding and jail costs for Pre-Trial defendants

Adopted Policy: NACo supports the use of continuous alcohol monitoring with house arrest as part of a continuum of effective alternatives to incarceration for pre-trial defendants.

Public Lands

■ Counting ESA-Protected Utah Prairie Dogs on Private Lands

Issue: Counting Utah prairie dogs protected under the Federal

Endangered Species Act (ESA) on private lands

Adopted Policy: NACo urges the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to modify its policies to permit the counting of Utah prairie dogs on private as well as public land for the purpose of determining species recovery and readiness for delisting.

■ Change of Administration of the Pittman-Robertson and Dingell-Johnson Funds

Issue: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has too much administrative power over the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act.

Adopted Policy: NACo supports transfer of administration of the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act and the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act from the Department of Interior (DOI) to Wildlife Services of the Department of Agriculture (USDA); and decreasing administrative fees comparable to the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) administrative fees.

Transportation

■ High-Speed Intercity Rail for the 21st and 22nd Centuries

Issue: High-Speed Intercity and Interstate Passenger Rail for the 21st and 22nd centuries

Adopted Policy: NACo supports a national dialogue to establish a new high performance national standard for high-speed intercity and interstate passenger rail and a corresponding vision and implementation plan for the 21st and 22nd centuries.



President Lenny Eliason recognizes the next speaker during the Board discussion on resolutions.

Amending Budget Act could delay sequestration

CLIFF *from page 3*

Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT) patch and education tax incentives.

In addition to the Bush cuts, unemployment insurance and the payroll tax holiday must be extended — and finally, tax extenders including the deduction of mortgage insurance premiums or qualified interest, the Research and Development credit, plus others. The small businesses in our counties will likely suffer as well as individuals if this is not addressed. Extending these tax cuts would cost approximately \$400 billion.

The second ledge is the Budget Control Act's mandate to reduce an

additional \$1.2 trillion by Jan. 2013. The act requires automatic sequestration of funds to be equally divided between defense and non-defense spending. The sequestration would require Congress to cut these two categories by at least \$55 billion annually over the next 10 years, decimating many programs in both areas.

For counties with an economic base that includes defense industry investment and jobs, the losses are a double whammy. Federal funds would be cut from domestic programs with less money available for defense programs that are sought after by local defense industry companies, affecting county economic develop-

ment efforts. Defense industry supporters and military hawks such as Sens. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) predict we will be a less safe place to live. Even Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Pentagon brass have expressed their concerns about the nation's military posture and ability to meet commitments abroad. Social service spending and funding for programs such as CDBG, PILT and others used by counties will inevitably be reduced.

The third ledge is the need to enact another increase in the debt ceiling. Depending on the pace of spending, the government will run out of money by around December

so the increase must be enacted to avoid a default of the current \$16.3 trillion debt.

The financial markets are watching this closely, and the ability of the Congress to address the spiraling debt burden will affect Wall Street investments, bond issuances, peoples' 401(k) accounts and other financial transactions that affect interest rates and future borrowing by counties and individuals.

The fourth ledge is the Nov. 6 elections. As they get closer, very little is expected to occur in dealing with the cliff. Political gamesmanship has been a staple of this Congress and will precipitate a lame duck session.

Depending on who is elected, the result could be a mix of tax cuts and social spending.

To avoid a train ride over the cliff, the Congress can delay action on a sequestration by amending the Budget Act, and there is already talk of passing a six-month continuing resolution before Oct. 1 to avoid a government shut down and delay budget actions to give the next administration and Congress time to find solutions. They have become adept at these "punting" tactics, and it is very likely they will come back in January and deal with the budget issues during the first half of next year. Stay tuned.



News From the Nation's Counties

► ALABAMA

A statewide effort to control the spiraling cost of providing lawyers for criminal defendants unable to afford counsel is leading some counties to **open public defenders offices**.

Public defenders will replace the current system of judges appointing lawyers for indigent defendants, though county judges will continue to appoint lawyers in capital cases, because the lawyers appointed — such cases need particular training and experience.

Alabama spent \$65.3 million on indigent defense during the last fiscal year, a 73 percent increase over the 2002 budget year, according to the state Office of Indigent Defense Services. Estimates put savings for **JEFFERSON COUNTY** at \$3.5 million, the *Birmingham News* reported.

Ricky McKinney, the state director of indigent defense, said the appointment system was inefficient and costly, in part, because the state paid lawyers an hourly rate for overhead expense, in addition to hourly rates for in-court and out-of-court work. A 2011 state law eliminated the overhead reimbursement.

► CALIFORNIA

• Fewer felons are **skipping out on probation** under California's new criminal justice realignment than under the state's old parole system.

The report obtained by the Associated Press is the first six-month snapshot of trends in all 58 counties. It found that less than 4 percent of felons failed to report to their county probation officers after their release from state prison, compared to 14 percent who faced fugitive arrest warrants for failing to report to their parole officers under the old system.

More than 23,000 ex-convicts are supervised at the county level instead of by state parole agents after a law took effect in October 2011 to save the state money and reduce prison crowding. Many counties are sending probation officers to pick up offenders from prison, instead of letting them make their own way back to their hometown.

• After facing years of political pressure from health care advocates, **LOS ANGELES COUNTY** supervisors agreed to let voters decide in November whether adult-film actors should be **required to wear condoms** during filming as a guard

against spreading HIV infections.

Backers of the measure had gathered more than 370,000 signatures supporting the proposed ballot measure, which sets up the first such vote in the nation. The Los Angeles City Council approved a similar condom ordinance in June and avoided putting the measure to a popular vote.

The measure's proponents said it would promote a safer environment for performers, the *Los Angeles Times* reported.

• The **TEHAMA COUNTY** Board of Supervisors will now hear **fire code appeals**.

Supervisor Bob Williams said comments from the public indicated it was impossible to meet some of the fire-flow or sprinkler requirements in parts of the county, and an across-the-board implementation of the California Fire Code could prevent construction in areas. Commenters also said a board of appeals would lend more flexibility.

The **SANTA CRUZ COUNTY** Board of Supervisors did the same thing, which was upheld by state law, the *Daily News* reported.

Under the existing fire code, the county's fire chief is responsible for interpreting and applying requirements for new construction. Fire code appeals typically address such issues as fire-flows, access requirements and driveway construction. The fire chief would sit on the board as a de facto non-voting member.

► GEORGIA

• **BIBB COUNTY** has launched a new way to submit service requests and receive real-time status updates through an online and mobile interface. **Citizen Service Request** is a place-based reporting platform that allows residents across the county to document non-emergency concerns and improvements, ranging from potholes to damaged traffic signs to flooding issues.

The first year of this program is being funded with a \$5,000 grant from the Knight Fund.

• **GWINNETT COUNTY** is calling off all efforts to **privatize a county airport**. The Board of Commissioners rejected a public-private partnership for the lease, operation and improvement of Briscoe Field.

The board also moved to withdraw the preliminary application to the Federal Aviation Administration pursuant to the FAA's Airport Privatization Pilot Program. In a letter dated July 5, the FAA confirmed the removal of Briscoe Field from the privatization program.

► HAWAII

Following complaints by homeowners close to the beaches, the **CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU** banned commercial activity at its parks inland of the beaches.

The state owns the beach property, but county parks buffer the beaches from residential areas. Various rental businesses and concessioners use the park to cater to tourists and visitors — at odds with residents.

► MINNESOTA

Workplace bullying is being shoved into a locker by the **HENNEPIN COUNTY** Board, which added the issue to its policy barring discrimination and harassment among employees and volunteers.

Commissioners also established a separate diversity policy to better recruit and maintain a workforce of people with different backgrounds, including race, gender, age, ethnicity and sexual orientation, the *Star Tribune* reported.

The board approved the workplace bullying policy, one of the first in the country to be adopted by a local government, which reads "Workplace bullying is persistent behavior by a person or group that is threatening, humiliating and/or intimidating."

► NEW MEXICO

The company that announced plans to build a 15-square-mile scientific ghost town in **LEA COUNTY** said its pulling out of the deal, the Associated Press reported, but remains committed to building elsewhere in the state.

Robert Brumley, managing director of the project, said Pegasus Global Holdings changed its mind "due to some very complicated and unforeseen issues with acquiring the land."

The group said it will review proposals from 15 other New Mexico communities that were interested in the project. "We are still very committed to locating in New Mexico if a site can be identified," Brumley said.

► NEW YORK

DUTCHESS COUNTY Executive **Marc Molinaro's bobblehead** was missing in action at the Hudson Valley Renegades baseball game July 30, but Molinaro was there as scheduled.

He joked that his bobbleheads, which were to be game-night giveaways, were sent back because "the head wasn't big enough." They were in fact stuck in shipping.

"I'm torn between 'Well, I guess I finally made it,' and something my



Photo courtesy of Hudson Valley Renegades

The Dutchess County executive is in (bobble)head company this year: with a president and a would-be president.

grandfather told me: 'If you can't laugh at yourself, you shouldn't laugh at all,'" Molinaro told the *Poughkeepsie Journal*.

Last season, the Renegades handed out replicas of three former Hudson Valley players. This year, three politicians are the ticket: At different games, the team will hand out springy-necked dolls of Molinaro, President Obama and presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney. The Molinaro bobblehead distribution will be rescheduled.

► NORTH CAROLINA

• Residents of **CABARRUS COUNTY** now have **quick access to voting information** and directions to polling places from the Web or their mobile devices.

The county used its existing geographic information system (GIS), along with a free mapping application template from Esri, to launch a polling place locator application in time for the county's July 17 election.

Officials expected the app to reduce the number of calls to the elections office on voting day, and said the step-by-step directions would help new residents find their way to the polls more easily.

The free templates Cabarrus County uses are offered as part of Esri's ArcGIS for Local Government model, which provides users with ideas and resources

NACo on the Move

» NACo Staff



Mary Bell

• **Mary Bell** has joined the NACo Financial Services Corporation as a director. Prior to NACo, Bell worked as a technical advisor in the Office of Personal Finance for the Department of Defense in Washington, D.C.

• **Sarah Sunderman** has been promoted to the position of associate with the NACo Financial Services Corp.

• **Karon Harden**, director of educational services, was commissioned a Kentucky Colonel by the Commonwealth of Kentucky for her role in NACo's County Leadership Institute. Kentucky colonels are honored for their contributions to their community, state or nation and for special achievements.

• **Jacqueline Byers**, director of research and outreach, was a panel member representing local governments at the United Way International's Policy Experts Summit on July 11 in Washington, D.C.



Sarah Sunderman

» Coming Up

• **Andrew Goldschmidt**, director, membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of NACo membership recruitment and retention at the Maryland Association of Counties annual conference at Worcester County Aug. 15–18.

• **Kaye Braaten**, NACo past president, will be exhibiting on behalf of NACo membership at the Association of Arkansas Counties annual conference in Washington County Aug. 8–10 and the Association of County Commissioners of Alabama annual conference in Baldwin County Aug. 21–23.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Rodgers outlines key presidential initiatives for his term

CONFERENCE from page 1

its pilot phase, will allow counties to share technologies via a cloud-based app library being developed by NACo, Oakland County, Mich. and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

The site is expected to go live in late September.

NACo members approved 18 new policy positions at their business meeting on issues ranging from oil and gas drilling permits to federal storm water regulations to high-speed intercity rail service (see page 21).

Presidential Initiatives

During his acceptance speech, Rodgers said he would focus on three initiatives: Smart Justice, the Next Generation NACo Network and Cybersecurity. Each initiative is geared toward addressing important issues facing counties and the association.

Smart Justice is an initiative to highlight "smart" justice policies and practices. It would explore pre-trial services, post-release service coordination, justice and mental health collaboration, sup-

portive housing and employment.

The Next Generation Network will provide a grassroots forum for young county officials to network, become engaged in NACo and develop a new generation of association leaders.

As threats grow to county government networks from hackers, the need for even more vigilance grows as well. To deal with these threats, Rodgers has appointed a Cybersecurity Task Force to promote cybersecurity awareness and education for county elected officials, administrators, staff and county residents.

Awards

The County Court House Award presented by NACo's Large Urban County and Rural Action caucuses, in partnership with the SIEMENS Corp., were awarded in the Rural Category to Millard County, Utah Commissioner Daron Smith; in the Suburban Category to Douglas County, Colo. Sheriff David Weaver; and in the Urban



Newly-hired NACo Executive Director Matt Chase (right) relaxes with current Executive Director Larry Naake after the NACo Board of Directors approved his hiring.

Category to DeKalb County, Ga. Chief Executive Officer Burrell Ellis. Each winner received \$5,000 to award as a scholarship to a student

of his or her choice.

Next year's Annual Conference will be in Tarrant County (Fort Worth), Texas July 19-23.



Maui County, Hawaii Councilman Riki Hokama waves to supporters after his unanimous election as NACo's second vice president.

Whatcom County restricts wind-power development in rural, forested areas

NEWS FROM from page 25

for maximizing their geospatial capabilities.

- The state's counties must bear electronic **voting machine-related expenses** after the General Assembly turned down federal aid that would have greatly offset the costs, the *Smoky Mountain News* reported.

Counties must pay annually for the maintenance, poll worker training and software license fees, among other costs. To receive about \$4.1 million in federal aid, the Legislature needed to approve \$664,000 in matching funds but refused to do so. When crafting the state budget, Republican lawmakers left out the funding, leaving county taxpayers to foot the bill.

"It's really going to cost the county," said O.L. Yates, chair of HAYWOOD COUNTY's election board. "It's a little bit of a fiasco for the state."

► TEXAS

Gov. Rick Perry's (R) decision to refuse two key provisions of the Affordable Care Act — the expansion of Medicaid and the creation of a state insurance exchange — hurts counties, local officials said.

The burden of paying for the

health care of the uninsured in the Lone Star State falls largely on county residents, whose property taxes help support safety-net hospitals.

Several local leaders, health policy experts and urban hospital officials across the state said Perry's decision to reject billions of federal dollars would hurt county taxpayers and the hospitals they support, forcing them to continue to pick up much of the tab for treatment of the uninsured, *The New York Times* reported.

"I understand the governor is probably trying to make a political move here," said Daniel Haggerty, an EL PASO COUNTY commissioner. "He hasn't got a clue as to what our situation is and what our problems are. He's saying, 'You guys figure it out.'"

► WASHINGTON

Wind power development faces an uncertain future in WHATCOM COUNTY as county lawmakers recently blocked its expansion into farming and forestry lands, according to KGMI-AM.

County Council members recently **rejected a plan to allow wind turbines** in agricultural and commercial forestry zones. Property owners had opposed the

expansion citing health, environmental and other concerns.

Councilmember Carl Weimer told KGMI he believes wind energy could have a future in other areas such as on heavy-impact industrial land near refineries in the county.

► WEST VIRGINIA

Add **MARSHALL** and **HANCOCK** counties to the list of those **suing Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac** over unpaid real estate transfer taxes.

The counties' commissions are named as plaintiffs in a suit filed in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of West Virginia, according to *The Intelligencer* and *Wheeling News-Register*.

The six-page complaint claims Fannie and Freddie Mac are not government entities and, therefore, are not exempt from paying West Virginia transfer taxes.

The lawsuit comes several months after similar litigation in Michigan resulted in a ruling that the agencies were liable about \$13.5 million in damages.

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

MyNACo

Add Your Profile Today

MyNACo is a secure, password-protected feature of the NACo website where you can network and discuss issues with your colleagues or with NACo staff.

Just go to www.naco.org and click on the **MyNACo** tab at the top right of the navigation bar.

The H.R. Doctor Is In

It's That Time Again

It must be presidential election season. I didn't discover the start of this quadrennial period because I read about it in the Constitution or because a government agency sent a nice officer to my house to remind me. I know it because a serious and prolonged flood occurs during this season that is not covered by FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program.

It is a flood of 30-second sound bites in the media, especially on television. It is the one time every four years when psychologically designed TV ads nearly outnumber the huge number of drug ads. As any viewer knows there is a rather constant bombardment, regardless of the season, of ads touting the benefits of some patented and overpriced drug that is guaranteed

to make us feel better. These are the drugs designed to help us overcome the ravages of some disease we never heard of let alone never realized we had.

It is also a season where the political ads nearly outnumber the ads calling on each of us to immediately contact a lawyer to sue the drug companies because the drugs they just got finished advertising as being good are actually evil and do terrible things to our bodies. Of course we should immediately file legal actions to collect untold riches. Not to worry about the cost of lawyer services, you pay nothing unless some kind-hearted jury awards you millions of dollars in damages.

The drug ads and the political ads share a common heritage. Both

are designed to feed our cravings to quickly fix things that may or may not be broken. Both tell us how miserable our lives are because of disease or because of the poor policies of either the incumbent or of the person seeking to defeat the incumbent. Both share tabloid dirt about the other candidate dug up by investigators looking into the candidate's eighth-grade science projects or revealing the fact that the candidate once studied a foreign language. Both promise relief and both offer fine-print paragraphs describing risks, side effects and how results may not be typical.

These ads are enough to make you sick and cause you to seek out the proper drug therapy. That in turn leads back into the medico-legal circle of life. We can't even blame

the predicted catastrophes if this or that candidate is elected on the Mayan calendar end-of-the-world prediction because that would be politically insensitive.

Will we really select the next president based on very polished and targeted ads? The answer regrettably may be yes. The more money available the more ads will appear. The more money available, the more frequently the ads will appear. The idea is to get a catchphrase implanted into someone's brain and offer them no hope of cure or exorcism unless they vote for a specific candidate.

If it is of any consolation, know that these attempts at political mind control go back far longer than the current generation — or even our current form of government. They are an inherent part of a system in which we are asked to select “one among many,” or, if you prefer *E Pluribus Unum*.

The HR Doctor is proud to present several political and social one-liners for your consideration, perhaps while you spend countless hours watching television instead of

doing something more productive for body and mind:

1. “He can compress the most words into the smallest ideas of any man I know” — Abraham Lincoln

2. “He is a self-made man and worships his creator” — John Bright

3. “Some cause happiness everywhere they go; others, whenever they go” — Oscar Wilde

4. “He loves nature, in spite of what it did to him” — Forrest Tucker

5. “He has none of the virtues I dislike and none of vices I admire” — Winston Churchill

6. “This country has come to feel the same way when Congress is in session as when a baby gets hold of a hammer” — Will Rogers

7. “Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt” — Herbert Hoover

8. “If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress” — author unknown

I'm the HR Doctor and I approved this article.



— Phil Rosenberg

The HR Doctor • www.hrdi.net

Financial Services News

Deferred Compensation Program Update

Recent headlines about pension funding around the country and the current economic climate highlight the importance of making sure personal and retirement investments are with a financially strong company.

As part of its oversight of its Deferred Compensation Program, NACo hires an independent consultant to evaluate several different program aspects. These include the creditworthiness of Nationwide Financial, the parent company to the program administrator, Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS), and the competitiveness of the fixed annuity investment option return to program participants.

According to the study, the 2011 return on this investment option placed highest among its competitors. The report was released at a recent meeting of NACo's Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee, in Allegheny County, Pa. This study has been conducted every year since 1989, and the NACo program has always come out on top.

“Our 32-year partnership with NRS continues to deliver a quality program that helps county employees save for a more comfortable retirement — this is more important than ever in today's economy,” said Larry Naake, NACo executive director.

In their analysis of the creditworthiness of Nationwide, the consultant's noted that Nationwide Financial's long-term financial per-

formance and commitment to the general account annuity market is excellent. The consultants' analysis notes that Nationwide's financial strength compares favorably with its peers. As of Dec. 31, 2011, the report noted, Nationwide's ratio of “surplus plus asset valuation reserve” to “general account liabilities” was 10.7 percent which is the median of the carriers in the test universe.

Further, Nationwide's action level risk based capital (RBC) ratio, a measure of the financial flexibility of an insurance company, at 585 percent, was the highest among carriers in the test universe and has been the highest in each of the past five years.

The consultants continue that Nationwide's general account assets are invested in a diversified portfolio of bonds, mortgages and other investments in order to support the term and risk characteristics of its general account liabilities which include a substantial annuity business.

The NACo deferred compensation program, also known as a 457 program, is a voluntary investment program that gives county employees the opportunity to save regularly for their retirement on a pre-tax basis. One of the investment options available to participants is the fixed annuity that offers county employees the opportunity to earn an investment return at a fixed rate that is established quarterly

by Nationwide. In addition, on an annual basis, Nationwide sets an investment rate minimum (or floor) for the year.

The consultants' analyses are only one feature of NACo's deferred compensation program that distinguishes it from others. As a result of NACo's Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee, the NACo program is the only one in the country that receives oversight and is advised by county participants.

For further information on NACo's Deferred Compensation program, please contact Lisa Cole at NACo at 202.942.4270 or lcole@naco.org or NRS at 877.677.3678 or www.nrsforu.com.

(Financial Services News was written by Lisa Cole, director, NACo Financial Services Corporation.)

Securities are offered through Nationwide Investment Services Corp. (NISC) a registered broker dealer and a member of FINRA. Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS) is a subsidiary of NISC. Retirement Specialists of NRS are Registered Representatives of NISC. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are each a Registered Municipal Advisor and do not recommend the purchase or sale of securities and do not hold or maintain funds or securities. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC act as third party marketers/solicitors. NACo RMA receives fees from NRS for such services. NACo RMA and NACo RMA LLC are NOT affiliates of Nationwide Investment Services Corp. or Nationwide Retirement Solutions.

What's in a Seal?

» Swift County, Minn.
www.swiftcounty.com



Swift County was established Feb. 18, 1870 and was named after Henry Swift, the governor of Minnesota in 1863.

By 1869, the St. Paul and Pacific railroad had reached the town of Willmar and the following year, Benson. The railroad company determined the number of future trading centers (Kerkhoven, DeGraff, Benson, Randall) in the county by locating sites at intervals of approximately eight miles.

In the spring of 1876, the Legislature authorized the construction of a courthouse in Benson for \$3,000. It soon proved to be too small to meet the needs of the large increase in the official business of the county. The county commissioners voted to construct another courthouse on March 26, 1897.

Agriculture is still the main industry in the county. Besides farming, the county is home to agriculture equipment manufacturers, an ethanol plant and the new Fibromin Plant which burns turkey litter to create electricity.

The seal shows the Swift County Courthouse, train tracks, crops, a plow, cows and a factory signifying the four words along the bottom — Government, Agriculture, Industry and Working Together.

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

Model Programs From the Nation's Counties

Horry County, S.C.

State Pressure Kick-starts Historic Preservation Effort

By CHARLIE BAN

STAFF WRITER

Everything seems to grow quickly in Horry County, S.C. — whether it's real vegetation, estate development or historical preservation.

The county best known as the home of Myrtle Beach has been the only one in South Carolina designated as a certified local government (CLG) by the National Park Service. For 20 years, though, preservation projects were kicked down the road by a rotating roster of staff members, and nothing was ever officially preserved or cataloged.

In 2007, with that inactivity in mind, the state's CLG coordinator threatened to revoke the certification and the county was pressed to start preserving sites. It chose to catalog cemeteries, aiming to identify every gravesite in the county, among the 500 cemeteries thought to be located inside the county's boundaries.



Photo courtesy of Horry County, S.C.

Teenage volunteers use Horry County, S.C.'s ground penetrating radar unit to look for unmarked graves.

"We didn't expect it to be the project it turned out to be," county planner Adam Emrick said. "Pretty soon we realized it would be more

impactful than appeasing the state government."

Many cemeteries were thought to be lost due to neglect, weather

and the natural course of events. In addition, the county had no legal mechanism to protect cemeteries, which led to several allegations that a few had been bulldozed to clear land for development. As land has been sold off, families whose ancestors may have been buried there began to lose their connections to it, and many were unaware of the cemeteries' existence on much of that property.

"When a tree came down in one older cemetery, the contractors not only cleaned it up but ended up moving the headstones, so the owners had no idea where people were buried," Emrick said.

Armed with funding from a Preserve America grant, the county bought a ground-penetrating radar device, which could locate unmarked graves, and handheld geographic information system units to use in the cataloging process. That led to finding more than 1,000 lost or unmarked graves. Many, Emrick said, were able to be traced back to

someone and identified.

The project has energized residents, and volunteers have come out of the woodwork from high school, church and heritage groups, and civic associations, contributing time that has gone a long way to moving the effort forward.

In the four subsequent years, the county added 182 historical properties to its register, after spending 20 years firmly parked at zero. The effort has led to a reclaimed sense of history in Horry County, one that's changed the mindset in the area.

"It was a hard sell to preserve land in advance of development, until you make the connection to people's family histories," Emrick said. "It's not a matter of preservation rather than development, it's just striking a balance that one doesn't have to be at the expense of the other."

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

Research News

School Shots Are a Big Deal

As the beginning of the school year draws near, states are having back to school tax-free shopping days, and counties are making sure that returning school age children all have their shots.

By law, in most states in the country, children will not be allowed to start the school year without the required shots. Many parents find themselves scrambling to find their kids' shot records and to arrange doctors' appointments. Many counties, too, have developed programs that help provide these required vaccinations.

In Indiana, Vanderburgh County provides notice of the state law requiring back-to-school immunizations in its advertisements about its vaccination clinics. The law spells out the required shots by school grade and by type of shot so that parents will know what to expect. To receive shots, the parents or guardians must provide shot records for each child. The county provides three-day-a-week appointments for shots as well as a one-day-a-week walk in service.

Huntington County, Ind. took a slightly different approach this year. The health department set up a tent at the 4-H Fair that provided shots daily throughout the fair. The county charged a fee for the shots which is waived for Medicaid recipients.

Laclede County, Mo.'s health department urges parents to not wait until the last minute to get the back-to-school shots for their kids because of fee changes due to cuts in state funding. Free immunizations can only be provided if the child qualifies under the federal Vaccinations for Children Program. All other children requiring shots in the county have been referred to their private family physicians. The county health department is one of the last in the state to limit the availability of free shots, which has been encouraged by the state for a number of years.

Dallas County, Texas is offering shots to all school children whose insurance does not cover these vaccinations. Yuma County, Ariz. Health District established Back to School Immunization clinics that

will run daily for 10 days, including weekends, at its health district auditorium. It is charging \$10 cash per visit for each child, but will not deny services for those who are unable to pay.

Lake County, Fla. Health Department is providing four clinics that are hosting back-to-school immunizations for children. The events are being held on four consecutive Saturdays at various clinics around the county. Shots will be provided to the first 100 children at each event.

Multnomah County, Ore. made a big deal Feb. 15 this year, on School Exclusion Day. This is the day when children without their up-to-date vaccines are excluded from participation and attendance at preschools, Head Start programs, kindergartens, private schools and other children's facilities throughout the county.

Each family where kids are not up-to-date on their shots receives a letter stating the deadline. The county health department holds a series of clinics throughout the month for uninsured and underinsured kids to

enable them to stay in school. Other families are directed to their private physicians.

Although the Vaccines for Children program, a federally funded program administered by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), provides free vaccines for up to 40 million uninsured and Medicaid-eligible children each year, nearly every state provides a medical, religious or philosophical exemption to the required immunizations, and some states continue to battle over these exemptions. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, all states except Mississippi and West Virginia allow religious exemptions but only 23 states allow philosophical exemptions.

More parents than ever are choosing not to have their kids get the required shots. In eight states, about one in 20 kindergartners are not getting the vaccines required to attend school. The states with the highest exemptions rates are in the West and the upper Midwest. In some rural counties in northeastern Washington

state, the rates of exemptions are above 20 percent and as high as 50 percent in one instance.

The major concern of CDC about these exemptions is the impact they may have on other children who are nearby. In a recent outbreak, California reported 2,100 cases of whooping cough resulting in the deaths of 10 infants. Records show that only one of these infants had received the first whooping cough vaccination.

Although the vaccination rate is still at about 90 percent or more for most vaccines, some parents don't believe the vaccines are essential, others think they are risky and still others claim the exemptions rather than getting the shots and maintaining the required paperwork. However, the CDC remains wary that sometime in the future we may see major outbreaks of diseases that have been all but eradicated.

(Research News was written by Jacqueline Byers, director of research and outreach.)