

County officials fare well in national, statewide elections

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

Candidates with county government service on their resumes scored four seats in the U.S. House and victory in the country's highest-profile U.S. Senate race.

They also won two governors' races and five statewide offices.

New Castle County, Del. Executive Chris Coons saw his candidacy change overnight when Christine O'Donnell won the Republican primary. Her surprise victory over veteran Congressman and former Delaware Gov. Mike Castle brought the race into the media's consciousness and gave Coons an opponent without Castle's significant experience and cachet.

The victory was overwhelming. Coons' votes in New Castle County alone — the largest of the state's three counties — surpassed O'Donnell's for the entire state.

Coons was an active NACo member. He served as chair of the 2008 Presidential Election Committee and over the years as a member of the Environment,



Photo courtesy of the News Journal

New Castle County, Del. Executive Chris Coons addresses supporters on Election Day after winning a U.S. Senate seat as his wife and children look on.

Whitley announces veterans theme for National County Government Month 2011

NACo President Glen Whitley issued the following statement to counties on Veterans Day regarding the April 2011 celebration of National County Government Month:

"I am pleased to announce on this Veterans Day that the April 2011 theme for National County Government Month (NCGM)

is Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families.

"Since 1991, NACo has encouraged counties to actively promote county government services and programs. Formerly National County Government Week, the designation was expanded to a full month to offer counties more opportunities to participate. Counties aren't expected to hold public awareness activities throughout the month, but can schedule activities any time during the month.

"As county officials, we know that America's counties provide essential programs and services to communities, but unfortunately many Americans do not. National County Government Month in conjunction with my County Government Works presidential initiative are terrific opportunities to educate the public and our partners in state and federal government about the responsibilities counties

have and the programs and services counties provide.

"Counties are encouraged to link this year's theme — Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families — to as many National County Government Month activities as possible. Popular events include holding public tours of county facilities; talking to students, community organizations and business leaders about county programs and services; holding essay and art contests; and sponsoring County Family Day events on the Courthouse grounds. You can hold media events, write newspaper columns, or be a guest on local radio and TV shows to discuss new county programs or highlight existing ones.

"This year's National County Government Month theme is important and timely as more veterans, military service members and their

Voters side with counties in several initiatives

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

A total 150 ballot measures faced voters in 35 states this Election Day.

California voters passed a pair of ballot initiatives that will protect county budgets on the surface, but it may take some time for things to settle.

Proposition 22, the Local Taxpayer, Public Safety and Transportation Protection Act, stops the state from snatching local funds for its transportation, redevelopment and local government projects and services. Proposition 26 requires a two-thirds vote to pass fees and levies.

Jean Hurst, lobbyist for the California State Association of Counties, said the effects of propositions 22 and 26 will remain to be seen for some time, and a lot of vagueness in Proposition 26 may cause years

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QuickTakes

Counties with Thanksgiving Towns

Cranberry, N.C. (Avery County)
Pie, W. Va. (Mingo County)
Pilgrim, Ky. (Martin County)
Pumpkin, Ga. (Paulding County)
Pumpkintown, Tenn. (Macon County)
Thanksgiving, Md. (Talbot County)
Turkey, Ark. (Marion County)

Source: Thanksgiving-related Places
www.accuracyproject.org

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Speakers' lineup taking shape for Legislative conference

MSNBC *Morning Joe* host, Joe Scarborough will headline the Opening General Session of NACo's 2011 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. March 5–9 at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel.

Scarborough leads a speakers' lineup that also includes Nationwide economist, Paul Ballew and military psychologist, Dr. David Brown. Online registration for the conference opens Nov. 30 at www.naco.org/legislativeconference.

Here's more information about the speakers.



Joe Scarborough



Paul Ballew



David Brown

**Tuesday, March 9
Luncheon**

David Brown, Psy.D.

Clinical Psychologist
Director, Integrative Wellness for the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE)

Dr. Brown is a special operations combat veteran and was a frequent guest on Armed Forces Networks television and radio in Japan, India and Germany for a range of psychological topics. He completed his residency training at the Department of Psychiatry at Tripler Army Medical Center and his postdoctoral training in Mind Body Medicine from Harvard Medical School.

He is a graduate of Organizational Leadership for Executives from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Prior to joining DCoE, he was the lead psychologist for seven bases in Bavaria, with more than 41,000 troops and their families dealing with a constant cycle of deployments.

Dr. Brown will share his knowledge on service member issues related to deployment and community re-integration and the impact this has on county services.

March 7 Opening Session

Joe Scarborough

MSNBC's Morning Joe

Former Congressman Joe Scarborough (R-Fla.), aka Morning Joe, will address attendees on Monday, March 7, during the Opening Session of the 2011 NACo Legislative Conference. MSNBC's Morning Joe features interviews with top newsmakers and politicians, in-depth analysis of the day's biggest stories and is described by *The New Yorker* as "appallingly entertaining."

Scarborough asks the tough

questions as part of his unyielding pursuit to hold our leaders accountable. A signer of the Contract with America and member of the 1994 Republican takeover of the House of Representatives, the former Florida congressman has been on the front lines of political history for over a decade. Scarborough talks with audiences about the state of the conservative movement, where it has gone wrong and what leaders in Washington need to do to curb reckless spending.

Scarborough is the author of two books including the recently

released *The Last Best Hope*, where he takes on the Republican Party establishment and lays out a way forward for both political parties.

Tuesday, March 8 Morning General Session

Paul Ballew

Senior Vice President
Customer Insights and Analytics
Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company

Paul Ballew, Nationwide's chief economist, directs the company's forecasting and planning. Ballew's

vast experience, prior to joining Nationwide, includes: executive director for global market and industry analysis at General Motors; senior advisor on industry conditions and corporate strategies for J.D. Power and Associates; and research officer and senior economist with the Federal Reserve. Today he maintains his advisory role with the Federal Reserve in addition to serving on a number of boards of nonprofit organizations.

He will provide his insight about the current economic climate and what the future holds.

FCC-imposed 'shot clock' in the works

By **JEFF ARNOLD**
DEPUTY LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The FCC is seeking to impose a "shot clock" on counties limiting the time allowed to approve wireless facility sitings — effectively forcing counties to review such requests without regard for the public processes necessary to complete the process. NACo is intervening in an

appeal of the FCC ruling in a case filed by the city of Arlington, Texas and others.

Background

On July 11, 2008, CTIA—The Wireless Association (CTIA), filed a petition requesting that the FCC issue a ruling clarifying the provisions of the Communications Act that provide for state and

local review of personal wireless facility siting applications. CTIA sought clarification of provisions in the Communications Act that it contended were ambiguous and had been interpreted in a manner that allowed zoning authorities to impose unreasonable impediments to wireless facility siting and the provision of wireless services.

In November 2009, the FCC established time frames for state and local governments to act on wireless facility siting applications. Five organizations representing local governments, including NACo, requested that the commission reconsider a portion of its ruling relating to the suspension of these time periods when an application is incomplete as filed.

On Dec. 17, 2009, a Petition for Reconsideration or Clarification was filed by NACo, the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, the United States Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities and the American Planning Association.

The petitioners said they do not agree with the commission's interpretation of its authority under Section 332 of the act, the petition did not challenge that interpretation. The commission issued a Public

Notice on Dec. 23, 2009, asking for comments in response to the petition on or before Jan. 22, 2010 and reply comments on or before Feb. 8, 2010. The commission received a total of 21 comments, oppositions and replies in response to the petition.

On Jan. 12, 2010, the city of Arlington filed a petition for review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit arguing that the FCC ruling generally exceeds its authority.

On Feb. 19, 2010, the FCC filed a motion to hold the case in abeyance pending a decision on the Petition for Reconsideration. The city of Arlington, NATOA, and other local government representatives opposed the motion. NACo did not join this effort. On March 4, 2010, the Court of Appeals granted the FCC's motion.

On Aug. 4, 2010, the FCC denied the petition and reaffirmed its decision that the time frames — 90 days for co-locations and 150 days for other wireless facility siting applications — are automatically started only when the reviewing government notifies the applicant of the incompleteness within the first 30 days after receipt.

The case will proceed in the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Issues Raised in 'Shot Clock' Petition

"Petitioners seek reconsideration and clarification of the 30-day incompleteness deadline on both legal and policy grounds. First, the Commission exceeded its interpretation of its authority under Section 332C-7 in implementing a 30-day review for completeness deadline because the 30-day incompleteness deadline imposes additional limitations on personal wireless service facility siting process beyond those stated in Section 332C-7.

"Second, the ability to start the shot clock must extend to valid reasons beyond the facial incompleteness of the application.

"Third, the 30-day review period does not reflect the realities of the zoning application process and will result in significant problems for local governments and applicants across the nation and could result in unnecessary litigation and/or siting delays unless modified.

"Fourth, the rule should be reconsidered based on input received by interested parties because the 30-day completeness rule was developed without public notice and without prior discussions with many interested parties."

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Florida voters soundly defeat public OK for planning changes

REFERENDA from page 1

of delay while courts work through its different facets.

"A lot of things in Prop 22 will be helpful, but since counties provide services on behalf of the state, the way the proposition restricts states from taking money from counties could affect how much comes back to counties to carry out state functions," she said. "Frankly, it's a new environment for budgeting, and it's hard to predict what it means."

Proposition 26 supporters compared fees to new taxes, and opponents said its passage would tie the state's hands in responding quickly to industrial changes that affect environmental health.

"I have a sense litigation will determine what it means, and we

might not find out for years exactly how this will impact county government," Hurst said of Proposition 26. "It will likely make it harder to subsidize fee rates for low-income residents and the elderly."

On the other hand, Hurst said counties are pretty relieved California's "Referendum" Proposition 19 failed. It would have legalized marijuana for personal use.

"Having to deal with Prop 19 would have put significant burdens on local government, creating a tax structure and enforcing parameters of the law," she said. "People are pretty happy it failed (53.8 percent voted against it)."

Meanwhile in Colorado, four initiatives opposed by Colorado Counties Inc. failed. Amendment 60 would have changed Colorado's

Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) law to cancel all of the existing voter-approved property tax changes. Amendment 61 sought to require voter approval to issue any kind of debt. Amendment R would have eliminated property taxes for individuals or businesses that use government-owned property for a private benefit. Proposition 101 would have revised the current vehicle, income and telecommunications taxes and fees.

In Florida, 67 percent of voters defeated a constitutional amendment — Amendment 4 — that would have required public approval of any change to a county's comprehensive plan. That would have meant a dramatic slowdown in local zoning operations and a significant increase in the cost of holding these referenda.

County officials from a variety of areas opposed the amendment, which would have required a 60-percent vote to pass.

New Mexico voters liked turnover in county elected office enough to defeat a ballot proposal that would have expanded term limits. Amendment 2, which would have expanded term limits to 12 years from the current

eight years for county officials, was defeated with a vote of 82.5 percent during the Nov. 2 election.

After the moratorium on offshore oil drilling this summer highlighted the economic effects of natural resource extraction to Louisiana, the passage of Act 541 was well received. The Louisiana Natural Resource

Severance Taxes passed with a 58 percent vote.

It decreases the amount of taxes the state keeps on the extraction of certain natural resources, including oil and natural gas, and increases the maximum amount of such tax revenue that goes to the parish where the resource was extracted.

Veterans focus of County Government Month

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families are turning to their county government for services. In addition to my County Government Works initiative, I created the "Veterans and Military Service Task Force" to engage NACo members to develop and highlight best practices and policies to promote innovative programs, services and benefits.

"To assist counties, a booklet will be available from NACo in early 2011 will provide ideas for the variety of ways counties can celebrate National County Govern-

ment Month. Many of these ideas and more are already available in the County Government Works section of the NACo website.

"I know you are proud of your county's programs and services and the men and women who deliver them. Start planning today to celebrate National County Government Month and participate in my County Government Works initiative."

For more information about NCGM, County Government Works, or the Veterans and Military Service Task Force, visit www.naco.org.

CORRECTION

In an article in the Oct. 18 issue of *CountyNews*, "Reading programs offer alternative to jail," recidivism rates for the Johnson County, Kan. library's "Changing Lives Through Literature" program were incorrectly attributed to Kathy McLellan. The data, from a 2007 article that she co-authored, has subsequently proven to have been unreliable, and county officials say "No official recidivism data exists at this point...." The program began in 1999; the article gave an incorrect start date.

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County saves on fuel by changing driver behavior

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

Polk County, Fla. has a message for drivers of county fleet vehicles: Don't be fuelish. The advice is paying off — for the county's bottom line and for some employees' pocketbooks.

The county's fuel conservation program is all about behavior modification. It includes a cash incentive for drivers to slow down, stop idling and, ultimately, get better mileage by using less fuel.

Drivers who improve their vehicles' mileage by at least 5 percent get to split the cost of the fuel saved with the county 50-50. One employee received almost \$500, according to Bob Stanton, the county's director of fleet management. It's part of a broader initiative that was recently recognized as a Bright Idea by the Ash Institute at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

"If you look at statistics, 35 percent of your miles per gallon is affected by the person behind the



Photos courtesy of Polk County, Fla.

Polk County, Fla. spent about \$800 on signs for its fuel conservation program, which officials say saved hundreds of thousands of dollars.

wheel," Stanton said. "So if you can modify that behavior ... even if you don't get 35 percent, if you get 5 percent, 10 percent, 15 percent, that can be a significant number for a government fleet."

The incentive program is voluntary. Its participants — and all fleet drivers — must follow eco-driving practices, which Stanton teaches, such as avoiding quick starts and stops, maintaining proper tire pressure and using cruise control, when possible. Emergency-response vehicles are ineligible for the program, since they often must exceed speed limits.

The classes are an adaptation of vehicle manufacturer Ford's Driving Skills for Life program. To date, Stanton has taught almost 1,000 students. Of that number, he said 108 employees signed up for the incentive program; 40 received an incentive check.

Nick Harboe, who drives a Ford F-250 truck for the county's mosquito control program, was one of them. He already considered himself a "conservative" driver when he decided to participate in the incentive program.

"I didn't think it was going to make as big a difference with me as it would with someone else who had tended to always hot-rod it," he said. "But I did the steps they told you about. Actually, I think I ended up saving 120-some-odd dollars when all was said and done." That was his share of the \$240 in fuel savings he realized. He was so impressed with the program that he's adapted some of the techniques to driving his personal vehicle.

To participate in the incentive program, an employee must also sign a Fuel Incentive Program Employee Agreement, and she or he must be the exclusive driver of the vehicle, so any driving behavior changes can be tracked to a specific driver and vehicle.

The one-year contract obligates the driver to practice eco-driving

techniques, enter the vehicle's odometer reading at each refueling, adhere to preventative maintenance schedules and have no preventable crashes. A driver can only be in the program for a year, Stanton said, because it's difficult to squeeze out additional fuel efficiency year after year.

In its first year, the program contributed to overall fuel savings from all conservation measures of 187,000 gallons and about \$500,000, Stanton said. The incentive program helped, but he said the biggest savings came from drivers observing the 55 mph speed restriction.

Because of the county's size, 1,875 square miles, and the high number of roads with posted speeds of 65 mph, he said the opportunity to recognize savings from driving 55 are significant. "By far, the 55-mile-an-hour speed limit restriction has had the greatest impact."

A Response to Soaring Fuel Prices

The impetus for the county's fuel conservation measures tracks back to the summer of 2008, when fuel prices were "off the charts,"



Signs like these reinforce new driving behavior for Polk County staff.

Stanton said. Gasoline was selling for north of \$4 per gallon and climbing.

He made seven recommendations to the county manager, three of which were already in place: an idle-awareness program, and downsizing vehicles and their engines. The county "reinvigorated" those programs and added the eco-driving component, speed-limit restriction

See NO-IDLE page 5

This Month in ...
County News

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

★ November ★

1975

- More than 1,700 county officials converged on Capitol Hill to urge renewal of revenue sharing before Christmas. They lobbied more than 300 representatives and 74 senators during the day-long blitz Nov. 17.
- Texas had the largest delegation, with 240 officials making the trip. Forty-six states were represented.

1990

- The Clean Air Act passed Congress after 13 years of trying. In addition to addressing the problems of persistent urban pollution, the legislation includes major new initiatives to control toxic air pollutants and acid rain. President George Herbert Walker Bush signaled that he was likely to sign the bill.

1997

- The House approved H.R. 1270, requiring the federal government to consolidate the nation's spent fuel from nuclear power plants in an interim facility in Yucca Mountain, Nev. by 2000.
- Yucca Mountain, in Eureka County, 100 miles northwest of Las Vegas, was identified as the interim repository in 1987.
- NACo supported a single interim storage site at Yucca Mountain as a cheaper and safer alternative until a permanent repository was identified and ready, which by most estimates would not be until 2010. (Update: The Yucca Mountain site was closed by the Obama administration Oct. 1, 2010.)

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

Word Search

Top Turkey Hunting Counties

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

BEDFORD (Va.)	HANCOCK (W. Va.)	ROBERTSON (Tenn.)
BROOKE (W.Va.)	HARDEMAN (Tenn.)	SOUTHAMPTON (Va.)
CASWELL (N.C.)	HENRY (Tenn.)	STOKES (N.C.)
DICKSON (Tenn.)	MARSHALL (W. Va.)	WILKES (N.C.)
FRANKLIN (Va.)	OHIO (W. Va.)	WIRT (W. Va.)
GRANVILLE (N.C.)	PERSON (N.C.)	
GREENE (Tenn.)	PITTSYLVANIA (Va.)	
HALIFAX (N.C. and Va.)		

Source: WildTurkeyZone.com • Created by: Christopher Johnson

'Generous Jurors' help keep county programs afloat

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

It's a task as despised as doing your taxes: Jury Duty. What many don't know is the money they earn can help county programs stay afloat through a Generous Jurors Program.

Jurors get paid anywhere from

\$9–\$25 per day of jury duty, plus any mileage for driving. All have the option of keeping the money, but now some counties are asking for jurors to donate it back to fund programs in need due to the high rate of budget cuts.

With many county budgets in the red, counties such as Eau Claire, Wisc. welcome alternative

ways to help programs continue to run smoothly.

"With county budgets being stressed and some programs not getting as much funding as they have previously, every little bit helps," said Kristina Aschenbrenner, Eau Claire County clerk of courts.

The Eau Claire County Board recently voted to put juror-donated

funds toward a new county program called the Veterans Treatment Court. The court is similar in principle to drug and juvenile diversion initiatives, but with a focus on the special circumstances impacting the lives of veterans facing (primarily non-violent) criminal charges. Court staff will also use the same principles as the Drug Court, focusing on effective, long-term treatment of substance abuse and mental issues through the VA with intensive court supervision.

Since June 2010, \$1,000 has been raised from the Generous Jurors Program to support the Mental Health Court with a handful of jurors donating their wages each trial.

Delaware County, Pa. started its program in 2003 and has raised more than \$450,000 for county

programs. Earlier this year, the program extended its reach to send aid to Haitian children affected by the earthquake that hit the island in January. The Haitian effort resulted in a \$6,130 donation to UNICEF to help injured or orphaned Haitian children.

Anne Arundel County, Md.'s Department of Social Services uses any juror fees to benefit foster children. Among the items covered with these fees are medical and dental expenses, academic tutoring, clothing, school activity and athletic fees.

Even in stressful economic times, people are generous in donating their juror fees to ensure program needs are met.

"It is a financial hardship for a lot of people so those able to donate are really appreciated," Eau Claire's Aschenbrenner added.

No-idle means fuel savings for county

NO-IDLE from page 4

and monetary incentives in July 2008.

Assistant County Manager Lea Ann Thomas said Stanton "took the ball and ran with it," eventually winning Board of County Commissioners' approval of the incentive and other conservation programs.

Stanton said overall costs were minimal compared to the savings. In addition to staff time, the county spent about \$800 to purchase decals resembling speed limit signs for county vehicles that read "I'm driving ... at 55: to save \$\$ and fuel" — to alert following vehicles.

As the program has progressed, Stanton discovered a money-saving

side benefit that he attributes to the slower driving: a reduction in the number and severity of vehicle crashes. In the initiative's first year, preventable accidents dropped 22 percent, and the severity of accidents declined 35 percent. "You're driving more slowly; you're driving, theoretically, more carefully. Consequently, you're reducing accidents," he said.

"So in addition to fuel savings, we calculated the hard dollar savings in the first year in safety or loss prevention to be about another \$280,000."

Thomas said she often served as a "sounding board" for Stanton when he was developing the program. "The bottom line is, from the county manager's office, we're very pleased with the success of the

program," she said. "All the different steps we've taken, I think they've all made a difference. We encourage any more ideas."

(For more information about Polk County's fuel conservation program for fleet vehicles, contact Bob Stanton at bobstanton@polk-county.net.)

What's in a Seal?

» Citrus County, Fla.
www.citruscountyfl.org



Citrus County was created in 1887, formerly part of Hernando County. It was named for the county's citrus trees. Citrus production declined dramatically after the "Big Freeze" of 1894–1895. Today, citrus is grown on one large grove, Bellamy Grove. Additionally, some people have trees on their personal property.

The county was first occupied about 2,500 years ago by mound-building Native Americans who built the complex that now forms the Crystal River archeological site. The site was occupied for about 3,000 years. Why the complex was abandoned is not known.

Phosphate mining also played a major part in the County's history until the end of World War II, after which it was largely moved overseas. In the 1960s, Citrus County began to develop and residential areas such as Beverly Hills started to dominate the county.

On the seal, the West Indian Manatee symbolizes the county's status as the only place in the U.S. where people can legally interact and swim with the manatees. The oranges symbolize the name of the county, Citrus. The wetland bird represents the wetlands in the county, and the county courthouse is featured in the upper right corner.

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

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- December 14: Aligning Counties and Cooperative Extension: Working Together to Serve Our Communities
- December 16: Kickstart Your Card: Improve Your Residents' Awareness and Savings with the NACo Prescription Discount Card

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This fall, take a trip to the Digital Coast

By **CARRIE CLINGAN**

SENIOR ASSOCIATE, COMMUNITY SERVICES

Governments have long used maps to improve services for constituents. George Washington was a surveyor. In ancient Egypt, "rope stretchers" re-established farmland boundaries after the Nile flooded each season. In 1854, John Snow depicted a cholera outbreak in London by plotting deaths on a map of a neighborhood centering on an infected water pump, which was promptly closed by local officials.

Snow's map represents forward thinking about how to reference social information with geography to address problems at the local level. Today's mapping technology incorporates photography, sonar and satellites.

Geographic Information System (GIS) data helps counties establish social information, like public health or economic data, on map-referenced geographic points, a high-tech version of John Snow's cholera map.

County officials can use this type of information in a broad range of applications, but this data holds special urgency for coastal counties. Many coastal counties do not have access to updated, accurate GIS data and face an increase in floods, storms and erosion threatening their residents' health, safety and livelihoods.

Over the past three years, NACo has worked with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center to increase counties' access to unbiased and accurate geographic information and tools.

The Coastal Services Center established a partnership team to help test, guide and develop the resources on the Digital Coast website. The partnership group features NACo, the American Planning Association, the Association of State Floodplain Managers, the Coastal States Organization, the National States Geographic Information Council and The Nature Conservancy.

Although the data available on the site comes only from state or federal sources, the partnership group works to ensure that the resources available meet the needs of a large and varied constituency. NACo has helped to make certain the data and tools apply to local county officials. In early 2010, NACo released an issue brief, titled *Building Resilient Communities: Counties and the Digital Coast*. This publication highlights many of the specific resources available on the Digital Coast for counties. These resources include

new data-based tools that users access without special software. NACo has advocated for programs that counties can use without specific data viewers or software, the Digital Coast now hosts many tools

accessible through a Web browser. In addition to these data viewers, the Coastal Services Center developed an inundation snapshot for almost 300 of coastal U.S. counties. This snapshot cross references

floodplain data and maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) with social and economic data from the Census.

The top portion of the report shows the population of the county

living in the floodplain with two groups of special interest broken out: the population of 65 years of age and the population living below

See **COAST** page 12

Hazard Exposure Information for

Jackson County, Mississippi

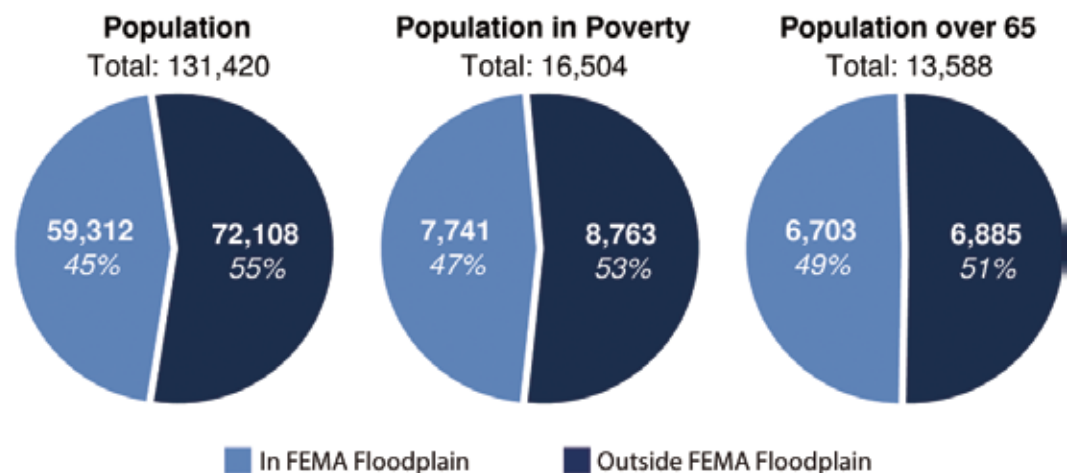
DATA SNAPSHOTS – COUNTY LEVEL
www.csc.noaa.gov/snapshots/

People + Floodplains = Not Good

High-Risk Populations + Floodplains = Even Worse

The more homes and people located in a floodplain, the greater the potential for harm from flooding. Impacts are likely to be even greater when additional risk factors (age, income, capabilities) are involved, since people at greatest flood risk may have difficulty evacuating or taking action to reduce potential damage.

Based on 2000 U.S. Census records.

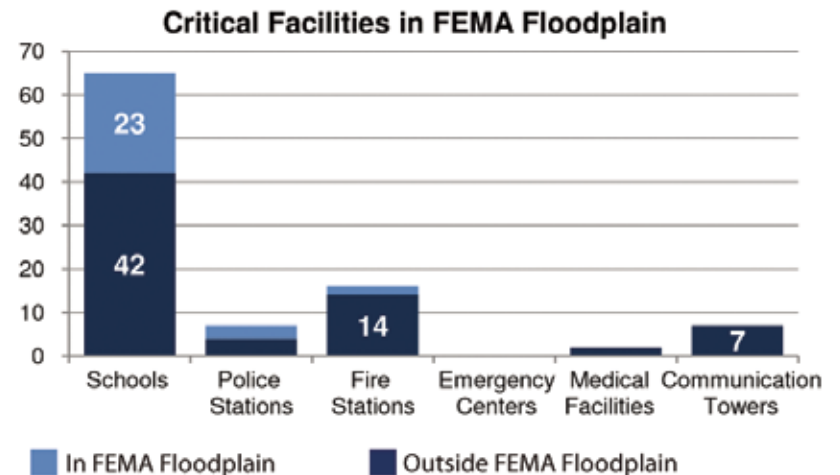


Community Infrastructure + Floodplains = Bad News

28% of critical facilities and 24% of road miles (512 miles) in Jackson County are within the floodplain.

Hospitals. Roads. Schools. Shelters. These facilities play a central role in disaster response and recovery. Understanding which facilities are exposed, and the degree of that exposure, can help reduce or eliminate service interruptions and costly redevelopment. Incorporating this information into development planning helps communities get back on their feet faster.

Based on Critical Facilities from FEMA HAZUS database.



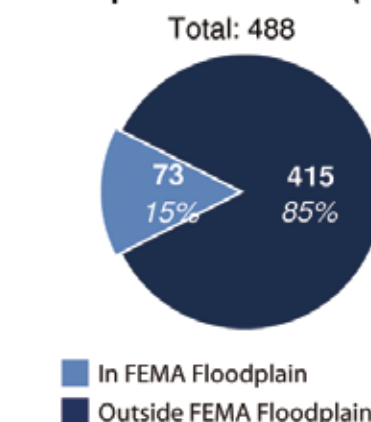
Increasing Development in Floodplains = More People in Harm's Way

Loss of Natural Buffers = Less Protection

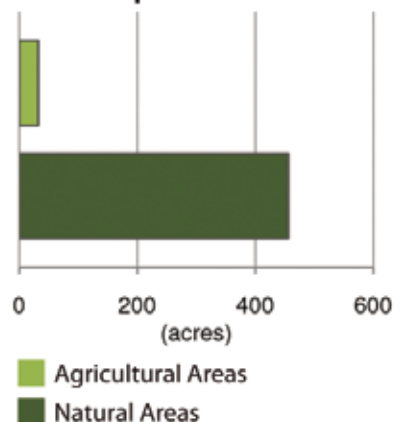
A county with more natural areas (wetlands, forests, etc.) and less development within floodplains typically has lower exposure to flooding. A county that monitors land cover changes within the floodplain will detect important trends that indicate whether flood exposure is increasing or decreasing. Armed with this information, local leaders can take steps to improve their safety and resilience.

Based on NOAA land cover data.

Amount of Land Converted to Development 2001-2006 (acres)



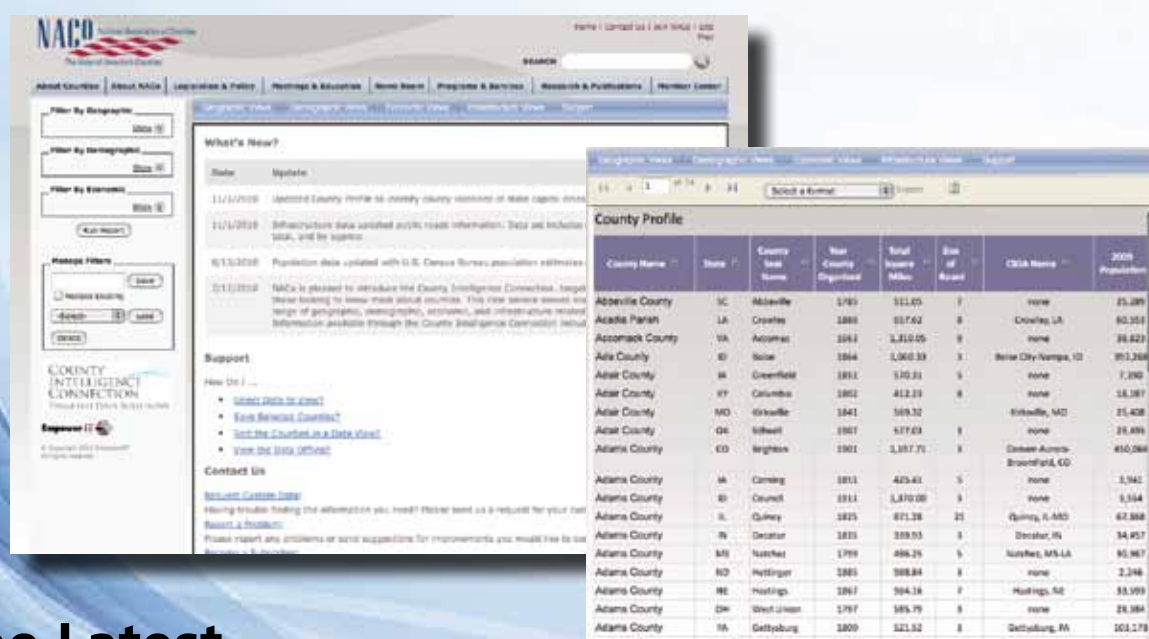
Type of Land Converted to Development 2001-2006



NOAA Coastal Services Center
LINKING PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

COUNTY INTELLIGENCE CONNECTION

TARGETED DATA SOLUTIONS



Get the Latest County Data and Demographics

NACo's County Intelligence Connection (CIC)...targeted data solutions for those looking to know more about counties. This online service makes analysis easy, providing a range of geographic, demographic, economic, and infrastructure related data at the county level.

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

*Subscriptions are available for non-members.

Local officials win national positions

ELECTIONS from page 1

Energy and Land Use, and Community and Economic Development Steering committees.

Though Coons will be one of 100 legislators in the senate, two county officials will shortly find themselves the governors of their respective states.

City and County of Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper (D) won the Colorado governor's race.

"It's a time that's going to be a crisis for government, because property tax revenues will come in at lower pace, thanks to the mortgage crisis," said Colorado Counties Inc. Executive Director Chip Taylor. "I'm hopeful that as the mayor of a county and city, he has some kind of sensitivity for what counties are going through."

"It's too early to make many prognostications, but he does have a lot of county officials on his transition team and committees, so that is promising."

Republican Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker won the Wisconsin race.

"We're all very excited to see someone from county government become governor," said John Reinemann, the Wisconsin Counties Association legislative

director. "His experience as executive of the largest county in the state gives him a unique opportunity to approach some of the problems counties will be facing in the coming biennium."

Four other county officials lost their gubernatorial races.

Meanwhile in Alabama, Madison County Commissioner Mo Brooks (R) won 58 percent of the vote for the state's 5th District seat. Former Maricopa County, Ariz. Treasurer David Schweikert (R) won 53 percent of the vote for his state's 5th district seat.

After suffering defeat in 2008, former Bucks County, Pa. Commissioner Mike Fitzpatrick, a Republican, reclaimed the 8th District congressional seat from Democrat Patrick Murphy.

South Carolina's 1st District seat went to State Rep. Tim Scott, a Republican, who had served as the chairman of the Charleston County Council.

In other election news, former NACo President Ken Mayfield lost his bid for another term as a Dallas County commissioner. Mayfield, who served as NACo president from 2002-2003, had served on the Dallas Commissioners Court since 1995.

National aviation facility opens in Sedgwick County



Photo Courtesy of NCAT

The National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) includes a group of three steel-and-glass buildings: the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center, the Aviation Service Center and an Assessment and Administration Center for admissions, student services and employment placement.

By CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

World-class aviation and aerospace training joined world-class research, design and manufacturing in a recent ceremony opening the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) in Sedgwick County, Kan.

As an aviation hub, Sedgwick County understands the need for a skilled workforce to replace workers in the industry as they reach retirement age. To respond to this need, the county, with Wichita Area Technical College and the National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR), created NCAT to serve as a national hub for aviation education, training and research, providing a

work force for the industry while speeding new technologies into production.

"This unique facility is the national hub for aviation training," John Tomblin, executive director of Wichita State University's NIAR said. "The center is designed so every detail meets the needs to advance aviation companies."

The 230,000-square-foot county-owned center provides industry-driven training courses in a facility where students from around the country have the opportunity to receive hands-on, real-world training in the areas of general aviation manufacturing, and aircraft and power plant mechanics.

The \$52 million center was

funded by the Sedgwick County government (\$43.8 million), the Kansas Department of Commerce Workforce Solutions Fund (\$2 million), the U.S. Economic Development Association (\$2 million), the U.S. Small Business Administration (\$1.5 million) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$495,000).

NCAT offers 37 certifications and degrees with 21 classrooms and 25 labs to provide hands-on, real-world training for up to 1,500 students. Classes began in September with additional classes scheduled to begin in January 2011. Cost depends on what area of training the student chooses. For more information, visit www.ncatkansan.org.

In Case You Missed It ... News to Use from Past County News

► Updated 'Alphabet Soup' publication now available

Have you ever felt like you needed a dictionary or translator just to attend a government meeting? NACo's publication, "Alphabet Soup: Government Acronym Guide," provides definitions to common government acronyms. Updated to include new legislation and programs, this guide will help decipher the secret code of government. The guide is available for purchase at \$2 per booklet or online to NACo members only.

To access this members-only publication online, visit www.naco.org/research/pubs. To purchase booklets, contact Christopher Johnson at cjohnson@naco.org or 202.942.4256.

► County Government Works: Get involved now

NACo President Glen Whitley's County Government Works Campaign to raise public awareness about counties is off to a great start. NACo's website has plenty of tools you can use to help your constituents better understand what your county does. There are talking points for community meetings, templates for brochures, PSAs to post to your county's website, ideas for reaching and teaching students, and other easily reproduced programs. Take action by picking tools you can use to tell your residents that County Government Works.

For more information, visit www.naco.org ► Programs & Services ► Tell the People What Counties Do ► County Government Works Campaign

Coastal Services Center also offers training

COAST from page 10

the poverty line. These two groups offer challenges in emergency planning because they may need extra support.

Infrastructure forms the second component of a county's inundation snapshot. The snapshot shows how many of each county's critical facilities sit in the floodplain. The FEMA HAZUS database provides a count of schools, firehouses, Police stations and other infrastructure affected by flooding. County decision makers can see at-risk facilities in this area of the snapshot.

The third piece of the inundation snapshot tracks the amount of land developed since 1996. Based on NOAA land cover data, this shows how much agricultural and natural lands, which absorb stormwater, have converted into land that will not perform this function. By simply

looking at or sharing this snapshot, a county official can start a conversation about increasing preparation for a flood or storm.

In the coming months, the Digital Coast partnership will develop snapshots on other key components for counties. These include a coastal economic snapshot to aid counties in developing economic strength through these tough times. This snapshot will incorporate data on jobs and industries with regional information to give local officials an idea of where to build on economic potency and where opportunities exist to develop weaker areas.

In addition to the tools available on the Digital Coast, the Coastal Services Center also offers many training opportunities at no or low cost for county officials. The staff at the center has designed courses for basic to advanced GIS users, as well as training on specific tools.

They also offer online versions

to reduce travel time and cost. The training ranges from tool-based instruction to in-depth topics like the Roadmap for Adapting to Coastal risk, which assists a county to develop a comprehensive coastal sustainability plan.

Over the past three years, NACo has supported these efforts to restore the federal-local partnership for coastal resiliency. Through this resource, counties and NOAA have created a partnership to address the shared concerns of emergency planning, land use and economic diversity.

The Digital Coast offers decision-support tools for coastal policy-makers grounded in scientific data and evidence, as well as free access to GIS data collected by several federal agencies and states. If you have questions, want to surf the Digital Coast or see what resources are available for your coastal county, please visit www.naco.org/coast.



News From the Nation's Counties

► CALIFORNIA

• A judge says law enforcement can shut down outdoor **medical marijuana gardens** in **FRESNO COUNTY**.

The outdoor ban was put into effect nearly two months ago by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors after a series of shootings involving thieves trying to steal marijuana growing in plain sight, but it has not been enforced because of legal concerns.

The ban was proposed by Fresno County Supervisor Henry Perea in September, and the judge agreed that Fresno County had the right to regulate marijuana plants and to force the gardens to go indoors. "I think the judge sent a pretty strong signal — whatever you have you better get out of the ground and harvested," Perea told CBS 47.

The judge gave patients and growers until Nov. 30 to get their plants out of the ground.

• The **SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY** Board of Supervisors

passed a preliminary version of a new rule that **forbids toy freebies**, like Happy Meal toys, with meals that don't meet minimum nutritional standards.

"This is a challenge to the restaurant industry to think about children's health first and join the wide range of local restaurants that have already made this commitment," Supervisor Eric Mar, who introduced the legislation, said in a statement.

Though Mayor Gavin Newsom has said he would veto the ordinance, the first vote suggests a veto-proof majority, NPR reported.

► FLORIDA

• **LEE COUNTY** commissioners lifted their ban on concealed **weapons in county parks**.

A lawsuit against the county pointed out the county's inconsistency with state law, which prohibits guns at professional sporting events, the *Naples Daily News* reported.

"I find it interesting that the State Legislature said firearms



► NORTH CAROLINA

HENDERSON COUNTY has a **new logo**, thanks to the 3,196 citizens who voted to pick the winning image. The county announced a design competition in April, in conjunction with National County Government Month.

Fifteen designs were submitted and the top three were chosen by a panel of county employees. The winning logo will be used on Henderson County Government documents and publications.

should be prohibited at professional events and school events," Commissioner Ray Judah said, but not at youth sporting events, such as Little League baseball played at public parks.

• **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY** Animal Services found homes for **809 dogs and cats** in October, more pets saved in a month than ever before in the history of the department.

In addition to the 809 adoptions, another 410 pets went home with 62 rescue partner organizations and 143 pets were reunited with their rightful owners.

"Seeing more than 36,000 pets abandoned at our shelter every year is heartbreaking, so we have to celebrate any good news," said Sara Pizano, Miami-Dade Animal Service, director.

MAINE

SOMERSET COUNTY residents voted to **increase the number of county commissioners** from three to five, and establish five new county districts.

With results tallied from all the major towns, the question of adopting a charter for Somerset County passed by a wide margin. Voters in Skowhegan, Pittsfield, Madison, Anson and Fairfield all said "yes" to the charter, which will change the way the county is governed.

County Administrator Larry Post said the effective date of the charter will be July 1, 2011. With new districts and the election of two new county commissioners, elections for all five seats will be held in November 2011, he said. The terms of service will be staggered beginning next year.

► MARYLAND

GARRETT COUNTY voters have fulfilled the wish of a county commissioner candidate who died 12 days before the election.

When Dennis Glotfelty died, his family said he preferred voters **nominate a write-in candidate**, rather than vote for him and allow local Republican Party officials to nominate a successor after the election. Republican Bob Gatto won the write-in campaign.

► MICHIGAN

WAYNE COUNTY officials voted to issue \$300 million in bonds for a **new jail** to consolidate its far-flung and aging lockups.

Proponents say the plan would save \$26 million a year by reducing inefficiencies of operating three jails. As part of the plan, Sheriff Benny Napoleon agreed to shed that amount from his budget by trimming 170 of the department's 900 jobs through attrition. Other savings would come from reducing overtime, cutting transit costs by adding video arraignments and consolidating in areas such as medical and mental health services, the *Detroit News* reported.

► NEW MEXICO

A few words of advice to city slickers who move to the country: "Gravel roads generate dust," according to **SANTA FE COUNTY**'s version of the **Code of the West**.

County commissioners are considering a resolution that reads, in part, "...we offer this information to help people who have chosen to build and/or live in the rural areas of Santa Fe County," *The Santa Fe New Mexican* reported.

Commissioner Mike Anaya proposed the code, which has also been called "How to Avoid Surprises and Be a Good Neighbor When You're Buying, Building and Developing in Santa Fe County."

At least 16 counties — in New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, Washington, Colorado, Utah, Idaho and Montana — have adopted versions of the code.

► NEW YORK

ERIE COUNTY voters have spoken and will get what they want: a smaller County Legislature. Eighty-two percent of the electorate voted in favor of **downsizing the legislature** from 15 members to 11, according to the *Buffalo News*.

The measure, initiated by a citizen activist, almost didn't make

The H.R. Doctor Is In

Being Thankful at Thanksgiving

A most wonderful time of the year occurs in late November. Thanksgiving is an HR Doctor favorite because it is centered on the opportunity to step back and view our own lives at work and at home with a sense of perspective.

It's a great time for an employer to help members of the staff appreciate all that they have in the form of jobs, which are generally steady and career-oriented, and include retirement, health care, time off, educational support and much more.

Thanksgiving is an excellent time to do more than simply eat a tremendous meal with family and friends and maybe watch football. It is a time to ask, "What am I doing to make things easier and more enjoyable for my colleagues at work or those in need in the community?" It is not coincidental that United Way campaigns occur during this holiday time nor that about one in three persons receives help from such an organization. "There but for fortune," could be any one of us.

This holiday is also a time to praise and recognize how much easier our own lives at work are made by having colleagues who work hard to help you as a county government leader and care about your success. Not a bad time to make some "Thanksgiving resolutions" and avoid a New Year's rush. Resolve not to take things for granted, but rather find new ways to help at the office and in community leadership through charitable giving and volunteering.

The HR Doctor has a lot to be thankful for, including the chance to share information on proactive Human Resources with each of you regularly. I bet if you stop for just a few seconds and think about it, you also have a lot to be thankful for in your own work life and personal life.

Take the time to do that — and save a slice of pumpkin pie for me. Best wishes!

Phil Rosenberg
HR Doctor • www.hrdr.net

NACo on the Move

» NACo Officers and Elected Officials

Glen Whitley, NACo president, spoke on what NACo can offer counties through membership and the latest on NACo and Congress at the Virginia Association of Counties annual conference in Bath County Nov. 7-9.

» NACo Staff

Anita Cardwell, senior associate, community services, spoke about the new Health Care Reform implementations at the Washington State Association of Counties annual conference in Spokane County Nov. 9-12.



Anita Cardwell

» Coming Up

Andrew Goldschmidt, director of membership marketing, will be exhibiting on behalf of NACo membership recruitment and retention at the Missouri Association of Counties Annual Conference in Camden County, Nov. 21-23.

On the Move is compiled by Christopher Johnson.

Model Programs

FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

St. Claire County, Ill.

Elder Caregivers Get Preview Support in County Workshops

By CHARLIE BAN
STAFF WRITER

The lunch is digested and gone in a few hours, but the lessons caregivers learn in St. Claire County, Ill.'s lunchtime workshops last a lot longer.

The county's human services office has joined with the St. Clair County Office on Aging to sponsor workshops to refresh caregivers and prepare prospective caregivers for the challenges ahead.

Judy Greenberg served as a caregiver to her mother 20 years ago, before she came to work for the county human services office, where she helps coordinate the series.

"I wish I had known about the emotional toll that my brother, and his wife and I were about to experience," she said. "These workshops help you prepare for those challenges, because as a caregiver, you feel like no matter what you do, it's never enough. These workshops bring people together and let them know they aren't the only ones going through it."

The St. Clair County Mental Health Board provides a box lunch to participants during hour-long lunchtime sessions.

Speakers include an older-adult counselor associated with the senior center and an elder law attorney, who advise participants *pro bono* about what they will need to master when caring for an aging family member or friend.

Most of the participants are children of aging parents, with a smattering of care-giving siblings.

Most of the program's cost is for the lunches provided to the participants.

Question-and-answer periods follow each presentation, and participants may make appointments with the speakers for a follow-up visit and one-on-one counseling.

Some sensitive topics, including how to transition to a nursing home or when someone should stop driving, are addressed.

About 100 people have attended the workshops since their inception in 2007. The county generally offers six workshops a year, at a variety of locations.

"We're looking for other places to reach out to different groups, looking at different places to give the workshops," Greenberg said. "The venue really does affect the segment of the population that attends."

The county has held workshops at senior centers, churches and the county office building, but has been unsuccessful holding them at libraries.

"We'll look at what other venues we can use to reach different kinds of people in the future," she said.

Participants receive a comprehensive resource guide that summarizes the workshop's lessons and provides a directory of useful contacts in the county system. An easy-to-follow procedure helps caregivers consolidate important records.

Overall, the workshops help caregivers create a strong framework, including legal procedures such as establishing durable power of attorney, a path for the future, which may include selecting an assisted-care facility, and outlets for the caregivers themselves to sustain their effort.

"Addressing the stress level in caregivers is crucial," Greenberg said. "If they aren't healthy, they will be less able to help the person on whom they are focused."

(Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights Achievement Award-winning programs. For more information on this and other NACo Achievement Award winners, visit NACo's Web site, www.naco.org ► Resource Library ► Model County Programs.)

Research News

Taking a Shot at Flu Prevention

Flu season has arrived and counties across the country are urging residents to be vaccinated against the influenza virus. To raise the rate of vaccination, county employees are taking the shots to the people.

The Vote and Vax program, where flu clinics were set up at polling locations on Election Day, is a popular way to encourage residents to get flu shots. As part of a nationwide effort, county health departments used polling as a great opportunity to reach large numbers of adults. While Vote and Vax clinics make it easy and convenient for voters at these sites to get their flu shots, the clinics are not limited to people voting. Vote and Vax clinics are open to any adult who would like to get a flu vaccine. Some counties, such as Sarasota County, Fla., even extended the program to include early voting sites throughout the month of October.

Some residents prefer getting flu vaccinations without having to leave the comfort of their cars. During drive-thru flu clinics, drivers who want a vaccination just have to roll down their windows and roll up their sleeves.

The Health Department in Polk County, Iowa, uses the Iowa State Fair grounds as a convenient and expansive area for drivers and families to get flu shots. Drive-thru flu clinics are becoming a popular choice for health officials not only because of the convenience for residents, but also because it prevents the unintentional spread of the flu by people waiting in line together to get the flu shot.

While everyone is being encouraged to have a flu shot this year, some programs are going after the most vulnerable populations. In conjunction with the Georgia Division of Public Health, Floyd County, Ga. is implementing a pilot program of providing free flu shots to area students.

In an effort to raise immunization rates and prevent large-scale school closures due to a flu outbreak, all children in Rome city and Floyd County schools are eligible for the free shot. After a parental permission slip is signed and returned, the free shots are given by nurses without parents needing to be present. For students skittish around needles, a nasal spray vaccine will also be available.

Seniors are also vulnerable to



Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County, Calif.

Supervisor Liz Kniss, shows off her ballot and flu shot at Santa Clara County, Calif.'s Vax and Vote event on Election Day. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Registrar of Voters Office and Public Health Department supported Stanford University School of Medicine's efforts to bring the "Vote and Vax" program to Santa Clara County. Vote and Vax is a national project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

the influenza virus because of other chronic conditions that make them more susceptible to it and additional complications resulting from the illness. In addition to a variety of information for seniors at the Marshall County Senior Expo, in Marshall County, Ind., free health screenings and flu shots are also available to ensure a convenient opportunity for seniors to receive preventative care.

The Department of Health in Anne Arundel County, Md. also targets seniors by administering flu and pneumococcal pneumonia vaccinations to residents at senior activity centers throughout the

county. These are free to residents with a suggested donation that can be covered through showing a Medicare Part B card. Residential centers such as these are key locations to provide vaccinations because of the vulnerability and proximity of residents.

Through these methods and other traditional flu clinics, county health departments are taking their shot at preventing the spread of the flu and helping to keep their communities healthy through the winter season.

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

Keep up with NACo online ...

www.naco.org



Financial Services News

The Network of Care Personal Health Record

NACo, in partnership with Trilogy Integrated Resources, offers innovative Network of Care websites and eLearning online training services to county, local and state agencies nationwide.

The Personal Health Record (PHR) on the Network of Care websites is a unique and free service

that anyone can use to store their personal health information. Thousands of records have been created, and the tool is an excellent way to privately store important information that can be easily retrieved at any time. PHR features include:

- free use, contains no commercial advertisements and is available

on all Network of Care sites

- fully registered, HL7-compliant record that meets the highest international standards for electronic medical records, including fully encrypted, password-protected security

- private and safe storage of virtually any medical, health,

personal and legal documents, as well as private notes

- best-in-class articles from the Network of Care Library can be stored in the record. It can also immediately find the local service agencies that deal with a particular condition

- full integration with the Network of Care means the record's creator has the ability to find and store a wide variety of interactive self-assessment tools and eLearning-based educational and recovery programs

- visitor access can be granted by the creator to see all or part of the personal record—all under the exclusive control of the creator. A guest, in turn, can leave a private message for the record's creator

- an emergency card or care coordination card that can be kept in a purse or wallet for valuable use in a wide variety of circumstances, and

- full interoperability standards with electronic medical records, if there is a willing provider.

The Network of Care was se-

lected through a nationally solicited competitive bid process by Fairfax County, Va. Acting as the lead public agency, Fairfax County issued a national RFP for a comprehensive, integrated Web-based information and referral system.

Trilogy Integrated Resources' Network of Care was selected as the provider of these services, and partners with NACo to offer the program throughout the country. This approach has simplified the process for counties and other public agencies that can piggyback on a contract competitively bid by another public agency, eliminating the need to re-bid the services.

If you would like more information about this service, please contact Jim Sawyer at 202.661.8868 or jsawyer@naco.org or Jacqueline Zimmer, Trilogy Integrated Resources, at 415.458.5900 or jzimmer@trilogyr.com.

(Financial Services News was written by Jim Sawyer, director, NACo Financial Services Corporation.)

Multnomah County, Ore. favors Google over Microsoft; mobile center promotes Arlington

NEWS FROM *from page 13*

it onto the ballot. The county's bipartisan elections commissioners disqualified the referendum because of alleged flaws in the county filing. But two courts subsequently upheld the ballot question.

According to some estimates, dropping four legislators would save the county more than \$200,000 a year. That doesn't take into account the salaries of four full-time aides to the county lawmakers.

► OREGON

MULTNOMAH COUNTY hopes to save up to \$600,000 a year by switching employees' **computer desktop applications** from Microsoft to Google, the *Oregonian* reported. Approximately 3,500 county employees are making the transition, excluding the sheriff's and district attorney's office staffs, to Google's Apps for Government.

Five hundred employees tested the applications during a pilot earlier this year. The other 3,000 made the switch last month.

► PENNSYLVANIA

DAUPHIN COUNTY officials say they'll take out a **\$34.7 million loan** to cover the city of Harrisburg's debt on an incinerator if the city can't make the payment on time, *The Patriot-News* reported. Harrisburg, the state capital, faces a Dec. 15 deadline to make the payment. As a co-guarantor of the debt, Dauphin County is liable if the city doesn't pay.

"This is not the course that we intended or wanted to take," County Commission Chairman Jeff Haste said. "It's a course we have to take." Members of the three-man commission said they'll only borrow the money if



Photo courtesy of Arlington County, Va.

► VIRGINIA

VISITORS to ARLINGTON COUNTY won't have to go to a visitor's center to find out about the county's attractions and activities. The center can come to them.

In a cost-cutting move, Arlington closed its bricks-and-mortar visitor's center earlier this year. Now the county has rolled out — literally — its replacement: an electric-powered **Mobile Visitors Center**.

The vehicle will serve visitors near subway stations in the county and at major tourism events, like last month's Marine Corps Marathon, at which it was unveiled.

Mobile Visitors Center cost \$70,000, which is less than one year's operation of the former storefront location (\$78,000).

it becomes apparent that the city and another co-guarantor, the Harrisburg Authority, can't meet their obligation.

► TENNESSEE

Terrence L. Cobb, director of Nashville and **DAVIDSON COUNTY's** Codes and Building Safety Department, has been honored by the International Code Council (ICC) with its Bobby J. Fowler Award.

The award recognized **contributions to the building safety and fire prevention industry**

that advance the ICC's goals to "achieve a safer and sustainable built environment." Emphasis is placed on the recipient's focus beyond local concerns to global issues and activities.

Cobb picked up the award at the council's annual conference in Charlotte, N.C.

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

Job Market / Classifieds

► COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – MCLEAN COUNTY, ILL.

Salary: DOQ.

McLean County, Ill. (168,000) Agricultural heartland between Chicago and St. Louis. Largest Illinois county by area; 14th most populous. Excellent K-12, community college, several universities.

Headquarters for State Farm Insurance, Country Financial, Mitsubishi Motors, two large hospitals, Beer Nuts, Steak n Shake and Biaggi's. Numerous cultural, sports and recreational venues; excellent shopping and dining. Three interstate highway systems, busy regional airport and Amtrak station. Listed among 100 Best Places to Live in America, No. 20 on the Best Small Places for Business and Careers, on the list of America's Smartest Cities and recognized as one of the Best Small College Towns.

The County Administrator reports to a 20 member County Board elected to staggered four-year terms. The Board conducts its business through five standing committees. Over 800

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Fire disaster tests county 'second responders'

By CHARLES TAYLOR
SENIOR STAFF WRITER

When the San Bruno (Calif.) fire ravaged parts of San Mateo County, it was fire and EMS personnel who rushed to the scene to fight the flames and tend to the injured.

But days later, after the first responders' jobs were done, another type of aid was still being rendered by — call them “second responders” — mental health professionals attending to survivors' emotional and psychological needs. The Sept. 9 gas line explosion and fire killed eight people and destroyed 37 homes.

“It's really part of a disaster response to lend support to educate individuals that have been impacted about what is normal to expect from a psychological or emotional or even behavioral perspective,” said Celia Moreno, M.D., director of San Mateo County's Behavioral Health and Recovery Services division — so they can recognize if their symptoms are “crossing the line” into something more serious.

Months later, the mental health

response is ongoing. Dr. Moreno said her office is still working with the Red Cross to provide vouchers for mental health treatment for individuals who don't have insurance coverage.

It's a situation that has played out after natural and manmade disasters across the country, from hurricanes Rita and Katrina, to the Interstate 35W bridge collapse in Minneapolis to the Midwest floods that devastated the Cedar Rapids, Iowa area two years ago.

According to a Centers for Disease Control disaster mental health primer, survivor responses to trauma can range from grief over the loss of loved ones and property or possessions, to concerns about relocation and the related isolation or crowded living conditions.

Linn County, Iowa was at ground zero when flooding hit Cedar Rapids in 2008. Linda Langston, chair of the Board of Supervisors and a former mental health professional, says problems typically arise after the adrenalin rush of the first response wears off.

“In the immediate aftermath of the flood, people [were] very

busy. There's a lot to do whatever the disaster is. The mental health needs come progressively over time,” she said. Langston is also involved with the National Commission on Children and Disasters.

In San Mateo County, a community response team of county staff and contractors deployed to reach out to those affected directly or indirectly by the fire. Indirect effects for those whose homes were spared can include their being traumatized by having to view nearby devastation on a daily basis.

“It's not like you wait for the person to come to you,” Dr. Moreno said. “If you're at a shelter or a resource center, you do have to be fairly proactive and engage with anybody who seems distressed.” The initial contact can be as simple as striking up a conversation or offering a drink of water, she said.

According to professional literature, Dr. Moreno said, early intervention can prevent the onset of post-traumatic stress disorder. “If you can prevent PTSD, then you're going to reduce the suffering,” including economic losses

from medical bills or missed days of work.

In Minneapolis, after the bridge collapse in 2007 Hennepin County was quick to provide “psychological first-aid,” officials said. That included working with emergency and mental health responders. During disasters, their long hours and exposure to destruction can also take an emotional toll, according to Andrew Baker, M.D., the county's chief medical examiner.

“When you go through events like this, you bottle up and internalize a lot of stress,” he said at the time. “If you don't come up with healthy ways to get rid of that stress, it will come back to bite you in a very bad way at a very inopportune moment.”

Dr. Moreno said her county's community response team coordinator spent a lot of time “making sure people didn't over-extend themselves” — rotating personnel and enforcing rest schedules, which can be a necessity for people in “helping” professions, whose first inclination is to think of others first, self last.

She said one lesson from the San Bruno fire response is the need to “bring new energy” to the mental health response team and keep it large enough to respond to an ongoing situation.

“[T]his incident was interesting in that it really went on and on and on,” she said. “It wasn't just one day; the needs were ongoing for over a month at a high level.”



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