



COUNTY PREPS TO HOST
MAJOR INTERNATIONAL
EVENT IN OREGON. **PG. 5**



STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS
COUNTY, 4-H IN WINNING
ARTWORK. **PG. 6**



COUNTY PROGRAM
HELPS MAN'S BEST
FRIEND. **PG. 9**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION *of* COUNTIES

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WAKE COUNTY INVESTS ARPA FUNDS IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Nobody steps into the boxing ring in the Haven House gym without warming up first.

Likewise, Haven House staffers have to warm up, too, but not for boxing. The organization provides free social services to 1,200 at-risk youth in Wake County, N.C. and by extension, 3,000 of their family members, both in its main facility and in the home.

"One of the things that we've noticed is that when young people get here, they're needing to talk to somebody before they can even just jump in and start doing programming," said Chief Operating Officer Patricia Cardoso.

"We've had to think of creative ways to meet those needs, because we know that a young person coming in here is not going to focus on the program if there are things that are happening outside taking up space in their heads."

Like others across the country, two years of living through the COVID-19 pandemic have taken their toll on Wake County youths.

See **CHILDREN** page 3



The 2022 County Leadership Institute class gathers June 14 on the rooftop at NACo headquarters in Washington, D.C. Front row: Tammy Tinchler, Greenbrier County, W.Va.; Cindy Brown, Denton County, Texas; Denise Winfrey, Will County, Ill.; Nora Vargas, San Diego County, Calif. Second row: Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County, Minn.; Latifah Faisal, Story County, Iowa; Shelley Brennan, Duchesne County, Utah; David Crowley, Milwaukee County, Wis.; Tracey Johnson, Washington County, N.C. Third Row: Eric Bryson, Montana Association of Counties; Danny Smith, Graham County, Ariz.; Kevin Shutty, Mason County, Wash.; Phil Montgomery, Summit County, Ohio; Michael Rivera, Berks County, Pa. Photo by Leon Lawrence III

Rethink jobs to broaden hiring pool

by **Stephenie Overman**
freelance writer

While the private sector has won back 93 percent of the jobs lost since the pandemic began more than two years ago, the public sector has gained back only 53 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

A key way to find more talented workers? Reevaluate

job requirements, using skills-based hiring criteria instead of relying so heavily on formal education credentials. Another way to attract top talent is by offering workers greater flexibility.

Those are takeaways gleaned from a MissionSquare Research Institute survey that will be released at the end of June, according to Joshua Franzel, the institute's managing director. The institute was

formerly the Center for State and Local Government Excellence at ICMA-RC.

Taking a skill-based approach to hiring "seems pretty

See **HIRE** page 2

Suburban, 'exurb' counties see growth as remote workers move

by **Stephenie Overman**
freelance writer

Collin County, Texas, "has been growing for a really long time — it's been both continuous and dramatic," according to Clarence Daugherty, the county's director of engineer-

ing.

The suburban county is part of the Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington metropolitan statistical area and it includes a small part of the city of Dallas.

That makes Collin County a model of the population shift reported by the Economic In-

novation Group. A study by the group finds that the majority of the fastest-growing counties in 2021 were suburban or "exurban." According to the Economic Innovation Group report, Collin County had a

See **MOVE** page 4

Look at ‘non-traditional’ benefits to attract new county employees

From HIRE page 1

edgy for government,” said Ramona Farineau, chief financial officer for Boulder County, Colo.

But the Colorado county first took that step in 2014, when HR managers got together with commissioners to rewrite all job postings, she said.

“We did our homework. We looked at the Fair Labor Standards Act,” she said. “Out of 375 job classifications, we originally got rid of 84. Now that’s up to 99.”

Managers initially were worried about how to choose the best candidates, Farineau said. “HR has had to hold hands,” as managers learned their own new skills.



They had to learn “to hone in on what is really required. If you’re not asking for a degree,

you have to be really specific” about qualifications. But, she added, a first-level accountant “doesn’t need a degree, they need to know debits and credits and how to do accounting.”

The MissionSquare Research Institute survey results point to another important way government employers can attract top talent — by offering greater work flexibility, Franzel noted.

“Re-evaluate how and where work is conducted. Even before the pandemic, flexible work arrangements were becoming popular and the number of positions that can have flexibility has increased,” he said.

Fifty-four percent of state and local government now offer some type of hybrid scheduling.

Some private companies have been able to offer much more flexibility by allowing their employees to work from out of state, something that became popular during the pandemic, Farineau said. For county governments, that can be complicated.

“It became an issue during the pandemic, when we were

100 percent remote. People want to be with their family,” she said. Boulder County’s policy is that employees can work up to three months out of state and “when we said they had to come back, one person said ‘no.’ The person had relocated to California. They moved on.”

The stumbling block to allowing that degree of flexibility is dealing with other states’ workplace laws and regulations, she said. “The workers comp question comes up over and over again.”

The MissionSquare Research Institute survey suggests a number of other areas for county governments to focus on in order to improve hiring and retention:

- **The overall compensation and benefit package:** Retirement and health insurance are still the backbone of public-sector benefits packages, Franzel said. But a lot of county governments “are looking at non-traditional benefits such as subsidized childcare, commuting subsidies and student loan reimbursement.”
- **Financial wellness:** In

the private sector, financial planning has long been an offering in a company’s Employee Assistance Program. The pandemic, with its high-level of economic stress, has increased public-sector employees’ desire for such programs, according to Fran-

‘Re-evaluate how and where work is conducted.’

- Joshua Franzel

zel. He said that an innovative EAP that includes financial wellness helps a county be seen as an “employer of choice.”

• **Outreach efforts:** County governments should reach out to communities — such as first-generation Americans — that wouldn’t normally consider public service, Franzel said. Not only does this expand the county’s recruiting pool, but it can help the county better reflect the community as a whole.

• **Recognition:** Employees are keen to be recognized internally by their peers and externally by the local community, according to the survey. An added advantage to giving workers public recognition, Franzel noted, is that it can be a recruiting tool. The practice is a way of “showcasing employees as ambassadors who highlight positions that people wouldn’t have thought of applying for.” **CN**

Stephenie Overman is a freelance reporter who writes extensively about labor and employment issues. She contributes frequently to County News and has written for Fortune, Forbes, Salon, Virginia Business magazine and the Los Angeles Business Journal.

SNAP/STATS

STRONGEST HURRICANES IN UNITED STATES

HURRICANE	YEAR	MPH	STATE
LABOR DAY HURRICANE	1935	185 MPH	FLORIDA
CAMILLE	1969	175 MPH	MISSISSIPPI
ANDREW	1992	165 MPH	FLORIDA
MICHAEL	2018	160 MPH	FLORIDA
IDA	2021	150 MPH	LOUISIANA
LAURA	2020	150 MPH	LOUISIANA

Source: USA Today

Wake County, N.C. uses ARPA funding to relieve pressure on children, families



Patricia Cardoso, Haven House's chief operating officer, stands in the organization's gym at its main office in Wake County, N.C. Photo by Hugh Clarke

From CHILDREN page 1

"Historically, the families we work with are experiencing challenges related to finances and there's a lot of housing insecurity and food insecurity, but the pandemic has just made a bad situation just incredibly worse," Cardoso said.

"I can say that we have never seen this level of challenge. We know that if we don't address those things, there's no way we can get to the bigger issues that families are dealing with."

There is help on the way, though, by way of Wake County's American Rescue Plan allocation. The \$1 million funding will allow the organization to do more, including hire a staff member who will focus on the social determinants of health underlying children's needs. That means connecting families with housing assistance, a sustainable source of healthy food and buttressing all of the unstable elements in a child's

life. Once that's done, Cardoso hopes the children will feel able to focus on the behavioral or emotional challenges that have brought them in contact with Haven House.

"We really want to try to get kids what they need as quickly as possible, because we know that if we don't, they can end up in systems that are really hard to get out of — the juvenile justice system or social services," she said. "We really want to try to do everything we can as early as possible so that they don't have to get into those more challenging systems."

Likewise, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Wake County also reaches out to the children who need the club the most, and to its credit, the club tried to keep going, taking its opportunities when the staff could get them.

"It was a tough, tough time, to be honest with you," said CEO Ralph Capps. "We were trying to figure out a way we could continue to stay open,

but everything around us was closing down and shutting down and we just felt we just needed to make safety the number one priority."

For the first few months, the organization planned food distribution in regions of the county that needed it the most. With outdoor COVID transmission rare, the club opened its day camp program to children in July, then converted its facilities into online learning centers, offering computers and broadband connections where students could do classwork.

"At the Girls Club next door, they had something like 40 schools that they were trying to manage, so you can imagine trying to keep up with a schedule with kids in 40 different schools — it was a real challenge," Capps said.

In addition to helping the children, though, the clubs' persistence helped allow their parents to continue to work, while knowing their kids were

in good hands until the parents got off work.

"We had one father whose job was transporting COVID tests to medical facilities to be interpreted," Capps said. "He knew he could focus on his job and his children would have a place to work and study."

The clubs received \$2 million in American Rescue Plan funding from the county, some of which has gone to replenishing resources like food, but most will finance capacity-building plans for the clubs. The money will help update HVAC ventilation systems to meet air quality standards that have been raised in reaction to the pandemic. The club will be able to move one location to a facility that should double its safe capacity, serving a region with a large Hispanic population. And after years of getting by with donated, retired school buses, the clubs will upgrade its fleet, which will not only allow for transportation services

from school buildings, which had been suspended for years after the school system faced a labor shortage, but the more reliable buses will allow for longer-distance trips.

"If they need to go to Winston-Salem for a STEM conference or something then we're going to be able to get him there," Capps said. "Right now, we don't let the vehicles hardly out of town because they are some old school buses."

With a typical roster of 1,000 children in its seven locations throughout the county, the clubs are still working at about 80 percent of typical participation.

"It's going in the right direction, we're coming back, and this grant is going to allow us to do several things that are going on now and they can accelerate that," Capps said. "Everything we do revolves around youth development and helping young people be all that they can be." **CN**

Remote workers are moving to suburban counties, away from urban areas

From *MOVE* page 1

population of 1,109,462 in 2021, a gain of 36,313 people.

Driving some of the population shift? The number of remote workers who have moved to more affordable areas since the pandemic began in 2020. Nearly 5 million have moved, according to Upwork.

Large urban counties, on the other hand, experienced a net loss of 863,000 residents in 2021, the first time this group has experienced negative growth in the aggregate in the past 50 years.

Sixty-eight percent of large urban counties lost population in 2021, "an exceptionally high share by historical standards," according to the study.

Eighty-one percent of exurban counties gained population in 2021, outperforming any other group. Rural counties without metropolitan areas saw the highest population gain since 2008.

In Collin County, a big chal-

lenge from all the growth is keeping up with infrastructure needs, according to Daugherty. In Texas, a county is responsible for areas outside the cities.

Bond programs and the Texas Department of Transportation are sources of funding.

But "probably the most basic thing that allows us to keep up with the infrastructure needs," Daugherty said, is that the builders pay for infrastructure in new developments.

"The existing population does not have to pay for the new people," he noted. "Developers are even required to contribute to connection to thoroughfares."

Sometimes, suburban "circle cities" are bedroom communities and, because residential taxes are relatively low, "they are not always in good shape financially," Daugherty said. "Taxes on commercial and, especially, industrial, pay much more. It's healthier when you have a good mix."



Collin County, he added, has a healthy mix, with Texas Instruments, Toyota Motor Corp., Nortel and Raytheon among its employers.

Dawson County, Georgia, an exurban county north of Atlanta with a population of 28,497 grew by 1,450 people last year.

Over the past 10 years, the county has grown roughly

20 percent, according to Billy Thurmond, chairman of the Dawson County Board of Commissioners.

"As you grow, you have to keep up with delivery of all the services. All departments have seen increased costs."

To pay for those services, the county board of commissioners has sought ways to increase

revenue without increasing property taxes.

One big solution, Thurmond said, has been "impact fees. Every time a new house is built, it has an impact fee.

That helps us meet service delivery for the first year until they become part of our tax base."

The county also works with developers to contribute toward ancillary construction of roadways.

"We can't make developers do it. But we can ask them, and we've not been turned down. They understand they are impacting traffic," Thurmond said.

Another money-maker is a special local option sales tax. "One penny of sales tax in this small county brings in \$10 million a year. Mall sales tax comes from people who don't live here."

As a result of these efforts, according to Thurmond, "we've lowered our county millage." **CN**



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International track crowd drives Lane County, Ore. event preparations

by **Charlie Ban**
senior writer

Lane County, Ore. has seen crowds before.

The University of Oregon Ducks football team helps the city of Eugene grow seven weekends every fall. NCAA championships and the U.S. Olympic Track and Field Trials in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020 draw tens of thousands to the university's Hayward Field.

But in all of those circumstances, the vast majority of visitors all speak English, and they generally know what they're doing.

This July, the World Track and Field Championships will

take place in Eugene, coinciding with the Lane County Fair, combining to bring tens of thousands of non-native English speakers to the county, whose main responsibility will be providing public safety and disaster preparedness. Estimates for both events figure to add 50,000 people daily to the county's 375,000 population from July 15-24.

Patence Winningham joined the county three years ago as its emergency manager after 14 years in a similar role with the city

"Not every community has a special event like this," she said. "Bigger communities, big metropolitan areas have the

Super Bowl or huge national teams and [something like] this is just run of the mill for them, it's nothing different or out of the ordinary, so they already do this."

"Here in Lane County, here in the state of Oregon, this is our opportunity to really tear the Band-Aid off and make sure that we have adequate plans in place and adequate relationships in place set up in a pre-planned event. I think that makes us a stronger community for our worst day."

The World Championships have contracted with the university for first responders, security and law enforcement, and the Eugene and Spring-

field fire departments will handle ambulance services. The county is the backstop against natural and manmade disasters.

"It's quite a monumental lift, but it helps us in our advanced planning abilities for a disaster, builds those relationships on a blue-sky day for special events, but prepares us for what could be a disaster countywide," Winningham said.

Blue skies, in this context, could be one of those threats, as the summer heat in Eugene hit a record 109 degrees during the 2021 Olympic Trials. Wild-fire season has already started in Southern Oregon, which is Winningham's chief concern.

"We're looking at our ability to translate information to help folks that come into our area from around the world understand what the climate is in their own language," she said. "How can we translate that information and get that to them in a consumable way? Because

they're coming from very different climates."

One drawback to the size of the community playing host to the championships is the shortage of housing, which may prompt visitors to save money by camping, sometimes illegally. The county's main focus is ensuring their safety, particularly as it relates to wild-fire risk in the county's sprawling rural areas.

"We have the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Oregon Department of Forestry and they're talking about mobilizing teams to go out and drive in the forest, because wildfires are a risk and we have a transient population — we don't know where all those people are," Winningham said.

"We don't know where they're going to pitch a tent and how do we make sure that they're following and complying and they understand the risk?" **CN**



Hayward Field in Lane County, Ore., host of the 2022 World Track and Field Championships, has plenty of experience holding major events, including May's Prefontaine Classic. Photo by Johnny Pace

Student highlights county, 4-H in winning artwork

by Mary Ann Barton
editor

Madilynn Bowles, a student at Brittain Academy, Montgomery County, N.C., featured her county and her local 4-H chapter in a colorful work of art that won the 5th-grade category in NACo's 2021 Student Art Competition.

Her work is one of the winning pieces included in the official 2022 NACo calendar.

Madilynn, the daughter of Adam and Jennifer Bowles, was one of more than 150 students from across the country who entered the

competition.

NACo started the contest to help young people learn more about the functions of county government.

Entries were as varied as the students and counties where they live, with depictions of everything from county sports fields to county animal shelters. Students got creative with their artwork, using pencils, paints and paper.

For her artwork, Madilynn used a stencil made from cardstock in the shape of Montgomery County to create her painted work on canvas.

"I wanted to show the

sunset because a new day brings new opportunity," she said, noting the use of Montgomery County's slogan, "A Golden Opportunity."

She found out about the competition from her local 4-H chapter, which she is involved in.

Each winner in the 2021 competition received a \$100 gift card. Madilynn used most of her prize money to purchase toys for the Angel Tree, a 4-H project.

Students across the country can enter the 2022 art competition by visiting naco.org/art for all the details. **CN**



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For more information, visit: naco.org/art

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SPECIAL PULLOUT FROM NACo INTERNET TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT

NACo Technology Guides **FOR COUNTY LEADERS**

CYBER



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NACo IT Advisory Council is developing layman’s guides for county elected officials, as well as other county executive leadership to help raise the awareness and understanding of the technology that is needed to support county essential functions. The guides will further provide for education in the innovative uses of technology to take the county beyond the essentials and improve the delivery of citizen services and programs.

Each guide will include an executive summary and then will focus on a series of questions to ask that will include the risk or missed opportunity if not implemented. Guides identified include:



CYBER

Purpose:

It is vital that county leaders communicate with the county IT leadership or the outsourced IT support concerning the important cyber posture of the county. One may ask “why is this important?” While it is the responsibility of IT to implement many of the day to day cyber best practices and for other department leaders to provide the business requirements, it is your responsibility to understand the impacts that these cyber efforts have in relation to resources, budget, legal requirements, and ultimately the safety of the county data assets.

Elected Officials, both incoming as well as seasoned, can benefit from a layman’s guide for emerging and innovative technologies that are required in local government. The theme of this guide is Cyber Security and is the first in a series that will provide an

overview as well as a checklist of questions to dialogue with county IT leadership and outsourced IT support (if outsourced). As you dialogue concerning the county cyber defenses, please keep in mind that many of these conversations will cover sensitive information and should be considered confidential.

These guides have been compiled with input from the IT Advisory Council, as well as NACo Tech Xchange members. The next two pages are the executive summary of benefits and top ten questions to ask in the area of cyber. As you dialogue with your IT support, whether full-time with the county or outsourced, it is important to remember that cybersecurity is a journey requiring ongoing assessment, adjustment, and dialogue. Think of it through the lens of people, processes, technology, and data.

Top Ten Benefits that Cyber Defenses Can Bring to Your County

1 INCREASED SECURITY

By implementing cyber best practices, the county exposure to theft and destruction of county data is significantly reduced.

2 PROTECTION OF RESIDENTS

When a county provides cyber education (through the website or other means), county residents not only have greater confidence in county government, but they also have access to tools and resources that can increase the safety of their personal lives and activities.

3 LOWER CYBER INSURANCE COVERAGE

Due to the increase in cyber attacks and ransomware on local government, cyber insurance premiums have significantly increased while coverage has decreased. By increasing cyber defenses, a county can receive better coverage and less of an increase in cyber insurance premiums.

4 PROTECTION OF END USERS

It is often said that the end user is the greatest risk. By implementing sound cyber tools and best practices, this exposure becomes less of a vulnerability.

5 PROTECTION OF DATA ASSETS

County government collects a plethora of resident and client information that is stored in documents, software applications and transmitted electronically to the state and other service providers. By increasing cyber defenses, the protection of this sensitive data in turn increases the protection of county residents.

6 PROTECTION OF THE COUNTY BRAND

When a county is attacked and a breach of data occurs, media will publicize such events. This in turn can weaken the credibility and trust of government services such as election procedures, tax collection, and online payments for county residents. Sound cyber security best practices can help to mitigate this situation.

7 PROTECTION OF THE WEBSITE

The county website is a main source of online information, services and digital applications. If the website is defaced or taken down by a cyber attack, county residents cannot access those resources. Further, county websites are key during an emergency for the residents to look up information; an attack on weak cyber security puts that at risk. Addressing website security weaknesses is no longer a nice to have but rather a necessity.

8 PROTECTION OF THE NETWORK

County employees rely on their computer and access to the network resources (email, software applications, case management systems) to perform their job functions. Cyber defenses are a necessity to ensure that those functions are available 24/7.

9 PROTECTION OF ELECTION EQUIPMENT

When a county follows the Election Administration Commission, Department of Homeland Security, and vendor guidance on the physical protection of election equipment including strict chain of custody processes, county residents will have a better appreciation of election security in their county.

10 PROTECTION OF ELECTION PROCESSES

When a county invites the public to view election system testing, or other activities that the county undertakes before, during and after an election, county residents will have more confidence in election processes.

Top Ten Cyber Questions for County Leadership

- 1** Does the County have a Board adopted Information Security Program in place to govern cyber risk management, that includes:
 - Cybersecurity policies and procedures
 - Proper cyber hygiene that covers patching, routine assessments, annual security risk analysis, cyber insurance, and incident response
 - Identification of cyber strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of people, process, and technology
 - Level of current and desired maturity of the county
- 2** Does the county have Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) in place?
- 3** Does our county have a security incident plan in place and
 - is that plan part of the overall continuity of government plan
 - is the IT department aware of the security incident plan?
 - is the plan prioritized based on criteria that takes into account critical services and potential impact?
 - is the plan tested with county departments so that they know what to do if a cyber incident occurs, and
 - does the plan include what is an acceptable computer/communication systems outage timeframe?
- 4** What cyber-related issues have we experienced in the past year or key high-level findings that have been uncovered through an assessment, and what is our plan for addressing them?
- 5** Are there security initiatives which you believe are important to take on in the next several years? And does that involve new tools and funding? How can elected leadership support you in those?
- 6** Does our county have an employee security awareness training program in place? Tell me more.
- 7** Are our backups safe from a security threat and have we conducted exercises to test reinstalling data from backup?
- 8** How does our county ensure the cyber safety of county employees, contractors and others that connect to the network, especially in a remote environment?
- 9** Is our county using the cloud for hosting data and applications and how is that protected?
- 10** Why do we need cyber insurance and what are the current challenges?

DIG DEEPER

Phase two will include the tracks below which will contain additional questions county leaders can use in dialogue with the county IT support.

Track 1

More in-depth questions for elected officials

Track 3

A track for county executives and administrators

Track 2

An IT track for county CIOs, IT Directors, outsourced IT support

Track 4

A track for department directors

Fortify the Network

The network of the future requires a better understanding of cybersecurity threats and a new way of thinking about security solutions.



ps.att.com/SecurityNOF

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For more information on the guides or on NACo Technology resources, visit County Tech Xchange (naco.org), or reach out to Rita Reynolds, NACo CIO at rreynolds@naco.org



GET TO KNOW...

Sunflower County, Miss.

Welcome Sunflower County, Miss.!

Created in 1844, Sunflower County, Miss. is located in the Mississippi Delta, about 30 miles east of the Mississippi River, 100 miles north of Jackson (the state capital) and about 100 miles south of Memphis. Named for the Sunflower River, which is named in turn for the sunflow-



ers that grow along its banks, the county is about 707 total square miles.

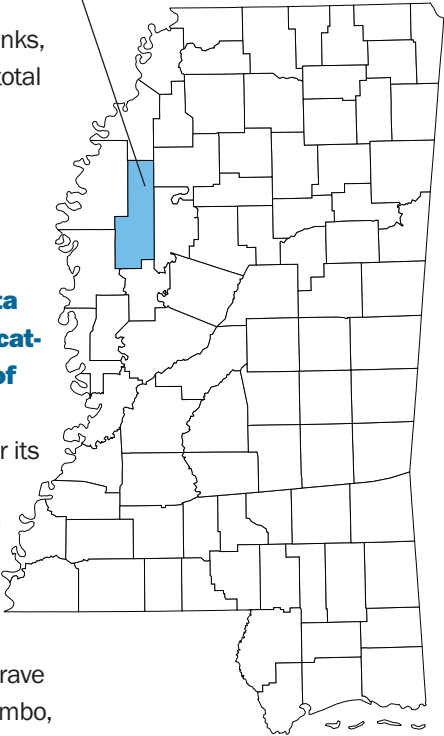
Blues musician B.B. King grew up in the county and is honored at the \$16 million B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center, located in the county seat of Indianola.

The county is known for its tasty dining. In business since 1976, the Crown restaurant, one of the best restaurants in the county, gets rave reviews for its catfish, gumbo, cornbread and Mississippi Delta Fudge Pie.

The area's culinary gifts rubbed off on Craig Claiborne, who grew up in the county. Claiborne became a longtime *New York Times* food writer and wrote more than 20 cookbooks before

his death in 2020. If you're ever in Sunflower, you may drive on streets bearing his name.

"Get to Know" features new NACo member counties.



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TAMMY TINCHER

NACo Board Member
Greenbrier County, W.Va.
Commissioner



Tinchler

Number of years active in NACo: Two

Years in public service: 3.5

Education: B.S. Animal and Poultry Science from Virginia Tech

Occupation: Licensed insurance agent, rental properties, lawn care, housekeeping business

The hardest thing I've ever done: Rebuild our home and replace our belongings after losing everything in a fire.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Jesus Christ, Thomas Jefferson and Michael Jordan.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Am a twin.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: I'm pretty reserved, lol.

My favorite way to relax is: Read a book by the pool.

I'm most proud of: Being

elected a county commissioner.

Every morning I read: Metronews website

My favorite meal is: Crab legs

My pet peeves are: Disorganization and untidiness.

My motto is: The only place success comes before work is in the dictionary.

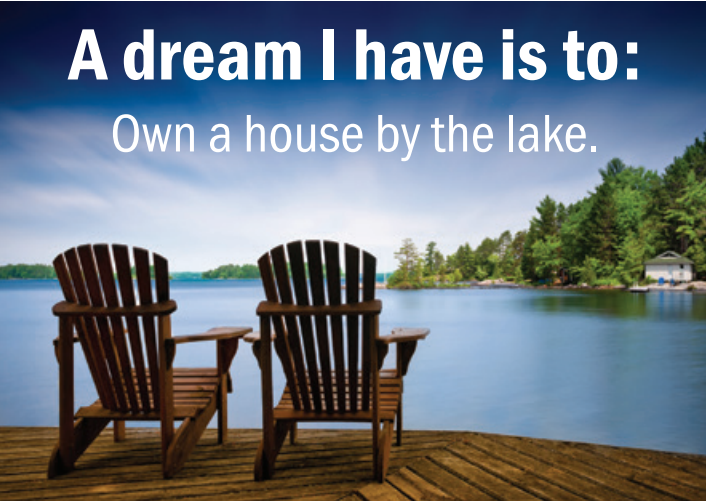
The last book I read: "The Lincoln Highway"

My favorite movie is: "The Blind Side"

My favorite music is: I like all types.

My favorite president is: Thomas Jefferson

My county is a NACo member because: NACo provides information and guidance we otherwise would not receive and therefore, we would not be able to serve our residents to the best of our ability.



finally!

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WORD SEARCH

CHARLESTON COUNTY, S.C.
Created by: Mary Ann Barton

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

ATLANTIC: The county's border on the east is the Atlantic Ocean.

CHARLESTON: The name comes from King Charles II of England.

COLBERT: Late-night talk host Stephen Colbert once ran a bed and breakfast with his mother in the county and now owns a home on Sullivan's Island.

COURTHOUSE: The county has restored its 1792 courthouse.

ECONOMY: The county's economy includes aerospace, energy, automotive, life sciences, IT and defense.

GULLAH: Preserved culture of handed down from ancestors of West African formerly enslaved people.

HISTORY: The county was created in 1901 by the state legislature.

LIVABLE: The Partners for Livable Communities named Charleston a top 10 livable community.

MUSEUM: Established in 1858, the Gibbes Museum of Art features a premier collection of American art that incorporates the story of Charleston.

PALMETTO: The palmetto tree grows wild on the coast of the county.

POPULATION: The county's population of about 350,000 makes it the third most populous in the state.

REVOLUTION: The first decisive victory of the American Revolution took place in the county, at the Battle of Fort Sullivan on Sullivan's Island.

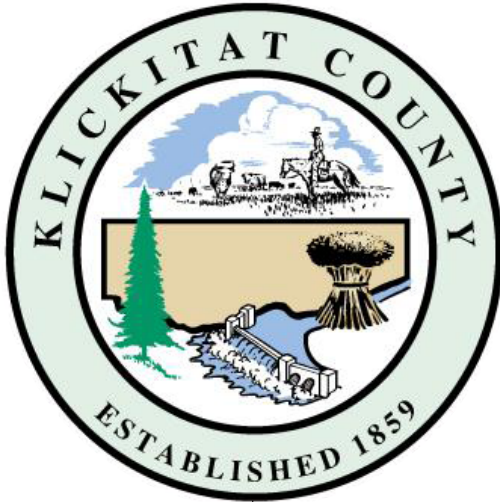
SHRIMP: Shrimp 'n grits is the most popular dish in the county.

SPOLETO: The Spoleto Festival USA, founded in 1977, is held each year in the county, featuring the performing arts.

SEAT: The county seat is the city of Charleston.

BEHIND THE SEAL

KLICKITAT COUNTY, Wash.



The Klickitat County seal comprises the small county's various characteristics: Rangeland, vegetable farming and forestry and wood production.

The Columbia River, which forms the county's southern boundary, is represented by the Dalles Dam, which creates Lake Celilo between Washington and Oregon. On the seal, the river helps outline the shape of the county's borders.

If you would like your county's seal featured in "Behind the Seal," contact Charlie Ban at cban@naco.org.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACo®

BRIGHT IDEAS | SALT LAKE COUNTY, Utah

Animal Shelter Program Attracts Volunteers, Helps Man's Best Friend

PROBLEM: Dogs up for adoption are inside a kennel most of the day, waiting to get adopted and don't get much exercise or outdoor time.

SOLUTION: Recruit and train volunteers to take dogs outside where they can have some fun, socialize and be seen by potential adopters.

by Mary Ann Barton
editor

The animal shelter at Salt Lake County, Utah is a lot like other county animal shelters — a place where county employees are trying find homes for the animals who they care for. A successful program they started just before the pandemic has helped attract volunteers and also “lets dogs be dogs,” said Callista Pearson, communications manager for the shelter. They call their program “Hounds Around Town,” and it matches up trained volunteers with pups who they take out to get exercise and playtime.

One of the employees, who is the shelter's foster coordinator, came up with the idea after attending a workshop that promoted getting dogs out of the shelter for “off-site adventures,” Pearson said.

“The goal of the program is just to get dogs out of the shelter and let them have a few hours of pure dog bliss,” she said. “You know, they don't get that when they're in the shelter. They're stuck in, you know, their little kennels. And they have to wait for a volunteer or staff member to take them out. And that doesn't always get to happen every day, you know, having this opportunity to go out and be a dog.”

Hounds Around Town also makes the volunteers feel good, she said. “I mean, who wouldn't feel good taking a dog



One of the canines in Salt Lake County's “Hounds Around Town” program enjoys an outing. Photo courtesy of Salt Lake County

out, having them have a great day, giving them a treat?” Taking the dogs out also improves their kennel behavior, “which is one of our main goals,” she said.

Although the people who volunteer for the program are from every demographic, it has “really taken off with college kids and people who can't have pets in their homes,” Pearson noted. “There are a lot of people out there who can't have pets in their homes or who can't afford to have a pet in their apartment, and they really miss having a pet. We find them to be some of our most faithful Hounds Around Town volunteers.”

Volunteers go through training and sign a waiver before taking dogs out; they're given a backpack with a leash, bandana and other items. Dogs wear color-coded collars that show their temperament (green, orange and red). Most people walk the dogs with green and orange collars; red-collared dogs go with highly experienced volunteers.

The county has partnered

with some pet-friendly businesses that offer treats to the dogs while they're out. “A lot of people will take the dog out, go on like a hike or a walk at the park. A lot of times they'll go to other county parks that we have...because there's a lot of trees and smells,” Pearson said.

“And then after that, they can go to get a ‘pup cup’ in a drive-through. And we've just started up a new partnership with a dog bathhouse, so if they want, they can take them to go get a bath.”

Some of the rules when a volunteer takes a dog out include not approaching other dogs, “because some of our dogs don't get along with other dogs,” Pearson noted. They do encourage interaction with people. “That's pretty much it, and making sure they're always on leash when they're at any park anywhere.”

The age limit for volunteers is generally 18 although the shelter will let younger adults with their parents or guardian take dogs out.

The county gets the word out about the program on social

media and flyers created by Pearson using a free software program. The shelter encourages volunteers to take photos during their outings, to help get the word out that the dog is up for adoption and to attract more volunteers.

“I mean, one of the number one things I feel like those dogs do, and they always have

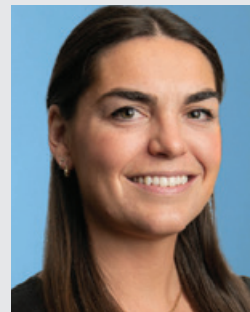
photos of them as they get to a park and they just do the dog ‘scratchy, scratchy roll in the grass.’ They do that, and they go in the stream. Like, they just get to be a dog!” **CN**

Salt Lake County is the 2022 NACo Achievement Award Best in Category winner in the Volunteers category.

ON THE MOVE

NACo STAFF

- Associate Membership Director **John Losh** attended the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia's Annual Conference in Chatham County.
- Membership Director **Kim Hall** attended the Illinois Association of Counties' Spring Conference in Sangamon County.
- Government Affairs Director **Eryn Hurley** and Hall attended the New Mexico Association of Counties Annual Conference in Bernalillo County.
- **Losh** attended the Mississippi Association of Supervisors Annual Convention in Harrison County.



Hurley

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE NATION

PENNSYLVANIA

The **ALLEGHENY COUNTY** Courthouse courtyard played host to the **county marbles championship** in late May. The marbles program is managed by the county parks department and the winners of nine neighborhood competitions move on to the county finals, where they vie for a trip to the national tournament. Photo by Greg Sciulli



CALIFORNIA

• Where there's smoke, there's fire, and **RIVERSIDE COUNTY** wants to limit the smoke by steering children away from behavior that could include starting fires. The Board of Supervisors voted to fund a program that would bring a "fire setter profiler" in to establish a **juvenile fire intervention program**, *The Press-Enterprise* reported. The program includes risk assessment tools and policies, procedures and protocols for addressing situations where minors exhibit fire-prone proclivities.

• **SACRAMENTO COUNTY** has approved its first tiny home village for people experiencing **homelessness**. The "Safe Stay Community" will be able to shelter up to

125 people with 100 sleeping cabins, which can house one or two people each and include bathrooms and communal gathering spaces.

• **YOLO COUNTY** is adding textiles to its **recycling options**, with hopes of removing dry clothing, clean rags/towels, bed sheets, pillowcases and sleeping bags from the waste stream. Items will be filtered through reuse via thrift store resale, turned into wiping cloths and being reprocessed into area rugs.

COLORADO

• Gov. Jared Polis signed a bill **codifying the certification curriculum** for county clerks and election workers, which they must complete within six months of taking office or overseeing their first election. The law, crafted with input from the Colorado County Clerks Association, mandates courses in general election law, the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002, professional development, voter registration and list maintenance, accessibility, coordinated elections, the mail ballot and in-person voting

process, voting systems testing, canvasses and risk-limiting audits.

• Colorado's 38,000 county employees have the right to **collectively bargain** under a newly passed state law, but they cannot strike. *The Colorado Sun* reported that the bill would not force a county commission to adopt a contract with a union made up of its county's workers, but workers couldn't be fired or discriminated against for organizing or participating in a union under the bill.

DELAWARE

Small business owners hoping to **adapt to an online marketspace** will get help in **NEW CASTLE COUNTY**. The Office of Economic Development has announced a new e-commerce training program, which will teach small business owners about the e-commerce industry and website-based marketing strategies. The county's American Rescue Plan Act funding will offer assistance for web development to qualifying small businesses with fewer

than 25 full-time employees, the *Delaware Business Times* reported.

FLORIDA

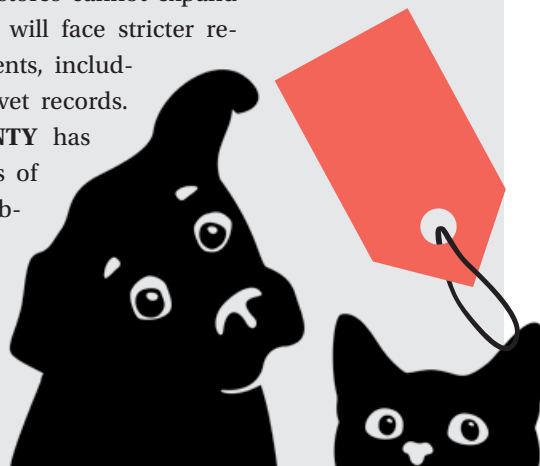
• **PASCO COUNTY** commissioners voted to take over **management of the county jail** from the sheriff. The move was driven by the county's growth and a desire to let the sheriff focus on law enforcement, rather than jail administration, WTSP-TV reported.

ILLINOIS

The **COOK COUNTY** public defender's office has expanded free legal services to immigrants. The **Immigration Unit Pilot** includes two staff attorneys, a supervising attorney and a paralegal and is taking on cases of those facing deportation proceedings in Chicago's immigration court. The Sun Times reported that immigration detention ended in Illinois in February because of changes in state law, but immigrants with cases in Chicago's immigration court can still be detained in jails and centers outside the state.

FLORIDA

• **PINELLAS COUNTY** has **banned the sale of cats and dogs** in new pet stores. Existing stores cannot expand or relocate and will face stricter records requirements, including mandating vet records. **MARTIN COUNTY** has banned all sales of cats, dogs and rabbits, giving existing pet stores six months to sell off their inventories.



From NEWS FROM page 10

KANSAS

The **JOHNSON COUNTY** commission softened development regulations to allow individual **solar projects** as large as 2,000 acres, solar fields as close as 1.5 miles from city boundaries and operational permits of 25 years in length, the *Kansas Reflector* reported.

NEW YORK

- **NIAGARA COUNTY** sheriff's deputies will now be outfitted with **EpiPens** when responding to calls after being trained to respond to calls for service where people are experiencing anaphylaxis. According to the Mayo Clinic, anaphylaxis causes the immune system to release a flood of chemicals that can cause you to go into shock — blood pressure drops suddenly, and the airways narrow, blocking breathing. Signs and symptoms include a rapid, weak pulse; a skin rash; and nausea and vomiting

- The **TOMPKINS COUNTY** Sheriff's Office has launched a new **unarmed response team** as part of a pilot project. The sheriff clerks will respond to calls for non-emergency situations like car accidents involving deer or other animals, traffic issues and complaints, property complaints like lost items from the Department of Motor Vehicles, vacant property checks, fraud and telephone scams, larceny and theft with no suspects and noise complaints.

NORTH DAKOTA

The **NORTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES** has debuted a **new online county handbook**. "It started out as a commissioner's handbook, but got out of control and now will be, we hope, useful to anyone in county government, said Jeff Eslinger, the association's member services director. "We plan to keep it growing and treat it is a living document."

The handbook includes organization and structure options for county government, county officers' terms and responsibilities, county redistricting, tax-



es, intergovernmental revenue and appropriations and expenditures. Future sections will include public works, health and public safety, planning and development, open meetings and records, human resources and employment law. The handbook can be found on the NDCCA website: <https://www.ndcca.org/handbook/>

OREGON

With the scope of nitrate contamination in the groundwater becoming more clear, **MORROW COUNTY** has declared a **local state of emergency**. The declaration gives commissioners the authority to establish procedures to prevent, minimize and respond to the water pollution issue and to coordinate with state and federal agencies for emergency financial assistance. Commissioner Jim Doherty told the *Oregon Capital Chronicle* that the declaration will allow access to more state resources, including reimbursement for dozens of tests the county bought to use on people's tap water, and money to pay for reverse osmosis filters for people with tainted wells.

TEXAS

The **HARRIS COUNTY** Flood Control District completed the Brays Bayou Federal **Flood Damage Reduction Project**, a \$480 million project

with the Army Corps of Engineers to create stormwater retention basins, modify 21 miles of increased channel capacity and modifications to 32 bridges. The retention basins were blended with parks and marshes to help integrate them into neighborhoods, and the overall effort will reduce flood risk for more than 767,000 residents.

VERMONT

CHITTENDON COUNTY residents can participate in stormwater infrastructure maintenance through the **Adopt-A-Drain program**.

The Chittenden County Re-

gional Planning Commission's Rethink Runoff program has partnered with Hamline University for the program.

Residents can sign up, name their drain and they will be greeted with a welcome packet explaining the value in storm drain clearing, a lawn sign showing support and safety tips. Organic matter caught in the drains can trap phosphorus and other pollutants like motor oil or salt, eventually polluting Lake Champlain.

WASHINGTON

New state laws will expand opportunities for **public com-**

MICHIGAN

As summertime weather beckons families to the water in **JACKSON COUNTY**, they will be welcomed by **life jackets available for loan** at an increasing number of lakes. The sheriff's office has supplied eight jackets per station, currently at lakes at three county parks, with plans to add stations to three parks every year.

ment at local government meetings. The Open Public Meetings Act established rules for virtual meetings and legal requirements governments have to follow during emergencies, both of which reflect the challenges counties experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments now have to accept public comment "at or before every regular meeting at which final action is taken," *The Spokesman Review* reported.

News From Across the Nation is compiled by Charlie Ban. Do you have a news item we should see? Email cban@naco.org.



Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone (center left) demonstrates how to use a sunscreen dispenser. Photo courtesy of Suffolk County

NEW YORK

- Twenty **SUFFOLK COUNTY** parks and beaches will offer **free sunscreen** dispensers starting this summer. Catholic Health is partnering with the county to fund \$5,000 worth of refills for the next three years.

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