

County News

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"The wisdom to know and the courage to defend the public interest"

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Inside this issue ...



Find out what the new transportation law means to your county in this special report. See page 8



What's in store for counties in 2006? We asked county leaders for their thoughts and begin the first in a series of three reports on their answers. See pages 10-11



Photo by David Hathcox

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia (third from right) addressed members of the National Council of County Association Executives Jan. 12 during their annual winter meeting in Washington, D.C. He is seen here with NCCAE executive committee members (l-r): Patricia Hamilton, third vice president, executive director, West Virginia Association of Counties; Brent Gardner, past president, executive director, Utah Association of Counties; William Peterson, president, executive director, Iowa Association of Counties; Justice Scalia; Joseph Evans, second vice president, executive director, Wyoming County Commissioners Association; and Celeste Carpiano, first vice president, executive director, New Jersey Association of Counties.

DHS revises state, local first responder grant programs

New guidelines emphasize risk, need

By DALEN A. HARRIS
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recently announced the availability of funds for FY06 Homeland Security Grant Programs and released new funding guidelines that place a greater emphasis on risk and need in awarding funds. This change will greatly affect all state and county governments.

Collectively, the FY06 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) application integrates the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Grant Program,

the Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Grant Program (LETPP), the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) and the Citizen Corps Grant Program (CCP) into a unified application process.

In past years, Congress has approved record increases in funding for state and local homeland security programs, but in 2006 these programs will see a significant decline. DHS will distribute \$2.9 billion in funding for these programs that continue to assist state and county governments in their efforts to prepare, prevent, respond to and recover from terrorist threats. Again, this level of funding is

a significant reduction from previous years, especially for DHS' SHSGP and UASI Grant programs.

In 2005, Congress approved \$1.1 billion for SHSGP and \$860 for UASI. In 2006, these programs have been funded at \$550 million and \$765 million, respectively.

Another significant change to the grant programs will be DHS' emphasis on risk and need in allocating grants to state and local first responders. Each state will continue to receive a base allocation of 0.75 percent (about \$7.1 million) for SHSGP and LETPP, but

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Budget reconciliation legislation still stalled

By JEFF ARNOLD
DEPUTY LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The massive budget reconciliation measure that contains a significant number of provisions affecting counties has been essentially put on hold until late January. The Senate chose to make changes to the conference report, and in order for the bill's language to go into effect, the House must concur.

Since the original vote in the House was 216-206, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) has

told House Speaker Dennis Hastert that she would object to accepting the Senate changes by unanimous consent and has asked for a roll call vote. The House is in recess until Jan. 31.

On Dec. 21, 2005, the Senate approved the reconciliation bill, by a vote of 51-50, with Vice President Dick Cheney casting the deciding vote. All Democrats voted against it, including Sen. Christopher Dodd

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Labor/HHS bill preserves CDBG, ups rural health

By JEFF ARNOLD
DEPUTY LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

In mid-December, the House of Representatives adopted the latest version of the Labor/HHS Appropriations Conference Report by a slim margin of 215-213. One of the changes made to secure this narrow victory was an increase of \$90 million in rural health programs.

The measure also preserved the Community Services Block Grant program at \$638 million, which the administration had proposed eliminating as part of its Strengthening America's Communities Initiative.

The conference agreement

included \$1.46 billion for the Dislocated Workers program, a \$132-million increase over FY05. However, it also included close to \$866 million for the Adults Training Program, a cut of nearly \$31 million from FY05. Youth training was funded at \$950 million, which is a cut of \$36 million from FY05. The final agreement included a \$4-million increase for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program to \$80 million.

The agreement included an amendment by Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) that prohibits governors from

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County News

Quik Takes

States with Highest Concentration of Baby Boomers

Alaska	32 %
New Hampshire	31 %
Vermont	31 %
Maine	30 %

State with Lowest Concentration

Utah	23 %
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(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

County officials retain economic development board majority

BY CASSANDRA MATTHEWS
ASSOCIATE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) revised an Interim Final Rule, originally released Aug. 15, 2005, that would have significantly reduced the presence of local officials on the governing boards of economic development districts (EDDs).

The new version of the rule preserves local elected officials' input in comprehensive economic development planning. The initial version would have altered the structure and governance of EDDs. In response,

NACo expressed concerns about the regulations, which effectively stripped local elected officials of a leadership role in planning, developing and implementing strategic economic development strategies.

EDA promulgated the rule pursuant to the Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act. Under the original rule, EDDs were governed by District Organizations. The rule specified that the majority of governing boards of District Organizations were to be comprised of representatives of the private sector. This represented a

significant departure from current policy, since local elected officials have historically represented the majority in the governance of EDDs.

Congress expressed concern about this policy shift. In language from the Commerce-Justice-Science conference committee report, EDA was directed to redraft provisions in the rule affecting the governance of EDDs and District Organizations.

EDA agreed to these changes after negotiations between the agency and congressional staff. The outcome represents a compromise

spearheaded by the efforts of the National Association of Development Organizations.

The revised rule now requires that the governing body of District Organizations have at least one representative of the private sector.

The definition of a private sector representative has been expanded to include designees of any senior management official or executive holding a key decision-making position in any for-profit enterprise. The original version of the rule required principals only.

Moreover, EDA may waive this

requirement if, after extensive due diligence, no private sector representative can be found to participate on the board. Most importantly, the revised rule explicitly states that the governing body must have a majority of local elected officials or employees of a unit of local government on the board of District Organizations.

The rule was effective Dec. 15, 2005 and was published in the Federal Register that day. It represents an important victory in preserving the voice of local governments in economic development planning and implementation.

Welfare, child support, foster care legislation attached to measure

■ BUDGET from page 1

(D-Conn.), who had to come in on a walker. Five Republican senators voted against it: Lincoln Chaffee (R.I.), Susan Collins (Maine), Mike DeWine (Ohio), Gordon Smith (Ore.) and Olympia Snowe (Maine).

TANF provisions

Several provisions on the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant (TANF), child support enforcement and foster care were attached to the reconciliation bill.

The proposed food stamp cuts that were in the House reconciliation bill were taken out of the bill in conference. The provisions include:

- **Child Support:** The reduction in the federal administrative cost match is not part of the agreement, but the prohibition on the federal match for child support incentive payments is part of the bill. Additionally, the provision reduces the matching rate for lab tests to 66 percent from the current 90 percent.

- **TANF:** The agreement changes the caseload reduction credit and makes the base year FY05. The change would also apply to state-only programs. These provisions

will cost states and counties a considerable amount of money.

Another concern centers on new broad Health and Human Services (HHS) authority to determine what can be counted as work activities and how to verify work. It also adds a new penalty to states for failing to establish and maintain the work verification procedures.

The conferees rejected the expanded hours of work in the House bill and the reduction in the allowable work activities. However, counties will have to be diligent in the regulatory process because of the new discretion given to the HHS secretary.

The bill also provides \$250 million more a year in mandatory child care funding, but this is considerably less than the Senate had in its finance committee bill. Transitional Medicaid was also approved, but only for a year. There is no restoration of Social Services Block Grant funding or the 10-percent transfer authority from TANF to SSBG. However, the transfer is included in the Labor/HHS appropriations bill.

TANF is extended at current levels through 2010, and supplemental grants for states with high population growth were extended through 2009.

2006 Congressional Schedule

House Majority Whip Roy Blunt's office has released the 2006 congressional calendar, which largely mirrors the Senate's schedule for the year. The House convenes Jan. 31, nearly two weeks after the Senate kicks off the second session of the 109th Congress.

Both chambers have scheduled a Presidents Day recess Feb. 20-24; a St. Patrick's Day recess March 20-24; an Easter recess April 10-21; a Memorial Day recess May 29-June 2 and an Independence Day recess July 3-7.

The House will leave town for its summer break July 31, one week earlier than the Senate. Both chambers hope to adjourn Oct. 6.

In a separate move, both chambers passed the 12th short-term program extension through March 2006.

The agreement includes the marriage-promotion grants (\$100 million a year in matching grants) with an additional \$50 million for responsible fatherhood grants. The out-of-wedlock and performance grants are eliminated to pay for this new initiative.

- **Foster care:** The conferees agreed to both House provisions: the elimination of the *Rosales* decision and the limits on the use of Title IV-E administrative costs. Additionally, the conferees adopted language limiting the use of Medicaid Target Case Management for activities related to foster care. NACo strongly opposed all of these provisions. The only concession is a provision for \$200 million over five years in mandatory funds for the Safe and Stable Families Program.

Health Care Provisions

The health provisions in the reconciliation bill are many but only a few will be highlighted here.

- **Cost-Sharing:** The Senate reconciliation bill did not include any provision to increase cost-sharing. The conference agreement however, takes much of the House-passed language that imposes cost-

sharing on families with incomes above 100 percent of poverty.

- For those with incomes between 100-150 percent of poverty, cost-sharing for an individual service cannot exceed 10 percent of the total cost of the service, and total cost-sharing for all beneficiaries in the family may not exceed 5 percent of family income. For those above 150 percent of poverty, cost-sharing for an individual service may not exceed 20 percent of the total cost of the service.

Additionally, states are allowed to impose premiums on beneficiaries with family incomes above 150 percent FPL (federal poverty level). For these families, premiums and cost-sharing together for all family members may not exceed 5 percent of the family's quarterly or monthly income.

States are also allowed to impose tiered co-pays on all beneficiaries for non-preferred drugs as well as co-pays for non-emergency care obtained in the ER if the beneficiary has access to a non-emergency provider.

Each cost-sharing provision is subject to certain rules and excludes the typically exempt populations.

- **Benefits:** Again, the Senate package included no provisions to alter benefit packages. The conference agreement allows changes to

Medicaid benefit packages for all beneficiaries except mandatory or exempt populations. However, states are allowed to cut benefits for children and the requirement to provide early prevention and diagnostic services to most children under age 19 has been eliminated.

- **Prescription Drugs:** The conference agreement sets a federal upper limit (FUL) for some drugs and redefines the average manufacturer price (AMP). Additionally, this section now makes children's hospitals eligible for the 340B drug discount program.

- **Asset Transfers:** The "look-back" period for asset transfers has been changed from three years to five years, and the start of the penalty period has been changed from the date of asset transfer to the date of Medicaid eligibility. This provision also established new limits to long-term care eligibility for those with substantial home equity of \$500,000 or above.

- **Targeted Case Management:** Services included in Targeted Case Management are clarified to ensure that Medicaid is not paying for services that could be covered by other programs.

Now that the Senate has changed a part of the bill, the House must come back to pass the package again. They are not expected to vote on reconciliation legislation until they return at the end of January. This will give groups opposed to the legislation another opportunity to try to defeat the bill.

Correction

Two Premier Technology members, Cisco Systems, Inc., and Keefe Commissary Network, were mistakenly omitted from the ad thanking NACo corporate sponsors in the Dec. 26, 2005 *County News*.

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Counties Care for America

PROFILES

In Service...



Willis (Will) E. Branning

Dakota County, Idaho

Vice chair
NACo Labor and Employment
Steering Committee

Number of years active in NACo: 9

Years in Public Service: 32

Occupation: Retired

Education: Completed 18 years, graduate work in mechanical engineering

The hardest thing I've ever done: Quit smoking.

Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner: Thomas Jefferson, Margaret Thatcher and Leonardo da Vinci.

A dream I have is to: Visit Ireland.

You'd be surprised to learn that I: Was the mayor of Apple Valley, Minn.

The most adventurous thing I've ever done is: Fly a T33 jet aircraft upside down.

My favorite way to relax is: Read a western paperback book on a Hawaiian island beach.

I'm most proud of: My engineering and management works at the Boeing and Sperry companies.

Every morning I read: The Dakota County section of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* newspaper.

My favorite meal is: My wife's meat loaf and scalloped potatoes.

My pet peeve is: Holding the line on a budget when I foresee that there are important priorities on the horizon that cannot be accomplished without scavenging other priorities.

My motto is: Just do it; it's the right thing to do!

The last book I read was: *The Walking Drum*, by Louis L'Amour.

My favorite movie is: *Gone with the Wind*.

My favorite music is: Yanni.

My favorite president is: Ronald Reagan.



County News invites Letters to the Editor

If you have a compliment, complaint or different point of view, let us know.

Please include a phone number with your letter. Mail, fax or e-mail to: County News, NACo, 440 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001-2080; 202/393-2630; cnews@naco.org.

Interest in TEL laws remains despite Colorado reconsideration

By DAN MILLER
STAFF WRITER

After passing the country's most famous, and restrictive, tax and expenditure limitation (TEL) law in 1992, Colorado voters last November voted to free the state Legislature from its Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) law, letting the government keep revenue slated for return to taxpayers. But Colorado's change of heart hasn't dampened other states' efforts.

"TABOR may make a good soundbite but it obviously creates real problems in providing public services," said David Bradley, policy analyst for the Center on Budget Policy and Priorities. "It is significant that the only state that actually had to live under TABOR voted to suspend it. I think it sends a cautionary tale to other states considering similar legislation."

Last fall, Colorado voters passed Referendum C, which allowed the state legislature to keep \$3.7 billion dollars that originally would have gone back to taxpayers under TABOR. Colorado's law prevented state government from increasing taxes at any rate faster than the combined rate of population growth and inflation. It also stipulated that taxes could only be increased through a popular vote, and applied to the state's city and county governments.

TELS, including TABOR, are fiscal mechanisms designed to restrain the growth of governmental budgets either on the tax or spending sides. As of early 2005, 30 states operate under such laws, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Despite Colorado's experience, states' interest in TEL laws has been on the rise in recent years in a "heavy, well-coordinated effort," Bradley added. "It's hard to tell if this is going to be a permanent part of the political battlefield."

NCSL Senior Policy Specialist Bert Waisanen said that TELS vary from state to state. The details of the laws make them unique.

Ohio's, for example, would restrict state spending increases to 3.5 percent a year or the sum of inflation plus population growth. Ohio's proposed law would also guarantee local governments, for the first time in state history, 5 percent of state revenues. It's scheduled to appear on the November 2006 ballot.

"No two tax and expenditure limits are the same. The states that have them tend to customize them to their own economies," Waisanen said. "The level of strictness can vary on the balance between those who want to limit government and those who want to make sure services are adequate."

Bill heads to House with proviso

■ **LABOR** from page 1

re-designating local workforce areas, with the exception of Idaho and Indiana whose state plans already include such changes.

The agreement also included NACo-recommended report language to request that the Department of Labor allow areas without community colleges, such as rural areas, to be eligible for the Community Based Job-Training Grants via other eligible training providers. The program was funded at \$125 million, a \$124 million decrease.

The measure was linked to the Defense Appropriations bill by a very unusual Senate tactic. The Senate had planned a vote for Dec. 15, 2005, but held off because not enough members were present to secure passage. When it became clear that the Senate did not have the votes to pass the bill on its own, it became part of the compromise that broke the stalemate over the Defense Appropriations bill.

The package then went back to the House with the proviso that if the House passed the defense bill, then the Labor/HHS bill would be

Colorado's TABOR law "hamstrung" government

In Colorado, the Bell Policy Center, which lobbies for equal economic opportunity within the state, concluded that TABOR wasn't working, claiming that it impaired the state's ability to set budget and program priorities and respond to crises, such as economic downturns.

"Some spending limits may be desirable and prudent, but TABOR has created a government hamstrung by inflexible rules that defy common sense and drive bad public policy," said Carol Hedges, director of the Fiscal Project at the Bell Center and author of a 2003 study on TABOR.

The Bell Center's case against TABOR was fourfold. First, while the law was intended to downsize state government and contain spending and taxes, the center found that growth in state government has not kept pace with economic growth, making the revenue growth limit too restrictive to meet critical needs. Second, TABOR makes the restoration of cut programs nearly impossible in good economic times.

Third, the group found that TABOR contained "complex and often redundant provisions" that restricted budget-making flexibility. Finally, TABOR had provisions that prevented lawmakers from taking advantage of surpluses in good times to save for bad times (e.g. a rainy day fund).

Calling Colorado's former TABOR law the most restrictive tax and spending limitation in the country, Hedges said, "The stated purpose of TABOR was to permanently limit the overall growth of government. But it didn't just limit government's growth; it shrank it."

"deemed" passed by the Senate. This default vote was significant in that no senator was required to actually be recorded on the conference report. The Senate often operates by "unanimous consent," but this was unusual even for the Senate.

County News

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Homeland security offices place county agencies under one roof

By DAN MILLER
STAFF WRITER

Gwinnett County, Ga. is the latest local government to create its own Office of Homeland Security in an effort to better protect its citizens by streamlining communication between federal, state and municipal agencies and reducing duplicated services.

Officially announced Dec. 2, 2005, the office follows in the footsteps of similar departments in local governments across the country – the most noteworthy being New York City's – that have sprung up since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"What we really see the Office of Homeland Security doing is serving as a central coordinating

point," said Gwinnett County Administrator Jock Connell. The office is also charged with identifying additional grant dollars as well as planning live homeland security exercises, Connell said. He made it clear, however, that the new office is not intended to replace the current command structure for first responders. "This department is not going to run the fire department or the sheriff's department."

One of the first jobs for Maj. Alan Doss, the new OHS director, will be to evaluate the effectiveness of the fire, sheriff, health and corrections departments and recommend improvements.

"I think the department is going to translate into a safer environment and better protection for our

citizens," Connell said. "I think now that we've got someone whose sole purpose is to focus on it, it can only put us in a better situation."

Collin County, Texas started its department of homeland security soon after the September 11 attacks.

"Our county commissioners decided they wanted to be more proactive in responding to terrorist attacks and natural disasters," said Jason Lane, Collin County bioterrorism city planner.

The department serves multiple functions, including assuming responsibility for courthouse security, emergency management, bioterrorism and the fire marshal. Essentially, the department put partial responsibilities from different groups under

one consolidated department.

According to Lane, having one person in control of all the inter-related responsibilities makes them easier to manage. He thinks that putting public health and emergency management personnel under one roof is one of the best results of the department.

Montgomery County, Md. Executive Doug Duncan first proposed the idea of a homeland security department in September of 2004. The department, under the direction of former county fire administrator Gordon Aoyagi, is responsible for areas including emergency management, disaster preparedness, security of county facilities, public health emergency preparedness and community outreach.

"The world is a very different place and it is essential that we remain vigilant in the face of potential dangers and use every resource available to protect our residents from harm," Duncan said when proposing the department. "A new department with overall responsibility for terrorism prevention will boost the security of our homeland and ensure more coordination within county government."

Feds to focus on asset-based risk

■ DHS from page 1

remaining funds will be distributed on a competitive basis to states and local governments based on risk and need, not population. However, states would still be required to suballocate 80 percent of these funds to units of local governments within 60 days of receipt.

This emphasis on risk and need will also be the sole method for allocating DHS' UASI awards to high-threat urban regions.

According to DHS' Preparedness Directorate Office of Grants and Training (formerly the Office for State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness) "risk will be determined at the federal level" and will focus on "asset-based risk" and "geographically based risk." These risk calculations will produce a total terrorism risk score.

DHS will evaluate need through a competitive review process. States will identify needs through program and capability reviews, and develop comprehensive initiatives to address identified priorities that reduce overall risk. Collectively, DHS will use the risk and need evaluations to prioritize homeland security grants to state and local units of governments.

NACo encourages county governments to immediately contact their respective state homeland security contact office at www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/interapp/editorial/editorial_0291.xml for a detailed description of how to apply for these funds.

States must submit applications by March 2 and DHS will review and approve all applications no later than May 31. County officials can review the application for these awards at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/odp/docs/fy2006hsgp.pdf.

From the President's PDA



Legislative Agenda for 2006 Focuses on Key Issues Affecting Counties

By BILL HANSELL
NACo President

One of the most important services NACo provides for counties is the legislative work and lobbying activities. As I have had the opportunity to spend time on The Hill, I am proud of the very positive reputation our organization and staff have in Congress. The respect NACo has, has been earned.



Bill Hansell
NACo President

NACo has identified a bold legislative agenda for 2006 that will tackle a number of key issues that affect counties. For many county officials, nothing NACo does is more important than the legislative work. The NACo Board of Directors adopted a legislative agenda for the year at its meeting in San Diego County in December.

NACo members and staff will work with the George W. Bush Administration and Congress on all the issues that affect counties. But the Board identified seven key priorities that will receive specific attention. I plan to highlight each priority in future columns which I trust

will better inform you on what the issues are, and why these priorities were selected. Here are the key priorities for 2006.

Preserve the CDBG program

Preserve the CDBG program in its present form, including appropriations, and oppose initiatives such as the Strengthening America's Communities Initiative (SACI).

Reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act

Reauthorize PL 106-393 (the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act) to provide revenue to those counties across the country that no longer receive 25 percent of receipts from timber sales.

Secure additional health care services and financing

Support the financing of our nation's health care system to recognize the roles and responsibilities of county governments. Specifically to address the issues of health disparities, indigent and uncompensated health care, and other health services provided at the counties' expense.

Support comprehensive methamphetamine legislation

Support a comprehensive and intergovernmental strategy to assist counties dealing with the methamphetamine epidemic. Necessary components include prevention, education, treatment, law enforcement, precursor control, research and cleanup. In particular, NACo calls for full funding of the Justice Assistance Grant program to assist counties with the methamphetamine crisis.

Reauthorize social services and workforce legislation

Reauthorize the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant, and reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act to maintain local authority and provide sufficient funding for social services and workforce programs to support needy families and provide workers with training they need to obtain jobs that pay a livable wage. Protect county financial and programmatic interests in legislation to reform the federal foster care system.

Telecommunication Act rewrite

Support rewriting provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which include protecting existing authorities and revenues, and addressing issues of convergence across a

broad range of communications and technology platforms.

Voting Rights Act reauthorization

Reauthorize provisions of the Voting Rights Act that help to protect the right of every eligible citizen to vote without discrimination. Provisions of the law related to pre-clearance, minority language assistance and federal examiners and observers have only temporary effect and are scheduled to expire in 2007.

Oppose unfunded mandates and preemption

Oppose unfunded mandates from Congress and the administration, such as those imposed by the lack of adequate immigration enforcement, and oppose legislation or regulations that preempt county authority, such as land-use regulatory authorities, and control of rights-of-way and other locally based functions.

I welcome your ideas and suggestions for achieving success on these priorities. I also encourage you to become actively engaged on these issues. We will be successful if county officials take the leadership role and make certain that the administration and Congress know and understand the county position on these key priorities.

Rural transit services: where counties can go for help

By JAMES DAVENPORT
SENIOR ASSOCIATE, COUNTY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

Providing access to transportation for those with special needs is a critical issue for counties, and is especially acute for people in sparsely populated rural areas where public transit may not be available.

According to a report recently released through the USDA, the 1990s saw rural public transportation services grow because of increased federal funding through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) legislation, with non-metro providers offering 62 percent more passenger trips, and 60 percent more vehicles (vans and buses). However, less than 10 percent of federal funding for public transportation went to rural areas.

Public transportation is available

in 60 percent of rural counties, with 28 percent of about 1,200 systems offering only limited service (less than 25 trips taken each year per no-car household). With access to many federal programs for the disadvantaged contingent on public transportation, rural areas without transit may be unable to address the mobility needs of the elderly, handicapped and poor.

The U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Transit Administration (FTA), along with other federal agencies, is working to identify mutual needs and goals and improve public transportation through increased coordination in rural and suburban areas. In fact, FTA, along with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Labor and Education support a range of technical assistance initiatives for coordinating human service transportation.

These programs and centers are charged with providing training, resources and direct assistance to communities and states interested in enhancing the mobility and transportation options for all citizens, including older adults, individuals with disabilities and people with lower incomes.

One of the programs specifically aimed at the needs of rural areas is the National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). The National RTAP, administered by the American Public Works Association, provides outreach and training to each state's RTAP and coordinates with other organizations involved in rural transit. Products and services are identified, developed, promoted and disseminated through each state's RTAP manager.

The National RTAP also works

with the Community Transportation Association of America to operate a national toll-free telephone line, a Web page, a national peer-to-peer technical assistance network and offers various presentations and publications, and fulfillment services for National RTAP products.

There are a number of programs, many county-based, providing transit services for those most-in-need living in rural areas. Hubbard County, Minn., a rural county with a population of 18,000 and land area of 1,000 square miles, has such a program in place.

The county established the Hubbard County Heartland Express (HE) in 1989 that provides curb-to-curb transportation service for all residents of Hubbard County. Service includes general bus routes that can deviate up to four miles, dial-a-car service with volunteer drivers and city bus services. The HE coordinates transportation services with agencies, both within and outside of the county and works with an advisory committee that includes representatives of participating agencies. Final decision authority, however, rests with the county and participating municipalities.

The service operates three vehicles, had a 2004 operating budget of \$185,742 and provided 20,375 trips during the year. Including its dial-a-car service, HE transported 1,707 people in 2004.

Public transportation for the county began after social services director Daryl Bessler worked through Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) Office of Transit to secure the initial grant. The current transit coordinator started the program, initially coordinating public transit services with two agencies. The program has since grown to include service contracts with the education

agencies throughout the region. Now, the coordinator also communicates regularly with state representatives to build and maintain support.

"Coordination of trips with other county systems and providers helps with the cost-effectiveness of the system. Also, by offering connections to private shuttle services and intercity bus lines, the HE helps the county residents meet their transportation needs. HE provides a sense of independence to those who have had to rely on others to meet their transportation needs," said Floyd Frank, County Commission Chair.

The biggest issues the county faces in providing the transit service include funding — always a continuing concern, especially with the potential of state budget cuts, and providing access to employment for people with limited mobility in such a rural area.

Technical assistance from Mn/DOT has been helpful, especially in developing the coordination service model. Mn/DOT required counties to address coordination of services as part of their grant award process.

Additional information on the HE program and many others is available from a report released by the Transportation Research Board *Toolkit for Rural Community Coordinated Transportation Services* at www.nationalrtap.org.

Information on these programs is available on the United We Ride Web site (Coordinating Human Services Transportation) at www.unitedweride.gov/1_123_ENG_HTML.htm.

For more information on the NACo/NADO Research Foundation Rural Transportation Project, contact James Davenport at jdavenport@naco.org or 202/661-8807.

Cook County, Ill. hosts 2006 NACo Conference



IT IS MY GREAT PLEASURE...
to invite you to attend the National Association of Counties Annual Conference and Exhibition next August in Cook County.

As the host of the 2006 NACo Conference, Cook County Government and our community partners have committed to showcasing the best that our region has to offer to our fellow County representatives.

We're extremely proud of the strong leadership role we've taken over the years in developing

innovative approaches to some of our nation's most challenging issues. Our public health system continues to grow as more and more of our residents are without health insurance. In this post 9/11 world, our public safety system is developing a regional approach to homeland security and we continue to strive to create a climate of governance that fosters healthy environments and a thriving business community.

In addition, Cook County offers some of the nation's most engaging amenities, such as the Forest Preserve District's world-class golf courses; the ecologically sensitive exhibits of rare wildlife at Brookfield Zoo; and the serenity and beauty of the Chicago Botanic Garden.

We're delighted to have the opportunity as NACo's 2006 host to share information with our visitors about our model programs and to foster dialogue among public officials which allows us to strengthen our commitment of working together on behalf of common goals and the greater public good.

Join us in August 2006!
Sincerely,

John H. Stroger, Jr.
Cook County Board President

Rural Consultation Rule

There's a deadline ahead for state departments of transportation (DOTs) that rural counties need to be aware of. By Feb. 24, state DOTs must submit to the Federal Highway and Transit administrations, comments from non-metropolitan local officials on the effectiveness of their state's consultation process for transportation and transit planning.

The reporting requirement, contained in rules promulgated by the two federal agencies, completes the rural consultation rule, which was released Jan. 23, 2003.

The rule, which remains in effect under the new transportation law (SAFETEA-LU), mandates that states:

1. have a process for consulting with local officials separate and discrete from the state's general public involvement process
2. document their process by Feb. 24, 2004, and
3. review and solicit comments on the effectiveness of the existing consultation process and proposed modifications within two years of implementation and every five years thereafter.

For more information, contact Bob Gorman at robert.gorman@fhwa.dot.gov or 202/366-5001.

EPA designates January Radon Awareness Month

By KELLY ZONDERWYK
COMMUNITY SERVICES ASSOCIATE

January is designated as Radon Awareness Month by EPA, and counties across America are participating in raising awareness in their communities about the serious health risks associated with radon exposure and the importance of testing homes.

For the average person, half of the radiation they are exposed to in their life comes from radon, according to Dr. R. William Field, associate professor at the University of Iowa Department of Occupational and Environmental Health.

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer among non-smokers

and the second leading cause of lung cancer death. According to the EPA, radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths annually and about 2,900 of these deaths occur among people who have never smoked. Lung cancer death associated with radon exposure accounts for more annual deaths than other cancers, including liver, brain, stomach, melanoma and gall-bladder cancer.

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas produced by the breakdown of uranium in soil, rock and water. This tasteless and odorless gas enters homes and buildings from beneath their foundations and then travels upwards. Radon can

enter the foundation through cracks or holes in concrete floors, walls, construction joints, sump pumps and loose-fitting pipes.

When these radioactive particles enter a person's lungs they adhere to the lung tissue and irradiate sensitive cells. The risk of lung cancer death rises in smokers who are exposed to radon. For every 1,000 people who have smoked and are exposed to high levels of radon, about 62 people will die of lung cancer. Non-smokers exposed to high levels of radon contract lethal lung cancer at a rate of about 7.3 people for every 1,000 non-smokers.

It's simple and inexpensive for a home to be tested for radon. Counties can purchase radon test kits to distribute in their communities or provide their residents with information on how to purchase a kit by visiting the EPA's radon test kits manufacturers' Web site at www.epa.gov/radon/manufact.htm.

You may also order test kits and obtain a free radon test kit coupon through the National Safety Council's (NSC) Web site, www.nsc.org/ehc/radon/coupon.htm.

The radon level in a home is measured in pico Curies per Liter, or pCi/L. EPA recommends that any home with a radon level measuring between 2 pCi/L and 4 pCi/L be mitigated. According to the NSC nearly one out of every 15 homes has a radon level EPA considers to be elevated — 4 pCi/L or greater.

Once a home is tested and if a high level of radon is discovered, the good news is that mitigation is effective. Active subslab suction (also called subslab depressurization) is the most common radon reduction method. One or more suction pipes are either inserted through the floor

slab into the crushed rock or soil underneath, or inserted below the concrete slab from outside the house.

Radon reduction systems for a home typically can cost anywhere from \$800 to \$2,500 and require little future maintenance. More information on reducing radon in homes can be found in the EPA's Consumer Guide to Radon found at www.epa.gov/radon/pubs/consguid.html.

Despite facts and research demonstrating the harmful health effects of radon exposure, counties still face a difficult task in convincing their residents to test their homes

and mitigate when radon levels are high. To view Dr. Field's complete presentation, access the NACo Air Quality Web site by visiting www.naco.org/techassistance and clicking on Air Quality.

Many counties have taken the lead to address radon in their communities. A follow-up to this article, in the Jan. 30 edition of *County News*, will feature innovative county projects occurring throughout the month of January on radon awareness.

For more information on indoor air quality, contact Kelly Zonderwyk at NACo at 202/942-4224 or kzonderwyk@naco.org.

Radon in Groundwater Sources

Radon exposure doesn't just come from the soil beneath a home or building, but also from groundwater sources — making itself present in well water and then being released into the air of a home when water is used for showering or other household uses.

In most cases, radon entering the home through water is a small source of risk compared with radon entering from the soil. Radon from the soil beneath the home is still the primary way individuals are exposed.

EPA estimates that indoor radon levels will increase by about 1 pCi/L for every 10,000 pCi/L of radon in water. About 1 to 2 percent of indoor radon in air comes from drinking water.

EPA also estimates that radon in drinking water causes about 168 cancer deaths per year: 89 percent from lung cancer and 11 percent from stomach cancer caused by consuming water containing radon.

Call EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800/426-4791 to get information on locating a certified lab to test a home serviced by well water for radon.

Additional questions on radon in groundwater sources can be answered at the National Safety Council's radon Web site at www.nsc.org/ehc/radon/rad_faqs.htm#water.

Radon Risk For Non-Smokers

Radon Level	If 1,000 people who never smoked were exposed to this level over a lifetime*	The risk of cancer from radon exposure compares to**	WHAT TO DO
20 pCi/L	About 36 people could get lung cancer	35 times the risk of drowning	Fix your home
10 pCi/L	About 18 people could get lung cancer	20 times the risk of dying in a home fire	Fix your home
8 pCi/L	About 15 people could get lung cancer	4 times the risk of dying in a fall	Fix your home
4 pCi/L	About 7 people could get lung cancer	The risk of dying in a car crash	Fix your home
2 pCi/L	About 4 person could get lung cancer	The risk of dying from poison	Consider fixing between 2 and 4 pCi/L
1.3 pCi/L	About 2 people could get lung cancer	(Average indoor radon level)	(Reducing radon levels below 2 pCi/L is difficult.)
0.4 pCi/L		(Average outdoor radon level)	

Note: If you are a former smoker, your risk may be higher.

* Lifetime risk of lung cancer deaths from EPA Assessment of Risks from Radon in Homes (EPA 402-R-03-003).

** Comparison data calculated using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's 1999-2001 National Center for Injury Prevention and Control Reports.

What's In a Seal?

Fairfax County, Va.

The central design of the seal was adopted from the coat of arms of the Lord Fairfax, for whom Fairfax County was named. The emblem is depicted in numerous reference books on British heraldry.

The shield is a field of gold on a white background with three sets of two red bars surmounted by a black lion standing on its hind legs.

The crest over the cornet or crown is a black lion with three paws on the ground and the right front paw raised and facing out to the viewer. The cornet with four pearls, to which the Fairfaxes were entitled as barons, is gold with red fabric and a gold tassel.

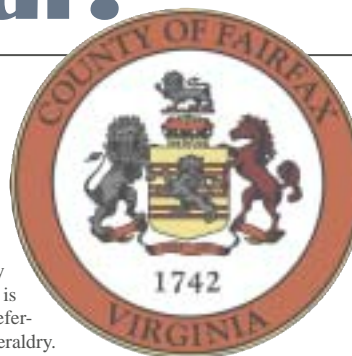
The shield's supporters are: on the left, a black lion on its hind paws looking out at the viewer, and on the right, a bay horse on its hind legs. Below the shield is the motto on a red ribbon, "Fare Fac" which translates as "speak and act (or to get it done);" the motto may be a grammatical Latin pun on the name Fairfax. In heraldry, bars represent those who set the bar of conscience, religion and honor; the lion represents dauntless courage and the horse represents a readiness for service. The colors also have meaning — gold is generosity and elevation of the mind while red stands for strength and magnanimity.

The seal is bordered with a wide red circle outlined with a thin gold band set in a black circular frame with the words 'County of Fairfax' embedded in the top center of the red and 'Virginia' in the bottom center. The year the county was established — 1742 — appears below the shield in black.

Research done in 1983 by county historians seems to indicate that the county seal was designed by the first public affairs director (then division of information), Elliot G. Shaw, Jr. in 1963. It was in general use for many years before being officially approved in 1991 by the county executive.

The county seal is also the principal image on the county flag — it is situated in the center of a light blue background bordered in gold.

(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Allison Mall at amall@naco.org or 202/942-4256.)



Taking a Closer Look at SAFETEA-LU

By ROBERT J. FOGEL
SENIOR LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The following analysis of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Safety Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the nation's new transportation law, outlines those sections of the act that are important to county officials who have responsibility for the highways, bridges, bus and rail systems that make up the county transportation system.

Counties are eligible to participate in all the highway and transit programs listed. For most highway programs, a county must go through the state DOT or the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to get approval for a project. For most of the transit programs, the funds go directly to local governments or are passed through by the state to local governments. Note that references to program funding include FY05-FY09.

For additional information, contact your regional or state FHWA or FTA offices or go to www.fta.dot.gov.

Highway Programs

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The STP is the most flexible of the highway programs and provides \$32.5 billion that can be used on a broad range of activities, including highways, public bridges, capital transit projects, carpool projects, certain parking facilities, planning and environmental restoration and pollution abatement projects.

In metropolitan areas, the MPO develops a transportation improvement program (TIP) which includes STP spending. If the metro area exceeds 200,000 population, all projects must be approved for funding by the MPO in cooperation with the state; in smaller metropolitan areas, the projects will be selected by the state in cooperation with the MPO. In rural regions, project decisions are made by the state after consultation with local governments.

Transportation Enhancements

The enhancement program is funded by 10 percent set aside from the STP program or a state's 2005 funding level, whichever is greater. It provides resources to fund 12 categories of cultural, aesthetic and environmental projects, such as scenic or historic programs and preservation, landscaping, preservation of abandoned rail corridors and environmental mitigation.

Bridge Program

This program provides \$21.6 billion to enable states and local governments to improve their bridges

through replacement, rehabilitation and maintenance. Any bridge rated as more than 20 feet on a public road deficient is eligible, and states must spend at least 15 percent of bridge funds on bridges not on federal-aid highways, which often means county bridges. Off-system bridge investment is no longer constrained by a 35-percent maximum. Spending on bridge preservation is now eligible even if the bridge is not classified as deficient.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

The CMAQ program provides \$8.6 billion to continue, to reduce emissions from highway travel, and aid states and regions in complying with the Clean Air Act requirements.

set-aside that was formerly part of the Surface Transportation Program. Over the next four years, an average of \$1.26 billion will be distributed by formula to the states that can be used on a broad array of safety improvement projects, including projects on county roads, such as intersection safety improvements, pavement and shoulder widening, rumble strips, signage and guardrails.

Every state is required to develop a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) that involves a comprehensive, collaborative and data-driven approach of highway safety.

High Risk Rural Roads

As a part of the HSIP, there is a specific set-aside for High Risk Rural Roads. While any of the \$1.2

Grade Crossing. At \$220 million annually, this program is increased by approximately \$65 million beyond TEA-21 levels, and funds projects on any public road that eliminate hazards at rail grade crossings, including the separation or protection, reconstruction and relocation of grade crossings.

Safe Routes to Schools

This totally new program focuses on enabling and encouraging children to safely walk and bicycle to school. An average of \$122 million annually will be distributed to the states, and all county roads are eligible. Projects include sidewalk improvements, traffic calming, pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements and traffic diversion near schools.

additional agencies and parties in the planning process.

State Infrastructure Banks (SIB)

Under the SIB program, a portion of a state's highway and transit program funds can be used to help capitalize state infrastructure revolving funds. While TEA-21 had limited this program to four states, the new legislation allows any state to enter into an agreement with USDOT to establish a SIB.

Tolls

Broader authority is provided through four programs to use tolling on a pilot or demonstration basis, mainly on the Interstate system. Additionally, a HOV-lane program is created that allows vehicles not eligible for HOV lanes to pay a toll to use such a facility.

Private Activity Bonds

Allows states or local governments to issue tax-exempt, private activity bonds to finance highway projects and rail-truck transfer facilities. A \$15-billion limit is placed on the aggregate face amount of the bonds that can be issued.

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)

Provides \$11.1 million to the LTAP program that makes available training and education to local officials and Indian tribes.

Conformity

Under the Clean Air Act, funding of federal transportation projects is prohibited unless there is conformity to the State Implementation Plan or SIP. In particular, this restriction can affect transportation projects in metropolitan areas that do not meet, or previously have not met, federal air-quality standards.

The new legislation requires less frequent conformity demonstrations — four years instead of every two years — and will shorten the planning horizon over which conformity must be demonstrated to 10 years instead of 20 years. There is also a 12-month grace period created before a lapse is declared.

Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)

The TIFIA program provides federal credit assistance to any major highway, transit or rail project (generally it must meet a \$50 million threshold) through secured loans, loan guarantees and lines of credit.

■ See SAFETEA-LU on page 9



Eligible projects include transportation control measures, programs for auto emission controls, public purchase of alternative fuel vehicles, and pedestrian and bicycle programs. The new legislation allows the following projects as eligible for CMAQ funding: advanced truck stop electrification systems; projects that will improve transportation systems management and operations; integrated, interoperable emergency communication systems and diesel retrofits.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The HSIP replaces the safety

billion annually can be spent on rural roads, \$90 million is specifically targeted for safety problems on roadways classified as rural major collectors, rural minor collectors and rural local roads. The funds can be used for construction and operational improvements related to safety but must be used on roads that have a crash rate for fatalities and incapacitating injuries that exceeds the statewide average for those functional classes of roads.

Railway-Highway Grade Crossing

A second set-aside of the HSIP program is for Railway-Highway

Metropolitan Planning

This ongoing process creates a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive framework for making transportation investment decisions in metropolitan areas, and it must include both highway and transit projects.

A major change is that the funding is increased from a 1 percent to a 1.25 percent takedown of the core highway programs, in part because of the substantial additional responsibilities facing many MPOs. Funding is also contributed by the transit program. There are a number of new requirements, many of which relate to consulting or coordinating with

SAFETEA-LU increases funding for rural, small urban transportation systems

■ SAFETEA-LU from page 8

New eligibility is extended to international bridges and tunnels, inter-city bus and rail facilities and vehicles, including Amtrak and high-speed systems.

Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP)

This ongoing program provides \$270 million in grants to assist in planning, developing and implementing strategies to integrate transportation, community, and system preservation plans and strategies, and identify private initiatives to improve such relationships. State, regional and local governments are eligible to receive TCSP grants.

Environmental Streamlining

The act incorporates changes aimed at improving and streamlining the environmental process for transportation projects, particularly the permitting process that often requires substantial time. Some of these changes include designating USDOT as the lead agency

for surface transportation project coordination; establishment of a 180-day statute of limitation on judicial claims on final agency actions related to environmental requirements; establishment of an interagency dispute resolution process; allowing for each state to assume responsibility for categorical exclusions, and allowing the use of publicly owned parks and recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges for transportation projects if such use would result in "de minimus impacts" to that resource.

Transit Programs

Urbanized Area Formula Grants

This program provides \$20.1 billion in grants for public transit capital investments to local governments and transit agencies in areas above 200,000 population, and capital and operating assistance grants to areas between 50,000–200,000. The basic program and formula remain unchanged with the exception two formula features — a Small Transit-Intensive Cities formula tier and a Growing States and High-Density States formula tier.

Rural Area Formula Grants

This program provides \$2.2 billion in capital and operating assistance for rural and small urban transportation systems, a substantial increase. Funds are distributed to the states, which in turn fund the local government, regional and non-profit transit agencies that deliver the transit services. A new formula tier is added based on land area.

New Starts

This program provides \$8.1 billion in funding for new fixed-guideway systems, extensions of these systems and bus corridor improvements. Within the program, a separate Small Starts section has been created for projects of \$75 million or less. Small Start projects can be used for any of the listed projects and also for bus rapid transit.

Fixed Guideways

This program provides \$7.3 billion to modernize or improve existing rail or fixed-guideway systems, including rehabilitation of rolling stock, track, structures and signals. Generally, eligible areas must have a population of at least 200,000 and systems that are at least seven years old.

Bus and Bus Facilities

This program provides \$4.2 billion for the acquisition of buses and facilities such as maintenance facilities, terminals, garage equipment and bus shelters. All the funds in this program are allocated to specific projects.

Elderly/Disabled

This program provides \$584 million in formula funding to states for the capital costs of providing services to the elderly and persons with disabilities. Funds are generally sub-allocated to local governments and non-profits for operation of the program. To improve coordination, a new locally developed human service transportation plan is required. A seven-state pilot program is created to determine if expanding eligibility to operating assistance would improve service.

Job Access/Reverse Commute

This program provides \$727 million for local programs that offer job access and reverse commute services for low-income individuals who may live in the city and work in the suburbs. The major change in this program is that it will be administered as a formula program.

New Freedom

This is a new formula program that will provide \$339 million over the life of the act to increase the availability of transportation services beyond that which is required in ADA to persons with disabilities.

Transit in Parks

This new discretionary program will provide \$97 million to fund transportation alternatives to the private car in national parks and on public lands.

Rail

The new legislation authorized \$90 million for Maglev deployment, \$70 million annually for high-speed corridor development, \$30 million for high-speed rail technology, and \$430 million for the elimination of rail-highway crossing hazards in high-speed rail corridors.

The legislation expands a federal loan and loan-guarantee program for improving and rehabilitating rail track from \$3.5 billion to \$35 billion on loans, \$7 billion of which is reserved for small, regional and short line railroads. Additionally, \$350 million annually in grants is made available for relocating rail track where it negatively impacts on a community.

National Association of Counties

2006

Achievement Award Program

Applications are available for the 2006 Achievement Award Program, a non-competitive awards program which seeks to recognize innovative county government programs initiated by county governments and personnel.

**Application Deadline:
February 10, 2006**

Who is eligible to submit applications?

County governments and state associations of counties are eligible to apply. There is no limit to the number of applications one can submit.

What are the criteria?

Applications are judged solely against the criteria standards, which are listed in the applications.

What do I win?

Winning applications receive a certificate and national recognition in our Model County Programs Database. They are also eligible to receive a Best of Category plaque and be highlighted in County News. All winners are invited to attend our awards ceremony at our Annual Conference.

County News asked...

What's Ahead for Your County in 2006?

(Ed. Note: This is the first in a series of reports from NACo member counties on their plans for 2006. If you would like to let County News know your plans, email amall@naco.org.)

Anoka County, Minn.



MARGARET LANGFELD
Chair

Board of County Commissioners

Anoka County is focusing on public safety and transportation as 2006's top priorities. Several transportation projects will be completed to ease congestion, improve safety and meet the needs of commercial and residential growth in the area.

In the area of public safety, the county is moving forward with plans for an improved, centrally located public safety campus and patrol station in Coon Rapids, as well as purchasing property for a new county morgue.

To reduce crowding in the jails, much of which is related to increased methamphetamine use, the county has worked out a long-term agreement to use 15 jail beds or more in neighboring Sherburne County, which will save money and improve jail security. Also, rather than opening its own detox center, the county is expanding its detox service agreements in the cities of Plymouth and St. Paul.

In the area of human services, Anoka County is focusing on protecting children who are victimized by methamphetamine use in the home. A newly awarded state grant will allow us to work more intensely with mothers using meth to help them get off the drug and start taking care of their families again.

Two county staff members will also be added to supervise serious criminal offenders, including sex offenders; security improvements to the Government Center and

Courthouse are planned and a crime lab deputy will be added to assure full 24-hour coverage assistance in investigations.

Barron County, Wis.



DUANE HEBERT
County Administrator

In 2006, Barron County plans to complete the \$5.5-million University of Wisconsin Barron County remodel/construction project; complete consolidation of all land information databases for better customer service and more efficient operations; continue overall staff reductions through attrition by greater consolidation and coordination of services and elimination of duplicative services; continue its five-year financial projections to help avert potential fiscal problems and meet or exceed the state of Wisconsin-imposed local property tax freeze without impacting County Board-approved services and programs.

Butte County, Calif.



PAUL MCINTOSH
Chief Administrative Officer

Butte County will be focusing on three major platforms in 2006. The first is an initiative to make 2006 "The

Best Year Yet" — an organizational approach to problem solving and service delivery based on results-oriented management.

The second major initiative is the drafting of a new comprehensive land-use plan for the county to better manage growth that is occurring and the development of our local economy.

Finally, the state of California is renewing the license for Lake Oroville, a 762-megawatt, hydro-electric facility that lies within Butte County. This is the second largest reservoir in California and attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors to our county. At issue, though, is whether the county is adequately compensated for the demands this project places on public services and other socio-economic impacts of the project.

Campbell County, Va.



DAVID LAURELL
County Administrator

Campbell County is looking forward to another year of moderate growth in both population and revenue. The 2006 economic development focus remains on expanding the county's retail and commercial base as well as supporting expansion of nuclear technologies companies and workforce readiness initiatives. Opportunities and challenges include helping two incorporated towns within the county to maintain economic viability; implementing a career Emergency Medical Services system; long-term growth planning through a comprehensive update of zoning and subdivision ordinances; continued development of the recreational park program and continued work on regional efforts to reduce operating costs through effective consolidated service delivery methods.

Catawba County, N.C.



DAVE HARDIN
Public Information Officer

Catawba County's goals for the upcoming year include the adoption of a Unified Development Ordinance to combine all of Catawba County's existing regulations concerning land-use and development into a single, coordinated ordinance.

The county also hopes to continue work on diversifying the county's economic base and providing employment opportunities for citizens, and plans to develop a finance plan for school construction over the next four-year period.

Chatham County, N.C.



CHARLIE HORNE
County Manager

Chatham County will be busy in 2006 with 11 capital projects made possible by a new capital improvement funding plan. The county will use certificates of participation funds to build new elementary and middle schools, a school cafeteria addition, middle school renovation, two community college facilities, expansion of a social services building, a new judicial building, water/sewer needs

at the county's industrial park, and a joint county-community college library.

A new high school will be built with bonds approved by voters in November 2006. The \$133-million debt will be covered by a recent four-cent tax increase and school impact fees.

Chatham County is also working to provide more county water capacity across the county and to add much-needed recreation facilities. Work on waterlines in two county districts will be underway in 2006. Recreation fees levied on developers is starting to provide funds to acquire and begin construction on at least one park in '06-'07.

Cumberland County, Maine



PETER CRICHTON
County Manager

The county is working to become the first county in New England to be declared an Urban Entitlement County, which means that because the county does not have home rule, it must seek and obtain the agreement from many of the county's 27 municipalities.

The county is also in the process of expanding the Cumberland County Regional Communications Center, which provides emergency and non-emergency communications services. When the expansion is completed in the fall, the center will provide countywide dispatch and E-911 services to the vast majority of the county's 280,000-person population.

The county is also embarking on a 2006-2010 Strategic Plan, which will include 10 subcommittees, covering very important, if not critical, internal and external issues that are facing the county.

■ See 2006 on page 11

Former WIR president Don Davis, dies Dec. 9, 2005

Don L. Davis, 69, former Western Interstate Region (WIR) president and Rio Blanco County, Colo., commissioner, died Dec. 9, 2005, at the Rangely, Colo. District Hospital. A retired Chevron engineer, Davis served as a Rio Blanco County commissioner for 16 years and as WIR president in 2003–2004.

"The Western Interstate Region Board remembers Don as an extremely passionate and involved member who deeply loved life and enthusiastically shared his visions for multiple use on the public lands. We all benefited from his leadership in WIR and will miss his contributions tremendously," said WIR President Connie Eissinger.

Davis was born Jan. 7, 1936. He attended Craig High School and Mesa Junior College. He served in the U.S. Army for three years. He was a member of the St. Timothy Church ministry team and on the Bishop's Committee.

Survivors include his wife, Paula; four children, Delon Martinez, Diane



Don L. Davis

Fox, Jamie Richens and John Had-denham; his father, Earl Davis, 11 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Memorial contributions may be sent to St. Timothy Episcopal Church, 115 Kennedy Dr., Rangely, CO 81648; or the Rangely Public Schools, 402 W. Main St., Rangely, CO 81648.

Counties take on strategic plans, technology in 2006

■ 2006 from page 10

Culpeper County, Va.

(Photo not available)

FRANK BOSSIO
County Administrator

Culpeper County is busy handling the implications of growth in the county and putting together a 50-year plan for water and sewer. The county is also building a new high school and planning for a new elementary school.

In addition, the county is forming a long-term technology plan to look at what promise the technologies of the future might hold for local government.

Camden County, N.C.

(Photo not available)

RANDELL WOODRUFF
County Manager

Although Camden County is a small rural county, it was listed by the Census Bureau as the eighth fastest growing county in the nation in 2005. It has fast become a part of the Hampton Roads area of Virginia and is experiencing tremendous growth

pressures after more than 100 years of no growth.

Currently, the county is in the process of building a new elementary school and a wastewater treatment plant/collection system. Additionally, since the county is in need of revenue generation, it has granted a franchise for a large municipal solid waste landfill that has become quite controversial. The county is working extremely hard to manage this new growth in manner that preserves the unique nature of this special place.

Cumberland County, Pa.

(Photo not available)

RICHARD MOORE
County Administrator

In 2006, Cumberland County will continue looking for opportunities to improve its focus on the core responsibilities of county government and to step back from non-essential activities. All the county departments are expected to take steps to manage the size and effectiveness of county operations, improve public access to courthouse services; and continue the leadership role in deploying technology and expanding e-government.

AFFILIATE NEWS

The National Association of County Surveyors

The National Association of County Surveyors (NACS) is one of NACo's 23 affiliates. With more than 200 members, it is the voice for county surveyors at the national level.

The NACS leadership serves on NACo's Board of Directors and on its Telecommunication and Technology Committee and GIS Subcommittee.

This year, NACS is a sponsor of the Survey and GIS Summit 2006. This conference brings together surveyors, engineers and GIS professionals in an educational environment to help bridge the gap between the professions. Past presentations have covered the spectrum of integrating GIS and surveying, GPS and engineering. A new educational track has been added this year, specifically designed for surveyors getting started in GIS.

The Survey and GIS Summit runs from Aug. 5–8 in San Diego and includes attendance to the ESRI International User Conference.

NACS has assisted the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) in determining whether the agency is meeting local needs for accurate positioning. NACS and NGS worked jointly to develop a scorecard for distribution to county surveyors nationwide. (If someone in your county would like to complete the scorecard, go to www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=668841561193.)

NACS also continues to review the ongoing effects of updating U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management's "Manual of

Surveying Instruction 1973." This manual sets forth how cadastral surveys of the public lands are made in conformance to statutory law and its jurisdictional interpretations. The NACS review committee continues to work on this effort.

NACS continues to meet its objectives with the activities described above. The objectives are to enhance the professional growth of its members, raise the level of service in efficiency and character to both the general public and county government, and support or propose legislation beneficial to county government

while opposing legislation deemed to be detrimental.

NACS achieves these objectives through continuing education programs, through the exchange of information and ideas at conferences or other meetings, and through NACo publications like this *County News* issue.

Go to www.naco.org/nacs/index.html to learn more about NACS.

(This Affiliate Spotlight article was written by Gail Oliver, NACS president.)

NACo ON THE MOVE

IN THE NEWS

- A Jan. 2 *Associated Press* article on smoking bans in Kentucky jails referenced a *County News* story. The article pulled the fact that the smoking ban trend began about three years ago.
- *USA Today* mentioned NACo in its Dec. 30, 2005 issue. In an article entitled "S.C. alcohol law mixes things up; New 'free pour' law waters down state's old mini-bottle rule," research director Jackie Byers was quoted as saying the nation has more than 500 dry counties.

NACo OFFICERS AND COUNTY OFFICIALS

- President **Bill Hansell** spoke at the Maryland Association of Counties Annual Winter Conference in Dorchester County (Cambridge), Jan. 4–6.

NACo STAFF

- **Charles Taylor** has been hired as the *County News* senior staff writer. He last worked for Arlington County, Va., where he was media relations manager. Taylor has also served as a reporter for the *Richmond News Leader*, WRVA Radio in Richmond, Va. and the Virginia News Network and as one of several media relations managers for Dominion Virginia Power. He is a graduate of Saint Paul's College in Lawrenceville, Va. and also studied urban planning at MIT.



Charles Taylor

- **Gary Gortenberg**, program director, Community Services Division, helped facilitate *Strengthening Rural Families: An Action Learning Institute for Oregon County Teams*, held in Umatilla County, Ore. Jan. 11–13. Eight county teams participated in an intensive two-day work session that ended with each county taking home action plans. The Institute is co-sponsored by the Association of Oregon Counties.

- **Kaye Braaten**, county services representative, participated in the Virginia Association of Counties New Supervisors Forum in Henrico County (Richmond), Dec. 6–8, 2005.

UP & COMING

- **Emily Landsman**, membership coordinator, will exhibit on behalf of NACo recruitment and retention at the New York State Association of Counties Legislative Conference Jan. 30–Feb. 1 in Albany County.

(On the Move is compiled by Dan Miller, staff writer, and Allison Mall, editorial assistant.)

Celebrate National County Government Week



Protecting Our Communities

APRIL 23 – 29



NEWS FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

CALIFORNIA

YOLO COUNTY Supervisor Duane Chamberlain plans to fight a policy set by the county counsel before next year's holiday season. The policy banned **caroling** inside any county facility and disallowed the Yolo Hospice from setting up a Christmas tree inside the county's office building.

Chamberlain told the *Daily Democrat* that he was unhappy that the board was never given an opportunity to vote on the policy.

Regarding the Yolo Hospice, Chamberlain said "I wanted them to know that I support what they do and I was in favor of allowing the Christmas tree. I'm definitely not opposed to Christmas caroling or Christmas trees."

DELAWARE

The Register of Wills Office in **NEW CASTLE COUNTY** currently allows a living individual's testator to store their original **wills** in the Register of Wills Office, where they will be safe and protected from tampering or destruction. New Castle is the only county in Delaware that provides this service. Starting in December 2005, New Castle County Council approved an exemption of the \$5 fee for the safekeeping service for residents who are active-duty members of the military.

New Castle County Register of Wills Diane Clarke Street, Esq. said this is a small way to show appreciation for soldiers. "Allowing the military to have free access to this service is just one small way to give back to the members of New Castle County who keep our country safe each and every day."

GEORGIA

This spring, new TV cameras will help **GWINNETT COUNTY** engineers adjust traffic lights in response to changing traffic conditions. The Board of Commissioners approved a plan to install the **new camera equipment** at 15 existing locations plus four new ones.

Cameras will be monitored at the Gwinnett Traffic Control Center, where operators will have remote control of traffic lights in the area. By coordinating the timing of the lights in response to actual traffic conditions, engineers hope to keep traffic flowing smoothly and reduce congestion on three heavily traveled roads.

HAWAII

HAWAII COUNTY is preparing to turn 225 acres of coastal land in Kau into the state's largest county **park**. The land encompasses a mile of coastline and wetlands.

The county will co-manage the land with a Kau community group called Ka Ohana O Honuapo.

The county, in addition to state and federal governments, has chipped in about \$3.2 million to buy the land, according to the Associated Press. Community activists raised another \$170,000.

INDIANA

The **LEBANON COUNTY** Conservation District is on the cusp of achieving its longtime goal of **preserving 10,000 acres** of the county's prime farmland.

According to the *Lebanon Daily News*, Brett Lentz, the district's agricultural conservation specialist, informed commissioners that four farms covering 473 acres are in the process of being preserved.

The county has run a farmland preservation program since 1992 and used state and federal funds to match the county's contributions. The conservation district pays landowners \$1,500 per acre for easements. After the settlement, the owner can remain on the property, but the land can only be used for agricultural purposes.

IOWA

Following the color palette of Maricopa County, Ariz.'s handcuffs and inmate underwear, **JACKSON COUNTY** Sheriff Russ Kettmann is thinking pink.

Kettmann painted the jail's **drunk tank** pink due to the belief that it has calming effects. The inspiration for the new paint job sprung from former Iowa football coach Hayden Fry, according to the Associated Press. Decades ago, he painted the visitors' locker room pink to give the Hawkeyes an edge.

In addition to painting the formerly gun-metal gray cell, Kettmann has added stars and moons to the ceiling.

MICHIGAN

The demand for dialysis treatments for **GENESEE COUNTY** inmates has grown so great that Sheriff Robert J. Pickell might bring the medical care to them.

Last year, jail personnel needed to take inmates on 96 **dialysis** trips. Pickell told *The Flint Journal* that this not only adds to the cost of running the jail, but increases the likelihood of an escape attempt.

"It kills us on overtime," he told the paper, stating that the inmates "are

in dialysis quite a bit, and it's not at our convenience."

Pickell hasn't figured out how much the proposition would cost, but said that the savings could be considerable. State prisons in Jackson and Detroit have on-site inmate dialysis.

MISSOURI

GREENE COUNTY has prosecuted the first of what could be many cases of **child endangerment** where a mother used methamphetamines shortly before she gave birth.

The charge carries a possible sentence of up to seven years in prison.

Greene County Assistant Prosecutor Jill Patterson told the Associated Press that the new policy, which is the result of conversations and brainstorming with pediatricians and police, is aimed at mothers who have used cocaine or meth—two drugs that pose significant risks to newborns.

NEW JERSEY

ESSEX COUNTY Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. recently joined officials from Project Live, Inc. at the groundbreaking ceremony for the nonprofit agency's new multi-purpose residential facility for five **mentally disabled adults**.

The county's Division of Housing and Community Development provided the organization with a \$100,000 loan to fund the building, which includes five bedrooms, a new kitchen and a self-help center for the clients.

"This project is just one of the many ways we work to support the mission of our community-based organizations committed to creating affordable housing for low- and moderate-income residents," DiVincenzo said.

Kevin Martone, assistant commissioner for the New Jersey Division of Mental Health Services, praised Project Live and said its apartments would help the state move closer to its goal of seeing the state fund 10,000 new affordable housing units for mentally ill residents.

NORTH CAROLINA

"Regifting"—the practice of giving away a recently acquired present—can be considered tacky by some, but the Animal Protection Society of **ORANGE COUNTY** is hoping to help out some animals through the practice.

The APS is holding its first annual regift **auction** on eBay. The organization came up with the concept to combat "donor fatigue" after Hurricane Katrina and the south Asian tsunami.

"I'm sure you've read about donor

fatigue this year in response to natural disasters the nation and the world has suffered," Heather Brown, director of development and public relations, told *The Herald-Sun*. "We're trying to get a little creative."

The APS takes dogs and cats from county run shelters, saving them from euthanasia.

PENNSYLVANIA

The latest deputy sheriff in **LACKAWANNA COUNTY** may not brandish a firearm, but she can intimidate criminals with her Academy Award statuette.

Oscar-winning actress Mira Sorvino was sworn in as a **deputy** last month, following in the footsteps of her father, actor Paul Sorvino, who received his badge in 1982. According to the *New York Daily News*, Sorvino was sworn in, along with "That Championship Season" castmates Martin Sheen, Robert Mitchum and Bruce Dern, because the film was important to the town.

Sorvino showed up to the swearing-in wearing knee-high boots and toting one-year-old daughter Mattea.

WASHINGTON

SPOKANE COUNTY commissioners have approved a 0.1 percent local sales tax to help provide

mental health services, hoping that increased community support will solidify their case for additional state funding.

The money is meant to fill a mental health funding gap created by reduced federal assistance, a shortfall in state allocations and a shortage of reserve funds.

Expected to generate \$3.9 million during the second half of 2006, Christine Barada, the county's community services director, told the Associated Press that this should be enough to prevent further cuts. Approximately \$500,000 a month has been cut from local mental-health services since the summer.

Voters overwhelmingly okayed the tax in November in an advisory vote. The tax will expire in three years.

• Looking for Ideas! •

Bernalillo County in Albuquerque, N.M., is in the process of redesigning its property tax bill. If you have any suggestions or ideas that you would like to share with them, please e-mail ppadilla@bernco.gov.

(News From the Nation's Counties is written by Dan Miller, staff writer. If you have news about your county, please e-mail them to dmiller@naco.org.)

Word Search Florida Counties

B Y G A R U U X O X L R E X Q J C E J X Q I
V W V W L R J R P N E E O G E I E L D S O K
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GILCHRIST
HENDRY
LEON
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MARTIN
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WAKULLA

Created by Allison Mail

RESEARCH NEWS

What's New for the New Year?

As we ring in the New Year, new laws go into effect around the nation. Four states — Alabama, Delaware, Ohio and Texas — have enacted legislation in response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*. Each of these states passed or amended legislation designed to limit a county government's use of eminent domain for economic development. Additional state legislatures will be grappling with this issue in their 2006 sessions.

In addition to reactive legislation, new laws abound.

Protecting children

In Illinois, the state has established a law prohibiting minors from being able to purchase or rent video games with "mature" ratings such as "Grand Theft Auto." Vendors who violate the law will be subject to criminal penalties.

Illinois also passed the Shaken Baby Prevention Act, which is aimed at new and younger parents, day care centers and health providers for young children. The act establishes a program to educate parents and primary caregivers about the dangers of shaking a baby and to provide alternative techniques to vent anger and frustration.

Minnesota has enacted a new law prohibiting anyone under the age of 18 from using a hand-held or hands-free cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. This bill was enacted to specifically apply to inexperienced young drivers. Provisional drivers convicted

of talking while driving can face 90 days in jail, \$1,000 fines or both.

California increased the penalty for conviction of street racing from 90 days to six months and changed the nighttime curfew for young drivers with provisional permits from midnight to 11 p.m.

Law enforcement and corrections

Michigan and several other states have recently passed new laws designed to help local law enforcement officials deal with child molesters or predators. The new laws in Michigan prevent a registered sex offender from living, working or loitering within 1,000 feet of school property. (Recent laws passed in Iowa have extended the distance in that state to 2,000 feet.) The new laws also require criminal background checks for all full- and part-time school personnel, day care center employees and operators, and families of day care centers. The law also prohibits any day care center or school from hiring a person who has been convicted of specifically identified sexual offenses.

Florida's new sex offender law states that any offender or predator whose victim was a minor is prohibited from having any contact with anyone under the age of 18 unless the contact is approved by the courts or the offender's parole office.

South Carolina also strengthened its laws by requiring sex offenders to not only report in the county where they live, but also in counties where

they own property, or work if that work is near children.

In North Carolina, prisoners housed in correctional facilities throughout the state will no longer be able to use any tobacco products while incarcerated. The only exception is for use of tobacco products in religious services.

Colorado now has a law that provides local governments with the authority to hold landlords liable for any violations of nuisance laws that are committed by their tenants. Hunters in Maine can now hunt bear or deer with a crossbow after completing the required archery hunting training. New Hampshire has added a new law to its books that makes it a crime for anyone to record a film in a movie theater. Unauthorized recording will result in a misdemeanor for the first offense, and a Class B felony for second or subsequent offenses.

Methamphetamine-related laws

Washington has created a pilot program that requires all local retailers of drug products that contain pseudoephedrine or phenylpropanolamine, which are commonly used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, to maintain a log of all transactions. This law is being added to laws already on the books that regulate how much of these drugs can be purchased at one time.

Illinois enacted new legislation requiring restitution to cover costs incurred by local law enforcement and public agencies in securing a methamphetamine site, and the law provides for an additional fine of \$100 if a person is found guilty of a meth-related offense.

Safeguarding personal information

Louisiana and Minnesota had new laws go into effect requiring that residents be notified when their personal information has been accessed or possibly accessed by unauthorized individuals. Nevada has gone one step further by establishing an "identity theft passport," which is available to victims of identity theft once they have filed a police report. The passport can be used to identify the individual as a victim and prevent him or her from being arrested because of the illegal use of their information. It can also be used to identify the victim to creditors.

In February, a new Ohio law takes effect requiring that a person whose Social Security number or

other personal information gets into the wrong hands must be notified within 45 days of the event.

Other issues of importance

In Florida, counties that have coastlines can no longer sell all available waterfront property as private residences and are now required to preserve some for commercial shipping use and for public beaches.

Effective Jan. 1, pocket bikes are banned from public roads in New Hampshire. In addition, retailers that sell these miniature motorcycles, will be required to disclose in writing to all buyers that it is illegal to operate them on public roads and that their insurance policies may not provide coverage for accidents.

Another new California law allows county governments to enact

ordinances for specific breeds of dogs, mandating spaying and neutering, and imposing other restrictions on breeding. Also in California, minors now need permission for body piercing, or face a fine of \$250.

Local officials in Texas can no longer claim they did not know the law. Under new legislation, public officials are required to undergo training on the state's laws governing open meetings and open records. The attorney general's office will conduct the training.

In New Mexico, unless you fall in the top tax bracket, filers will receive a tax rebate designed to help compensate for high energy costs.

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

web watch

Web Site Helps Users Keep Track of New Year's Resolutions

Have you made a New Year's resolution for yourself? For your county? Evaluate your progress when 2007 hits by sending yourself an e-mail from futureme.org. Simply type the e-mail and set the date you would like to receive it. The system will send it to you in the future, and you'll be able to compare your goals versus your results.



Drug Enforcement Administration Offers Host of Resources

The Web site for the DEA offers a variety of online resources on its Web site (visit www.dea.gov/resources/law_enforcement.html). The page contains lists of training

available from the organization, a list of DEA fugitives as well as information about the drugs themselves. Additionally, the Web site compiles fact sheets describing the drug situation in all 50 states.

Federal Web Site Helps Find Health Information on the Web

Healthfinder (visit www.healthfinder.gov) is an award-winning federal Web site for consumers, developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services together with other federal agencies. Since 1997, the site has been recognized as a key resource for finding the best government and nonprofit health and human services information on the Internet. The page links to carefully selected information and Web sites from more than 1,500 health-related organizations.



(Web Watch is compiled by Dan Miller, staff writer. If you have an item you would like featured, please send it to him at dmiller@naco.org.)

County News



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THE H.R. DOCTOR IS IN

God Save the 'King'

On Jan. 15, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., would have been 77 years old. He would have lived through decades of amazing technological changes, and continuing progress in America's quest to close gaps and narrow inequalities between races, genders, persons of different sexual orientations and persons of different languages and national origins.

He would have seen tens of millions of immigrants continuing to come to America to realize their own versions of the American dream. It's hard to even imagine how much more progress would have been made in creating a great and equitable society if he had been able to continue as a passionate advocate.

Conventional wisdom recounts that his great contribution to the world was in the advancement of civil rights through non-violence. The HR Doctor, however, will focus in this article on another lesson from Dr. King that all of us as managers and administrators, not to mention as parents, community members and friends, need to learn and practice every day: the importance of creating a vision and enlisting others to share in that vision to help make it a reality.

The greatest weakness in public service, in this writer's opinion, is the narrowness of our vision. We spend

too much time counting paper clips and not enough time looking at the long-range vision of what our city, county or community could be like. We focus on the memo of the day and not on the momentous changes which could happen in our world if only we created the opening in thought and action to make these changes happen.

Dr. King was able to speak with amazing eloquence about what he saw in his own mind when he went to a metaphorical mountaintop and looked at the "promised land."

That land could be a county or a country in which all children had health care coverage. It could be a place in which senior citizens are not prevented from enjoying their final years in dignity because of the cost of prescription drugs, or the lack of health insurance or the scourge of loneliness. It could be a society in which no one dropped out of school or in which the unemployment rate was statistically insignificant.

The only hope for visions to become real is to create a vision of the future that is so compelling and so articulately presented that persons throughout the society agree to put aside lesser divisions to focus on the higher loyalty.

We have done this historically in times of war, and we have done this



historically in times of other national opportunities, such as the mass polio vaccination program of the 1950s. In a sense, we do it every day. In commercial America when we create cultural icons or heroes or products which sell in the millions.

The HR Doctor recently received a gift of the book by Neenah Ellis entitled, *If I Live to be 100*, which explores what common characteristics long-lived individuals share. Based

development and personal growth on the job, or it can mean looking at a vacant lot filled with litter and imagining a new senior citizens' health and recreation facility. It can mean a personal commitment to stop smoking, begin exercising or finish that college degree.

There is no end to the number of positive visions that can turn into reality if we learn to move with commitment and optimism to make the changes happen.

Here are a few of the HR Doctor's favorites:

- Make a commitment as a manager or executive in government to be a mentor to subordinates at work and children in the community. Be a Big Brother or Big Sister or a high school mentor. Be a teacher and a champion of the career development and success of others.

- Find a teacher as well as being one. Commit to learn new skills. Learn to speak Spanish. Learn to take up hiking, photography or one of the HR Doctor's favorites, music. Review the HR Doctor article "Learn as though you were going to live forever" to be reminded of the importance of this concept.

- Commit to personal health improvement by getting a check-up and following through on actions to reduce health risks by regular exercise, weight loss, smoking cessation and other steps already mentioned.

- Do these things and do them soon. While you're at it, take someone with you such as a colleague at work or a member of the family. It is easier to succeed in a plan if you have support from an understanding friend.

- Make a major difference in the community. Be the catalyst to turn that vacant lot into a senior health center. Be a United Way champion. Be a "go-to" person for charities so your own reputation is enhanced and your own leadership skills are developed.

- What better way to improve these personal elements in your life than by also helping other people on the way. There are no shortages of charities in the neighborhood, in the county or in the world that need your help.

- Spend time with people you care about, including private time with yourself away from the excessive intrusions of the modern world. The HR Dog, Kamala, and I make time almost every morning for this purpose by taking walks together. It's harder and harder to find privacy, meditation — call it what you will — but the more our lives are intruded upon by cell phones, horns honking, telemarketers and loud neighbors, the more we lose some part of the essence of our individuality.

- Spend some time away from the television and away from the computer to pursue some personal passion.

- Plan ahead for what your own life may be like after retirement. Invest energy in not only saving for financial security but in taking steps to increase your long-term "intellectual security" as well. Think about things like where and when you might retire, and what active steps, including other employment, you will take to keep alert, alive and contributing.

Do all these things and you will have a significant set of New Year's resolutions. You will also be walking in the pathway of Dr. King. Each of us can individually make the choice of whether to live our lives surrounded by large piles of paper clips or surrounded by a legacy that will make our children look back at us and say that we stood for something wonderful.

The HR Doctor wishes Dr. King a very happy birthday and hopes that you will spend some time reliving the great "I Have A Dream" speech and remembering the power of those words.

Best Wishes,

Phil Rosenberg
The HR Doctor
www.hrdnet

FINANCIAL SERVICES NEWS

NACo Deferred Comp Fixed Annuity Is Highest

NACo's deferred compensation program, administered by Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS), placed first among its competitors for its return on the fixed annuity option offered to county employees, according to a study conducted by an independent consulting firm.

Released Nov. 3, 2005, the competitive interest rate test concluded that Nationwide met its contractual requirement to equal or exceed the lowest test results of the top one-third of selected carriers. This study reviewed the fixed annuity option offered by Nationwide and its nine largest competitors.

The NACo program is the largest deferred compensation program in the country for county employees.

The report was released at the fall meeting of NACo's Deferred

Compensation Advisory Committee, held in San Diego County. This study has been conducted every year since 1989, and the NACo program has always come out on top. "We are committed to providing county employees the best retirement program in the country and to continuing our 26-year partnership with NRS to deliver such a quality program," said Larry Naake, NACo executive director.

In addition to evaluating the competitiveness of the fixed option offered to county employees, the consultants also reviewed the creditworthiness of Nationwide Insurance and concluded that it is a strong, stable insurer that continues to grow stronger.

The consultant study is only one feature of NACo's Deferred Compensation

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

Deferred compensation is a voluntary retirement savings program that allows county employees to regularly save, on a pre-tax basis, for their futures.

For further information on NACo's Deferred Compensation Program, please contact Lisa Cole at NACo at 202/942-4270 (lcole@naco.org) or NRS at 877/677-3678 or www.nrsforu.com.

(This issue's Financial Services News was written by Lisa Cole, director of Enterprise Services.)

JOB MARKET / CLASSIFIEDS

■ ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR — SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLA.

Salary: \$60,506–\$111,951

Bachelor's degree in business administration or public administration or a closely related field and five (5) years of experience in administrative management and risk management. Master's degree is desirable. Professional and managerial work directing

the operations of the following divisions: support services, fleet services, property management, facilities and risk management. Skilled in the operation of a personal computer and associated software including applications for word processing, spreadsheets and database management are required. Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of public administration and management as applied to all areas

of municipal operations. Ability to plan, coordinate and supervise the work of professional staff handling various duties. Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing. Apply to Human Resources at 1101 East First Street, Sanford, FL 32771. Resume may be faxed to 407/665-7939, e-mailed to hr@seminolecountyfl.gov. Or apply online at www.seminolecountyfl.gov. Equal Opportunity Employer M/F/D/V.

responsible for the performance of the sworn staff and subordinate units. Requirements include a minimum of two (2) years proven, progressive experience in a correctional facility with a preference for managerial/supervisory experience. Must be certified as a TX Police Officer by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) within six (6) months of hire date. For additional information visit www.dallascounty.org to complete the online application or you may call 214/653-7638. E-mail resumes to pjones@dallascounty.org. Dallas County Human Resources/Civil Service Department 509 Main St., Room 103, Dallas, TX 75202. Equal Opportunity Employer.

related field or equivalent experience is preferred. Position will be open until 6/30/06. Submit resume including salary requirements to: Chairman, Board of Commissioners, P.O. Box 299, Cusseta, GA 31805.

■ DIRECTOR, WATER ENVIRONMENT SERVICES — CLACKAMAS COUNTY, ORE.

Salary: \$93,133 – \$125,730

Water Environment Services is a department of Clackamas County located in the south Metro area of Portland, Ore. The county is conducting a search for a director to lead the agency which manages three county service districts providing retail sanitary sewer and/or stormwater services to areas of Clackamas County. The director will oversee an agency of 105 employees and an operating budget of \$71.9 million. Position oversees a management leadership team, works with advisory committees, citizen task forces, employee committees, partner cities and county officials. The director is an executive-level position at the county and serves under an employment contract with the County Administrator.

Competitive candidates will be an experienced manager in the field of wastewater, storm and surface water management, pollution control and environmental regulation. Desired skills include strong communication, interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, collaborative work styles and experience managing intergovernmental projects, employee and labor relations and budget management. Base salary range is \$93,133–\$125,730 annually, plus 6.27-percent Deferred Compensation and 6-percent employer-paid retirement contribution in addition to an excellent benefits package. For a complete job posting and online application, visit www.co.clackamas.or.us and click on "jobs." Closing date: Jan. 31. EEO Employer. Questions may be directed to Karen Pearson at 503/655-8272.

(If you would like information about advertising your job openings in County News and County News Online, please contact Allison Mall at 202/942-4256 or amall@naco.org.)

NOTICES

■ Forum

The 2006 National Electricity Delivery Forum will be held in Washington, D.C., Feb. 15–16. The forum will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss near- and long-term steps needed to expand and modernize the electricity delivery system in the United States.

During the past two years, energy policy makers and regulators in many areas have realized that much of their electricity infrastructure is aging and has become significantly dependent on natural gas. Because natural gas prices are high and likely to remain so for some time, many state and local energy agencies want to diversify the generation mix with new technologies, including renewables, to meet growing electricity demand. Implementing these technologies will require regional-scale, multi-state generation and transmission planning.

Visit www.electricitydeliveryforum.org for details.

■ Grant

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Education is requesting applications for 2006's environmental literacy projects. Approximately \$3 million is available to fund 5–10 projects involving ocean literacy or weather and climate literacy. Counties with museums or learning centers may especially want to consider these grants. Letters of interest are required and are due Jan. 25. Full proposals are due March 1. Visit www.oecd.noaa.gov/funding_opps.html for the full announcement and additional information.

■ Study

The study *Moving Home, Manufactured Housing in Rural America* has been published by the Housing Assistance Council (HAC). Mobile homes, manufactured homes and trailers are an important part of rural America's housing landscape, although not everyone agrees on their suitability as affordable housing for low-income people. The new analysis seeks to provide balanced information to inform discussions about their use.

In addition to data analysis, the *Moving Home* report includes short pieces written by local rural housing providers, national organizations and a representative of the manufactured housing industry, illuminating some of the pros and cons of using these structures to provide affordable, sustainable homeownership.

Moving Home: Manufactured Housing in Rural America is free on HAC's Web site, www.ruralhome.org. Printed copies are available from Luz Rosas at 202/842-8600, ext. 137 or luz@ruralhome.org.

■ Training Institute

Georgetown University will hold a training institute in Orange County (Orlando), Fla., July 12–15 called *Developing Local Systems of Care for Children and Adolescents with Emotional Disturbances and their Families: Family-Driven, Youth-Guided Services to Improve Outcomes*. The training includes in-depth, practical information on how to develop, organize and operate coordinated, community-based, family-focused, culturally competent systems of care for children and their families and how to provide high-quality, effective clinical interventions and supports within them.

For more information, contact the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at Georgetown University, 3300 Whitehaven Street, NW, Suite 3300, Washington, DC 20007, 202/687-5000, or e-mail institutes_2006@comcast.com or go to http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/object_view.html?objectID=5709.

(If you have an event or publication or conference that you would like to be featured in Notices, please e-mail it to amall@naco.org.)

■ ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER — INGHAM COUNTY MICH.

Salary: \$106,025–\$127,623

Ingham County, Mich. (pop. 279,000) is seeking a county administrator/controller. The position reports to a 16-member county board of commissioners and is the chief fiscal and administrative officer for the county. The total budget for 2006 is \$172,836,364.

The ideal candidate must have a thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of local and state government fiscal and administrative operations, knowledge of Michigan government is particularly desirable; excellent communication, managerial and financial skills; be an enthusiastic team builder; and possess the ability to confer with department heads, county and regional officials to resolve problems and promote the region. Additionally, he/she should possess the ability to work well with the board, elected officials, employees, unions, governmental officials, and the public; possess honesty, openness, trustworthiness, characteristics and sensitivity to social and societal issues; and possess the ability to embrace diversity. Minimum of a bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in public administration, business, or related field, plus a minimum of eight years of related experience.

To apply, send resume and a narrative (no more than three pages) describing managerial and supervisory experience and accomplishments in planning, coordinating and directing governmental fiscal and administrative programs. Include scope of project, budget and staff, etc., to Charles Blockett, Jr., IPMA-CP, 3537 Waverly Hills, Rd., Lansing, MI 48917 or e-mail cblockettjr@aol.com. Deadline is Feb. 24. For more information, visit Ingham County's Web site at www.ingham.org. Note: Under Michigan law, applicants must request confidentiality. Resumes of finalists will be subject to public disclosure.

■ ASSISTANT CHIEF DEPUTY — DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS

Salary: \$85,840

Dallas County, Texas is seeking a Deputy VII (Assistant Chief Deputy) to provide executive-level leadership for the Dallas County Sheriff's Department. The successful candidate will manage the day-to-day operations of the detention facility that oversees 7,000 inmates; provides leadership to the management team who supervises 900 employees; engages in planning and project management and is directly

■ CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER — WYANDOTTE COUNTY, KAN.

Salary: \$80,000 – \$90,000

The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kan. is searching for a Chief Financial Officer to oversee budget, accounting, treasury and research divisions of the Finance Department. For a detailed job description and qualifications please refer to www.wycokck.org. Must be a resident of Wyandotte County or be willing to relocate within 12 months from the date of hire. Please send resume attention Human Resources Director no later than March 1 or apply at: Unified Government of WyCo/KCK Human Resources Department, 701 N. 7th Street, Rm. 646, Kansas City, KS 66101. Or fax resume to 913/573-5006. Or send resume to jobs@wycokck.org. EOE, M/F/H/V.

■ COUNTY MANAGER — CUSSETA-CHATTAHOOCHEE COUNTY, GA.

Salary: DOQ

The Unified Government of Cusseta-Chattahoochee County in western Georgia seeks a hands-on manager. The position involves the day-to-day management of all aspects of a small, progressive, rural government. The successful candidate will be a "people person" who is able to motivate and encourage team work. There is frequent interaction with county employees and the general public. Job responsibilities include finance and personnel management. A four-year degree in a

Job Market - Classified Rate Schedule

- **Line Rates:** \$7 per line, NACo member counties; \$10 per line, others.
- **Display Classified:** \$50 per column inch, NACo member counties; \$70 per column inch, others.
- **Billing:** Invoices will be sent after publication.
- **Mail advertising copy to:** Job Market, County News, 440 First St., N.W., Washington, DC 20001.
- **FAX advertising copy to:** Job Market, County News, 202/393-2630.
- **E-mail advertising copy to:** edassist@naco.org.
- **Be sure to include billing information along with copy.**
- **Estimates given prior to publication are approximations only and do not necessarily reflect final cost.**

For more information, contact the Job Market representative at 202/942-4256.

Strengthen the Voice of Local Government! Don't Miss NACo's 2006 Annual Conference & Exposition!



Legislative

NACo 2006

Conference



March 4-8, 2006
Hilton Washington & Towers
Washington, DC

It's a scary new world! The 109th Congress, Second Session, will hit town in January, and a great number of programs that assist counties will be under fire as Congress continues to find ways to offset the costs of the hurricanes and our action in Iraq. As a county official you need to know what this means for counties, what you can do about the issues and how you can strengthen the voice of local government on Capitol Hill! With a philosophy of "those who show up decide," you have a host of reasons to attend the NACo Legislative Conference.

Preliminary Schedule

• Saturday, March 4

8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Registration

All Day

Steering Committee, Subcommittee and Affiliate Meetings

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
ALT Pre-Conference Seminar #1

(Separate registration fee required)

"Communicating with Impact: From Your County to Capitol Hill"
Co-sponsored with NACIO, The National Association of County Information Officers

• Sunday, March 5

8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Registration

All Day

Steering Committee, Subcommittee and Affiliate Meetings

9:00 a.m. – Noon
ALT Pre-Conference Seminar #2

(Separate registration fee required)

"Leading Change – It Takes More than the Bully Pulpit"

9:00 a.m. – Noon
ALT Pre-Conference Seminar #3

(Separate registration fee required)

"Building Consensus in Issues of Power, Disputes and Conflict"

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
ALT Pre-Conference Seminar #4

(Separate registration fee required)

"What Has the County Done for Me Lately?: Reporting Your Performance to a Skeptical Public"

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
ALT Pre-Conference Seminar #5

(Separate registration fee required)

"Protecting Your County from Fraud and Abuse"

• Monday, March 6

8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Registration

9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.
Concurrent Educational Sessions I

10:45 a.m. – Noon
Concurrent Educational Sessions II

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Opening General Session

Evening Open

• Tuesday, March 7

8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Registration

8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
General Session

Educational Session Grid & Descriptions

Monday, March 6 9:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Monday, March 6 10:45 a.m. – Noon	Tuesday, March 7 10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Tuesday, March 7 2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
The County Link to National Health Information Technology Efforts	So, You Think You Deserve More Homeland Security Funding?	BRAC 2005: Mistakes We Made, So You Won't Make Them Now	Will the Computer Eat My Vote?: Fact, Fiction and Public Confidence in Electronic Voting Equipment
The Meth Crisis: What Congress Has Done and Where They Are Going	Closing Meth Labs: Recovering the Costs of Environmental Clean-Up	The Great Promise of Prisoner Re-entry Legislation	
D-Day Is Here: Election Day Becomes Deadline Day for HAVA Compliance	Pension & Retirement Savings Reforms: Merely Talk or Action?	Ready or Not...the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit is Here!	How to Read the Wall Street Journal
Effective Emergency Communications: Getting the Right Message to the Public Quickly and Accurately	Caring for America's 46 Million Uninsured and Managing Rising Medicaid Costs: A Physician's Perspective	SAFETEA-LU – What Did Counties Get and How Will the Legislation be Implemented?	Come Fly With Me
Rewriting the Telecommunications Act of 1996—Charting the Future of Broadband	Will There Be Comprehensive Immigration Reform this Year?	The Latest on Sales Tax Simplification	What Does the New Energy Bill Mean for Your County?
Saving CDBG: The Battle Continues	Indian Law: the Essentials for County Officials	Counties and the Court: How Our Voice is Heard and Update on Eminent Domain Legislation	Is Your County Ready for the Next Catastrophic Disaster?
NACo's Prescription Drug Discount Card Program: Solving the High Cost of Prescription Drugs			Creative Approaches to Balancing Budgets

Featured Speaker:
The Honorable Gordon Smith (R-OR)
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC



10:30 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.
Concurrent Educational Sessions III

12:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Attendee Luncheon

2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
Concurrent Educational Sessions IV

6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
NACo President's Reception

• Wednesday, March 8

Capitol Hill Visits



For up-to-date information on the 2006 Legislative Conference and on-line registration, visit www.naco.org.