

NACo National Association of Counties

# CountyNews

| The Voice of America's Counties

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES ■ WASHINGTON, D.C.

VOL. 40, NO. 23 ■ DECEMBER 8, 2008

## NEW MEMBER BENEFIT

### NACo launches Online Supplier Directory

NACo has launched a new member benefit, a free Online Supplier Directory. The directory is designed to help all members, but particularly those in the administrative and purchasing areas.

The Web-based directory will provide quick and easy access to an extensive catalogue of suppliers of products and services purchased every day by counties. County officials and employees can use the searchable database to find

See **NEW BENEFIT** page 2

## QuickTakes

### States with the most public school systems

California . . . . .	1,107
Texas . . . . .	1,090
Illinois . . . . .	934
Michigan . . . . .	739
Ohio . . . . .	667

Source: U.S. Census of Governments, 2002



Photo by Jim Phillips

Leon Evans (front row, left), president/CEO, Center for Health Care Services, Bexar County, Texas, offers testimony before the NACo Health System Working Group, chaired by NACo President-elect Valerie Brown, during the first of three regional NACo hearings on U.S. health reform held Dec. 3 in Maricopa County, Ariz. Evans was joined on the first panel by Broward County, Fla. Commissioner Ilene Lieberman (front row, right) and Carol Moehrle (front row, center), director, North Central Health Department, Nez Perce County, Idaho. Evans, Lieberman and Moehrle also sit on the working group. Also pictured (back row from left to right) are working group members Tarrant County, Texas Commissioner Roy C. Brooks, Johnson County, Kan. Public Information Officer Robert Tucker, President-elect Brown and NACo staff representative Stephanie Osborn. The NACo Health System Reform Working Group will issue recommendations on behalf of the nation's counties to the Obama Administration and the 111th Congress advising them on how best to achieve national health system reform.

## NACo board member, Bruce Elwell, remembered as 'selfless,' 'caring'

"Caring," "selfless," "genuine" are just a few of the words that friends and colleagues use to describe Terry Bruce Elwell. The longtime NACo board member and former Major County, Okla. commissioner died Nov. 18 after a long battle with cancer.

Elwell, 52, known to friends as Bruce, served on NACo's Board of Directors for more than 10 years. First elected to the Major County Commission in 1986, he served there more than 21 years before retiring early last month due to his illness.

He is survived by his mother, Florice Elwell of Fairview, the county seat; three brothers, and several nieces and nephews.

"Bruce Elwell made a difference



Terry Bruce Elwell  
1955-2008

as a member of NACo's leadership," said NACo Executive Director Larry Naake. "He was respected and well-liked by his colleagues — two qualities that don't always go hand-in-hand — and will be missed by everyone who knew him."

NACo Board Member Ron Houseman, a close friend of Elwell's and Stone County, Mo. administrator, spent time with Elwell during his last days — reading to him e-mails from colleagues from across the country. "He was just a great guy," Houseman said of the friend he will "miss forever."

Elwell's reach far exceeded his small Oklahoma county of 7,300,

See **ELWELL** page 2

## EPA gives more policy-making voice to local governments

State and local governments will have more involvement in developing federal environmental rules thanks to a new EPA policy that broadens the agency's consulting efforts with intergovernmental partners when new regulations and policies cost more than \$25 million each. This is a significant lowering of the previous consultation threshold of \$100 million.

EPA's new policy updates existing policy that was put in place to carry out Executive Order 13132, Federalism. The order requires the federal government to consult with elected state and local government officials before proposing regulations or actions that have substantial direct effects below the national level, either by virtue of their implementation costs or their preemption of state or local authority.

When the order was first issued in 1999, EPA and other federal agencies adopted an interpretation of "substantial direct effects" consistent with the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

See **EPA** page 5

## INSIDE »



Check out more NACo county calendar contender photos » **Page 6**

Military families' group is asking the nation's counties to show support for wounded service members by issuing proclamations » **Page 2**

Fine tuning GIS mapping tools pits accuracy against inclusion » **Page 4**

Research News finds libraries in high holiday spirits. » **Page 8**

# Wounded, ill veterans get support from Silver Stars

BY CHRISTOPHER JOHNSON  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Days of remembrance offer a salute to the brave men and women who gave their lives for America. Whether it is World War II or the current war in Iraq, Americans

honor those brave soldiers with holidays every year. But where is a day for wounded or ill veterans who also risk their lives? Their day of honor might finally be realized.

Founded on April 11, 2005, the Silver Star Families of America (SSFOA) organization is dedicated

to supporting and assisting the wounded, ill and their families. Its goal is to recognize the sacrifice of those wounded or taken ill during combat, and to remember their efforts by honoring them with the Silver Star Banner. The group advocates for the wounded and ill, and assists in educating their families and the public concerning their plight.

"Our mission is to recognize all veterans wounded or ill no matter what branch of the Armed Forces," said Steve Newton, cofounder of the SSFOA. "With many types of life-changing illnesses caused by the war zone, we strive to help out however we can."

SSFOA touches the lives of the wounded, ill and families of all branches of service and wars.

The Silver Star Flag and Banner are symbols of remembrance and honor for those wounded or incurring illnesses during combat while honorably serving in the United States Armed Forces. It may be displayed or flown at anytime, not just wartime, by families as well as their wounded and ill service members. It is SSFOA's wish that all of America never forgets the sacrifice of service members.

SSFOA is asking the nation's counties to show support for wounded service members by issuing proclamations or passing resolutions. Forty-six states, the Virgin Islands, District of Columbia and more than 200 cities thus far have signed proclamations declaring May 1 "Silver Star Day." (See sample resolution on this page)

States are also giving signature endorsement that establishes the Silver Star Flag and Banner as the permanent official symbol for the wounded and ill. In addition to the Silver Star Banner presentations, SSFOA assists wounded and ill and families through programs geared to help the healing process.

(For more information, visit [www.silverstarfamilies.org](http://www.silverstarfamilies.org).)

## Silver Star Banner Day Sample Proclamation/Resolution

WHEREAS, the County of \_\_\_\_\_ has always honored the sacrifice of the men and women in the Armed Forces and

WHEREAS, The Silver Star Families of America was formed to make sure we remember the blood sacrifice of our wounded and ill by designing and manufacturing a Silver Star Banner and Flag and

WHEREAS, to date The Silver Star Families of America has freely given thousands of Silver Star Banners to the wounded and their families, and

WHEREAS, the members of The Silver Star Families of America have worked tirelessly to provide the wounded of this County and Country with Silver Star Banners, Flags and care packages, and

WHEREAS, The Silver Star Families of America's sole mission is that every time someone sees a Silver Star Banner in a window or a Silver Star Flag flying, that people remember they sacrificed for this County, State and Nation and

WHEREAS, the people and leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ wish that the sacrifice of so many in our Armed Forces never be forgotten

NOW THEREFORE, the County of \_\_\_\_\_ does hereby proclaim our appreciation of The Silver Star Families of America and honor their commitment to our wounded Armed Forces members. We do hereby declare May 1st "SILVER STAR BANNER DAY," the official day to honor the wounded and ill Soldiers of the County of \_\_\_\_\_.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the County of \_\_\_\_\_ in the State of \_\_\_\_\_ this day \_\_\_\_\_ year \_\_\_\_\_.

Please send to:  
Steve Newton, Founder /SSFOA  
525 Cave Hollow Rd. / Clever, MO 65631

## Benefit gives NACo members access to competitive pricing

NEW BENEFIT from page 1

nationally recognized, regional or locally-based businesses.

The directory identifies green businesses and will allow counties to: have quick and easy access to suppliers from across the country, have more options to select, obtain more competitive pricing, gain more knowledge on the products, and submit a Request for Information (RFI) anonymously. This last feature will make it easier for counties to obtain information on materials and background prior to purchasing or requesting a bid. The RFI function will also enable counties to be better able to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP).

You can find NACo's Online Supplier Directory by visiting [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org). Look for the link in the lower right-hand corner of NACo's home page. Note, once clicking on the link, please log into the Members Only Section using your e-mail address and password.

If you need help with your login or password and for more information, contact Bill Cramer at [bcramer@naco.org](mailto:bcramer@naco.org) or 202/942-4264. If you have membership-related questions, please contact Andrew Goldschmidt, [agoldschmidt@naco.org](mailto:agoldschmidt@naco.org) or Ilene Manster, [imaster@naco.org](mailto:imaster@naco.org) or at 202/393-6226.

ELWELL from page 1

where he was a rancher and farmer. The Kauai County Council in Hawaii sent an official note of condolence to Elwell's family, calling him "a special friend and colleague to all the elected officials from Hawaii." The council also noted that his service on NACo's Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee would be "long remembered." He also served on NACo's Finance Committee.

As a NACo board member, Elwell was a quiet consensus-builder, Houseman said. "I think part of what he brought to NACo was a team-building effort of collaboration, working behind the scenes, bringing differing ideas together. And he did it in such a subtle and friendly way that before long, you were kind of agreeing with the other side even though you didn't agree with them."

"He really sought out conversations with people regarding information that he could take back, not only to help his small county... but the entire state of Oklahoma," Houseman added.

These were skills honed in his home state, where Elwell had served as president of two organizations of elected officials: the Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma (ACCO), which represents county commissioners, and later of the County Officials and Deputies Association, whose members include a range of county elected officials, from treasurers to county clerks.

Kenneth Eggleston, president of ACCO, said, "He was probably one of the most fundamental people that got all the county commissioners and the county officers across the state of Oklahoma to do things legislatively together. He really worked hard towards unity."

"He just was one of those genuine, caring type guys—the ones that don't come along very often in a lifetime," Eggleston added. It's a sentiment echoed by many who knew him.

ACCO Executive Director Gayle Ward remembers her friend of more than two decades as "a hard worker, a man of few words [and] eyes that reached into your soul and listened to every word you said and never judged anyone."

"Bruce had one goal, to serve the citizens of his county and make our state of Oklahoma a better place to raise our families and enjoy our friends," Ward said. "His great strength, faith and love for others never failed him."

Elwell was born in Enid, Okla., Dec. 19, 1955. He attended and graduated from public schools in Fairview. He earned a bachelor's degree in business from Northwestern University, Alva, Okla. in 1984.

Muskogee County, Okla. Clerk Karen Anderson recalled one his many kindnesses in a tribute posted to an online book of condolences hosted by Fairview Funeral Home. "More than once when I was alone in D.C.," she said of visits to Washington, "Bruce took me to dinner for my birthday and made sure it was special..."

Houseman said that, although ill, Elwell continued to attend NACo board meetings. And even in trying times, he cared for others.

"When Oscar Soliz from Texas would come to the meetings in a wheelchair, it was Bruce, all too often, even though he was suffering with cancer, that would push [Soliz] around from one meeting to another. I mean, that speaks volumes."

Deanna Santema, who serves on NACo's Justice and Public Safety Committee, met Elwell through NACo, shortly after her husband's death from cancer. She is a Brookings County, S.D. commissioner. "What a friend he was," she wrote in the online guestbook. "He was always there with a HUG and quiet words and then he would slip away and you felt blessed."

Memorials may be made to the Central Christian Church, 223 East Broadway, Fairview, Okla. 73737.

## CountyNews

The Voice of America's Counties

**President** | Don Stapley  
**Publisher** | Larry Naake  
**Public Affairs Director** | Tom Goodman  
**Executive Editor** | Beverly Anne Schlatterbeck  
**Senior Staff Writer** | Charles Taylor  
**Staff Writer** | Elizabeth Perry  
**Graphic Artist** | Jack Hernandez  
**Editorial Assistant** | Christopher Johnson

**ADVERTISING STAFF**  
**Job Market/Classifieds representative**  
Christopher Johnson

**National Accounts representative**

Beverly Schlatterbeck

(202) 393-6226 • FAX (202) 393-2630

Published biweekly except August by:

National Association of Counties

Research Foundation, Inc.

25 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20001

(202) 393-6226 | FAX (202) 393-2630

**E-mail** | [cnnews@naco.org](mailto:cnnews@naco.org)

**Online address** | [www.countynews.org](http://www.countynews.org)

The appearance of paid advertisements in County News in no way implies support or endorsement by the National Association of Counties for any of the products, services or messages advertised. Periodicals postage paid at Washington D.C. and other offices.

Mail subscriptions are \$100 per year for non-members. \$60 per year for non-members purchasing multiple copies. Educational institution rate, \$50 per year. Member county supplemental subscriptions are \$20 each. Send payment with order and address changes to NACo, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

**POSTMASTER: send address changes to**  
County News, 25 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.,  
Washington, D.C. 20001

(USPS 704-620) | (ISSN: 0744-9798)

© National Association of Counties  
Research Foundation, Inc.

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



# County officials lay out their State Legislature concerns

County News recently surveyed county administrators and managers about issues in their states that will or should be addressed by their State Legislatures. We asked them, "What's coming up in your State Legislature next session that has you worried?" Here are a sample of their responses.

## Michael Serpe

county administrator  
Door County, Wis.



What I really have worried is what they won't do. I doubt that they'll face the truth about our state's dismal financial condition (potential \$5 billion debt) and take bold and decisive action to get us moving in the right long-term direction.

Aristotle said that nature abhors a vacuum. This idiom is used to express the idea that empty or unfilled spaces are unnatural as they go against the laws of nature and physics. It applies to politics as well.

Aside from the crashing markets and dying banks, the worst thing that may happen in our state after the election might be the emergence of a leadership with an idea vacuum and, I don't know about you, but I abhor it.

This is more like a black hole, sucking in the governor, department secretaries and legislators alike. So who will lead us out of the wilderness?

## Claire A. Collins

county administrator  
Rockbridge County, Va.



The focus of the 2009 Virginia General Assembly will be the state budgetary situation with decreased

revenue. As a "best managed state" and "the best state to do business," Virginia legislators over the next two years will be considering how to cut and/or save \$2.5 billion and at the same time vying for election and/or re-election. There has been no discussion or dialogue to address measures of performance

and service delivery provided by the state or to relax mandates that local governments are required to fund.

Local governments are the last point of action and recognize that in all likelihood, Virginia will balance its budget to the detriment of services that our local communities rely on and deserve. New and creative ideas and partnerships between state and local governments are needed to address the intense funding decisions to be determined by the governor and legislature.

## Holland Belue

assistant county administrator  
Cherokee County, S.C.

Our biggest concerns are no different from most other counties. They all center on money. The South Carolina Legislature has been forced through budget cuts to reduce our state aid significantly over the past few weeks and months. This creates a dramatic effect to the small counties which already operate on a very tight budget.

Act 388 also limits the counties on their taxing ability, which further limits the access to funds necessary to meet the monetary demands required to meet the needs of local government. Furthermore, the legislature has set forth requirements such as GASB 45, which require the counties to fund post-employment benefits, but yet again does not allow a provision to allow the funds to be accrued.

## David Johnson

county administrator  
Wabasha County, Minn.

The Minnesota General Assembly has been transferring millions of dollars in service costs to county governments in the form of unfunded mandates in an effort to balance the state budget, thus demonstrating their "fiscal responsibility." What is really happening is that services that should be funded by the state are being pushed down to counties. This does not save the average taxpayer any money. While their state taxes may not rise, or at least not rise as fast, the cost for these mandated services will be paid through higher local property taxes.

The state legislators look like they are cutting costs and local officials become the bad guys when they have to raise property taxes to pay for these unfunded state mandates. I am concerned that additional unfunded mandates will

cost Minnesota counties millions of dollars again next year.

If the state passes a mandate onto the counties without paying for it, they should tell the counties how much it's going to cost them. The state needs to put some effort into financial impact studies that should be included with any new proposed legislation that will transfer service costs from the state to counties and municipalities.

## David R. Smith

county manager  
Maricopa County, Ariz.



The absolute number-one top priority for Maricopa County is the state budget. For the current '09 fiscal year,

the State of Arizona has a \$1.2 billion deficit. In addition, the FY 2010 budget shortfall is estimated at this moment to be \$3 billion. (That is out of a \$10 billion state budget, so you can see such a large structural budget deficit puts Arizona in the top five in the country in terms of the worst deficit situations.) At this point, revenue collections in all major

tax categories continue to steadily decline.

Exacerbating the state's problem is that at least \$6.7 billion of the state's general fund spending is mandated in some way, including at least \$3.5 billion of voter-protected spending (Arizona's Proposition 105 passed by voters in 1998 prevents the State Legislature from changing voter-mandated spending increases and programs).

Unfortunately, the state has a history of taking local government dollars to cover as much of the state deficit as it can. For FY 2009, Maricopa County has already been compelled to contribute \$46 million, in a time when we ourselves are seeing unprecedented and historic shortfalls in our revenue streams (sales tax, jail tax, vehicle license tax). We fully expect the state to continue to try and take local revenues to cover its shortfall, so we will have to be extremely aggressive and proactive in an effort to try to protect our local revenues and resources during the upcoming legislative session which begins January 12, 2009 (and also play defense in an anticipated December 2008 Special Session to address the current year budget deficit)...

It is worth noting that local governments in Arizona, particularly Maricopa County, have been much more alert, proactive and

anticipatory than the state in reacting to the downturn in revenues, taking immediate action such as hiring freezes, a series of ongoing 5 percent to 20 percent cuts, and making RIFs to try to manage the impacts on the organization while maintaining provision of services to the public.

Incoming legislative leadership has even publicly lauded a number of times the responsiveness of Maricopa County and municipalities in addressing their fiscal shortfalls, while at the same time expressing grave dismay at the state's inaction and inertia.

## Rusty Moya

county administrator  
Grady County, Ga.

Legislators will once again discuss replacement of ad valorem tax with some type of sales and use tax. We need more cooperation between governor, Senate and House to insure the whole session is not wasted. They will consider a cap on the increase in property values probably tied to some inflation index. The Georgia governor is presently holding Tax Payer Homestead Relief funds, which are to be returned to the counties, until the Legislature reconvenes and the legislators find enough money to fund an approximate \$1.6 billion dollar shortfall in the state's budget funding."

## NACo Prescription Discount Card FREE to your County & your residents

1,106 counties have implemented the NACo Prescription Discount Card program and are improving the health of their counties.

**Make a difference!** Implement the program today for your residents and be a part of the solution in managing the high costs of prescriptions.



For information on the NACo Prescription Discount Card contact Andrew Goldschmidt at (202) 393-6226 or visit [naco.org/drugcard](http://naco.org/drugcard)

NACo National Association of Counties

CVS CAREMARK

## In My View ...

# Accuracy vs. Completeness: Critical Question for GIS Tools

BY LEE HARTSFIELD  
GIS COORDINATOR, LEON COUNTY, FLA.

Today, a Geographic Information System (GIS) is a unique tool designed to input, store, retrieve, manipulate and analyze layers of geographic data to produce interpretable information. For example, the city of Tallahassee and Leon County, Fla., use GIS to review pipeline information and pinpoint potential problems to communities for new development proposals and proposals to install new pipelines.

Obviously, accuracy within the GIS is critical for analysis purposes, whether it is visual analysis or more in-depth computational analysis. However, it's important to weigh inclusion or exclusion of data based solely on strict accuracy standards. If data is not included in GIS due to concerns about its accuracy, then our GIS database may be incomplete.

What does this mean? Well, we may not include a high-pressure gas line on our maps because the stated accuracy standard (plus or minus 300 feet for some high-pressure gas lines) is beyond our standard map accuracy. This may give the impression that no gas line exists in that location at all.

On the other hand, including it on the map may suggest that the gas line is correctly positioned and lead a user to the wrong conclusion of the gas line's exact placement. Therefore, the balance between accuracy and completeness of data is a matter of risk assessment and education. Consequently, we must understand what risks are involved if we include inaccurate data versus educating users of the data to recognize the lack of accuracy and its implication.

Many times this balance is better defined by the appropriate decision or policy makers. Regardless, the balance cannot be ignored or its significance minimized.

## One model for policymaking

The Tallahassee-Leon County GIS (TLCGIS) is responsible for the dissemination of GIS information for Leon County, the city of Tallahassee and the Leon County Property Appraiser's Office. The oversight of the program is defined under its Inter-local Agreement,

enacted in May 1990. The GIS Executive Committee membership includes a city commissioner, a county commissioner and the property appraiser, and they have the responsibility of recommending GIS policy and long-range direction. The GIS Steering Committee membership includes the city information technology director, the county



**If data is not included in GIS due to concerns about its accuracy, then our GIS database may be incomplete.**

technology director and the assistant property appraiser, and they have the primary responsibility of managing the guidance and proper use of the countywide GIS.

The GIS Steering Committee would be the entity to evaluate and provide direction when weighing issues of balance between accuracy

and completeness, and recommend policy changes to the GIS Executive Committee.

The GIS Steering Committee, under approval of the GIS Executive Committee, has reviewed the availability of pipeline information and directed the TLCGIS coordinator to disseminate the pipeline information to the internal customers of TLCGIS (governmental staff) only. Consequently, TLCGIS staff added the pipeline data to the land development intranet Web sites. External customers of TLCGIS are directed to view the information on the National Pipeline Mapping Site.

Limiting direct distribution of the pipeline data to staff allows them to educate key governmental "super users" on the pertinent issues of accuracy about the data. This, in turn, allows the information to be used to flag potential conflicts between proposed developments and the presence of high-pressure gas pipelines during the land development approval process. These flags can highlight the need for additional information or a site visit by staff in order to mitigate any safety concerns.

The GIS allows us to represent our environment, both natural and man-made. If it does not provide us all the detail required or needed, we must creatively seek out methods of disseminating the information while maintaining the balance of the accuracy and the completeness of the data.

In recent years, GIS has provided the public with a variety of map viewers such as Map Quest, Google Earth and Virtual Earth. Their popularity and use has grown extensively over the past few years, and many citizens use them as viable sources of geographic data. The relative

accuracy and completeness of the geographic data depicted on these sites will widely vary. Therefore, there are concerns within the GIS community that the data will be used to draw inappropriate conclusions which could lead to inappropriate actions. Consequently, if we are to use GIS to support planning, policy making and action, then it should be relatively accurate and complete for those purposes. In these cases, good

data will promote good planning which will promote pipeline safety.

*(For more information on the TLCGIS program, please contact Lee N. Hartsfield, TLCGIS coordinator at 850/606-5584 or email at [HartsfieldL@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:HartsfieldL@leoncountyfl.gov). For more information on the NACo's pipeline project please contact James Davenport, NACo project manager, at 202/661-8807 or E-mail at [jdavenport@naco.org](mailto:jdavenport@naco.org).)*

## Profiles in Service



### » Patti Hamilton

President  
National Council of County Association  
Executives  
NACo Board of Directors

**Years in public service:** most of my adult life which is a lot of years!

**Occupation:** executive director, West Virginia Association of Counties

**Education:** B.S. West Virginia University; M.S. in management/public administration

**The hardest thing I've ever done:** go through a divorce

**Three people (living or dead) I'd invite to dinner:** Princess Diana, Jacqueline Kennedy, Paul McCartney

**A dream I have is to:** join the Peace Corps and live at the beach, but not necessarily at the same time.

**You'd be surprised to learn that I:** saw the Beatles live at a concert during their 1964 American tour — one of the highlights of my life.

**The most adventurous thing I've ever done is:** embark on a new life twice — post divorce and second marriage 14 years later.

**My favorite way to relax is:** read.

**I'm most proud of:** my three sons Derek, Wes and Kyle.

**Every morning I read:** *The Charleston Gazette*.

**My favorite meal is:** spaghetti, salad and good homemade bread.

**My pet peeve is:** big one is negative reactions and closed minds; the little one is price stickers that won't come off.

**My motto is:** something my dad always closed his wonderful letters with, "Keep Smiling."

**The last book I read was:** *Digging to America* by Anne Tyler.

**My favorite movie is:** *A Christmas Story* and 100 others.

**My favorite music is:** Beatles, Rolling Stones, Bruce Springsteen and just about anything you can dance to.

**My favorite president is:** John F. Kennedy, but I hope my memory of him is far surpassed by the presidency of Barack Obama.

## NACo Pipeline Project

This article was published in conjunction with a NACo project funded through the U.S. Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Agency (PHMSA). The goal of the project, known as the County Officials Participation in the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA), is to help build county officials' awareness and capacity to improve transmission pipelines, especially through local land use practices and pipeline safety.

Through the project, both elected county officials and key county professional staff have participated in the PIPA Committee. This committee will develop a technical document that provides best practices and recommended land use practices to protect communities and the pipelines located in those communities.

Keep up with NACo online ...

**[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)**



# Model Programs

## FROM THE NATION'S COUNTIES

### Program Helps Incarcerated Parents Provide for Children

By ELIZABETH PERRY  
STAFF WRITER

A Chesterfield County, Va. jail work release program is helping child support scofflaws catch up on their payments while incarcerated.

Lt. James F. Pritchett Jr., of the county Sheriff's Office, heads up the department's Child Support Work Release Program. He said parents who go through the program once do not usually return.

"Before the program, someone would come into the program \$20,000 behind and leave \$30,000 behind," he said. "They are making payments while they are here. It might not be a high-paying job — flipping burgers — but they are making some kind of payment that is going directly to the child."

Other child support enforcement programs exist throughout the state, but none quite like Chesterfield County's, which depends on cooperation between the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court, the Child Support Enforcement Office, Sheriff's Office and local businesses. A local judge, fed up with the practice of incarcerating parents for contempt when they were unemployed, mentioned the need for a program to help incarcerated parents support their children and the Sheriff's Office ran with the idea.

A deputy reassigned to the program in 2004 began talking to local businesses about hiring inmates. Funding for the program came from other areas of the Sheriff's budget and no extra county, state or federal funding was needed. The program began with 12 businesses and collected \$23,614 in support. It quickly grew and by 2006, the total collected was \$517,000. Pritchett projected the total for the end of 2008 would be more than \$1,447,000.

Once an inmate is committed to the jail on a civil contempt charge, a court order is issued to the Sheriff's Office. If the inmate already has a job, the Child Support Enforcement Office is notified and his or her



Lt. James F. Pritchett Jr.  
Chesterfield County, Va.  
Sheriff's Office

checks are garnished. If the inmate is unemployed, the Sheriff's Office will try to find them a job and then notify Child Support Enforcement. Pritchett estimates between 20 and 25 inmates come to the jail every day to serve time for nonpayment of support.

"The way the sentences work is people will get incarcerated for 12 months, or until they pay their 'purge amount,'" said Pritchett. "It depends on how much they owe and their child support payment. If they are \$10,000 in the hole, we will start them into work. They may or may not pull their 12 months, because as soon as they make that payment, the judge usually releases them."

A few of the inmates are destitute and a few are female, but they are rare, according to Pritchett. He said there are also very few who have the financial means to pay what they owe right away. Most are men earning middle-income paychecks, some with their own businesses. He estimates that half of the men have no criminal records and have fallen behind on their payments because they try to pay bills first.

"Some have multiple children and multiple courts are cited," he said. "I don't think they are able to keep up with all of them, based on what employment they do have. Some will have one job, when they really need two to keep up with their regular expenses, as well as their child support expenses."

The program has also met with success with nearby fast food businesses, all of which are within walking distance of the jail. Pritchett said no one has fired any of the inmate employees. In fact, some employers call the jail instead of placing a newspaper ad when a position is open. Pritchett said some of the inmates continue in their jobs after release, with a few going on for supervisory training.

Pritchett said communication and cooperation among agencies is the key to the program's success. Once inmates are released, it is up to the courts to monitor them to ensure they are continuing to make payments. The Division of Child Support Enforcement requests payroll deductions through the courts, so they are able to track support payments after parents are released.

"I don't think it would be successful if it weren't for the agencies speaking to each other and working well together," Pritchett said. "Particularly in terms of getting the paperwork in place for the garnishments and reporting back to us that people are actually making payments the way they are supposed to do."

He advised other sheriffs' departments to establish a stronger partnership with their child support agencies and juvenile courts. He also suggested educating nearby businesses about the program, as well as how the inmates are different from other employees.

"The businesses would have to be visited and called, and we may have to ask for an inmate's paycheck," he said.

For more information about the Child Support Work Release Program, call Pritchett at 804/717-6702 or email [pritchettj@chesterfield.gov](mailto:pritchettj@chesterfield.gov).

*(Model Programs from the Nation's Counties highlights Achievement Award-winning programs. For more information on this and other NACo Achievement Award winners, visit NACo's Web site, [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org).)*

### EPA seeks to strengthen work relationship with local officials

EPA from page 1

(UMRA), a 1995 law that set the state and local consultation threshold at \$100 million per rule.

However, based on its experience in conducting rulemakings over the last several years, EPA said it has determined a need for state and local input on a wider range of regulations and is lowering the consultation threshold to \$25 million.

EPA's action comes at a time when state and local officials are calling for a stronger working relationship with their federal partners in solving many of today's major environmental challenges.

The National Governors' Association, the National Conference

of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the International City/County Management Association and the U.S. Conference of Mayors recently issued a joint statement urging the incoming administration to "adopt a policy of constructive engagement" and to "cooperate and consult with state and local leaders."

These seven associations, along with three others (National Association of Towns and Townships, County Executives of America and Environmental Council of the States), constitute the group of 10 organizations with whom EPA will consult under its new Federalism policy.

**Become a champion**  
for Geographic Information  
Systems (GIS) coordination  
to **improve**  
**communities**  
and **manage**  
**growth.**

**Where would you be without a good map?**

GIS TECHNOLOGIES provide essential information for successful PLANNING and development in your community including:

- Designing livable cities
- Establishing regional and public transportation
- Creating new water and sewer plans
- Utilizing smart growth principles
- Coordinating government agencies
- Developing accurate legislative districts

To learn more about GIS coordination and making better informed decisions, visit  
**<http://50states.nsgic.org>**  
Click on "State GIS Coordinator" to contact your representative.

The Fifty States Initiative is managed by the National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC) and the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC).



# Counties in Photos

The following images are just a few samples of the photos submitted to the County News photo contest. NACo members can check out all the entries in the online gallery by visiting [www.naco.org/photocontest](http://www.naco.org/photocontest).



Photo by Lisa Fleming, Hennepin County, Minn.

A young reader shares a favorite book with a cocker spaniel at a Hennepin County, Minn. library. The library system's popular "Paws To Read" program helps children gain confidence by reading to dogs — always an appreciative audience.



Photo courtesy of Arlington County, Va.

Arlington County, Va. Board Chairman J. Walter Tejada and 700 fellow bikers at the start of the annual "Community Bike Ride"



Photo by Chris Matthews, Washoe County, Nev.

The Great Reno Balloon Race is the second-largest in the country and is held annually at Washoe County, Nev.'s largest regional park, Rancho San Rafael. Nearly 200,000 people attend the event.



Photo by Cindy Rodriguez, Polk County, Fla.

Fire fighters landscaped the area around a new Polk County, Fla. station with water conservation Florida-friendly plants.



Photo by Leslie Bucklin, Los Alamos County, N.M.

Household Hazardous Waste Day is a free annual service to Los Alamos County, N.M. residents wishing to dispose of electronics, computers, paint, propane, batteries and many other items not easily thrown away.





Photo by Jeff Stead, Jackson County, Mo.

Workers secure beams in place as they construct a new bridge in eastern Jackson County, Mo.



Photo by Sarah Williamson, Wake County, N.C.

Hazel Thomas, a 101-year-old great-grandmother, demonstrated the simplicity of One-Stop Early Voting by casting her ballot at the Wake County, N.C. Board of Elections.



Photo by Michael Mills, Broward County, Fla.

Local emergency response workers from Broward County, Fla. stage a mock drowning and rescue for SWIM Central's ninth annual April Pools' Day, a free water-safety education program for elementary school students.



Photo by Erick Gill, St. Lucie County, Fla.

The Herpetological Society's snake exhibit captivates onlookers during an Earth Day event in St. Lucie County, Fla.



Photo courtesy of Natona County, Wyo.

Fort Casper, a reconstructed military post, sits along the Oregon Trail. It is one of Wyoming's "Old West" historical landmarks.

## The H.R. Doctor Is In

# Being There without Being There

Two conversations with British friends in the past month came together last night during a conference dinner event. The lively discussion with guests from three continents was complicated by the pounding sounds emanating from a disc jockey's impressive array of sound equipment. It was also interrupted by the well-intended behavior of the server.

She appeared at the table before some of my colleagues had even finished the food on their plates and began to collect dishes and silverware. She interrupted our conversation by asking if we had finished and if she could remove the plates. Of course, the questions occurred after she had already started that process. It was hard enough to converse well with the background music, but the server's appearance added a new complication. The person was not trying to be rude. However, she was so focused on the task at hand that the surrounding environment seemed to be irrelevant to her.

My British colleagues had interesting and quite different backgrounds but shared a significant characteristic of professional conduct and success. The first is my friend Jason King, a British-trained butler and estate manager. In discussing "butling" over din-

ner last month, as Jason served a beautifully prepared pasta dish, we discussed the impeccable service characteristic of being very much present in the life of your employer, but not being obtrusive or interrupting. The ideal butler will anticipate needs and will be ready to meet them immediately. However, the

**We all get excited about a new thought or idea during a meeting. We may feel that our proprietary thought must be immediately added to the discussion.**

butler will hardly be noticeable during dinner or a meeting. This highly trained professional will be a presence in the house but will not interfere with the events in progress except to improve the quality of the encounter.

Jason has managed the Rosenberg "estate" while we have been away. When we returned, we found the mail gathered and neatly sorted, the house clean, our favorite foods in the refrigerator, the vehicles gassed up, and the HR Dog, Kamala, very well taken care of. In fact, she kept wandering around for several days after we returned

seeking out her friend Jason for some play time.

Had a repair been necessary, or an emergency occurred, it would, no doubt, have been handled expertly. We're sold on the value of Jason's estate management services. Now, all we need is an estate worthy of such expertise!

"Being there but not being there" is also the watch word of an expert in the personal protection of top executives as well as Queen Elizabeth II. Chris Hagon retired as a superintendent of Scotland Yard, having spent seven years commanding the "close personal protection" of the Royal Family. His unique security firm, The Incident Management Group, protects and escorts corporate leaders and provides other security services around the world, often calling upon a strong network of what singer Garth Brooks would call "Friends in Low Places." We have done many presentations together and worked on several projects assessing the security at hospital facilities, child care operations and other places. As the protection officer in the car with the Queen — the one always present and always ready to protect proactively — Chris is also a skilled practitioner of the concept in this article.

Whether the subject is protecting people or managing an estate as a personal assistant, the concept of being there without really being there is of critical importance. Think about how you can be present and contributing in your own work, without distracting, derailing or interrupting the work of others. Imagine how you might have dealt with a friendly, well-intended colleague who may be a brilliant subject matter expert, but may lack a critical expertise — knowing when to contribute and when to remain an always ready "phantom of the opera" in the background.

We all get excited about a new thought or idea during a meeting. We may feel that our proprietary thought must be immediately added to the discussion. However, simply jumping in without a sense of the impact as well as the content of the interjection can serve to detract from the value of

the contribution you are trying to make. It may annoy those around you, including your boss, your work colleagues and your family members. It may come to mark you with a reputation that harms your move forward in a great career, or in the chance to date that dream significant other.

Conversely, practicing the skills of the butler or the protection officer can help you come to be known as a person who can be counted on to offer a great contribution at the right time and in a discreet, respectful manner. That reputation will help propel your career over time and your relationships with others.

Don't worry, Kamala, Jason will come back and visit regularly!



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

## Research News

# County Libraries Spread Holiday Cheer

With the holidays quickly approaching, county libraries are preparing a variety of holiday activities for county residents. In these tough economic times, these innovative unique programs offer free holiday fun for the whole family.

Christmas gets a blast from the past in Ocean County, N.J. with its libraries' program WREP — When Radio Entertained People! Christmas On-the-Air. This lively holiday entertainment returns to the glory days of radio in the 1940s. The program features live actors, music and the classic sounds effects of a traditional radio show. Live from "Make Believe" studio, the skits and songs provide a unique holiday experience for the whole family.

At the Albuquerque Bernalillo County, N.M. library's Stitch Along, crafters can enjoy the company of others while creating gifts for the holidays. All are welcome to devote time to finishing their holiday gifts and to get assistance from others in knitting, crocheting or needle point at the holiday stitch support group. The large collection of patterns and examples provide inspiration for all to create something new this holiday season. The program features fellowship and refreshments, and an opportunity to present finished products to the group.

Children of all ages can enjoy holiday stories in both English and Spanish at Multnomah County, Ore. bilingual program A Winter Tale/

*Un Cuento de Invierno.* This program provides both native Spanish speakers and children still learning a chance to hear winter tales in two languages. The program features skits, songs and dances to entertain all. Seasonal crafts such as virtual snowflakes, chenille candy canes and others give an opportunity for hands-on fun. The holiday refreshments provided ensure everyone maintains a warm winter spirit.

Teens are the focus at a holiday decorating party in Chester County, Fla. The holiday decorating party provides teens — sixth grade and up — an opportunity for holiday fun while helping decorate the

## Word Search

### Lower 48 Snowiest Counties

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

AROSTOOK (Maine)  
BALTIMORE (Md.)  
COOK (Ill.)  
CUYAHOGA (Ohio)  
DENVER (Colo.)  
ERIE (N.Y.)  
FRANKLIN (Ohio)

FREMONT (Wyo.)  
HARTFORD (Conn.)  
HILLSBOROUGH (N.H.)  
JACKSON (Mo.)  
MARION (Ind.)  
MARQUETTE (Mich.)

MILWAUKEE (Wis.)  
MUSKEGON (Mich.)  
NEW YORK (N.Y.)  
ONONDAGA (N.Y.)  
PHILADELPHIA (Pa.)  
SUFFOLK (Mass.)  
WAYNE (Mich.)

Source: National Weather Service  
Created By Christopher Johnson



## News From the Nation's Counties

### ► CALIFORNIA

ALPINE COUNTY officials are worried the **moratorium on stocking area lakes** and streams with hatchery-raised fish will have a negative effect on tourism. *The Sacramento Bee* reported that state fish and game officials agreed not to stock hatchery fish, including trout, bass and catfish, in waterways that are home to 16 endangered species of fish and nine endangered frogs, until at least 2010. The deal with environmental groups also affects several waterways in **EL DORADO, SACRAMENTO** and **NEVADA** counties.



Photo courtesy of Gwinnett County, Ga.

### ► ILLINOIS

**TIPPECANOE COUNTY** is considering the purchase of **global positioning systems** for its ambulances to help first responders get to emergencies quicker. System hardware would cost \$20,000, half of which would be funded through a Homeland Security grant. Wire service news reports say the GPS devices would connect to dispatchers through a computer program. Dispatchers would locate and send ambulances closest to the emergency site, instead of contacting the base station. The county has a population of 163,364 and covers 503 square miles.

### ► GEORGIA

**GWINNETT COUNTY**'s George Pierce Park Community Recreation Center is ready for the holidays. On display through Dec. 31 is a "G"-scale **model train display**, courtesy of a local railroad club.

The vintage scene features two tracks and a quaint holiday town complete with people, cars, houses, stores, a post office and watch tower.

### ► INDIANA

**KOSCIUSKO COUNTY** Board of Zoning Appeals gave approval for an energy company to build a **test wind tower** to measure the feasibility of a wind farm in the area. "Essentially, what they're looking at is establishing regulation on wind turbines and wind mills," Assistant County Planner Matt Sandy told the

*Times-Union*. He said the regulation would dictate height, noise levels and locations.

### ► MICHIGAN

• Court-ordered improvements in the state's **foster care system** could cost counties millions, according to *The Detroit News*. One of those changes involves local Human Services departments, who are now required to license relatives who take in family members for foster care, and foot part of the bill. **MACOMB COUNTY**, which is facing a \$30 million deficit, estimates the extra cost to the county will be more than \$2 million to fund foster youth living with relatives. "We had nearly 700 kids being housed by family members and not costing the county anything," David Diegel, county finance director told the *News*. "Now that they have to have licenses, the minimum cost to the county is going to be \$14 a day in each case."

• **MUSKEGON COUNTY** commissioners passed a resolution urging the federal government to provide a multibillion-dollar loan to **Big Three automakers** General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. *The Muskegon Chronicle* reported that the resolution passed by a 9 to 2 vote. Those in favor of the loan said it was necessary to avoid additional budget cuts that would affect counties in Michigan, while those opposed said the automakers could file for bankruptcy like other businesses. A similar resolution, authored by NACo Immediate Past President Eric Coleman, was adopted last month by the **OAKLAND COUNTY** Board of Commissioners.

### ► NEW YORK

Five counties are planning to create a **regional 911 network** to enable interoperable communications. **ONONDAGA, OSWEGO, MADISON, CAYUGA** and **CORTLAND** counties currently have radio systems that don't "talk to" one another, WSYR-TV reported. This makes it difficult to communicate across county lines during a widespread emergency.

"The true gem in all of this is when two counties work together, in an emergency, that's the true savings," said Mike Allen, Oswego County's E-911 director. The counties will seek state and federal grants to pay for the system.

### ► NORTH CAROLINA

Call it food for forgiveness — **forgiveness of library fines**, that is. From Dec. 1–15, **CABARRUS COUNTY** library patrons with overdue books can pay off their fines by donating non-perishable food items.

Two food items will erase the libraries' maximum fine of \$4. A donation of a single food item will have a maximum value of \$2 in fines. County officials said even those who don't have library fines

are encouraged to bring canned goods to donate to local food banks during the Food for Fines event. It's an "effort to stock up the local food banks during these tough economic times," county officials said.

### ► OREGON

Gov. Ted Kulongoski is calling for at least \$6.5 million to **aid rural transportation** in 12 counties that would be hardest-hit if federal timber payments aren't renewed in four years, *The Register-Guard* reported.

The Jobs and Transportation Act of 2009 is a billion-dollar stimulus plan, recently presented to the State Legislature's transportation committees. It would create thousands of jobs, establish long-term funding for statewide transportation needs and address greenhouse gas emissions in transportation construction and planning, according to the *Wallowa County Chieftain*.

It would be funded by increases in state vehicle registration and title fees, and a two-cent hike in the state's fuels tax. **WALLOWA COUNTY** Commissioner Mike

See **NEWS FROM** page 10

## NACo on the Move

### » In the News

NACo's **Prescription Drug Card Program** was featured in articles about Porter County, Ind. (*Post-Tribune of Northwest Indiana*) and Lake County, Fla. (*Orlando Sentinel*) on Wednesday, Dec. 3.

### » NACo Officers and Elected Officials

NACo President **Don Stapley**, President-elect **Valerie Brown** and Second Vice President **Glen Whitney** spoke at the California State Association of Counties Annual Conference in San Diego, Dec. 1–4, on energy, what NACo can offer counties through membership, and the latest on NACo and Congress.

NACo Second Vice President **Glen Whitley**, Green Government Advisory Board Chair **Pamela Newton** and **Kelly Zonderwyk**, NACo Community Services senior associate, attended the International Greenbuild Conference and Expo in Boston, Nov. 19–21, to learn about environmental and social challenges.

### » NACo Staff

**Kati Guerra**, Community Services senior associate, spoke at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Fall Conference in Hershey, Nov. 23–25. Guerra presented NACo's newest publication, *Reentry for Safer Communities*, during a breakout session.

### » Coming Up

**Andrew Goldschmidt**, membership/marketing director, will be exhibiting on behalf of membership recruitment and retention at the Nebraska Association of County Officials Annual Conference in Lincoln, Dec. 10–12.

*On the Move* is compiled by Christopher Johnson.



# What's in a Seal?

## » Harrison County, W. Va.

[www.harrisoncountywv.com](http://www.harrisoncountywv.com)

The official seal of Harrison County was adopted by the County Commission on Feb. 23, 1976, and symbolizes the natural beauty and resources of Harrison County. Described briefly, the seal bears the legend "Harrison County Seal—West Virginia," along with the motto "Freedom and Independence," and the date 1784, the year Harrison County was created. It pictures a deer standing among the hills of Harrison County with the sun rising behind.

The rising sun symbolizes that Harrison County has begun a time of growth for labor, industry, agriculture and business. The hills are representative of the geography and beauty of the county, and also one of the most fundamental rights, land ownership. Freedom stands for the strong feeling for freedom the county's founders had, and Independence stands for the fact that Harrison County was one of the first counties of Virginia that initiated the creation of the state of West Virginia. The leaf border symbolizes agriculture, the means by which early settlers supported themselves.

The county seal was designed and drawn by Conrad A. Chayes of Clarksburg at the request of the Harrison County Commission.

(If you would like your county's seal featured, please contact Christopher Johnson at 202/942-4256 or [cjohnson@naco.org](mailto:cjohnson@naco.org).)

## Financial Services News

# U.S. Communities Search for Green

The U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance is now offering participants the ability to search for environmentally preferable products online. The search process allows purchasers to type in a product name, category or brand name of a product or product line. The search engine uses new technology to find the product in any U.S. Communities supplier catalogue that is searchable online. Once the search is completed, the purchaser can select a link to the product in order to be linked to the U.S. Communities pricing and the supplier ordering systems.

The U.S. Communities program provides significant product offerings for green purchasing at deep discounts. These include office supplies, paper or toner, lighting and electrical, Energy Star-rated appliances, Eco Logo — or GreenSeal-certified

products such as janitorial supplies — recyclable carpet and flooring, recycled and non-toxic office and school furniture, environmentally sound playground and recreational equipment, hypoallergenic safety equipment, or environmentally sensitive roofing products and related services.

As an example, if purchasers were seeking paper products that meet various environmental standards, they could enter the word "paper" and they would receive information on all of the green paper products available as well as information on the green standards those products meet. Likewise, if they were searching for "floor cleaners" they would find information on green cleaning products. The number of search results will depend upon the commonality of the product line and the extent to which the

U.S. Communities suppliers stock the items.

This new service is designed to complement the various initiatives of U.S. Communities suppliers and partners. In the future, U.S. Communities will add search capacity for suppliers that are not in the program in order to provide buyers with the broadest possible information for making environmentally preferable purchasing decisions.

For more information on the U.S. Communities green purchasing program, please visit [www.uscommunities.org](http://www.uscommunities.org) and click on the "Go Green" button on the front page of the Web site. You can also visit [www.gogreencommunities.org](http://www.gogreencommunities.org) to find the same information.

*(Financial Services News was provided by Nancy Parrish, director, NACO's Financial Services Corporation, [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) ► Counties save with NACO.)*

## Texas county cracks down on dogfights

NEWS FROM from page 9

Hayward said, "I'm not a fan of raising taxes, myself, but we have to address the transportation issue in Oregon because it is slowly failing and the existing gas tax is not covering the expenses."

### ►PENNSYLVANIA

County commissioners are lobbying for a state law that would allow them to assess oil and natural gas in valuing real estate. A 2002 state Supreme Court ruling held that counties don't have the authority to do so.

Because of the ruling, Pennsylvania oil and natural gas deposits are excluded from the real estate tax base, said Douglas Hill, director, COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA, according to *The Times-Tribune*. However, coal, sand and limestone inventories can be taxed. "We really aren't approaching it as a windfall or a financial salvation," Hill said. "We are approaching it as a tax equity issue."

### ►TEXAS

A proposed e-mail retention policy is coming under close scrutiny by DALLAS COUNTY commissioners. A computer security specialist, hired by the county, is recommending a 90-day

retention policy, according to *The Dallas Morning News*. The exception would be e-mail that is relevant to a lawsuit; those would be placed on "legal hold."

"We are currently storing every e-mail and using huge amounts of resources," said Bob Clines, the county's information technology director. "It's a never-ending cost to us."

Open-records advocates, lawyers and some commissioners worry that three months is too short a time before erasing most e-mails. Commissioner Mike Cantrell chairs the county's IT steering committee and is concerned that employees might accidentally delete an important government record. "I would rather err on the side of caution," he said. "You're putting employees at risk of violating the law." He has recommended further study of the proposal.

• HARRIS COUNTY officials are concerned that dogfighting is becoming popular among the area's youths, the *Houston Chronicle* reported. "I think it's a phenomenon on the rise," said Assistant District Attorney Belinda Smith, who prosecutes animal cruelty cases in the county. "When I started with the office 12 years ago, (dogfighting) wasn't a problem."

Authorities plan to launch a crackdown on the illegal activity next month. Much like a similar

effort in Chicago, it will encourage callers to report illegal dogfighting to the Crime Stoppers program's anonymous tip line. A task force will investigate all leads.

### ►WYOMING

Counties in the state's Big Horn Basin have expressed their concerns to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) about the future of 3.2 million acres of federal land. "There is concern our Western culture is being destroyed or detrimentally changed," stated county commissioners from PARK, BIG HORN, WASHAKIE and HOT SPRINGS counties.

In 22 pages of comments recently submitted to the BLM, counties outlined their visions of how federal land should be managed in the future. The agency is currently considering designating 12 areas as potential wilderness sites, which the counties oppose. "Millions of acres in the West are designated as wilderness," they wrote. "We oppose designating any of the lands within the (planning area) as wilderness."

*(News From the Nation's Counties is compiled by Charles Taylor and Elizabeth Perry, staff writers. If you have an item for News From, please e-mail [ctaylor@naco.org](mailto:ctaylor@naco.org) or [eperry@naco.org](mailto:eperry@naco.org).)*

## County libraries not short on holiday programs

RESEARCH from page 8

of winter.

library with homemade crafts. Teens enjoy fun and food while using their creative talents to both decorate the library and decorate their homes.

In King County, Wash., the county library presents several programs as part of its Season of Stories and Songs. The Discover Holiday Songs program explores the holiday culture from other countries including Latin American countries, Japan and others through native holiday songs. The program showcases a wide variety of instruments including Andean bamboo flutes, the marimba, percussion and guitar.

Traditional Christmas and Hanukkah music are presented along with fun costumes and dances during the Keep the Spirit concert.

For those looking for a different type of holiday party, the King County library also sponsors a magic show and a seasonal journal writing class. The magic show features a holiday theme that can bring out the kid in everyone. The classes on creating a seasonal journal provide an interactive way to remember the holidays. The program teaches how to create a journal using pencils, pens and watercolors to sketch the beauty

Throughout December, Hennepin County, Minn. holds the Winter Holiday Stories and Fun program for children in preschool through second grade. These story times include traditional holiday stories and modern seasonal stories and poems. In addition, the city of Richfield's Centennial Winter Holiday program, presented in conjunction with the Richfield Centennial Committee, features a traditional variety of holiday stories such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, St. Lucia Day and St. Nicholas Day. This interactive story time also demonstrates origami arts and allows children of all ages to have hands-on experience creating holiday art projects.

To help working professionals enhance their networking skills, the Hennepin library also hosts a program for networking during holidays. This workshop highlights the importance of networking during local holiday events and the methods for incorporating it into a general conversation. In partnership with HIREd, a local employment agency, the program encourages building connections and contacts in order to further professional development.

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

# eSubscribe

**Personalized E-mail Updates**

Receive e-mail updates whenever new information is posted on NACO's Web!

Just click on the 'e-subscribe' icon on the homepage or on one of the many "E-mail Update" icons located throughout the site.

[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

# CountyNews

— | ONLINE

Sign up for headline/Web site updates and PDF delivery at ...

[www.countynews.org/Online\\_Form.cfm](http://www.countynews.org/Online_Form.cfm)



## Job Market / Classifieds

### ► CITY MANAGER – CITY AND BOROUGHS OF JUNEAU, ALASKA

Salary: Begins at \$110,000, DOQ.

Do you have a demonstrated record of success in executive management? Are you a strong, ethical leader with excellent communication and consensus building skills? Do you want to live, work and play in a breathtakingly beautiful community? For more information, visit [www.juneau.org/personnel/documents/09-076.pdf](http://www.juneau.org/personnel/documents/09-076.pdf) or call 907/586-5250. Job closes on Monday, Jan. 5, 2009. EOE.

### ► TOWN MANAGER – TOWN OF CARY, N.C.

Salary: DOQ.

Cary, incorporated in 1871, is a thriving community in the heart of the Triangle area of North Carolina. The area, and specifically Cary, has repeatedly ranked among the top places in the country to live and work, to find a home or start a business, to raise a family or retire. The Town adjoins the state capital, Raleigh, and encompasses approximately 55 square miles. Cary is a diverse community largely composed of young, affluent and well-educated people. With an estimated current population of 132,000, Cary is North Carolina's seventh largest municipality and, with a 30% population increase since 2000, it is also one of the fastest growing. Cary operates under a Council/Manager form of government. The Town Council sets policies and enacts ordinances, which are then carried out under the Town Manager's direction. The Town Council includes seven members. Four are elected from districts, and three, including the Mayor, are elected at large. Each member serves four-year staggered terms. Elections are nonpartisan. Cary has a long tradition of very stable and strong Council-Manager government which provides exceptional services to a highly demanding community. The Town enjoys a tradition of highly supportive Town Councils, excellent and long-tenured Town Managers and outstanding staff members. Cary is a full-service, independent municipality with approximately 1,150 FTE's assigned to 13 departments. It has a triple AAA bond rating and a current operating budget of \$163,154,531. The FY 08 CIP budget is \$127,053,714. The ideal candidate will have a combination of education and experience equivalent to a master's degree in Public Administration (or related field) and at least 10 years of increasingly responsible local government management experience gained in a medium-size city. Requirements also include expertise in budget and finance, community relations and economic development. The successful candidate will be politically astute, have exceptional interpersonal skills and enjoy community involvement. He or she will clearly possess and apply superior management and leadership abilities. Visit Cary on the Web at [www.townofcary.org](http://www.townofcary.org). Send your resume by Monday, January 5, 2009 to: Robert E. Slavin, president, Slavin Management Consultants, 3040 Holcomb Bridge Road,

Suite A-1 Norcross, Georgia 30071. Phone: 770/449-4656 Fax: 770/416-0848. E-mail: [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net). Visit [www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com). AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

### ► DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT – CITY OF BRANSON, MO.

Salary: DOQ.

Branson, Missouri covers 20.8 square miles, is a top tourist destination and serves as the business hub for more than 70,000 residents. This full-service municipality functions like a city of 60,000 to 70,000 and utilizes a Board of Alderman/Administrator form of government. The City Administrator appoints all department heads. The Director of Planning and Development administers the City's comprehensive planning program including land use, transportation, housing and area plans; supervises the planning function including zoning and subdivision application, review and processing; building and code enforcement; prepares development and expansion plans; appoints departmental staff; administers the budget; serves as technical advisor to the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Mayor and Board of Aldermen and the City Administrator; serves as liaison with state and federal agencies and neighborhood associations. Requires the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in Urban Planning or closely related field (advanced degree preferred) and five years of progressive experience in municipal land use planning, including three years of administrative experience. Need to revise the Comprehensive Plan, development code and internal operations to enhance customer service, provide for quality growth and development (using smart growth techniques) and form active partnerships with community groups, key industries (tourism) and the development community. Must balance the need to enforce development codes with the need to maintain an environment of cooperation and collaboration. Code Official Certification and AICP are desired. For more information, please visit the City's Website at [www.cityofbranson.org](http://www.cityofbranson.org). Competitive salary negotiable DOQs. Branson provides excellent employee benefits. Please submit your confidential resume by February 16, 2009 to: Robert E. Slavin, president, Slavin Management Consultants, 3040 Holcomb Bridge Road, Suite A-1 Norcross, Ga. 30071. Phone: 770/449-4656. Fax: 770/416-0848. E-mail: [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net). Visit [www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com). AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITER/EMPLOYER.

### ► ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR – CITY OF BRANSON, MO.

Salary: DOQ.

Branson, MO (population 7,500/7.8 million annual visitors) covers 20.8 square miles, is a top tourist destination and serves as the business hub for more than 70,000 residents. The City's new Branson Landing is a \$420 million, mixed-use development containing

a convention center, hotels, retail, restaurants and residential. Branson is a full-service municipality which functions like a city of 60,000 to 70,000. It utilizes a Board of Alderman/Administrator form of government. The Board appoints a City Administrator who appoints all department heads. The Economic Development Director manages and directs all economic development activities including representing the City to new and expanding businesses, marketing Branson for economic development, assisting existing industries to prosper and expand, grantsmanship, conducting a variety of economic feasibility studies, coordinating incentive programs and hiring, supervising and evaluating assigned employees. Performs other administrative duties as assigned by the City Administrator including serving as acting City Administrator. Requires the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in Business or Public Administration, Marketing or closely related field (Master's Degree preferred)

and five years of senior level economic development experience, preferably gained in a municipal government. CED or EDFP certification preferred. Must have knowledge of workforce housing development, workforce training and development, and nurturing and supporting entrepreneurial development. Must strive to expand the City's economic diversity by attracting more "green" type (possibly knowledge based) businesses while supporting its critical tourism industry. For more information, please visit the City's Web site at [www.cityofbranson.org](http://www.cityofbranson.org). Competitive salary negotiable DOQs. Branson provides excellent employee benefits. Please submit your confidential resume by February 16, 2009 to: Robert E. Slavin, president, Slavin Management Consultants, 3040 Holcomb Bridge Road, Suite A-1 Norcross, Ga. 30071. Phone: 770/449-4656. Fax: 770/416-0848. E-mail: [slavin@bellsouth.net](mailto:slavin@bellsouth.net). Visit [www.slavinweb.com](http://www.slavinweb.com). AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY RECRUITER/EMPLOYER.

### ► MUSKEGON COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR – MUSKEGON COUNTY, MICH.

Salary: \$116,274-\$135,692, DOQ.

Muskegon County, Mich., ICMA recognized since 1970. Three Administrators since 1985. Requirements: Graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree in public or business administration, management or closely related field and substantial full-time executive level experience in administration required; possession of a Master's degree preferred. Strong financial management and interpersonal skills required with broad understanding of social service delivery highly desirable. Appointed by an 11 member Board of Commissioners, elected by district, on a partisan basis for two-year concurrent terms. Muskegon County is located in West Michigan on Lake Michigan.

The City of Muskegon is the County Seat. The County government is comprised of 19 departments with approximately 1,400 employees and a budget of \$280 million. Apply with complete resume and reference to County's Recruitment consultant: The PAR Group, LLC, 100 N. Waukegan Road, Suite 211, Lake Bluff, IL 60044. TEL: 847/234-0005; FAX: 847/234-8309; Email: [resume@pargroupltd.com](mailto:resume@pargroupltd.com). Inquires should be directed to Steve Bernard, TEL: 616/308-4899; E-mail: [sbernard@pargroupltd.com](mailto:sbernard@pargroupltd.com). Muskegon County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. See our website at: [www.co.muskegon.mi.us](http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us).



**Real Experience. Real Solutions.**

Offering customized solutions to improve your effectiveness in vital programs and functions.

- General Public Safety Consulting
- Strategic Planning
- Executive Searches
- Organization & Management Studies
- Efficiency Studies
- Association Management

**www.GPSSinc.net**

4025 Fair Ridge Dr., #300 • Fairfax, VA 22033 • 703.537.4835 phone  
GPSS is a subsidiary of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC).

## Methamphetamine Prevention Forum



**What:** NACo Methamphetamine Prevention Forum, in partnership with: Association of Arkansas Counties and Arkansas Sheriffs' Association. An educational forum designed for all professionals who are interested in meth prevention.

**When:** 8am – 5pm, Friday, January 23, 2009

**Where:** Pulaski County (Little Rock) Arkansas. Wyndham Riverfront Hotel

**Registration:** For registration and forum details, please visit [www.naco.org/methforum](http://www.naco.org/methforum). Deadline to sign up is January 5.


**Contact:** For additional forum details and questions, please contact Kati Guerra at [kguerra@naco.org](mailto:kguerra@naco.org) or 202/942-4279.





# Billions of dollars

in government funds are being used to produce state-of-the-art Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data. Do you know how to get the maximum return from that investment?



BECOME A  
GIS CHAMPION  
IT SAVES YOUR  
COMMUNITY MONEY

Government Executives and Chief Information Officers, we need your help. Failing to inventory GIS data leads to:

- Wasted funds and duplication of effort
- Failure of government to respond effectively in emergencies
- Inefficient government operations
- Fewer partnership opportunities
- Ineffective business planning

Put taxpayer dollars to use and help strengthen our nation by ensuring that your organization participates in the GIS Inventory.



NSGIC

Go to: <http://gisinventory.net> and select your state.  
30 minutes or less! Contribute to major life saving and economic growth efforts in your community by doing your part today!  
National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)

**GIS**  
INVENTORY  
POWERED BY RAMONA