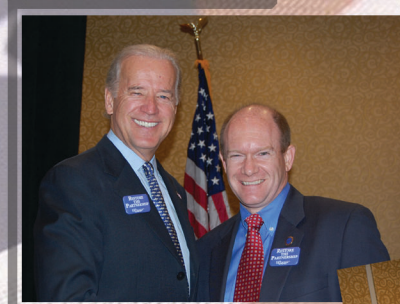
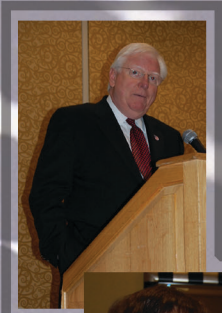


The Iowa County

Iowa State Association of Counties



December 2007
Presidential Candidates
Visit the Fall School

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ISAC's Mission:

To promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa.

ISAC's Vision:

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.

feature

Senator Joe Biden (D - Delaware)

Dear Iowa State Association of Counties Member,

As you remember the 2007 ISAC Fall School in Des Moines, I want to urge you to remember the address by Senator Joe Biden of Delaware. Sure, you may know him well as the proud sponsor of the Violence Against Women Act or the COPS program, funded through the Biden Crime Bill. Or you may remember his heroic defeat of Judge Bork as Reagan's nominee to steer the Supreme Court to the right. Or you may be impressed with his current leadership of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and his thoughtful, practical plan for Iraq, which has been supported by every other Democratic candidate.

But we in Delaware also know Joe as a good husband and father, as a man who is the same person at the neighborhood grocery store as he is in Washington and as he is on the stump. Joe is a caring, tough, plain-spoken, hard-working advocate for the people he cares about, and he cares about our counties.

As a former county official who began his career in public service as a member of New Castle County Council, Joe knows how hard running a local government can be, and knows to partner with counties when it comes to fighting crime, keeping our communities safe, protecting our environment and water, promoting public health, and responsibly planning for future growth.

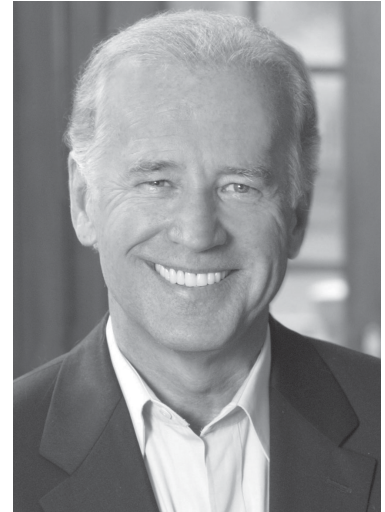
The National Association of Counties (NACo) has been working on your behalf to engage the presidential candidates in issues of real interest to county officials and America's counties. In response to our 2008 Presidential campaign effort, Senator Biden addressed our NACo national meeting in Washington, has met with NACo staff to discuss our issues, and made his personal appearance before ISAC the anchor of his latest swing through Iowa. Biden has long been an accessible, reliable ear for the concerns of counties over his 35 years in the U.S. Senate.

When campaigning for Joe across counties in Western Iowa, I kept hearing the same thing: folks knew him, were impressed with his leadership and his ideas, and wondered aloud why he wasn't drawing the attention of the national press and polls. Please, do what you do best: look past the national hype and polls and fundraising, and give a good second look at the man I believe is best qualified to lead America, at home and abroad, at this most important moment in our history.

Sincerely Yours,

Chris Coons
County Executive
New Castle County, DE

Paid for by Biden for President, Inc.
Produced by Chris Coons
County Executive
New Castle County, DE
In-House Using Volunteer Labor



About the Feature

ISAC invited all nationally-recognized presidential candidates – both Republicans and Democrats – to address our members at the 2007 ISAC Fall School in Des Moines. The candidates that accepted our invitation and spoke at the Fall School (or sent a qualified representative on their behalf) were given the opportunity to write a one-page article in our magazine addressing important issues of their choice. The seven articles included in this feature were authored exclusively by the candidates and/or their campaigns. ISAC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. ISAC does not endorse any candidate or political party in any national, state or local election.

Senator Chris Dodd (D - Connecticut)

It was truly an honor to speak before the ISAC membership at the ISAC Fall School of Instruction in Des Moines on November 28th. It is dialogues such as the one we had there that will keep us on the path to rebuilding the partnership between the Federal and local governments.

I am firmly committed to that partnership and to fulfilling the role the federal government can play to strengthen and support local governments. I don't believe in federal mandates without the federal dollars to back them up. For as you know all too well, federal mandates without federal dollars create local disasters.

You can count on me to uphold my commitment to getting federal funds to the communities that need them the most. No matter what the issue, it will take this sort of leadership to set us back on course.

One area in which we can start to forge that partnership is the infrastructure of our communities. On this, you can count on me. Just last August I worked with Republican Senator Chuck Hagel to introduce a bill that would put real political and financial will behind repairing our nation's roads, bridges and water systems. It was just hours after our press conference that the bridge in Minneapolis collapsed. We have to be looking ahead on these issues and we have to be willing to allocate the necessary resources.

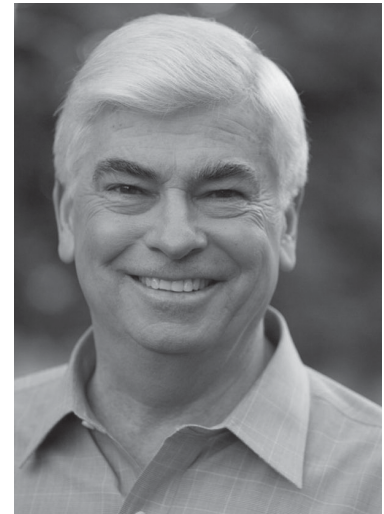
Our infrastructure is an issue of National Security. And so is our emergency preparedness. I fought tirelessly for funding for our firefighters and first responders and I did this before September 11th. The FIRE Act provides the single largest stream of federal funding in our communities to help hire, train and equip first responders. Iowa has received nearly \$64 million in grants from both the FIRE and the SAFER Acts. This money goes directly to the local communities to decide on the best use for the funds according to local needs.

Access to quality and affordable health care is an issue that is in great need of unifying, results-oriented leadership. My ability to bring people together around the Family Medical Leave Act is based on the belief that the only way to really deliver results is to work with all parties. That is the approach we need to pass universal health care in this country. And local health care providers, who are at the forefront of caring for those in need, should be at the forefront of creating that policy.

We have the opportunity to mend the relationship between federal and local governments, but that opportunity will not last for long. We must nominate and elect a leader that can turn political foes into allies for the greater good. Because that is the real way to get results from our government, both federal and local. That is the way to get the change that we need.

Thank you,

Senator Chris Dodd



Senator Hillary Clinton (D - New York)

Avoiding a Home Heating Crisis

We are heading toward a home heating crisis across the Midwest and many other parts of the country. Winter is approaching, and energy prices are sky-high and heading higher. But the Bush Administration has vetoed immediate relief and failed to address the underlying problems. Unless we take action now, thousands of Iowan families will be literally left out in the cold this winter.

The price of oil is at a record high – near \$100 a barrel – and gas prices are at their highest level ever for this time of year. The price of natural gas—which nearly 70% of Iowans rely on for heating—is at near record highs, as is the price of propane and home heating oil. Those record costs are already being felt by the typical family, which is paying \$2,000 more each year for electricity, home heating and gas than it did in 2000. That’s like a \$2,000 energy tax – more than three times what the typical family received from the Bush tax cuts.



It’s only going to get worse: home heating costs are expected to jump as much as 20 percent this winter for Iowan families. After seeing their healthcare costs double and college costs spiral out of control, that’s money many hardworking families just don’t have. And for Iowa’s seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, these price increases could force heartbreaking and dangerous choices between heat and basic necessities like food and prescription drugs.

We need immediate action to keep the most vulnerable Americans from going cold this winter. Unfortunately, the President is standing in the way. Recently, President Bush vetoed emergency energy assistance funding for families. Because of his veto, state agencies in Iowa and across America have had to scale back outreach to needy families and may have to close their programs early and turn families away. One million families will be cut off from heating assistance this winter.

That is simply unconscionable. Iowa families deserve to be warm this winter. That’s why I have laid out a three-part emergency plan to avoid the looming heating crisis. First, we need to secure funding to meet the growing needs for heating assistance this winter. I call on the President to provide emergency funds today, not months down the road, after millions of seniors and low-income families have literally been left out in the cold. The President should pledge that no family eligible for heating assistance will be turned away, and assistance will keep pace with rising energy prices. Rather than cut one million families, let’s come together and provide energy assistance to an *additional* one million families this winter. Second, we need to take immediate steps to stabilize energy markets and make them work better for consumers. I urge the President to use the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and the Northeast Heating Oil Reserve to send a signal to the market, easing concerns about crude oil stocks that drive prices higher. And we need to make sure Americans aren’t getting ripped off at the pump. President Bush should drop his opposition to legislation that cracks down on price gouging and shines a brighter light on how prices are set. Third, we need to help families reduce their own energy bills by limiting energy waste in homes. As part of my energy plan, I call for weatherizing 20 million homes over 8 years. But we should immediately invest \$1 billion in an emergency home conservation program. This program will make weatherization kits available to three million families. The kits would include an insulating wrap for water heaters, caulking for doors and windows, and other easy-to-install items. These measures can reduce a family’s heating bill by up to 20 percent.

There is no doubt we are all feeling the effects of the Bush Administration’s failure to create a sound national energy policy. The tragic attacks of September 11th offered a historic opportunity to call Americans to action to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. Instead, President Bush outsourced energy policy to Dick Cheney and the big oil companies. As a result, we are more dependent on foreign oil today than we were on 9/11.

We need a new direction in our energy policy – toward energy independence, cleaner energy technologies, and energy efficiency to reduce consumer costs – and I have outlined a detailed plan to accomplish these goals. My plan would increase fuel economy standards to 55 miles per gallon by 2030 in partnership with the automakers. It would increase the use of biofuels, and set a goal of generating 25 percent of our electricity from wind, solar and other renewable sources. And it would invest in efficiency and conservation in our homes and offices. My plan would cut oil imports by two thirds and create at least 5 million new clean energy jobs. To help pay for it, I’ll create a \$50 billion Strategic Energy Fund by taking tax breaks away from the oil companies and putting that money to work for alternative energy.

Iowans have suffered enough from President Bush’s continued indifference to the rising prices of natural gas, home heating oil, electricity, and gasoline. Winter won’t wait, and we shouldn’t either. The time to act on the heating crisis is now and the time for a White House that actually sees the struggles of American families is long overdue. When I am president, families in Iowa and across the country will no longer be left out in the cold.

Former Senator John Edwards (D - South Carolina)

On January 3rd, Iowans will make a critical decision about what kind of person our next president will be, and who will lead our country into the future.

We desperately need change in Washington – not only a change in leadership, but a change in the way Washington does business. Too many Washington politicians forget the impact their action – or inaction – can have on local communities. Over the last two decades, the federal government has not been a responsible partner for local communities. From transportation to education funding, from health care to rural development, Washington has consistently failed to meet its obligations to local governments and local property taxpayers.

Washington has put a crushing burden on county governments and rural communities, and the effect is felt strongly by homeowners who have seen their property taxes steadily rise. It's just one more example of how Washington is out of touch with the needs of regular Americans.

We need a president who will work together with local leaders to make sure our citizens can get a good education, find a decent job, have health care and build better futures for their families. In short, we need a new partnership with local communities and taxpayers. I have offered a broad agenda to ensure that the federal government lives up to its obligations and helps take the burden off property taxpayers.

First, I will pass universal health care and relieve the burden on county health departments. Counties in Iowa and across the nation face skyrocketing health care costs, including rising costs for employee health care as well as uncompensated care in county hospitals and public clinics as a result of the 47 million Americans without health insurance. My plan to require insurance for all Americans will save money for local governments by bringing down costs and improving quality through steps like better preventative and chronic care, electronic medical records, and encouraging proven treatments.

Second, I will make sure the federal government meets its share of special education funding. For decades, Washington has failed to meet its promise to pay 40 percent of the cost of special education. It consistently fails to meet even half that amount, hurting our children and placing an enormous burden on school districts and property taxpayers to make up the difference. As president, I will introduce a budget that puts the federal government on track to meet its full and fair share of special education funding.

Third, I will revitalize rural economies and expand the tax base. Washington's neglect of rural America has contributed to the steady decline in rural jobs and population. As people leave and businesses fail, rural communities face a shrinking tax base that makes it harder to maintain good schools and important local services. As the only candidate from rural America, I have pledged a major reinvestment in rural economies, including funding for main street businesses, support for broadband expansion, investments in renewable energy, and expanded educational opportunities.

Fourth, I will help local government save money on procurement. The federal government is the largest consumer in the world and has enormous bargaining power to negotiate lower prices on everything from office supplies to vehicles. As president, I will issue an executive order directing the General Services Administration to expand the ability of state and local governments to take advantage of discounts available under federal purchasing contracts, providing volume pricing and reducing unnecessary duplication of effort.

Finally, I will make sure that federal highway funding legislation meets the needs of local communities and ensures our local roadways are safe. Local governments play an important role in maintaining roads and bridges and other infrastructure. I will reform congressional earmarks to redirect tens of billions of dollars to higher priority projects and make tax dollars go further by cracking down on waste and overspending.

Meeting the moral test of this generation and building a stronger economy – one where everyone has a chance to achieve the American Dream – has to be done one community at a time. We need leadership in Washington that recognizes the importance of local communities across Iowa that represent the backbone of our economy and the key to our success. We desperately need to restore the trust between Americans and their government. A good way to start is ensuring that Washington starts living up to its obligations.



Senator John McCain (R - Arizona)

Leadership for All Generations

Three decades ago, a visionary politician described the dangers in the world. It was, like today, a time when some doubted America's goodness and greatness. Many argued for reconciliation with our global adversary at the time. But this man held firm. He did what he thought was right. He criticized the liberal Democrats' foreign policy of weakness and vacillation. He called for resolve and firmness in dealing with the Soviet Union. And, he refused to condemn millions to perpetual Communist tyranny in the false hope that accommodating the Soviet Union would contribute to America's security. Fortunately, this man, Governor Reagan, became President Reagan.

Today, the challenges are at least as severe as they were when Ronald Reagan stood tall. And, today, the differences between Republicans and Democrats on national security are every bit as stark as they were 30 years ago. But while the challenges that confront our great nation are considerable, I do not doubt our ability to overcome them.

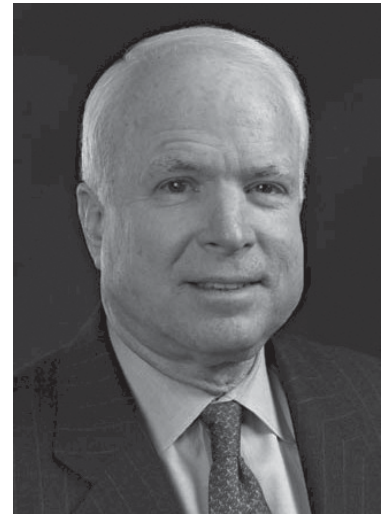
I believe our nation's best days are ahead and remain committed to an America with a strong national defense; a smaller, more accountable government; a robust economy with abundant opportunity for all who seek it; and a nation of traditional values that protects the rights of the unborn and the traditional family.

As president and commander in chief, I will protect the security of this great nation from all enemies. Today, we confront a titanic struggle against Islamic extremism that will not be won quickly or easily. But we will win it, despite the efforts of leading Democratic presidential candidates who vote against funding for our troops engaged in war in Afghanistan and Iraq. While our ultimate victory is not in doubt, the length and intensity of this struggle remain to be determined. It is up to us and our determination for victory. I, too, look forward to bringing our troops home, but I know that we must bring them home in victory and with honor. We must recognize that our enemies are in this fight to win. Be assured that I would employ all instruments of national power – military, intelligence, law enforcement, economic and political – to defeat them.

At home, Americans have lost trust in their government. The ambition of my presidency will be to restore that trust. I will fight to ensure a political process worthy of the sacrifices that have been made by so many to keep us free and proud and will see to it that the institutions of self-government are respected pillars of democracy. Special interests have too much influence in Washington. That will end. I will secure the border, bring spending under control, veto pork-barrel spending bills and keep taxes low by reforming a tax code that is too complex and too burdensome. I will restore trust in government by securing our nation's borders. I will work to modernize Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid and bring accountability, choice and competition to our schools, so our children are equipped for the best jobs of the 21st century. I will also nominate strict constructionist judges who understand that their job is to rule on what the law says and not to impose their opinions through judicial fiat.

We are in need of bold solutions to address health care in America, an issue that touches every family in this nation and impacts our economy and fiscal outlook. We can fix our health care system and lower costs without sacrificing quality. But the answer is not to increase the amount of bureaucracy through a government-controlled health care or single-payer system. The answer is to enhance the ability of the market to offer affordable and portable insurance options for as many Americans as possible, and to help those without insurance to access the health care system with the dignity and quality care that all Americans expect and deserve.

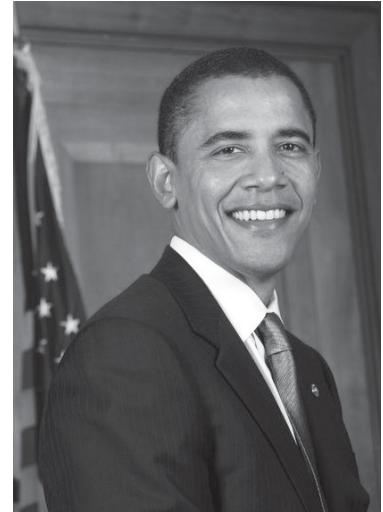
I am running for president to protect our country from harm and defeat its enemies. I am running for president to restore trust in our government and to ensure it remains worthy of that honor. I am not running to leave our biggest problems to an unluckier generation of leaders, but to fix them now, and fix them well. I am running for president to make sure America maintains its place as the political and economic leader of the world; the country that doesn't fear change, but makes change work for us; the country that does not look longingly to the past, but aspires to even better days. I am running for President of the United States, a blessed country, a proud country, a hopeful country, the most powerful and prosperous country and the greatest force for good on earth.



Senator Barack Obama (D - Illinois)

Organizations like the Iowa State Association of Counties are some of the most important in this country, because it's local officials like you who are on the front lines dealing with our nation's most pressing problems. This is something I know about firsthand, since throughout my two decades in public service, I've served at the local level – first as a community organizer on the streets of Chicago and then as a state Senator in Illinois.

I understand the demands placed on local officials, and the problems plaguing our communities. And I understand that many of these problems can't be solved by local government alone. Whether it's helping folks climb out of poverty or ensuring that our roads and bridges are adequately maintained, many of the challenges we face require local government working in partnership with state and federal government. And yet, for too long, that partnership has been broken. Local officials have been denied the resources and support they need to do their jobs. And as we all saw when Katrina struck, the American people pay the price when their government fails them by failing to work together. We cannot let it happen again. We need to restore the partnership between our local, state and federal governments.



As President, I'll offer the leadership to make sure that happens. I'll pass my universal health care plan by the end of my first term – and I'll do it by standing up to the insurance companies and bringing Democrats and Republicans together like I did in Illinois. My plan will cut the cost of a typical family's premiums by up to \$2500 a year – more than any plan that's been offered in this race. By doing this, we can alleviate the burdens that so many county hospitals face by treating folks who either don't have health care or can't afford it. I'll make sure our county hospitals have the support they need, and we'll encourage health professionals to practice in rural areas that don't always get the same quality health care as the rest of the country.

This is particularly important because improving health care in rural areas can help us combat the creeping national epidemic of methamphetamine abuse – an epidemic that has taken an especially tragic toll on mothers and children in Iowa. Families are being split apart, children are watching as their mothers turn into a different person, and small towns are being plagued by crime. That's why I cosponsored the Combat Meth Act in 2005, and that's why when I'm President, we'll stop seeing meth as a local challenge and start seeing it as an American one. We'll keep meth out of our country. We'll get it out of our communities. And we'll launch new treatment programs that hold families together while helping parents beat addiction.

So these are some of the steps we need to take. But if we're serious about empowering county governments, then we have to make sure they have the support they need when the American people need them most – in times of emergency. Whether it's a hurricane or tornado, a bridge collapse or a terrorist attack, county officials are this nation's first line of defense. And we have to cut the red tape to ensure that you can work swiftly and effectively with federal and state officials during a crisis. We should expedite assistance to farmers like I did in Illinois because they're often hit hard by natural disasters. And we must do more to help our local communities prepare before a disaster strikes. To do all this, and to meet the other challenges we face in this country, we need real leadership in the White House that won't tolerate partisan bickering and bureaucratic foot-dragging. The stakes are too high.

This is a defining moment. Our nation is at war. The planet is in peril. The American dream that so many generations fought for feels as if it's slowly slipping away. And the only mission that the Bush administration ever accomplished was to use fear and falsehood to take this country to a war that should have never been authorized and should have never been waged.

It is because of these failures that all Americans – not just Democrats – are listening, intently, to what we're saying. And that is why the same old Washington textbook campaigns just won't do in this election. That's why not answering questions because we are afraid our answers won't be popular just won't do. That's why telling the American people what we think they want to hear instead of telling the American people what they need to hear just won't do. And that's why triangulating and poll-driven positions because we're worried about what another candidate might say about us just won't do.

We need a President who's guided not by polls, but by principle; not by calculation, but by conviction; a President who can summon the entire nation to a common purpose – a higher purpose. That's the kind of President I intend to be. That's why I'm in this race – to offer not just a difference in policies, but a difference in leadership. Not just change as a slogan, but real, meaningful change – change the American people can believe in. And if you join me, then I'm confident we'll bring strong, steady, and principled leadership to the White House. And that won't just be a victory for our county officials. It will be a victory for all Americans.

Governor Bill Richardson (D - New Mexico)

As a Governor, I meet with county leaders—sheriffs, commissioners, county clerks - almost every day. We work together, because county issues like economic development, public safety, emergency response, education, Medicaid and health care—are also state issues, and our nation’s issues.

But we are becoming best known as a clean energy state. Using tax incentives we are attracting solar, biomass, biofuels, and wind companies and creating good paying jobs in cities and towns across our state.

While Washington has let our highways and bridges crumble, I worked with city and county officials to identify and invest over \$1.6 billion to modernize our roads, to start a new commuter rail, and create thousands of construction jobs at the same time.

Like many rural states, our state has been hit hard by meth trafficking and drunk driving. Our state, county and local police now conduct joint checkpoints to stop drunk drivers and special operations to crack down on meth labs. We also shifted to laws now focused on enforcement and prevention, treatment and cleanup. As our enforcement has gone up, DWI fatalities and the number of Meth labs are going down—significantly—in fact not one meth lab was found to have children present this year.

One of the reasons I declared a border emergency was to fight crime like meth trafficking across the border. We added law enforcement on the border immediately, and passed on federal funds to local sheriffs quickly and efficiently. In my view, you cannot expect law enforcement to deliver the criminals, unless you deliver the funding first.

Same goes for our firefighters and emergency responders. Not only did we boost funding for our firefighters by 20%, but we also signed into law the first job protection guarantee for volunteer emergency responders in the country.

Now those who volunteer as emergency medical workers, firefighters, and sheriff reserves no longer have to worry that their job will still be there when they return home.

I’ve been proud to work directly—side-by-side—with the county governments of my state. We put aside party, put aside position, put aside partisanship—to solve problems for the people of our counties and state.

www.RichardsonForPresident.com
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Leadership Conference 2008

January 16-17, 2008
Holiday Inn Airport Des Moines



“You do not lead by hitting people over the head - that’s assault, not leadership.”

- Dwight D. Eisenhower

Come join us for this exciting day-and-a-half conference that will give you down-to-earth training on how to become a better leader. The conference will provide unique content that is packed with practical and powerful success strategies. The dynamic speakers will give you practical information that you can begin using as soon as you return home.

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Kit Welchlin is a high-energy speaker who utilizes a variety of approaches that truly motivate audiences. Kit purchased his first manufacturing company at age 21, and by age 26 he was C.E.O of three manufacturing companies in three states. Kit has provided hundreds of presentations to such corporate clients as 3M, General Mills and American Express. He will be speaking on “Leadership Through High Impact Communication.”

David Landis was a highly praised presenter at NACO’s Leadership Training Institute, he is a seven-term Nebraska state legislator, law professor and award-winning actor. He will be speaking about improving your negotiating skills.

Dr. Bill Withers is the assistant director of Wartburg College’s Leadership Institute. He will speak about the demographic shifts predicted for Iowa, and help you better understand how these demographic shifts create unique challenges that your county must prepare for in the coming years. Dr Withers has served as a consultant for national companies such as Disney and Starbucks

Registration fee is only \$150 (fee includes dinner, lunch and coffee breaks)
Register on-line at www.iowacounties.org beginning December 7. Space is Limited!

For more information contact dvestal@iowacounties.org.

ISAC Top Legislative Priorities

The ISAC board of directors reviewed, revised and approved the draft policy statements and legislative objectives proposed by the seven steering committees. In addition to changes to minimize duplication of issues in the document, the board deleted one legislative objective and amended another in the Tax & Finance section. A legislative objective regarding the market value standard for assessing property was deleted after receiving input from the assessors' affiliate. Since there was disagreement among the members of the affiliate and there is a court case that will impact the issue, the board voted to delete this objective from the 2008 book. A change was also made to the Tax & Finance legislative objective regarding local option income tax. The change made by the board would add that any legislation adopted allowing this practice should require a vote of the people.

The board also set the top priorities for the 2008 legislative session. The top priorities are the issues that the board president and ISAC staff focus on in meetings with the Governor and with legislative leadership. All of these proposals were recently approved by the ISAC membership at the fall school. The top priorities for 2008 are:

Property Tax Reform

This has been a priority for several years and there is, once again, a legislative interim committee looking at possible reforms to Iowa's property tax structure. ISAC's policy statement is as follows: ISAC supports property tax reform that stabilizes the tax base, resolves unfair discrepancies within the current tax base, improves accountability in the budgeting process of cities and counties, and imposes a reasonable limitation on city and county property taxes while maintaining local control for citizens and their elected representatives.

State Funding of All-Paper Voting System

Last session the Legislature passed a measure requiring that any future purchase of voting machines must replace touch-screen machines with a system consisting of optical scan machines supported by ballot marking devices. This objective seeks state-funding to make this change, particularly since county auditors have purchased touch-screen machines with federal funds allocated through the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) after being assured that the state-certified touch-screens would properly address the HAVA requirements.

Mental Health Funding

Both Human Services and Tax & Finance included legislative objectives on mental health services funding. In addition to the ongoing request for additional state funding to ensure that the system can meet the needs of the persons served, both objectives looked at the levy cap. The Human Services Committee, once again, is recommending that the Legislature look at the levy dollar cap and consider changing it to a levy rate cap. The Tax & Finance Committee looked at the broadening range of levy rates across the state and recommends that the state move toward a levy range between \$1/1000 and \$2.50/1000.

Real Internet Access for Rural Iowans

Legislation introduced in the 2007 session would appropriate \$100M over four years to achieve the goal of 99.95% statewide access to wireless broadband. This would level the playing field as it relates to Internet access and would remove an obstacle for counties

By: **Linda Hinton**

Government Relations Manager



without access that are trying to retain or attract businesses.

Sex Offender Residency Law

This was a top priority for ISAC last year and remains so this year. There is general agreement that the current sex offender law is flawed. In many cases, the law has made things worse by pushing offenders into "colonies" or causing them not to report to the authorities at all. Because of the perceived political price legislators might have to pay for addressing this issue, the ISAC board believes that it is important to reiterate our support for replacing the current 2,000 foot residency restriction with safe zones that would prohibit sex offenders from entering areas near schools or daycares.

Urban Renewal

The Tax & Finance Steering Committee made recommendations in three areas related to Tax Increment Financing (TIF), the major financing tool for urban renewal. Those areas are excessive or inappropriate use, erosion of the tax base, and the impact of removing parcels from TIF districts on other taxing entities.

Urban Renewal Use - To address the overuse or inappropriate use of TIF, ISAC proposes four changes: 1) limiting the duration of all TIFs to 20 years from inception or the term of the bonded indebtedness as of January 1, 2008, whichever is greater; 2) requiring TIF districts to gain the support of all taxing jurisdictions; 3) anytime a TIF district issues new debt, reestablishing the base year as the year immediately preceding the debt issuance, and 4) prohibiting tax abatement in TIF districts.

Rollback Applied to TIF Districts - Iowa Code requires the entire reduction in assessed value due to the rollback to be applied to the base value in a TIF district until the base value is reduced to zero. This erosion of the base often results in non-TIF entities having a smaller tax base than before the TIF was created. For new bonded TIF debt, ISAC supports changing the law to require rollback to be applied proportionately to base and incremental valuations to determine the taxable values of each.

Removal of Negative Increment Parcels in TIF Districts - Allowing a TIF entity to remove a parcel that is losing value from a TIF district is unfair to the remaining local taxing jurisdictions. As a result, these jurisdictions are denied the benefits of increased taxable valuation. This practice also represents an administrative hassle for counties. ISAC supports changing urban renewal law to prohibit removing parcels from an active TIF district.

Funding of TIME 21

There is an increased awareness of the need to fund construction and maintenance of Iowa's roads and bridges after the bridge collapse tragedy in Minnesota. The TIME 21 study outlined Iowa's significant needs in this area and proposed a funding methodology to address the needs of the state, counties and cities in Iowa with responsibility for this important infrastructure. ISAC supports an increase in fuel tax, adjustments in pick-up registration fees as well as other registered vehicles, and exploration of a 1% increase in vehicle use tax as revenue sources to support TIME 21.

RAGBRAI Controversy Focuses on Proper Role of County Roads

By: David Vestal
ISAC General Counsel



In October, Crawford County's insurance carrier paid \$350,000 to settle a claim brought by the estate of a rider who died on RAGBRAI. Soon after, Crawford County passed a resolution prohibiting RAGBRAI from returning to the county. That was like the shot heard 'round the world. The county's action was all over the news media. Bloggers weighed in with their thoughts about what this meant for the future of RAGBRAI.

Here is the problem, in a nutshell: under Iowa law, bicycles have a right to use Iowa's county roads. But county roads are not designed, built, or maintained with a goal of making them safe for bikes. County roads are designed, built and maintained for cars and trucks.

The problem is that right now the only guidance we have is Iowa Code §321.234(2), which says bicyclists in Iowa are subject to the rules of the road and have "all of the rights and duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle."

If they have all the rights applicable to a vehicle, what does that mean? For instance, can they sue if they are injured when their bike hits a 1-inch crack in the road? We don't know.

There was an interesting Iowa Supreme Court case in 2002 called *Vasconez v. Mills* where there was a bike-truck accident on a county road. In the lawsuit, the truck driver claimed that the bike should not have been on the road at all, it should have been on a bike path. The Iowa Supreme Court cited §321.234(2), giving bikers all the rights of cars, and rejected that argument.

This is a classic public policy debate. If the Legislature wants county roads to be safe for bikes, they need to clearly state that in law, and also give counties a way to pay for that, because it is going to be very expensive.

The Iowa DOT reported in December 2006 that Iowa's roads needed \$200 million more per year to keep up with needed repairs. This is due to dramatically increasing construction costs, increased usage and deferred maintenance.

There are 90,000 miles of secondary roads in Iowa – 80% of the total miles of all roads in Iowa. A 2005 assessment by the American Society of Civil Engineers said that 28 percent of Iowa's 24,000 bridges are in substandard condition.

So, with all of these existing needs, where would the money come from to make county roads safe for biking?

This is not just about RAGBRAI. It is about bikes in general. But RAGBRAI is an important piece of the discussion. No one wants to see RAGBRAI go away. But there is significant sentiment out there that counties do not have the money to make every road safe for biking, and do not want to allow RAGBRAI to ride through their counties if that is an open invitation to get sued by anyone who is

injured while voluntarily participating in RAGBRAI.

It is not enough for the public to say, "Iowa's counties need to welcome bikers." Crawford County welcomed 20,000 RAGBRAI bikers, and found itself in an expensive lawsuit.

The Legislature needs to get involved. RAGBRAI is a uniquely Iowa event that brings in tourists, and their wallets, from all over the world. RAGBRAI showcases this state in a very positive way. If legislators want RAGBRAI to continue, they need to step up to the plate.

Any solution has to be a three-legged stool:

1)Waiver –The Register needs to make the RAGBRAI waiver as tight as possible. They have changed the waiver twice to make sure counties are included, so they deserve credit for that. But this is only a partial solution. About 50% of RAGBRAI riders are not officially registered, so they do not sign the waiver;

2)Insurance - RAGBRAI needs to purchase insurance coverage that includes the counties along the route as named insureds. That is not going to happen overnight, and may not even be feasible. We are exploring whether that is a possibility; and

3)Legislation – Bike riders need to assume the risk of injuries on county roads. Counties need clarification in the law that they are not required to upgrade their roads to make them safe for bikes. One way to do that would be to pass a law that clearly states that biking has inherent risks, and that if you are injured in a garden variety accident while biking on a secondary road, you cannot sue the county. As a biker, you assume that risk.

That would be similar to a law in Connecticut regarding skiing. The idea is that skiing is important to the Connecticut economy, so in the nutmeg state they have a law acknowledging that skiing is dangerous, and saying that skiers cannot sue the ski resort if they are injured in a garden variety skiing accident. It affirms the notion of personal responsibility, and at the same time helps keep the ski industry thriving. A similar law would help keep RAGBRAI thriving in Iowa.

That type of change in the law would help make RAGBRAI welcome in every county once again, and it would not cost the state a dime.

Parting Ponderable: From Mike Wentzien

"You can say any foolish thing to a dog, and the dog will give you a look that says, 'My God, you're right! I wish I would've thought of that!'" - Dave Barry

case management

Iowa Mental Health Conference

By: Jackie Olson Leech
ISAC Case Management Specialist



In October I attended the 2007 Iowa Mental Health Conference in Ames. The theme of the conference was 'Recovery – Under Construction.' Plenary and concurrent sessions addressed the Recovery Model as it relates to employment, identifying evidence based practices, and integrating systems for those experiencing a chronic mental illnesses.

Ken Minkoff set the tone in his keynote presentation, 'Changing the World: Developing Comprehensive Integrated Systems of Care for Individuals with Co-occurring Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Disorders.' Dr. Minkoff is Medical Director of Choate Health Management in Woburn, MA, Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and a nationally known consultant and trainer on co-occurring disorders. Ken said that "Treatment success derives from the implementation of an empathic, hopeful, and continuous treatment relationship which provides integrated treatment and coordination of care through the course of multiple treatment episodes." Case Managers are aware of the importance of showing empathy toward the persons they serve, but having the courage to engage "empathically just where the person is at" and listening to their pain and lack of hope is not always easy to do. Through the recovery process, helping the person create measurable steps toward success and focusing on the strengths of the person (also not new to Case Managers), a vision of success begins to become clear.

Dr. Minkoff, as well as other speakers during the conference, described the mental health system and substance abuse system as silos that make it nearly impossible for persons with co-occurring disorder to get integrated and continuous care. In the substance abuse silo the person is confronted and given the tough love approach, while the approach in the mental health silo is one of empathic detachment – caring about the person, but not being responsible for the outcome. A balance of both approaches, in Dr. Minkoff's opinion, is the correct philosophy. In order for recovery to occur, each disorder needs to be treated as primary so that the person receives appropriate, intensive, diagnosis-specific treatment. In a continuous care model, helping the person stay in the relationship with case manager, physician, psychiatrist, therapist, substance abuse counselor and direct care providers is essential. Both systems need to share the same approach with the recovery model as the cornerstone in all phases of the process. According to Minkoff, "There are no rules! The specific content of dual primary treatment for each person must be individualized according to diagnosis, phase of treatment, level of functioning and/or disability, and assessment of level of care based on acuity, severity, medical safety, motivation, and availability of recovery support."

Paul Berry, from the Village Integrated Services Agency in Los Angeles, also discussed the Recovery Model and the need for continuous and integrated approaches in regards to work for persons diagnosed with a mental illness and their barriers in pursuing work. According to Berry, the most important structural change that needs to occur in the mental health field is the concept that work is essential - "real" work - not sheltered work, day treatment, or prevocational

classes. A person with a chronic mental illness moves through the stages of recovery despite evidence of their symptoms. Promoting an employment culture, where work is an essential piece of recovery, services need to be promoted by everyone on the team, from the administrators, to the doctors, nurses, therapist, direct staff, and case managers. Berry believes that employment needs to be discussed from the very beginning of the intake and assessment process. The person's treatment plan needs to reflect employment offering a wide array of options that build on vocational experiences. According to Berry, the biggest disincentive to work is the fear of failure. This is supported by our mental health system that still gives the message that work is too stressful for those with a mental illness, and that they are not able to work while they are actively experiencing symptoms. This attitude is a barrier to the person making the transition from the role of patient to the role of worker, and as Paul suggests, we need to confront the "soft bigotry of low expectations."

For more information on the Recovery Model in regards to co-occurring disorders and employment:

www.village-isa.org - The Village Integrated Service Agency
www.bhrm.org - Behavioral Health Recovery Management Project
www.mindlink.org - Advocacy Unlimited
www.ucpsychrehab.org - University of Chicago center for psychiatric rehabilitation.
www.bu.edu/cpr - Boston University's Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation
www.contac.org - Consumer Organization and Networking Technical Assistance Center
www.mentalhealthrecovery.com - The Wellness Recovery Action Plan
www.miepvideos.org - The Mental Illness Education Project
www.power2u.org - National Empowerment Center
www.neattc.org - Northeast Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network
www.samhsa.gov - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
www.nami.org - National Alliance on Mental Illness

CoMIS Project Update

By: Robin Harlow
ISAC Technology
Project Manager



The CoMIS Replacement Committee has continued to meet on a regular basis to hammer out the scope of the replacement for the CoMIS application. Here is the current schedule for the project:

- **December 2007** – Select vendor and work to assemble teams to address identified areas of concern.
- **January 2008** – Present project and obtain additional funding for design work.
- **January to March 2008** – Complete the design, which includes the phasing strategy of the project.
- **March 2008** – Obtain additional funding for implementation.
- **March to June 2008** – Build and test the application, and train users.
- **July 2008** – Begin a phased roll-out of the new system.

In October and November the meetings have revolved around reviewing the existing applications, building a vendor selection process and finalizing a governing structure for the new application.

Selecting a Vendor

In order to meet the July 2008 roll-out date, the committee has decided to work with either Spindustry or Quilogy to work out the systems specification, high level design, and implementation plan. Both vendors have produced a version of CoMIS in the recent years. The committee felt that there was a significant advantage to the timeline to work with a vendor that had existing knowledge of the business logic of the current process.

The committee sent a ‘Request for a Statement of Work’ package to each vendor. The package contained:

- A request for a statement of work;
- High-level function requirements comparisons;
- Listing of data exchanges;
- Examples of documents that we would need to be delivered once the design has been completed; and
- Design the framework requirements.

The committee then met with each vendor to review the request and to answer any outstanding questions or concerns. The vendor is expected to have the statement of work returned to the committee in the last week of November. The committee will then review the statement and choose a vendor.

Each vendor will be judged on the completeness of the statement of work; their demonstrated management and technical capacities; and the final estimates of time and costs.

CoMIS Data Exchanges

In late October 2007, John Grush, Karen Walters-Crammond and I met with senior DHS IT management. The intent of the meeting was to establish a rapport and dialogue of partnership, and to review the current data exchanges taking place between the counties and DHS. The

initial data exchanges with DHS and the replacement will take current electronic transmissions and move them into the replacement. Items that are high on our list are the Annual MH Data State Report and County Billings (state invoices for institutions and Medicaid match). There are several more exchanges that will be added over time as the counties and DHS work through the list.

Running the Replacement

In early November 2007 a joint meeting between the ETC Advisory Committee, CoMIS Replacement, and the Executive Board of the Community Service Affiliate was held. The purpose of the meeting was to make recommendation on how the new CoMIS will be operated, governed, and funded. The current ETC 28E agreement between the counties allows other electronic services to be added as deemed necessary. Since the web interface that is part of ETC will be rolled into the CoMIS Replacement, the discussion will most likely be on how to operate, govern, and finance the new CoMIS under the current 28E agreement. ETC is considered a major key to the data exchanges of the new CoMIS. It most likely will make sense to bring the governing, funding, and operating procedures under one structure.

Help Wanted

The CoMIS committee will be recruiting additional help to build teams to ease the development and roll-out of the new system. Committee members will be approaching every county to assist in providing help in the following areas:

- **Provider Management** – How will we manage the providers in the system? How will the providers be managed at the local level? What are the rates and how will they be applied?
- **Data Migration** – What information needs to be moved from current CoMIS applications? What is the time range for the data? How do we resolve data inconsistencies?
- **Training** – What training structure is needed? Can we develop regional trainers? What materials are needed? Who will develop the material? What will be the cost?
- **User Support Groups** – After the application is in place, what will be the setup and use of support groups? Will we want a support forum and/or knowledge base sites?
- **Test Development** – How will we test? What will we test? Who will do the testing?
- **Communications** – How will other interested parties be informed? What on-going methods will be needed when production begins? How will stakeholders be tracked and understanding of purpose be ensured?

Additional teams will be identified before the printing of this article. The intent will be to have active involvement from all users well before the first screen goes into production. Each user should feel that they have had a hand in the building process.

by the numbers

Utility Excise Taxes

By: Jay Syverson
ISAC Fiscal Analyst



County revenues for utility excise taxes came in lower than expected in FY08. Utility companies will pay counties \$35.3 million in FY08, about \$1.1 million less than the \$36.4 counties budgeted.

The main reason for the shortfall is the difference between the general property tax equivalent (GPTE) and actual revenue. GPTE is a number that many counties use to set their budgeted utility tax revenue. In fact, 83 counties set their FY08 budgeted revenue within \$100 of GPTE. GPTE is established based largely on what the utility companies estimate their taxes will be. But it's also established based on last year's tax rates. So if tax rates increase from FY07 to FY08, then GPTE will be higher than actual revenue. Of course, company estimates can be off too, and that can negatively affect the accuracy of GPTE. Some combination of those factors caused GPTE to exceed actual revenues by 2.5% this year. This is the sixth year in a row that GPTE has exceeded actual revenues.

Counties can't control GPTE, and they can't control actual utility tax revenues. But counties can control their budgets. And there is a direct relationship between the amount of utility tax revenue budgeted and the amount of property taxes levied. If a county expects to receive \$150,000 in utility tax revenue, but only receives \$130,000, that \$20,000 is not like a shortfall in local option sales tax money – something the county expected or hoped to get but couldn't directly control. That \$20,000 is revenue that could have been generated by property taxes had the county accurately budgeted for utility taxes.

One suggestion in budgeting is to not blindly follow GPTE. In a couple of counties, GPTE exceeded actual revenue by over 20% this year. Counties should give the GPTE its due consideration. But they should also consider their actual utility tax revenues over the last few years. If there's a pattern, great – follow it. It might also make sense to increase last year's actual revenue by 2-3% and use that as a budget for next year. If there's no pattern to the utility revenues, counties should budget conservatively. For example, a county could reduce its GPTE by 3-5% and use that number in its budget. By conservatively estimating utility revenues, counties can be sure to generate the revenue they need through sources they can control – like property taxes. If a county budgets conservatively and then receives significantly more utility revenue than expected, it can always adjust for the surplus in next year's budget. That's better than having to scramble to cut spending to offset a shortfall.

ISAC meetings

Spring School 2008

By: Jerri Noboa
ISAC Meetings Administrator



Here we are again just finishing up with the fall school and we have to start thinking about the spring one.

On-line registration will be available December 10 on the ISAC website along with an overall agenda of the conference.

The following affiliates will be meeting at the Marriott; Supervisors, Treasurers, Conservation, Engineers and Recorders with the remaining at the Renaissance Savery. FYI – the 2008 fall school will be in Coralville and all affiliates will be meeting under the same roof.

Hotel reservations open December 3 at the Downtown Marriott, Renaissance Savery and the Hotel Fort Des Moines.

Marriott (515-245-5500) rates are \$89/flat for single or double. You need a credit card to hold the reservation. If you do not want to pay for the room on your personal credit card, you need to call the accounting department tell them you are going to bring a check with you and request that they send you a document stating the room rate, hotel/motel tax, etc. Then have the check cut to take with you. Present check when you check-in. This must be done before each school.

Renaissance Savery (515-244-2151) rates are \$89/flat for single or double. You may opt to send in a claim form with a letter (on county letterhead) asking to have the room billed back to the county. This must be done before arrival date for each school. The letter of request can be faxed to Carla Curry at (515-243-8974).

Hotel Fort Des Moines (515-243-1161 or 800-532-1466) rates are \$89/flat for single or double and \$109 for suites; use booking #333475. You need a credit card to hold the reservation or they will accept purchase orders/claim forms. This must be done before arrival and for each school.

Excellence in Action Awards

On Thursday, November 29th 2007 the Iowa State Association of Counties awarded its 2007 Excellence in Action Awards. Fourteen nominations were received by the September 7th deadline. A distinguished panel of five judges representing the academic arena, county government and the ISAC staff scored each nomination. Each nomination was scored on a 100 point system based on the following characteristics:

- Creativity and innovation
- Cost savings
- Replication
- Leadership
- Increased efficiency
- Cooperation with others
- Perseverance

Scoring was very tight, with the outcome unknown until the final judge submitted his scoring sheet. Five of the 14 nominations were in the top 10% of scoring. The three award winners all were in the top 5%.

The Winner of the Outstanding Inter-governmental Excellence in Action Award for 2007 was the “Joint Communication Network” submitted by Linn County. Because Linn County, the City of Cedar Rapids, and the Cedar Rapids Community Schools were willing to cooperate and leverage their individual strengths, the citizens, students, and employees will be able to benefit from a state of the art county-wide communication network.

The Winner of the Outstanding Inter-County Office Excellence in Action Award for 2007 went to the “Marshall County Electronic Permit Application System.” Marshall County was presented the actual award. Key players; Jon Bailey, Scott Williams, John Kunc, Wayne Chizek, and Deane Adams were presented with Excellence in Action Award Certificates. The auditor, IT, GIS, assessor, zoning/public health, and treasurer offices worked together to build an electronic permit system that increased the quality of data collected and the reusability of the information. Citizens in Marshall County can now file for and track permits from their home, office or a permit station in the county building.

The Winner for the Individual Excellence in Action Award for 2007 was Tamra Lewis of Johnson County for her “Monofilament Fishing Line Recovery and Recycling Program.” Through Ms. Lewis’ hard work and determination, Johnson County’s lakes, rivers and streams will contain less discarded fishing line that is harmful to both machinery and animals.

Details of each of the winning projects can be found on the ISAC web page.

Thanks again to all of those who nominated projects and individuals. Look for exciting announcements on the 2008 Excellence in Action Awards in the spring of 2008.

If you want more information about the Excellence in Action program, please contact Robin Harlow at 515-244-7181 or email rharlow@iowacounties.org.



Outstanding Inter-governmental Award Winners

ISAC Staffing Changes

Deb Eckerman will be taking on the role of ISAC Case Management Services Manager (CMSM). The CMSM will report to the ISAC Executive Director and will serve as the chief staff liaison to the County Case Management Services Board of Directors. The CMSM will also have direct supervisory responsibility for the ISAC Case Management Specialists. Deb Eckerman has been with ISAC since January 2004 as a Case Management Specialist. Deb served as a Targeted Case Management and Supported Community Living Director for Golden Circle Behavioral Health in Des Moines prior to joining ISAC. She also has worked as a targeted case manager and supervisor, day program counselor, and recreation therapy director at various agencies in Des Moines and central Iowa. Deb began her new role on November 1st.

Hanna DeGroot will be filling one of the two open Public Policy Specialists positions. As you know, Hanna has been ISAC’s Secretary/Receptionist/Administrative Assistant since February 2007. What you may not know is that Hanna is a 2006 graduate of Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa with a B.A. in political science. While getting her degree Hanna did a six-month internship in the Sioux County auditor’s office, where she assisted with the preparation for the 2006 primary elections. Hanna will be transitioning to her new role as we search for her replacement.

Donate to the

ISAC

Education Foundation, Inc.

Make a charitable, tax-deductible donation before the end of 2007!

The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) annually awards college scholarships to high school seniors who are children of county officials or county employees. The ISAC Education Foundation is an organization whose only mission is to raise money to support ISAC's scholarship program. The ISAC Education Foundation is a public charity exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. **Donations to the ISAC Education Foundation are tax deductible under I.R.C. § 170.** ISAC and all county officials ask that you consider supporting the ISAC Education Foundation and ISAC's scholarship program with a tax-deductible donation. All donors will receive a receipt and, unless they choose not to, will also be recognized in at least one issue of ISAC's monthly magazine, on the ISAC website, and during at least one of ISAC's semi-annual conferences. Your generous support is appreciated.

Donor Name: _____

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Address: _____

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Additional Notes/Comments: _____

DONATION: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

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Please make checks payable to the ISAC Education Foundation, Inc. Mail to: ISAC Education Foundation, Inc., 501 SW 7th St., Ste. Q, Des Moines, IA 50309. If you have any questions please contact Jay Syverson or Brad Holtan via phone at (515) 244-7181 or email at jsyverson@iowacounties.org or bholtan@iowacounties.org.

Directory Lists Expert Civil Engineers Available for Disaster Response

The American Society of Civil Engineers organizes a directory of technical volunteers by area of expertise for use by local, state and federal agencies during disaster planning and response

When disasters such as Sept. 11, Hurricane Katrina or the I-35W bridge collapse occur, members of the civil engineering community often respond by offering their time and talents to assist in response and recovery efforts. In response to this interest, the American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) Committee on Critical Infrastructure developed the Disaster Assistance Volunteer Directory (DAVD).

The directory includes a listing of ASCE members who have expressed interest in volunteering for disaster planning, response and recovery initiatives. Members included in the directory can maintain an up-to-date profile that includes their skill set, experience and availability. This directory is available to qualified parties, including local, state and federal agencies, as well as private consulting firms, to draw from for engineering expertise in not only their post-disaster response and recovery efforts, but also in their pre-disaster planning and preparedness initiatives.

The directory is currently available for use and has more than 500 engineers registered, representing a wide array of areas of expertise. For more information, including instructions on how to access the directory, please visit

<http://ciasce.asce.org/ASCEDisasterAssistanceVolunteerProgram.html>.

Founded in 1852, the American Society of Civil Engineers represents more than 140,000 civil engineers worldwide and is America's oldest national engineering society. For more information, visit www.asce.org.

Buchanan County Receives Award

The Buchanan County secondary roads in Independence, Iowa received a 2007 Excellence in Regional Transportation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for the Railroad Flatcar Bridges project.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery and comprehensive strategies. The association's Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards program recognizes organizations for noteworthy projects and practices in rural and small metropolitan transportation planning, program delivery and special initiatives. Award winners were showcased during the 2007 National Rural Transportation Peer Learning Conference, September 26 – 28 in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

According to NADO President Leanne Mazer, Executive Director of the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland in Cumberland, Maryland, "The Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards showcase the significant effect of transportation programs and projects like Railroad Flatcar Bridges, which are key to promoting integrated and efficient transportation systems that foster economic growth in our nation's regions and communities."

For more information about the award winning project, contact the Buchanan County secondary roads department at 319-334-6031.

Iowa Transportation Museum Opens Online with Heroes Center

Visitors, young and old, are encouraged to nominate transportation heroes from their lives

Even before it officially opens its doors to the public, the Iowa Transportation Museum is taking flight online with the launch of its interactive, web-based Heroes Center.

At www.TransportationHeroes.org, visitors of any age can nominate heroes who they feel have made a difference in the transportation industry. The new site also features commentary from former Iowa Gov. Robert Ray who shares his thoughts on what makes a transportation hero and the important role that transportation plays in all of our lives.

“The Heroes Center is all about honoring the people who make the wheels go round – assuring us of a better life,” said Gerald Schnepf, president of the Iowa Transportation Museum’s board of directors. “For too long many of these heroes have gone unrecognized, and it is time to tell their stories. We are thrilled to be opening this online version of the museum experience and we aim to use content from it to help develop future exhibitions at the museum and, more importantly, to provide role models to our youth that can inspire and motivate them into the field of transportation.”

By early next year an inaugural class of heroes will be inducted into the Heroes Center, and an expanded version of the site will be launched that will use a blend of personal interviews, videos and written stories to shine a light on some of the heroes who have kept our country moving forward.

Nominations for the Heroes Center will be accepted year-

round with no limit to the number of individuals who can be inducted each year. Visitors to the site will be asked to select one of three categories when nominating a hero:

- “Heroes by Example” – transportation workers who have accomplished their everyday job in an extraordinary way;
- “Heroes of Industry and Technology” – those individuals who have made significant breakthroughs or contributions in transportation-related industries or technologies; and
- “Heroes of Valor” – transportation workers who have placed their life at risk – either willingly or unknowingly – while on the job.

“The Heroes Center is breaking the mold by telling the stories of the unsung heroes, particularly those right here in Iowa,” said Gordon Canfield, treasurer for the Iowa Transportation Museum’s board of directors and mayor of Grinnell. “I hope that everyone takes advantage of this special opportunity to get the transportation hero in their life recognized.”

The Heroes Center will serve as the centerpiece of the Iowa Transportation Museum, currently in development in Grinnell at the former site of the historic Spaulding Manufacturing Co., where thousands of horse drawn vehicles and motorcars were once produced in the early 1900s.

The mission of the Iowa Transportation Museum is to explore the evolution of transportation, making it come alive to enhance our understanding of how transportation systems and workers contribute to the culture and quality of life we enjoy. For further information about the museum or its Heroes Center, visit www.IowaTransportationMuseum.org.





Iowa Author Nominated for Pulitzer Prize in Letters

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Participation in National IPA saves you valuable time, effort, and resources. **There is absolutely no obligation, no minimum purchase, and no contract required to participate in the National IPA.** Simply register at www.nationalipa.org and we'll get you set up to begin taking advantage of this program. If you have any additional questions or if you would like to learn more about the National IPA, please contact Caren at 515-270-0300 x15 or caren.freyberg@cexp.com.

By: Suzanne R. Larson

Literary Promoter, Iowa Reader

John D. Thompson, author of 6 books of poetry, has been notified that his most recent book, On Holiday, has been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Letters. Columbia University annually awards the Pulitzer Prize for books published during that calendar year, and the Poetry Award is awarded to a book of original verse by an American author.

Des Moines and Iowa are in for a literary treat this season as On Holiday is being heralded as one of the finest books of Christmas poetry ever by an American poet. Perhaps no other time in state history has an Iowa poet, or any Iowa writer for that matter, released consecutive year literary masterpieces like Thompson's 99 Voices, 99 Lives: County Poems of Iowa (2006) and On Holiday (2007). Thompson is being compared to Grant Wood and Meredith Wilson for his artistic contributions to the state through poetry. You don't need to need to know poetry to enjoy this book of holiday verse, you just have to know Christmas. Thompson can be reached at statepoetpro@yahoo.com, and On Holiday is available for sale at this address for \$20.00.

Born in Mt. Ayr and raised in Lamoni, John Thompson is a United States Senate Scholar, a member of American Mensa, and an honors poet at Harvard University. Thompson holds advanced degrees from the University of Iowa and an MFA in Poetry/Creative Writing from New England College. He currently lives in Pella and teaches at Eddyville-Blakesburg High School.

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calendar

December

- 4-6 Engineers Annual Conference
(Scheman Center, Ames)
- 6 CCMS "NE Support Group"
(The Other Place, Waverly)
- 6 District II Supervisors Winter Meeting
(Elks Lodge, Charles City)
- 6 Open Meetings/Public Records Training
(Ola Babcock Miller Building)
- 7 Open Meetings/Public Records Training
(Civic Center/Public Library, Mt. Pleasant)
- 7 District V Winter Meeting
(Hotel Ottumwa)
- 7 Annual Drainage Conference
(Starlite, Fort Dodge)
- 10-13 Sheriff's Annual Conference
(Sheraton Hotel, WDM)
- 13 Open Meetings/Public Records Training
(Grant Wood Area Education Agency,
Cedar Rapids)
- 12 District IV Winter Meeting
(Location TBA)
- 14 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)
- 14 Open Meetings/Public Records Training
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 24-25 ISAC Office Closed
- 31 ISAC Office Closed

Please visit ISAC's online calendar of events at www.iowacounties.org and click on 'Upcoming Events.' A listing of all the meetings scheduled thus far in 2007, agendas and meeting notices can be found on ISAC's website. A majority of ISAC's meetings offer online registration. If you have any questions about the meetings listed above, please contact Jerri Noboa at (515) 244-7181 or jnboea@iowacounties.org.

January

- 1 ISAC Office Closed
- 7 CCMS Training Committee
(ISAC Offices)
- 8 CCMS "Administrators"
(Botanical Center, Des Moines)
- 16-17 ISAC "Leadership"
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 17 CRIS Board of Director
(Location TBA)
- 17 CCMS "East Support Group"
(Coral Ridge Mall, Coralville)
- 18 Statewide Supervisors Meeting
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 25 ISAC Board of Directors
(ISAC Office)

February

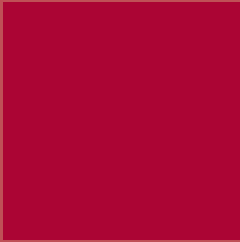
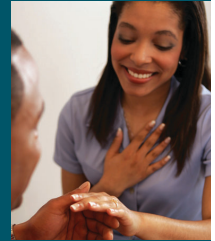
- 6 District 2 & 3 Legislative Days at the Capitol
(Wallace Building Auditorium, Des Moines)
- 8 ISAC Executive Board
(ISAC Office)
- 6-8 CCMS "Fundamentals"
(Hilton Garden Inn, Urbandale/Johnston)
- 13 District 1 & 4 Legislative Days at the Capitol
(Wallace Building Auditorium, Des Moines)
- 20 District 6 Legislative Days at the Capitol
(Wallace Building Auditorium, Des Moines)
- 21-22 ISAC Board of Directors
(ISAC Office)
- 27 District 5 Legislative Days at the Capitol
(Wallace Building Auditorium, Des Moines)

March

- 12-14 **ISAC Spring School of Instruction**

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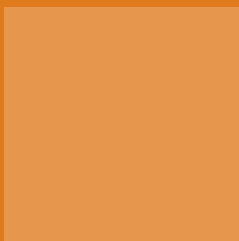
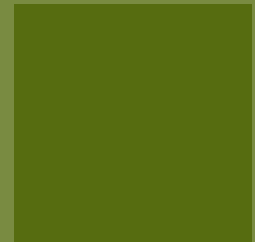
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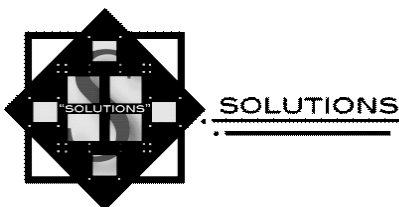
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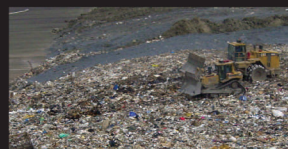
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Do You Know What Your Carbon Footprint Is?

In 2003, the Chicago Climate Exchange (CCX) set in place a voluntary, legally binding system to allow companies the opportunity to "trade" pollution credits based on the release and capture of all six greenhouse gas emissions. This system operates much the same as the stock market and pollution credits are the currency.

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