

The Iowa County

Iowa State Association of Counties



June 2009

Reflections of the 2009
Legislative Session
Johnson County Celebrates
County Government Week



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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.

capitol comments

Reflections on the 2009 Legislative Session

Given the landscape going into the 2009 Legislative session, ISAC had some very positive outcomes this year. There were some major victories and most of the losses were minor. And, in the final analysis with state revenues declining, the state legislature did not cut its funding to counties as dramatically as expected.

The Good

TIME-21

While additional funding of TIME-21 was not realized, the annual DOT policy bill, SF 419, included a provision that will cap the TIME-21 Fund at \$225 million. This means that, in the event that TIME-21 is funded at this level in the future, any revenue generated in excess of \$225 million will revert back to the Road Use Tax Fund and be distributed by that formula.

Sex Offender Residency Law

ISAC has pursued changes in Iowa's Sex Offender Residency Law, enacted in 2002, as one of its top priorities for the past three years. County attorneys and county sheriffs found that the law had significant unintended consequences that have actually made Iowa's children less safe rather than more safe. ISAC leadership recognized that in order for legislators to make changes in this politically-charged area, broad-based, bipartisan support was necessary. This year, in conjunction with changes required by the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection Act, the legislature was able to pass a bill that made numerous improvements to the sex offender registry law.

The bill creates a three-tier system for classifying sex offenders. Tier 3 is for the most serious offenders who are prohibited from residing within 2,000 feet of a child care facility or school and are required to complete four registration updates per year. Tier 1 and 2 offenders have no residency restriction and fewer registration updates per year than Tier 3 offenders. The bill also establishes 300 foot exclusionary zones around schools, libraries, swimming pools, daycares, and related areas. This gives law enforcement more power to monitor individuals loitering around areas where children congregate.

Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Funding

One of the first good news items of the session came with HF 414, the deappropriations and supplemental funding bill. After Governor Culver instituted a 1.5% across the board cut just before the session started in January, the legislature put all but about \$30,000 back into FY 09 funding for counties with this bill.



Linda Hinton
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The Governor's proposed budget for FY 10 included a cut of approximately \$18 million (6.5% plus no growth) to counties for mental health and developmental disabilities services funding. In addition, there was concern that an additional cut would be taken out of the \$88 million in property tax relief that is appropriated late in the session. This projected cut was particularly problematic since county budgets would be certified by the time the legislature took action. Much to our surprise, HF 820, the bill that implements the Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, includes full funding for property tax relief and includes \$10 million for counties to access through the Risk Pool. The dates for the Risk Pool were moved forward to ensure that counties have the opportunity to spend additional funds received in FY 10.

Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund

HJR 1, to initiate a constitutional amendment to create the natural resources and outdoor recreation trust fund to preserve and protect Iowa's resources passed early in the session. Since this legislation passed two consecutive General Assemblies, it now goes to a vote of the citizens of Iowa at the 2010 general election. If ratified by the people, the fund will be credited with a portion of the state sales tax after the next sales tax increase.

County Land Records Information System

It took all session and lots of ups and downs to shepherd SF 465 through the process. This bill would allow the County Land Records Information System to get back up and running after concerns were raised about personal information being available on the land records website. The bill requires every county to participate in the county land record information system; makes changes to fees; prohibits the sale of electronic records in batch form; and includes provisions on redacting electronic documents. The bill also limits the liability of recorders, supervisors, the county recorders association, and the members of the county land record board for good faith actions within the scope of their employment and specifies that persons who contract with the governing board are not employees for tort purposes.

Funding of Property Tax Credits

Although we did not know it until almost the last day of session, the legislature held steady on funding the property tax credits for FY 10. The homestead credit will be funded at a slight increase over FY 09 at \$100.7 million, the military credit is funded at \$2.4 million, the agricultural land and family farm credit is funded at \$34.6 million, and the low-income elderly/disabled credit is funded at \$22.2 million.

Labor Issues

Several labor bills were introduced, but none passed this session.

The Bad

Veto Requests

ISAC will be requesting that the Governor veto two items that got included in appropriations bills. One is a delay in the implementation of the Time of Transfer Septic Inspection Program, slated to begin on July 1, 2009. After no consultation with either the Department of Natural Resources or ISAC and based on erroneous information that there would not be sufficient inspectors to begin the program on time, an amendment was put on the Agriculture and Natural Resources Appropriations bill to delay implementation until July 1, 2010.

The other veto request is an amendment in the Salaries and Standing Appropriations bill that would require the County Land Records Information System to terminate their contract with their project manager immediately and issue a request for proposals.

Gender Balance

The only bill that ISAC opposed that made its way to the Governor was HF 243, a bill requiring local appointed boards and commissions to be gender balanced by 2012. The bill does allow for any qualified person to be appointed, regardless of gender, after three months of good faith effort by the county to find an appointee of the gender necessary to balance the board or commission.

Open Meetings/Open Records

A compromise bill came out of the House, but the Senate wanted more stringent changes. While nothing happening on this issue may be a positive, the lack of a bill passing means that this issue will be very much alive next session.

The Ugly

LOST-TIF Repeal

Another issue that was around all session long, but did not come to a positive resolution, was the repeal or amendment of the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST) TIF. House and Senate leadership did not agree to insert the compromise changes to the LOST-TIF program in the standings bill. Despite unanimously passing identical language to make changes to the LOST-TIF, because the language was not passed in companion bills, the changes were not ultimately enacted. In a last ditch effort to enact changes, Representative Mary Gaskill (D-Wapello) offered an amendment to the standings bill that would have included the LOST-TIF language, but it was ruled non-germane, and it was not voted on. Thus, the LOST-TIF remains in place, allowing cities to unilaterally capture all increased LOST revenues and use them for a different purpose than their citizens authorized.



About the Cover

The cover of this magazine shows the break area of the new Johnson County Health and Human Services Building. Shown lining the break room are the 3-form color glass panels. The panels are made of recycled plastic and include day lighting efficiency controls.

The 2009 National County Government Week (NCGW), themed “Greening Our Future,” was celebrated in many ways across Iowa and the country. Please read more about Johnson County on page 15.

Did your county celebrate? If so, please contact me at rbicego@iowacounties.org so you too can be featured in an upcoming issue of *The Iowa County* magazine. Also, please visit www.naco.org for more information about NCGW.

by the numbers

Call Me if You Need a Good Lawyer

About seven years ago I graduated from Drake University. I left with a degree in finance, but without a job, without any idea of where I would live, and without much desire to do anything but play golf all summer long. So that's what I did, back in my hometown of Alexandria, MN. Well, pretty soon September 2002 rolled around, and golf season was about over (winter comes early up north). I still had my degree, still had no job, and still didn't know exactly where I would live - other than to say it would be "somewhere else," much to the joy of my father. As luck would have it, Nikki - now my wife - had another year of school at Drake, so I moved back to Des Moines to be close to her. I moved into my apartment October 1, but had to take a break from unpacking that afternoon so I could go interview at this place called the Iowa State Association of Counties.

When I started at ISAC I was the youngest employee by about thirty years. I'm kidding - sort of. A lot has changed in the past six and a half years. New programs and services, new people, new challenges (legislative and otherwise). Now I'm one of the veterans, if you can believe it. And just when I'm primed to move to an office with a window, I'm moving out the door instead.

My last day at ISAC coincided with my graduation from law school - May 15, 2009. In another coincidence, I'll be spending a lot of this summer playing golf - just like I did seven years ago during the summer before I started at ISAC. The rest of the summer will be spent studying for the bar exam, which I'll take in late July. After taking a well-deserved month off, I'll start my career as a tax attorney in September, working for the Nyemaster Goode law firm in Des Moines. I didn't know or care anything about taxes before I came to ISAC. But after being thrown to the fire my first day, digging through old files trying to figure out what abbreviations like LOST (local option sales tax), TIF (tax increment financing), and even BOS (board of supervisors) meant, I leave actually looking forward to spending the rest of my working days within reaching distance of the Internal Revenue Code. Wow. I had never actually put that in writing before. Give me just a moment, please.

I have really enjoyed my time at ISAC. I learned a lot about many of the subjects that impact county government. I got to develop some new skills - writing for this magazine, giving presentations to county officials, even lobbying (although let me say that I will not miss the lobbying). I am very grateful to Bill Peterson for hiring me six and a half years ago, and for

By: Jay Syverson
ISAC Fiscal Analyst



giving me the many opportunities I've had at ISAC. Bill let me create new projects to tackle and spend time working in areas that interest me, and he didn't even seem to mind too much putting up with my hectic law school schedule over the past three years. He did censor some of my writing a little too often for my liking (hey, sometimes legislators need to hear how stupid their idea is), but it was probably for the best.

I also enjoyed working with the rest of the ISAC staff. They are a great group of people - easy to work with, talented in so many areas, and dedicated to doing the best job they can for county officials. My new office will be less than a mile up the road, so I will be sure to keep in touch with them. Linda Hinton is already requesting hours of pro bono work on mental health allowed growth.

Finally, thanks to all the county officials I've come in contact with over the years. Many of you are probably happy to see me go so I won't keep bothering you with surveys asking for ridiculous and unquantifiable information. The assessors and auditors deserve a special mention for all the grief I'm sure I've caused them. I thank the many ISAC board members who stayed awake - some even feigned mild interest - during my County Financial Overview presentations each January. And of course thanks to everyone who has organized or participated in the ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser. Awarding significant scholarships to an inspiring group of students is a highlight of every spring school, and it's a wonderful aspect of ISAC that I'm proud to have helped start. In the future, I will do my best to ensure that the trophy stays in the hands of a team with at least one lawyer on it.

I wish you all the best of luck in the future. Good luck getting that goofy LOST-TIF repealed. Good luck getting a fuel tax increase to rebuild Iowa's road system. Good luck holding the mental health system together as revenues dwindle and demands increase. Good luck continuing the transition to E-Government. With county officials around the state serving their constituents with diligence and passion, and the ISAC staff backing them up and keeping an eye on the capitol, Iowa's citizens are in good hands.



By: Deb Eckerman Slack
ISAC Case Management
Services Manager



The 2009 CCMS Annual conference will take place at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines from August 12 to 14. “The Heart of the Matter: People” is the theme for this year’s conference and will be carried out through a number of keynote speakers and breakout sessions. Below is the schedule of the events for the conference. Registration will be available at www.iowacounties.org.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2009		
7:30 - 9:00	Registration/Continental Breakfast	
9:00 - 10:30	KEYNOTE: “Disability Is Natural” <i>(Kathie Snow)</i>	
10:30 - 10:45	Break	
10:45 - 12:00	1. Creating Community With Natural Supports and Generic Services <i>(Kathie Snow)</i>	2. Personality Changes in Individuals with Brain Injury <i>(Dr. David Demarest)</i>
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH	
1:00 - 2:15	KEYNOTE: “I’m Tyler, Don’t be Surprised” <i>(Tyler Greene)</i>	
2:15- 2:30	Break	
2:30 - 3:30	3. Guardianship Rights & Responsibilities <i>(Deanna Clingan-Fischer)</i>	4. Living Real Lives, Dreaming Big Dreams <i>(Kathie Snow)</i>
3:30 - 4:30	Story County Jail Diversion Program <i>(Deb Schildroth et. al.)</i>	6. Understanding the ABC’s of the XYZ Generations <i>(Kris Jensen)</i>
		7. Cultural Differences <i>(Christina Sibouih)</i>
4:30 - 6:00	WELCOME RECEPTION: <i>Networking ♦ Door Prizes ♦ Fun ♦ Food</i>	
THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2009		
8:00 - 9:00	Continental Breakfast in the Atrium	
9:00 - 10:30	KEYNOTE: Diagnosis and Strategic Treatment of Personality Disorders <i>(Dr. Joseph Shannon)</i>	
10:30 - 10:45	Break	
10:45 - 12:00	8. Diagnosis, Assessment and Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder <i>(Dr. Joseph Shannon)</i>	9. Shared Decision Making through Implementation of the Strengths Assessment and Personal Wellness/Recovery Plans <i>(Dr. Walter Kisthardt, Ph.D., MSW)</i>
12:00 - 1:00	LUNCH	
1:00 - 2:30	10. Understanding and Managing Anger <i>(Dr. Joseph Shannon)</i>	11. The Importance of Engagement and Graduated Disengagement in the Case Management Process <i>(Dr. Walter Kisthardt, Ph.D., MSW)</i>
2:30 - 2:45	Break	
2:45 - 4:15	CLOSING KEYNOTE: The Critical Role for Hope, Humor, Laughter, Joy and Celebration in Promoting Wellness and Recovery <i>(Dr. Walter Kisthardt, Ph.D., MSW)</i>	
4:15 - 4:30	Wrap Up/Evaluations	
FRIDAY, AUGUST 14, 2009		
7:30 - 8:00	Continental Breakfast in the Atrium	
8:00 - 12:15	Post-conference A: Mandatory Reporter Certification <i>(Diana Nichols Blomme)</i>	
8:30 - 11:30	Post Conference B: Ethics <i>(Tom Eachus, ACSW, LISW, BCD)</i>	

Healthcare: In the Hands of Information Technology

In April, as a representative of the Electronic Transaction Clearinghouse (ETC), I had the pleasure of attending a Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) conference in Chicago. I have to admit, part of the reason why I wanted to attend the conference was because Dennis Quaid was a keynote speaker and because I had never visited “The Windy City.” (Yes, I am now privy to the real meaning of “wind.”) The other half of the reason (probably 40/60 split) I wanted to attend the HIMSS conference was to grasp the ramifications of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 and how it is going to affect the Healthcare Industry and its technology; specifically how it will affect counties in Iowa. Since our counties deal with various providers related to community services, it is extremely important that the ETC be positioned to adapt with these changes for all 99 member counties.

The section of the ARRA particularly related to healthcare is the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act, or the HITECH Act for short. The Act creates incentives starting in 2011 to encourage healthcare providers to move towards an electronic health record (EHR) process within the next few years. Prior to the Act, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that under current laws, 65% of physicians would have adopted an EHR by the year 2019. It is now estimated that the incentives of the HITECH Act will boost the EHR adoption rates up to about 90% of physicians. According to the CBO, this increase will provide the U.S. an overall net savings of more than \$60 billion between 2011 and 2019 for the U.S. healthcare system. Just a small chunk of change wouldn't you say?

The notion of having 90% of physicians using EHRs by 2019 begs the question, if everyone is switching from paper files to electronic records, would the next logical step be to create a national network where these electronic files can be accessed by all authorized parties? A few of the HIMSS seminars explained that the architecture for an electronic nationwide health network is already in the works.

The National Health Information Network (NHIN) is a project that began to take root in November 2005 when the National Coordinator for Health IT awarded four contracts for developing prototype architectures for a NHIN. The selected prototype for the NHIN is not one huge database or a centralized system holding all the EHRs in the U.S.; instead the network will use shared architecture, processes and procedures to interconnect health information exchanges to and from individual

By: Chelsea Walden

ISAC Program Support Specialist



systems. The goal is to “provide a secure, nationwide, interoperable health information infrastructure that will connect providers, consumers, and others involved in supporting health and healthcare.” This “network of networks” will securely connect consumers, providers and others who have, or use, health-related data and services, while protecting the confidentiality of health information.

The NHIN will attempt to achieve this goal by:

- Developing capabilities for standards-based, secure data exchange nationwide;
- Improving the coordination of care information among hospitals, laboratories, physicians offices, pharmacies, and other providers;
- Ensuring appropriate information is available at the time and place of care;
- Ensuring that consumers' health information is secure and confidential;
- Giving consumers new capabilities for managing and controlling their personal health records as well as providing access to their health information from EHRs and other sources;
- Supporting the delivery of appropriate, evidence-based medical care; and
- Lowering healthcare costs resulting from inefficiencies, medical errors, and incomplete patient information.

Certain hospitals, clinics and pharmacies are currently in the beginning test stages of the NHIN. Many security processes and procedures will need to be defined and written before this network becomes a nationwide reality. For more information about the NHIN and its progress, please visit: <http://healthit.hhs.gov/>.

I have been plagued with the hassle of moving my medical records from one physician to another. As a consumer, I expect more than just a paper pushing process for my medical records as we move towards a more internet dependant society. As a consumer, my personal health records should be transferred securely in an electronic format from one healthcare system to another, not via the mail or fax machine where data can easily get lost. Had my health record files been in an electronic format, the clinics could have handled the transfer of my records through the NHIN, if it were up and running, without me having to get fully involved. With the assistance of a nationwide network of EHRs, the secure exchange of personal health records will become commonplace.

Text Messaging

By: *Tammy Norman*
ISAC Office Manager



Q: What are the benefits of text messaging and why is it so popular?

A: Text messaging is a form of communication that involves sending short messages that are no longer than a few hundred characters over a cell phone. Texting can be between two or multiple cell phones. One benefit to texting is that you can text in a meeting and not be disruptive and can do it without having to leave the room. However, if you are sitting on the front row, you may still want to exit!

Here is an interesting tidbit of information; Friedhelm Hillebrand is credited for being the person that standardized text messaging back in 1985 at the age of 45. He sat at a typewriter and typed various sentences, questions and answers and found that they averaged under 160 characters and thus used that magic number when he and other communications researchers established and standardized the text message technology. It seems to be the perfect number, because since its first inception, texting is now the prevalent form of communication via cell phones to-

day. In fact, text usage out numbers cell phone calls in the US now and with Twitter (see April article), we can only envision those

texting numbers will continue to grow.

Due to character limitations of texting, “texters” have created their own language. So to aid those of us that are over 30, here are a few of the more popular text acronyms and definitions. Use these abbreviations the next time your child or grandchild sends you a text. You may be able to actually decipher what they are saying.

Abbreviation	Meaning
B4	Before
BC	Because
BFF	Best friends forever
BTW	By the way
Def	Definitely
G2G	Got to go
IC	I see
IDK	I don't know
IMO	In my opinion
JK	Just Kidding
JW	Just Wondering
K	Okay
LOL	Laughing out loud
MSG	Message
NP	No Problem
NBD	No big deal
OMG	Oh my gosh
OMW	On my way
PLS or PLZ	Please
PPL	People
ROFL	Rolling on the floor laughing
SUP	What's up?
TTYL	Talk to you later
THX or TY	Thank you
UW or YW	You're welcome
WE	Whatever

Website Note: On a side note, there is currently a debate out there in the techie world about Ottumwa, Iowa being named the “Video Capitol of the World.” Evidently Ottumwa played host to the first video game world championship in 1983. It was filmed for a show entitled “That’s Incredible.” Have a question regarding new technology and would like it addressed in this column? Contact me at 515-244-7181 ext. 315 or via e-mail at tnorman@iowacounties.org.

Until next month, keep clicking!

Call for Seminar Topics

ISAC is now taking proposals for educational topics and speakers for the 2009 ISAC Fall School of Instruction to be held at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center November 18-20. ISAC conducts a variety of 75-minute educational seminars at both the fall and spring conferences. These seminars are a great learning resource and typically reflect issues or challenges that counties or affili-

ates are currently facing. Seminar topics and speakers will be selected from both internal and external proposals.

If you are interested in submitting an educational seminar proposal for use during the 2009 ISAC Fall School in Coralville, please contact Stacy Horner at shorner@iowacounties.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

ISAC meetings

ISAC Prepares for Future Conferences

In preparation for the 2009 ISAC Fall School of Instruction being held at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, the ISAC Board of Directors approved the conference agenda at the April 30 meeting.

2009 ISAC Fall School of Instruction Agenda

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Exhibitor Setup (Exhibit Hall)

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

6:30 am - 8:00 am Exhibitor Setup (Exhibit Hall)
8:00 am Registration (Exhibit Hall)
8:00 am - 9:00 am Exhibitor Morning Refreshments (Exhibit Hall)
9:00 am - 10:15 am ISAC Educational Seminars
10:30 am - 11:45 am ISAC Educational Seminars
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Exhibitor Box Lunch (Exhibit Hall)
1:15 pm - 2:30 pm ISAC Educational Seminars
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm Exhibitor Ice Cream Social (Exhibit Hall)
3:30 pm - 5:15 pm ISAC General Session
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm Hospitality Rooms
8:30 pm - 11:30 pm ISAC Dance/DJ

Thursday, November 19, 2009

7:30 am Registration (Exhibit Hall)
7:30 am - 8:30 am Exhibitor Morning Refreshments (Exhibit Hall)
8:30 am - 11:00 am Affiliate Time
11:00 am - 12:30 pm Exhibitor Lunch Buffet/Vendor Drawing (Exhibit Hall)
12:30 pm Exhibitor Teardown (Exhibit Hall)
12:30 pm - 5:00 pm Affiliate Time
9:00 pm - 11:00 pm ISAC Social Event/TBA

Friday, November 20, 2009

7:30 am - 8:00 am Morning Refreshments
8:00 am - 12:00 pm Affiliate Time

As you can see, there are a few agenda revisions from the 2008 ISAC Fall School in Coralville. I have highlighted these revisions for you:

- Per the request of the exhibitors, conference registration has been moved into the exhibit hall instead of in the foyer area. This will create more traffic for the exhibitors. Exhibitor setup will also be earlier and exhibitor booths will be available to conference attendees at the start of the conference.

By: Stacy Horner

ISAC Meeting/Event Administrator



- Like at the spring school in Des Moines, morning refreshments will be available all three mornings of the conference.
- The ISAC Educational Seminars will kick off the conference instead of concluding the conference. The ISAC General Session has been moved to Wednesday afternoon so more conference attendees are able to attend if they have to drive in on Wednesday morning.
- Like the 2008 fall school, there will be two conference-wide lunches. A box lunch will be served on Wednesday and a lunch buffet will be served on Thursday, both in the exhibit hall.
- This year we added an Exhibitor Ice Cream Social to Wednesday afternoon's agenda. The ice cream social was a huge hit at the spring school in Des Moines, so we decided to eliminate the Exhibitor's Reception usually held on Wednesday evening. Attendance had been down for the past couple of years.
- Due to successful dance attendance at spring school, we are keeping the dance on Wednesday evening and adding another social event, such as karaoke, on Thursday evening. We have eliminated the traditional dessert reception that was called the ISAC President's Reception. For the past couple of years, the dessert reception had not been well attended, and we have gotten feedback requesting two evening social events.
- Affiliate time will remain on two days, Thursday and Friday.

You are currently unable to reserve your hotel accommodations for the 2009 ISAC Fall School, because we are in the process of creating a new registration format to reserve your sleeping rooms through the Iowa Housing Bureau. This new registration process will ease your previous worries and frustrations about reserving a sleeping room during the conference. Conference registration, which will include your hotel accommodations, will NOT open until mid-August. Please DO NOT try and make your hotel reservations until ISAC launches this new reservation format. I'm currently in the process of re-negotiating the best rates for our conference hotels. Besides having the conference room block at the Coralville Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, there will be four overflow hotels which will provide complimentary shuttle service to and from conference to ease all of your parking worries. Thanks for your patience. We are working hard to make this process as smooth as possible for everyone involved, which includes our members, exhibitors, special guests and conference hotel staff.

Continued on next page.

In preparation for the 2010 ISAC Spring School of Instruction being held at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown and Renaissance Savery Hotel, the ISAC Board of Directors approved the conference agenda at the April 30 meeting.

2010 ISAC Spring School of Instruction Agenda

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

8:00 am	Registration (Marriott)
8:00 am - 9:00 am	Continental Breakfast (Marriott)
9:00 am - 10:15 am	ISAC Educational Seminars (Marriott)
10:30 am - 11:45 am	ISAC Educational Seminars (Marriott)
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Box Lunch (Marriott)
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	ISAC General Session (Marriott)
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Refreshment Break (Marriott)
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Affiliate Time (Marriott and Savery)
8:00 pm - 11:30 pm	ISAC Social Event/Dance (Savery)

Thursday, March 25, 2010

7:30 am - 8:30 am	Morning Refreshments (Marriott and Savery)
8:30 am - 4:30 pm	Affiliate Time (Marriott and Savery)

As you can see, there are a few agenda revisions from the 2009 ISAC Spring School in Des Moines. I have highlighted these revisions for you:

- First, the major revision is that there will be no exhibit hall. A variety of sponsorship opportunities have replaced the traditional exhibit booths.
- The second major revision is that the third day of the conference has been eliminated to make the conference a two-day event. This will help counties financially with the number of nights conference attendees need to stay in Des Moines. ISAC will begin the conference with our educational opportunities and affiliates will end the conference agenda.
- Like at the 2009 spring school, morning refreshments will be served each morning, as well as a conference-wide box lunch on Wednesday. There will be open lunch on Thursday.

The new registration process that we will be implementing at the 2009 ISAC Fall School will continue at the 2010 ISAC Spring School. We will announce the conference registration information, which will include your hotel accommodations, later this fall.

We hope that these new conference revisions will be beneficial to all of our conference attendees. Based on your evaluation feedback, these revisions were created and then were presented and approved by the ISAC Board of Directors.

If you ever have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact me at shorner@iowacounties.org. Thanks again for your patience as we implement these changes to better serve our members!

Van Buren County Engineer

Van Buren County, Iowa, is now seeking qualified applicants for the position of County Engineer. Position requires registration as Professional Engineer in the State of Iowa. Salary is negotiable based on qualifications/experience. Anticipated hire date is July 1, 2009.

Cover letter with resume may be sent to: Van Buren County Auditor's office, PO Box 475, Keosauqua, Iowa 52565. For additional information, call 319-293-3129 or email: jfinney@vbcoia.org

2009 ISAC District Legislative Meeting Schedule

The ISAC staff will travel to the six ISAC districts to conduct a series of district meetings to provide county officials with a summary of the legislation that passed during the last session and to discuss important issues for our members to consider.

2009 ISAC Legislative Workshop Dates/Locations

Tuesday, June 9 – District 5

Honey Creek Resort
12633 Resort Drive
Moravia, IA 52571

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 1.

Wednesday, June 10 – District 6

Kirkwood Center for Continuing Education
7725 Kirkwood Blvd SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 1.

Tuesday, June 23 – District 2

Hanford Inn
3041 4th Street SW
Mason City, IA 50402

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 15.

Wednesday, June 24 – District 3

King's Pointe Resort
1520 Lakeshore Drive
Storm Lake, IA 50588

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 15.

Wednesday, July 8 – District 1

Stoney Creek Inn
5291 Stoney Creek Court
Johnston, IA 50131

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 29.

Thursday, July 9 – District 4

Southwestern Community College
1501 W. Towline Street
Creston, IA 50801

*Registration Deadline is Monday, June 29.

2009 ISAC Legislative Workshop Agenda

9:00 am - 9:30 am	Registration and Morning Refreshments
9:30 am - 9:45 am	District Meeting
9:45 am - 10:45 am	General Session
10:45 am - 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Legislator's Roundtable
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Affiliate Breakout Meetings

You can register for the district workshops on-line at www.iowacounties.org. The pre-registration fee is \$35 and registration is \$40 at the door. Morning refreshments and lunch are included in your registration fee, as well as a copy of the legislative summary book.

If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Horner at shorner@iowacounties.org.



Recognizing Participants' Need for Access

By: Bob Beasley

NRS Communications
Consultant

As the uncertainty of the investment markets as well as the economy in general continues to concern workers trying to prepare financially for their retirement, many find themselves dealing with questions or worries about their retirement accounts well after business hours. Nationwide recognizes this need and has responded by extending its hours of service to the retirement-plan participants of the cities, counties and other governmental entities it serves.

Effective May 18, 2009, Nationwide's call centers will remain open until 10:00 pm, Monday through Friday. In addition, Nationwide is reinforcing its commitment to processing requests received by 3:00 pm on the same day every day.

This is no time to pull back

"Our country has often faced uncertain economic times in the past," Louie Watson, Vice President of Strategic Relationships for Nationwide Retirement Solutions, said, "but the current situation has brought together a particularly volatile set of conditions and events that have led to a severe market downturn and a global economy that's in crisis. Many organizations have been forced to curtail services.

"At Nationwide, we believe times like these are not for pulling back. We've seen an upward trend in calls from public employees who are looking for answers about what to do next. In announcing these extended hours, we're telling participants 'Someone is here, ready to help you put things into context and help you review your strategy and risk tolerance,'" Watson added.

Workers are looking for reassurance

Recent surveys reveal that despite experiencing declines in both account balances and confidence, workers are still committed to saving for retirement. By and large, workers are also resisting the urge to tap into their retirement accounts.(1) But only one out of every seven Americans is very confident of having enough money to live comfortably in retirement, half the amount with the same level of confidence two years ago, according to the Retirement Confidence Survey released in April 2009 by the Employee Benefit Research Institute.(2)

Watson says this underlying concern is an opportunity for employers. "Plan sponsors can help employees understand that market turmoil happens from time-to-time, but history suggests conditions are likely to recover and rebound over the long term. Since most retirement plan participants are investing for the long-term, 'staying the course' may be their best option.

"Fortunately, Nationwide is enhancing services – such as keeping our call centers open until 10:00 pm – to help participants find and use the resources available through their employer's deferred compensation plan," Watson said.

Let Nationwide help

If you're a public employee not participating in deferred compensation, contact your local Nationwide Retirement Specialist about how you may be able to enroll, or call an in-house Retirement Specialist at 877-677-3678.

If you're a benefits decision maker for a governmental employer, you should know that finding creative solutions for employers has been a hallmark of Nationwide's service to the public sector, and especially NACo. As provider of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, Nationwide has more than 30 years of collaborative experience in working with and developing solutions for our country's leading county employers. For more information on what Nationwide is doing to help participants succeed even during difficult economic conditions, contact Louie Watson, Vice-President of Strategic Relationships, by e-mail watsonl2@Nationwide.com or by phone (614-854-8895).

(1) "Keeping the Faith: Americans Still Committed to Retirement Savings," Tranamerica Center for Retirement Studies press release, April 14, 2009.

(2) "The 2009 Retirement Confidence Survey: Economy Drives Confidence to Record Lows; Many Looking to Work Longer," Press Release, Employee Benefit Research Institute, April 14, 2009

(See ad on page 23.)

Success at Safety Pays

Sometimes it takes a crisis to prompt change. It may come in the form of a serious injury to an employee, or it can come in the form of a hike in the cost of insurance. Whatever the way, it's what happens after the event that dictates the results.

About five years ago Boone County was experiencing a rash of claims that had caused their workers' compensation provider, Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA), to take note. At a board of supervisors meeting the county was presented with a choice; either make significant improvements in their loss experience or look for another provider. According to Scott Smith, Boone County Landfill Administrator and County Safety Coordinator, "the supervisors and department heads took this demand seriously and action was taken. Although several departments had active safety programs, what was missing was an overarching umbrella program that ensured a commitment to safety for all county employees. Thus, our system was built upon, and not a replacement to, existing departmental safety programs."

Boone County took advantage of their close proximity to Iowa State University (ISU) and hired a graduating senior from the ISU safety sciences department through the university's internship program to assess their system and get them to a point where the program could be monitored by a safety coordinator and an employee safety committee. This took a few months to complete but was far more effective than the county's first thought which was to carve out some time from an existing department head's schedule. They formed a safety committee consisting of management and rank and file representatives from each work area, not necessarily each department. The safety committee became the nucleus of a dynamic safety and health program for the county.

The results are impressive. First, the county significantly lowered the cost of insurance. By lowering their Experience Modification Factor (EMF) 25%, they realized a direct savings of 25% on the cost of workers' compensation insurance. But the benefits were more than just lower rates for the county. According to Smith, secondary benefits include:

- Far more communication between departments and levels of staff;
- Employees now have a method to raise safety issues that concern them (suggestion box);

■ IOWA MUNICIPALITIES WORKERS' COMPENSATION ASSOCIATION IMWCA

- Courthouse staff now has a safety program applicable to their workplace exposures;
- Increased participation in CPR/AED/First Aid training;
- Greatly improved incident reporting;
- Designated healthcare provider program;
- Job descriptions now make reference to safety protocols;
- Sharing of injury reports to make every effort to learn from these experiences; and
- The safety committee now looks at safety issues beyond employee injury, including customer safety and other liability related issues.

Clinton County has its own success story. As a result of recommendations made by the IMWCA loss control staff, the county board of supervisors issued a resolution establishing a risk management committee "to review all operations of Clinton County that affects the safety and well being of employees, officials and the public and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding policy and procedural changes."

What followed is a county-wide review and updating of individual departments' safety policies and procedures. And the county created a county-wide safety manual. According to Todd Kinney, Clinton County Engineer and Safety Coordinator, "in general I think it has brought safety more into the forefront of employees' day-to-day operations as well as making department heads aware of claims and safety issues. Departments now take an active role in mitigating workers' compensation claims." Clinton County has experienced a drop in their EMF of 17% and went from a loss ratio over 100% in FY 05 to a loss ratio of 3% in FY 08.

After these transformations, both Boone and Clinton Counties applied for IMWCA's Best Practices program. The program is based on the American National Standard for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (ANSI) Z10, and other benchmarks. The program focuses on leading indicators in the areas of underwriting, claims and loss control. History has shown that organizations who take these measures experience fewer losses and when a loss does occur, they have the tools to cost-effectively manage the claim while keeping the best interests of the employee and organization in mind.

Continues on page 15.

county in the spotlight

Johnson County Celebrates County Government Week

By: Terrence Neuzil

Johnson County Supervisor



To help kick off National County Government Week, themed "Greening Our Future," the Johnson County Board of Supervisors voted to pass the first ever Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Sustainability Plan for Johnson County Government Operations. According to the plan, the goal is to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases currently produced from daily county operations by 10% by 2010 and 80% by 2050. Johnson County plans to use and adopt many methods to reduce greenhouse gases produced, both directly and indirectly, from operations related to county buildings, vehicle fleet operations and employee commutes. As an added benefit, this plan will also achieve a noticeable annual energy cost savings, promote cleaner air, and promote "green" industries in Johnson County. As a member of ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Johnson County used Clean Air and Climate Protection (CACP) software to calculate greenhouse gas emissions to determine both baseline emissions and future emissions. From there, the plan calls for the county to create identifiable and achievable goals within two, five, or 10 years. For building management, the plan calls for the requirement of LEED-NC (new construction) Certification of all newly constructed buildings; for instance, the new Health and Human Services building and the new Conservation Office and Maintenance Facilities are on track to become LEED Certified. Just the LEED certification of the Health and Human Services building alone is projected to save

upwards of \$15,000 in energy costs and save approximately 185 tons of greenhouse gases annually. Johnson County also plans to require that all county computers be set to energy saving mode after 30 minutes of inactivity. This simple step is projected to save up to 34 tons of greenhouse gases and generate an energy cost savings of \$2,800. For the vehicle fleet, the plan calls for a policy that requires many departments to purchase vehicles that meet a minimum mile per gallon (MPG) requirement. The county also plans to educate employees on ways to reduce vehicle miles, to help facilitate employee car and van pooling efforts and to promote more use of public transit, walking or biking to work. These are just a few of the many steps Johnson County government



is doing in efforts to "Greening Our Future." Johnson County is encouraging residents to learn more about the plan by visiting the County Administration Building foyer area for displays that promote environmental efforts. You can also learn more about the new greenhouse gas reduction and sustainability plan for Johnson County government operations by visiting our website at www.johnson-county.com. Pictured are Johnson County Facilities Manager David Kempf and Johnson County Supervisor Chairperson Terrence Neuzil showing off some of the displays in the front foyer of the Johnson County Administration Building.

miscellaneous

Continued from page 14.

Boone and Clinton Counties both qualified for the award, which includes a plaque and a cash award, plus certificates for every department. The cash award includes a stipulation the money be used to further their safety and loss control efforts. Both counties are eligible for annual recognition if they continue to meet the Best Practices criteria.

Both Boone and Clinton Counties have one thing in common, an active safety committee made up of employees led by a committed safety coordinator and supported by strong boards of supervisors - all working towards the same goal: the safety and health of the employees and citizens of the county.

To learn more about IMWCA and the Best Practices program, visit www.imwca.org. IMWCA is a self-funded risk sharing pool that provides workers' compensation coverage to local governments including cities, counties, other political subdivisions and entities formed by intergovernmental agreements. IMWCA is organized under Chapter 28E of the Code of Iowa and currently covers more than 49,000 employees of nearly 500 members.

associate member highlight

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Past issues of The Iowa County can be viewed on ISAC's website, www.iowacounties.org, under news.

Editor's Note: For consideration of materials to be published in *The Iowa County* magazine, please submit before the first Friday of the previous month. (Materials for the July 2009 magazine are due on Friday, June 5.)

Thank you! Rachel

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County Risk Management Services, Inc.



calendar

June

- 3 CCMS Supervisors Training
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 9 District 5 Legislative Workshop
(Honey Creek Resort, Moravia)
- 10 District 6 Legislative Workshop
(Kirkwood Center for Continuing
Education, Cedar Rapids)
- 10 CCMS Board Meeting
(ISAC Office)
- 10-12 ICIT Mid-Year Conference
(West Des Moines Marriott)
- 12 CRIS Board Meeting
(ISAC Office, Des Moines)
- 15-17 Assessing Officers (NCRAAO) Conference
(Coralville)
- 16 CRIS Cost Report Training
(Carrollton Center, Carroll)
- 17-19 CCMS Fundamentals Training
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 23 District 2 Legislative Workshop
(Hanford Inn, Mason City)
- 24 District 3 Legislative Workshop
(King's Pointe Resort, Storm Lake)
- 25 CRIS Cost Report Training
(Kirkwood Center for Continuing
Education, Cedar Rapids)

July

- 8 District 1 Legislative Workshop
(Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)
- 9 District 4 Legislative Workshop
(Southwestern Community College,
Creston)
- 14 CCMS Administrators Training
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)
- 15 ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser
(Jester Park, Granger)
- 16 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office, Des Moines)
- 24-29 NACo Annual Conference
(Nashville, TN)
- 29-31 ISACA Summer Conference
(The Inn, Okoboji)

August

- 5-7 Recorders Summer School
(Honey Creek Resort, Moravia)
- 6-7 2009 Supervisors Executive Board
Retreat
(Holiday Inn at Ameristar Casino,
Council Bluffs)
- 12-14 CCMS Annual Conference
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)

September

- 17-18 ISAC Board of Directors Retreat
(Honey Creek Resort, Moravia)

October

- 13 CCMS Administrators Meeting
(Adventureland Inn, Altoona)
- 21-23 CCMS Fundamentals Training
(Courtyard by Marriott, Ankeny)
- 29-30 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office, Des Moines)

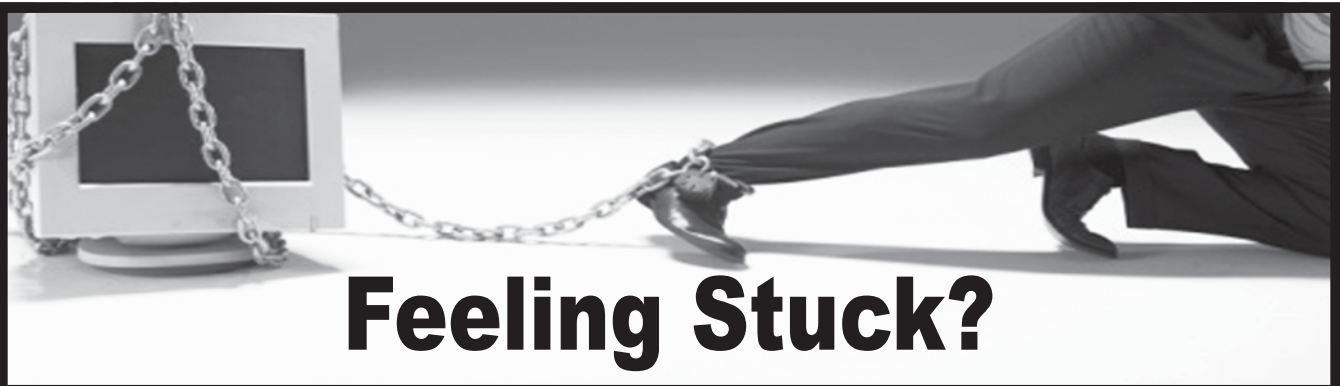
November

- 5 CCMS Advanced Case Management
Meeting
(Hilton Garden Inn, Urbandale)
- 18-20 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
(Coralville Marriott Hotel and
Conference Center, Coralville)

December

- 7-10 Iowa County Engineers Association
Annual Meeting
(Ames)
- 10 ISAC Board of Directors
(ISAC Office, Des Moines)

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 2008, 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 Stacy Horner at (515) 244-7181 or shorner@iowacounties.org.



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