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May 2004



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# The Iowa County

May 2004 \* Volume 33, Number 5

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Denise Obrecht, EDITOR



**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.*

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## Local Government Innovation Award Winners Announced

Local governments in Iowa partner together on projects to be efficient, solve problems and improve the local quality of life for their citizens. There are 6,000-7,000 intergovernmental agreements in Iowa between cities and counties, cities and cities, or counties and counties.

In December, counties and cities were given the opportunity to apply for financial assistance from the Local Government Innovation Fund, a fund created by the 2003 Legislature to encourage and support innovations at the local level. The Local Government Innovation Fund Committee received more than 70 applications from local governments. Preference was given to projects that involved sharing initiatives among two or more local governments. The fund will provide up to \$975,000 in loans and grants for local governments to use to implement new, innovative methods of service delivery. Buena Vista County Auditor Karen Strawn and Linn County Supervisor Linda Langston are among seven members of a committee that oversee the fund, evaluate applications, and award grants and loans. On March 22, 2004 Lt. Governor Sally Pederson announced recipients for grants and loans from the Local Government Innovations Fund. A total of \$352,000 was awarded in grants and loans to the following six projects.

### Attorneys Case Management Project - Henry County

In July 2003, Iowa launched a major statewide initiative to integrate its criminal justice information systems, thus affecting county attorneys. An assessment by SEARCH, the National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics, revealed that statewide integration of justice information systems is not feasible in Iowa at present because of the lack of automation in prosecutor's offices. The Iowa Exchange Analysis Report found that prosecutors operate very diverse information system infrastructures and there is little standardization, especially among primary applications like case and records management.

Zetta Pilch, Henry County Attorney's office manager, stated counties vary on how they organize their case management data. "Some counties jot information down on note cards while others input data into main frame computers," she said. County attorneys from Henry County and 29 other counties expressed interest in developing and making available a case management program or programs which are more universally accepted as well as compatible and are able to integrate with state systems. "Case loads are staggering for county prosecutors and everyone has the same processing requirements and deadlines, even the smaller counties," said Pilch. "Counties need a standardized system for efficiency and safety of records."

This project received a \$50,000 grant and a \$100,000 loan

to integrate criminal justice information. The funds will be used to explore a multi-county contract for development, installation, conversion of data to, and maintenance of a model county attorney case management system that has the capacity for statewide expansion. The counties have already started working together and hope to have the 15 counties without any electronic case management data integrated into the statewide system by January 2005. The rest of the counties will work on converting their current electronic data to the state's new system by July 2005.

The counties partnered for the project include: Audubon, Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Calhoun, Carroll, Dallas, Des Moines, Dubuque, Guthrie, Harrison, Henry, Jackson, Johnson, Kossuth, Madison, Mills, Muscatine, Plymouth, Polk, Pottawattamie, Sac, Scott, Sioux, Tama, Van Buren, Wapello, Washington, Webster, and Woodbury.

### Centralized CPR Training Equipment

Training and safety are very important for every county in Iowa, but unfortunately they too can be hard to fund in tight budget times. Hardin County Emergency Management and the Hardin County Sheriff's Office decided to partner with 30 other agencies in the county and pool resources to provide CPR training equipment that works well, meets the needs of all these

### Advantages of Interlocal Agreements

- Increased efficiency can be attained by establishing optimum-size operating units on a function-by-function basis.
- Underutilized and expensive equipment, facilities and manpower can be shared. Seldom used or expensive facilities and equipment and specialized personnel may be better utilized.
- A local government can obtain a service or a product which it cannot produce itself or can produce only at a prohibitively high cost.
- Duplication of efforts may be eliminated and overall service efficiency increased.
- A problem affecting several local governments can be solved without changing the basic structure of the local government system.
- Intergovernmental service arrangements can enhance the service capabilities of small local governments by allowing them to provide specialized services to their residents that they may not otherwise be able to afford.
- Intergovernmental service contracts allow local governments to avoid start-up costs of purchasing new equipment or hiring staff to provide a particular service.

*(Municipal Cooperation Guide, MRSC Report No. 27)*

agencies, and meets OSHA and CDC guidelines.

When Hardin County came up with this idea all of the 32 agencies had CPR classes for their personnel on a regular basis. Most of these agencies owned their own manikins and training materials used one to four times a year. Much of the equipment was outdated and out of compliance. "The majority of everyone's equipment was not in compliance with the Center for Disease Control recommendation to have manikins that can be decontaminated in order to protect trainees from AIDS, flu, colds and many other health related concerns," said Douglas Riggs, Hardin County Emergency Management Coordinator.

All of the agencies agreed to pool their equipment and have it checked out through the Hardin County Emergency Management Agency. By doing this they save large amounts of money throughout the county. The group estimated the cost if all EMS, fire and law enforcement kept their own manikins and equipment. The purchase cost for updated materials would be approximately \$58,000 with an ongoing cost of \$14,250 per year. The group's costs for mannequin upkeep will be an estimated \$1,158 per year. "It was easy to get the other agencies in the group on board due to everyone needing new equipment and seeing what a cost savings they could have partnering with us," said Riggs.

The group received a grant for \$21,294 to supply adult CPR mannequins, child CPR mannequins, infant CPR mannequins, crisis mannequins, rescue mannequins, IV arms, pediatric advanced life support mannequins, intubation mannequins, AED trainers, and other training devices. These materials are checked out without charge to members of this group. Each group has access to enough high quality and safe manikins to teach the largest classes taught in Hardin County. This should increase the number of people trained in the county. Riggs said, "I haven't heard of any other county partnering with such a large number of agencies in their county. It is really easy if you have someone that can manage the equipment and be available for equipment check out. The agencies you partner with also need to be willing to plan ahead."

This project involves the following agencies: Hardin County EMS Association, Hardin County Red Cross, Ackley EMS, AMR Ambulance Service, Eldora EMS, Union EMS, Hubbard EMS, Radcliffe EMS, Alden First Responders, Buckeye First Responders, Steamboat Rock First Responders, Whitten First Responders, Emergency Squad North, Emergency Squad South, Ackley Fire Department, Alden Fire Department, Buckeye Fire Department, Eldora Fire Department, New Providence Fire Department, Union Fire Department, Whitten Fire Department, Steamboat Rock Fire Department, Hubbard Fire Department, Radcliffe Fire Department, Iowa Falls Fire Department, Eldora Police Department, Iowa Falls Police Department, Ackley Police Department, Ellsworth Municipal Hospital, Hardin County Sheriffs' Department and Hardin County Emergency Management Agency.

## Tips For Service Sharing

On March 18, 2004, at the ISAC Spring Conference, Linn County Supervisor Linda Langston spoke about consolidation and reinvention of government, Local Government Innovation Fund projects, freedom communities, 28E agreements, economic development clusters, and other local government forms of cooperation. Three practical tips for preparing and dealing with change emerged from the day's discussion:

1. **Work on relationships.** Build relationships with other governments, agencies, businesses, organizations, schools, and other groups. Knowing people and knowing their needs shows you care, and these relationships can lay the groundwork for future partnerships. One of the Linn County supervisors attends a city council meeting for every community in the county, meeting the council, learning about their issues, and sharing information.
2. **Look for opportunities.** Some opportunities for partnership and cooperation are obvious, like the Local Government Innovation Fund. Others require some thought, and initially may not seem significant, but can build to something greater. Keep in mind all the needs of your county, rather than focusing on a single one, and opportunities will abound. Langston connected the people of Springville with the Endow Iowa program and the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, and a sizable library endowment for the small town may result.
3. **Know the facts.** Be aware of existing partnerships and cooperation in your area. Become informed enough to speak about them, their benefits, and lessons learned. Counties must market their efforts.

### CABS Accessible Taxi Project - Linn County

Since 1989, the City of Cedar Rapids Five Seasons Transportation & Parking Department and Linn County's Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities Services Department have been collaborating on an innovative program known as "CABS" that provides taxicab service at a reduced cost to eligible individuals with disabilities. The current CABS Program utilizes taxis to provide door to door service for individuals to go to and from work when buses are not running. In addition, the program also provides non-work rides to persons with disabilities who need to go grocery shopping, get to the doctor, go to

*continued to page 6*

*continued from page 5*

church, or participate in community activities when other forms of transportation are unavailable. Rather than try to develop separate programs, which neither the city or county could afford to do, the two entities have worked together to develop one unique program.

The CABS Accessible Taxi Project received a \$33,000 grant and an \$11,000 loan to expand the availability of their service to those in wheelchairs or motorized carts that cannot access a regular taxicab, so that they, like their ambulatory colleagues, can ride a cab to get to work or participate in community life. Craig Wood, Linn County MH/DD Services Director said, "We found through our research that individuals in motorized carts and some wheelchairs cannot use public transportation since their carts will not fold down. In some situations the only way they can get to the doctor is to call the ambulance which costs \$200 that they privately pay."

The Local Government Innovation funding will help to defray the cost of the ride for eligible participants for one year. The expanded service will ensure that there is 24-hour accessible transportation for everyone in their community. "Currently the CABS program gives 10,000 rides a year," said Wood. "With our expanded service we think we will add at least 2,500 more rides each year. It is hard to know for certain what the demand will be."

While other communities across the state have followed the CABS Program example and are purchasing cab rides for

special population groups, there is currently no accessible taxi cab service in the state of Iowa, which makes the CABS Accessible Taxi Project both unique and innovative. In addition, the strong sense of collaboration that exists between local governments, non-profits and the private sector within Linn County could serve as a model for other areas of the state. Wood said that in order for other counties to replicate the CABS project the county would have to pool talents and money with a city or cities where the service will be provided and have a taxi cab company available. "This project is fairly easy to control financially."

## Conclusion

The remaining two project winners were cities in Iowa. The cities of Slater and Sheldahl received a \$28,800 grant to determine the feasibility of sharing and/or merging environmental and recreational features; sidewalk and roadway maintenance and equipment; personnel; development and land use; and water and sanitary sewer systems. The city of Denver received a \$7,500 grant to simplify administrative issues between the Denver subdivision ordinance and Bremer County subdivision ordinance by using the expertise of Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments. The Local Government Innovation Fund Committee has \$54,000 in grants and \$569,000 in loans still eligible to be awarded this year.

## counties in the spotlight

In continuing efforts to inform and educate the public, **Hancock County's** elected officials and department heads hosted a year-in-review forum in December. Hancock County Attorney Karen Kaufman advised constituents on a variety of topics. Karen noted challenges facing governmental officials, capital improvements for the county and concluded with a power point presentation concerning the 2003-2004 budget. The evening forum offered county officials the opportunity to exchange ideas with citizens and answer questions.



*Hancock County Attorney  
Karen Kaufman*

**Wright County** Emergency Management received a Homeland Security Grant for the purchase of a command center trailer. The 22 foot trailer can be used as a command post where county and city officials can be together in a secure location for decision making. During a major fire, it could be used as a place for fireman to rest and recover. When there is a stressful situation for a family, such as a drowning, the trailer can be used as a place for the family to wait and be away from the recovery efforts. The trailer is equipped with a generator for plug in power; a radio system for communications to any fire department, ambulance, or EMS in the county to request additional help; and storage space for equipment. Wright County will be applying for additional grant money for purchasing radios, backboards, blankets, video camera and an additional generator.

*(Taken from the Wright County Monitor, March 10)*

## 2004 Legislative Dramas

*"Government can easily exist without law, but law cannot exist without government." - Bertrand Russell*

*"Pizza counter waiter: 'Do you want the pizza in six or eight slices?' Yogi Berra : 'Better make it six. I can't eat eight'"*

As anyone who has read this column for more than a year or two knows, every legislative session has its own personality. This one strikes an observer in some ways much resembling its 2003, 2002 and 2001 siblings, short on revenues and long on feisty arguments about priorities. The 2004 model is contentious, but it doesn't seem to be as contentious and angry as last years. Perhaps this is because we are getting used to a bit more rancor. Education funding has been very much the center of the discussion and the fire of this session, more so than the debate on gaming.

### Tax Limitation Bill

The 2004 session, toward the waning weeks, resembled two older brothers : 1992 and 1998-99. In 1992, during a special session, the Legislature approved the now infamous "tax freeze" bill. This year, a limitation bill appeared suddenly in mid-March. In its original form, HSB 718 established a maximum limit on the property tax dollars which could be levied, with the exception of taxes on new construction and mental health. It would also impose a limit on local government fund balances. In 1998 and again the following year, as is required for an addition to the Iowa Constitution, the Legislature passed a constitutional amendment which would require a 60% majority vote in each chamber of the Legislature for any state tax increase. That effort lost at the polls in June 1999. This year, a new constitutional amendment appeared in March which is a variation of the 1998-99 theme. This would require a vote of the people to ratify tax or fee increases by the General Assembly. It would also require a popular vote to ratify actions of the Legislature, which would cut funding to local governments. This proposal has been referred to as the "protect you from us" act of 2004. This would require another legislative approval in 2005 and then a thumbs up at the polls.

### HAVA

The marriage of election administration changes and the state's appropriation of matching funds for the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and the ensuing nasty fight over provisions dealing with absentee ballots was on center stage for the second year in a row. This has been important to counties because of the matching funds (this year amounting to \$15 million) with which to pay for a significant chunk of the cost of new voting machines, as is proscribed by HAVA.

### Recorders' Technology Fee

Another county connected legislative effort which had a

*By: Robert Mulqueen*

ISAC Public Policy Analyst



second act in 2004 was that involving the county recorders' technology fee on real estate documents. This \$5 fee was included in 2003's "reinvention of government" legislation which was given final approval in the waning hours of that session. Four dollars of this fee was to sunset on July 1, 2004. However, a proposal floated in March would retain the \$4, \$2 of which would continue to fund the recorders real estate documents website and \$2 of which would go toward a current or future local housing trust fund. There are currently only eight or nine such funds in the state at the moment. But, as proved in other states, such as Pennsylvania, such local pots of money attract both private and public funding for housing rehabilitation and the development of new affordable housing of many types. While existing local housing trust funds in Iowa have been primarily in metro counties such as Polk and Johnson, they could be a vital part of rural development if given half a chance to succeed.

### 9-1-1 System

Second acts and sequels seem to have been the order of the day for counties this year because the 9-1-1 saga continued for a second year. While a 9-1-1 system is hardly new, completing the system to include a caller's location for wireless telephones has been a goal since it became apparent that the technological advances to enable this were available. This journey began with legislation in 1998 and was to be completed last year. The bill which would have paved the way for finishing this process was shelved in 2003 and didn't come to life again until February of this year.

### Underground Storage Tanks

Some legislative dramas are not in two or even three acts, but in 10 or 12. The original Iowa leaking underground storage tank legislation was put together during the 1989 session. This effort to inventory and find the funding to clean up numerous underground petroleum tanks was seen as a follow-up to the Iowa Groundwater Act of 1987. Like the '87 law, the tank act was landmark legislation, complete with endless meetings, screaming and gnashing of teeth. Almost every year since then, legislation has been acted upon to tweak or refine the '89 act. The result has been an underground tank clean-up program which has been better than many other state programs around the nation. This year, the focus in a little noticed bill (HF 2401) was on above ground petroleum storage tanks and the need to close and remove or upgrade such hardware. For a limited time a fund can be drawn upon, borrowed from the underground tank fund, to pay for the removal of or upgrade. This is important to such county offices as the engineer and the conservation director, many of whom have above ground tanks and are eligible to make application for these funds.

The effects of the 2004 legislative session will be felt through the summer and certainly during the fall campaign.

## When Can a County Legally Revoke a Building Permit?

### Building Permits

Is there anything that a county can do when it realizes that it has issued a building permit in error? With spring arriving, and construction beginning around the state, it is a good time to answer this question.

In a Supreme Court case called *City of Lamoni v Livingston*, 392 NW2d 506 (Iowa 1986) the city gave Livingston a permit to build a sawmill. The zoning administrator had issued a building permit after erroneously deciding that a sawmill was authorized because it qualified as a “non-manufacturing enterprise.” Livingston began construction, and then the city realized that the sawmill was not allowed by the local zoning ordinance. They revoked the permit. He sued over the revocation.

One of his arguments was that the city’s issuance of a building permit prevented the city from later asserting the invalidity of the building permit. In other words, he was saying “I’ve got my permit in my hand, I’ve done everything you have asked, I’ve already begun construction at considerable expense, so buzz off.”

Can a city or county revoke a permit if construction has already begun? The answer is that it depends on the circumstances. The Supreme Court said the factual circumstances fall into three categories:

1) If the building permit was properly issued in accordance with applicable ordinances it may not be revoked after the permit holder has begun construction in reliance on the permit if there is no violation of the applicable ordinances. *See City of New Hampton v. Blayne-Martin Corp.*, 594 N.W. 2d 40, 44 (Iowa 1999).

2) On the other hand, where the construction is prohibited by the county ordinance, even if building has begun, the deficiency is deemed jurisdictional and reliance on the permit will not bar a revocation. In these types of cases, the Iowa Supreme Court has held that because the permit was granted wholly without legal authority, there was no power in the zoning officer or board of adjustment to grant it in the first place, and the permit holder acquires no vested rights. *See Arkae Development, Inc. v. Zoning Board of Adjustment*, 312 N.W.2d 574, 578 (Iowa 1981). In other words, if a permit was illegally granted, the permit holder’s reliance is no bar to an injunction against further construction by the board of adjustment.

3) What about the middle situation in which the zoning official in good faith and within the ambit of his duty makes an erroneous interpretation of the ordinance and the property owner in good faith relies on the permit and commences construction?

The Iowa Supreme Court has said that the permit holder acquires the vested right to proceed under his building permit, and the board of adjustment cannot revoke the permit. *See Crow*

By: David Vestal

ISAC Deputy Director



*v. Board of Adjustment of Iowa City*, 288 N.W. 145, 147 (Iowa 1939).

In the *Livingston* case with the sawmill, the Court said that the case fit into the second category, situations where a permit is granted wholly without legal authority.

The Court said that the permit was unauthorized and void because clearly a sawmill is not a “non-manufacturing enterprise.” Thus, the zoning officer had no authority to issue the permit to build the sawmill. For this reason, the Court held that there was no merit in the defendant’s claim that the permit gave him a vested right to build the sawmill.

So if your county does issue a building permit in error, and wants to revoke it, the fact that the county issued the permit in the first place is not determinative. The question will be which factual category does your situation fall into?

### Courthouse Campaigning

I spoke at the ISAC Spring School on free speech rights of county employees. One of the questions I was asked afterwards was whether county employees can display partisan political bumper stickers at their desks. There is no express prohibition on such conduct in the Iowa Code, other than the language in Iowa Code §39A.4 prohibiting soliciting votes at a polling place on election day itself.

But it is more complicated than that. Iowa Code §68A.505 (formerly 56.12A) provides that “the governing body of a county...shall not expend or permit the expenditure of public moneys for political purposes...” The Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board (IECDB) has interpreted this Code section as prohibiting bumper stickers in county courthouses, since public money pays for the furniture to which the stickers are affixed.

As far as campaign buttons, however, the IECDB said in an advisory opinion in 2000 (number 2000-06) that 68A.505 does not prohibit county employees from wearing political buttons and political t-shirts at work, since there is no expenditure of public funds involved. So at least according to the IECDB, t-shirts and political buttons are okay, but bumper stickers are not.

The opinion went on to note that elected officials could enact internal policies that would prohibit the wearing of campaign materials in the office. That is the same point I made at the Spring School.

**Parting Ponderable:** And you thought you had problems with employee retention: “Every year in the United States, 600,000 to 700,000 Wal-Mart associates walk out the door and must be replaced by fresh faces. An analysis by Staffing.org shows that the retail industry spends \$2,379 for each new hire. At that price, the tab for hiring 600,000 workers would be \$1.4 billion.”

- *Workforce Management, February 2004*



## What Is Reasonable?

Have you heard about the low-carb trend? Well, it would be very difficult lately to not notice! It amazes me that even the restaurants have joined the craze. There are several reasons why this and other diets may not be a good idea.

1. **Just using the word diet makes me hungry.** The minute I know I can't eat something that is the very thing I crave.
2. **Eating a lot of one food just isn't a good idea.** A balanced diet of a variety of foods is a lot more interesting and you will probably stay with it much longer than something like the "grapefruit diet" or other diets that limit foods and stress other foods.
3. **You will not be able to do without foods you love long term.** Try to work them into your diet without overdoing it.
4. **Most diet plans are not meant to be done for long periods of time.** What do you do when it is over? What happens when you can't stand it any more?
5. **Most diets will work for a period of time.** There is almost always some truth in them. This makes people very ex-

*By: Sandy Longfellow*

ISAC Administrative Assistant



cited while they are on it and depressed when they gain the weight back and more.

Okay, here's what I think – take it or leave it. I think most diets are stressful. You go places where it is hard to stay on them.

When you don't eat what they suggest you feel guilty. Often, even though you have eaten that apple or carrot that was restricted you feel like a loser. I would rather feel guilty about eating chocolate!

Try this. 1) When you go out to eat try to pick things that are delicious but not as bad for you as almost anything fried. Try a grilled chicken breast or a lean cut of grilled meat. 2) Don't forget to work in vegetables and fruit. Go to the farmers market and get something fresh. 3) When you want a dessert, get a small one and split it.

Do you get worn out by all those ads in magazines and on television? Do we not have more important things to think about in life? Maybe we should be thinking more about how to help other people get through life than what we stuff in our mouths. And really, do you think eating all that fatty food is a good thing?

## technology center

### Importance of Security

**Q: I am extremely nervous about opening my e-mails; do you have any advice on how to prevent viruses and eliminating SPAM?**

**A:** Unfortunately, there are no guarantees to keep you completely safe in the technology world. However, with a little caution and some preventive measures, you can keep yourself and your computer safe from harm. The easiest method of preventing damage to your computer is to use caution when opening e-mails. Remember you can be your own worst enemy when it comes to viruses. Never open an e-mail with attachments that have an .exe, .txt, or .zip extensions. These more often than not are viruses, even when they are being generated from a valid e-mail address. If you receive an e-mail with an attachment that looks suspicious – **DO NOT OPEN!** Contact the sender and verify that they actually sent you the e-mail. When in doubt, **DELETE!** Always weigh in on the side of caution; it will save you and your IT department hours of extra work. To help in the process of virus prevention, invest in virus protection software. Norton Anti-Virus or McAfee are a couple of excellent anti-virus software programs that are cost effective. McAfee costs as little as \$39.99 per

*By: Tammy Norman*

ISAC Technical  
Administrative Assistant



year and Norton AntiVirus software that includes virus protection, SPAM filtering and a firewall can be purchased for \$69.95.

As far as the issue of SPAM, I spoke with several IT Directors at the ISAC Spring School and the consensus among the group was FrontBridge and Postini. These are SPAM filtering services that are extremely effective and pay for themselves with savings in staff time and reduction in downloading viruses.

**Website Note:** The legislative district workshops are just around the corner, please take a moment to sign up for the workshop in your district. You can register online by visiting ISAC's homepage ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) and clicking on 'Online Meeting Registration.' Relevant information about the district workshops can be found by clicking on 'Upcoming Events.' If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please forward any items that you would like addressed in this column to my attention at [tnorman@iowacounties.org](mailto:tnorman@iowacounties.org) or by calling 515-244-7181. Until next month, keep clicking!

# ISAC brief

## ISAC's Spring School A Success

More than 900 county officials traveled to Des Moines for education, skills training and networking during ISAC's 61st Spring School of Instruction & Business Meeting held March 17-19 at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines.

ISAC awarded scholarships to eight outstanding high school students during ISAC's General Session on March 18. The winner of the top scholarship, in the amount of \$3,000, was Anna Kuennen from Northwood (Worth County). Six other students received scholarships in the amount of \$1,500: Mary Widman from Altoona (Polk County); Penny Zaugg from Pocahontas (Pocahontas County); Nathan Stouder from Malvern (Mills County); Danielle Boeding from Fort Madison (Lee County); Ryan Grekoff from Springville (Linn County); and Katie Lester from Clarion (Wright County). Emily Bakke from Muscatine (Muscatine County) received a scholarship in the amount of \$250 from the ISAC Alumni Association.

During ISAC's General Session more than 300 county officials were honored with Years of Service Awards to acknowledge their dedication to serving citizens through county government. Years of Service Awards were given to county officials with 15 years of service or more (in five-year increments). Bob Sandy, Warren County Supervisor, was recognized for 55 years of service and Virginia Sleeper, Buchanan County Assessor, for 45 years of service.

Other highlights during the General Session included: Jane Halliburton, Story County Supervisor and NACo Board Representative, making a presentation on the NACo Rural Action Caucus; Pat Gill, President of the Auditors' Association and Woodbury County Auditor, explaining the State Election Administrators Training Program (SEAT) which auditors and other county employees are involved; and the FY05 budget approval by the ISAC membership.

Seminars offered by ISAC were on topics such as substance abuse addiction, health care, landfill operations, service sharing 28E agreements, and the freedom of speech in the workplace.

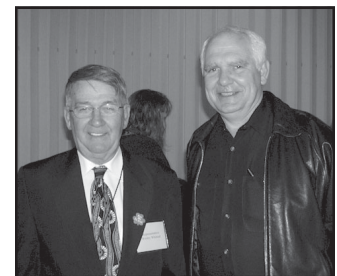
Mark your calendar for ISAC's Fall School of Instruction scheduled for November 14-16, 2004 at the Downtown Marriott and Renaissance Savery. For further information visit ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) and click on 'Upcoming Events.'



ISAC scholarship winners (L to R): Anna Kuennen, Danielle Boeding, Mary Widman, Penny Zaugg, Nathan Stouder, Katie Lester, and Ryan Grekoff.



Above: Past President Dick Heidloff presents Katie Lester with the ISAC Past Presidents Award. Above Right: Anna Kuennen read a short story after receiving the top ISAC scholarship in the amount of \$3,000. Right: Angela Connolly, ISAC 1st VP, conducted ISAC's general session.



Above left: Rep. Dolores Mertz dressed in St. Patrick's Day attire and Buchanan County Engineer Brian Keierleber at the legislative reception. Above: Rep. Wes Whitehead talks with Pat Gill, Woodbury County Auditor, during the legislative reception. Left: Senator Neal Schuerer and Iowa County Supervisor Charles Montross relax during ISAC's legislative reception.



Left: The exhibit area was busy with more than 900 county officials at ISAC's Spring School.





*Butch Hoffman with Danko Emergency Equipment Co. was one of 45 exhibitors at ISAC's Spring School.*



*Left: Two county officials look over the exhibit area. Below: Bill Peterson, ISAC Executive Director, takes a break at the ISAC Information Desk with a Des Moines volunteer and ISAC Alumni Member Sharon Winchell.*

*Environmental Air Solutions displayed their air-to-air heat exchange in the exhibitor area.*



*Jeff Heil with Ruan Securities talks to Jim Ledvina, Tama County Supervisor.*

## Recognition and Thanks

The ISAC staff wishes to thank the following associations and people for their help and assistance in making the 2004 Spring School a success.

The 14 organizations that sponsored the conference: Cott Systems, Inc.; Fidler Election Company; First American Real Estate Tax Service; ING; IPAIT; Solutions, Inc.; The Sidwell Company; Architects Wells Kastner Schipper; INCODE – CMS; J. A. Reno Associates, Inc.; JEO Consulting Group, Inc.; MAXIMUS, Inc.; PMC, Pro Map Corporation; and Ruan Securities Corporation. We thank these organizations for their continued financial support to ISAC.

The Alumni Association for supervising the ISAC Information Table. When we are short on staff, we know we can count on them for help.

A special thank you to Angela Connolly, ISAC 1st VP and Polk County Supervisor, for filling in for ISAC President J. Patrick White and conducting the ISAC General Session and Business Meeting. Jane Halliburton, NACo Representative and Story County Supervisor, and Pat Gill, President of the Auditors' Association and Woodbury County Auditor, for making presentations during the ISAC General Session.

And finally, the county officials from around the state that came to ISAC's Spring School to support the association and to discuss the issues directly affecting Iowans this legislative session.



*State Election Administrators Training (SEAT) program graduates were honored during the Auditors affiliate meeting. Above: 2004 graduates. Right: 2003 graduates.*



# ISAC brief

## ISAC Fall School 2004

By: *Jerri Noboa*

ISAC Meetings Administrator



I want to put your mind at ease regarding parking and the skywalk system for ISAC's Fall School scheduled for November 14-16, 2004. We will be meeting in downtown Des Moines at the Marriott and the Renaissance Savery. A color map of the parking ramps and skywalk system in downtown Des Moines can be found by visiting ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) and clicking on 'Upcoming Events' then 'ISAC Fall School Information.' The specific fees of each parking ramp are also available on this web page. On the map of the skywalk system, you will notice that it is not connected to the Hotel Fort Des Moines. Take my word the skywalk system is now complete; they just need to update their map. If you do not feel you can walk from the Hotel Fort Des Moines to the Marriott or Renaissance Savery, you can catch a shuttle from the Hotel Fort Des Moines to either hotel and both of those hotels will take you back.

If you are coming in town on Sunday and staying at the Renaissance Savery, I would park in the 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue parking ramp. If you are staying at the Marriott, I would park at the 7<sup>th</sup> Street parking ramp or the valet parking lot at the Marriott. At the Marriott, if you prefer, you can pull into the hotel parking lot to check in first and then go park at the ramp. Also in Des Moines on Sunday, you can park at any parking meter at no charge. If you are staying at the Fort Des Moines, park at the 10<sup>th</sup> street parking ramp. You can probably be guaranteed your choice of parking spots on Sunday.

On Monday if the 4<sup>th</sup> Street or 7<sup>th</sup> Street parking ramps are full, park in the Park'n Ride ramp at 7<sup>th</sup> Street between Crocker and Center Streets and across from the Veteran's Auditorium. There is a shuttle that runs every 15 minutes from there and the cost is 25¢ each way. I will spend more time on this parking ramp in next month's article. Note: the shuttle does not run on Sundays.

Visit ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) under 'Upcoming Events' for further information on ISAC's 2004 Fall School.

## Meet the Board Members

Timothy Huey has served as Scott County Planning Director since April 1996. "I enjoy being a zoning administrator/land use planner and representing CoZo on the ISAC Board." He was sworn in as a member of the ISAC Board of Directors on January 16. "I think planners can make valuable contributions to the ISAC Board because of the nature of planning and the skills they bring. Planners try to find solutions and reach decisions that take divergent views and interests and reach acceptable compromises."



Before working in Scott County, Timothy was the city planner and senior planner for the Rapid City-Pennington County Planning Department in the Black Hills and Badlands of South Dakota for a total of eight years. Timothy's hope for ISAC is to educate state legislators on the needs of local governments and let counties do the jobs required to do without undo interference. "I hope that ISAC could work with the League of Cities on issues of common interest to effect good legislation and to prevent bad legislation."

Timothy is currently President of the Scott County Housing Council; Board of Director/Treasurer for the Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau; Board of Director/Treasurer for the Greater Davenport Redevelopment Corp.; Past President for the Quad City Riverfront Council; member of the Iowa Metro Building Officials; member of the Board of Directors Partnership for Scott County Watersheds; member of the Career Link Advisory Board for Eastern Iowa Community College District.

In Timothy's spare time he enjoys cooking, gardening, music (listening) and films (watching). His wife Sandy is a registered landscape architect.

### Looking for Information Related to ISAC's Board of Directors?

Visit ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) for profiles of each member of the ISAC Board of Directors, contact information for each board member, and minutes from the board meetings. Click on 'About ISAC', then 'Board of Directors.'

## Summer District Workshops

The final stage of the ISAC policy cycle are the ISAC Legislative District Workshops held in June. The workshops consist of meetings with the county officials in each of the six ISAC districts throughout Iowa. At these meetings, the ISAC staff provides a presentation about the legislative year and its outcomes. Area legislators are invited. Finally, breakout sessions for affiliate groups are held and the ISAC staff makes special presentations to them about bills affecting their particular areas. Every county official that attends a workshop receives a copy of the ISAC Bill Summary Book. *To register for one of ISAC's Legislative District Workshops visit ISAC's website at [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org) and click on 'Upcoming Events.'* The on-line registration fee is \$35, at the door registration is \$40.

### District Workshop Locations

June 10 - District II

Location: Forest City, Waldorf College

June 11 - District III

Location: Storm Lake, Buena Vista University

June 16 - District IV

Location: Council Bluffs, Mid-America Center

June 17 - District I

Location: Des Moines, Holiday Inn Airport (6111 Fleur Drive)

June 18 - District V

Location: Ottumwa, Indian Hills Community College

June 25 - District VI

Location: Cedar Falls, University of Northern Iowa

### District Workshop Agenda

9am - 9:30am Registration

9:30am - 9:45am District Meeting

9:45am - 10:45am General Session

10:45am - 11am Break

11am - Noon Roundtable with Legislators

Noon - 1pm Lunch

1pm - 3:30pm Affiliate Meetings  
- Auditors, Assessors, Community Services  
Engineers, Recorders, Supervisors,  
Treasurers, Zoning

## alumni corner

### Upcoming Alumni Meetings

Members of the ISAC Alumni Association met at the ISAC Spring School and decided on two things. First, they are inviting all former county officials, elected and appointed, to join them for lunch at any of the ISAC district workshops and spend time chatting and reminiscing. The location and dates of the workshops are located on the Calendar of Events page in the magazine and on ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) under 'Upcoming Events.'

Second, they will be holding their annual meeting in conjunction with the ISAC steering committee meeting at the Holiday Inn Airport in Des Moines on September 1. Again they are asking all current alumni and former county officials, elected and appointed to join them for lunch and a meeting from Noon - 2pm.

*If you are interested in any of these meetings, please call Jerri Noboa at the ISAC office 515-244-7181.*

### Interested in Becoming An ISAC Alumni Member?

Anyone who is a former elected or appointed county employee is eligible to become an ISAC Alumni Member. A few membership benefits include a subscription to *The Iowa County* magazine and an invitation to the ISAC Schools (free registration and same sleeping room rates as other attendees). Alumni meetings are held during the ISAC Fall School of Instruction and the ISAC Spring School of Instruction. Other meetings are held throughout the year as needed. The dues are \$25 per year.

For further information, including an application form, visit ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) and click on 'About ISAC' then 'Members.'

# associate member highlights

## NovaLIS Technologies

NovaLIS Technologies' software suite automates and integrates the collection and flow of information within land records agencies, streamlining land records activities, reducing administrative costs, and capitalizing on the latest advancements in hardware and software technology. Our products include Assessment Office™, Land Development Office™, Land Titles Office™ by ILS, Billing & Collection Office™, GATE™, and Parcel Editor™.

*GIS Integration:* At NovaLIS, GIS technology is not an add-on, but an integral component of our solutions, which are designed to operate on a fully integrated basis with ESRI's ArcGIS, ArcView, and MapObjects products. *Flexibility:* Never be held hostage by your vendor again! NovaLIS gives you the tools and knowledge to customize our solutions to meet your evolving needs. This means long after implementation, you have the power to modify the solution at no additional cost. *Workflow:* NovaLIS' solutions provide workflow capabilities for replacing even the most intricate manual, paper-based business processes. Automatic task generation and assignment - and the ability to immediately pinpoint where and why a slow-down has occurred - aid land agencies in the struggle to streamline and improve service delivery.

**Product Integration:** Our software suite is an integrated management solution that maintains the integrity and accuracy of land records by updating spatial and attribute information in one central database. It streamlines land records information management by enabling users to view and update data using a user-friendly, multi-purpose interface or using the Web, PDAs, IVR, and tablet computer technology. *Team NovaLIS:* We have a unique understanding of our customers' needs because many of our employees were recruited directly from the industry we serve. We have an exceptional team of software developers, product specialists, and implementation consultants that develop and deliver our solutions.

**Contact Information:** Charlie Magruder, Midwest Regional Manager      Email: [cmagruder@novalistech.com](mailto:cmagruder@novalistech.com)  
Phone: (636) 294-1623      Web: [www.novalistech.com](http://www.novalistech.com)

## NACo news

### National Homeland Security Funding Task Force

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Tom Ridge appointed four county officials to a new Homeland Security Funding Task Force, which will study the funding process and ensure that federal homeland security dollars flow faster to local first responders.

The four officials representing counties on the Task Force are Montgomery County (Md.) Executive Doug Duncan, Story County Supervisor Jane Halliburton, Yuma County (Ariz.) Sheriff Ralph Ogden, and Johnson County (Kan.) Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Mike Selves. The Task Force is composed of state and local officials knowledgeable about the homeland security funding process and will operate under the direction of the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) and its State and Local Officials and Emergency Response Senior Advisory Committees.

Jane said, "This is a critical issue for all of our nation's first responders - law enforcement, fire fighters and emergency medical service. The National Association of Counties and others have been raising it's importance for over a year. I welcome the opportunity to work with Secretary Ridge and the Department of Homeland Security, and representatives of other state, local and tribal organizations to look for solutions that help protect Americans from terrorism while assuring base-level preparedness for threats from disease to natural disasters."

"Ensuring that local first responders have the necessary funding to carry out their mission is critical," said NACo President and Boone County (Mo.) Commissioner Karen M. Miller. "This new Task Force will help expedite the funding process because of the increased collaboration between all levels of government."

The Department has implemented a national strategy that allows funds to flow quickly from the Department to the states and requires states to partner with county, city, and tribal officials and work together to build a bottom-up system that serves the national strategy while sharing information, resources, and equipment. This plan highlights Secretary Ridge's commitment to "One Mission, One Team."

## Enhancement Seed for County Roadsides

*Counties Partnering Together*

*By: Kirk Henderson*

University of Northern Iowa

Forty-five counties recently sent someone in a pickup from their secondary road department or conservation board to the Native Roadside Vegetation (NRV) Center at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI). They returned to their counties with 350 pounds of prairie grass and wildflower seed, their share of a \$200,000 Transportation Enhancement Program seed purchase. Over the next few months, the native seed will be planted in county road right-of-way (r-o-w). The plantings are part of these counties' Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM) programs.

Most of the forty-five counties have a full-time IRVM Roadside Manager who will install the plantings. They will use specialized seeding equipment such as native grass drills and hydro-seeders purchased by the state's Living Roadway Trust Fund. The Transportation Enhancement Program and the Living Roadway Trust Fund are administered by Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT). These funding sources have been vital to the success of Iowa's county IRVM programs.

Iowa Code §314.22, which outlines IRVM, states: *It is declared to be in the general public welfare of Iowa and a highway purpose for the vegetation of Iowa's roadsides to be preserved, planted, and maintained to be safe, visually interesting, ecologically integrated, and useful for many purposes.* The Enhancement seed each county received will help fulfill this charge. A diverse mix of prairie species, grasses, legumes and wildflowers, will create a stable plant community designed to protect the soil, help prevent weeds, restore our natural heritage, improve wildlife habitat and add visual interest to the landscape.

County IRVM programs have been obtaining seed, equipment and education for roadside prairie restoration for 15 years. Iowa now has a small army of experienced, well equipped roadside managers around the state. They are positioned to make the most of each county's 4,000-acre roadside resource. With roadside managers in place to use the seed and the Roadside Office at UNI to administer the seed purchase and distribution, IRVM makes efficient use of this portion of Iowa's Transportation Enhancement Funds. Every dollar received goes for seed.

To be eligible for a share of the seed, a county need only have an IRVM plan on file with Iowa DOT. Over the last seven years 66 different counties have obtained seed at least one time. The chart below shows how Enhancement Fund money has been used to purchase native seed for the counties.

Year	Enhancement Dollars Received	Pounds Grasses	Purchased - Forbs	Acres Planted	Species in Grasses	Mix -Forbs	Number Counties Participating
1998	\$142,000	4,350	540	362	5	23	31
1999	\$367,000	11,024	1,796	918	6	22	52
2000	\$388,000	15,288	1,870	1,274	5	28	55
2001	\$461,000	6,172	1,696	514	9	38	54
2002	\$461,000	19,681	3,108	1,640	10	40	55
2003	\$189,000	14,390	2,042	1,199	6	17	42
2004	\$200,000	17,639	2,186	1,469	6	24	45

With a single, joint purchase counties receive a much better price than individual counties making small purchases on their own. The funds have also been used to encourage the production of Yellow Tag, Source-Identified seed. By guaranteeing at least a 20% premium for this seed, production by private growers has gone up and prices have come down. Native seedings no longer have to cost more than traditional seedings. The commitment to Yellow Tag seed also maximizes the amount of these public funds that are spent within the state.

There are so many positive things happening in Iowa's roadsides. Not every county is participating as much as possible. It would be good to see more counties taking advantage of what is available, from both the Transportation Enhancement Program and the Living Roadway Trust Fund. To find out if your county is participating or for information on how to get your county involved, contact: Kirk Henderson, Native Roadside Vegetation Center, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614-0294 Phone: 319-273-2813 E-mail: kirk.henderson@uni.edu.

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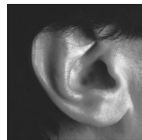
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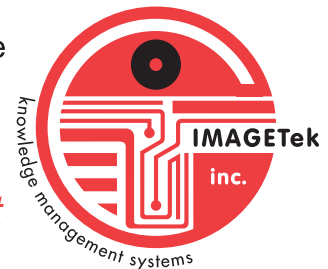
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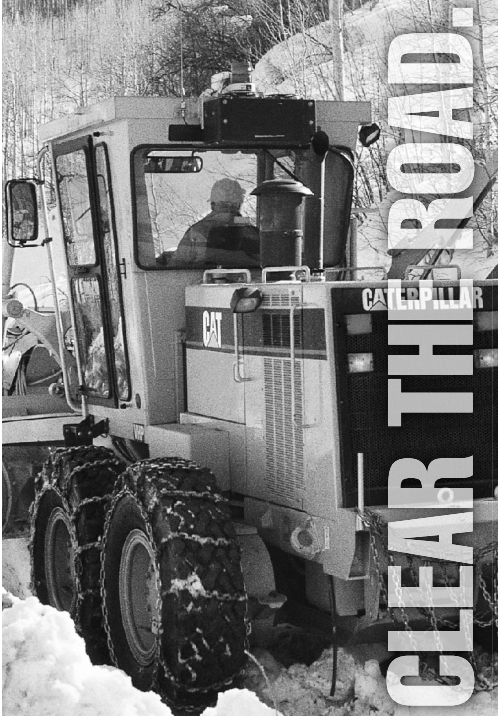
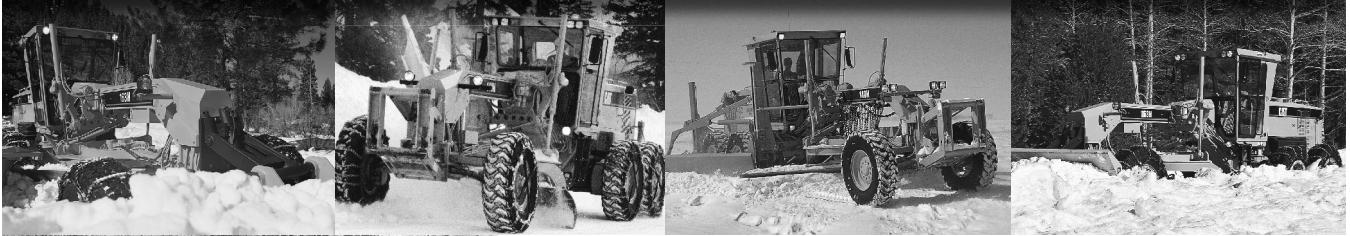
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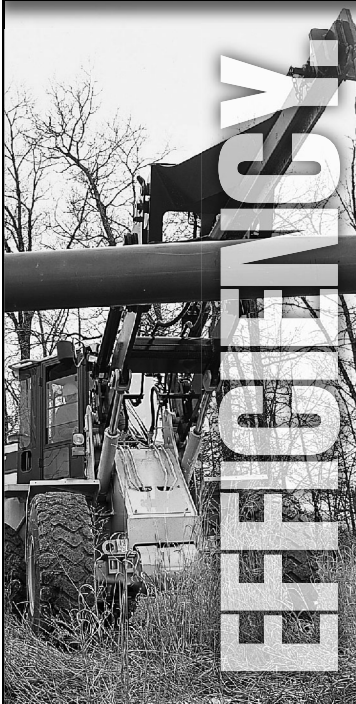
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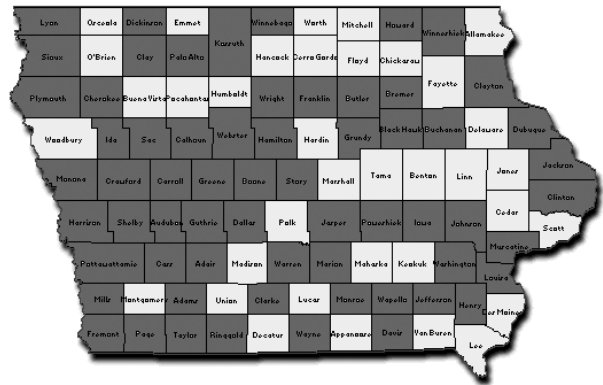
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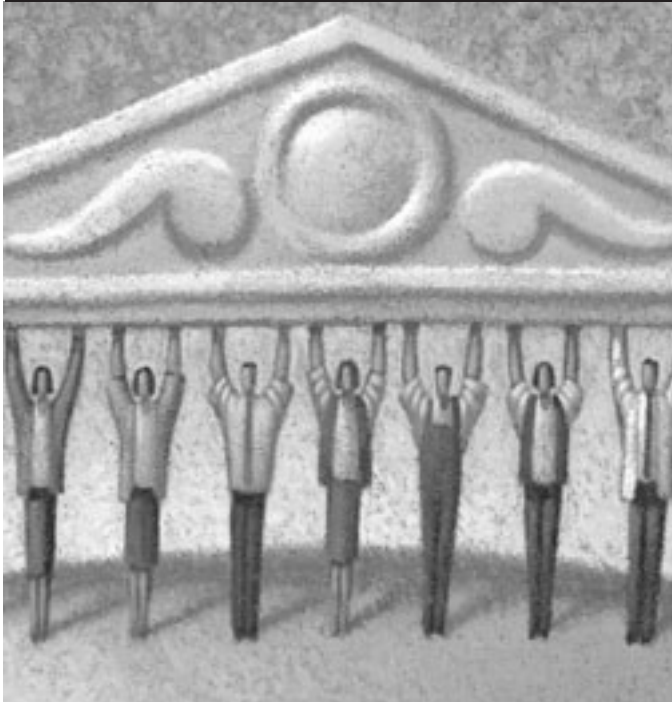
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For more information contact Lisa Cole, NACo Director of Enterprise Services, at 202.942.4270 or email [lcole@naco.org](mailto:lcole@naco.org).

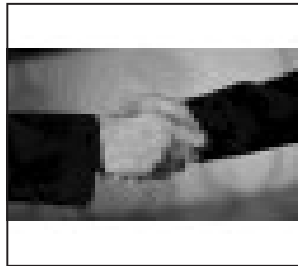




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# calendar

## MAY

- 4 Technology Workshop (location TBA)
- 4 Wellness Spring Meeting  
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 5 HCBS Training (Scheman Center, Ames)
- 6 Wellness Spring Meeting (Wellmark, DM)
- 6 *CCMS Advanced Case Managers*  
(Scheman Center, Ames)
- 12-14 Treasurers Statewide Meeting (Dubuque)
- 20 Engineers Executive Board (ISAC Office)
- 27 IEHA Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

## JUNE

- 8-9 *CCMS Supervisors Training*  
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 10 District II ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(Waldorf College, Forest City)
- 11 District III ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 16-18 ICIT Annual Mid-Year Conference  
(Council Bluffs)
- 16 District IV ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(Mid-America Center, Council Bluffs)
- 17 District I ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 18 District V ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa)
- 25 District VI ISAC Legislative Workshop  
(UNI, Cedar Falls)
- 25 CCMS Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

## JULY

- 5 **ISAC OFFICE CLOSED**
- 9 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 13 *CCMS Administrators*  
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 16-20 NACo Annual Conference (Phoenix, AZ)

- 21-23 Auditors Annual Conference  
(Plaza Inn, Sioux City)
- 22 IEHA Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

## AUGUST

- 5-6 Supervisors Executive Board  
(Independence area)
- 11-13 *CCMS Annual Conference*  
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 11 Recorders Legislative Meeting  
(Grand Harbor Resort, Dubuque)
- 12-13 Recorders Summer Conference  
(Grand Harbor Resort, Dubuque)
- 26-27 Community Services Retreat  
(Country Inn & Suites, Clive)

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 ISAC Steering Committees  
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 16-19 Conservation Directors' Annual Conference  
(LeMars)
- 19-22 Sheriffs & Deputies Jails School  
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 22-24 *CCMS Fundamentals*  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 23 IEHA Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 23-24 ISAC Board of Directors  
(Sheraton Hotel, Iowa City)

*For agendas or additional information on any of the above listed meetings please visit our website at [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org) and click on Upcoming Events! If you have any questions about the meetings listed above, please contact Jerri at (515) 244-7181 or by email at [jnoba@iowacounties.org](mailto:jnoba@iowacounties.org).*

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- Mark Twain

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