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February 2005



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The Iowa County

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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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David Vestal - General Counsel

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A View On Today's Emergency Management

The basic principle in emergency management is the local jurisdiction will be the first to respond to any incident within. No matter what state and federal resources are available or needed, the local jurisdiction is the one prepared and responsible for the safest possible response and recovery effort.

Emergency management coordinators do exactly that - they coordinate, plan, train, and provide exercises and other essential activities to keep citizens and communities prepared. The true root of emergency management has always been that local organizations are committed to the precepts of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. We are committed to a multi-hazard approach - assessing the hazards and risks that their communities face, regardless if natural, technological, or human caused, including acts of terrorism and the use of weapons of mass destruction and disruption. Emergency managers continue working within their communities - making plans on how to lessen the effects of the hazards they face, how to respond when disaster strikes and having an effective strategy for short and long term recovery.

Besides the day-to-day activities in responding to emergencies, of budget deadlines and ongoing multi-hazard planning and update requirements, we are challenged with several new homeland security initiatives. New for FY05 is the homeland security funding being distributed regionally to the six established regions (Iowa Emergency Management Association (IEMA) and Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) regions) with the funds being distributed by each individual region. The establishment of this structure has been time consuming and very challenging for all. The State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) offers grants for the preparation of response organizations for any weapons of mass destruction event.

Another recent change was to the administration of the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division. Upon Ellen Gordon's leaving, David Miller was named to this position. Miller is committed to the efforts of a partnership in the state and local effort, with communication being a priority for more effi-

*By: Rick Wulfekuhle,
Buchanan Co. Emergency Management
Iowa Emergency Management Assoc. VP*

cient operations. Homeland security and emergency management are inextricably linked. Homeland security adds concepts like detection, protection and prevention. These functions expand emergency management, causing coordinators to expand community relationships and work with a broader array of agencies both public and private. Coordinators work with communities, counties, public entities and private entities to develop and implement effective strategies - making the best strategic investment of the limited grant dollars that are received.

The enormous challenge of protecting Americans from any natural or man-made disaster requires a nationwide effort. The attacks of 9-11 resulted in a new philosophy of how we secure the country - a philosophy of shared responsibility, shared accountability and shared leadership. At the federal level, leaders are looking at the National Response Plan (NRP) and how this has the true need to be cycled from a local level to the state level and shared federally if the situation were to demand. Within the NRP is a component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which involves all levels of agencies in a common effort to the best practice of handling an incident of any kind. The NIMS implementation will probably be a mandated planning requirement attached to the federal funding.

With all this combined, the challenge before us is to sustain a comprehensive emergency management program with limited funding and resources. Our best effort at being successful is for county officials to be good resource identifiers. The most successful programs are those that know how to work with surrounding resources and can barter what they have through memorandums of understandings with those who may have the resources they need. It is truly a collaborative effort and not a stand-alone process. There is too much at stake for the loss of an effective program locally.

To adequately prepare the nation for emergencies of all kinds, we must all work together to see it through. Emergency preparedness must be the priority of every county official, governor, mayor, township supervisor, tribal leader, first responder, business owner, school board member and citizen.

Iowa's First First Responders

By: Nancy Brady, Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Telecommunicator Training Coordinator

How much do you know about your emergency communications center? Aside from watching television shows like Rescue 9-1-1, people know very little about their emergency responders who work behind the scenes. The *first* first responders in an emergency are your telecommunicators, sometimes known as 9-1-1 dispatchers or radio operators.

The Incident Command System is becoming the standard method of emergency response and the telecommunicator is the initial Incident Commander until an emergency responder arrives on the scene. Then command is transferred to the person on scene. The three priorities of the Incident Command System are life safety, incident stability and property conservation - the very same priorities of emergency communications. Whether the emergency is a car accident, a burglar, or a house fire telecommunicators consider those priorities in handling calls.

Telecommunicators receive emergency and non-emergency calls for law enforcement, fire and emergency medical services. They assess the call, determine what type of help is needed and dispatch the appropriate responders. The communications center initiates the call by dispatching responders and continues to work on the call until the last responder is safely back in the fire station or on patrol.

9-1-1 calls are the telecommunicator's most commonly recognized job task. 9-1-1 callers may be hysterical, suicidal, in imminent danger, or in great pain. Other challenges include calls from children, elderly, mentally impaired people or those intoxicated or on drugs, hearing or speech impaired, or non-English speaking people. Telecommunicators are also responsible for receiving and dispatching calls for law enforcement, fire, medical and other emergency response units. Their work is fast-paced and exciting, but stressful during emergencies. A telecommunicator must be able to handle multiple calls and radio traffic simultaneously, operate several different types of computer systems, monitor various kinds of alarms and operate complex radio systems. The ability to coordinate and stay focused, pay attention to detail, manage stress and provide good customer service are just some of the necessary traits for this position.

Call prioritization, determining what must be handled first, is critical. For example, is it possible that keys locked in a vehicle could be more important than a car accident? The answer is yes, if there is a child in the car and the accident is a simple fender bender with no injuries. Is a barking dog complaint more important than an ambulance call? It is, if the dog is warning someone of a prowler and the ambulance is on a transport returning a healthy patient from a hospital to a care center.

The ability to take control of an emergency call takes a special type of person. It takes quick thinking, command, empathy, patience and persistence; while remaining professional at all times. Studies have shown that only 2% of Americans have the necessary traits to do this job well, so retaining good employees is critical. Many of Iowa's communications centers have only one person on duty most of the time, none are overstaffed. The cost of re-training new personnel and the stress imposed on regular staff while someone is in training are good reasons for working to retain good staff.

Location information for wireless or cellular 9-1-1 calls is not yet completed. Calls frequently ring in at the wrong center. Since cellular phones operate on radio waves, they will never be as reliable in providing location as wire line 9-1-1 calls are. The Federal Communications Commission requires that used cellular phones without service can dial 9-1-1. Some organizations provide these phones to citizens who do not have cellular phones. Since there is no service on these phones, there is no telephone number assigned to them. So the 9-1-1 center has no number to call back, should the call be disconnected. Since the implementation of wire line enhanced 9-1-1, beginning in the late 1980's, the technical knowledge for telecommunicators has steadily increased. Emergency Medical Dispatch, Amber Alert, terrorism, liability, and other issues make this position ever changing and ever more challenging.

I encourage you as county officials to visit with your telecommunicators to learn more about the vital services they provide for our citizens. The more you know about them, the better you can serve the citizens by helping to educate them about use of 9-1-1.

Lobbying

As this publication is released, we are moving well into the grind of the legislative session. To lawmakers, what “the folks back home” think about a piece of legislation is often far more important than positions taken by interest groups like ISAC. County officials *are* the folks back home. The ISAC staff at the Capitol talks with your legislators about bills of interest to our membership, and we advance ISAC positions in subcommittee and full committee meetings. We provide information as requested and help representatives and senators prepare information for floor debates. Still, as county officials you are the key lobbyists in the legislative process.

So as the session continues on, it is ISAC’s job to keep up with bills of interest to county officials, to inform you of what is contained in those proposals and where they are in the legislative process. Accordingly, the ISAC system helps you to be prepared to communicate with your own representatives and senators on a timely basis. *How* our members communicate is just as important as the message itself. In order to better assist you, here are ISAC’s top ten rules to use when communicating with your legislators.

10. Get To Know Your Legislators. It is important to become well acquainted with your legislators before you actually need something from them. Help them to gain confidence with who you are and what you have to say. Get to know them by attending weekend events such as legislative coffees and other social affairs. By establishing a rapport with them early, they will be more accepting of your message when the time comes for requesting a vote for or against an important issue.

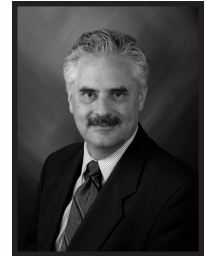
9. Become A Resource. Offer to assist your representative and senator with constituent issues that can be solved at the local level. Often these matters may never find their way into legislation. Legislators, like local officials, are asked to address a variety of constituent issues throughout the year. Often you may have the knowledge and background that will help a lawmaker solve a constituent problem. Your local perspective can prove invaluable to state officials since your constituents are the same.

8. Timing Of Your Message Is Important. The life of legislation is driven by deadlines in the legislative process. When ISAC sends out requests to contact legislators about a bill coming before a committee or scheduled for floor debate, a quick response by our members will help to ensure that lawmakers hear from you in a timely fashion. The best response means nothing if it is too late.

7. Be Brief. Legislators are inundated with information from multiple sources. More is not necessarily better. Often times, there can be *too much* of a good thing. Lengthy letters that are placed in a pile with good intentions to be read later can get lost in the shuffle and may never be seen again. Then your opportunity to make your point is lost.

By: **John Easter**

ISAC Director of
Intergovernmental Affairs



6. Stick To One Subject. Counties are involved in numerous issues. The temptation to cover many issues when writing your legislator is strong. It is better to stick to one topic in each letter or position paper. Combining subjects often clouds your main point and creates confusion about what you want.

5. Use Your Own Words. Form letters usually are placed in the “circular file.” While ISAC bulletins give you key points of information to make on bills of importance, the information has greater meaning when it comes from you. When you phone, email or write a letter to your legislator use ISAC information as a resource, but use your own words and make sure your letter is on your own county stationary.

4. Provide Facts With Documentation Whenever Possible. One of the first things a lawmaker wants to know about a bill is how it will impact his or her county. When ISAC sends out a message to “contact your legislator,” your letter, e-mail or phone conversation will always be stronger if you can illustrate the message with specific facts regarding how the legislation would impact your particular county. Revenues lost or gained from proposed tax legislation, for instance, or the costs of a proposed mandate on your county would always be of interest to your representative or senator.

3. Participate In County-A-Day. Spend a day at the capitol participating in ISAC’s County-A-Day program. By coming to the Capitol, you will have an opportunity to learn firsthand how the legislative process works. You will see your legislators in action and gain new insights into what a tough job they have. And most importantly, you will have the opportunity to talk face-to-face with your legislators and develop your relationships even further. By being involved in County-A-Day and other ISAC activities, your association becomes stronger while individual counties enhance their effectiveness in the process.

2. Maintain Respect, Even When Being Firm. Often our positions on issues seem so logical, how could anyone else differ from our opinion? Lawmakers are pulled in many directions by other lobbying interests so sometimes their vote may not reflect what we want. You can still hold them accountable for a vote, but we don’t want to “burn a bridge” over a road issue today when we will want their vote on a piece of tax legislation tomorrow.

1. THANK YOUR LEGISLATORS! Above all, thank your senators and representatives for their help. They often have a thankless task and a little recognition from you can go a long way.

County Officials Must Know Iowa' Public Records Law

Here are some random thoughts about Iowa's Public Records Law (Iowa Code chapter 22):

Confidential Records: Public records are confidential records if they are:

- *Personnel Records:* Performance evaluations, job reviews, and written complaints about employees are not public records. On the other hand, all information pertaining to compensation and days worked and sick days taken are public records.
- *Job Applications:* They are not public records and need not be disclosed according to a 1998 Iowa Supreme Court case.
- *Letters to the County:* Counties can keep letters from the public confidential if the county could reasonably believe the public would be discouraged from communicating if the communications were available for public inspection and copying.

Discretionary Disclosure: When the law says a record is "confidential," it can still be disclosed, if the custodian chooses to disclose it. Iowa Code §22.7 lists 47 categories of records "which shall be kept confidential, unless otherwise ordered" by the lawful custodian. Even if the custodian discloses a confidential document to someone, that does not destroy the confidentiality as to everyone else. This is stated in a 1996 Iowa Supreme Court case called *Gabrilson v. Flynn*.

Administrative Access: Even if a record is confidential, that does not mean that others in the courthouse cannot see it. For instance, if you are a county supervisor, and miss a meeting where the board goes into closed session, you can listen to the tape of that closed session, even though members of the general public cannot. This comes from that *Gabrilson* case, which says that if you need access to a document to fulfill your statutory duties, you can have that access.

Storing Records: There is no requirement that public records be stored in any particular location. In 1997, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled that public records may be kept at a private residence, though the Court stated it was "considerably less than enthusiastic about the practice." The Court went on to say that storing the records in a home "does not alter the statutory mandate" to make the records available to the public.

Point of Contact: To comply with the Iowa law, and just from a "best practices" standpoint, all county offices need to designate someone to respond to requests for public records. That person should be someone with good people skills and a basic knowledge of the public records law.

That person should sit down today and answer three questions: 1) What "public records" do we maintain in this office? 2) Which of those public records are confidential? 3) How am I going to respond when someone comes in and demands to

By: David Vestal

ISAC General Counsel



see a particular public record?

In the *Des Moines Register* series of local governments and public records in 2000, one clear message was that many of the offices described in the stories had never anticipated what to do if someone comes in and asks for a copy of a public record. That has to change.

Fees: You can charge for providing a place to examine the records, supervising the records during examination, photocopying and retrieval fee. If you use a particular employee to respond to a request, you can charge his hourly salary. You cannot recover fixed costs such as depreciation, maintenance, electricity and insurance. The test is, if you would have incurred the same cost regardless of whether the copy was made. All charges should be imposed according to a written policy.

Timing of Response: The records do not have to be provided immediately. Iowa Code §22.8(4) allows for "good faith delay" to determine if the request complies with the law. You must respond within 10 business days. Unless the request is routine, the way to respond is to say, "I'll have to review that with the county attorney, I will get back to you within 10 business days."

Duty of County: Keep in mind that you are there to serve the public. But read literally, Iowa Code chapter 22 only gives the public the right to come to the county office and request records orally. It does not specify that a custodian must respond to a telephone request for a record, a written request, or an emailed request. This means you do not have to comply with faxed, emailed or telephone requests from out of state companies. The law does not require that you deliver records to a requestor.

Nature of Request: As far as how specific the request must be, a request is "reasonable" if it enables the lawful custodian who is familiar with the subject matter of the request to locate the records with a reasonable amount of effort (1982 Attorney General Opinion 538). The request must adequately identify which particular records the requestor is seeking. According to an Attorney General Opinion dated October 7, 1982, a public records request must "reasonably describe the records requested." The same Opinion goes on to state that "broad, sweeping requests lacking specificity are not permissible."

Internet Issues: Currently there is no requirement that counties put any public records on the Internet. That is probably coming. But it is not here yet.

Parting Ponderable

"Was it over when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor?"
- John Belushi as Bluto in *Animal House*

health check

February – Heart Month



You can certainly tell it is February. There are hearts everywhere. February is National Heart Health month so if you have been putting off that medical checkup or need to get a little more exercise for that very valuable muscle, now is the time! I can't believe I'm saying this, but you might go easy on the chocolate as well.

I want to recommend some activities related to the heart, but of a much different nature. February 14-20 is "Random Acts of Kindness" week. I think it is fitting to begin on Valentine's Day since we are thinking good thoughts already.

Observing this week has been a popular wellness activity of organizations and businesses. The University of Minnesota is recognizing February as "Month of Kindness." Their goal is to unite the campus by encouraging acts of kindness that create an environment filled with goodwill, tolerance and open-

By: **Sandy Longfellow**

ISAC Administrative Assistant



ness. A group of high school students held a teddy bear drive and collected 500 stuffed animals for a local children's home.

Here are a few ideas for you: give a flower, visit a sick friend, tip generously, send a thank you note, bake cookies for someone, give a balloon to a child, offer a ride, share a smile, give blood, read to a child, buy someone lunch, offer a hug, pick up litter, cheer up a friend, plant a tree, call a lonely person, open a door, listen with your heart, thank a teacher, be tolerant, respect others, encourage a child, drive courteously, do a favor, let someone go first, forgive mistakes, be kind to your mother. *For more ideas visit www.actsofkindness.org.*

technology center

Shopping For A New Computer

Q: I would like to buy a personal computer for my home use but am unsure what to look for. Do you have any tips that would help me thru this process?

A. There are a few important items to keep in mind when shopping for a home computer. First, determine your price range and what your computer is being used for. One of the key components to your computer is the processor or the "brains" of your computer. You may be able to skimp on other areas of your computer, but this is one area I highly recommend that you do not. You will find that most computers will come with either an Intel Pentium 4 processor or the AMD Athlon XP, which are both good in their own right. Another key component is the memory in your computer. I would suggest that you spend the extra money to upgrade at least to 512 MB of RAM; it is well worth the small investment that you make. Also, make sure that the memory is DDR versus the old SDRAM. As far as drives goes, you will find that most computers come with at least 60GB to 80GB of hard drive space. Unless you plan on storing large video files, this should serve you well.

An area that becomes confusing is the optical drives. What does a CD-ROM, CD-RW, CD-RW/DVD-ROM combo, or DVD+/-R/RW all stand for? A CD-ROM will only allow you to play/view CDs. A CD-RW will allow you to view CDs and burn/create new CDs. A CD-RW/DVD-ROM will enable you to view CDs, create CDs and view DVDs. A DVD+/-R/RW allows you to view DVDs and create new DVDs. Many computers come with more than one optical drive so you may opt for a primary

By: **Tammy Norman**

ISAC Technical
Services Coordinator



optical drive such as a CD-RW/DVD-ROM combo drive and have your secondary optical drive be a DVD+/-R/RW. The choice is up to you.

Final point, warranties are important. Unless you feel you have the ability to open up your computer case and delve into the hardware world of a computer, I highly encourage purchasing the extended warranties. Again, this is definitely a personal preference, but it does give you peace of mind. If you have at least one need for a service call the extended warranty will pay for itself. Some computer companies offer onsite warranty service, while others require you to send your computer in. This may be a decision factor in which company you purchase your computer from. In most cases, warranties will save you money in the end.

Website Note: The ISAC Spring School of Instruction is just around the corner, please take a moment and look over the exciting seminars that ISAC is offering March 16 from 9am-Noon: Developing Elderly Friendly Communities, Major Trends Reshaping the Future of County Governments, Look Before You Leap: Understanding the Full Cost of Jail Construction. You can register online by visiting our website (www.iowacounties.org) and clicking on 'Upcoming Events.' Please forward any items that you would like addressed in this column to my attention at tnorman@iowacounties.org or by calling 515-244-7181. Until next month, keep clicking!

NACM Seminar

The annual salary for the average NBA player is approximately \$13 billion dollars per year. The annual salary of the average case manager is considerably less. As I arrived in Indianapolis for the National Association of Case Management (NACM) Seminar, the hot sports story locally and nationally was that Ron Artest, a “star” for the Indianapolis Pacers, was requesting a paid leave of absence from his team. His reason? He stated that he was physically and emotionally exhausted from promoting a rap album that was soon due for release as a holiday stocking stuffer. Here’s the kicker – the NBA season was only about five games into an 81 game regular season and the Pacers are considered to have a legitimate shot of winning the championship. Now here was a real supervision problem!

Fortunately, the case management agencies that I work with have a much more professional approach to their work. They are dedicated and responsible advocates for the clients and the counties that they represent. That is not to say, however, that there are not issues of supervision to address. And judging from the nationwide turnout, this is not just a local phenomenon. In fact, this seminar was developed by NACM in response to input by its national membership. Adult learning techniques were utilized throughout to provide opportunities for discussion, hands-on practice and opportunities for networking and learning from others.

The first session was entitled “Matures, Boomers, Xers, & Y’s.” Much like the “Colors” personality profile trainings, the purpose here was to help supervisors understand that different groups of people can have different values and motivations. The revelation for me was that these differences can track somewhat predictably across generational lines as well as personality types.

The next session was “How to Choose, Get & Keep Competent Case Managers.” The major point here was that you should develop a system for supervision that includes:

- good job descriptions (based on job analysis),
- job classifications and salary scales,
- interviewing and hiring practices,
- orientation programs,
- disciplinary processes and documentation, and
- evaluation process.

In order for this system to work, there needs to be continuity between the component parts (e.g. performance evaluations should be directly based on the job description if they are done correctly).

Day two started with “MY Poor Attitude? Examining Challenges in Supervision.” This session identified the three main role functions of supervisors: to administer organizational policy and procedures, to supervise tasks and to manage people. It described the importance of staff knowing themselves as well as their supervisor and customers in order to function efficiently. It reviewed some tools (mission statements, written job responsibilities, code of ethics, performance reviews, growth plans, etc.) the supervisor can use to help evaluate conduct, work performance and development needs of their employees.

By: **Dan Vonnahme**

ISAC Case Management
Specialist



The next session was entitled “The Right Supervision to the Right Person at the Right Time: Providing Responsive Leadership.” This session described four basic types of situational leadership that should be applied based on where the person or group is residing at that particular point of time. These types are identified as telling, selling, participating and delegating. It is up to the supervisor to determine which style best applies for each group or person. A group that is new or struggling may be in the telling mode and the supervisor may need to be very direct and use concrete tools such as policy and procedure to achieve desired outcomes. On the other end of the spectrum, an established group that has demonstrated job competency and autonomy may be in the delegating mode, in which the supervisor provides them with much more responsibility in the planning and implementation aspects of their job.

The afternoon sessions, “Stress Management for the Middle Manager” and “Time Management for the Overscheduled Supervisor” provided some good practical tips on dealing with these universal and inter-related issues. A point of emphasis was that you have to take care of yourself in order to be able to take care of others. Following that bit of advice, I then went to the nightly manager’s reception to de-stress a bit, and to network with the other attendees, before going out to see a great blues band at the Slippery Noodle later that evening.

The final session was “Managing for Outcomes: The Focus of ALL Efforts.” It reinforced that there is a difference between person-directed outcomes and performance outcomes. As anyone who has attended our Fundamentals training knows, person directed outcomes are the measurable/observable achievement of goals directed by the person served. Performance outcomes, on the other hand, measure process (performance) of the agency providing service. These performance outcomes can include utilization rates, billable services, referral rates and tracking of documentation (including service plans, progress reports, frequency of contacts, etc.). While performance outcomes do NOT equate to person-directed outcomes, they are required by funding and accreditation entities. The trick is to use the data you are required to gather to help provide meaningful information for your organization to analyze and act upon.

It is said that all good things must come to an end. With the conference winding down, the Artest story was now supplanted by the bizarre “Dangerous Housewives/Monday Night Football” controversy. An anonymous quote from the training crossed my mind as I boarded the plane to begin my journey home: “Strangely enough, this is the past that someone in the future is longing to get back to.”

ISAC's Legislative Process

The relationship between levels of government is dynamic. Intergovernmental relations involve more than just contacting legislators. There are many facets involved in the process as counties participate in developing public policy that affects local government. The goal for counties in this effort is to produce policy that enables county officials to serve their citizens in the most flexible, efficient, and cost-effective way possible.

The following describes the entire process used by ISAC in bringing the county message to our state policy makers. As the 81st General Assembly and Governor Vilsack are underway in the new session, it is a good time for new county officials to learn the process ISAC uses throughout the year. It is also a good time for the rest of us to become reacquainted with our own process.

Steering Committees And Policy Development

Our public policy process begins with the seven ISAC steering committees. Committee chairs are appointed by the ISAC President. Their terms are for two-years and they are on a staggered basis. Each ISAC affiliate is entitled to name three members to each steering committee.

The following ISAC staff members are appointed to each of the steering committees: County Administration and Organization - Denise Obrecht; Environment and Public Health - Deb Westvold; Human Services - Linda Hinton; Land Use and Rural Affairs - Bill Peterson; Public Safety - David Vestal; Taxation and Finance - Jay Syverson; Transportation - John Easter.

The steering committees meet two times in the early fall to recommend policy direction for ISAC. Policies are created in two essential ways.

Policy Statements: First, the committees establish policy statements. Policy statements express long-term or continued statements of principles important for local control, local government authority, and efficient county operation. These statements are designed to guide the Association in responding to proposed public policy issues affecting county government.

Legislative Objectives: Second, the committees adopt and prioritize legislative objectives. These are matters that ISAC will initiate as legislation or as amendments to legislation. They are prepared in a problem/solution format. Policy statements and legislative objectives reflect proposals raised by the ISAC affiliates, unmet objectives from the previous year, and any other item brought to the steering committee by other organizations.

Once the steering committees have done their work, the ISAC Board of Directors reviews, amends, and approves each report and identifies "top priorities" during the October board meeting. These top priorities are typically selected from legislative objectives, but sometimes policy statements are in-

cluded. While the ISAC staff works on all of the issues raised by the steering committees, the ISAC top priorities receive special attention during the legislative session.

At the ISAC Fall School, the entire package (including the identified top priorities) is ratified by the full membership. ISAC publishes the package in a handy booklet for the General Assembly and other interested groups. ISAC also produces a brochure highlighting the top policy priorities. All of this information is available on ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) under 'Legislative Information.'

Affiliates In The Legislative Process

Each affiliate has its own way of dealing with the legislative process. ISAC staff is available to assist the affiliates with their legislative programs, but the ultimate responsibility rests with each affiliate.

All affiliates designate a person as their legislative liaison. These liaisons serve as the primary contact point through which ISAC staff communicates with the affiliate memberships during the session. For example, with the assistance of ISAC staff on "the hill," the affiliate liaison coordinates legislative strategy (such as letter writing or telephone contacts with legislators) when important issues arise.

Most affiliates have a legislative committee that reviews bills and provides direction to their liaisons and ISAC. Such committees help spread the workload among a cross-section of their own affiliate members. Individuals on these committees also become a good resource for the affiliate liaisons and ISAC staff to rely on when special expertise on an issue is needed.

Affiliate Legislative Liaison Meetings: Throughout the policy cycle, the ISAC lobbying staff and all affiliate legislative liaisons hold special strategy meetings. There are usually about four of these meetings during the year. These meetings help ISAC to develop strategy within and among the various affiliates. These meetings also enable each affiliate to become acquainted with other affiliate representatives and learn about their issues and how they deal with them.

ISAC Lobbyist/Staff & Issue Areas

- John Easter (lobbyist) - Tax and finance, elections, public safety, transportation and any other issues as needed
- Linda Hinton (lobbyist) - Mental health, public health, children and families, and any other issues as needed

In addition to the lobbyists, the following ISAC staff share in the workload with affiliate liaisons by providing technical legislative analysis to help formulate ISAC positions.

- Bill Peterson - Any issue as needed
- Jay Syverson - Tax, finance, and fiscal impact analysis
- David Vestal - Corrections, law enforcement, criminal justice and general research
- Deb Westvold - Mental health and social services

ISAC Bill Review And Registration Process

Assignment of Bills to ISAC Review Staff and Affiliate:

Every morning during the legislative session, the ISAC lobbying team reviews the daily bill packet and makes initial assignments to the appropriate ISAC legislative review staff and affiliate(s). Each assigned bill is posted on the ISAC website (www.iowacounties.org) under 'Legislative Information' and it is updated daily.

Registration on Bills: In order to lobby on a piece of legislation, interest groups such as ISAC must register to lobby on it. There are three ways for ISAC to register to lobby on a bill. They are: For; Against; and Undecided. Accordingly, when it is obvious that ISAC should register, an "F", "A", or "U" will be posted by the bill number, along with the review staff initials and affiliate assignment and a brief description of the bill.

FYI System: Often there are bills that *could* have an impact on counties but the ISAC lobbyists may not be sure during their initial review. In such cases, we do not register on the bill, but we send it out to affiliates with a notation of "FYI." ISAC proceeds with appropriate action on these bills once the affiliate(s) analyze the bill and make their recommendations. If the affiliate wants ISAC to monitor the bill without registering on it "M" will be noted with the bill posting.

ISAC Update

One of the most effective communications tools for our membership during the legislative session is the weekly ISAC Update. This newsletter features the hot topics of the week. It reports important changes and developments on key issues and alerts county officials which legislators to contact, when to contact them, and the appropriate message that needs to be delivered.

The ISAC Update is sent every Friday by 1pm during the legislative session. This grassroots newsletter is emailed to every county official that has email capabilities (that ISAC is aware of.) If a county official does not have email, the auditor in each county handles the distribution. It is also posted on ISAC's website under 'ISAC Update.' This device helps crystallize the county position on important issues and brings continuity of the county message across the state. It also helps to assure timely contacts with state policy makers.

"County-A-Day" Program

One addition to the policy process is called the "County-A-Day" program. This is a program for county officials of each county to spend one predetermined day at the Capitol during the legislative session. The goals of this effort are to raise awareness of counties with state policymakers and to assist ISAC in lobbying issues. The continuous presence of county officials works to enhance relations between state and local officials by having a fresh set of new county people in the capitol each day. This program also provides our mem-

bership an opportunity to learn the legislative process first-hand. While supervisors are responsible for heading the delegation from each county, other elected and appointed county officials are encouraged to participate.

You can sign your county up for County-A-Day by calling Karmen Anderson, ISAC Staff, at 515-244-7181 or by email at kanderson@iowacounties.org. You will need to provide which date you want to reserve for your county, how many you anticipate will be coming, who the contact person from your county will be, and how they can be reached in the future (phone number or email address). Visit ISAC's website under 'Legislative Information', then 'County-A-Day' for the dates still available.

District Workshops

At the end of each legislative session, the ISAC staff compiles and summarizes all enacted bills that affect counties into a legislative summary book. These summary books are organized into topic areas that correlate with ISAC steering committees. Also included are indexes of bill summaries listed by affiliate.

The final stage of the policy cycle is the June District Workshops. The workshops consist of meetings with the county officials in each of the six ISAC districts throughout Iowa. At this meeting, copies of the bill summary books are distributed and ISAC staff provides presentations 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 about bills affecting their particular areas.

Legislative Interim Committees And Administrative Rule Making

After the district workshops, and until the cycle starts up again with the steering committee process, ISAC monitors legislative interim committees. The committees are appointed by legislative leaders to study certain issue areas. Many committees look at matters that affect counties and ISAC is often asked to provide testimony to these committees.

The interim period also provides time for ISAC to track the administrative rule-making process by executive branch agencies. Many rules are promulgated to implement legislation that ISAC has worked on. Again, this sometimes involves testimony on issues of interest to counties and appropriate coordination with affiliates.

Finally, affiliates use the interim period to study issues to propose to ISAC steering committees for the following year. ISAC staff provides assistance to affiliates during the interim if requested. Before you know it, it is time to start all over again.

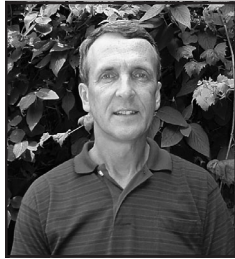
For further information regarding ISAC's legislative process contact John Easter at (515) 244-7181 or jeaster@iowacounties.org.

ISAC brief

Meet The Board Members

Steve Lekwa

Steve Lekwa, Story County Conservation Director, is the newest member of the ISAC Board of Directors. January 5 marked his 32 year anniversary with Story County Conservation. He started working for Story County Conservation in January 1973



as a ranger-naturalist, served as deputy director from 1989-1993 and then began his current position as director in 1994.

Steve said, "I have served on several ISAC Committees over the years, and have enjoyed getting to know and learn from other county officials and the ISAC staff. Serving on the Board of Directors will allow me to continue in that tradition, but learn much more, and have a positive influence on policy development and legislation. I would love to see ISAC recognized by citizens and legislators as the "go-to" organization for helping to solve the problems faced by local governments in Iowa."

Steve is involved in his community with memberships to the following organizations: Memorial Lutheran Church, Nevada; Broken Arrow District Committee for the Boy Scouts of America; Story County Pheasants Forever; Ducks Unlimited; Friends of Central Iowa Biking; Friends of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area; Iowa Conservation Education Council; charter member of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.

Steve's wife, Sue, taught elementary music for more than 20 years. She currently substitute teaches for several schools, teaches private piano lessons, and plays for their church. His daughter, Amy, and her husband live in Illinois and are both Iowa State University graduates. His son, Adam, will graduate from ISU in the spring, but hopes to attend graduate school.

Steve said, "I enjoy hunting, fishing, biking, canoeing, and camping. We've always had a garden and enjoy helping at my in-law's tree farm in Floyd County."

ISAC Spring School 2005

By: **Jerri Noboa**

ISAC Meetings Administrator



ISAC's Spring School of Instruction will held next month, March 16-18, so I am going to review direct billing with the Marriott, Renaissance Savery and Hotel Fort Des Moines.

If you are staying at the Marriott and do not want to pay for the room on your personal credit card, you need to call the accounting department (515-244-5500). Tell the accounting department that you are going to bring a check with you and request that they send you some sort of a documentation stating the room rate, hotel/motel tax, etc. Then have your auditor cut a check to take with you. Present the check when you arrive at the hotel.

If you are staying at the Renaissance Savery, you may opt to send in a claim form with a letter asking to have the room billed back to the county. This must be done before arrival date. The letter of request can be faxed to Carla Curry (515-243-8974).

If you are staying at the Hotel Fort Des Moines, you need a credit card to hold the reservation. They will accept purchase orders/claim forms, but this must be done before arrival.

Remember, you cannot go to the registration desk at any of these hotels and ask them to direct bill the county. They just don't do that.

If you put the room on your personal credit card, they can charge you sales tax. If it is put on a county credit card or you pay with a county check, they cannot charge you sales tax since counties are tax exempt. Counties are not exempt from hotel/motel tax.

It is a good idea to bring your county ID number. The hotels are trying to keep a record of these numbers, but until they get them all into their system, they could request that information from you.

2005-2006

County Directory For Sale

The 2005-2006 ISAC County Directory has been completed and is available for sale. Order forms can be found on ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) under 'County Information.' The directories are \$15 for county officials, \$25 for non-county officials.

Register On-line for ISAC's Spring School of Instruction March 16-18, 2005

Visit www.iowacounties.org and click on 'Upcoming Events.' Registration, lodging, entertainment, directions, parking and seminar information available!

NACo 2005 Key Legislative Priorities

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

Remote Sales Tax Collections: Support the collection and distribution to states and counties of current sales taxes due on purchases made by mail order and over the Internet. Support the Streamlined Sales Tax System and urge states to pass such model sales tax legislation.

Surface Transportation Reauthorization: Undertake a comprehensive legislative effort to reauthorize the highway, transit, and safety programs in TEA-21, with a particular emphasis on funding that meets the growing transportation needs of county governments. Also implement a workable environmental streamlining process, and improve local government input in the planning and programming of federal transportation funds. Support legislation that provides additional federal support for seaports, inland waterways and intermodal connections that contribute to maintaining and expanding the economic health of counties.

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

Telecommunication Act Rewrite: Support rewriting provisions of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which include protecting existing authorities and revenues, and addressing issues of convergence across a broad range of communications and technology platforms.

Help America Vote Act: Extend deadlines for compliance with the Help America Vote Act due to federal delay in establishing standards.

Forest Counties Safety Net: Reauthorize PL 106-393 (the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act) to provide revenue to those counties across the country that no longer receive 20% of receipts from timber sales.

Oppose Unfunded Mandates and Preemption: Oppose unfunded mandates from Congress, and the George W. Bush Administration, and oppose legislation or regulations that preempt county authority, such as land-use regulatory authorities, telecommunications and cable rights-of-way and other locally-based functions.

NACo Hosts Leadership Meeting

Angela Connolly, ISAC President, and Bill Peterson, ISAC Executive Director, attended the State Association Presidents and Executives Meeting in Washington D.C. January 5-7. The conference was hosted by NACo with discussions on lobbying Congress, federal budget process and NACo legislative priorities. Michele Norris, National Public Radio, was the featured speaker for event. Other noted events included a reception/tour at the NACo office, a visit to the National Press Club and a briefing at the White House.



miscellaneous

City & County Summit

The 2005 City and County Innovations Summit will be the nation's premier conference analyzing and discussing management innovations in municipal government. This year's Summit will share examples to replicate success so that government can achieve greater impact with increased results. The 2005 Summit will also address challenges emerging as a result of continuing budget shortfalls and shrinking revenues.

The 2005 City and County Innovations summit will be held March 21-23, 2005 at the Doubletree Guest Suites in Phoenix, AZ. When you register receive a \$150 discount off the tuition by using priority code P450-JN. *For additional information regarding the summit, please contact Jon Norris at 703-894-0481x228 or norris@PerformanceWeb.org.*

New ICAP Board Member

Holly Fokkena, Butler County Auditor, joined the Iowa Communities Assurance Pool (ICAP) Board in replacement of Marvin Ford, Adair County Supervisor, whose term ended in 2004. ICAP was designed in response to Iowa legislation that authorizes and permits Iowa entities to form a local government risk pool. ICAP offers property and liability coverage at a stable cost from year to year. Since its formation in 1986, ICAP has met these goals. The public entities and special districts that are its members own ICAP. ICAP has grown steadily since its formation. Currently ICAP has 503 members consisting of 63 counties, 277 cities and 163 public entities.

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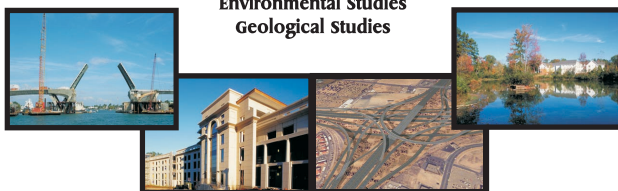
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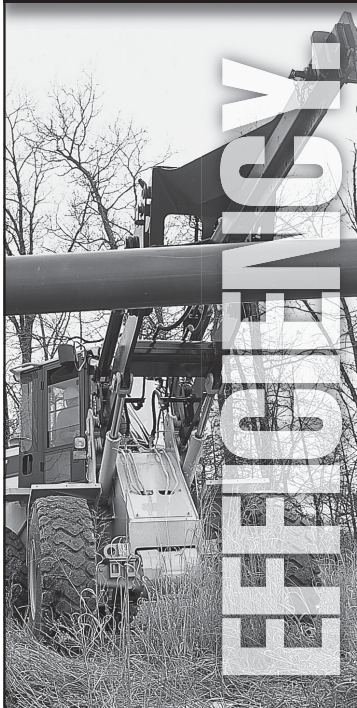
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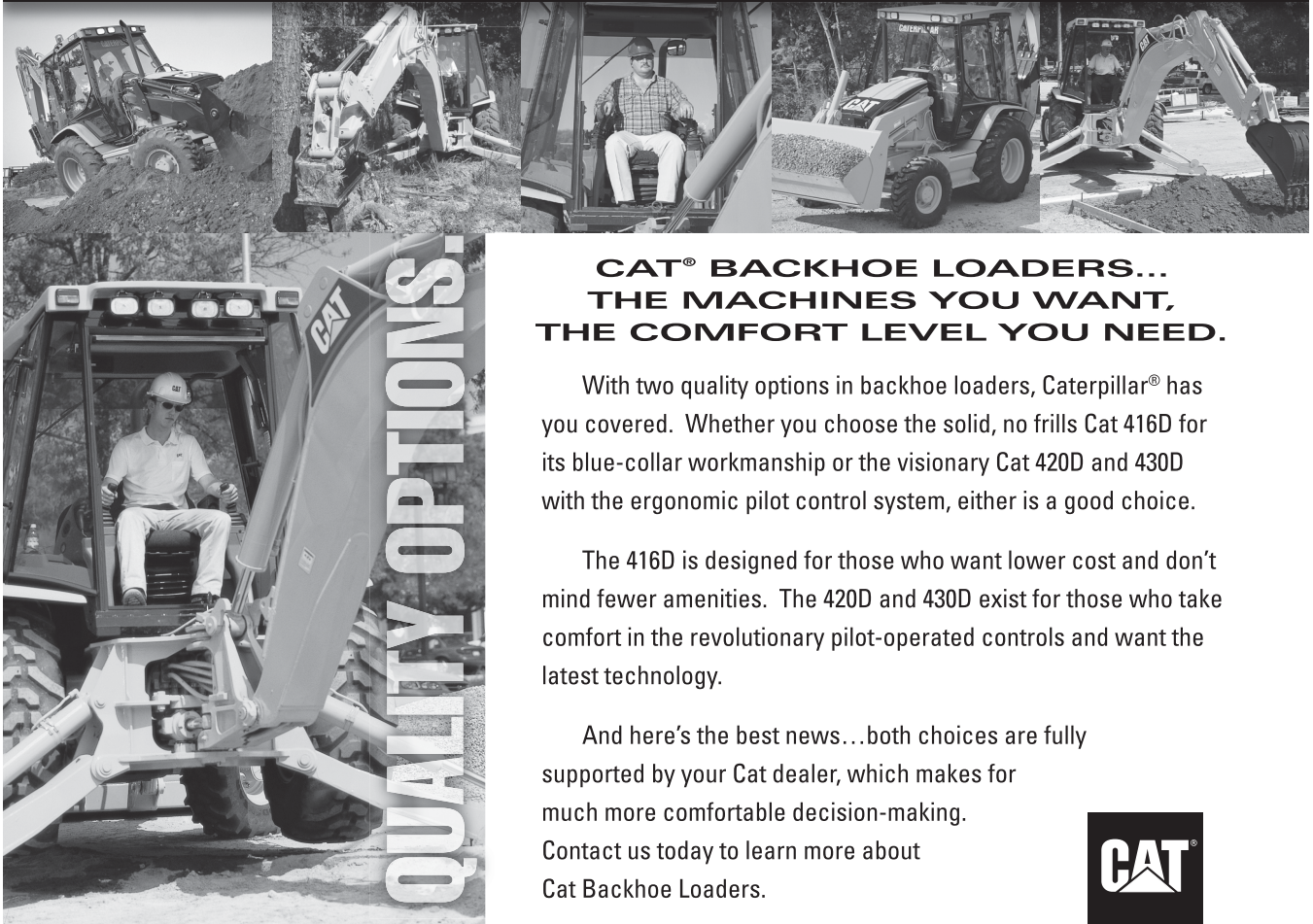
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For more information contact Lisa Cole, NACo Director of Enterprise Services, at 202.942.4270 or email lcole@naco.org.

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FEBRUARY

- 17 ISAC Executive Board (ISAC Office)
- 17 CCMS ELP Support Group
(Urbandale Public Library, Urbandale)
- 23 CCMS North Central Support Group
(Bennigan's, Clear Lake)
- 24-25 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

MARCH

- 2-4 CCMS Fundamentals
(Baymont Conference Center, DM))
- 4-8 NACo Legislative Conference
(Washington DC)
- 16 CCMS Board of Directors (Marriott, DM)
- 16-18 ISAC Spring School
(Marriott & Renaissance Savery, DM)

APRIL

- 12 CCMS Administrators/Support Staff Meeting
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 13 CCMS Cost Report Training
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 27 ISAC Board of Directors & League of Cities
Board of Directors Dinner/Meeting
- 28 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

MAY

- 12 CCMS Advanced Case Manager
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)

JUNE

- 7-8 CCMS Supervisors Training
(Baymont Conference Center, DM)
- 15-17 Information Technology Annual Conference
(Cedar Rapids)
- 22-24 CCMS Fundamentals
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 27-29 Auditors Summer Conference - Fort Dodge

JULY

- 12 CCMS Administrators
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 13 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 15-19 NACo Annual Conference (Hawaii)

AUGUST

- 4-5 Supervisors Executive Board (Atlantic area)
- 10-12 CCMS Annual Conference
(Holiday Inn Airport, DM)
- 11-13 Recorders Annual Conference
(Grand Harbor Resort, Dubuque)

For agendas or additional information on any of the above listed meetings please visit our website at 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 jnboea@iowacounties.org.

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