

The Iowa County

IowaCare:
Medicaid Reform
Implementation



October 2005



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The Iowa County

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IowaCare	4-5
Capitol Comments <i>John Easter</i>	6
Legal Briefs <i>David Vestal</i>	7
Health Check <i>Sandy Longfellow</i>	8
Technology Center <i>Tammy Norman</i>	8
Case Management <i>Jackie Olson Leech</i>	9
ISAC Brief	10-13
Counties in the Spotlight	14
Associate Member Highlights	15
NACo News	16
Miscellaneous	17
Classified Ad	17
In Memory	17
Calendar of Events	23

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ISAC's Mission:

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

ISAC's Vision:

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

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IowaCare: New Approach To Health Care For Low-Income Iowans

When it comes to health care for the poor, most of the news these days is sobering at best. Against that backdrop, Iowa is bucking the trend.

Anyone with an Internet connection can see the overall picture. Try “Googling” the word Medicaid in the news section and you’ll find thousands of news stories about benefit cuts, enrollment slashing or funding shortages. Make no mistake - Iowa’s Medicaid program is also under financial pressure. A supplemental appropriation will be needed next year to keep the program at status quo levels.

Still, Iowa leaders came up with a novel answer last spring to avoid catastrophic cuts. An offshoot was the creation of IowaCare, a limited benefit package for the working poor. “IowaCare isn’t wall-to-wall coverage and it’s not free for customers, but it’s an important health backstop for people working their way out of poverty,” said Gene Gessow, director of Iowa’s Medicaid program.

Why IowaCare?

It became more and more clear over the year leading up to the 2005 legislative session that federal action would soon cut \$65 million in federal revenue to the Iowa Medicaid Program. This revenue represented over 11% of the funding used for the state’s spending on Medicaid. Making the problem worse, losing the \$65 million was going to coincide with reductions in other sources of funds to Medicaid due to losses of one-time funds used in the past.

In the fall of 2004, when the Governor and Legislature began looking at their FY 2006 budgets, the situation for Medicaid was dire. State revenue was not going to be sufficient to cover the Medicaid funding issues and all of the other state needs, such as education funding. Medicaid cuts appeared inevitable.

The gap was filled when the Legislature and Governor Vilsack reached agreement with federal officials to permit a two-to-one federal match of state dollars raised for the care of indigents. That includes property taxes raised for Broadlawns Medical Center in Des Moines and state funds spent for the four state mental health institutes and the indigent care program, known as “State Papers,” at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

The legislation not only rescued Medicaid but could allow a limited expansion of the state’s indigent care program. The State Papers program served approximately 5,000 Iowans in the past and Broadlawns served approximately 9,000 people below 200% of the federal poverty level. The IowaCare Program is also estimated to cover about 14,000 Iowans in total.

The IowaCare legislation replaces Iowa’s previous 100%

By: Jennifer Vermeer, Assistant Medicaid Director

state funded programs with a program that now receives two-to-one federal match. This was done through an expansion of the Medicaid Program. The expansion is limited, however, to mirror limits in the previous programs.

Offsetting the loss of federal revenue was the initial genesis of the IowaCare concept, but not the final goal. The goal of IowaCare is not only to expand coverage for indigent persons, but to change the way care is provided in IowaCare and Medicaid.

IowaCare also includes a number of innovative health care reform initiatives for both IowaCare and the regular Medicaid program. Iowa is leading the nation in testing reforms aimed at increasing personal responsibility in health care decision-making, using incentive programs to promote healthy activities, developing strategies for electronic medical records, and rebalancing Iowa’s long-term care system, to name a few.

Who Is Eligible For IowaCare?

IowaCare generally covers anybody ages 19-64 who:

- has an adjusted income of below 200% of the federal poverty level, which is about \$1,600 a month for a family of two;
- is not eligible for Medicaid;
- does not have other health insurance; and
- agrees to pay a premium ranging from \$1/month to \$75/month per covered person, depending on income (there will be exemptions in hardship cases).

Eligible individuals include single people, childless couples, and parents of children now covered under the state’s program for the working poor, called Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa, or *hawk-i*. Many of these people are not eligible for Medicaid regardless of their income.

Eligibility standards for IowaCare are statewide. Under the former program, indigent people who were not eligible for Medicaid received clearance, or “papers,” from county general relief directors to qualify for care at U of I hospitals. As of late August, 7,337 individuals had enrolled in IowaCare from all 99 counties. The program is over halfway to its goal.

Special Categories

There are two additional special categories of folks who are eligible:

- Pregnant women who, when their medical expenses are deducted from their income, have income between 200% and 300% of the federal poverty level. This is expected to total about 20 women per year; so far, seven women have enrolled in this category.
- Patients enrolled in State Papers in FY 2005 who have income greater than 200% of the federal poverty level but who have on-going chronic conditions.

These two special groups also receive coverage through IowaCare. To receive coverage under the chronic care program, the member must have received State Papers between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, and have an on-going chronic medical condition. This applies to people both above and below 200% of the federal poverty level. Persons on State Papers during this time period received a letter from the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to July 1 inviting them to enroll in IowaCare and instructing them to provide information indicating they had a chronic condition. This special category was developed to provide continuity of care from State Papers to IowaCare, and they do have additional benefits (described below).

What Does IowaCare Cover?

IowaCare is an expansion of the Medicaid program; however, the benefit package is limited. The limits are set in state law and approved by the federal government. The benefits provided are very similar to what has been available at Broadlawns and through State Papers in the past, but are not identical. IowaCare provides coverage for the following:

- inpatient hospital services (typically procedures provided in the hospital with an overnight stay, and ordered by a physician);
- outpatient hospital services (procedures performed on a same-day basis, and ordered by a physician);
- physician services;
- dental services; and
- transportation services.

These services are covered by IowaCare, but only to the extent that they are offered by the provider. For example, Broadlawns does not offer tertiary hospital care, so that level of care is not available at Broadlawns and the member would need to go to the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics for those services. Another example is transportation. Broadlawns does not offer transportation services, while the University of Iowa does.

We often receive questions about whether specific procedures will be covered. Like any health insurance or Medicaid service, the service must be medically necessary. Most of the time this means that the member needs to see the physician to determine whether a service will be covered.

Medical Exams

Coverage expands beginning March 1, 2006 to include comprehensive medical examinations and health risk assessments. All IowaCare enrollees will be required to receive an exam within 45 days of enrollment. The purpose is to ensure that each member receives a personal health improvement plan from his or her physician or nurse practitioner that will provide instructions on lifestyle and diet changes to enhance long term health outcomes.

Prescription Drug Coverage

Under the state law authorizing IowaCare, prescriptions are not covered. One exception is for prescriptions that are provided as part of an inpatient hospital stay, which may also include a 10-day take home supply. After that, the cost of prescriptions falls to the member. This will undoubtedly continue to be a difficult challenge for IowaCare members. DHS is in the process of developing a referral list to programs offering discounted or free pharmaceuticals, but we know the need will far exceed the supply.

The only other exception for pharmaceuticals is for former State Papers recipients. If a person received State Papers between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005, and has a chronic medical condition, IowaCare will cover all prescription drugs related to the specific medical condition. This is for people both above and below 200% of the federal poverty level.

Where Are Services Covered?

Under state law, the only providers covered under IowaCare are:

- University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics;
- Broadlawns Medical Center; and
- the state's four mental health institutes.

Coverage is limited to these providers because they had state or county-funded indigent care programs in the past, which are now being replaced by a federally-matched program. The providers offer basically the same services they offered in the past, but now receive federal matching funds. The comprehensive medical exams that begin March 1, 2006 will be available from any qualified physician or nurse practitioner in the state.

Mental Health Institutions

The state's mental health institutions in Cherokee, Clarinda, Mt. Pleasant and Independence are included in IowaCare. The services offered, process for admission and population are unchanged under IowaCare. The program merely allows the institutions to receive federal matching funds for Medicaid and IowaCare recipients. This has previously not been allowed under federal regulations.

How To Sign Up?

To enroll, members simply need to fill out an application. The applications are user friendly and the process is very quick. People with chronic medical conditions who received State Papers between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005 should apply for IowaCare even if their income is over 200%. This will allow them to continue to receive coverage through IowaCare.

For additional information see the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise website at www.ime.state.ia.us or call Member Services at 1-800-338-8366 outside Des Moines and 515-725-1003 inside Des Moines. Visit ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) for a link to further Medicaid reform information.

Eliminate the Confusion

There has been a lot of talk in recent years about government efficiency and the conservation of public resources. During the 12 years that I have been involved in the Iowa legislative process, I've noticed several things that I think should be considered to streamline the system. This month I want to address the confusion of our current bill-numbering system and suggest a better way of doing it.

We should eliminate the complicated system of house files, house study bills, senate files and senate study bills, and replace it with, simply, house bills and senate bills. We should also design the system so that when a bill is introduced, it retains its original number throughout the process instead of continually changing numbers.

The Need For Study Bills?

One of the more confusing things about our current system is "study bills." Since we already have house files and senate files, why do we also need house study bills and senate study bills? Study bills are considered and approved in standing committees just as files are. Once approved by a committee, a study bill is reprinted with a file number in the same way files are passed and reprinted with new numbers.

Study bills are requested by committee chairs and are introduced without specific legislators' names printed on them. This way, unpopular ideas can be offered without the political risk of specific legislators being associated with them. Under my proposed system, eliminate study bills and simply note "By the Committee on..." at the top of the file just as it is currently done on study bills today.

Study bills are not included in the bill packets. Even when you get a daily bill packet, if you want a copy of a study bill, you have to go to the respective house or senate bill room and request it. If we keep study bills then they should at least be made available in the bill packet just as files are.

House and Senate Names and Numbers

Why do we call bills "files?" Let's call them what they are. We should change "file" to "bill" so we would simply have house bills and senate bills. In the first session of the general assembly, senate bills would begin with the number one and house bills would begin with the number 1000. This would prevent both houses from using the same numbers.

In the second year of the biennium, house bills could begin with the number 2000 and senate bills could continue where they left off at the end of the first year. The last two digits of the calendar year could be hyphenated onto the bill number. For example, the first number next year would be House Bill 1000-06 and Senate Bill 1-06.

By: **John Easter**

ISAC Director of
Intergovernmental Affairs



Retain Numbers Throughout Process

Just when you become familiar with a bill (or file) by its number under the current system, it is suddenly renumbered. Once a piece of legislation is introduced, it should retain its original number throughout the entire process.

For example, House Bill 1013-06 is introduced and assigned to a committee. Currently, when the bill is amended and approved by the committee, it is reprinted with the amendments, given a new number and placed on the floor calendar for consideration. Under my proposed system, simply keep the same number (HB 1013-06) and print a new copy of the bill with committee amendments included in it. The committee amendments would be noted in the margins of HB 1013-06 and the word "engrossed" would be stamped on the title page.

When HB 1013-06 is adopted on the House floor, the floor amendments would be noted in the margins and the word "re-engrossed" stamped on the title page. It would still be a good idea to print this version on pink paper as is currently done.

When HB 1013-06 passes the Senate committee of assignment, reprint HB 1013-06 as amended by the Senate committee with the amendments noted in the margins and stamp "revised" on the title page. Then when the bill passes on the Senate floor, it should be printed again with the word "re-revised" on it. At this point, the Senate (second house) version could be printed on, say, green paper.

Once a bill gets a number, it would always have that number. Any interested person could determine which version he or she wants (engrossed, re-engrossed, revised or re-revised) and ask the bill room for it. Bills could still be paired with companions in the second house and substituted as they are today.

There are other advantages to this proposed system. Currently, a bill as adopted in the second house is printed in the "clip sheets." This is very confusing to many people involved in the process when trying to distinguish the bill from numerous amendments and other information also contained in the clip sheets. Under my new system, the bill would be available in bill form with "re-revised" stamped on it, rather than buried in the clip sheets. This would save lots of frustration and reams of paper because the number of new bills introduced would be cut down substantially.

There may be a better way than what I have proposed, but I think the time has come to make this part of the process more efficient and user-friendly.

For a diagram outlining how this new bill process could work, visit ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) and click on 'Services', 'Legislative', then 'Capitol Comments.'

Counties Explore the Legality Of Sharing One Assessor

Sharing Agreements

Can two counties share one assessor? Can a city and a county share the services of one assessor through the use of a 28E agreement? This is an issue that has been percolating lately, as counties try to become more efficient. Traditionally the answer from the Department of Revenue and from the Attorney General's office has been that no such sharing agreements are allowed.

If that's true, it would take a legislative change to begin allowing such sharing agreements. But for the reasons stated below, I believe that two counties, or a county and a city, can currently share one assessor under existing law.

No Controlling Legal Authority: The only applicable language in the Iowa Code is Iowa Code §441.1, which says: "In every county in the state of Iowa the office of assessor is hereby created. A city having a population of ten thousand or more... may by ordinance provide for the selection of a city assessor..." There is no other language in the Iowa Code that addresses this issue. Nothing in this language precludes having two political subdivisions share an assessor. Likewise, there are no reported court cases or Iowa Attorney General's opinions I have found that address this issue.

Iowa Code §441.17(1) does require county assessors to devote their "full time" to the duties of their office. This is the language that the Attorney General's office points to in saying that sharing agreements are disallowed. But it should be noted that this language was interpreted to mean that county assessors could also serve as county zoning administrators (Iowa Attorney General Opinion 97-2-2). What the opinion says is that an assessor cannot serve in another job if "a single person cannot physically perform the duties of both positions." If that is the standard, then I'd argue that county assessors can likewise serve as city assessors. Or serve as the assessor for two counties.

County Home Rule: Cities and counties in Iowa have home rule authority. This means that they have the authority to make their own decisions regarding their local affairs. The only limit on this authority is that they cannot act in a way that is "inconsistent with the laws of the general assembly," (Art. III, Section 37). Pursuant to this provision, counties and cities now have the authority to act "unless a particular power has been denied them by statute," (*City of Des Moines v. Master Builders of Iowa*, 498 N.W.2d 702, 703-04 (Iowa 1993)).

The Iowa Code goes on to say that a county power is not inconsistent with a state law unless it is "irreconcilable with the state law," (Iowa Code §331.301(4)). Iowa Supreme Court cases have construed this to mean that Iowa law requires some legislative expression of an intent to preempt home rule authority, or some legislative statement of the state's transcendent interest in regulating the area in a uniform manner.

By: David Vestal

ISAC General Counsel



This approach is consistent with the legislature's statement in Iowa Code chapter 331 that "[a] county may exercise its general powers subject *only* to limitations *expressly imposed* by a state law," (Iowa Code §331.301(3)). In *City of Des Moines v. Gruen*, 457 N.W.2d 340, 343 (Iowa 1990) it states: "Limitations on a municipality's power over local affairs are not implied; they must be imposed by the legislature."

In this case, there has certainly been no express limitation imposed by the Legislature regarding sharing the services of an assessor. That leads me to the conclusion that two jurisdictions can use a 28E agreement to share the services of one assessor.

Incompatibility: There is no incompatibility problem with an assessor serving as both city assessor and county assessor. Especially since, in 91 counties in Iowa, the same person already assesses all of the property in the county.

Precedent: Lastly, this does not settle the question of whether this practice is legal, but there is precedent for this. Jasper County and the City of Newton shared the services of one assessor through the use of a 28E agreement some years ago.

Inverse Condemnation

In *Harms v. City of Sibley* (August 12, 2005), a case involving inverse condemnation, the city rezoned property near the Harms' property to allow the construction and operation of a ready mix plant. The Harms sued, claiming that the city's action constituted the taking of the Harms' property without just compensation. The Iowa Supreme Court disagreed, saying that it was not the action in rezoning the property that resulted in the damage in this case. The ready mix company, said the Court, decided where the plant would be built, and how it would be operated. The Supreme Court said that the Harms' correct remedy is a nuisance suit against the ready mix company, not the city.

Law Enforcement Officers Carrying Weapons

A federal law passed in 1996 makes it a criminal act for law enforcement officers to carry a weapon if they have ever been convicted of misdemeanor domestic abuse. The law applies even if the conviction was prior to entering law enforcement. And it applies even if the conviction was prior to the passage of the federal law. Every county sheriff's office needs to be aware of this law. The citation is 18 U.S. Code section 922(g)(9).

Parting Ponderable: The 22nd President of the United States and the 24th President of the United States had the same father but were not brothers. How is this possible?

health check

Victims Of Mental Abuse

We see cruelty everyday on television, in movies, in books and magazines. There is another place that we must be especially aware *not* to see it - the home. There are two comments that I have always dreaded hearing: "I was just teasing" and "It was just a joke." These two reasons for doing something cruel are just an excuse.

Mental abuse is so subtle, it sometimes starts without the receiver even knowing it is happening. Often the victim even thinks it is their own fault. People tell you these pranks are funny and ask why don't you get the joke. Sometimes the abuser makes the receiver feel like they deserve the abuse. They have curly hair or the wrong kind of clothes; they are tall or short or thin or not. The result is a person drained of confidence and courage and who generally can't speak up. They feel powerless and hopeless.

Who are the victims? I think there are many children that are mentally abused by their parents. They are told they are stupid or worthless. They can't do anything right and rarely hear any words of praise. It also can be a wife or even a husband that is constantly bombarded with insults or maybe even threats. They are often humiliated in front of friends and family.

By: **Sandy Longfellow**

ISAC Administrative Assistant



Beware of parents or spouses that are excessively possessive and keep their victims isolated from family and friends. There is no one in whom to confide or get assistance. Restriction of resources also indicates an abuser. The victim has no money or resources to use to oppose their tormenter. The next stage would be limiting personal freedom and mobility – keeping them totally isolated from anyone that can help.

If anything I have described applies to anyone you know, please try to be there for them: help to rebuild confidence; try to explain that these behaviors are not acceptable and have no place in a loving relationship; be a friend; and help a child's self esteem. We need to be an advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves. The challenge is to speak up in a positive way for people who have difficulty defending themselves. Be a positive influence on those around you.

Here are some websites that might be helpful: www.nmha.org, www.endabuse.org, www.cyberparent.com/abuse/mentalemotionalabusers.htm.

technology center

Purchasing A Cell Phone

Q: I need to purchase a cell phone for use when out of the office. Do you have any recommendations as to what to look for?

A: A few things to keep in mind when looking to purchase a cell phone and plan, are how often you will be making calls, how long they may be and when and where you will be making them. The plan is the most important part of the cell phone purchase, even more so than the phone itself. Ultimately all cell phones will allow you to make phone calls; what becomes costly is the added features and design of the phones. When you sign a contract for the phone service be extremely cautious. It is a contract and most companies have hefty penalties for early termination, so before signing the contract you may want to keep the following points in mind: get a trial or grace period that will allow you to try out the service and see if it will fit your needs; find out how many minutes you will have and find out when the peak and off peak hours begin and end; be aware of extra fees for roaming and overtime; determine if the plan provides free long distance; find out if the plan allows for free calls to another phone using the same provider; check out the warranties and insurance on your phone (phones can be costly to replace); and do not allow your-

By: **Tammy Norman**

ISAC Technology
Services Coordinator



self to be pressured into signing up for extra features you will not use.

When you initially sign your contract most companies offer incentives and reduced pricing on many of their phones. Do not purchase more than you need. How many pictures will you take with a camera phone and if you do take them, how much does it cost to download? Will you need a speakerphone/conference calling capability? Do you wish to send text messages and use e-mail? If not, you will be able to purchase a simple but economical phone. Ultimately, you may be able to purchase a phone with all these features at a reasonable price but before using the features provided, make sure there are not hidden costs involved.

Website Note: ISAC's Fall School is fast approaching. Remember to take a moment and register online at www.iowacounties.org. Please forward any items that you would like addressed in this column to my attention at tnorman@iowacounties.org. Until next month, keep clicking!

National Case Management Conference

Cultural Competence

I attended the National Case Management Conference in Philadelphia June 5-8, 2005. The conference featured a number of excellent speakers and topics. Wilma Townsend, who has a masters degree in social work and has experienced the mental health system as a consumer, discussed issues pertaining to “Developing a Cultural, Competent and Recovery-Oriented System of Care.” Wilma believes it is imperative that the mental health system and individual Targeted Case Manager give the person experiencing symptoms of mental illness hope, and provide them with the tools necessary to live fulfilling and productive lives in the community in which they live.

Listening to what the person wants and needs is an additional role of the Targeted Case Manager as a facilitator of the recovery philosophy. Supporting recovery is the role of the community and the mental health system. If these supports are in place for the person, the paperwork involved in providing services is meaningful, because it is based on the person’s recovery, not on paperwork outcomes. In a system that supports recovery, the focus is on putting money toward the needs and preferences of the individuals served and providing the staff with what they need to be recovery facilitators. What makes a difference in the community, according to Wilma, is having a 1:1 relationship with the individual in the community to help them better understand the person and their mental health issues.

Training on cultural competence is also essential for Targeted Case Managers to understand the people they are serving, including knowledge of the culture’s worldview on mental health. Wilma gave examples from her own culture including: African Americans in the 1970s were misdiagnosed with schizophrenia instead of depression because there was a belief that African Americans are always happy, and therefore can’t be depressed. Because African Americans have a mistrust of the overall health care system, they are reluctant to utilize the system, and therefore wait to seek mental health services when they become very ill, through emergency rooms or psychiatric hospitalizations rather than through a doctor’s appointment.

Evaluating systems from a recovery focus looks at many indicators to measure success. The mission statement of the organization should address recovery of the persons served, and the leadership of these organizations should announce recovery. Public relations with the community should be educating the public on mental health issues and informing the community that recovery is possible. Consumers of mental health services should be on advisory boards and committees, as well as direct staff. The funding should follow the individual needs of the persons served. Agency policies and pro-

By: *Jackie Olson Leech*

ISAC Case Management
Specialist



cedures should reflect the recovery philosophy. There should be internal and external collaboration and services need to be based on recovery-oriented treatment.

Staff need to be given the skills through training to pass on to the people they serve, including training in cultural competence.

The Benefits of Working

Dr. Kate Donegan’s presentation, “Work is Everybody’s Business,” focused on the importance of meaningful activity for everyone and was an overview of the evidenced-based practice of supported employment, which has proven to be effective in helping people return to or become part of the workforce. Dr. Donegan believes that the recovery philosophy should be expected in providing vocational supports to people and that there needs to be a shift from the medical model to the psychosocial rehabilitation model. The people served today in vocational services are younger, have little or no history of institutionalization and are diverse in many ways. A huge study conducted through the EIDP Project Center for Mental Health Services showed that there is a positive connection between rehabilitation and work. Most people with psychiatric disabilities want to work, and work is associated with higher levels of self-esteem, morale and self-efficacy. In this study, it was found that less than 25% of those with a chronic mental illness secure any form of vocational assistance, and less actually utilize supported employment services. Increasing opportunities for work was shown in this study to increase medication compliance and life satisfaction. According to Dr. Donegan, some of the reason for underused services is the myths that work equals stress and stress is bad, that those with certain diagnoses can’t ever “really” work, and that it’s not worth it for the person or the employer.

Principles of evidence-based supported employment are based on consumer choice and are integrated and supported with all aspects of treatment. The preferences, dreams and goals of the person are central to work. It is the belief that people can work despite their diagnosis history, and the jobs must provide real work for real pay. In addition, there must be benefits education included in vocational supports for the person. Dr. Donegan believes that the “day wasting programs” in sheltered work and day programs are unacceptable and the longer individuals are in these types of programs, or unemployed, the more difficult it is to try and work for competitive wages again. For more information on evidenced-based practices for persons living with psychiatric disabilities, go to www.mentalhealthpractices.org.

ISAC Fall School 2005

By: Jerri Noboa

ISAC Meetings Administrator



Lodging

Registration is coming along great and hotels are filling up fast for ISAC's Fall School of Instruction November 13-15. The Marriott and Renaissance Savery are full but there are still hotel rooms at the Hotel Fort Des Moines.

At the Hotel Fort Des Moines (515-243-1161 or 800-532-1466), you need a credit card to hold a reservation or they will accept purchase orders/claim forms, but this must be done before arrival and for each school. Please use booking #3428 for the ISAC room block.

Dining

Last month I told you that Pitcher's, located in the Marriott, will be open on Sunday from noon – 6pm with "Grab N Go" food. Allie's Restaurant, also located in the Marriott, will be open from 6:30am - 1pm, with the breakfast menu ending at 11am. The restaurant will close at 1pm and then re-open for dinner at 5pm.

At the Renaissance Savery, the Iowa Room will be open on Sunday for only one hour from 11:00am - noon but the Monihan's Lounge will be open from noon - midnight. In the lounge you may order off the Iowa Room lunch menu from noon - 5pm and from 5pm - 10pm you may order off their dinner menu. From noon - 10pm the lounge also has its own lighter menu.

Construction

Construction on I-235 into downtown Des Moines is really coming along and you will be pleased as to how much easier it is getting in and out. There is still a considerable amount of construction east and west of downtown. Visit our website (www.iowacounties.org) for directions to the parking ramps and hotels in downtown.

Marketing Opportunities

ISAC depends on corporations and organizations to participate in ISAC's conferences by sponsoring, advertising and exhibiting. Their financial support makes it possible for us to offer top-notch facilities, entertainment and food at a low cost to our attendees. They also supply counties with a wealth of information on how to become more efficient and effective through the use of their products and services. Please encourage the companies you work with to be a part of ISAC's Fall School of Instruction. Information is available on ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org) or by contacting Denise Obrecht at 515-244-7181 or dobrecht@iowacounties.org.

Alumni Meeting

The ISAC Alumni Association will hold a luncheon/meeting on Monday, November 14 in Allie's Restaurant at the downtown Marriott in Des Moines. The "Dutch treat" luncheon will start at 11:30am and be followed by a meeting with an election of officers and a guest speaker. If you are interested in attending, please make a reservation with Jerri Noboa at ISAC 515-244-7181 or jnobia@iowacounties.org.

Make the Most of Your Fall School Experience

There is still time to register for the ISAC Fall School of Instruction November 13-15, 2005. Visit our website (www.iowacounties.org) and register online. We hope you will join us!

The following information will assist you in making the most of your conference experience.

- Bring a large supply of business cards to make contacts during the conference and use in requesting information from others.
- Plan your schedule. The conference agenda can be found on the ISAC website (www.iowacounties.org), along with affiliate agendas. Be sure to attend ISAC's General Session to vote on the Association's legislative priorities for the year.
- Ask questions during the sessions to clarify ideas being discussed; after the session, get more information to meet your county's needs.
- Take notes, save handouts, gather literature.
- Look for opportunities to share information and ideas from your county.
- Fill out an evaluation form so we can make improvements at next year's conference.
- Do a concise report promptly upon your return home and circulate it to your fellow county officials, relevant county agencies and departments, and to your local media. Highlight the value of the conference as an opportunity to help you do a better job as a county official to manage the resources and attend to the needs of your county.

By The Numbers:

Counties and the Courts

By: Jay Syverson, ISAC Fiscal Analyst

With all the recent attention being focused on the U.S. Supreme Court, it seems appropriate to look at county involvement in Iowa's court system (as represented in service area 1 – public safety and legal services – of county budgets).

Leaving aside the obvious aspects of criminal prosecution, there are three other main categories within which counties interact with the courts: assistance to the district courts, court proceedings and juvenile justice. In FY 2004, counties collectively spent \$3.4 million on assistance to the district courts, including facilities operation, maintaining a law library and other research services, and bailiff services. Counties spent \$1.4 million on bailiff services alone, although 95% of that was concentrated in just three counties; Polk, Scott and Woodbury counties each spent more than \$400,000 on bailiff services.

Counties spent almost \$9 million on court proceedings, including paying for juries and witnesses, detention services, and court costs and filing fees. But by far the biggest cost within the court proceedings category is the service of civil papers. Counties spent \$4.5 million serving civil papers in FY 2004, a quarter of that total in Polk County. Finally, helping to administer the juvenile justice system cost counties another \$4.4 million in 2004. Victim restitution accounted for \$1.1 million, about a fourth of the total cost.

All tolled, however, county expenses related to the administration of the court system are relatively minor. FY 2004 expenses in the categories listed above totaled just over \$16 million, which is less than 6% of the total amount counties spent on public safety and legal services.

For a county by county listing of court costs visit ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org).

Good-Bye

By: Karmen Anderson,
former ISAC Receptionist



Saying goodbye has never been easy for me. It's especially difficult when you work so closely with such a fantastic group of people. It's not just the ISAC staff that I am leaving, but the Board of Directors and all the county officials that I have had the opportunity to work with and serve over the last 18 months. During my stay with ISAC, I can honestly say that I haven't met anyone that I haven't liked. ISAC has been a wonderful experience for me.

However, there comes a time when you feel a need to take on new challenges. I will no longer be a member of the ISAC staff after September 16th. For the last seven years I have been pursuing my bachelor's degree with hopes that I might attend law school afterwards. I am finally nearing that goal and it is time to buckle down to prepare. I am in my last 12 months at Upper Iowa University with a strict degree plan to reach graduation before the fall of 2006, so that my dream of attending law school can finally be realized. This entails a tremendous amount of hard work and lots of time and studying. I am also enrolled to take the Law School Admission Test in October and will spend the first few weeks that I am off work to prepare for it.

The decision to leave ISAC was a hard one for me to make. In fact, I put off giving my notice for almost 30 days after my husband and I had initially made the decision. I am looking forward to being a full-time student, being admitted to law school, having my four-year-old home with me when he isn't in preschool and of course sleeping in every morning. I am not looking forward to missing out on this year's Fall School of Instruction, the support the ISAC staff has given me during various projects, the unlimited amount of patience the staff had while I was preparing to get married last year, when my sewer system broke, when my basement flooded and the various other times that they have been there for me. This job is one that I have truly loved and I will never forget. Everyone has been a friend, as well as a co-worker, and I will miss you all.

ISAC's Fall School of Instruction

November 13-15, 2005

Marriott & Renaissance Savery, Downtown Des Moines

Register Online at www.iowacounties.org

Early Bird registration ends November 1

ISAC scholarship application

ISAC is now accepting applications for our scholarship program. Eligibility is limited to children of county officials or county employees. This does not include city employees, employees of county extension offices, or candidates who are themselves county employees. Children of county assessors are eligible to apply for this scholarship. At least one \$1,000 scholarship shall be awarded annually. The candidates must be seniors in high school. The scholarship can be awarded to anyone who will be a full-time student of any college requiring at least a minimum of two years for a degree. **For the complete list of requirements please visit ISAC's website (www.iowacounties.org).**

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

County _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail Address _____

Date of Graduation _____ Name of High School _____

Proposed college _____

Have you taken the SAT/ACT _____ If so, your score _____

Total Class Size _____ Rank in Class _____ Grade Point _____ on a 4.0 scale

Which parent of yours is a county official or employee? _____

Parent's Name _____

County Department _____ County Position _____

County Phone # _____

Financial Need: In the space provided, explain your financial need for this scholarship:

Essay: On another sheet of paper type an essay of no more than 250 words explaining your career plans and future goals. **MAKE US SEE THE REAL YOU.**

ISAC scholarship application

Extra Curricular Activities: In the space provided, please identify your most significant extra curricular activities, school activities, work experience, etc. that might be helpful to the committee in judging your application.

References: We need personal reference letters from three (3) individuals other than family members (such as teachers, employers, advisors, etc.).

Music Award: We are also offering the BureauCats Music Award, which is a \$1,500 scholarship. This scholarship is available to an applicant who intends to participate in music on some level while in college, for instance, concert band, symphony orchestra, instrumental ensembles, choir, swing choir, or chorus. If this applies to you, on another sheet of paper labeled "music essay", tell us about any plans you may have in this area.

For you to be considered for a scholarship you must:

- 1. Return application filled out completely**
- 2. Enclose your typed essay**
- 3. Include three letters of personal reference**

Return to: Iowa State Association of Counties, 501 SW 7th St., Suite Q, Des Moines, IA 50309-4540.
Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2005.

I hereby certify that this application contains no misrepresentations or falsifications and that the information given by me is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Applicant _____

counties in the spotlight

Changes In County Government

Editorial note: This is the second part of a six-part series exploring the changes that have taken place in county government. Three to five county officials in each elected affiliate have been asked to answer questions about their memories of the past and outlook for the future.

Participants from the Recorders Affiliate:

Patricia S. Sass, Black Hawk County Recorder, 15 years in position, 40 years in county government

Linda Fort, Humboldt County Recorder, 12 years in position, 36 years in county government

Kurt Brown, O'Brien County Recorder, 22 years in position, 22 years in county government

Why do you enjoy being a county official?

Pat: I enjoy working with and serving the public. The variety of work in my office really makes for a very interesting day. I have always been very proud to serve the people and work at the courthouse. You meet some very nice people, and sometimes you have to deal with unhappy people.

Linda: I enjoy meeting and working with people. No two days are ever the same. I find it interesting and challenging.

Kurt: You interact with a lot of people. In doing so, you are able to find solutions to many challenging problems, but also help your customers with routine tasks. Everyday is guaranteed to be interesting and different.

Since you started your current position, how has the position changed?

Pat: The addition of all the vital records (birth, marriage and death), along with doing the applications for marriages, has increased the work load. We have added the passport applications also. This was a good addition of revenue for the county. With the interest rates so low we have more than doubled the real estate that we record.

Linda: There have been many added duties and responsibilities, as well as computerization, security and privacy issues.

Kurt: We've gone from hand-indexing documents (before computers) and photocopying them onto paper, to scanning documents onto CDs and uploading them to the CLRIS website. Game licenses are issued electronically instead of handwritten. Since I started, some additional duties include handling vital records, passport applications, titling of boats, snowmobiles & ATVs, and various other miscellaneous duties.

What do you feel has been the biggest change overall in county government?

Pat: I see the big change being the rising costs of how we have to operate to provide the services to the public. We are getting ready to put the real estate on the Internet, and I have a concern about privacy.

Linda: The overall work load increase.

Kurt: The various mandates passed onto us that we are required to administer as county officials have changed how we function. Our duties and responsibilities have changed immensely.

If you could, would you go back to how things were when you began your career in county government, or do you prefer the present times?

Pat: I feel we need to keep moving forward, as long as it doesn't keep us from providing the people excellent service in a timely fashion.

Linda: The stress level was definitely lower when I began my county government career.

Kurt: I'd prefer somewhere in between. Technology - such as computers, fax machines and the Internet - allows us to serve the public faster now than in the past. The public keeps demanding more from county government. It is a challenge to keep up with the various changes necessary for us to function. I wouldn't want to return to the way we operated 20 years ago. It's scary when you see how quickly things have changed in such a short time span, and I wonder what the future holds.

Where do you feel the focus should be in the future of county government?

Pat: We need to keep local control and work to inform our state representatives when problems arise. We need to stop forming committee after committee, which costs taxpayers, and deal with some of these problems ourselves.

Linda: Maintaining local services to county residents.

Kurt: We have to be ready and able to adapt our operations to fit the lifestyle and needs of our customers.

How does county government need to adapt to the changing times?

Pat: We have to continue to make services for the public available and easy to access. We need to keep our county offices in each county operational.

Linda: By being flexible and keeping up with technology.

Kurt: We need to function more efficiently in our positions as the needs and demands of our customers change.

associate member highlights



Auxiant is an employee benefits administrator located in Cedar Rapids, providing consultation and administrative services to over 250 clients across the Midwest.

At Auxiant, we focus on *preventing* unnecessary costs for our clients, and believe it is better to invest in the health of employees rather than paying for their illnesses down the road. In order to help our clients accomplish this, we have implemented a Partnership Plus Program, which integrates a variety of services to provide valuable resources to our clients. This includes access to online information regarding our clients' health plans and claims information, as well as a 24-Hour Nurseline. In addition, the Partnership Plus Program offers prevention resources that are customized for each employee's health needs and mailed directly to their homes, serving to motivate and educate them on the importance of maintaining good health.

Another major component of Partnership Plus is our Health Management Program, which discovers undiagnosed conditions and encourages plan participants to modify lifestyle habits to reduce medical costs and improve overall health. Health professionals come to the clients' worksite and provides employees with a confidential risk-analysis. In the end, this program not only saves money, it saves lives.

Unfortunately, despite our prevention efforts, some illnesses and injuries are inevitable, which is why another component of our Partnership Plus Program is a Claims Surveillance System (AWAC®) which screens all medical and prescription claims daily through this doctor-produced and doctor-monitored system. It flags erroneous or fraudulent billing for further review, and examines each claim to ensure medically appropriate services are being performed. This year alone, the program has saved our clients over \$900,000.

If you would like more information on the many ways Auxiant™ can deliver better outcomes while also reducing costs for your agency, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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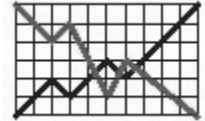
Tom O'Brien
(800) 475-2232, ext. 1210
tobrien@auxiant.com

Kirby Moss
(800) 475-2232, ext. 1228
kmoss@auxiant.com

Brenda S. Shald and Associates Expense Reduction in Telecom

Telecom is a fast changing industry. Just to update you on a few trends:

- √ **Long distance** interstate rates are down to 2 - 4 cents, which is near cost. Large carriers are moving away from it and from smaller customers.
- √ **VoIP** is just starting to become available to smaller and medium sized entities. Questions linger over whether it can actually save you money; it's a customer by customer evaluation. E911 service issues are not yet resolved, with regulations varying from state to state...keeping track of where the 911 call came from can be a challenge. VoIP allows you to be reached wherever you are. Security is an issue, since the calls are over the public internet. One way to "test it out" without a lot of upfront capital is "IP centrex", if that's available in your area.
- √ **Wi-fi**...have you heard of it? It eliminates cell phone costs. Your cell phone would access nearby "hotspots" set up connecting it to the internet for VoIP calling. It will eventually drive down the cost of cell phone service. It's only good now for short ranges from the "hotspots."



Ninety-five percent of the time savings can be found by reviewing telecom expenses, whether its from implementing new technology, finding billing errors, better rates, removing outdated services or provisioning services differently. Since it's a time consuming, tedious task, a reputable business exists to do the legwork for you, so that all you have to do is make decisions.

For 13 years Brenda Shald has been serving over 200 cities, counties, and hospitals in Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and now Iowa, reviewing their telecom expenses for savings. Fees are contingent, based on realized savings. As such, they won't increase a budget.

Contact Information:

Brenda S. Shald and Associates
Contact: Brenda Shald
113 Park Ave.
Worthington, MN 56187
Ph: (507) 376-4654 Fax: (507) 376-5519
E-Mail: bshald@frontiernet.net

Story County Recognized Again for Energy Efficiency

By: Kelly Zonderwyk, NACo Community Services Associate

As energy independence continues to be on the minds of individuals throughout the country, making county-owned buildings more energy efficient is a logical and necessary step. Story County has already made great strides in minimizing the energy usage of their county-owned buildings by participating in the National Association of Counties' (NACo) ENERGY STAR Courthouse Campaign. The county is an active member of this voluntary, cost-free program that assists counties in becoming more energy efficient.

In January, Story County became the second county involved in the NACo Courthouse Campaign and the first county in Iowa to earn an ENERGY STAR label for a county facility. The county's Human Services Center is a 30,120 sq ft. building built in 1999 with energy efficiency in mind. Geothermal energy replaced the need for a boiler room and cooling tower which resulted in large space and insurance savings. In addition, features such as T-5 light bulbs (energy efficient fluorescent lighting), window glazing, insulation and efficient water monitoring were implemented. These features, combined with good management, allow the Story County Human Services Center to use approximately 40% less energy than an average building without compromising comfort or services.

In August, Story County announced more good news. The county has been rewarded with a rebate of more than \$44,000 from Alliant Energy. This latest rebate was presented to the county to recognize the installation of a geo thermal HVAC system and updated, more efficient lighting at the county's Administration Building in downtown Nevada. The county received over \$120,000 from Alliant last year for similar energy saving efforts at the Story County Justice Center.

By joining the NACo Courthouse Campaign, counties are able to benefit from the resources and technical training NACo has to offer in this area. The Courthouse Campaign provides assistance to counties across the nation in assessing their current energy usage, benchmarking their buildings, determining investment opportunities, and receiving recognition for their efforts. Like with Story County, NACo also facilitates county involvement in the national ENERGY STAR program with the ultimate goal of achieving an ENERGY STAR label for one or more county buildings.

In addition to Story County, Jefferson and Polk counties are also involved in NACo's energy efficiency programs. The counties are all members of the County Energy Efficiency Network, which allows them to obtain and share information on the work of counties throughout the country on topics such as

energy efficiency, green building and renewable energy. All members of the network benefit from best-practice examples from counties like Story County, Iowa.

For more information on joining either the NACo ENERGY STAR Courthouse Campaign or the County Energy Efficiency Network, please contact Kelly Zonderwyk at kzonderwyk@naco.org or 202.942.4224, or visit www.naco.org/techassistance and click on Energy Management.

New Certification For Voting Systems Begins

The U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) recently adopted the initial framework for the country's first federal voting system certification and laboratory accreditation programs. This is the first step in the transition of these programs from the National Association of State Election Directors (NASED).

"EAC has adopted procedures at the onset to ensure that election officials and voters use voting systems that are accurate and reliable," EAC Chair Gracia Hillman said in a statement. "The goal to make sure that every vote is counted accurately and fairly begins here, and we will make sure this process is transparent every step of the way."

One of the mandates of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires that the EAC provide for the testing, certification, decertification and recertification of voting systems. This marks the first time these activities have been the responsibility of a federal agency. The initial framework will require the EAC to:

- develop an interim accreditation program for testing laboratories currently accredited by NASED to ensure that the process is not interrupted;
- develop procedures for EAC accreditation for Voting System Test Laboratories; and
- create procedures for EAC certification, decertification and recertification of voting systems.

In early August, the EAC issued voluntary guidance on the implementation of statewide voter registration lists. Although these guidelines are only voluntary, the EAC believes they will help states make sure voter registration information is accurate, secure and updated on a regular basis. The guidelines should help states make informed decisions about the best way to manage and maintain these lists.

HAVA requires that each state develop, maintain and administer a single, statewide list of registered voters, and the law directs the EAC to issue voluntary guidance to assist the states. The 19-page document is available on the EAC's website (www.eac.gov). Although the guidance has now been issued, the EAC and a working group of state and local election officials will continue to explore technical issues related to the maintenance and upgrade of these database systems.

Iowa Statewide Entrepreneurship Academy

The Community Vitality Center recently announced that the 2005 Community Entrepreneurship Academy will be held on Friday, October 21 at the Manning Hausbarn Restaurant & Konferenz Centre in Manning, Iowa.

This year the academy will offer:

- a unique opportunity to learn the secrets of Manning's success from a panel of Manning community leaders and entrepreneurs;
- keynote presentation by Brian Dabson, Associate Director for the Rural Policy Institute and Co-Director of the National Rural Entrepreneurship, on rural entrepreneurship from a national and international perspective;
- CVC community incentives and programs;
- Hausbarn tours (350 year old Hausbarn brought from Germany);
- capital financing and technical assistance for entrepreneurs;
- Iowa community wind entrepreneurship opportunities; and
- a Manning business showcase offering tours of Tall Corn Ethanol, Struve Labs, Caleris and downtown Manning, Plastico, and AGP/Industrial Park.

The academy will be held from 9:00am until 4:30pm. The registration fee is \$35 until October 11th and \$50 thereafter. Registration forms and information are available at www.cvc.org.

RC&D Program Spotligted

Representatives from the Resource, Conservation, and Development (RC&D) program will be speaking to the Supervisors affiliate during ISAC's Fall School of Instruction, November 14th at 1:30pm. The program was authorized by the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, and funded through the Farm Bill. The objective of the program is to improve the capability of state and local units of government and private citizens to plan, develop and carry out programs for land conservation, water management, community development and environmental enhancement.

RC&D is a unique program that is led by local volunteer councils that help people care for and protect their natural resources in a way that improves the local economy, environment, and living standards. RC&D is a way for people to work together to plan and carry out activities that will make their areas a better place to live. Each RC&D Council is organized and directed by local people to meet local needs.

For further information please feel free to attend their presentation November 14 at the Marriott from 1:30pm - 2pm with the Supervisors affiliate.

classified ad

Mahaska County Attorney

The Mahaska County Board of Supervisors is taking applications for the position of Mahaska County Attorney, which will be vacant December 31, 2005. The specific job duties and description is set forth in Section 331.756 of the Code of Iowa.

Person selected for this position must be a registered voter of Mahaska County, be admitted to the practice of law in the courts of this state as provided by law, qualify by taking the oath of office as provided in section 63.10 and give bond as provided in section 64.8.

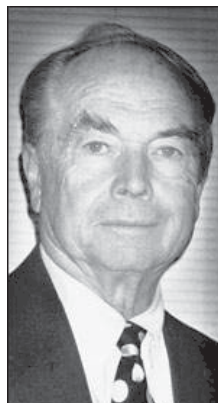
The appointment by the Board of Supervisors will take effect on January 1, 2006 and continue until a successor is elected in the November, 2006 General Election. Application forms may be acquired from the office of the Mahaska County Auditor on the first floor of the Mahaska County courthouse in Oskaloosa, Iowa, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Application and resumes must be submitted by delivery to the Mahaska County Auditor's office by 4:30 p.m. on October 14, 2005

Although the Mahaska County Board of Supervisors intends to fill the vacancy by appointment, the electors of Mahaska County have the right to file a petition requiring that the vacancy be filled by special election. Mahaska County is an equal opportunity employer.

in memory

John O'Neill

John O'Neill, former Johnson County Recorder, died August 20 at the age of 79. He served Johnson County for 32 years and retired in 1997. John was a member of the ISAC Board of Directors 1986-1987. He was also a member of the St. Mary's Church, Knights of Columbus, St. Joseph Cemetery Committee and the Regina Booster Club. John's family includes his wife Jean, five daughters and 12 grandchildren.



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Graham Land Acquisition	22	Solutions, Inc.	21
Horizons, Inc.	20	The Sidwell Company	24
IPAIT	2	TrueNorth Companies	18
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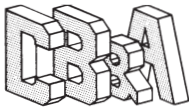


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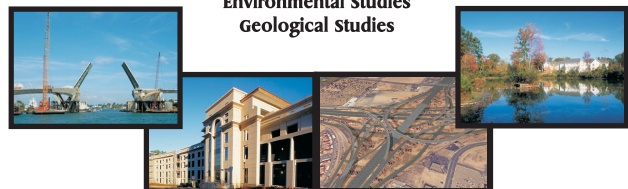
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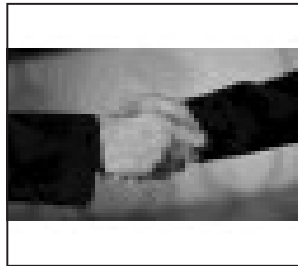




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OCTOBER

- 4 CCMS Administrators
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 5 CCMS EC & SE Support Group
(Coral Ridge Mall, Coralville)
- 5 CCMS NW Support Group
(BV Case Management Office, Storm Lake)
- 6 ISAC Steering Committees
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 8-12 Assessors Annual Conference
(Marriott, West Des Moines)
- 12-13 General Assistance Retreat
(Holiday Inn & Coral Ridge Mall, Coralville)
- 13-14 CCMS Strengths
(Sheraton, West Des Moines)
- 19 CCMS Support Staff Training
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 26 CRIS Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 27-28 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

NOVEMBER

- 8 CCMS Advanced Case Manager
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 13 ISAC Board of Directors
- 13-15 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
(Marriott & Renaissance Savery, Des Moines)
- 16 SEAT Session II
(Renaissance Savery, Des Moines)
- 30-Dec. 2 CCMS Fundamentals
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)

DECEMBER

- 1 District II Winter Meeting
(Elks Lodge, Charles City)

- 6-8 Engineers Annual Conference
(Scheman Center, Ames)
- 7 District IV Winter Meeting (location TBA)
- 15 Annual Drainage Seminar
(Starlite Village, Fort Dodge)
- 16 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

JANUARY

- 10 CCMS Fundamentals
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 18-19 ISAC University
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 20 Statewide Supervisors Meeting
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)

FUTURE ISAC SCHOOLS

- Downtown Marriott/Renaissance Savery, Des Moines
- November 13-15, 2005
- March 19-21, 2006
- November 29-Dec. 1, 2006
- March 18-20, 2007
- November 28-30, 2007

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 jnoba@iowacounties.org.



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Quote of the Month:

*When you jump for joy, beware
that no one moves the ground
from beneath your feet.*

- Stanislaw J. Lec

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