

The Iowa County



September 2015

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The Iowa County

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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.

Improving the Quality of Public Health in Iowa

By: Kevin Grieme

Iowa Counties Public Health Association

In 2006, the national report of the Exploring Accreditation Steering Committee stated that a voluntary national accreditation program should:

- “Promote high performance and continuous quality improvement.
- Recognize high performers that meet nationally accepted standards of quality.
- Clarify the public’s expectations of state and local health departments.
- Increase the visibility and public awareness of governmental public health, leading to greater public trust, increased health department credibility and accountability, and ultimately a stronger constituency for public health funding and infrastructure.”

The report goes on to state that: “The goal of a voluntary national accreditation program is to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of state and local public health departments.”

What is public health accreditation?

“The measurement of health department performance against a set of nationally recognized, practice-focused and evidenced-based standards.” The national public health standards are published by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) and were developed by local and state public health practitioners from across the country. Iowans took an active role in that process by serving on work groups, testing the standards, and providing public comment as the standards took shape.

The national public health standards do not prescribe exactly how a department should meet the standards. Instead, the measures describe what activities a health department should do. The standards take into account that not every health department provides all public health services for a jurisdiction so they also look at how a health department can facilitate that the population health needs of the community are served by collaborating with others.

PHAB is a nonprofit organization that administers the public health accreditation program. PHAB was incorporated in May 2007 and is funded in part by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PHAB office is located in Alexandria, Virginia.

Why you should invest in accreditation or meeting public health standards

“The tangible benefits of working on accreditation will vary

among health departments. Accreditation provides a framework for a health department to identify performance improvement opportunities, to improve management, develop leadership, and improve relationships with the community. The process is one that will challenge the health department to think about what business it does and how it does business.”

In Iowa the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) was established to advise the Iowa Department of Public Health about the implementation of an accreditation system. The Iowa Public Health Gaining Ground coalition is a collaboration of the Iowa Environmental Health Association, Iowa County Public Health Association, Iowa Public Health Association, the Upper Midwest Public Health Training Center and the PHAC. They both concur that work towards meeting standards or becoming accredited signify the role public health plays in assuring a healthy Iowa. As we look to Governor Branstad’s goal of becoming the healthiest state in the nation, it is vital to have a quality public health system performing well.

We also recognize that maintenance of public health infrastructure is often overlooked, and the standards/accreditation shed light on important aspects of the system. This helps to define infrastructure problems and points to the need to seek solutions, resources, and support. Additionally, it is important to assess whether or not we are doing a quality job in public health. Holding ourselves to a set of standards, and allowing a third party to come in and evaluate how we are doing provides validation of our work. This is important to our partners, our customers, our funders, and most importantly, our communities. Finally, there is a lot of impetus at the national level to begin work now. National funding opportunities are present and technical assistance is available for states that are engaging their local public health partners in meeting standards and measures.

What’s in the standards? Is it realistic for an Iowa county?

PHAB’s standards are made up of 12 domains. The first 10 are based on the 10 essential public health services. The 10 essential public health services are a nationally recognized set of criteria used to define the work of public health. The 10 essential public health services are listed in Iowa Administrative Code 641.77.3 as the roles and responsibilities of the local board of health. They are as follows:

1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community

Continues on next page.

feature - public health

3. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal, population-based, and environmental health services
4. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
5. Research new insights and innovative solutions to health problems
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect public health and enforce lawful orders of the department
7. Link people to needed personal health services: provide such personal, population-based and environmental health services as deemed necessary for the promotion and protection of the health of the public
8. Ensure the competence of the public health, environmental health, and personal health care workforce
9. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues
10. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.

The 11th domain addresses administrative functions of public health practice like contracting, budgeting, human resources, and policies and procedures.

The 12th domain addresses the role of governance in public health, in Iowa these standards apply to either a local board of health, or the state board of health.

Because the standards are linked to the essential services, they are most likely being addressed to some extent by Iowa's public health departments. Also, PHAB makes clear that not every activity has to be done by the health department; however, it is the health department's responsibility to have an awareness of what is going on in areas of the standards that they do not perform directly, and the department should have a relationship with the provider of those services.

It is also important to understand that the standards look at the ability of a health department to know its own community, its special populations, risks, assets, needs, etc. They do not impose national or state priorities on a local health department. Even if a health department chooses not to pursue accreditation, a health department's use of the standards as a roadmap

for public health, to assist in planning, or to inform everyday work is encouraged. Simply adopting the standards as a best practice would allow for a common understanding of what public health should be about in our communities.

Finally, it should be noted that the standards are recommendations, not mandates.

What happens if we don't embrace accreditation? What's at stake?

At this time there is no monetary incentive to embrace accreditation; however, the PHAC and Gaining Ground Coalition concur that even if Iowa's public health departments do not embrace the concept of accreditation it is important to adopt the concepts of the public health standards.

Use of the public health standards in Iowa would bring more consistency to public health service delivery across our state. It would demonstrate public health's accountability to our customers and partners and a good return on investment of public and private funds. Additionally, it would demonstrate that public health is striving to efficiently meet the needs of our communities. Work on the standards would also make public health in Iowa more consistent with other states. This in turn allows the larger governmental public health infrastructure to grow in a similar manner strengthening our public health system to be able to handle new and emerging threats to the public's health.



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feature - careers in government

Careers in Government

By: Michael Hurwitz

Co-Founder/President, Careers In Government

Gone are the days that local government can attract top talent based only on the notion of job security. Even as the job market improves, most municipalities are cautiously “testing the financial water” before hiring for new/existing positions.

There is now a large influx of millennials that have graduated school and are seeking to enter the workforce. Top talent is seeking a variety of things: money, upward mobility and value-added impact. Based on this reality, it may seem that local government does not stand a chance, but after 17 years of working closely with state and local government employers in the marketing of their vacancies, *Careers In Government* sees a seismic shift in how municipalities are reaching this burgeoning workforce.

To communicate your county’s competitive advantage, you will need to answer “Who are we?” and “What are we aspiring to be?”

Before communicating what you can offer, in the words of the Greek proverb written upon the temple of Apollo, “Know Thyself.” Local governments can achieve this by collecting a combination of quantitative/qualitative data to assess the current internal structures (SWAT and GAP Analysis) and the external environments (education, migration patterns, unemployment rates, current job market trends).

Engaging a diverse representation of community and business leaders and local government staff can ensure a more credible response to “Who are we?” Also, finding ways to strategically incorporate key community and business leaders into the conversation early will lay the foundation for future collaboration in attracting top talent.

In Grand Rapids, MI municipal, business, and Grand Valley State University leaders embarked on a journey with college students to determine how to attract and retain millennials. Understanding who they were as a city before developing/implementing recommendations is critical to the initiatives’ overall success.

Once you “know thyself” as an organization (current capabilities, strengths, weaknesses, etc.) you are better positioned to define your niche. It is prudent to use experienced, internal or external analyst/consultants to complete the comparison keeping in mind that the type and size of the competing market could impact your local government’s unique capabilities. Clearly defining your niche provides you as a local government with information to target your efforts and resources to capitalize on the market.

Take for instance Pittsburgh, a rustbelt city that suffered a mass exodus of its population during the latter part of the 20th century into the beginning of the 21st century. Through the help of leaders in the government, universities, foundations, and the community, Pittsburgh was able to assess their resources and the current/future markets. The assessment helped them to identify what they were uniquely positioned to do (health care, education, and technology) currently and in the future.

Additionally, due to the city understanding what they were uniquely positioned to do and the need to strategically allocate limited resources, they have capitalized on these opportunities, which have paid dividends.

Local governments can use Pittsburgh among other examples as a model for determining their competitive advantage and focusing organizational resources to attract and retain millennials.

The next part of understanding a county’s competitive advantage is defining the vision for local government, and ultimately, the community. Answering “What are we aspiring to be?” requires the engagement of a diverse group of stakeholders in the conversation. More specifically, millennials need to be engaged to help craft this vision as they represent the future of our communities and local governments - the City of Grand Rapids (mentioned above) is a great example.

One proven method for developing aspirations for organizations and governments is the appreciative inquiry (AI) model. AI identifies the strengths of an organization and seeks to amplify those strengths. Usually comprised of four phases (discovery, dreaming, designing, delivery/destiny), this approach can be used as a tool to help local governments understand their vision and how to attain their competitive advantage.

As a result of local governments understanding their competitive advantage, they will be better able to attract and retain talented millennials as government employees. Additionally, community support and engagement in defining the competitive advantage and vision will create more opportunities for developing stronger buy-in inside and outside of local governments.

The next hurdle for state and local government is to reach the most talented millennials as they begin their job search. There’s no question that social media is changing the way job seekers look for jobs and research employers.

Continues on next page.

feature - careers in government

One of the easiest ways to use social media is for recruiting to review an applicant's own public postings and accounts, providing a better picture of him or her as a potential employee. But be careful. Once you review a candidate's online profile, a court will assume you are aware of that person's protected characteristics that are often part of their online postings.

These characteristics include gender and race as well as those that are not always evident in a face-to-face interview such as religion, age, sexual orientation or disability. In such cases employers need to be particularly careful not to expand their interview questions or decision-making beyond legal interview limits.

But what if a candidate's profile suggests that he or she may not be appropriate for the position -- or even shows a lack of candor about their background or abilities? If you choose to review social media as part of your hiring practices, it's a better practice to wait until after you've met a candidate face-to-face. By using social media in this, more targeted way, you are less likely to be accused of making snap selection decisions or relying on protected characteristics evident from a social network profile

If you decide to use social media in your recruiting process, make sure you conduct the same searches at the same point in the process for every applicant. Be sure to print or save screen shots if you see something that causes you to question the candidate's candor, professionalism or judgment

There is plenty of lawful information to be had from social media, though. Does your candidate have a Twitter account that she regularly updates with thoughtful "tweets?" Does his social media presence demonstrate a deeper interest in the type of job he is pursuing?

While social media should not be used to make final employment decisions, it can be used as an extension of the resume, a conversation starter that gives the interviewer a deeper understanding of the candidate. This is particularly true if familiarity with social media in business is needed for the position at issue. A candidate for a marketing job that knows how to market herself via Facebook should stand out among otherwise equally-qualified job seekers.

When it comes to using social media to research, remember, it goes both ways. Assume that applicants and new hired could be searching you and your county and even trying to figure out the identity of possible interviewers ahead of time.

Of course it would be ideal to have a strong social media presence that creates a strong employer brand but not every county has the time or resources to generate a social media marketing plan and online content strategy.

At minimum, make sure that whatever materials you have are accurate and legal. Things to consider: Do not make statements that could be construed as a promise of employment or business opportunity; particularly if the site is "live" and uses employees to add comments or blog postings. For example a job posting that states, "This is a great place to work," is fine. Promising that "All applicants will be hired," is obviously not.

Know exactly who in your county or whether a third-party vendor is able to add to or change the content on the county's profile; make sure that it is consistent with other marketing and advertising messages.

Treat "bad" social media information delicately. Social media law is constantly evolving. Although such cases will certainly give employer pause, an attorney familiar with employment issues, privacy, and the evolving law of social media can help determine the best course of action.

While it's not always entirely clear what a potential employer can legally do with a candidate who has denounced his or her current boss on a social media site, you can create a social media policy as part of your social media strategy.

But remember, a candidate may not control every image posted on a social media site, so consider the overall context. If you have lingering questions, consider consulting an attorney who is well-versed in social media before relying on negative information to justify an employment decision.

Biography:

Michael Hurwitz is the Co-Founder/President of Careers In Government. The organization was founded in 1996 and is the largest state and local government job board and career resource center. Careers In Government was recognized by *Forbes* as the best government career website and is also the exclusive IPMA-HR and NACo job board and career resource center partner. Careers In Government is also ranked in the top 5% of all social media influencers boasting more than 100,000 Twitter followers, 90,000 LinkedIn connections and more than 20,000 Facebook followers.



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Reed v. Gilbert: US Supreme Court Upends the Status Quo of Sign Regulations

On June 15, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Town of Gilbert, Arizona's sign code as violating the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. Unfortunately, the sections of the Code the Court found troubling are the same in type as those found in the vast majority of sign codes across Iowa and the rest of the nation, putting cities and counties that regulate signage at risk of legal challenges. A review of the case, including suggestions on how local governments can respond, follows.

Gilbert's sign code distinguished among various categories of signs based on the type of information they convey. The distinctions that were the subject of the litigation were between "Political Signs," "Ideological Signs," and "Temporary Directional Signs." Each category of sign had different restrictions on size, location, and the amount of time a sign could be displayed. The Supreme Court has long held that "content-based" regulations are rarely legal under the First Amendment (in legal jargon, such signs are subject to "strict scrutiny" by the courts), and so Good News Community Church sued Gilbert, arguing that such subject-matter distinctions were impermissibly content-based.

The Federal 9th Circuit Court of Appeals disagreed with the Church's assertion. The 9th Circuit reasoned that the regulations were "content-neutral" because the restrictions were not based on "which candidate is supported, who sponsors the event, or what ideological perspective is asserted." In other words, because the sign code did not favor one viewpoint over another (did not favor, for example, Democratic political signs over Republican political signs) the 9th Circuit did not consider the regulations to be based on the contents of the sign.

In stark contrast to the 9th Circuit's conclusion, the U.S. Supreme Court found that the distinctions between signs in Gilbert's code "depended entirely on the sign's communicative content." It determined that the 9th Circuit's focus on viewpoint "skips the crucial first step [of determining] whether the law is neutral on its face." The Supreme Court noted that while government discrimination among viewpoints is a more blatant form of content discrimination, it is also discriminatory when government limits, or prohibits altogether public discussion of an entire topic, even if there is no improper motive or intent on the part of the government. Gilbert's sign code improperly gave ideological messages more favorable treatment – in terms of the size of signs allowed and their placement – than messages concerning a political candidate, which in turn were given more favorable treatment than messages giving directions to "an assembly of like-minded individuals."

Gilbert could not demonstrate to the Supreme Court's satisfaction that the code's differentiation between the various types of signs

Gary Taylor, AICP

Associate Professor and Extension Specialist,
Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

should survive strict scrutiny. While Gilbert claimed that placing strict limits on temporary directional signs was necessary to beautify the town, the Supreme Court observed that other types of signs create the same problem. The Court also rejected Gilbert's argument that temporary directional signs pose a greater threat to public safety than ideological or political signs.

All nine Justices agreed on the outcome of the case (the Church won); however, three Justices wrote separate opinions that voiced, among other things, their disagreements with the impact that this decision will have on local governments in their efforts to regulate signs. The majority stated that the decision "will not prevent governments from enacting effective sign laws," but Justice Kagan fears that because thousands of towns have ordinances containing subject-matter exemptions like those in the Gilbert sign code, the Supreme Court "may soon find itself a veritable Supreme Board of Sign Review." Justice Alito ventured to provide a list of the types of sign regulations that he believes would pass muster under the majority's opinion (although it must be noted that there is nothing to indicate whether the majority agrees or disagrees with Justice Alito's list):

- Rules regulating the size of signs. These rules may distinguish among signs based on any content-neutral criteria, including any relevant criteria listed below.
- Rules regulating the locations in which signs may be placed. These rules may distinguish between free-standing signs and those attached to buildings.
- Rules distinguishing between lighted and unlighted signs.
- Rules distinguishing between signs with fixed messages and electronic signs with messages that change.
- Rules that distinguish between the placement of signs on private and public property.
- Rules distinguishing between the placement of signs on commercial and residential property.
- Rules distinguishing between on-premises and off-premises signs.
- Rules restricting the total number of signs allowed per mile of roadway.
- Rules imposing time restrictions on signs advertising a one-time event.

Justice Alito also believes that government signs (traffic, wayfinding, warning, etc.) are unaffected by the Court's decision.

While this case upends the status quo of sign regulation, it is also clear that local governments will still be able to regulate signs through content-neutral approaches. The best advice is to get ahead of the game and update sign codes now, rather than wait for a legal challenge.

2015 Legislative Session a Success!

After the Iowa Legislature went over a month past their scheduled day of adjournment and Governor's final signatures and vetoes, the 2015 legislative session has finally come to a close. It was a productive year of advocacy for ISAC and its members, and we just wanted to briefly outline what action was taken on ISAC's 2015 legislative priorities.

Mental Health and Disability Services

Ensuring continued stable and sustainable funding for counties in the regional mental health and disability services (MH/DS) system was again a priority for ISAC and was addressed by the Iowa Legislature. SF 505, the Health and Human Services Appropriations bill, extends the equalization formula through FY 2017 and sets the MH/DS levy rates at the FY 2015 level with a \$47.28 per capita cap. To assist regions that would be unable to have a 25% carry forward in FY 2016, \$2 million was appropriated in SF 505 and HF 666 (one-time spending bill) for those regions. Another element within this priority was the elimination of the Medicaid clawback, and now all, continued savings brought on by the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan will be retained by the counties/regions. Finally, another important piece of this priority was realized with the passage of HF 468, which now places the appointment and employment oversight of mental health advocates with the Board of Supervisors.

Electronic Records Requests

Government officials are required to spend significant time and resources to comply with electronic records requests from companies that are seeking Iowa taxpayer data and information for resale. To address this, ISAC pushed for legislation that would allow counties to either reject electronic records requests that aren't in a specific format that is easily accessible by the county or to provide that record by charging a reasonable fee that would cover the third-party manipulation to meet the needs of the requestor. This bill, SF 435, passed both chambers and was signed by the Governor.

Road Funding

Significant progress was made this legislative session to address the increasing shortfall in road and bridge funding. Through tremendous bipartisan work, SF 257 was passed through both chambers early in the session and signed by the Governor on February 25. The bill implements a 10 cent increase in the per gallon fuel tax, which is estimated to generate about \$200 million in additional Road Use Tax Fund revenue according to the Legislative Services Agency. Of that amount, it is estimated that over \$51 million will go to the secondary road fund and an additional \$16 million will go to the farm-to-market fund.

By: Jamie Cashman

ISAC Government Relations
Manager



The increase in the fuel tax went into effect March 1 of this year, so counties should already be seeing the benefits. This additional revenue will have a major, positive impact as counties continue to work on repairing our transportation infrastructure. The bill did contain language directed at counties that established guidelines and restrictions on the new revenue stating that the legislative intent is for the dollars to be used on critical road and bridge construction projects that significantly extend the life of the assets. It also prohibits the new dollars from being used to service debt if the term of the repayment exceeds the useful life of the asset. SF 257 will also increase the fees for all systems permits, annual permits, oversize/overweight permits, and single, round-trip permits effective January 1, 2016.

The passage of the gas tax increase is a major accomplishment perhaps, most notably, because the last time it was increased was 1989. The issue of road funding, in one form or another, has been one of ISAC's top priorities 10 of the last 15 years. We are sure that the work done by county engineers, supervisors, and others to educate lawmakers on the importance of maintaining our state's roads and bridges had a significant impact on the legislation finally being adopted.

Multi-residential Property

The issue of primary use for multi-residential property was addressed with an amendment to HF 616 in the final days of the session. The change will get rid of the determination of primary use and have each component of a multiple use property that includes a multi-residential portion classified and taxed based on its own use. Under the administrative rules adopted for SF 295 (2013), assessors were charged with determining the primary use of the property and if the primary use was determined to multi-residential the entire property including the commercial or industrial component would be classed and taxed as multi-residential. ISAC saw this as problematic because of the inevitable disagreements between property owners and assessors over what the primary use of the property should be determined to be. By classifying and taxing each component based on its own use, the task of the assessor is simplified and the process will be much more consistent and equitable for property owners both within and among jurisdictions. HF 616 was signed by the Governor on June 18 and the provisions dealing with multi-residential property go into effect in the assessment year beginning January 1, 2016, and apply to each subsequent assessment year.

Continues on page 18.

Technical Tidbits for Untechnical People

By: *Andrea Jansen*

ISAC Program Support
Coordinator



This month's article is dedicated to bridging the knowledge gap between technical people and the rest of us.

Size Matters

In terms of how large something (file, document, picture, movie, application, etc.) is electronically: MB means Megabyte and GB means Gigabyte. There are 1000MB in 1GB. So, 1GB is pretty big, and it is important to keep that in mind when you are sending files such as long videos or 100s of photos from your last vacation. Overall, 1 to 5MB is considered a reasonably sized file.

Most email programs have limits on the size of attachments. If you have to share a large file you will have to compress it (email me if you have specific questions on this) or use a USB drive. Speaking of USB drives...never put a random USB drive into your computer. (Please note - this does not apply to the free goodies you get from vendor booths at conventions.) This does apply to the stray USB drive that is in the mall parking lot that looks interesting. Do not pick it up, take it home/work, and put it in your computer - it could contain any number of harmful files! Lastly, there are some cloud-based solutions like Dropbox or Google Drive that can assist with sharing larger files.

Music and Pictures

Now that we have the size of files figured out, let's go over some types of files. There are two main types of sound files - MP3s and WAVs. WAV files are larger audio files, and MP3s are smaller, more compact audio files. There are conversion programs available to translate WAVs to MP3s, so keep that in mind if you have a large audio file.

There are also two main types of picture files - JPGs and PNGs. PNGs are larger files and usually illustrations or drawings. JPGs are the smaller and more condensed versions which are often used for photos.

Searching

Searching the internet is the most helpful/dangerous tool for finding an answer to a question. Here are a couple of tips to help guide you through the labyrinth:

1. Use quotation marks to find more specific answers. For example, searching for Iowa County Fair will bring all combinations of those three terms, however, searching "Iowa County" fair will search for Iowa County together and fair.
2. Did you know that you can do a search on images? You can search for images using Google: <https://images.google.com/>.

3. If you get an error message (AX009) that you do not understand - do a search of that specific code for solutions. Most likely you are not the first person to encounter that error or issue, and if you are lucky someone has already found a solution!
4. The less specific you are, the more results that you will get. Keep this in mind when you have a very specific topic you are searching on and get no search results. By taking off a few of the criteria you will broaden the results.

Documents

The best way to send and share documents is by saving your document as a PDF file. This can be done by clicking "Save As" in a Word document and selecting PDF as the type:

*If you have an older version of Word this functionality may not be available.



PDF stands for Portable Document Format, so it is no wonder that it is the easiest format to share. They are, for the most part, un-editable or read only. This is great for contracts, other legal documents, or anything where you don't want the content edited.

Bandwidth vs. Broadband

Does your internet always seem to be lagging? It could be due to the fact that you do not have very fast internet in your area. It also could be due to a lot of other things. In general if your computer seems to function at a decent speed, but your internet is slow it may be due to bandwidth or broadband speed. Bandwidth is the amount of data that is being used at any given time. Broadband is the minimum speed to transfer that information. Check out the Iowa maps here: <http://www.connectiowa.org/mapping/state>.



Criteria and Procedures for ISAC Scholarships

The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) is a private, nonprofit corporation whose members are county officials and employees from the 99 counties in Iowa. ISAC has established the following criteria and procedures for granting scholarships:

1. Eligibility to apply is limited to children of current county officials or employees. This does not include city employees, employees of county extension offices, or candidates who are themselves county employees.
2. At least one (1) \$1,000 scholarship shall be awarded annually.
3. The candidates must be seniors in high school.
4. This is a one (1) year scholarship, and can be received only once by an individual.
5. The scholarship can be awarded to anyone who will be a full-time student of any college requiring at least a minimum of two (2) years for a degree.
6. The scholarship monies will be paid directly to the college; one-half upon acceptance, one-half upon completion of the first semester.
7. The candidates must provide personal reference statements from three (3) individuals other than family members, complete an application, and submit to an interview.
8. The criteria used in awarding the scholarship will be scholastic achievement, financial need, participation in extracurricular/community activities and overall character.
9. The scholarship committee shall award all scholarships and the decision of the selection committee shall be final.
10. The scholarship committee shall consist of seven (7) members, to be appointed by the ISAC President. The selection committee shall consist of one (1) representative from each ISAC district, plus one (1) member of the ISAC Board of Directors.
11. ISAC reserves the right to verify any information provided on any application.
12. Scholarships will be awarded at the ISAC Spring School in March.
13. Scholarship winners have two years to use their award. During the two years, they may apply to the scholarship committee for an extension of the time limit. The scholarship committee shall recommend to the ISAC Board of Directors whether to allow the extension of the time limit.
14. It is a requirement of the finalists for this scholarship to come in and participate in a personal interview (early February) with a panel of judges or you may be disqualified for the award.
15. Applications must be **postmarked by December 11, 2015.**
16. **Applications should be mailed to:
ISAC, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266-8202**



Scholarship Application

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home County _____ Home Phone _____

E-mail Address _____ Name of High School _____

Mother's Name _____ Mother's Job Title/Occupation _____

Father's Name _____ Father's Job Title/Occupation _____

Which parent is a county official or employee? _____

County and Department _____ County Position _____

County Phone # _____ Work E-Mail _____

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

Financial Need:

Family's Household Income: *Please circle*

(\$0 - \$49,999) (\$50,000 - \$99,999) (Over \$100,000)

Special circumstances that have impacted your family's income: _____

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.**

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 (Teachers, employers, advisors, etc.).

Transcript: Please enclose a copy of your high school transcript with your application.

Technology Award: We are also offering the Iowa Counties Information Technology (ICIT) Award Scholarship. This scholarship is available to an applicant who intends to pursue a two (2) or four (4) year degree in a technology related major and/or a degree that leverages/incorporates technology. If this applies to you, on another sheet of paper which should be label "Technology Essay," tell us about your plans in this area.

For you to be considered for a scholarship you must:

- 1. Return application filled out completely and signed**
- 2. Enclose your typed essay**
- 3. Include three letters of personal reference**
- 4. Enclose your official high school transcript**

NOTE: If you do not comply with these requirements, your application may be disqualified.

Return to: Iowa State Association of Counties, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266-8202. **Applications must be postmarked by December 11, 2015.**

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

Signature of Applicant: _____

meetings

Top 10 Reasons to Attend the Fall School

There are many reasons for county officials to attend the 2015 ISAC Fall School of Instruction, but here are our Top 10.

1. Attend the Counties Connect America 2016 Presidential Forums happening on Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning.
2. Help select ISAC's top priorities for the 2016 legislative session.
3. Visit the Doubletree by Hilton Cedar Rapids Convention Complex! It's a great new space and location for our conference!
4. Visit the exhibit hall to learn how new products and services can assist your county.
5. Make valuable networking connections throughout various conference events.
6. Find out who will receive the 2015 ISAC Golden Eagle.
7. Attend the first ISAC Education Foundation Trivia Night and help raise scholarship funds for our high school graduates. Registration form on the next page - space is limited!
8. Find out the 2015 ISAC Excellence in Action Award winners.
9. Participate in your affiliate meetings and presentations.
10. Learn from and socialize with hundreds of your county colleagues and friends in the same place!

By: *Kelsey Sebern*

ISAC Meeting/Event
Administrator



Please bookmark the fall school webpage at <http://www.iowacounties.org/meetings-and-events/fall-school-of-instruction/>. It

is updated often with the latest conference information you will need to prepare for the conference, including: hotel reservation instructions; conference agendas; exhibit hall information; and much more!

Registration for the 2015 fall school opened on Wednesday, August 26. Please remember that you must register for the conference on the ISAC website before you are able to reserve your hotel room through the Iowa Housing Bureau. Advanced conference registration closes at 4:30 pm on Friday, October 30; however, the ISAC hotel room blocks will only be available until 4:30 pm on Friday, October 16. We strongly encourage you to pre-register for the conference. It greatly helps the ISAC staff to plan accordingly for meals and materials. This keeps the conference registration rates as low as possible, which in turn saves money for your county.

I will be keeping a waiting list for those who are unable to secure rooms at the DoubleTree Hotel by Hilton (the fall school conference hotel that is attached to the convention center). If you are unable to get into the DoubleTree but wish to stay there during the conference, please register for your second choice hotel through the housing bureau registration process, and then email me at ksebern@iowacounties.org to be added to the waiting list. During the last conference, 29 people on her waiting received rooms at the Marriott/conference hotel.

Please contact me if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you in November!

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**Contact Jeff Lorenz (515)-238-7989
or Roger Stirler (515) 250-2687**

ISAC Education Foundation Trivia Night brought to you by Election Systems & Software

Wednesday, November 18

7:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Taft A, Cedar Rapids Convention Complex

ISAC will host a trivia night to raise money to support the ISAC Education Foundation that provides scholarships to the children of Iowa county officials and employees. Trivia night is brought to you by Election Systems & Software. Please thank them for their generous support of ISAC scholarships.

Tables of eight will compete in a trivia competition consisting of 10 rounds of 10 questions each based on themed categories. Tables will work as teams and submit answers at the end of each round. Correct answers will be given after each round. Scores will be tallied at the conclusion of the evening, the winning table will be announced, and the \$800 cash prize will be awarded to the winning table.

Registration includes snacks and keg beer. A cash bar will be available as well. Door prizes will be given between rounds. Question? Contact Rachel Bennett at rbennett@iowacounties.org.

Registration

___ I wish to register as an individual for \$40.

___ I wish to register a table for \$320.

___ I would like to volunteer to help with trivia night instead of participating.

Name: _____ County: _____ Office: _____

Table Team Name: _____

(We will collect all team member names during the event for door prize drawings.)

Sponsorships and Donations

SOLD - Event Sponsor: \$2,000 – Emcee the entire event, materials at every table, signage, and more.

SOLD - Beverage Sponsor: \$500 – Signage on bar and more. Opportunity to provide door prize.

SOLD - Snack Sponsor: \$500 – Signage with snacks and more. Opportunity to provide door prize.

___ Round Sponsor: \$250 – Announced as sponsor of a round of trivia. Opportunity to provide door prize.

Door prize donation: _____ Donor: _____ Value: \$ _____

(Door prize donations will be accepted from ISAC preferred vendors, members, affiliates, and fall school exhibitors.)

ISAC Education Foundation donation: \$ _____ This donation is in honor of _____.

Thank you for your participation and support, and GOOD LUCK!

CM&MHDS

CM&MHDS 23rd Annual Conference

As you are aware, the 23rd Annual conference “Paving the Road to Success” will be held September 23 and 24, 2015 at the Sheraton in West Des Moines. As usual, we are very excited about the topics and speakers we have lined up!

Our opening keynote and morning session will be presented by Carol Blessing, Cornell University on Person Centered Planning. Carol is one of the pioneers in the idea of service delivery. She is a consultant for CMS regarding person-centered planning. Although we have always come from the strengths based teaching and person-centered planning focus of service delivery in case management, I don't think we have hit the mark of the true meaning of “person-centered” as it relates to the communities in which our members live, work, and socialize. Carol has also published tools for this process, and she will give us useful information with her tools to move forward in this area.

Our afternoon session and closing keynote will be presented by Dr. Richard Newkirk. Some of you may be familiar with him, as he has been featured on Des Moines news networks for his work with individuals with disabilities. He is an avid runner, and for years has pushed a young man in a wheelchair in his races. He will focus on neurological impairments that affect cognitive and physical functioning and resiliency and determination, not only in the individual's we work with, but also in our personal lives.

By: *Deb Eckerman Slack*
ISAC CM & MHDS Manager



On Thursday we will have mandatory reporter certification training for dependent adult and child by Diana Nichols-Blomme and ethics by Bruce Buchanan. Morning breakout sessions will focus on emergency preparedness planning for individuals with disabilities, transitioning children with disabilities into adult service provision, and available technologies to assist individuals with disabilities live a more independent lifestyle.

The afternoon breakout session and closing keynote will be given by Kerry Magro, a young man diagnosed with autism at the age of four, who is now an award winning national speaker, best-selling author, movie consultant, TV host, and disability advocate. With one in 68 individuals currently diagnosed with autism in the United States and over 70 million worldwide, autism in a topic that more information is needed to provide services and promote lives for those affected.

I hope to see many of you in September at the conference, not only because of the great speakers and information to be shared, but also for the opportunity to network with other colleagues from across the state.



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NACo Annual Conference

By: Melvyn Houser

ISAC President
NACo ISAC Representative
Pottawattamie County Supervisor



“We are about people and parcels.”

- Scott Belt, Pottawattamie County Supervisor

“There’s a LOT to do in CharLOTte!” The local officials kept telling us that, but most of what I did was attend meetings at NACo’s Annual Conference held in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. But I did get out a bit and dined at some very good restaurants. The daughter-in-law of Douglas County, Nebraska Commissioner, Mike Boyle (Leanne cuts my hair) says you cannot find a bad place to eat in Charlotte. If it was bad, it wouldn’t be open for long. Lots of BBQ. The sauce there is vinegar based, not like we’re used to in the Midwest, which is tomato based. I liked it a lot better. Pulled pork and cole slaw seemed to be my staple while I was there. But throughout those brief respites of putting on pounds, I participated as fully as I could in all that the conference had to offer.

The first day, as usual, was consumed by the Tech Summit. Most of it consisted of presentations regarding health care and the role new technologies and big data play and will play in the future. Then Robin Harlow showed me his smart phone app that reads pulse rate. Mine read about 80, which is high normal. His was in the low 50’s because he said he biked a lot. Bill Peterson tried it and his read 32. Either he bikes a whole lot or the app is a bit unreliable.

Speaking of food. GMOs was the hot topic again at our Ag and Rural Affairs Steering Committee. Panel participants Margaret Willie from Hawai’i and Doug Briedenthal from Oregon both spoke. Margaret talked about the impacts of pesticide and pollen drift on neighboring growers and the need for local governance of setbacks. Doug talked of the economic impacts of varying ordinances. It is a very complicated issue as is any part of our food system. I mentioned to the committee that ours will become more and more of a “food” committee and not so much an Ag committee in the future. More and more, people want to know where their food comes from. That is why we were in support of COOL. Country of Origin Labeling. So it was disappointing when the World Trade Organization found it illegal. Therefore we had to change our policy stance in order to be at the table to discuss the issue. Some of the committee members did not want to compromise, but standing alone in the corner and pouting is not conducive to problem solving.

Presented at the Board of Directors Forum was a plan for a new project called “Across the County Line.” “A new reality television show that is all about you.” The producer’s objective

is to cross the country and, in a reality TV style, showcase interesting county folks and innovative projects. It will not be about the elected officials who receive all the credit, but the professional staff that do the good work that counties do. It sounds very interesting. So, if this comes to fruition, keep in mind any interesting people that you may have working in your county doing interesting, cool stuff. More details to follow.

The Board’s business meeting was bookended by two highlights. The first was a tribute to retiring board secretary, Karen McRunnels. She has served NACo under five different Executive Directors for the past 35 years. Even here at our local level it is not uncommon to have someone working that many years, because working for county government is so fulfilling and fun. I’m sure Karen enjoyed every minute of it. Back to business. Several reports were given. Our membership retention rate is 98% which is very high for any association. The research department is putting out some excellent work in one-page graphics and texts. NACo is doing such good work and has such good credibility, that they are at the table helping write some federal rules. We are expecting to move into the new Local Government Center in October of 2016, co-locating with the National League of Cities and other affiliates. Also, check out NACo’s new web site. Many resolutions were presented by the various steering committees. Most were approved, but, there was much discussion over a few. Federal minimum wage barely squeaked out of its committee, and was defeated by the full board. Life without parol for juveniles was hotly discussed and a motion to postpone was adopted. Previous to adjournment was the ending highlight of the meeting. Grant Veeder gave us another of his clever limericks! In all her great wisdom, incoming President Sally Clark appointed Grant to another year on the Board. Ergo, more canto from Grant!

Probably the most anticipated event at the conference was the election for 2nd Vice President. As you may recall, Lee May from Dekalb County, Georgia was the sole candidate. Since taking an appointed rather than elected role for his county, Lee had to drop from the “race” last May. This, of course, left a vacuum for the position and several members thought that maybe they should run. My personal problem was that two of the candidates were two of my closest NACo friends. Liz Archuleta from Arizona kept twisting my arm and Bill Cox from Utah kept putting campaign stickers on my back.

Continues on page 18.

NACo news

Continued from page 17.

Several of those in the know said it would come down to at least two, maybe three votes. As it turned out, Larry Johnson from Georgia dropped out and threw his support to Roy Brooks from Tarrant County Texas, who won by a landslide. All of the candidates worked very hard on their campaigns, and any one of them would have been an excellent choice.

The final general session had two keynote speakers. One talked about people. The other about parcels. Well, not parcels, exactly. But, what good is a parcel unless it has good transportation connecting it with others. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Fox said that this is the 33rd time that Congress has extended the Transportation Bill. Thirty-three times they have “kicked the can down the road” trying to get a good multi-year bill passed. There are so many potholes now that the can doesn’t get very far down the road, and they have to kick it more often, I guess. Federal funding to locals has dropped by 30% in the last several years. The Administration is asking for \$15 billion plus more for Tiger grants and a greater share to local governments. We should all thank our legislators here in Iowa for the roads bill they passed last session. It is much appreciated, and our constituents should be thankful also.

Soledad O’Brien told the story of her parents. Her father, white, from Australia, and her mother, black, from Cuba. On their first date they were not allowed into any restaurant in the neighborhood. In 1950’s Baltimore, bi-racial relationships were looked down upon. They had to go out of state to marry and still found it difficult to find a place to live. She remembers as a child being spat on. It is hard to imagine that any of this could happen in the land of the free. But it did. Our culture has changed quite a bit over the years. And it will continue to change. Our culture and our people. This country is what it is because we’ve been blessed with very rich, fertile parcels and mixed it with innovative and industrious people of varying ethnic cultures. How we as local governments deal with both will prove our value.

Our next board meeting will be held in Sallie Clark’s home county of El Paso, Colorado. Her initiative for the coming year is “Safe and Secure Counties.” It will be preceded by a symposium open to the membership. So, stay tuned. It should be a good one.

Capitol comments

Continued from page 9.

Governor Vetoes

The Governor has 30 days past adjournment of the Iowa Legislature to take final action on bills and he addressed the remaining bills on July 2. In taking final action, unfortunately there was legislation that was either line-item vetoed or allowed to stand that was detrimental to the counties. In SF 505, funding that would have supported a bi-partisan plan to keep the mental health institutes of Clarinda and Mount Pleasant open was line item-vetoed. In HF 651, language that would have increased the percentage local public safety answering points would have received from the E-911 fund from 48% to 58% was line-itemed vetoed. Finally, even after extensive outreach from ISAC and county officials from across the state to the Governor’s office, new language in SF 510 that now places a private collection agency ahead of the county attorney in the collection of delinquent court debt was signed into law.

For a complete summary of 2015 legislation visit:
www.iowacounties.org.

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Volatility Looms by the Fed Dominates

By: Miles Capital, Investment Advisor to Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust (IPAIT)

The volatility in Greece generated a lot of headlines throughout the second quarter. But no matter the outcome, the market and systemic risk of a Greek exit from the Eurozone is relatively limited today, especially in comparison to the potential impact a few short years ago. Today, Europe is much stronger given the efforts of the European Central Bank to generate growth and shore up the zone's banking system, and these efforts are reflected in higher GDP and inflation metrics. Ultimately, brinksmanship in Greece did little to rattle markets but resulted in a bailout deal early in July with economic reform details to follow.

Domestically, investor focus has shifted to a stronger U.S. economy and a likely Fed rate hike in the second half of the year. The first estimate of 2Q GDP printed mostly in line with expectations at 2.3% but also brought a revision to 1Q GDP that turned the previously reported contraction to a 0.6% advance.

The housing market has remained very solid this year despite an increase in mortgage rates. Growth in building permits, which is a leading indicator for housing activity, has accelerated and is currently at a seven year high. Also, strong housing typically translates into additional spending on durable goods

Importantly, the Fed remains on track to raise rates in 2015 as the unemployment rate continues to fall toward a sustainable level, even as inflation remains stubbornly low. The Fed will not wait for core inflation to reach its target level of 2% but instead will look for evidence of nascent inflation pressure for justification to begin hiking rates.

We do not expect higher short-term rates to limit economic growth or equity market appreciation. Instead, we expect Fed action to support continued expansion of the economy by confirming the growth story.

IPAIT is here to help provide you both short and long-term options and safety of principal, no matter what the year brings. Visit us on the web at www.IPAIT.org. Thank you for your business and support.

Disclosure: The views expressed are those of the author as of the date of the article, are for informational purposes only, not meant as investment advice, and are subject to change. Miles Capital does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any statements contained in this material and is not obligated to provide updates.

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The Accidental Superpower Book Review

The Accidental Superpower by Peter Zeihan is an astonishing book that everyone interested in our future should read, if only to wonder why everything it says didn't seem obvious before, or what it is that Zeihan missed that will sabotage his confident predictions. Zeihan, a geopolitical analyst (who grew up in Iowa), does nothing less than explain the world as it is and the world as it's going to be.

The accidental superpower of the title is the United States. Zeihan would have us believe our country didn't achieve its unprecedented power and wealth simply due to democracy, capitalism and the Protestant work ethic. Instead, once our transcontinental borders were established, we found ourselves with an abundance of geographical advantages that are lacking or in relatively short supply in other countries. Zeihan convincingly postulates that the accident of geography is what made us great, and it is what will assure our continued global dominance. "Geopolitics," he writes, "strips away the ideological, the emotional, and the normative...leaving only what is."

Zeihan shows how great powers rose and fell through history based on three geographically based factors: "The balance of transport determines wealth and security. Deepwater navigation determines reach. Industrialization determines economic muscle tone. And the three combined shape everything from exposure to durability to economic cycles to outlook." Guess what? "...Americans have been remarkably fortunate in that their geography is the best in the world for all three factors." The key to success can be expressed more succinctly: Capital. Those who have a lot of it are more likely to get more of it than those who don't. Those endowed by nature with better means of getting and keeping it not only have a head start, they have an ongoing advantage.

What are these geographical features and how do they relate to capital? The prime factor, says Zeihan, is rivers. The costs of growing food and making consumer products are multiplied by the effort it takes to get them to market. Conveying them by water reduces the effort significantly, increasing the amount of capital derived from the enterprise. The United States has more navigable rivers than the rest of the world combined, leading to a flow of capital searching for investment opportunities. A common destination of a country's capital is national security. A country that has easily-crossed frontiers typically must devote a significant part of its available capital to a military strong enough to assure its defense. The United States is protected east and west by oceans, on the south by a mountainous desert, and on the north by a border that is largely covered by either dense forest or mountains, meaning capital otherwise needed for defense can be directed to investments with a greater economic return. Some countries would face starvation if they didn't use significant amounts of capital for the importation of cereal grains. America has the largest contiguous stretch of high-quality farmland in the world. Furthermore, that farmland is overlaid by the world's largest network of navigable rivers. The result? "America's waterways have created a legacy of extreme capital richness, remarkable political unity, and

By: *Grant Veeder*

Black Hawk County Auditor,
and ISAC Historian



a powerful, consumer-driven economy, all on a scale that makes the United States the outlier in a global context."

However, the second half of the 20th century saw remarkable capital growth in previously poor or struggling countries. This was made possible, says Zeihan, by America's economic and military pre-eminence at the end of World War II. A year before the war ended the U.S. called a meeting of dozens of our allies (and their then-colonies) at the small New Hampshire resort town of Bretton Woods. The meeting resulted in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, institutions that baffle me in the first paragraph of any description. But Zeihan says the primary takeaway for the delegates was an unexpected twofold promise by the Americans: The U.S. market would be available to all comers, and the U.S. Navy would protect all maritime trade, not only that with the United States, but trade between any cooperating nations as well. Closed trade systems, high tariffs and competitive devaluations of currency caused economic dislocations that were largely responsible for the national rivalries that resulted in two world wars, and the United States realized that world peace relied more on the economic prosperity that would come from free trade than any other factor.

Zeihan swears by impersonal geographical absolutes, but he accepts this one anomaly provided by a human agency. He says that the normal progress of history essentially stopped while the Bretton Woods system replaced, temporarily, the age-old zero-sum game of competition for resources and markets. With the unconstrained ability to export to insatiable American consumers, and credit readily available due directly or indirectly to the ever-flowing well of American capital, "third world" countries like South Korea, Singapore and the Philippines, to name but a few, have become industrialized and are attractive targets for capital. Formerly aggressive powers like Germany and Japan are able to peacefully access the markets and resources that they once seized with savage force. A once-isolated and internally dysfunctional rival like China, a latecomer to the Bretton Woods table, literally has more capital than it knows what to do with. But you'll notice I said "temporarily."

Bretton Woods was forged with the causes of World War II in mind, but it quickly became an alliance with political and military overtones. As that war ended the Cold War began, and facing down the Soviet Union (represented at Bretton Woods but not a signatory) became the overriding obsession of U.S. diplomacy. Keeping needy countries happy not only promoted peace but kept them out of the Soviet orbit. A few years later Mao Zedong's Communist forces achieved victory, and Red China joined the U.S.S.R. as a top bogeyman.

Raise your hand if you remember the Communist Menace. Let's look at it in geopolitical terms. What the West typically saw as an ideology

Continues on next page.

bent on world domination was in the end two large countries, Russia and China, that had suffered wars, occupations and millions of deaths at the hands of other countries, using their temporary positions of strength to secure their borders and gain access to necessary resources. Still, their aggressive behavior was felt by dozens of countries and millions of people, and the United States devised a strategy to contain them, and eventually pitted one against the other. Because of their long common border, the Chinese were more afraid of the Soviets than the Americans, and thanks to ping-pong diplomacy (see *Forrest Gump*) they began a slow integration into the Bretton Woods world. The Soviet Union, meanwhile, was doomed by the Bretton Woods coalition: “One side controlled the money, the markets, and the ability to move across the oceans; the other didn’t. The Americans started the Cold War with an economy far larger than the *entire* Soviet world, and by the end of the Cold War a lengthy list of states – including the once crushingly impoverished South Korea – had leveraged American economic offerings with such success that they themselves surpassed Soviet living standards.”

Now let’s get back to “temporarily.” Zeihan says that history is about to restart. With the Cold War over, much of the incentive for continuing Bretton Woods is gone, and Zeihan sees evidence that American leaders are backing away from free trade. And due to another inexorable force, demography, propping up the world is about to get much harder. Zeihan devotes considerable space to showing how most countries are staring at a declining birth rate, meaning that succeeding generations will suffer economically, because there are fewer of them to spend money, and a greater portion of their money will go to taxes to support their decrepit elders. In the United States, for example, the Baby Boomer generation will give way to the smaller Generation X, and Zeihan says “There are only two ways to go: sharply higher taxes or sharply lower benefits.” But America is the exception once again – the Generation Ys (or Millennials) are about as numerous as the Baby Boomers. “After 2030, the Americans will have moved through ‘painful’ and be merely ‘uncomfortable,’ and things will be improving by the year...But that will most certainly not be happening elsewhere.” In most other countries, “2030 will simply be another year of an ever-deepening imbalance between retirees and taxpayers, with smaller and smaller generations coming up the ranks generating less and less growth.” And almost nothing can be done about it. “It takes 20 years to grow a 20-year-old,” Zeihan points out. You can increase your productive-age population to some extent through immigration, but immigrants feel more welcome and assimilate faster in settler societies like Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and, of course, the United States of America.

Zeihan paints an apocalyptic picture for a lot of countries. “Most likely,” he says, uncharacteristically hedging his bet, “things are as good in Japan as they are ever going to be. Japan will never have more young people than it has today, so economic growth is as high as it will ever be.” Places like Europe and China “are only a few short years behind the Japanese.” What? Aren’t scholars and talking heads calling our new age “the Chinese Century”? But Zeihan doesn’t shy away from the challenge. “Individually, any of the raft of concerns I’m about to detail would be enough to derail the Chinese rise,” is how he introduces his in-depth China dissection. “Collectively they are more than enough to return China to the fractured, self-containing mess that it has been for most of its history.” Chinese unity has always

been difficult because its river system isn’t interconnected, leading to different goals for different areas. (Besides, Zeihan scoffs, their rivers’ geographies aren’t even as good as ours *individually*, so they aren’t that great at capital formation.) The current government is able to keep a lid on unrest by focusing on full employment, which is possible due to huge exports to the deep American market. Take that away in a post-Bretton Woods world, and the Chinese juggernaut is revealed to be a paper tiger. The Chinese were able to push out competitors to the American market because of their vast pool of cheap labor. Ironically, China’s earlier concern about overpopulation led to the successful if heartless one-child policy, which has hollowed out the younger generations, increasing labor costs and producing a huge burden in caring for the elderly. (The Chinese call it the 4:2:1 problem: four grandparents to two parents to one child.) And China has no social security system. What kind of socialism is that?

Meanwhile, Zeihan reveals to us poor saps who have been worrying about how to keep our access to Mideast oil that we already get most of our oil from North America (“the United States has only rarely sourced more than one-quarter of its imports from the Persian Gulf”). Not only that, but we are sitting on most of the world’s accessible shale oil deposits. (Sorry, I don’t have space for his explanation on why “most of the public’s distrust for the slate-related techs will evaporate within a few short years.”) We are already the world’s largest energy producer, “bringing up more oil than Saudi Arabia and more natural gas [a shale oil byproduct] than Russia.” Oh yeah, Russia. *That’s* a great story too. So is Germany, and Canada, and Mexico, and Uzbekistan. *Uzbekistan*. You really need to read this book.

How many of you are going to be around in fifteen years? If I’m not there, will you do me a favor? Would you see how many of Peter Zeihan’s predictions have come true? On the book’s final page, he sums up with “Simply put, the world is indeed going to hell, but the Americans are going to sit this one out.” This elicits *The Wall Street Journal’s* only criticism, that “the triumphalist tone of the final pages is jarring.” But like Dizzy Dean said, “It ain’t braggin’ if you can back it up.” Zeihan backs up his prophecies with convincing geopolitical and demographic unchallengeables. But what did he miss? Look at any old-timey list of predictions and you’ll see at least a few clunkers. What will make people snicker when looking at Zeihan’s list 50 years from now? I won’t even try to guess; I would just be opening my own predictions to ridicule anyway. So let’s look at it this way: if Zeihan had made his projections prior to World War II, where might he have gone wrong? Predicting the war would have been easy, and with the geopolitical facts so obvious to him, predicting the outcome would have been right up his alley. But would he have predicted Bretton Woods, and America’s willingness to put history on hold for the sake of world peace? What if America, or some future irresistible combination, pulls off a similar gambit 20 years hence, for the same reason? Or effects a less altruistic plan for purposes of world domination? Where would your ultra-confident prognostications be then, Mr. Zeihan?

My efforts at skepticism haven’t lessened my admiration, though. I’ve been talking up this book for months, almost from the day it was first enthusiastically recommended to me. I will look at every international development with keener eyes from now on. And one more thing: If Alberta becomes part of the United States, I hope it’s in my lifetime.

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2015 calendar

September 2015

- 2 ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser
(Toad Valley Golf Course, Pleasant Hill)
- 16-18 ISAC Board of Directors Retreat
(Pottawattamie County)
- 17-19 IACCB Annual Fall Conference
(Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Cedar Rapids)
- 22 ISAC Legislative Policy Committee Meeting
(ISAC Office)
- 23-24 CM&MHDS Annual Conference
(Sheraton, West Des Moines)
- 27-30 Assessors Annual Conference
(Des Moines Holiday Inn Airport)

October 2015

- 1-2 Community Services Statewide Meeting
(Polk County River Place, Des Moines)
- 13 CM&MHDS Administrators Meeting
(Polk County River Place, Des Moines)
- 15-16 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

November 2015

- 5 CM&MHDS Advanced Case Management
(Stoney Creek, Johnston)
- 18-20 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
(Cedar Rapids Convention Complex)

December 2015

- 7-9 ISSDA Winter School
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)
- 8-10 ICEA Annual Conference
(Ames)
- 16 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

2016 Conference Dates

- January 20-21 ISAC University
- February 11 Supervisors Statewide Meeting
- February 20-24 NACo Legislative Conference
- March 9 County Day at the Capitol
- March 10-11 ISAC Spring School of Instruction
- April 14 ISAC HIPAA Program Training
- April 28 Smart Connections Conference
- June 15-17 ICIT Midyear Conference
- July 13-15 ISACA Summer School Conference
- July 22-25 NACo Annual Conference
- Nov 30-Dec 2 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
- December 6-8 ICEA Annual Conference

If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC calendar, please contact Kelsey Sebern at ksebern@iowacounties.org.

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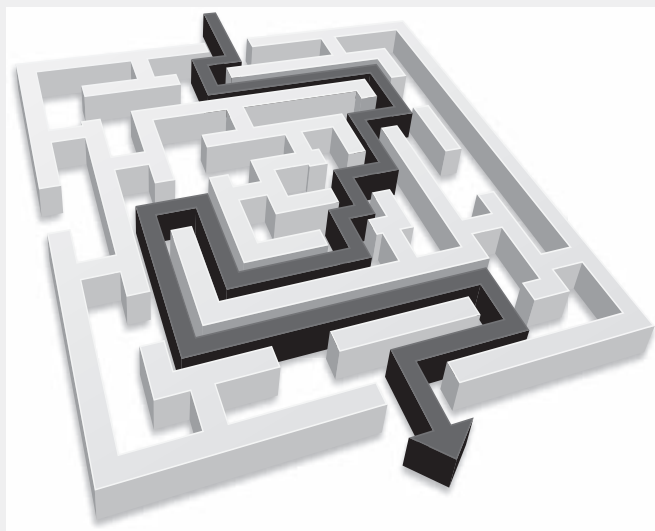
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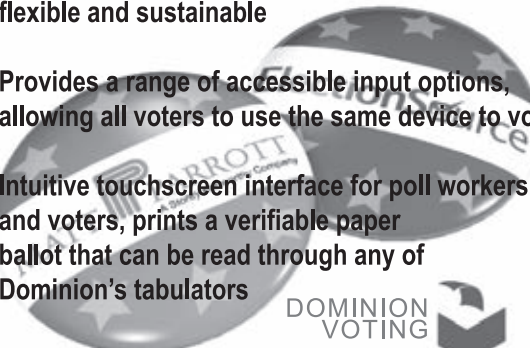


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