

# The Iowa County

**Jackpot!**  
*Counties Looking to  
Casinos for Revenue*

May 2006

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Iowa State Association of Counties

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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.

## Casinos Boost Economic Development in Counties

While casino gaming has been legal in Nevada for more than seven decades and in Atlantic City, N.J. for more than a quarter century, it was not until the late 1980s and early 1990s that other jurisdictions across the country began to introduce commercial casino gaming. Today, the Iowa Gaming Association reports commercial casinos are located in 11 states.

Horse and dog racing was first established in Iowa in 1983. Dubuque opened the first dog track in 1985 and Altoona opened the first horse track in 1989. Iowa was the first state to legalize riverboat gambling (April 1991) and placed restrictions on bets capping the maximum losses permitted on each cruise. The first riverboat casinos were opened in Dubuque, Bettendorf, Davenport, Fort Madison and Clinton. In 1994, when it became clear that Iowa was losing revenue to the neighboring Illinois riverboats, the restrictions were removed. The riverboat casinos are allowed to remain open 24 hours a day and, as of July 2004, are no longer required to cruise. In 1994, individual counties in Iowa were also cleared to put slot machines in the pari-mutuel facilities (dog & horse tracks) where voters gave their approval.

Iowa has 10 riverboat casinos, three racetrack/slot casinos, three Native American casinos and three casinos under construction. The three Native American casinos operate under the National Indian Gaming Act and contracts negotiated with the state of Iowa. The four casinos under construction are riverboat casino projects in Worth, Black Hawk, Palo Alto and Washington counties that were granted licenses by a 4-1 vote of the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission in May 2005. Ten projects in seven counties had initially sought the commission's go-ahead.

The Iowa Gaming Association states that the positive impact of Iowa's gaming industry is vast and far-reaching. Casinos purchase more than \$175 million of products and services from Iowa-based businesses through the Buy Iowa First Program. They pay more than \$278 million in local and state taxes every year. Casinos employ nearly 8,500 people, with an annual payroll of more than \$227 million. They add value to our state's growing tourism and entertainment industries with exceptional convention and hotel facilities, hosting more than 19.5 million visitors each year. Casinos in Iowa fund thousands of charitable requests with millions of dollars annually. Over \$5.4 million was distributed through the 2005 County Endowment Fund Program to 85 community foundations and/or their affiliate organizations that do not have state-licensed gaming facilities in or planned within their counties. Each recipient received approximately \$63,000 in this first year of the County Endowment Fund Program.

### Worth County Shows Strong Citizen Support

Worth County is in a buzz over the \$40 million Diamond Jo Worth Casino in Northwood that opened April 6. The 60,000 square foot facility offers full scale gaming and will have over 500 slot machines, a poker room and table games, including black jack, roulette, three card poker and craps. Dan Reeder, Worth County Assessor, said, "The county anticipates \$530,000 from the casino in property tax revenue a year, which is very big, especially since no incentives were given. I wish we had three or four more casinos coming to Worth County, the potential for economic development is tremendous."

Citizens hope economic development booms with the opening of an adjacent 100 room hotel in November and plans for another hotel and convenience store in the future. With the employment of 300 people, the cities of Northwood and Manly have housing developments underway. Reeder said many of the employees will be driving from the Albert Lea, MN area. "We hope they will get sick of driving and decide to locate in the county." He said there have been many inquiries from companies thinking of coming to the area. "This is just the beginning!"

The vote of the citizens for the casino passed with 75% approval, with 50% of registered voters taking part in the referendum. Reeder said, "That is the highest approval for Iowa." The Worth County Development Authority, non-profit license holder for the casino, pushed the casino hard to the citizens and tried to make it a regional concept. The towns in Worth County entered into a 28E agreement to share proceeds, which Reeder said really helped the high voter approval. Letters of support were received from area counties. "It was a win-win situation for everyone."

The Worth County Development Authority will get a portion of the proceeds from the casino. He said they have set up a scholarship fund that will impact hundreds of high school seniors in Worth County. "Every high school student that has lived in Worth County for at least two years will be receiving a one year \$2,000-\$2,500 scholarship, no requirements attached." Students will have four years to utilize the scholarship. "We hope this will be an incentive for students to come back to the area and grow Worth County."

### Washington County Experiences A Rough Ride

Bill Fredrick, Washington County Auditor, said things haven't been as smooth in Washington County with the \$107 million Riverside Casino and Golf Resort in Riverside that will open in the fall. Fredrick said the casino wanted to come to the county, didn't ask for any incentives and even paid for the referendum. "The casino offered us (Riverside and Washington County) incentives to support their gambling license. But once the vote passed with 52% the casino come up with all sorts of incentive requests."



The casino's annexation agreement with the city of Riverside provided for the city to supply services to the casino or for the casino to do their own systems. After looking at the city's proposal, capacity and timeline, the casino decided to construct its own water and sewer systems. The city then approached the casino to join forces for a joint project. Estimates on the project precluded the city undertaking this project on its own because of debt capacity limitations, so they approached the county to do a joint TIF with the intent of using the county's bonding capacity. The agreement provided for \$9.4 million debt to be retired with TIF revenue over a 9-10 year period.

"Many citizens began to get very upset about the agreement and the supervisors were taking a lot of heat," said Fredrick. During a board of supervisors meeting December 12, a large group of citizens became unruly and spoke of the project being financially unsound or ethically flawed (Washington Evening Journal, December 12).

A financing agreement was eventually approved on December 27 between the city of Riverside and Washington County. The city agreed to make infrastructure finance payments to the county in the amount of \$175,000 annually from FY08-FY 2017 to help offset losses to the county's general fund from using TIF to repay the \$9.4 million bond issue.

Fredrick said citizens have struggled with supporting the casino because of social and religious beliefs. "There is a large population of Amish and Mennonite citizens in the county that oppose the casino." He feels the citizens that voted for the casino proposal were voting for economic development reasons, "which our county desperately needs. This group of people is still enthusiastic and feels some good things will come of it." The Riverside Casino and Golf Resort will sit on 375 acres and have the largest hotel in Washington County with 200 rooms and a conference facility. An 18-hole golf course will also be onsite.

Approximately 850 employees will be needed to run the 47,000 square foot casino. Fredrick said the casino facility hopes to draw workers and patrons from Johnson County, which is only two miles away. The facility is also conveniently located along the Avenue of the Saints, which offers many opportunities for the construction of new businesses. Fredrick said the facility had an initial assessed value of \$748 million. "The property taxes from this facility will have quite an impact on the county."

## Pottawattamie County Has Experience With Casinos

Eleven years ago the first casino came to Pottawattamie County. Judy Miller, Pottawattamie County Treasurer, said, "I remember everyone was so excited. They thought the casinos would reduce their property taxes tremendously and be their answer to everything." She said though some long-time citizens are disappointed that they still have to pay property taxes, Pottawattamie County citizens see the casinos as community friendly and essential for the funding of new projects,

such as a library and downtown park.

Miller said, "These casinos are not tax exempt, like many citizens believe. Last year, Ameristar Casino paid \$2.6 million in property taxes. Harrah's paid \$2.5 million." She said in the previous fiscal year, the three casinos in Pottawattamie County and one dog track brought in \$2.2 million to the county in property taxes. "There should be a little more this fiscal year. We have been averaging about a 2% increase each year."

The casino industry is still growing in Pottawattamie County, with the Bluffs Run Casino name change to Horseshoe Casino after an ownership switch. An \$85 million expansion is planned to make the facility the largest casino in the region. The casino will expand by about 69% from its current size. Harrah's Entertainment, the company that owns Bluffs Run, will turn it into a 68,000 square-foot horseshoe-shaped casino and add 250 slot machines, a poker room, 36 additional gaming tables and 300 more employees. Harrah's estimates the new casino will generate more than \$50 million in additional state tax revenue through 2010.

## Gambling Problems Going Up in Iowa

Wes Ehrecke, Iowa Gaming Association, said 98% of casino visitors can go for fun and entertainment. "There are a small percentage of individuals (2%) that have a compulsive behavior with gambling. Extensive funding is offered to help these individuals." IGA members contribute more than \$5 million annually to problem gambling treatment, prevention and outreach programs.

The Iowa Gambling Treatment fund receives 0.5% of the gross lottery revenue and 0.5% of the adjusted gross receipts from the casinos (effective July 2004). The Iowa Gambling Treatment Program offers recovery programs, self-help groups, and special counseling for gamblers and for concerned others. Gambling problems can be induced from casinos, but also from sports betting, video-poker, blackjack, keno, cards (not at a casino), bingo, scratch tickets and pull tabs, lottery (numbers), raffles, pools, stocks and commodities. 1-800-BETS OFF Telephone Helpline received 5,453 calls from gamblers and concerned persons in FY05, up from 4,816 calls in FY04. Margaret Van Ginkel, 1-800-BETS-Off Telephone Hotline, said there is an increase of calls each year. "There has been a trend in more calls coming from or concerning the elderly population and college students having gambling problems."

## Looking Towards the Future

The Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission will be one factor in determining the future expansion of casinos in Iowa. The organization has 21 criteria used in granting licenses: such as compliance, revenue, population of the area, security, community support and employment opportunities. Iowa citizens will be another factor of casino expansion with their support or opposition of casinos coming to their counties.

# capitol comments

## ISAC's Top Priority Results

At the ISAC Fall School last November, five top priorities for the 2006 legislative session, as recommended by the ISAC Board of Directors, were ratified by our membership. What were those priorities and what happened to them?

### Property Tax Reform

For the second year, ISAC and the Iowa League of Cities jointly proposed an overhaul of the property tax system. Our proposal was drafted as HSB 727 and SSB 3047. The plan eliminates the rollback, imposes a reasonable property tax limitation, and makes a number of changes to property tax credit programs and technical assessment practices. HSB 727 was considered in a House subcommittee but tabled in the full Ways and Means Committee, pending passage of legislation to transfer homestead credit funds into the school aid formula as directed in the bill.

Many other "competing" property tax bills backed by various groups were also introduced. HF 2771 and companion SSB 3085 coupled all classes of property together, abolished county compensation boards, and prohibited counties from cutting funding for certain "real-property related services," as identified in the bill, until they first cut funding for all other services. Another bill was designed to freeze property taxes for seniors. ISAC opposed these bills.

Because there were so many rival proposals and the Senate is evenly split between the political parties, no consensus could be reached on property tax reform.

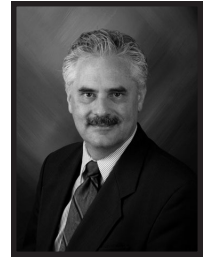
### Auditors' Technical Elections Bill

The voters of Iowa expect and deserve an elections system that is beyond reproach. County auditors are the election commissioners in our state. Accordingly, the auditors' affiliate proposed a package of technical elections updates to facilitate changing public demands in the conduct of this important process. HF 644, as passed by the Iowa House and the Senate State Government Committee last session, provided the best opportunity to meet this priority. Because of the politics of the controversial voter verified paper audit trail, passage of this legislation in 2006 was not possible.

Meanwhile, two *fast track* elections bills became necessary to help county auditors to prepare for the 2006 primary elections. These bills contained some of the objectives included in HF 644. Specifically, HF 2050 removes the requirement that a room or area containing polling places for more than one precinct maintain separate entrances. The bill allows the auditor to draw names for ballot placement of non-partisan offices and it provides that voters may sign the registrar to declare eligibility. HF 2051 allows redundancy for maintenance of voter registration files by allowing counties to continue to maintain such files until January 1, 2007. Together, these bills achieved significant progress for auditors' elections issues.

By: John Easter

ISAC Director of  
Intergovernmental Affairs



### Adult Rehabilitation Option Audit

As a result of a federal audit of the Medicaid Adult Rehabilitation Option Program (ARO), the state was required to repay \$6.2 million in federal Medicaid funds. When ARO was added to Iowa's state Medicaid plan, the state reduced the counties' growth funds by the anticipated amount of program savings. Therefore it was the ISAC policy position that the funds to pay back the federal government should not come from the counties. The issue was ultimately resolved through a federal administrative decision to offset the \$6.2 million through a commensurate reduction in allowed claims for the quarter that ended on September 30, 2005.

### Eminent Domain

In the recent U. S. Supreme Court ruling *Kelo vs. the City of New London, Connecticut* the Court held that the use of eminent domain, or condemnation, is a matter for the individual states to regulate. The Court also concluded that the use of eminent domain for economic development must be of benefit to the general public. In response to that case, legislation was introduced in Iowa to stop the use of eminent domain for economic development purposes.

While several bills were introduced, the principal piece of legislation was HF 2351. As passed by the House, the bill went well beyond tightening the use of eminent domain for economic development and included numerous procedural changes that would interfere with the access of land for roads. HF 2351 narrowed the scope of county procedural exemptions from any "property" to just "agricultural land." ISAC worked in a coalition with other groups to successfully delete these provisions in the Senate. The Senate amendment also provides, with certain exceptions, that condemnation by a city for projects in the unincorporated area must first be approved by the board of county supervisors. The House accepted these Senate amendments, and the final bill basically addressed the economic development issues. ISAC was satisfied with this outcome.

### Food Code Enforcement

Funding for food inspection programs is a growing problem for counties. Over time, fees have become inadequate to cover costs of inspections, regulations are outdated, and two state departments are involved in the administration of the program. Several pieces of legislation were introduced that addressed these issues. These bills provided a good mechanism to educate lawmakers about the growing county concerns with food code enforcement. However, with 2006 being an election year, it was no time for any proposal that raises taxes or fees. All of the bills died in the first funnel.

## Veterans Preference Case Decided by Federal Court

By: David Vestal

ISAC General Counsel



**Veteran's "Hearing" Insufficient:** Veterans in Iowa are not "at-will" employees. They are entitled to special protection when it comes to termination. In a recent federal district court case called *Glandon v. Keokuk County Health Center* (408 F.Supp. 2d 759), the court found that the employer failed to follow the veterans preference law when terminating a difficult employee.

In the case, Dan Glandon was the director of ambulance services at a hospital. He was a veteran, having served in the Coast Guard. On many occasions during his employment, Glandon complained about patient care issues at the hospital. His direct style caused disagreements between the nursing staff and the paramedic staff.

When the hospital CEO decided to fire Glandon, he was called into the CEO's office and presented a detailed letter setting out the reasons for his termination. The letter said he had four days to resign or he would be fired. He refused to quit and was fired later that same day. Glandon was later given five minutes to speak to the hospital's board of trustees concerning his termination. He was not reinstated.

The Iowa veterans preference law, Iowa Code §35C.6, provides that no veteran "shall be removed from such position or employment except for incompetency or misconduct shown after a hearing, upon due notice, upon stated charges...."

The statute provides for notice and a pre-termination hearing before a covered employee can be discharged. In a 2001 case called *Kern v. Saydel Comm. Schl. Dist.*, 637 N.W.2d 157, 161 (Iowa 2001), the Iowa Supreme Court noted that "the type of hearing called for by [the statute] is not described in the statute. . . . Some flexibility is called for in determining the type of predischarge hearing that must be afforded. . . ." The *Kern* court also said that "a full and complete [postdischarge] evidentiary hearing pursuant to a formal postdischarge procedure would, in conjunction with pre-discharge notice and an opportunity to respond, satisfy the requirements of due process."

The problem for the county hospital officials in this case is that, as they admitted later, they knew Glandon was a veteran, but had absolutely no idea that he was entitled to any preferential treatment as far as his termination. So there was no attempt to follow the requirements of Iowa Code §35C.6. Nonetheless, the hospital, pointing to the *Kern* court's observation that "some flexibility is called for in determining the type of predischarge hearing that must be afforded," argued that, looking collectively at all that had gone on, the hospital had followed the law.

The hospital pointed to, among other things, the meeting between the hospital CEO and Glandon where Glandon was handed the letter detailing the reasons for his termination, and Glandon's postdischarge appearance before the trustees at which he sought reinstatement. The hospital said that this satisfied the statute.

The federal district court disagreed, and held that Glandon "was not afforded the process contemplated by the statute or as discussed in *Kern*." The court said that "the discharge decision had already been made" at the time Glandon met with the CEO and was given his termination letter. The five minutes Glandon was allotted after his discharge to argue his case for reinstatement before the board of trustees was clearly insufficient as a "full and complete" postdischarge evidentiary hearing, said the court. The federal district court denied the hospital's motion for summary judgment on the veterans preference claim. If this case is not settled, Glandon will undoubtedly be entitled to job reinstatement.

Under the Iowa veterans preference law, a public employee who is a veteran is not an employee at will, but rather, may only be discharged for incompetency or misconduct, following notice of the reasons claimed to support these grounds and the opportunity for an evidentiary hearing.

Counties officials need to know whether the person they are about to fire is a veteran, and if so, they need to be prepared to follow the requirements of the veterans preference law.

**Nominating Petitions:** It is a common practice of candidates running for office to place nominating petitions in the local bank. The bank has a lot of foot traffic and has been seen as a great place to get signatures. But there was a question raised because Iowa Code §68A.503(1) says banks cannot contribute anything of value to a political campaign. Now Charlie Smithson and the Iowa Ethics and Campaign Disclosure Board have done the right thing and clarified that petitions may indeed be placed in banks.

**Last to Know:** Okay so it only took a decade for me to make the connection, but now I know that Bill Fennelly, Scott County Treasurer, is the father of Bill Fennelly, very successful Iowa State women's basketball coach.

**Parting Ponderable:** A national survey released in March by the *Chicago Tribune* found that 22% of Americans could name all five members of the Simpson cartoon family, compared with just one in 1,000 people who could name all five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment (freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly and petition for redress of grievances). It also showed that people misidentified First Amendment rights. About one in five people thought the right to own a pet was protected. The survey found more people could name the three *American Idol* judges than could identify three First Amendment rights.



## Website Design

**By: Tammy Norman**

ISAC Technology  
Services Coordinator

**Q: Do you have any tips on creating a county website that the general public will find easy to use?**



**A: Formatting** - Keep the website easy to view on any monitor. Common mistakes are the use of extremely bright colors and flashing icons and/or symbols. It is important to draw attention to certain information on your website, however, using bright neon colors is not the solution. Bright colors are hard to read and can cause eye strain. You will be better off to use a different font type, size and style to draw attention. Another solution is the creation of textboxes around "urgent" information. When creating your textbox, make your background a dark color and your text white or off white, thus creating an attention-grabbing format while still maintaining an easy to read layout for your end-users. Your homepage can be creative with photos and different colors. On underlying pages it is best to have your page background in white with a top or side banner and have your font color be dark. Try to stay with a font type that is widely used, such as Arial. Remember - simple is better.

**Information** - Many end-users do not know which county office provides the services they are searching for. Creating a directory that enables an end-user to look for a service and then be directed to the proper county office is much easier for them than the other way around. Ensure that this information is titled in a manner that the end-users are able to know what the document contains, such as "Directory of County Services." You may wish to create a webpage reflecting the duties and activities of each office, along with hours of the services provided. Photos of county officials are a nice touch. Also, make sure all public information, such as board of supervisor minutes, agendas, and county budgets, are easy for the community to find.

**Links** - Provide links to other organizations and government entities within your county. This will entice the end-users to utilize your website versus others. Enabling your community members to readily find the information they are searching for makes you and your county look good.

**Website Note:** The legislative session has come to an end. To find out the outcome of legislation that affects you and your county, sign up to attend one of the six legislative workshops to be held in a facility near you. Please forward any items that you would like addressed in this column to my attention at 515-244-7181 or via e-mail at [tnorman@iowacounties.org](mailto:tnorman@iowacounties.org). Until next month, keep clicking!

## Project Manager's Toolbox

**By: Robin Harlow**

ISAC Technology  
Project Manager



As with most project managers, I have maintained a toolbox that contains the tools that will be needed when building projects. The drawers on the toolbox might vary slightly from project manager to project manager, but generally they contain the following drawers: initiation, planning, execution, and closure.

**Initiation** - Focuses on project definition and project feasibility. In most cases this drawer would contain two compartments - pre-charter and charter. Pre-charter steps are simply either formal or informal steps that an organization takes to decide to pursue a project. At this point the organization should be asking some basic questions. What is the problem? What are the alternatives for fixing the problems? Is there money to fix the problem? What are the risks? If the project is deemed worthy, then a charter (more on this in future columns) is created.

**Planning** - I consider the planning drawer the most crucial phase of any project. Many of the tools in this drawer are simply agreements that lay out what each person or persons will be expected to do during the project. Failure to communicate or agree to these expectations will lead to either a less than effective project or a total project failure. In short, because of the urge to get the project going, most projects fail because the tools in this drawer are either ignored or underutilized.

**Execution** - Finally we get to build something! Execution is when the plans from the planning drawer are carried out. The most important aspect of this phase is to maintain the discipline to follow the plans. I have yet to see a project plan not change. To help control the scope of the project, it is important that the change management process (as laid out in the planning phase) be followed. Without this process, projects can soon spiral out of control. The project manager will need to learn to skillfully use the tools in this drawer in order to have a high degree of success.

**Closure** - Closure is more about gathering information about the project than anything else. It is about learning what went right and, more importantly, what went wrong. These lessons can be applied to the next project. Finally, celebrating the project allows the team to not only gather momentum for the next challenge, but also the good will that often goes with a successful project.

Future columns will cover some of the more important tools in each drawer. In the meantime, I will be putting some examples of the tools on our website for your review. Next month's column will be "How to Put the Z Into CRM."

## by the numbers

### Mother's Day

By: Jay Syverson

ISAC Fiscal Analyst



Mother's Day this year is May 14. Before you plan a nice home-cooked meal, send a sentimental card, or rush out to buy some flowers, read on to brush up on some facts about Mother's Day and Iowa moms in general.

Mother's Day has roots that trace all the way back to the ancient Greeks. Anna Jarvis, of Philadelphia, is widely credited with starting the movement to establish Mother's Day as a national holiday in the United States. Her efforts paid off in 1914, when Congress passed and President Woodrow Wilson signed legislation designating the second Sunday in May as Mother's Day.

Of the 150 million females in America, approximately 81 million are mothers. About four million women have babies each year in the United States; 415,000 of those new moms are teens and more than 100,000 of them are age 40 or older. The average age of women giving birth for the first time is currently 25.2, the highest it's ever been. Forty percent of all births are the mother's first; 32% are the second-born; 17% third and 11% fourth or more.

Today over 70% of mothers with children under age 18 are in the labor force. That's down from a peak of 73% in 2000, but still well above the *Ozzie and Harriet* days of the 1950s. In 1955, for instance, only 27% of mothers with children under age 18 were part of the labor force. Naturally, Iowa moms are harder workers than those in the rest of the country; more than 80% of Iowa moms with children under age 18 are in the labor force. That number doesn't dip much even when we look at the families with the youngest children. A full 71% of Iowa moms with kids under age six remain in the labor force.

The statistics get a little gloomy when we look at single moms. There are over 64,000 single moms (with minor children) in Iowa, and 30% of them live in poverty. The poverty rate rises to 46% among single moms with children under age five. The higher prevalence of poverty among single moms is concerning, especially because one in every four new mothers is unwed. Also, nearly one in every five kids lives with only their mother, compared to almost four of five living with both parents and less than 5% living with only their father.

Still, Iowa's unwed mother rate is lower than the national average of 29%, and Iowa has a lower teen birth rate than the nation as well. Another bright spot, at 54%, Iowa has the fourth-highest percentage in the nation of households comprised of married couples.

*Sources include Infoplease.com, the Des Moines Register, the State Data Center of Iowa and the U.S. Census Bureau.*

## health check

### Doctor's Orders

By: Sandy Longfellow

ISAC Administrative Assistant



I recently attended a wellness meeting and heard some amazing statistics. It was stated that 12% of people who go to the doctor are given a prescription that they never fill. Another 12% filled a prescription but did not take it. And 29% started their prescriptions but didn't take them as prescribed. So 53% of patients did not take their medication as prescribed.

The second thing mentioned at the meeting was people are sometimes resistant to the idea of taking medication for the rest of their lives. My husband is on antidepressant medication, and we can see that it is effective and he is glad to take it as long as necessary. I, on the other hand, was recently told that to lower my blood pressure and cholesterol I would have to take medication from now on because it is genetic. This was something I didn't want to hear. My first reaction was that it was not necessary and I didn't need to take the meds as often as they said. Therefore, I didn't. Amazingly, I fell into the 29% that didn't take medication as prescribed. This was quite a revelation to me. When I heard the statistics, I wondered why you wouldn't follow the directions. Then I realized they were talking about me!

My conclusion was that if I don't trust my doctor to give what was needed at a level that is appropriate, I should ask another doctor. Medications help us avoid diseases that ravaged our ancestors. This doesn't, however, mean that you should take things blindly - be informed.

**Addendum:** When I went to fill my prescription, the cost was \$45, which meant it was a non-formulary drug. It was a new drug that had not been on the market very long. I asked the pharmacist if there was something else I could take that would cost less. She said yes and called the doctor who agreed that a less expensive drug would work as well. I also called the Wellmark pharmacy department. To lower overall health care costs, we should use generics when possible and formulary drugs when they are available. It will save you money as well!

# ISAC brief

## ISAC Spring School 2006

**By: Jerri Noboa**

ISAC Meetings Administrator

Below are questions and comments from ISAC's Spring School online evaluations submitted.



### **Can you allow more time for informal round table discussion?**

Affiliate time is planned by your affiliate, not ISAC. ISAC only plans the seminars, general session and keynote speaker.

### **I was told by others from my county that I won a prize during the exhibitors break. Can you send it to me?**

When your name is called during the vendors drawing you are to pick up your prize at the exhibitor's booth. ISAC is not responsible for the prizes getting to you, it is the responsibility of the exhibitors.

### **Why are the treasurers meeting at the Renaissance Savery again in the fall? Why are we not rotating to the Marriott?**

It is the policy of the Association to have the current and the incoming ISAC presidents' affiliates meet at the headquarters hotel.

### **How much am I expected to tip for valet parking?**

*Emily Post Institute Guide* says \$2 to drop off and pick up of your car. When I asked the hotel people they say \$1 to park and \$1 to bring your car to you is the *minimum*. If someone helps you with your bags it should be \$1 per bag.

### **I don't enjoy having the conference on Sunday.**

The 2007 Spring School is the last conference scheduled with a Sunday - Tuesday format. We will try to set future conferences on a Wednesday - Friday schedule. When we initially tried this time table we thought it would be a benefit for county officials to be out of the courthouse one less day and we obtained a cheaper hotel rate. Also, when we moved to downtown Des Moines the Wednesday - Friday dates we wanted were not available.

### **When are we going back to the Holiday Inn Airport?**

Even though they have a great hotel and everyone is wonderful to work with at that facility, we have just outgrown it. When we had people standing around the perimeter of the meeting rooms and in the doorways, we knew we had to find a bigger meeting facility. We are also quite fortunate that the Marriott

has a big exhibit hall which allows us to have up to 67 exhibitors. We could only accommodate 54 exhibitors at the Holiday Inn Airport.

### **Can we move from downtown Des Moines to the Adventureland Inn?**

We are such a large conference requiring 16 breakout rooms that can accommodate six groups of 100 or more attendees, a general session area for 900 people and exhibit space to accommodate up to 65 booths. Adventureland Inn only has eight meeting rooms and the Adventureland Inn area cannot accommodate the 750 sleeping rooms needed for attendees.

### **How about moving to the Iowa State Fair Grounds?**

Same problem as stated above, plus the fact we would have enormous rental fees to pay. When you are at a facility with both meeting and sleeping rooms the rental fee is minimal.

### **Have you looked at moving the conference around the state?**

The Spring School can't be moved outside of Des Moines due to legislative interaction. The Fall School in the early 90s did move around the state and county officials asked to have the conference moved back to Des Moines. There is a planning committee of ISAC Board members that are researching this possibility again.

*If you have questions that I have not answered, please feel free to contact me at 515-244-7181 or [jnoboia@iowacounties.org](mailto:jnoboia@iowacounties.org). Mark your calendars for ISAC's Fall School of Instruction November 29-December 1.*

## classified ads

### Free Equipment

Standard Register 2000 Forms burster. Good condition. Works well. If interested, contact Jefferson County Assessor, Fairfield, IA 52556. 641-472-2849.

### County Assessor

Shelby County is currently taking applications for the position of County Assessor. Send resume to the Shelby County Examining Board, %Sandy Ronfeldt, 612 Court St., Harlan, IA 51537.



## counties in the spotlight

### Lee County Lightens Up

The Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa State University have challenged all Iowans to lighten up with the recent Lighten Up Iowa campaign to get the state's population moving toward a healthy lifestyle.

The Lee County Board of Supervisors, along with the Lee County Board of Health, have joined the challenge. The Lee County Board of Supervisors was selected to participate in the program to become a model for other county governments. Teams have formed statewide as a support to one another in a quest to increase daily physical activity and decrease waistlines.

"Next to tobacco use, obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death and illness," Lee County Supervisor Bob Woodruff said. Woodruff serves as the team's captain. Each team is required to turn in their weight loss and number of minutes of activity each month. Lighten Up Iowa began on January 18 and will conclude on May 31.

*(Taken from the Fort Madison Daily Democrat, March 1)*

### Women of Influence Award

Lu Barron, Vice Chair of the Linn County Board of Supervisors, was recognized among the *Corridor Business Journal's* 2006 Women of Influence. She was one of 11 honorees this year. This award recognizes women in the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Corridor who have demonstrated a high degree of professional success and community involvement.

Barron's work to find a resolution to the decade-long deadlock on siting a new landfill in Linn County was noted more than once by those who nominated her. Linn County Supervisor Linda Langston received the Women of Influence award in 2005.

### What's New In Your County?

Please email magazine contributions to Denise Obrecht (dobrecht@iowacounties). Pictures are appreciated!

## associate member highlights

### Midland GIS Solutions

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Owned and operated by Iowa Professional Land Surveyors, Midland GIS Solutions is a professional firm offering comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping services, data development, implementation, and consulting services to counties throughout the Midwest.

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With over 30 years of mapping experience, the goal of Midland GIS Solutions is to provide our clients with the highest quality GIS program at the most reasonable cost. For more information about our products and services please call toll free at 877-375-8633 or visit [www.midlandgis.com](http://www.midlandgis.com).

#### Contact Information:

Matt Sorensen - Vice President - [sorensen@midlandgis.com](mailto:sorensen@midlandgis.com)  
Kirk Larson - Operations Manager - [klarson@midlandgis.com](mailto:klarson@midlandgis.com)

## NACo Steering Committees

Do you want a voice in creating the national legislative policies of the National Association of Counties? Then consider filling out a NACo nomination form to be appointed to one of its 11 steering committees: Agriculture and Rural Affairs; Community and Economic Development; Environment, Energy and Land Use; Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs; Health; Human Service and Education; Justice and Public Safety; Labor and Employment; Public Lands; Telecommunications and Technology; and Transportation.

As a NACo steering committee member, you are responsible for debating and creating national policies and priorities affecting counties and serving as NACo's front line in its grassroots efforts. Committees meet at the NACo legislative and annual conference and possibly one other time during the year. You will be responsible for your own travel.

You can receive nomination information by visiting ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)). Forms (nomination and grassroots) are due back to the ISAC office by June 1 (fax to 515-244-6397).

## Story County Receives NACo Award

NACo's Center for Sustainable Communities has announced Story County and Interstate Power and Light Company: Energy Efficiency as one of the 2005-2006 Sustainable Community Awards winners. The award winners displayed outstanding local collaborations to create economically prosperous, environmentally secure and socially equitable communities.

The 12 award winners illustrated how America's local officials are reaching out to each other, their citizens and community leaders to assure that pressing local challenges are met. By recognizing and promoting these accomplishments, the Center for Sustainable Communities hopes to equip scores of additional leaders with the knowledge to make similar progress in communities across America.

The Center for Sustainable Communities' primary mission is to provide a forum for county officials to work with other government leaders, the private sector, and communities to develop policies and programs that lead to economic enhancement, environmental stewardship and social well being - the three pillars of sustainable communities. The Center assists local elected officials in building sustainable communities by promoting community leadership initiatives, facilitating multi-jurisdictional and public-private partnerships, providing technical assistance and training, and conducting community policy and educational forums. For further information visit [www.naco.org/sustainable](http://www.naco.org/sustainable).

## Register for NACo's Annual Conference in August

NACo's Annual Conference will be held August 4-8 in Cook County (Chicago) at the Lakeside Center at McCormick Place. More than 3,500 appointed and elected officials from across the country are expected to attend. The conference and exposition kicks off Friday and Saturday with steering committee and Advanced Leadership Training (ALT) seminars. Sunday is the official open of the conference. Election for NACo second vice president and other Executive Committee officers takes place on Tuesday. This is the first time in 15 years that there have been four candidates for the NACo 2nd VP position. Candidates include Teresa Altemus, Gloucester County (Virginia) Supervisor; Valerie Brown, Sonoma County (California) Supervisor; Joe Fuller, Rapids Parish (Louisiana) 1st VP; and Harry Montoya, Sante Fe County (New Mexico) Commissioner. Online registration is available at [www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org). Early bird registration ends July 10.

## National County Government Week

Counties across Iowa joined together to celebrate National County Government Week and voice how important county government is to this nation. National County Government Week, April 23-29, was held in recognition of the leadership, innovation and valuable service provided by counties.

On April 27, Linn County held an open house for its new Elections Depot, which is a 5,000 square foot secure building that will house new voting machines and related items, as well as provide space for training poll workers. The county had a new flag designed and on display during National County Government Week. Linn County officials focused on students during the week and worked with their local school system to schedule guest speaking engagements. They also worked with Workplace Learning Connection to arrange a job shadow opportunity for a high school student interested in government.

Tama County celebrated National County Government Week early by hosting its annual Government Day April 12, sponsored by the American Legion. The county invited high school government classes in the county for a day at the courthouse learning about the departments of county government. Tama County Supervisor Larry Vest participated in Government Day as a student 47 years ago. "I was elected by my class to observe the office of supervisor, which is an irony since that is the office I hold today."

*National County Government Week is sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo).*

## Smoke-Free Laws Catching On Nationwide

By: Joseph Hansen, NACo research associate

New Jersey is the latest. It will soon be followed by Washington D.C., and Montana's law will be enacted later. These are the most recent jurisdictions that have outlawed smoking in bars, restaurants, or workplaces (either in one, two or all three categories), a trend that is sweeping the nation.

Recent statistics from the American Nonsmokers Rights Foundation show exactly how widespread these regulations have become. As of January, 2,120 municipalities have local laws restricting smoking. Of these, 124 have outlawed smoking in bars, restaurants and workplaces altogether.

In addition to local laws, 15 states have laws banning smoking in at least one of those places. In total, there are more than 6,000 municipalities covered by some smoking restrictions, affecting nearly 40% of the entire population. In general, the number of local clean indoor air laws has increased tenfold over the last 20 years.

These numbers are staggering. And they continue to grow, as many localities and states are exploring the option of passing smoking bans or placing the issue on ballots. These places are facing the same concerns and debates from citizens as those localities and states who have already passed such legislation.

The main objection comes from the local restaurants and bars, claiming that the smoking bans would drive away business. In each locality, there are stories about businesses being forced to close, cut back hours or lay off workers because of the loss of business.

In New Jersey, this was an especially noteworthy argument because there is a casino exemption in the smoking ban. This exemption has triggered the threat of a lawsuit from the state restaurant association, saying that the ban and exemption violate Equal Protection under the Constitution.

Maryland, which has banned smoking in workplaces and is now debating a general ban in all public spaces, is also facing the same fight by the restaurant association. The association argues that the ban would restrict an individual's and business owner's right to choose.

Another common argument among opponents of smoking bans, especially those passed at the city or county level, is that customers can just go to the next town or county where there is no ban. The enforcement and uniformity of laws has been an issue for these groups.

Colorado is expected to pass a statewide ban, where 47 cities and counties have their own restrictions, creating state uniformity in the area.

This was a main issue in Hennepin County, Minnesota. Late last year, the county decided to re-evaluate its no smoking ordinance, which totally banned smoking in all bars and restaurants. Neighboring Ramsey County had a more relaxed ban, allowing smoking in places that serve more liquor than

food as well as private clubs and restaurants with sufficient ventilation systems. The Hennepin County business owners believed their county's tighter restrictions were causing customers to take their business to Ramsey, and claimed statistics showed that their restaurants and clubs lost both revenues and jobs under the ban.

In addition, opponents claimed that enforcement of the ban is difficult, since it would drain police resources away from more important duties, or the police would not uniformly enforce the ban because of other obligations. In other words, enforcing a no-smoking ban would be low on the list of priorities.

But the proponents of such smoking prohibition laws believe the statistics are on their side, both in terms of the public health and the impact on businesses in the area.

An *Associated Press* article cited a study performed by a biophysicist researcher, which showed that "smoky bars and casinos have up to 50 times more cancer-causing particles in the air than highways and city streets during rush hour." Employees of these establishments are at a much greater risk. The study also showed that the air pollution virtually disappears once smoking is prohibited. Studies by health groups also show that cases of heart attacks decrease when a ban is implemented.

Many economic studies of the impact of smoke-free establishments claim that the potential loss of jobs and income is a myth. Tax data in a number of states and localities, including New York City, California and Dane County, Wisconsin show an increase in taxes paid by bars and restaurants (corresponding to an increase in sales), employment in those places has increased, and the overall number of bars and restaurants has increased.

Montgomery County, Maryland issued its own report on the economic impact of the smoking ban on restaurants and bars. The ban was passed in 2003 for all restaurants, bars and workplaces in the unincorporated county, while incorporated districts had the option of passing such a ban. The results of the study showed no real impact on taxable sales or employment; in fact, employment actually increased in bars and restaurants. The conclusion of this study was that the opponents' cries of losing business were not true.

Opponents of smoking bans have attacked the credibility of these studies, claiming they are conducted at the behest of the government to prove that the smoking bans are not harmful to local businesses. Most local restaurant and bar owners are not swayed by these statistics. But with more and more jurisdictions, both local and state, looking into developing and implementing smoking regulations, these owners might be fighting a losing battle.



## Managing for Results

### Citizen Participation

For the past two decades there have been two major movements that have affected the way communities have operated and how local government officials have governed. The first is a movement toward citizen governance and reinventing government through citizen participation, which was captured in the book “Reinventing Government” (David Osborne and Ted Gaebler, 1992). In this movement citizens are seen in multiple roles as customers, owners, issue framers, co-producers, and evaluators of government (Epstein, et al., 2000). To fulfill the variety of roles citizens should be involved in decision-making concerning the well-being and livelihood of a community (Mathews, 1999; Wang, 2001). This concept is especially important in city and county government, where service delivery has a significant impact on citizens’ daily lives.

### Accountability

The second major movement is accountability; the emphasis is on achieving results that meet citizens expectations. The accountability movement is often manifested through the use of performance measurement. Professional organizations, such as the Urban Institute, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and the Government Finance Officers Association have been advocating the tool to enhance the accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness of government operations for several decades.

### Performance Measurement

While these two movements may seem to be separate developments, they are in fact integrated to form the basis for how community governance is being defined today and into the future. The contrast of this new approach with traditional approaches is exemplified in the method used to develop and implement performance measurement. Traditionally, performance measurement focused primarily on the needs of program management, and is often designed and used only by managers. For example, a recent survey by the GASB found that only 13% of city and county respondents had active citizen participation in the selection of performance measures and only 36% believed that citizens, clients, or stakeholders of government programs were very important in performance measurement (GASB, 2001).

This practice is problematic because if major stakeholders do not have a voice in performance measurement, they are less likely to support it (de Lancer Julnes, 2001). In addition, many of the managerially-oriented performance measures, such as activity and workload measurement, do not devote enough attention to program outcomes and their impact on a commu-

*By: Paul Coates, Director of the Office of State and Local Government Programs at Iowa State University and Alfred Ho, Associate Professor, School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University-Purdue University*

nity, which are the primary concerns of citizens (Fountain, 1991). Many citizens already feel that they do not have much influence on government policies (Frisby and Bowman 1996) and they often distrust the ability of politicians, lobbyists, and the mass media to give them a full picture of public problems (Durant 1999; Matthews 1999).

If performance measurement fails to provide citizens with reliable and valid information about their community’s concerns, and if government fails to evaluate services from citizens’ perspective, citizens may pay little attention to performance measures, resulting in the elected officials also potentially losing interest in using measures. When and if this happens, administrators may have even less incentive to use the tool (Ho, 2002), making performance measurement a mundane data exercise with little relevancy to governmental decision-making.

### Citizen Initiated Performance Assessment

In response to these concerns, a project titled “Citizen-Initiated Performance Assessment” (CIPA) was launched in nine Iowa cities from 2001-2005. CIPA built a process in which citizens, elected officials, and city staff jointly develop performance measures that incorporate citizens’ perspective and are then integrated into the government’s decision-making process (for more information go to [www.iowacipa.org](http://www.iowacipa.org)).

The CIPA project is but one example of how the two forces of citizen participation and accountability have been joined to provide a new approach to how local officials can governing in the modern era. A new book titled “Results that Matter: Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance and Getting Things Done,” by Paul Epstein, Paul Coates and Lyle Wray with David Swain, presents a framework for analyzing community involvement and discusses a number of examples from around the country of effective approaches of new community governance. The examples in the book will be useful to Iowa county officials in helping them explore new approaches that will directly or indirectly impact the way counties are managed and how they interact with their citizens. To preview the book visit [www.resultsthatmatter.net/book/index.html](http://www.resultsthatmatter.net/book/index.html).

## Managing Risk and Costs Seminar

Is your organization effectively managing risk? In today's complex operating environment, it is critical that governmental entities efficiently and effectively manage a whole host of issues that fall beneath the risk umbrella. A seminar entitled "Managing Risk and Costs for Governmental Entities" will be held in May at two locations: May 2 at The Lodge in Bettendorf and May 3 at the West Des Moines Marriott. Topics include:

- GASB 43 & 45 (OPEB - Other Post-Employment Benefits) - Catch up on the latest GASB updates and explore how to capture information from your service providers to prepare financial information needed to report Post-Employment Benefit costs. You'll even get the perspective of our experienced actuaries.
- Taxes - Learn how to manage your tax penalty exposure before the IRS calls.
- Network System Security - Discover how to implement adequate network system security and controls to minimize risk.

There is no fee to attend. To register contact Carla Hall at 563-888-4108 or [Carla.hall@rsmi.com](mailto:Carla.hall@rsmi.com). Registration also available online at [www.rsmmcgladrey.com](http://www.rsmmcgladrey.com).

## Designing Cool Communities Conference

Many of Iowa's communities are ripe for a rebuild. How can we foster a regeneration of our communities into the cool communities of the future? Designing Cool Communities, a one-day conference on livable communities, will be held May 12. The conference will explore how good design can foster economic vitality, neighborhoods that promote healthy lifestyles, places that attract people of all ages, and more livable places. In workshops attendees will learn from communities that have succeeded by pairing strong community leadership and powerful design skills to create smart growth that is healthy and sustainable.

Three tracks with a total of nine workshops will range from "Are Our Communities Killing Us?" to "Cultural Assets-Help or Hindrance" to "Livable Communities-Small Town Successes." The Designing Cool Communities Conference will be held May 12 at Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. The conference is hosted by the American Institute of Architects, Iowa Chapter (AIA Iowa). Go to [www.aiaiowa.org](http://www.aiaiowa.org) to register or call 515-244-7502.

## ISAC's New Nationwide Rep.

Levi Lathen is a program director for Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS). He is the relationship manager for ISAC and responsible for the state of Iowa Deferred Compensation Plan and the city of Milwaukee Deferred Compensation Plan. He is licensed by the National Association of Securities Dealers and holds the following security licenses; Series 6, 26, and 63. He is also a certified retirement counselor. He has 18 years of supervisory and management experience and extensive experience with recruitment, training and retention of qualified employees, budget development and oversight, program development, implementation and evaluation, and public relations. He is a knowledgeable and persuasive educator. He is skilled at the development of marketing and educational materials for plan recipients, and has consistently led his teams to reach or exceed yearly production goals.

Levi also contributes and provides leadership to the community by involving himself in a variety of causes. He has provided volunteer services for the Survive Alive House, city of Milwaukee Fire Department and the Milwaukee Police Association. He was recruited to provide bicycle safety education and training to children. He continues to volunteer his time and services to a number of fund raising events covering a variety of health related issues including; The American Cancer Society, Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Midwest Athletes Against Childhood Cancer, and juvenile diabetes. Levi can be reached at 414-276-2079 or [lathenl@nationwide.com](mailto:lathenl@nationwide.com).

## ISAC District Workshops

Online registration is available on ISAC's website ([www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org)) for the ISAC District Workshops. The registration fee is \$35 with online registration or \$40 at the door. A continental breakfast and lunch are included. Come and hear how the legislative session affected your affiliate! The dates and locations for the 2006 District Workshops:

- June 8 - District IV Workshop – Harrah's, Council Bluffs
- June 9 - District V Workshop – Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa
- June 14 - District VI Workshop – Grand River Center, Dubuque
- June 22 - District II Workshop – Waldorf College, Forest City
- June 23 - District III Workshop – Buena Vista University, Storm Lake
- June 28 - District I Workshop – Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines





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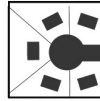
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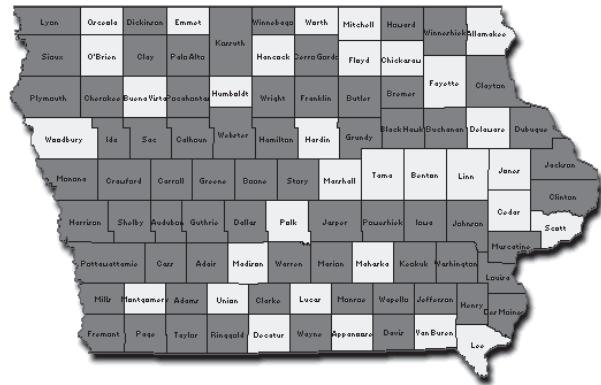
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**IMWCA** was formed in 1981 to offer workers compensation and employers liability coverage to Iowa public entities. Current membership stands at 477 members (65 counties). **ICAP’s** inception was 1986. ICAP provides property and casualty coverages to 518 members (65 counties).

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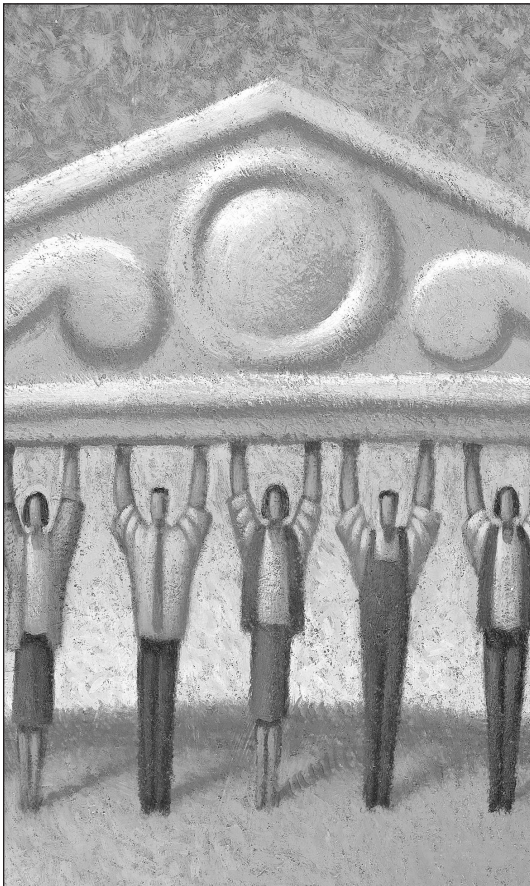
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# calendar

## MAY

- 10-11 GA Retreat (Ames) CANCELED
- 10-12 Treasurers Conference (Council Bluffs)
- 10-12 WIR (Sacramento, CA)
- 11 CCMS Advanced Case Manager  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 18 Engineers Executive Board (ISAC Office)

## JUNE

- 6-7 CCMS Supervisors Training  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 7-8 Performance Measurement Conference  
(Holiday Inn, Mason City)
- 8 District IV Workshop (Harrah's, Council Bluffs)
- 9 District V Workshop  
(Indian Hills Community College, Ottumwa)
- 12-15 County Attorneys Summer Conference  
(Arnolds Park)
- 14 District VI Workshop  
(Grand River Center, Dubuque)
- 14-16 Information Technology Annual Conference  
(Mason City)
- 21-23 CCMS Fundamentals  
(Hilton Garden Inn, Des Moines/Urbandale)
- 22 District II Workshop  
(Waldorf College, Forest City)
- 23 District III Workshop  
(Buena Vista University, Storm Lake)
- 28 District I Workshop  
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)

## JULY

- 12 Engineers Midyear Conference Golf Outing  
(Coldwater Golf Links, Ames)
- 13 Engineers Midyear Conference  
(Gateway Center, Ames)
- 19 ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser  
(Jester Park Golf Course, Granger)
- 20 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)
- 25-28 Auditors Conference  
(Stoney Creek Inn, Johnston)

## AUGUST

- 2-4 Recorders Conference  
(Arrowwood Resort, Okoboji)
- 3-4 Supervisors Executive Board (Burlington)
- 4-8 NACo Annual Conference (Chicago, IL)
- 9-11 CCMS Annual Conference  
(Sheraton, West Des Moines)

## SEPTEMBER

- 8 ISAC Steering Committees  
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 21-22 ISAC Board of Directors (Dubuque Area)
- 21-23 Conservation Directors Conference  
(Davenport)

## OCTOBER

- 6 ISAC Steering Committees (Location TBA)
- 26-27 ISAC Board of Directors (ISAC Office)

Please visit ISAC's online calendar of events at [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org) and click on 'Upcoming Events.' A listing of all the meetings scheduled thus far in 2006, agendas and meeting notices can be found on ISAC's website. A majority of ISAC's meetings offer online registration. If you have any questions about the meetings listed above, please contact Jerri Noboa at (515) 244-7181 or [jnoboia@iowacounties.org](mailto:jnoboia@iowacounties.org).



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