

The Iowa County

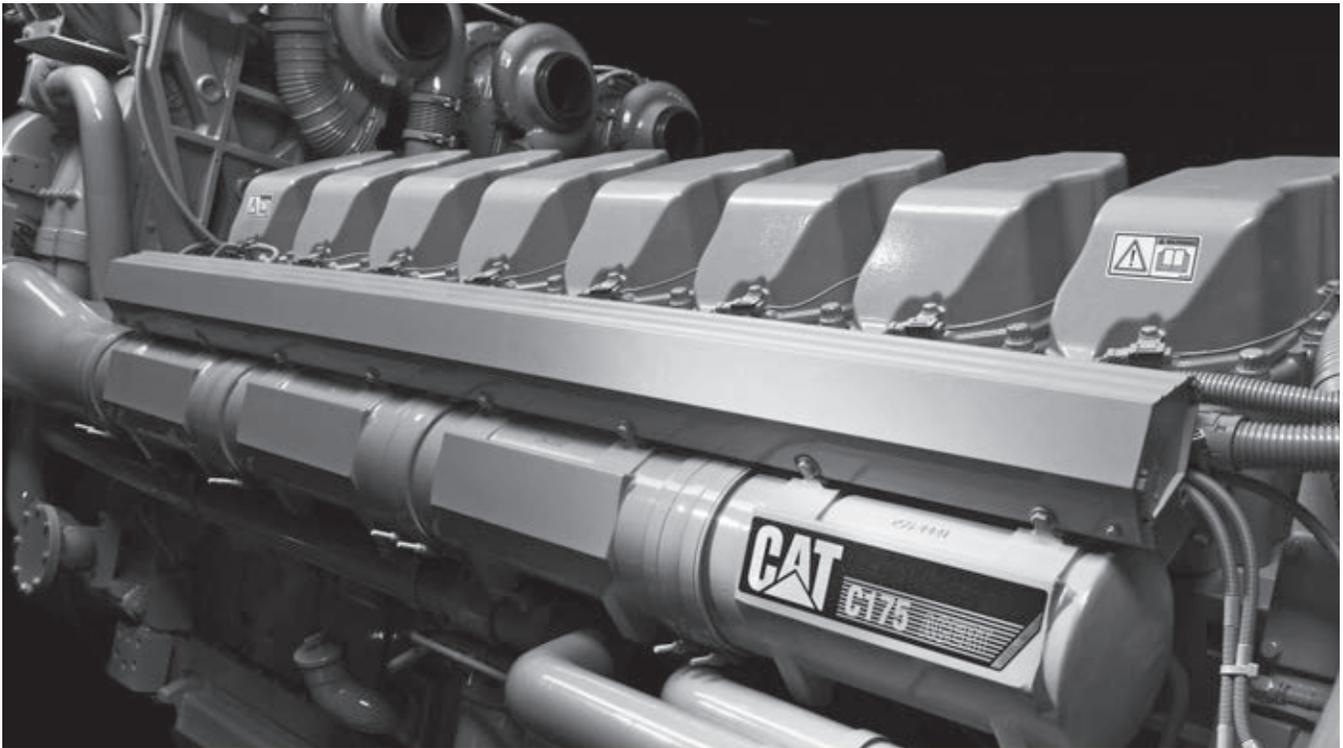
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The Iowa County

November 2015 * Volume 44, Number 11

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** The views and opinions expressed in articles authored by anyone other than ISAC staff are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of ISAC.

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.

feature - scholarship fundraiser

11th Annual ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser a Success!

On Wednesday, September 2, ISAC held its 11th annual scholarship golf fundraiser at the Toad Valley Golf Course in Pleasant Hill. The event, which was hosted by the ISAC Education Foundation Golf Committee, raised around \$21,000 for the ISAC Scholarship Fund! ISAC uses the Scholarship Fund proceeds to award college scholarships to Iowa high school seniors who are children of county officials and employees. ISAC would like to thank the committee members, golfers, sponsors and volunteers for making the event a success. Congratulations to the winners of this year's golf fundraiser, Jay Syverson, Mark De Groot, Rob Peterson and Brad Holtan. A full list of our sponsors and donors is below. Also, please note that the 2016 scholarship application is available on the ISAC website and was included in the September issue of the magazine.

A special thanks goes out to all of our sponsors!

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feature - economic development

Snapshot: A Look at Rural Economic Development in Woodbury County

By: David Gleiser

Woodbury County Economic Development

With a current unemployment rate of 3.4%, coupled with the largest capital investment project in Iowa history, a \$2.1 billion fertilizer expansion by CF Industries, Woodbury County's local economy is booming; but, things seem to just be getting started.

Located in northwest Iowa, Woodbury County is the sixth most populated county in the state with a total population of 102,172. The county seat, Sioux City, is the predominant metro city in the area with 82,109 residents. This leaves the rest of the county's population living in 878 square miles of unincorporated farmland and in 14 incorporated rural cities with populations ranging from roughly 100 to just slightly over 4,000.

With a significant portion of the county's land mass being rural, flat, and developable, and with the majority of the county's large-scale industrial developments happening in its unincorporated area located south of Sioux City, the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors realize the opportunity and need for assistance in helping them foster development and grow their tax base. Although the county is not required to have an economic development department, the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors created its Rural Economic Development Department in 2005 to help facilitate economic development opportunities for its rural communities. Since then the county has steadily seen significant gains.

Focusing solely on rural economic development, the department works closely with rural stakeholders and outside agencies such as the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA), Iowa Area Development Group (IADG), and USDA Rural Development, to access resources and programs to assist with economic and community development projects. The department also works with local, state, and federal legislators to advocate on behalf of businesses and families in rural Woodbury County.

Funding for the Rural Economic Development Department comes from the county's Local Option Sales Tax (LOST), which was originally approved by voter referendum in the late 1980's to pay for secondary roads, county bridges, and economic development. Rather than choosing to be represented by a quasi-governmental economic development organization as many counties in Iowa do, Woodbury County has been very intentional in using its LOST funds to manage economic development interests on their own behalf, and the results have paid dividends. In the last year alone the Rural Economic

Development Department has secured \$100 million in capital investment projects in rural Woodbury County.

Through the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), tax abatements, tax rebates, revolving loan funds, and state incentives, Woodbury County has created a business-friendly environment that is conducive to economic development and business growth in its rural areas; something that many jurisdictions struggle with being able to do. County officials claim that the key to their success is simple: be intentional and work collaboratively.

"For many years the Board of Supervisors was not being intentional with respect to economic development in our rural communities, and because of that those communities suffered," stated Mark Monson, Chairman of the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors. "We now know that we must be laser-focused on making things happen, and that we must make investments in staff and programs in order to be successful."

I attribute Woodbury County's success to our ability to work collaboratively with others. We have great partnerships with all of our stakeholders, locally and otherwise, which is extremely important when it comes to economic development. Rather than working in isolation or in competition with others, our ability to work collaboratively has generated more legitimate opportunities for us to be involved in, and that's a great thing to be able to say.

While Woodbury County's model for rural economic development has proven to be an asset, I'm a huge supporter of networking, sharing best-practices, discussing current trends, and learning from others. I am seeking other counterparts in Iowa that would be interested in the potential of forming a new Economic Development affiliate group through ISAC. County economic developers and county officials in Iowa could stand to gain a lot by banning together to form an affiliate through ISAC. If there's interest, please let Rachel Bennett, rbennett@iowacounties.org, know.

Continues on page 7.

feature - public health

Animal Bites/Rabies and Local Public Health Departments

Interesting tidbit about animal bites: A county's local board of health/public health department is responsible for monitoring animal bites, which includes all domesticated and wild animals.

The most frequently reported animal bite is from domesticated dogs. When responding to a dog bite report the local board of health/public health department refers to Iowa Code Chapter 351 which outlines the state's laws pertaining specifically to dogs and other animals. It is the local board's responsibility to thoroughly investigate the report, especially in the case of an animal suspected of carrying rabies. Rabies is a disease that affects the brain and is caused by a virus. In humans, rabies is always fatal.

Most commonly, rabies is spread through the bite of an infected (rabid) animal. It is also possible to become infected if the saliva of the infected animal gets directly into an open cut or wound, the eyes, mouth, or nose. In 2014, Iowa saw 15 rabies cases in animals; 10 of those were bats. That's slightly higher than the 12 animal cases reported the year before. The most recent rabies case in an Iowan was in 2002, caused by a bat strain. Wild animals such as raccoons, skunks, bats, foxes, and coyotes are much more likely to carry rabies. However, animals that live primarily outside the home such as dogs, cats, cattle, or horses are more likely to infect a person with rabies due to exposure to wild animals. To prevent the spread of rabies, pets are vaccinated for the disease. All domesticated dogs and cats are required to have a rabies vaccine by six months and wear a rabies vaccine collar tag. If there is ever a bite exposure it is important to know the animal's vaccination status for possible treatment options.

The bitten party should consult with a physician. If any animal that has bitten any person is suspected of having rabies, the

By: *Kathy Babcock*

Chickasaw County Public Health,
ISAC Board of Directors



physician or veterinarian and local board of health/public health department may destroy the animal and have the carcass examined in lieu of quarantine. A wild or stray animal that has bitten any person may be destroyed by the veterinarian if necessary with consult of local board of health/public health department. Further, the law states that it shall be the duty of the owner of any dog, cat or other animal which has bitten or attacked a person or any person having knowledge of such bite or attack, to report this act to a local health or law enforcement official.

The law requires the dog or animal be confined for 10 days after a bite incident. The observation and confinement of the animal shall be at an animal shelter, veterinary clinic or by the owner defined by the local board of health requiring the following:

- The owner is able to demonstrate a history of responsibility for confinement;
- The location of the confinement is a facility sufficiently secure to ensure that dog/animal will not be lost or escape from confinement;
- If home confinement is not possible the animal will be taken to a secure facility in which the owner will pay the cost of the confinement;
- There is a current certificate of vaccination for rabies readily available;
- The owner must allow Public Health staff members to assess the animal during confinement period;
- The dog/animal cannot be tied or leashed outside unless attended by owner or caretaker;
- The dog/animal cannot have contacted with any other dog

Continues on page 7.



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feature - public health

Continued from page 6.

- or animal; and
- The dog/animal must be under the control of a person competent to restrain the animal when outside for exercise or relief, animal shall not allowed to leave the owner's or caretaker's property except to receive veterinary care.

Compliance with Iowa Code §351.39, is mandatory. If the owner refuses to cooperate, the dog or animal will be seized. If the owner fails to confine such animal in the manner directed, the animal shall be apprehended and impounded by such board, after ten days the board may humanely destroy the animal and send its remains to an approved lab for testing. If the animal is returned the owner must pay the confinement fees.

The owner has the right to a hearing before the local board of health regarding confinement protocol by submitting a written request. At the hearing the owner needs to provide proof of the current rabies vaccination record for the animal in the investigation and a demonstration of a responsible confinement plan. The local board of health shall have a hearing within in

48 hours, giving the owner a 24 hour notice of the hearing. Expenses accrued in this procedure are the responsibility of the dog/animal owner.

With regard to damage done by dogs and dogs bites, the owner of a dog shall be liable to an injured party for all damages done by the dog, when the dog is caught in the action of worrying, maiming, or killing a domestic animal, or the dog is attacking or attempting to bite a person, except when the party damaged is doing an unlawful act, directly contributing to the injury.

Many Iowa counties have dog/animal bite policies, but enforcement is not always followed or there are incidences of non-compliance. It is important that local law enforcement and the local health board and possibly animal control departments are united and in agreement with domesticated animal bite policies. When these agencies understand and implement policies accordingly it ensures the health and care of the bitten person and also effectively relays to the owner his/her responsibilities.

feature - economic development

Continued from page 5.

As counties across the state of Iowa continue to work on addressing issues related to economic development, such as workforce, infrastructure, and housing; and as Iowa legislators and officials continue to work on legislation, programs, and resources related to economic development, there will always be a tremendous need for someone to assist counties with monitoring these issues, fostering development opportunities, and growing their tax base. This article was humbly submitted in an attempt to provide you with a snap shot of how Woodbury County is conducting rural economic development. It was also written with the hope of measuring the level of interest of ISAC members on the potential of forming a new Economic

Development affiliate. Please be sure to share your thoughts, suggestions, and feedback.

With that being said, how is your county managing economic development? Are you frustrated with the lack of development occurring in your county? Have you had negative experiences with those that are supposed to represent you? Have you ever wondered if there's a better way? Would you be interested in exploring the potential of forming an Economic Development affiliate? I encourage you to consider your options. It worked for Woodbury County; it could work for you.



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Old and New Questions

In this month's article, I'm going to re-visit a couple of topics that we get questions about every year at this time and then discuss a recent question that others may be able to learn from.

First up, the gift law. With the holidays coming up, it's a good time to refresh yourself on these rules. Eric Gookin, our law clerk last year, wrote an article about this topic. It's in the December 2014 issue of our magazine, which is available at www.iowacounties.org under the member resources tab. Eric explained what you need to know and even managed to work some humor into the discussion. As an aside, Eric graduated from Drake Law School in May of this year, is working for the Iowa Secretary of State and recently found out he passed the Iowa Bar Exam. We miss him, but also know he will be successful in his new endeavors.

Next, compensation board questions arise every year around the end of November or beginning of December when the compensation boards come back with their reports. Iowa Code §331.905 creates a seven-member county compensation board. Each member is to be a county resident, and appointments to the board are made as follows: 1) the board of supervisors appoints two members; and 2) the auditor, attorney, recorder, treasurer, and sheriff each appoint one member.

County compensation board members have four-year, staggered terms of office. Terms are effective on July 1 of the year of appointment and vacancies are to be filled for the unexpired term in the same way as the original appointment. Compensation board members cannot be officers or employees of the state or a political subdivision of the state. School board members or city employees, for example, may not be appointed to the county compensation board.

In determining the salaries of all the elected officials but the sheriff, the compensation board is to annually review the compensation paid to comparable officers in other counties of the state, other states, private enterprise and the federal government. The compensation board is directed to consider setting the sheriff's salary so that it is comparable to those of professional law enforcement administrators and command officers of the Iowa Highway Safety Patrol, the Division of Criminal Investigation of the Department of Public Safety, and city police agencies in Iowa.

The compensation board is directed to prepare a compensation schedule for the elected county officers for the succeeding fiscal year and to submit this recommended schedule to the board of supervisors. The Iowa Code requires the county compensation board to submit its recommended compensation schedule for elected county officials at the public hearing on the budget, to be included in the next fiscal year county budget. There is obviously no way for a county to produce a budget that

By: Kristi Harshbarger

ISAC Legal Counsel



includes elected officials' salaries unless they know what those salaries are going to be in advance. So while the compensation schedule should still formally be presented at the budget hearing, in most counties the compensation board recommendation is actually submitted to the supervisors earlier. This way the recommended compensation schedule may be factored into the budget.

Whenever the recommended compensation schedule is actually submitted, the board of supervisors reviews it and determines the final compensation schedule, which shall not exceed the compensation board recommendation. If the board of supervisors wishes to reduce the recommended increases in compensation, the amount of the reduction shall consist of an equal percentage for each elected county officer (with the possible exception of the supervisors, see below). The board of supervisors may only reduce the amount of the salary increase; it may not reduce the entire salary, unless such a reduction is recommended by the compensation board.

In 2009, a law passed that allows the board of supervisors to adopt a decrease in supervisor compensation that is not an equal percentage to that of the other elected officials. "The board of supervisors may adopt a decrease in compensation paid to supervisors irrespective of the county compensation board's recommended compensation schedule or other approved changes in compensation paid to other elected county officers. A decrease in compensation paid to supervisors shall be adopted by the board of supervisors no less than 30 days before the county budget is certified under section 24.17." Iowa Code §331.905(3).

Finally, HIPAA is not a new topic for me to be discussing, but we had a great real-world situation come up I'd like to share. One of our employees found a jump drive (the portable USB drives that you can store files on for moving between computers) in our parking lot. The employee that found it did the right thing by bringing the drive to our Security Officer, Robin Harlow. As you may know, ISAC operates as a HIPAA-covered entity for a couple of our programs – our health insurance plan and CSN. Thus, we didn't want to put the jump drive in one of our computers in case it contained PHI that we should not access (although hopefully PHI would not be stored in this manner). Additionally, we didn't want to risk the jump drive having a virus on it and causing problems with our IT security. Robin solved the issue by taking a photograph of the jump drive and emailing it out to our staff for the owner to identify. It turned out it was a staff member's personal drive – so no PHI, just family photos and likely no viruses. Nonetheless, it was reassuring to see training pay off and watch our staff take the necessary actions.

Innovative Countywide Initiatives in Johnson County

Over the last several months Johnson County has been busy implementing two countywide initiatives to address community needs. The first is a Community ID program that issues identification cards that can be used for a select number of purposes within the county. The Community ID can be used in lieu of or in addition to a photo identification card issued by the state such as a driver's license. The second item is a recently passed ordinance establishing a countywide minimum wage that is higher than the federal and state minimums. The increase will occur in three steps and will reach \$10.10 per hour on January 1, 2017. I recently met with the county attorney, auditor, sheriff, and supervisors to discuss the two initiatives and to get their perspective on the innovative ways they are serving their constituents.

The Community ID program was an idea brought to the supervisors by several Johnson County organizations including the Center for Worker Justice, the Human Rights Commission, and several religious groups. The advocates showed the supervisors that there were many reasons an individual needs photo identification, but there are segments of the population that don't have a government issued identification card or driver's license. The supervisors agreed with the need for a locally issued identification card as they saw the benefit to their student, elderly, and immigrant populations in particular. After the board of supervisors passed a resolution to establish the program, new hardware and software was purchased to issue the ID cards, and county employees were trained on the types of proof of identity that could be accepted and how to issue the Community ID. The county accepts a broader number of items than the DOT for proof of identity, and then mails the card after verifying the identity to ensure the address given is valid. The cost of the card is \$8, and it is good for four years; a price at which the county expects to maintain the program without general fund dollars. The county worked with local businesses to make them aware of the new program and make sure the Community ID would be accepted. The card includes the individual's photo, address, and date of birth. It cannot be used to purchase tobacco or alcohol or enter an age-restricted establishment, but it can be used at banks, libraries, pharmacies, and other places where photo identification is needed to conduct business. The Community ID is of great benefit in particular to international students and immigrants who previously had to carry their passport as proof of identity so they could use a credit card, write a check, or pick up a prescription. Johnson County rolled out the program in July and has already issued more than 600 Community ID cards.

By: Lucas Beenken

ISAC Public Policy Specialist



Raising the minimum wage countywide has been long on the radar of the Johnson County Supervisors, but they say inaction by the legislature caused the final push to adopt an ordinance this summer. The supervisors know that Johnson County has one of the highest costs of living in the state and many working families and individuals in the county are unable to adequately sustain themselves due to wages below the cost of living. This shortfall contributed to significant investments in social services and aid by the county, but the board felt a different approach was necessary with the increased cost of these programs and decreased revenue due to property tax reductions passed by the legislature. After careful analysis by the county attorney and her staff to ensure the action would fall under home rule authority, the board of supervisors adopted the ordinance. The ordinance raises the countywide minimum wage in three steps to \$10.10 by January 1, 2017. Incorporated areas within the county have the ability to opt-out by ordinance of the city council, but otherwise the ordinance is countywide and the rules and exceptions mirror current state and federal law. Any violation of the ordinance is considered a county infraction punishable as provided in Iowa Code §331.307. Officials in Johnson County are confident the increase in the minimum wage will begin to help workers rise from poverty and be less dependent on social services and government aid, while also boosting the local economy with workers having more money to spend at local businesses. Though there have been concerns expressed, the supervisors said the overwhelming majority of calls, emails, and public comment have been favorable and supportive.

The Community ID and minimum wage increase initiatives are examples of a county identifying and addressing the needs of its constituents. As county officials you set priorities for your jurisdiction based on the desires and needs of your citizens and communities. Johnson County has done just that with these two endeavors that have proven to be very popular with the public and beneficial to the county as a whole. If your county is pursuing or has implemented a unique program that may be of interest to your counterparts throughout the state, please share it with us for possible inclusion in a future magazine article.

meetings

Fall School Final Reminders

In preparation for the Fall School on November 18-20, here are some last-minute conference reminders.

Location This conference, at a great, new location in Cedar Rapids, will be one you won't want to miss. All conference events (unless otherwise noted) will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Cedar Rapids Convention Complex, 350 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Parking Guests may self-park in either the Convention Center Parking Garage on 1st Avenue across from the hotel or in the Five Seasons Parkade Garage, located next to the hotel at the corner of 1st Avenue and 5th Street. Both garages attach to the Doubletree by Hilton Cedar Rapids Convention Complex by skywalk on the third level of the garages. The skywalk enters the hotel on the second floor, near the U.S. Cellular Arena. Guests should take the elevator at the end of the Skywalks to the lobby of the hotel and proceed into their event. Self-parking charges are \$0.75 per hour (first hour free) with a daily maximum of \$12.

Guests pull a parking ticket when they arrive at the garage. Upon departure, guests insert this ticket back into the attendant parking machine and the charge is calculated. Guests may pay the parking charge with cash or credit card.

Guests may also valet park their cars from the front drive of the hotel, on 1st Avenue. Valet-parking charges are \$15 for events and \$22 for overnight.

Shuttle Service To ease the hassle and expense of parking on-site, shuttle services will be provided in a loop between the Cedar Rapids Marriott, the Hampton Inn & Suites Cedar Rapids North, and the convention center during these times.

Wednesday, November 18

7:30 am - 9:00 am

5:00 pm - 10:30 pm

Thursday, November 19

7:30 am - 9:00 am

4:30 pm - 11:30 pm

Conference Attire The attire for the conference on Wednesday and Thursday is business casual and casual on Friday. Please note that meeting room temperatures do not feel the same for everyone. It is recommended that you bring a sweater or jacket should the meeting room be too cool for you.

Registration Location ISAC registration/information will be located in Exhibit Hall AB at the convention center. Access to Exhibit Hall AB is located at the Southwest end of the ground

By: Kelsey Sebern

ISAC Meeting/Event
Administrator



level of the Cedar Rapids Convention Complex. Please remember that all conference attendees are required to wear their name badge to all conference events. It will serve as your conference meal and admission ticket.

Hospitality Rooms There will be hospitality rooms taking place at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel and the Cedar Rapids Marriott, on Wednesday evening, November 18 and Thursday evening, November 19. The conference app and website contain all details.

Conference Entertainment ISAC will be holding a Trivia Night fundraiser during the Fall School from 7:30 pm – 10:00 pm on Wednesday, November 18. Come out and help raise money for the children of county officials while having a blast competing with and against your fellow county officials from across the state. Light snacks, beverages, door prizes, prize money, and more will be included in your registration fee. All proceeds will go to the ISAC Education Foundation to fund ISAC scholarships. Contact ISAC to register as an individual or a full table today!

The ever popular dance floor will be alive once again. The ISAC Dance is scheduled for Thursday, November 19, from 8:30 pm – 11:00 pm. Beverages and light snacks will be available during the dance.

Conference App The 2015 ISAC Fall School conference app will be available for download on November 9. We will be hosting a webinar on Tuesday, November 10 from 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm to give you a tutorial on the app so that you can make the most of the app and your conference experience.

Please don't hesitate to contact me at 515.369.7013 or ksebern@iowacounties.org if you have any questions in regards to Fall School of Instruction. Please don't forget to continue to check out <http://www.iowacounties.org/meetings-and-events/fall-school-of-instruction/> for important conference information, updates, agendas and maps. We look forward to seeing everyone in Cedar Rapids!

***Mark your calendars now for ISAC University being held on January 20-21, 2016 at the West Des Moines Marriott. The agenda and event details will be available in the December issue of The Iowa County magazine and at www.iowacounties.org.

Replacing a Computer

Time to replace your computer? You know you want something you can take on the road, but cannot decide between getting a laptop or a tablet. Here are a few things to consider when looking into your next purchase.

Tablets have reached an all-time best, with high-definition displays, thinner bezels, and improved battery life. Apple's iPad is a great example of this, being less than a quarter of an inch thick and weighing under a pound, yet having up to 10 hours of battery life while browsing the web. They are typically more portable and lighter than a laptop and with gestures and voice commands, navigation of the phone's interface is a breeze. Like a smartphone, they turn on quickly and their long battery life, typically 10-12 hours, means they're not always on the charger. Whether it is e-books or digital newspapers, tablets are great for reading, especially for those bus rides to work. Tablets also have a low entry cost, with Amazon's new Kindle Fire starting at \$50, making the item great for a Christmas gift. For lightweight use, whether it is browsing the web, or watching Netflix, you can't beat the features you get for the price on tablets.

Laptops have come a long way since they were first sold in the 1980s. Laptops are lighter than ever, as Apple MacBook Air accelerated the popularity of the Ultrabook. As an example, Dell's Latitude E7450 laptop weighs under four pounds, yet achieves the performance of a traditional desktop computer. Laptops also supply a long battery life, like in the case of Apple's 13" MacBook Air, which features 12 hours of battery life when browsing the web. For heavy computing users, such as those who edit photos or have large files to manage,

By: Dan Rees

ISAC Software Developer



laptops are great option. When it comes to office productivity applications, such as Microsoft Excel, you really benefit from the larger screen, which typically is 14 to 15 inches diagonally. When it comes to heavy typing, whether writing an essay or entering data in spreadsheets, you can't beat the physical keyboard on a laptop. Laptops also feature larger storage, typically 10 times the capacity of a tablet, and with additional connections such as an SD card reader, they work great for managing your photos.

This may sound clear cut, but the laptop and tablet companies blur the lines a bit. As an example, some tablets have physical keyboards that they can connect to, though usually for an extra charge. Also, you can get a two-in-one laptop, which allows you to turn the display so you can write on it and use touch gestures, just like on a tablet. In the end, it really comes down to personal preference; go to the store and try out some of the display models to better help guide you in the right direction.

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23rd Annual CM&MHDS Conference

The 23rd Annual Conference, “Paving the Road to Success” was held September 23 and 24 at the Sheraton in West Des Moines. We had fantastic speakers with a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm for their topics.

We kicked off Wednesday morning with Carol Blessing from Cornell University. Carol has spent the last 15 years on faculty with the Employment and Disability Institute at Cornell University where she leads system impact projects aimed at supporting full inclusion of people with disabilities in typical community life. She spoke on person-centered planning. Person-centered work is based on the belief that all people are born with gifts, capacity, potential and purpose; committed to using resources that creates full access to opportunity for exploring, discovering and exchanging these gifts; and centered around the expectation of contribution through productive, meaningful expressions of citizenship. Beyond this, person-centered work co-creates the means for a person to live a life they and the people who care about them have good reasons to value; shifts social status of people with disabilities and to shift social perception about disability; and leverages and orchestrates available resources and constraints at the personal, organizational and system levels to reliably offer the assistance and support a person requires to show up in community life as a contributing citizen. She spoke about assessing our systems and agencies and gave us a working framework for this assessment and moving forward to provide this to the individuals we work with. We often “think” we are providing person-centered planning, but we all too often miss the mark. Carol’s information was a good reminder as to what we are striving to do and the tools to move ahead with this work.

The afternoon was spent with Dr. Richard Newkirk, an energetic, knowledgeable and motivational speaker. There was not one dull moment in his afternoon session that dealt with neurological impairments that affect cognitive functioning. He had so much information that he could have gone on for several more hours. His closing session was entitled “Determination to Help Compensate for Disabilities.” In this session he had an individual speak who had suffered a traumatic brain injury that included her fight to learn how to walk, talk and live again. He also had parents talk about their life with their daughter who is disabled. These personal stories brought to life the message that he imparted to us.

On Thursday we had sessions on ethics by Bruce Buchanan, and Mandatory Reporter Certification Training by Dianna Nichols Blomme. Both are experts in their field, and are excellent

By: Deb Eckerman Slack
CM&MHDS Manager



speakers on very difficult topics that case managers deal with on a daily basis.

There were also concurrent sessions dealing with emergency preparedness for individuals with disabilities given by Jane Gaye, the Director at the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology at the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa and the Program Manager for the Living Well Iowa Initiative at the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa. This session gave very detailed information on emergency preparedness for the individuals we serve, but also a lot of food for thought for everyone in being prepared for any emergency. Susan Gill, a Family Support Coordinator with ASK Resource Center, spoke on transition planning for children with disabilities from the children’s system to the adult system, and how important this planning is for lifelong success for individuals. Gary Johnson, an Assistive Technology Specialist with the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology, spoke on assistive technologies for home and work applications. Not only did he have examples and equipment to show us the purpose, but also gave a lot of information that not only is invaluable to individuals with disabilities, but things that anyone can use on a day to day basis.

The afternoon was filled by Kerry Magro, an award winning national speaker, best-selling author of books, movie consultant, TV host and disability advocate. Kerry was diagnosed with autism at the age of four, and told the story of how he came from being non-verbal to being a national speaker. Kerry also works full time for Autism Speaks, and is currently working on his doctorate. Kerry talked about the prevalence of Autism and planning and advocating for services for individuals with this diagnosis. Because of the range of abilities on the Autism Spectrum, he used the quote “if you’ve met one person with autism, you’ve met one person with autism.” He gave us a good reminder that all individuals are unique and different, with different abilities and needs, regardless of what diagnosis or “label” we may have been given.

All in all, it was a very informative conference not only for the work that case managers do in their professional life, but also in their personal lives. The information learned was practical, and there were many takeaways that could be used immediately. We hope to bring another conference next year and keep up with the caliber of speakers we were able to bring in this year!

Davis County Courthouse and the Sheriff's Champion Pumpkin

The cover of the November magazine features this year's Iowa State Fair Big Pumpkin that was grown by Davis County Sheriff Dave Davis. The pumpkin weighed in at a whopping 1,235 lbs. In order to give you a little more information to accompany the cover photo, I chatted with Sheriff Davis about pumpkins, and in doing so, found out that he is very passionate and well educated about growing huge pumpkins.

Sheriff Davis began growing pumpkins three years ago. He admits that it's a lot of work, but despite that, it's a very fun hobby that can be shared by the whole family. There's a simple joy in planting a seed and watching it grow. Anyone can do it! Giant pumpkins not only grow in all different colors, shapes and sizes, but they grow quickly. At times of peak growth they can gain an average of 30 lbs a day.

Growing the big pumpkin was a pleasurable experience for Sheriff Davis this year. He reported no major issues – like the year before when close to the fair his pumpkin developed a crack. On day 30 when it was already 518 lbs he said to his wife, "We've got a pumpkin." And it continued to grow quickly and steadily with its largest gain topping 46 lbs in a single day. The weight of the pumpkin is an estimate based on three different tape measurements on different parts of the pumpkin. The sheriff's pumpkin weighed in 2% under its estimate but was still more than heavy enough to take home 1st place.

So, what does it take to grow a pumpkin that is the weight of an average horse? I'll get you started based on what I learned

By: *Rachel Bennett*

ISAC Communications and Marketing Manager



from our brief conversation. I highly suggest chatting with Sheriff Davis yourself. He has a wealth of knowledge.

A good seed is extremely important. The breed is Atlantic Giant Dill Pumpkin, and the seeds must have good genetics. His big pumpkin seed, for example, came from the grower who won the Anamosa pumpkin contest two different times in recent years. If you don't have connections, he recommends www.bigpumpkins.com.

Healthy soil is also crucial. Pumpkins tend to like organic matter, like compost and manure, over commercial fertilizers. High calcium and potassium levels are also very important for a thick walled, bulky fruit. His choices were lime and sugar maple leaves. (I hope I'm not sharing too many secrets.)

As you can imagine, Mother Nature also plays a large role. Not too hot and not too cold, not to dry and not too wet. Many competitive growers occupy existing or build makeshift green houses, use fans, misters, heaters, gauges, etc. These pumpkins are serious business!

Sheriff Davis did mention that you don't need to do all of this. Simply buy some good seeds and with little work you should still be able to get a HUGE pumpkin – maybe just not a State Fair Champ that has walls so thick that it has to be carved with a chainsaw.



ISAC brief

Welcome, Jon

My name is Jonathan Covalt, though most people just call me Jon. I joined the ISAC team as the Network Administrator on August 14. I am excited to be part of this active and growing organization as we look to the future.

I grew up in the Des Moines area, as did my wife, who I met in high school. I attended DMACC in Ankeny, where I received my Associate's Degree, and then joined my then girlfriend (now wife) attending the University of Iowa, where I got my Bachelor's Degree. After graduating and getting married, we moved to California where she attended school for her graduate degree. I worked with a company that provided IT training and certification for its clients; I taught some courses before being hired as their Network Administrator and Operations Manager.

After my wife finished her schooling, we moved back to Iowa to be near family, and to start our own family in a place where we felt they would get a good upbringing. Since moving back, I have primarily worked for Combined Systems Technology, a company that provides technical and networking services to small and medium sized organization, including many city governments around the state. As a result, I am familiar with the benefits and challenges of IT in government, which I am hoping will better allow me to meet the needs of ISAC and its members.

By: Jonathan Covalt

ISAC Network Administrator



As far as family, we now have two little boys, both still under two years old, named Gavin and Drake. On my days off from work I enjoy spending time with my family and working on some home renovations. I am also a self-proclaimed computer nerd. I like playing computer games, building my own PCs, and working with computers, so getting to be in this position where I work with computers and the network is ideal for me.

My very first project here at ISAC, and one that I am greatly looking forward to, is to perform a general upgrade of the network. It is my intent to ensure this process goes as smoothly as possible, and that when it is done everyone will be able to see a positive difference in connectivity and speed of using ISAC's system. I am enthusiastic about future opportunities as well, as I have been told that some of the future projects will most likely entail aiding the counties and other partners in helping streamline more of their own IT services.

I'm certain that I will be meeting many of you during my time here. I sincerely look forward to getting to know you, and assisting you with achieving your own goals.

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ISAC Board Meeting Summary - September 17-18, 2015

ISAC President Melvyn Houser called the meeting to order.

The June 25, 2015 ISAC Board of Directors meeting minutes were approved unanimously. The ICTS Board of Directors minutes from the same day were reviewed for informational purposes.

Highlights from the June 30, 2015 (year-end) and August 31, 2015 financial reports were given by Brad Holtan and approved unanimously. The 2015 Scholarship Golf Fundraiser raised around \$21,000 for the ISAC Education Foundation.

Kelsey Sebern reported that registration numbers and hotel room reservations are very high for the 2015 Fall School. Rachel Bennett gave an update on the Counties Connect America initiative, ISAC Education Foundation Trivia Night, and exhibitors and sponsors. She also reported that ISAC has purchased and has begun the process of building a conference app for the fall school. More information on page 10. Kelsey also gave an update on the convention center hotel progress in downtown Des Moines. She reported that contracts have been signed for 2017-2018 conference hotel room blocks.

The Board convened an executive session to perform a review

of the Executive Director and staff were dismissed.

President Houser reconvened the ISAC Board of Directors meeting on September 18.

Bill Peterson gave an update to the Board on progress made on the 2014 action steps that were adopted during the board retreat in Humboldt County. A full list can be found in the full meeting minutes at www.iowacounties.org.

President Houser led a discussion of the Board's self-evaluation. After ample discussion, the Board came to the conclusion that the need for long range goals and a strategic plan are a critical issue.

The Board and staff split into roundtable discussion groups each tasked with discussing one of the following topics: the future of ISAC and county government; the ISAC legislative process; and technology changes at ISAC and in local government. Reports and discussion followed as a full group.

Prior to adjournment, board members shared issues, concerns, ideas, achievements, etc. with other board members.

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Lee County Motorgrader Testimony

By: Ben Hull P.E.

Assistant Lee County Engineer

Secondary roads employees are exposed to many hazards while performing their duties. Safety training must cover a broad spectrum - alternately focusing on handling hazardous chemicals, safe operation of heavy equipment, and navigating underground utilities - to name a few.

Perhaps the greatest hazard faced by Lee County employees is the necessity of performing their jobs on roadways among the travelling public. The motorists we serve are too often inattentive and likely not alert to the reality they are speeding through our place of work.

A recent incident brings renewed focus to this danger, which is a daily reality for roads employees. Fortunately, it is a story about how much worse things could have been. Cleanliness, good house-keeping and vigilance in wearing a seatbelt may seem too mundane to receive great focus during routine safety meetings. In this instance, it is likely that these behaviors mitigated an incident with a potentially catastrophic outcome.

On a recent afternoon, an employee was finished blading some gravel roads, returning to the shop in his motorgrader. With his blade rotated beneath the machine and travelling down the road in high gear, the operator glanced in his rearview mirror. This quick glance revealed the tractor-trailer bearing down on him and the inevitable collision about to occur.

Despite a half-mile of clear visibility and the beacon on the motorgrader flashing several feet above the ground, skid marks indicated the brakes were applied by the semi driver just 45 feet before impact. Evidence also showed that the two vehicles travelled together for just 12 feet before the rear tires of the motorgrader were lifted off the ground. The vehicles travelled as one into the road ditch, resting with the motorgrader on its side and the tractor-trailer, still upright, lodged into its belly. With the cab of the machine resting on the ground and its door inoperable, the operator resorted to breaking the remaining glass to exit the overturned vehicle.

Examination of the machine revealed the force with which it had been struck. The motorgrader was left with two blown out tires, the cab noticeably compressed downward on one side, and the massive circular gear between the frame and mowboard bent considerably. Four of the six half-inch bolts securing the transmission cover had been shorn off. The door was pushed one inch past the cab - evidence of deformation of the large steel beam frame.

An expensive machine was lost on this day, and Lee County resources had to be deployed in order to clean up the aftermath

of this accident. Lost time away from work was recorded. Insurance is carried for just these costs. What could never be replaced is a co-worker, a skilled employee and a family's loved one.

Through what seems to be good fortune, the employee received only minor injuries. It is striking how in an accident beyond his control, he had such a role in creating his good fortune.

All those who responded to this accident have remarked on two things. One, how critical it was that the employee remained in the cab of the motorgrader- beneath its protective rollover structure. Second, how fortunate he was not to be struck by flying debris inside the cab. If not for the proper seatbelt usage, he certainly would have fared worse.

The employee is known to keep the cab of his machine free of unneeded objects, with heavy items such as a fire extinguisher secured. Imagine what may have happened if that heavy extinguisher had been propelled about the cab.

These often unheralded habits of responsible employees should always be remembered as important, potentially even helping to improve the outcome of events beyond their own control.

Article provided by the Iowa Municipalities Workers' Compensation Association (IMWCA) and original ran in the August 2015 issue of the Informer. Photos courtesy of Lee County.



Lincoln the Lawyer #8: Interesting Stories Part 2

Some of Abraham Lincoln's colleagues recalled that he wasn't an especially learned member of the bar, but they felt that he compensated for what he lacked in legal knowledge with his persuasiveness. He seemed able to plumb the depths of human nature, and had an innate ability to use the insights he gained thereby to his advantage.

Chicago attorney (and early Lincoln biographer) Isaac Arnold said Lincoln "understood, almost intuitively, the jury, witnesses, parties, and judges, and how best to address, convince, and influence them." Judge John Scott agreed. He thought one of Lincoln's most remarkable talents was in examining witnesses: "With him it was a rare gift. It was a power to compel a witness to disclose the whole truth." And as for juries, Scott said Lincoln "had the happy and unusual faculty of making the jury believe that *they* – and not *he* – were trying the case." Attorney Orlando B. Ficklin said Lincoln "had a fashion of pointing at the jury with his long bony forefinger of his right hand. There seemed to be something magnetic always about that finger," which Ficklin felt conveyed the thought, "Don't you see?" A seasoned observer from Bloomington remembered, "By the time the jury was selected, each member of it felt that the great lawyer was his friend and was relying upon him as a juror to see that no injustice was done." The benefits of spending years traveling the circuit are underlined by the recollection of an actual juror, who stated that Lincoln "knew nearly every juror, and when he made his speech he talked to the jurors, one at a time, like an old friend who wanted to reason it out with them and make it as easy as possible for them to find the truth."

Plus, Lincoln clearly had a genius for providing and delivering an apt story. As Judge Scott put it, for most lawyers, using an illustrative story would be a risky ploy, "but it never failed with Mr. Lincoln." He made opponents look ridiculous "by relating in his inimitable way a pertinent story." Lincoln always claimed that he didn't make up the stories; he just had an unusual capacity for retaining them and for recalling the one that would best elucidate a point. One of the most fondly remembered examples came from a case where he was defending a man who had sorely beaten another, but only after being attacked first by the plaintiff. Abe said it reminded him of the time a man was walking down the road with a pitchfork. Suddenly he was attacked by a vicious dog, and in defending himself he stabbed the dog to death. This brought out the dog's angry owner, and the following dispute ensued: "Why did you kill my dog?" "What made him try to bite me?" "Why didn't you go after him with the other end of your pitchfork?" "Why didn't he come after me with his other end?" At which point

By: *Grant Veeder*

Black Hawk County Auditor
and ISAC Historian



in the story Lincoln used his angular arms to pantomime whirling a dog around and thrusting its hindquarters towards the jury. His illustration rather than an explanation of self-defense was all the delighted jury needed to hand down an acquittal.

While Lincoln relished a courtroom battle, in most situations he clearly favored getting clients to settle out of court. He once wrote some notes for a law lecture in which he said, "Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser – in fees, expenses, and waste of time." There is much on the record to show that he practiced what he preached. In one letter to a client he wrote, "I sincerely hope you will settle it. . . . If you settle I will charge nothing for what I have done, and thank you to boot. By settling, you will most likely get your money sooner; and with much less trouble and expense." His commitment to settlements is displayed along with his compassion and his sense of the ludicrous in the story about a Springfield lawyer named Urquhart, an addled eccentric looked upon as a charity case who borrowed small sums from attorneys and others who never expected the loans to be returned. A newcomer in town, one Smith, was unaware of the practice, and went to Lincoln wanting to sue Urquhart for the return of his \$2.50. Lincoln explained the situation, but Smith was adamant. Finally Lincoln said he would only take the case for \$10. Smith agreed and paid the fee. Lincoln took five of the \$10, gave it to Urquhart, and then brought suit. Urquhart confessed judgment and paid the \$2.50, ending up with another \$2.50 of Smith's money.

But Lincoln did relish a battle. As he grew older he was less inclined to "skin" an opponent – he started to become remorseful over the embarrassment he caused his humiliated victims – but he could be wrought up into a righteous fury when he saw the unscrupulous take advantage of the innocent. In one case, a pension agent had withheld a portion of a fee that he owed to a hobbled Revolutionary War widow. Outraged, Lincoln visited the agent to remonstrate but to no avail. He filed suit on behalf of the widow, and made up some notes for his presentation: "No contract. – Not professional services. – Unreasonable charge. – Money retained by Def't [defendant] not given by Pl'ff [plaintiff]. – Revolutionary War. – Describe Valley Forge privations. – Ice – Soldiers bleeding feet. – Pl'ff's husband. – Soldier leaving home for army. – Skin Def't. –

Continues on next page.

Lincoln letters

Continued from previous page.

Close.” His speech to the jury wetted their eyes and fired their indignation. They found for the widow, and charged her costs to the defendant, including her hotel bill and transportation home.

Another story from Judge Scott shows Lincoln’s skill at using humor as a last resort. Lincoln defended a farmer whose hogs damaged a neighbor’s crops. There was little doubt that they had, but a point of Illinois law made an issue of whether the plaintiff’s fence could keep the hogs out. Lincoln didn’t actually say it couldn’t, but he told a story about a hog trying to squeeze through a fence that was so crooked that whenever the hog managed to get through he came out on the same side he went in. “His description of the confused look of the hog after several times going through the fence and still finding itself on the side from where it had started was a humorous specimen of the best story telling,” said Scott. “The effect was to make plaintiff’s case appear ridiculous and while Mr. Lincoln did not attempt to apply the story to the case, the jury seemed to think it had some kind of application to the fence in controversy – otherwise he would not have told it and shortly

returned a verdict for defendant. Few men could have made so much out of so little a story.”

We make much out of little stories about Lincoln, but besides being entertaining, they display his humor and his humanity. These are qualities that serve any leader well, and Lincoln had them in abundance.

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2015 calendar

November 2015

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)

January 2016

20-21 ISAC University
(West Des Moines Marriott)

February 2016

11 Supervisors Statewide Meeting
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)
20-24 NACo Legislative Conference
(Washington, D.C.)

March 2016

9 County Day at the Capitol
(Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines)
10-11 ISAC Spring School of Instruction
(Des Moines Marriott Downtown)

April 2016

14 ISAC HIPAA Program Training
(Courtyard by Marriott - Ankeny)
28 Smart Connection Conference
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)

June 2016

15-14 ICIT Midyear Conference
(West Des Moines Marriott)
21-23 Recorders Summer School
(Honey Creek Resort, Moravia)

July 2016

13-15 ISACA Summer School Conference
(West Des Moines Sheraton)
22-25 NACo Annual Conference
(Long Beach, CA)

November 2016

30-2 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
(Veteran's Memorial Community Choice Credit
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

December 2016

6-8 ICEA Annual Conference
(Scheman Building, Ames)

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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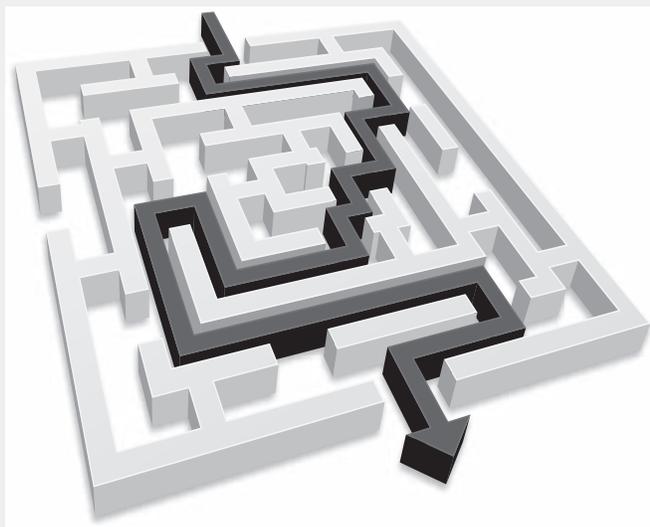
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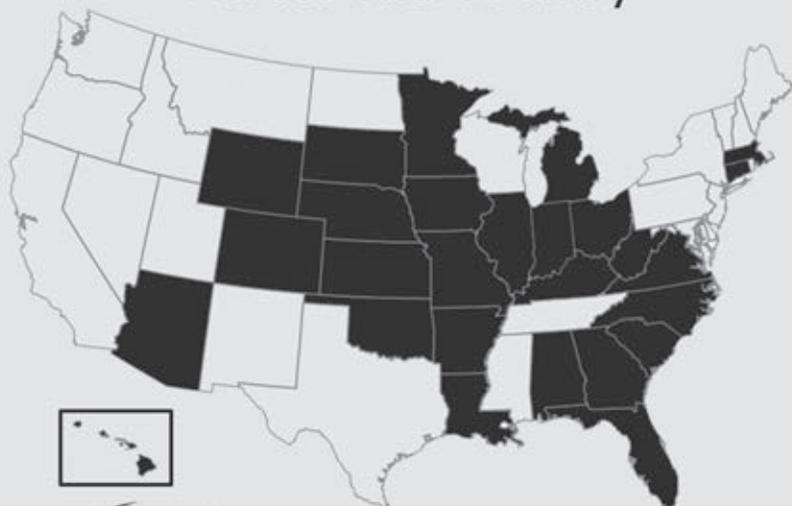
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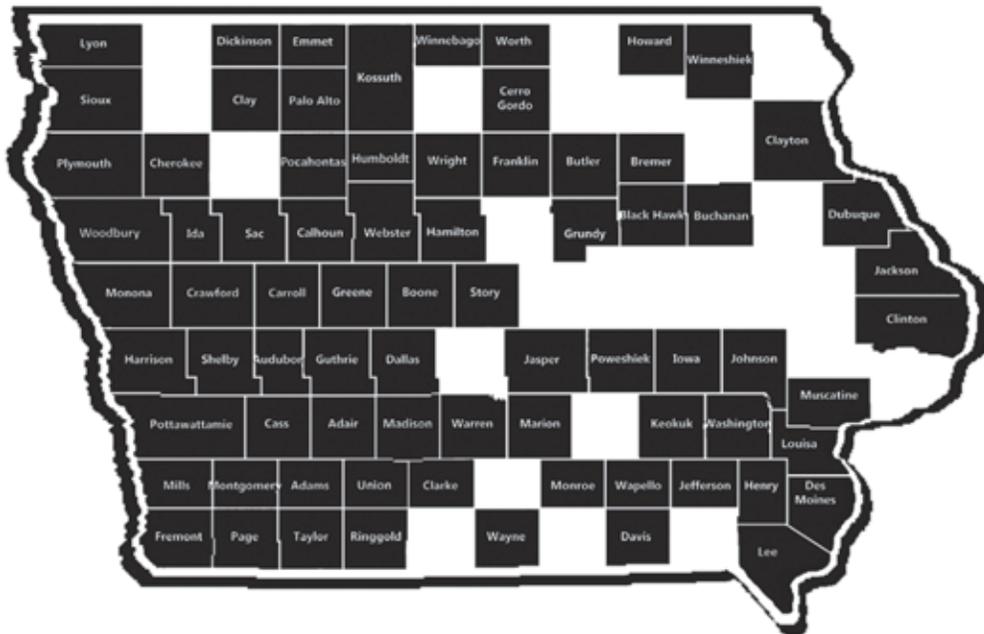
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