

# The Iowa County



December 2018

County Treasurers

Election Recap





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# The Iowa County

December 2018 \* Volume 47, Number 12

The Iowa County: The official magazine of the  
Iowa State Association of Counties  
5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
515.244.7181 FAX 515.244.6397  
www.iowacounties.org  
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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.

## ISAC OFFICERS

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**2ND VICE PRESIDENT** Burlin Matthews - Clay County Supervisor  
**3RD VICE PRESIDENT** Wayne Reisetter - Dallas County Attorney

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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 members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. The Iowa County (ISSN 0892-3795, USPS 0002-150) is published monthly by the Iowa State Association of Counties, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines, IA 50318. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to rbennett@iowacounties.org. Subscriptions: \$25 per year.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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My name is Eric Stierman, and I am the incoming ISAC president and the Dubuque County Treasurer. Everyone's path to the present is different. Mine was a little convoluted, but would not have traded any of the twists and turns that occurred as at each turn I met valued lifelong friends. I have been the Treasurer in Dubuque County for 24 years and enjoy a good working relationship with my fellow elected and appointed department heads in Dubuque. On a professional level, my government career started at the City of Dubuque upon graduating from the University of Northern Iowa with a degree in Financial Management in 1977. I was hired by the City of Dubuque as a payroll clerk where I worked until July 1979 when I was hired by the Dubuque County Auditor Terry Hirsch as a deputy to work in his office. After working in the auditor's office covering meetings and budgets for a few years. An opportunity presented itself when Terry did not run for reelection in 1984, and I decided to run for the position of Dubuque County Auditor. We had a six-way run in a

democratic primary. The result of that primary was that I received the most votes; however, I did not get the necessary percentage of votes 35% and only received 33.5%. As a result, there was a convention convened to resolve that election. I subsequently lost at the convention to Michael McFarland who became the Auditor and my boss. I continued to work in the Auditor's office and in 1986 I transferred to the treasurer's office as a deputy in charge of property taxes. In July of 1989 Tom Breitbach, the Dubuque County Treasurer at that time, retired midterm and asked the Board of Supervisors to appoint me. Other board members were not of the same mind as Tom and appointed Robert Carr who was serving as a State Senator at the time of the appointment. By this time, politics were not something that I wanted to be involved in anymore. I took a job as Auditor with the Archdiocese of Dubuque hoping to go someplace where ability ranked above political connections. After working in politics, religion was a refreshing change. I worked in the finance office of the Archdiocese for the next four years. While there, I audited parishes that were having pastor changes. However, I always had the feeling that if I did not try for the Treasurer's job that I would always wonder what would have happen if I had tried. In 1994 I submitted my name to be put on the ballot for the Dubuque County Treasurer. I ran against Robert Carr in the primary as we were both Democrats, and I defeated him with 60% of the vote. Mr. Carr had served as a State Representative and Senator since 1973. To say that was a highlight of my career would be an understatement. Accomplishing that goal was the result of a lot of work from dedicated people on my election team. My election team was a combination of friends and people that I never even knew before that time who were interested in helping me. I will never forget the evenings and nights door knocking and touching base with as many people as possible. It was a wonderful experience.



**Eric Stierman**

Dubuque County Treasurer

Incoming ISAC President

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# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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A few years after becoming treasurer, I became involved in the executive board of the Iowa State County Treasurer's Association which at that time was also investigating a website for online registrations and tax payments. Kim Reynolds, Iowa Governor, was very instrumental in the creation of the website. Ultimately, we ended up with two websites, Iowa County Treasurer's EGov Alliance (ICTEA) and Iowa Tax and Tags (ITAT). I had the pleasure of working with her in the development of this website. As far as the executive board experience, another wonderful time working together with individual treasurers resolving issues planning for the future of the treasurer's organization. Working within these groups helps a person grow.

I have been able to participate in other boards because I have a fabulous staff in my office. Knowing that allows me to be out of the office as they can handle any situation that may arise. People may state "then they don't need you" I disagree as I will maintain that I have nurtured independence amongst my deputies/supervisors and have the faith in them to handle any situation that may arise. My first allegiance will always be to Dubuque County.

On a personal note, I have been married to my wife, Julie, for 38 years, and we have two daughters, Megan and Molly, and two grandsons. The girls have grown up to be wonderful adults. My wife has remained a wonderful adult. In every situation above, my wife has been part of my team. I would not have been able to accomplish what I have on my own. I have been active in my church, serving on boards, participating in fundraisers, and organizing events. Over the years, I have done a number of different activities including restoring a 1969 TR6 that I purchased while in college and still own, renovating of a couple of houses, and hunting, although more and more it is the draw of nature that interests me. Currently, I have some bee hives and am taking guitar lessons.

As with the staff in my office, having an opportunity to work with Bill Peterson and the ISAC staff is wonderful. They work hard at their purpose of serving the members and affiliates to the best of their ability. Thank you for this opportunity.

State and National politics could learn a lot from County Government putting together and accomplishing goals on a local level.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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## ISCTA and the World Wide Web

It's the last day of the month and you hear on the radio...PROPERTY TAX DUE TODAY!!! You panic...you have meetings all day, you can't get to the courthouse, what do you do? Well have no fear, online payment options are here to save the day!

With a few clicks you can go to a secure website, choose your items to pay, place them in a shopping cart or check them off, enter your credit card, debit card or banking information, and make the payment. Whether paying your property taxes or vehicle renewals, you can pay online and on time from the comfort of home, office, or even on vacation and receive an emailed receipt of payment for your records.

The Iowa State County Treasurer's Association (ISCTA) created a ground-breaking payment website in 2002. The goal of the website was to give information about the services provided by the treasurers' offices and to create a secure payment option for motor vehicle renewals and property taxes. This website is found at [www.iowatreasurers.org](http://www.iowatreasurers.org). Two payment sites for paying motor vehicle renewals and property taxes have evolved over time. One is called ICTEA and the other ITAT. The treasurer of each county decides which website their county will use for collecting property tax and motor vehicle renewal payments online.



ICTEA is the Iowa County Treasurers eGovernment Alliance at [www.iowatreasurers.org](http://www.iowatreasurers.org). It services 88 counties in Iowa. ICTEA's website provider, GovTech Services, Inc., has provided the treasurers and customers a user-

friendly site with a lot of information at your fingertips. When you receive your tax bill or motor vehicle renewal reminder, you can go to the website and set up a scheduled payment right away, and the website provider and treasurer will do the rest. For property taxes, you have a few more options; you can set up a recurring monthly payment, or even pay partial payments! When you pay online, a history of your payment is always there for you to refer to if needed, which is great for your accountant at tax time. And, if you lost your tax bill, you can find a copy on the website too. Encrypted payments are serviced through Heartland.



ITAT is the Iowa Tax And Tags portal at [www.iowatax-andtags.org](http://www.iowatax-andtags.org). Eleven counties utilize this site for collection of payments. ITAT was created in 2006 and is now maintained by Polk County IT and treasurer's office

employees. All transactions are handled using advanced encryption technology. Payment information is not stored, and transactions are encrypted at each endpoint. This ensures that your transaction is secure before, during, and after it is complete. Partial tax payments can be made at any time. The website also shows online payment history and links to each county assessor's website.

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## Rita Schmidt

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# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

The following chart shows the volume of business for online payments using the two payment portals:

ONLINE PAYMENTS SUMMARY				
PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS			MOTOR VEHICLE	
WEBSITE	FY 2018 \$	September 2018	FY 2018 \$	RENEWALS
ICTEA	\$915,933,870.25	\$444,544,923.61	\$47,652,743.00	193,031
ITAT	\$893,297,878.10	\$436,909,163.30	\$54,939,462.35	330,505
TOTALS	\$1,809,231,748.35	\$881,454,086.91	\$102,592,205.35	523,536

Both of these payment portals allow taxpayers to sign up to receive email reminders that taxes are due at the beginning of September and again in March.

Both are also used by mortgage companies to pay property taxes for escrow accounts in a batch process. Smaller portfolio services are available for banks, companies, or individuals paying a list of parcels for ease in maintaining and paying. Simply load, update, select, and pay.

These web-based payment services are maintained by both ICTEA and ITAT through user fees. The fees vary depending on which website and also what type of payment method is used. eCheck payments are the least expensive on both websites – cheaper than a postage stamp – where payments come directly from bank accounts. Credit and debit card payments have higher fees because these payments run through the processes of credit card companies. Batch and Portfolio payments have different fees as well.

Many people and businesses use ISCTA and its two payment portals for information. Click on any county on the Iowa map and in seconds you have the county's information for office hours, location, and the services it provides. There is information for property taxes, motor vehicle titling and registration, driver's license information, and other online resources. Links for various forms are also available on the ISCTA website and/or payment portals and can be downloaded for your convenience.

In Iowa, all county treasurers must conduct an annual tax sale on the third Monday in June to clean up property taxes that have not been paid prior fiscal year end. Some county treasurers use an online tax sale process. Instead of the tax sale being conducted in the courthouse or another physical building, the tax sale is held completely online. Treasurers can also choose to register their tax sale bidders online yet still have a live tax sale. Currently, 47 treasurers are conducting tax sales entirely online.

Life has become so full with work, family, and activities. If you haven't done so already, try using one of the county treasurer payment portals. They are truly great opportunities to make life easier for you -- just a few quick steps on your computer! Don't stand in line – pay online! Go directly to your county's payment portal or go to [www.iowatreasurers.org](http://www.iowatreasurers.org) to find your link.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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## Duties of the Treasurers Office - Driver's Licenses

"Courage is being scared to death and saddling up anyway" quoted by John Wayne of my famous county. I can only assume this is how the original pilot counties felt back in January 1994 as they took on issuance of driver's licenses.

In 1993, there was a proposal in the legislature that would restructure the motor vehicles offices throughout the state. Instead of an office in each county courthouse and Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) offices for driver's license issuance, IDOT proposed 19 regional offices that would handle all motor vehicle business. For many county residents that would cause a major hardship. Luckily, the proposal died quickly, and with that, an even better idea arose thanks to a group of forward thinking treasurers.

In January 1994, the southwest Iowa county treasurers offices in Cass, Mills, Montgomery, Adams, Fremont, and Page counties began a pilot project of issuing driver's licenses. The 18-month pilot was scheduled for review in July 1995. In August 1995, a county treasurer driver's license committee went back to work to determine a plan of action for the upcoming legislative session in hopes of expanding the number of counties offering services. In 2002, 16 more counties began issuing driver's licenses and conducting testing. Over the next several years many more counties jumped on board, with the most recent counties being Carroll and Clay county in 2017.



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Let's go back prior to the county treasurer's offices issuing driver's licenses. Over the years there have been many, many changes. Below are just a few highlighted points of interest:

- 1919 – The 38<sup>th</sup> General Assembly enacted a Chauffeur License Law. The license was issued by the Secretary of State, expired every December 31, and was \$2.00 to purchase. The only requirement to purchase a license was you must be 18 years or older (no testing required). You received a metal badge that was to be worn in a conspicuous place and a certificate.
- 1932 – Added to the Chauffeur license was the operator license. The operator license was \$0.25 to purchase; however, an examination was required unless a person had driven at least one year and appeared within three months after the law became effective. Minimum age was 15 years old and a school license was provided at age 14. Both expired every odd numbered year on December 31.
- 1939 – The Legislature created the Iowa Department of Public Safety and licensing of new drivers was switched to the Iowa Highway Patrol with license renewals being handled by county sheriffs.
- 1948 – Expiration of licenses were changed to the licensee's birthday and a vision test was required upon renewal. County sheriffs no longer issued renewals.
- 1951 – A fee increase was effective July 5, 1951. Operator licenses from \$.50 to \$1.50, instruction permits from free to \$1.50, and chauffeur licenses remained at \$2.00.
- 1957 – Operator licenses went to \$3.00, chauffeur to \$4.00, and instruction permits to \$3.00
- 1964 – Social Security Numbers were used as a driver's license number.
- 1965 – A fee increase took affect – operator licenses went to \$5.00, chauffeur to \$10.00, and instruction permits remained at \$3.00. The issuance went from one year to two years.
- 1966 – The Legislature passed the Driver Education Bill which required a person under the age of 16 years to successfully complete an approved driver education course.
- 1968 – For renewals, persons wanting a license valid for motorcycles had to pass a motorcycle written test. New customers were required to pass both a written and Motorcycle Skill Test.
- 1970 - Operator licenses went to four-year renewals, based on the birthday being even or odd numbered to stagger the switch.
- 1971 – Department policy required successful completion of an approved course in driver education prior to be considered for the issuance a minor school license.



# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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- 1972 – A new license format started. Four-year operator licenses were issued to persons between the ages 21 and 65. Chauffeur had the choice of two or four years (if under 65 years in age).
- 1974 – Speed limit was reduced to 55 mph effective March 1, 1974. Law required revocation for three speeding convictions in a 12-month period.
- 1975 – Responsibility for driver's licensing moved from Department of Public Safety to the Department of Transportation effective July 1, 1975. The Motorcycle Helmet Law went in effect.
- 1976 – The Motorcycle Helmet Law was repealed effective July 1, 1976. The Legislature passed a photo license law for 1977. Only permitted issuance without photo would be for religion objections.
- 1977 – Social Security Numbers were optional on driver's licenses. Four-year Operator licenses now issued between the ages of 18 and 65 vs 21 and 65.
- 1979 – DL stations shifted to Tuesday-Saturday schedule.
- 1980 – Persons under the age of 18 and over 70 years could only obtain a two-year license. Motorcycle instruction permits became available.
- 1984 – Every license or non-operator ID card issued to a person under age 19 shall carry a side profile picture. License fees increased: ID's to \$5.00; operator license to \$7.00 for two years and \$20.00 for six years (four-year Operator and chauffeur were discontinued); chauffeur to \$14.00 for two years; and \$40.00 for six years and instruction permits to \$6.00.
- 1985 – The Child Restraint Law went into effect. Background color on photo licenses was changed from blue to red.
- 1986 – Seat belts and harnesses must be used by drivers and front seat passengers.
- 1987 – Operator licenses went to \$8.00 for two years and \$16.00 for four years
- 1988 – Peripheral vision screening was started June 1, 1988.
- 1989 – Persons between the age of 17 years, 11 months and 108 years on the date of issuance may be issued an operator license valid for four years.

The 1990's saw the enacted law of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act which included a classified license system (A, B, C, D and M), restrictions and endorsements, CDLIS (Commercial Driver's License Information System), and vision reports were only accepted from licensed vision specialists to name a few.

The next decade once again brought further changes. The private act was revised to include all motor vehicle records. An ignition interlock device was required on all registered or operated vehicles under certain situations. Driver's license renewal reminders were discontinued. Assigned DL numbers were automatically issued to a person as their license number unless they asked to use their Social Security Number. Selective Service information became part of the issuance program. Proof of liability insurance for all drive tests is now required. All DOT Driver's License stations went from a six-day week to a five-day week (now closed on Monday's). Federal fingerprint-based security threat assessment was required for an applicant renewing or transferring a hazardous material endorsement.

Something that has come about more recently is the REAL ID license. If you plan to fly commercially or be allowed into a federally mandated building, and do not have a passport, you will be required to have a REAL ID by October 2020. A REAL ID would require a gold star in the top right-hand corner of your license. **Check your license now.....**the following information will save you time and money. REAL ID requirements are as following:

Male – State Issued Birth Certificate or Valid Passport, SSN Card\* and two proofs of your current address.

Female – State Issued Birth Certificate or Valid Passport, SSN Card\*, two proofs of your current address **and** marriage license, divorce decree, etc. (We need to be able to follow a name from birth to current.)

Please contact your local county (or DOT) to get more specific direction on the REAL ID. \* Other options are available for proof of SSN.

Driver's license issuance is a bit like a revolving door as you can tell from this article. Constant changes and updates which are many times hard to keep up with. With the help and support from the Iowa DOT, the county offices are able to offer this service to Iowa residents on a daily basis. What a wonderful privilege we have for just \$4.00 per year (operator license), the best bargain around.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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## Duties of the Treasurers Office - Motor Vehicle

In July 1904 the Secretary of State began a program of registering motor vehicles. Each vehicle was registered one time, and the cost was \$1.00. A metal disk was issued with the inscription "Registered in the Office of the Secretary of State for the State of Iowa under the motor vehicle law No. \_\_\_\_" and normally fastened to a dashboard. Law also stipulated that the number assigned by the Secretary of State must be displayed on the back of such motor vehicle in a manner as to be plainly visible and that the number must be in Arabic numerals of a certain size and that the initial and terminal letters of the state's name must be included as part of the number. It was the owner's responsibility to obtain the plates which at that time were made of leather with metal numerals. By the end of 1904 the number of registered vehicles totaled 155. In 1907 registration fee was increased to \$5.00.

## Jana Corkrean

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The number of registered vehicles exceeded 500,000 during the 1922 registration year and exceeded 1,000,000 for the first time in 1948. In 1939 motor vehicle registration function was transferred to the Department of Public Safety.

Metal plates were first issued in July 1911. Since that time annual registration has been required on all motor vehicles in this state. All license plates since 1911 have been manufactured by the Men's Reformatory/Iowa Prison Industries. Through 1921 all plates were numbered in one series. Since 1922 the plates have included a county identifier as part of the plate number and have been issued through the office of the 99 county treasurers.

Between 1922 and 1929 license plates contained no more than six characters, including the county prefix and sequential number. In 1930 numbering all counties in alphabetical order by use of numeric prefixes came about. The original plate size, which was 6" x 15", became 5 ½" x 12 ½". The size of the numerals was also reduced so that more than six characters could be used. Between 1941 and 1958 all Iowa plates were either black on white or white on black. Plates in 1942 were issued for a three-year period because of World War II and shortage of steel. In 1943 and 1944 a windshield sticker was issued to indicate payment of the registration fee. In 1945 a single plate was issued in conjunction with a windshield sticker with the same number on it.

The only slogan ever to appear on an Iowa Plate was "The Corn State" on the 1953 plate. All states standardized the size of plates in 1956 to 6" by 12".

Today there are several options of plate designs. Rather than having multiple more special plates in 2017, a decal plate became available. Clubs and organizations can design a decal (DOT approved) to be attached to the decal plate. If a person wants to support one organization with a decal for six months and then switch to a different decal (organization) they can.

In my experience in the Madison County Treasurer's Office as an employee for 17 years and as the county treasurer the past four years, changes happen daily. Some changes have been permanent, and others are only here for a few months. Being flexible is a must in any county treasurer's office.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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## Death and Taxes

Benjamin Franklin said there were only two things certain in life: death and taxes. That may be job security for the treasurers in Iowa! The responsibility of Treasurer is to collect all property, mobile home, and special assessment tax for your county. Each month those tax dollars plus credits received from the State of Iowa are apportioned out to the cities, schools, townships, and other taxing authorities within the county. Every June, before year end we all hold an annual tax sale, which is a way to collect any unpaid tax to help balance the budget at year end. The tax sale is another thing that has completely evolved over the years, with 47 of 99 counties conducting its tax sales online this past year. This began in 2013.

## Amy Zybarth

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The Iowa State County Treasurers Association (ISCTA) rolled out the online website payment portal in 2002, and it continues to make enhancements and improvements every year. This makes our office available to the public 24/7, to make payments, research, download property tax credit applications, and other information. Currently, two sites are in use and can be found at [www.iowatreasurers.org](http://www.iowatreasurers.org) and [www.iowataxandtags.org](http://www.iowataxandtags.org). Iowa taxpayers may visit online or in person to make partial or full payments or schedule monthly payments with most offices. Computers and technology have come a long way in a relatively short time. Our records are created and stored electronically which eliminates the need for storage of record books. We are working on having tax statements emailed to property owners that choose, instead of mailing out through the postal system. Treasurers are offering more convenient methods to pay, such as debit and credit cards as well as an E-Check online.

I started with Muscatine County Treasurers office in January 2000 and really had no idea what my job as Deputy Treasurer would entail. The first few weeks were overwhelming, the lady that was training me had been there more than 22 years and was not a fan of change. I will never forget the huge leather bound bank ledger that completely filled her desktop, she would hand write the deposits and withdrawals daily. The inside of the tax office looked more like an architectural firm with slanted top drafting like tables that stored the same large leather bound books that contained handwritten property tax payment records for every parcel within Muscatine County. Those old record books held everything from taxes levied and paid to the monthly apportioning and Annual Tax Sale reports, but they were fading over the years. I felt as though I had stepped back in time.

Needless to say, my trainer quickly announced her retirement after hearing my plans for the future! We uploaded Quick Books with an electronic check register to track the deposits and withdrawals and those Tax Ledger books were retired to the attic with the rest of the record books dating back as far as 1854! One of my first meetings was with a Mortgage Escrow Company that was introducing a new way to import thousands of property tax payments at one time which would eliminate the manual input of each receipt. That was the beginning of streamlining property tax payments and making available so many convenient ways for citizens to pay. Long gone are the days of the 10-key adding machines, typewriters, and check embossers, even though we still have a typewriter in the office!

I am proud of how far we've come and it would not happen without the leadership from ISCTA along with the support of ISAC. Thank you to everyone that has participated in the past and those who will lead us into the future of great new things.

# Feature - Treasurers Affiliate

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## NACCTFO

Some of you may or may not know, I was born and raised on a dairy farm in northern WI. I'm number 14 of 15 children. I currently reside in Atlantic, IA where I'm the Treasurer for Cass County. I took office in January 2003. I first became involved in the National Association of County Collectors, Treasurers and Finance Officers (NACCTFO) in July 2008 in Kansas City. Since then I have been involved and am now President. NACCTFO is an affiliate of NACo and has several benefits to county collectors, treasurers, and finance officers as NACo does for all county officials. If your county is a NACo member, you are automatically a NACCTFO member. However, NACCTFO dues are welcome as it is the main source of funding.

I'm honored to be part of NACCTFO and to be leading the association. In Nashville in July of this year I was sworn in. During the Nashville conference several Iowa treasurers and ISAC members joined me.

I thank you all for your support. Since then, I've been busy traveling from state to state promoting NACCTFO and Iowa (New Mexico, Florida, Idaho, Nevada, and Washington so far), and I have several more on the calendar.

I've formed a NACCTFO/NACo partnership committee in order to help in building a stronger working relationship with NACo. We are looking at possibly combining some NACCTFO/NACo classes that could bring value to the general NACo membership. I've also formed a website committee to look at a redesign site for the NACCTFO website.

Please consider becoming active in your national associations. Below I've listed many reasons why NACCTFO is of great value to county treasurers.

- Promotes professional growth and education, we have a Professional Certification program
- Encourages a high level of customer service and efficiency in county government.
- Provides networking opportunities by sharing ideas and discussing common issues affecting our county offices
- Active in federal legislation and regulations that affect tax collection and treasury management in county government

NACCTFO meets twice a year just prior to NACo conferences. I would encourage all of you to attend a NACCTFO and/or NACo Conference. It's a great experience with lots of educational opportunities. If any of you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

NACo Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.

- NACCTFO - March 1-2, 2019
- NACo - March 2-6, 2019

NACo Annual Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada

- NACCTFO - July 9-11, 2019
- NACo - July 12-15, 2019

I would like to take this time to extend an extra thanks to ISAC staff for all you do. I have worked with most of you at one time or another and have had nothing but great things to say.



**Tracey Marshall**

Cass County Treasurer  
President, NACCTFO  
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# IPERS Update

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Pension plan benefits are funded by contributions from employees and their employers as well as earnings from investments made with the plan's Trust fund. At IPERS, more than 60% of future benefits for retirees are funded with investment earnings.

Since investments are critical to our fund status, the IPERS Investment Board constantly reviews and monitors the status of our asset allocation and investment performance. We also continue to consider alternative ways to manage our investment portfolio that could increase net earnings for the fund.

With regard to investing, it has been said that those investments that are comfortable are rarely profitable. Investment risk and investment return generally go hand in hand. The IPERS investment team constantly strives to manage the investment risk our fund takes. We recognize that the only way to achieve our target return is to focus on decisions that will create value for the fund, and an important part of that focus is risk.

One of the changes we are considering is creating a new internal investment team that would manage some funds that are presently being outsourced to external management. This kind of internal management team has been successfully used by other plans to reduce fees and to gain a better return for the fund. This change would affect the IPERS investment plan but would NOT change any retirement benefit.

Of course, given the current political climate, I do expect any change that is proposed for IPERS investments would result in some controversy. It is predictable that any suggested change will bring a charge of "TAKING IPERS AWAY" from someone.

I regularly tell our members that one way to ensure a plan like ours will fail is to make sure that NO CHANGES are EVER made. In order to ensure our plan survives and provides benefits to our members, it must be updated to account for changes that affect our fund income and changes that occur in our membership.

IPERS is an important retirement benefit for our members. All of us want to make the system reliable for the future, and there is no plan to take benefits away. We must, however, be willing to discuss changes that keep our plan safe and strong without playing politics. That is hard to do when we have a political climate that does not allow discussion.



**Wayne Walter**

Winneshiek County Treasurer  
Chair, IPERS Investment Board  
[wwalter@co.winneshiek.ia.us](mailto:wwalter@co.winneshiek.ia.us)

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# Legislative

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## Election Recap

With the combination of legislators not seeking re-election and incumbents being defeated in last month's General Election, the Iowa Legislature will have many new faces when it convenes in January. There will be nine new members in the Senate and 22 or 23 new members in the House (as of this writing HD 55 is separated by less than 10 votes and could be going to a recount). Despite the turnover, Republicans maintained majorities in both chambers; expanding to a 32-18 advantage in the Senate with a net gain of three seats and holding onto a 54-46 or 53-47 advantage in the House with a net loss of five or six seats. The GOP trifecta was also retained with former Clarke County Treasurer and current Governor Kim Reynolds winning the office for the first time after ascending to the position in 2017 with former Governor Terry Branstad resigning to become U.S. Ambassador to China.



**Lucas Beenken**  
ISAC Public Policy Specialist  
[lbeenken@iowacounties.org](mailto:lbeenken@iowacounties.org)

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On the Senate side, Representative Todd Taylor (D-Linn), Representative Zach Nunn (R-Polk), Zach Whiting (R-Dickinson), Claire Celsi (D-Polk), Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-Wapello), Zach Wahls (D-Johnson), and Chris Cournoyer (R-Scott), a reserve deputy in Scott County, all won election to seats left open by incumbent retirements. Carrie Koelker (R-Dubuque) and former Woodbury County Supervisor Jackie Smith (D-Woodbury) both defeated incumbent Senators. Senator Tony Bisignano (D-Polk), a former Polk County Human Resources Director, Senator Joe Bolcom (D-Johnson), a former Johnson County Supervisor, and Senator Kevin Kinney (D-Johnson), a former Johnson County Sheriff's Deputy were all re-elected.

In the House, Tom Jeneary (R-Plymouth), Ann Meyer (R-Webster), Ray Sorenson (R-Adair), Jon Thorup (R-Marion), Brian Lohse (R-Polk), Jennifer Konfrst (D-Polk), Kenan Judge (D-Dallas), Phil Thompson (R-Greene), Anne Osmundson (R-Clayton), Molly Donahue (D-Linn), Tracy Ehlert (D-Linn), Tom Gerhold (R-Benton), Dustin Hite (R-Mahaska), Holly Brink (R-Mahaska), Jeff Kurtz (D-Lee), Joe Mitchell (R-Henry), and Lindsay James (D-Dubuque) all won election to seats held by incumbents not seeking re-election. Additionally, Majority Leader Chris Hagenow was elected to a Dallas County based open seat after moving from his Polk County based district. Heather Matson (D-Polk), Karin Derry (D-Polk), Kristin Sunde (D-Polk), Dave Williams (D-Black Hawk), and Jeff Shipley (R-Jefferson) all defeated incumbent Representatives. Representative Mary Gaskill, a former Wapello County Auditor, Representative Andy McKean, a former Jones County Supervisor, Representative Scott Ourth, a former Warren County Public Affairs Director, and Representative Todd Prichard, a former prosecutor with the Floyd County Attorney's Office were all re-elected to the House. Representative Michael Bergan, a former Winneshiek County Supervisor, currently holds a less than 10 vote lead in HD 55 as mentioned above.

The large number of retirements and lost re-election bids has also created several House committee chair vacancies including the Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Ethics, Judiciary, Local Government, Public Safety, and State Government committees. The Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee will need a new House co-chair and the Justice System Appropriations Subcommittee will need a new Senate co-chair.

In addition to Governor Reynolds' victory in the gubernatorial race, most of the statewide elected officials also retained their positions as Secretary of State Paul Pate, Attorney General Tom Miller, and State Treasurer Michael Fitzgerald were re-elected and appointed Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig won his first election. Former Story County Auditor and current State Auditor Mary Mosiman was defeated by Democratic challenger Rob Sand in her re-election bid.

Iowa's Congressional delegation flipped from a 3-1 Republican majority to a 3-1 Democratic majority as two incumbent GOP Representatives lost races for re-election. In Iowa's 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District, state Representative Abby Finkenauer defeated second term Congressman Rod Blum, and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District Cindy Axne defeated second term Congressman David Young. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Congressman Dave Loebsack was elected to a seventh term and in the 4<sup>th</sup> District Congressman Steve King was elected to a ninth term. At the federal level, Republicans increased their majority in the U.S. Senate and Democrats regained the majority in the House of Representatives.

The ISAC staff would like to congratulate our members that were re-elected this year and welcome newly elected county officials to the organization. We look forward to working with you. We would also like to thank our county auditors, their staffs, and poll workers for all the hard work that goes into conducting free, fair elections. We appreciate your dedication to the voters of Iowa and our election process.

## **Board Meeting Summary – October 4-5, 2018 - Johnson County Board Retreat**

ISAC President Lonny Pulkrabek called the meeting to order and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. President Pulkrabek swore in new board member Jan Heidemann, Bremer County Community Services.

The meeting minutes from the June 27 ISAC Board of Directors, August 22 ISAC Annual Conference General Session, and September 13 ISAC Litigation Committee were approved as written. The meeting minutes of the January 19, 2018 ICTS Board of Directors were reviewed for informational purposes.

Brad Holtan presented the June 30, 2018 and August 31, 2018 financial reports. He discussed expenses and revenue highlights for ISAC and the programs and funds that it manages. The financial reports were accepted.

Bill Peterson reported that the ISAC Unemployment Fund is eligible to participate in the Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust (IPAIT) and a resolution authorizing participation was approved.

Brad proposed reallocating resources between ICACMP and IPAC due to staffing needs of the programs. The ICACMP Project Manager/Trainer position has been created, and Molly Steffen will now be offering support to IPAC and the ISAC Health Program in the role of Program Support Coordinator IPAC/ICACMP. The new staff position was approved.

Kristi Harshbarger discussed proposed changes to the ISAC Board policies. Many of the changes are minor and reflect current policies. The administrative fee for registration cancellations was changed from \$25 to \$75 to more accurately reflect the cost of a cancellation. The IPAIT resolution that was approved by the Board will be included as Attachment C. The proposed changes were approved as amended.

Kristi reviewed minor changes in wording and to reflect current processes that were made to the ISAC bylaws. The proposed changes were approved.

Kristi reviewed changes to the ISAC Employee Handbook that include current policies, salaried vs exempt employee updates, current staff positions, and other outdated information. The proposed changes were approved.

Bill Peterson reported that ISAC has an appointment to the IPAIT Board of Directors. Craig Anderson, Plymouth County Supervisor, is the current member and has agreed to serve another term. The Board reappointed Craig Anderson to the IPAIT Board.

President Pulkrabek adjourned the ISAC Board of Directors meeting and reconvened following adjournment of the ICTS Board of Directors meeting.



# ISAC Brief

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Wayne Reisetter reported on actions taken by the litigation committee. The Board ratified the actions.

Bill reported that ISAC and the Iowa State Association of County Supervisors (ISACS) have come to an agreement for government relations services for the calendar year 2019. This agreement is the same as in 2018 and no action is required.

Burlin Matthews reported that the ISAC Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) had successful meetings and that the policy creation process for the 2019 legislative session went very smoothly.

Jamie Cashman and Lucas Beenken reviewed the nine LPC recommended objectives, three of which were recommended as top priorities: the backfill, mental health and disability services (MH/DS), and water quality.

Rachel Bennett reviewed the timeline for online voting for the 2019 ISAC Legislative Priorities and presented the online voting tool.

Rachel, Jamie, and Lucas presented and proposed the 2019 ISAC social media campaigns. A video discussing property taxes will be rolled out through the assessors in January and by ISAC in February and March. No additional funds will be spent on this rollout unless there is a lot of related bad PR and/or legislation. If that is the case, more funding will be requested at that time.

A proposal for campaigns related to MH/DS and the backfill was presented. Funding was requested for the combination of the campaigns and the exact allocation of funds will depend on the happenings of the legislature. The Board approved funding as recommended.

Rachel reported that all but one of the county visits for 2018 have been completed. Most of the meetings were very successful and a lot of good discussions occurred. ISAC will continue to explore options for county visits in the future as staff and the Board see a lot of benefit.

President Pulkrabek recessed the ISAC Board meeting on October 4 and reconvened on October 5.

Kelsey Sebern reviewed the highlights of the 2018 ISAC Annual Conference post-event survey. Overall, the results were excellent. The recurring negative comments were reducing the number of annual conferences and moving the date of the Annual Conference.

Kelsey reported that the Marriott notified ISAC that we were 37 guest room short of our contracted minimum and that we owed them \$5,000 in attrition fees. After discussions, they agreed to waive the fees, but it will continue to be a concern in the future. The Board discussed the issue amply, and the importance of affiliate communication was expressed.

Rachel and Kelsey reviewed a document that was compiled during the 2017 ISAC Board Retreat following discussions related to conference. The Board discussed items of importance at length including: affiliate conference timing and participation in ISAC conferences; CEU programs; supervisor participation and advocacy for learning; one-day registrations; corporate opportunities; promotion of joint affiliate sessions; educational tracks; and more.

President Pulkrabek dismissed ISAC staff members and met with Bill prior to adjournment.



# Keep Iowa Beautiful

## Back Yard Beauty

We have all heard the expression “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Well, one of my recent walks took me on a trail past the back yards of about 50 relatively new duplexes. It became clear to me that there are as many definitions for “beauty” as there are people. Each back yard was different and apparently matched the definition of beauty for the owner.

The lesson from this is that beauty is a key ingredient in our lives. It sets the tone for how our communities look and for their economic and cultural vitality. In essence our communities are the face of Iowa. We need to help make sure we are “looking good.”

Some examples of the personal variations that we see in beauty came from that walk and include:

- Decks and patios: In a few of the backyards the decks and patios were tied to the sliding double door entrance. In others the patio was built in another portion of the yard. The decks varied from very minimal to large expansive wooden floored displays. Some were decorated with flowers and plants – others were just plain. A few were covered with an awning, but, most depended on shade from trees. Some of the decks had railings / sidings, but many were without any “edge” treatment.
- Landscaping: The yards ranged from those elaborately decorated with stone and plantings to those with grass only. A few had a handful of trees and shrubs while others had a floral base. In some cases, there were exquisite “miniature” gardens ranging from a few tomato and/or pepper plants to a full-scale garden with a wide range of expected produce.
- Yard Fencing: Most were outlined with wood fences – some were so tight that you couldn’t see through, while others were semi-open, giving you a glimpse of the yard. Many were surrounded by mesh fences with either metal and/or wood posts. Some of the mesh was vinyl covered. In a few yards there wasn’t any fencing.
- Accoutrements: If the above three features don’t give you enough of a choice for a wide mixture of back yards - how they are furnished and lighted will complete the picture. Furniture ranged from none to an overabundance of wicker or plastic wicker chairs, tables, etc. A few had no furniture at all. About half of the units had cookers/BBQ grills of all types and sizes. Lighting of these special places was minimal. Most depended on the outdoor lights under the eve by the sliding doors to do the trick.

This array of options made the walk enjoyable and an adventure. I became anxious in my walk to see what beauty the next duplex would hold. What was special and common to all units is that they were clean, without litter, and well maintained. A special feature that drew my attention.

Remember “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” but taking care of your special places of beauty is both the challenge and the opportunity to show off your definition of beauty. It is also a reflection of that person’s pride by keeping it clean and tidy!

You can help us in our enhancement work with Iowans, public entities and communities! Become a Keep Iowa Beautiful sponsor and help us keep Iowa’s back yard and landscape clean, tidy and attractive. We need your help – join with us.

<https://keepiowabeautiful.com/become-a-sponsor/>



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

**Gerald F. Schnepf**

Executive Director, Keep Iowa  
Beautiful

[gschnepf@keepiowabeautiful.com](mailto:gschnepf@keepiowabeautiful.com)

# 2018/2019 Calendar

## December 2018

- 2-5 ISSDA Winter School  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)
- 12-14 Iowa County Engineers Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

## January 2019

- 16-17 ISAC New County Officers School  
(Sheraton West Des Moines)
- 18 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)
- 31 Statewide Supervisors Meeting  
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)

## February 2019

- 7 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)

## March 2019

- 2-5 NACo Legislative Conference  
(Washington, D.C.)
- 13 County Day at the Capitol  
(Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines)
- 14-15 ISAC Spring Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

## April 2019

- 14-17 ISSDA Civil School  
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)
- 23-24 Iowa Governor's Conference on Public Health  
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)
- 25 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)

## May 2019

- 7-10 Treasurers Conference  
(Ameristar Holiday Inn, Council Bluffs)
- 15-19 NACo WIR Conference  
(Spokane, Washington)

## June 2019

- 5-7 Records Summer School  
(Council Bluffs)
- 18-21 ITAG Conference  
(Sheraton, West Des Moines)
- 26 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)

## July 2019

- 11-15 NACo Annual Conference  
(Las Vegas, Nevada)
- 17-19 Auditors Annual Conference  
(Burlington)

## August 2019

- 21-23 ISAC Annual Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

## September 2019

- 15-18 ISSDA Jail School  
(Holiday Inn Airport, Des Moines)
- 18-20 ISAC Board of Directors Retreat  
(Dubuque County)

## October 2019

- 6-9 Assessors Fall Conference  
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)

## November 2019

- 20-21 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)

## December 2019

- 8-10 ISSDA Winter School  
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)

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](mailto:ksebern@iowacounties.org).

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