



Governor announces capital funding for local transportation projects

On June 23, 2011, Governor Pat Quinn announced a \$100 million capital investment to address local transportation needs and put people to work throughout Illinois. The \$100 million in *Illinois Jobs Now!* funding will be distributed to local officials to repair municipal, township and county infrastructure, and improve public safety.

The announcement is through the six-year, \$31 billion *Illinois Jobs Now!* program and represents the second of five \$100 million annual investments to fund municipal, township and county projects statewide. Projects will be selected and managed locally, with the Illinois Department of Transportation providing oversight. The types of projects that will be performed include street and bridge maintenance, upgraded traffic signals, new storm sewers and bike paths, sidewalk replacement and pothole repairs. A complete list is available at www.dot.il.gov/blr/mftbooklet.pdf.

"We are extremely proud to work with our communities so they can fix their roads and bridges and address other needed projects," Illinois Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig said. "This local component of the Governor's capital program will not only stimulate the economy and create jobs, but improve the quality of life of residents for years to come."

The local component of *Illinois Jobs Now!* is distributed to local governments based on the same formula as the state motor fuel tax. The funding will boost the annual distribution of the motor fuel tax by 17 percent. A breakdown of the distribution of the \$100 million by county, road district and municipality is available through an interactive map at www.dot.il.gov/blr/100mil/map.aspx.

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Preckwinkle, Sims provide municipalities with economic development tool

Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, Finance Chairman John Daley and Cook County Board Commissioner Deborah Sims delivered on a promise to help 13 municipalities with targeted economic development projects through the Cook County No Cash Bid Program.

The basic concept of the program is to assist municipalities and other taxing bodies with the purchase of tax delinquent properties for reuse as private development.

Preckwinkle said the program is part of a larger effort on the part of the County to promote economic development.

"This is good news for Cook County communities and we're excited about this. On a local scale, we are trying to help revive areas with new businesses, housing and other types of development projects. These specific projects area designed to generate new property and sales tax from parcels that had once been a drain on municipal resources," she said.

Sims said the program is an effective way of taking tax delinquent properties and turning them into tax revenue generating properties for the local municipality, school district, the County and other taxing bodies.

"We call it tax reactivation. That means bringing a property that is off the tax rolls back onto the tax rolls. It's good for our communities and it's our hope that these certificates can be put to good use," she said.

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Commissioner Deborah Sims discusses the benefits of the No Cash Bid Program at the press conference in Chicago.

Rural Development offers funding to increase access to biofuels in Illinois

Chances are you're paying more to fill your gas tank than ever before. With the average price of gasoline in Illinois reaching more than \$4.00, people are reconsidering vacation plans, cutting back on trips to the mall, and finding alternative ways to get to work. Something has to be done.

One federal agency has taken a step to expand the choices drivers have when they pull up to the gas pump. USDA Rural Development is providing an incentive to small retail fuel station owners to install flexible fuel pumps, sometimes called "blender pumps."

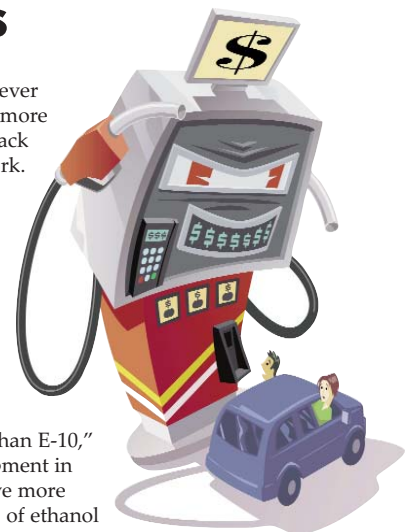
Loans and grants are available to these small businesses through the agency's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). A recently revised definition of renewable energy systems made blender pumps eligible for REAP funding.

"Few fuel stations in Illinois offer a biofuel blend greater than E-10," said Colleen Callahan, state director for USDA Rural Development in Illinois. "Blender pumps make it possible for motorists to have more options, such as E15, E30 and E85. The greater the percentage of ethanol in the fuel, the lower the price."

Earlier this year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the results of E15 testing on vehicles years 2001 and younger. EPA's findings confirm that these vehicles, accounting for about 60 percent of the vehicles on the road today, can safely use E15.

This year USDA is providing funding for up to \$61 million in guaranteed loans and \$42 million in grants through REAP. Funds are available to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses develop renewable energy systems, make energy efficiency improvements and conduct studies to determine the feasibility of renewable energy systems.

REAP offers grants up to 25 percent of a project's eligible costs. Guaranteed loans and a combination guaranteed loan and grant can be as much as 75 percent of total eligible costs incurred after submitting the application.



More information on REAP is available at www.rurdev.usda.gov/Energy.html or by calling Molly Hammond at 217-403-6210 or Mary Warren at 217-403-6218 in Illinois' Rural Development State Office.

Message from the ICA President

by Ruth Anne Tobias, DeKalb County Vice-Chair



Greetings to you all. I hope you are enjoying a lovely summer, now that we've gotten over the horrible end to the spring season. It's time for beginning again – in farming and in politics. Now that the Census 2010 data are available and we all have to redistrict our county board geographies, some of us are considering the size of our boards, and are considering making them smaller. This is the right time for this discussion, indeed really the only time, once every ten years.

Some counties are losing population and may also need to reconsider their districts. Apparently, very large counties – over 800,000 residents – are limited by state law to 18 board members. For the few counties in this position, that generally means fewer board members.

In DeKalb County, discussions were raised about moving from 12 two member districts to 18 single member districts, on the rationale that more compact districts with fewer residents would be more representative and more cost effective. It didn't get approved and we are staying with 24 board members, but it was a good discussion.

The range of board configurations across the state is quite amazing. In the southern part of the state, commission counties have three or five board members. These are the non-township counties that did not change with the 1970 constitution. In neighboring Iowa, all counties have the same three or five supervisors, since they all use the commission form of government. That means those few board members do all the work of running the county! Commissioners perform both the executive and legislative functions of counties.

The variety begins as you move north in Illinois, with some counties having as few as 6 board members and some having as many as 30. It doesn't seem to depend on size of population or whether one board member represents 1,000 or 100,000 people as to whether the board is effective at representing the voice of the people. It depends on having good people run for office and being good in their connections back to their districts.

You can find information about all Illinois counties if you go to www.naco.org, and go to the Info About Counties header and click on 'Find a County', then click on Illinois on the map.

The NACo website is a treasure trove of county information, and now that we are all members you can logon as a member and get to the data, statistics and reports section of the website for more detailed information. Take advantage of your NACo membership!

Keep up with ICA online at www.illinoiscountiesassociation.org

Cook County No Cash Bid Program

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Sims, who serves as Chairman of the Cook County Tax Delinquent Subcommittee of the Finance Committee, said that in other cases, the properties are used by the municipality itself.

In 2010, the Cook County Department of Economic Development worked with a variety of Cook County departments and elected offices to review almost 500 property index numbers (PINs) for the No Cash Bid Program. After determining that qualifying delinquent taxes were present, municipalities submitted request packages for those properties in hopes they would eventually secure the tax deeds in order to redevelop and improve their communities.

Through a collaborative effort with the offices of the Cook County Assessor, Board of Review, Clerk, State's Attorney and Treasurer and Cook County departments of Real Estate and Revenue, the Economic Development staff presented No Cash Bid requests to the Finance Tax Delinquency Subcommittee of the Cook County Board for approval. With the approval of the board, a certificate of purchase is generated which allows the municipality to petition the Circuit Court of Cook County for a tax deed.

Sims said today marks that step in the process and, along with Preckwinkle, presented 99 certificates of purchase to those municipalities that have participated.

Over the history of the No Cash Bid Program, the County has assisted 68 municipalities and three townships. The projects highlighted during this round of the program include the construction of a gas station/convenience store, single family homes, municipal projects, such as a first responder training and operations facility, and storm-water management projects, all of which bring much needed resources and services to Cook County residents.



Kane County approves energy plan

On June 14, the Kane County Board approved an energy plan that recommends a set of actions that could save the county between \$1 billion and \$3.4 billion in avoided energy costs over the next 30 years.

The Kane County 2040 Energy Plan, produced by Chicago-based nonprofit CNT Energy, provides data and analysis on current energy use in the county and then projects various energy use scenarios between today and 2040. The plan is an expanded update that CNT Energy produced for the county in 2005.

Under a "business as usual" energy use scenario, the plan assumes Kane County would take no energy savings measures. The plan then projects three scenarios for reducing energy consumption that assume low, moderate and high levels of energy saving action that could save the county and its residents \$1 billion, \$2 billion, and \$3.4 billion in energy savings.

In addition to analyzing current and future energy use, the plan provides information and resources Kane County and regional partners will need to effectively reduce energy consumption.

"Following through on this plan can further Kane County's role as a leader in energy efficiency and sustainability throughout the region," said Lindy Wordlaw, a senior planner at CNT Energy and a primary author of the current and 2005 energy plan for the county.

Download the plan as a PDF at www.cntenergy.org.

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For more information contact Andrew Goldschmidt at 202/942-4221.



The Maturing of America Communities moving forward for an aging population

Two powerful phenomena have come face-to-face this year, demanding urgent attention. One is demographic: the rapid and dramatic aging of the U.S. population. In 2011, in communities across the country, the leading edge of the Baby Boom generation reached age 65. By 2030, more than 70 million Americans—twice the number in 2000—will be 65 and older. At that time, older adults will comprise nearly one in five Americans.

The other phenomenon is the Great Recession, which began officially in December 2007. In the U.S., despite initial signs of recovery, it continues to heavily influence policy, programs and planning. States continue to cut budgets, and municipalities are also financially distressed. As a result of the recession, spending for aging supports and services is shrinking—precisely at the time it is needed most.

With the convergence of these two forces, critical concerns come to the fore. How prepared are communities across America to tap the vast potential of the oncoming wave of older adults? How are policies in all dimensions of community life being adapted to support these individuals as they age in place, particularly during the most advanced years of their lives? What initiatives are underway to address the “maturing” of America?

To answer these questions, with support from MetLife Foundation, and in partnership with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), American Planning Association, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, and Partners for Livable Communities, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) led a nationwide survey: “The Maturing of America—Communities Moving Forward for an Aging Population.” The survey, administered in 2010 by ICMA, was intended to assess progress against benchmarks established in the first “Maturing of America” survey conducted in 2005. In both cases, the findings were eye-opening.

Key Finding: n4a’s report on the first survey, issued in 2006, found that, while many communities had some programs to address the needs of older adults, few had undertaken a comprehensive assessment to create a “livable community” for all ages, including the diverse population of those age 65+. The new survey reveals only limited progress in advancing this goal. Indeed, as a result of the severe economic challenges associated with the recession, most communities have been able only to “hold the line” — maintaining policies, programs and services already established. Thus, they have not been able to move forward to the degree needed to address the nation’s current “age wave.” The survey captures encouraging steps forward in some areas, and retrenchment in others. But overall, it appears that many communities are struggling to maintain the status quo.

Specific Notable Findings

Advances: Notwithstanding the challenges faced by local governments, there have been notable areas of advancement by communities since the 2005 survey. Communities report the following:

Increased support for older adults

- A dramatic increase in the availability of specialized training for public safety and emergency staff in dealing with older adults, from 24% in 2005 to 59% in 2010. Such training is indispensable for those helping older persons during natural and manmade disasters.
- Significant growth in the provision of in-home support services for older adults, from 71% in 2005 to 77% in 2010. This change responds to older individuals’ desire to remain in their homes and communities as long as possible, rather than being forced into institutional care.

Greater support for advanced education and retooling for the workforce

- Significant increase in programs that support older adults’ participation in local educational opportunities (e.g. discounts, transportation), from 45% in 2005 to 52% in 2010. This finding likely reflects older adults’ desire for educational enrichment as well as to refresh workforce skills.

Expanded opportunities for older adult contribution to the community

- Very significant rise in volunteer opportunities for older adults (e.g. arts, culture, human services), from 66% in 2005 to 80% in 2010. Communities

We call upon policymakers at all levels of government, but particularly at the local level, to move forward energetically – even if incrementally – to address the challenges at hand. We urge local community leaders – working with Area Agencies on Aging, universities, businesses, non-profit organizations, other public sector entities and older adults themselves – to become champions and change agents who can break through the current stalemate. We hope that this report, which spotlights the ways some communities are doing just that, will inspire fresh momentum.



are clearly acknowledging the invaluable resource represented by older volunteers, who can contribute in every dimension of civic and community life.

Challenges: Local governments identified three top challenges their communities face in meeting the needs of or planning for older adults. While responses varied, the challenges most often cited were financial/funding shortages, transportation and housing. This lineup contrasts with the top three identified challenges in 2005, which were, in the following order, housing, financial issues and various health issues.

This articulation of current challenges is backed up by how local governments assess their economic condition:

- In 2010, only 42% of jurisdictions indicated they were experiencing some growth – a drop of 25 percentage points from the 67% reporting some growth in 2005.
- In 2010, 30% of local governments experienced some decline; a nearly three-fold increase from the 11% that reported that they experienced some decline in 2005.

To learn more contact Maeghan Gilmore, NACo Community Services Program Director at 202-942-4261. To download the report visit www.n4a.org.

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Jesse White • Secretary of State

Will County hosts Public Information Officers Network Summit

Area communications professionals learn about role in terrorist attack

About 120 crisis communicators from agencies across Northern Illinois learned about the history linked to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and how best to keep the public informed during an emergency.

Communications representatives from schools, hospitals, police and fire departments, townships, municipalities and counties heard nationally recognized terrorism authorities Dr. Anthony A. Lukin and Rob Gandy during the 8th annual Will County Public Information Officers Network Summit at the Local 150 Operating Engineers facility in Wilmington on June 20.

Both men have had long careers in law enforcement, crisis communications and work for the California Specialized Training Institute. Lukin also is president of Lukin and Associates, Inc., an international consulting and training consortium specializing in criminal justice and security matters.

Their presentations focused on the escalating threat of terrorism and how Public Information Officers can manage the aftermath of terrorist events. Participants also spent part of day working in groups discussing the response to fictional disasters.



Dr. Anthony A. Lukin (standing, left) sets up a fictional disaster to which participants must figure out how to respond during a breakout session at the annual Will County Public Information Officer summit held June 20, 2011.

"The Will County PIO Network was formed nine years ago with a goal of effectively managing information for the public during an emergency," said Harold Damron, Director of the Will County Emergency Management Agency. "This includes working with the media to get accurate information out to those who need it. As part of that mission, we began holding these summits.

"The benefit is twofold in case of a wide-scale emergency. Representatives from all of these agencies have had training on managing a crisis, plus they have had some interaction with each other."



Rob Gandy (from left), Will County Executive Larry Walsh and Dr. Anthony A. Lukin share some thoughts prior to the Will County Public Information Officer Summit, *The Escalating Threat of Terrorism and the PIO*. Gandy and Lukin, experts about terrorism and crisis communication, were the featured speakers.

In addition, Damron pointed out, the lessons on communications are useful for every day, as well.

Will County Executive Larry Walsh, who welcomed the group to the day-long event, said the PIO Network makes Will County distinctive in the area of crisis communications. "Dr. Lukin and Mr. Gandy expressed admiration for the Network and the resources it provides area PIOs. In fact, Mr. Gandy said he'd like to share a copy of the guide given each of the attendees with those he works with in California. He was impressed with the information it contained."

The event was hosted by the Will County PIO Network and funded by the Will County Local Emergency Planning Committee and the Will County Health Department. It was also made possible through the courtesy of Local 150.

Attending were representatives from the following schools: Crete-Monee, Lewis University, Plainfield, Troy 30-C, Valley View, Wilco Area Career Center and Wilmington. Participating hospitals were: Ingalls Memorial Hospital, Harvey; Provena St. Joseph Medical Center, Joliet; Provena St. Mary's Hospital, Kankakee; and Riverdale Medical Center, Kankakee.

Municipalities involved (including police and fire departments) were Beecher, Braidwood, Channahon, Crest Hill, Diamond, Elwood, Frankfort, Godley, Joliet, Lemont, Manhattan, Naperville, New Lenox, Oak Lawn, Orland Park, Park Forest, Peotone, Romeoville, Shorewood, Tinley Park, Wilmington and Woodridge.

Officials from Lockport, Troy, Washington and Wheatland Townships participated, as well as from Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, McHenry and Will Counties, and the Illinois State Police.

Ford County sheriff's resident and jail listed as one of Illinois' most endangered historic places



Located next to the Ford County Courthouse, this 1871 Italianate-style, brick house served as a sheriff's residence, with an attached stone jail, for 120 years. It was sold in 1993 to private buyers who planned to create a bed and breakfast, but they were unable to carry out the project and the property has sat vacant for several years. The County repurchased the structure in 2007 with the intent of using it to relocate probation offices from the courthouse. However, county officials have since decided against this approach and have suggested possible demolition. Local advocates have urged the County to consider other options, such as leasing the property for office space or for a community use.

The former Ford County Sheriff's Residence and Jail is thought to be the earliest building, serving this dual purpose, of its kind in the state. Built in 1871, a wrap-around porch was added to the house portion after 1900. The jail, built of Indiana limestone, and also built in 1871, continued to function until 1993 when a new jail was built. The last county sheriff resided in the house until 1989, when it was converted into office space.

After Ford County vacated the facility in 1993, the community was supportive of the bed and breakfast plans, which would get the property on the tax-rolls. However, the incomplete project left the building vacant and unheated. After the County repurchased the building, a new roof was added. If demolished, the County would likely use the land for development of a new county-related building.

Source: Landmarks Illinois



Ribbon cutting ceremony: Funding flows to local governments through the CDI

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in March at the new home of the Fayette County Health Department at 419 W. Edwards St., in Vandalia. The former home of Leo Brown Lumber now allows all of the functions of the health department to be housed in one building, which was vital for the integration of services. The previous facility, an area historic home that had been altered numerous times, offered cramped quarters and a serious challenge for client services.

Rhonda Andrews, Administrator for the Health Department, stated that the previous facility was incapable of meeting critical ADA requirements without taking cost-prohibitive measures. She had reviewed written notification from the Illinois Attorney General's office mandating the changes, stating: "Basically, the letter said, 'You have had these issues with the building, you have to come up to ADA standards, or else. And the or else could have meant closing the health department.'"

The economic development tools used to make this relocation possible were the Community Development Initiative or CDI Loan, provided by the South Central Regional Planning & Development Commission (SCIRP&DC), along with a direct loan provided by the Fayette County Board

The CDI loan is made available for local governments and special taxing districts, such as libraries, park districts etc., and for nonprofit organizations within the SCIRP&DC region. It is used for projects that directly lead to private investment and jobs or resolve a serious threat to the health and safety of local residents.

Madison County Board meetings now online

Madison County residents are now able to listen in on County Board meetings from any computer. Madison County Clerk Mark Von Nida announced that audio recordings of County Board meetings and committee meetings will be available to the public through the county website at www.co.madison.il or www.madisonvotes.com.

"This is an example of using technology to promote the spirit of the Open Meetings Act." According to Von Nida the idea is that government conducted in the open leads to good government. "This will allow anyone to hear their county board member in action."

Von Nida explained that video has been discussed but the expense of hiring a camera operator, the unusual layout of the three tiered County Board room and storage requirements all made it too difficult.

DuPage County unveils new website creating greater transparency



Dan Cronin
DuPage County Chairman

DuPage County's mission to provide a transparent form of government has been enhanced with the launch of a new website.

DuPage County Board Chairman Dan Cronin said the website promotes the county's mission to provide an open and transparent form of government.

"DuPage County has an open door policy and the new website allows residents to find information about services and county government from the comfort of their home. It's a great tool to find information on senior services or an issue to be voted on during the next county board meeting," said Cronin. "The website is another accountability tool the public can use to ensure we are serving their needs and offering services in an efficient manner."

In 2010, DuPage County's website earned a Sunny Award from the Editors of Sunshine Review for exceeding transparency standards. Brien Sheahan, Technology Committee chairman, said

the website is most often used by residents seeking information about courts, property taxes and services provided by DuPage County.

"The website gets a lot of traffic and we realized that it was not very user friendly. So we revamped it and made the pages commonly used by residents more prominent. It's a big improvement and I hope residents will be able to easily navigate through the site and find the information they are seeking," said Sheahan. The website includes a new "I want to" pull-down intended to easily help residents find pertinent information. Like the existing website, it also includes pages for the county board and other elected officials, along with county services, job postings and a calendar of meetings and events.

Although the new website improvements are available immediately, the county is also tackling new initiatives that will include an interface that allows smart phone users easier access to the website. Another new project in the near future will include a page listing all of the county agencies that allows residents to nominate themselves to serve on an appointed commission. DuPage County can be found online at dupageco.org.

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Madison County Treasurer thanks "first" taxpayers of 2011

On the morning of Tuesday, May 24, the employees of the Madison County Treasurer's Office began their day speculating when the first taxpayer of 2011 would arrive. The day before, they had mailed over 130,000 tax bills. They were "betting" each other when the "early bird" would arrive. Their speculation ended at 12:20 p.m. when Walter and Lorraine Wieseman of Bethalto arrived, and paid their entire property tax bill.

Kurt Prenzler, Treasurer, greeted them at the front desk and informed Mr. and Mrs. Wieseman that they were the "first" to pay their property taxes in 2011, out of approx. 270,000 Madison County residents.

"It is our custom to pay our real estate taxes promptly," Walter said. "The mailman delivered our tax bill at about 11:00 a.m., and we didn't waste any time bringing it into the Treasurer's office. Prenzler asked if Wieseman had exceeded the speed limit, but Wieseman denied it.

Walter and Lorraine are life-long residents of Madison County; Walter growing up near Prairietown, and Lorraine from Worden. Prenzler commented, "Psychologically, people are very careful with their property tax bills. People who pay their electric bill by mail often prefer paying their property tax bill in person at the Treasurer's office, and having their tax bill stamped PAID."

Prenzler explained that taxpayers have a number of options to pay their tax bills. First, they don't need to pay the entire bill at once, but may pay in four equal installments. This year the due dates are July 6, September 6, October 6 and December 6.

In Madison County, the Treasurer's office offers taxpayers a variety of payment methods. Taxpayers may pay at their local bank, credit union or savings and loan. Taxpayers may also pay by mail, using the address stickers provided with the tax bill. For taxpayers who like to "budget", the Treasurer's office offers a monthly payment program. Finally, taxpayers may also pay by credit card.

"We also have an AUTOPAY option that doesn't require the taxpayer to drive his or her AUTO," joked Prenzler. "The AUTOPAY option allows the taxpayer to schedule an ACH payment directly from a checking or savings account on the due dates."

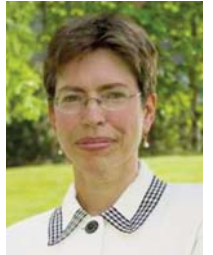
Prenzler also mentioned that this year's tax bill cost \$30,000 less than the previous year. "We eliminated the four envelopes, and replaced them with address stickers," said Prenzler. "That saved the taxpayers \$15,000, and reducing the weight of the envelope saved another \$15,000 in postage, for a total savings of \$30,000."

Lt. Gov. Simon seeking input from Wabash and Ohio Rivers area residents

As chair of the Wabash and Ohio Rivers Coordinating Council, Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon is seeking input from residents on water related issues. The brief survey will be used to help develop a Wabash River Watershed Plan.

"The Wabash and Ohio Rivers, and their tributaries, are of vital importance to the ecosystem and economy of Illinois," Simon said. "I look forward to receiving feedback from the community so the Council can work to outline goals and initiatives to protect our rivers and waterways."

The Council works with residents and the community to coordinate initiatives, projects and funding to increase awareness and promote the ecological health of the Wabash and Ohio Rivers. Residents of Champaign, Clark, Clay, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Edgar, Edwards, Effingham, Ford, Hamilton, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland, Vermilion, Wabash, Wayne and White counties are eligible to participate.



Officials break ground on DeKalb County courthouse addition

Construction began April 4, on the new addition of the DeKalb County Courthouse. According to Maureen Josh, circuit clerk of DeKalb County (standing right), the expansion of the courthouse is not due to overcrowding.

"We are building the new addition to the courthouse to meet all of the new requirements of the past 30 years and to hopefully meet as many of the future requirements as are foreseeable," Josh said.

Updates to the courthouse will include new security cameras, a secure entrance for prisoners, a secure holding area for prisoners and an extra courtroom for certain specialty courts. The courthouse addition is set to be completed in June 2012.

Lake County continuing with plans to build new nursing facility

The Lake County Board approved issuing an invitation for private firms to submit bids for the management of Winchester House – a Lake County government owned and operated skilled nursing facility located in Libertyville. The action allows Lake County to gather more information, which will be presented to the board for future consideration. The focus is to preserve Winchester House's mission of providing long-term nursing care to residents.

Lake County is continuing with its plans to build a new Winchester House to replace the existing facility, which is aging and in disrepair. The board's vote follows a unanimous recommendation from the Winchester House Advisory Board, which is made up of healthcare and financial experts, and two county board members. The advisory board recommended this direction based on financial analysis that showed future expenses outpacing revenues, in the new facility. The flat revenue is primarily due to cuts in Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements at the federal and state levels. In its analysis, the advisory board evaluated wages and benefit costs in the local nursing home market. The findings showed that Winchester House wages and benefits are significantly more, when compared to the market median rate. Lake County would maintain oversight of Winchester House, if the board were to approve contracting with a private operator in the future.



David Stolman
Lake County Chairman

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McHenry County recognizes long-term employees

The McHenry County Board recognized Barry and Rita Valentine (pictured with Chairman Ken Koehler, left) for their years of dedication to McHenry County and its Residents. The Valentines have a combined 58 years of public service between them and retired on May 6.

Barry Valentine started his employment with McHenry County on March 27, 1979 and was appointed Director of the McHenry County Emergency Management Agency on May 18, 1994. Mr. Valentine was in the first class to receive the Certified Emergency Management (CEM) designation from the National Emergency Management Institute, as well as serving as the Vice-Chairman of the County's E-9-1-1 Board. In addition to serving four years with Emergency Management, Rita Valentine's employment with the McHenry County Department of Health spans 26 years. Since 1985, Rita served as Office Assistant II in the Department's Environmental Health Division.

Williamson County seeks grant

Williamson County Board of Commissioners approved acceptance of a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency through the Illinois Terrorism Task Force. The grant will pay for two wireless electronic devices known as repeaters, which provide for stronger signals on communication devices. All non-federal public safety licensees using 25kHz radio systems must migrate to narrowband 12.5 kHz channels by December 31, 2012. Both units will cost \$8,600, with the county paying 50% of the amount.

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What's Twitter?

Twitter is an information network made up of 140-character messages called Tweets. Spaces and punctuation count towards this limit, so Twitter has its own kind of shorthand that you'll pick up.

How is it useful?

Twitter contains information you will find valuable. Messages from users you choose to follow will show up on your homepage for you to read. Use it to find out what's going on in your community, state government, federal government and other organizations of interest to you. You can send out messages to communicate with your residents, the local media, local businesses, county services and more. You control the message! Make sure you are the one telling your constituents what you're doing in your county and Washington and how it will benefit everyone.

How to get started

- Choose a handle (nickname) that will be easily identifiable. Some variation on your name would be best. Your followers will see this every time you send a message.
- Tweet important information relevant to your followers/county residents. Include links back to official pages for full information.
 - County Commission meeting tonight 6-9 pm. 1400 Courthouse Road, 3rd Flr.
 - Board of Supervisors approves 2012 budget. Visit www.county.state.gov for info
- Mention another user by using their name. They will see that you mentioned them, and chances are they will look you up. If you have similar interests, they might follow you back.
- Retweet (RT) messages from others that you like or think are important. The RT prefix indicates you are giving credit to the original poster.
- Use hashtags. Tags make it easy to follow an event in real time. The tag will allow anyone who clicks on it to find everyone else using the same tag. Any word can be a tag, just use the pound sign in front of it. The tag #NACoAnn will allow anyone who clicks on it to find everyone else using the same tag.
- Follow associations of interest. Chances are your county CVB, library, parks department is already on Twitter. Of course, follow your state association of counties and NACo!

If you have questions about social media and would like to learn more about getting started contact Emily Landsman (202-942-4242, elandsman@naco.org) or Matthew Fellows (202-942-4205, mfellows@naco.org).

DeKalb County inducts local veterans into the Veterans Honor Roll

On March 16, DeKalb County inducted its first members into the Veterans Honor Roll. A partnership effort between County Clerk John Acardo and the DeKalb County Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) will induct and recognize up to five local Veterans from DeKalb County at each County Board meeting.

Inductees will receive a certificate of recognition, to be awarded at the County Board meeting; have their name, title and rank, as well as dates served in the Armed Forces recorded in the County Board minutes, and in a leather bound book to be stored with the County's official records; their name engraved on a plaque to be housed outside of the offices of the VAC; and be honored annually at a community reception.

"Helping honor those members of our communities that have fought to protect our freedom is an important component of our mission at the County Veterans Assistance Commission," Superintendent Herb Holderman stated.

All Veterans are eligible for participation and may submit their name either online or by mail. The form is located on the DeKalb County Clerk and Recorder's website at www.dekalbclerk.com. Forms may also be requested by calling the office at 815.895.7149.

"This is a special way to honor our local heroes," said John Acardo, Clerk for DeKalb County. "I encourage all families, friends, or service members themselves, to complete the form and become inducted into our County's honor roll."





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Nationwide makes their quarterly deferred compensation plan review reports available online

Taking Gauging Success online enhances plan sponsor reporting

Nationwide Retirement Solutions' plan sponsors have ongoing access to quarterly plan level data through a new online *Gauging Success* tool. This new reporting system is designed to help you objectively evaluate plan performance against historical data.

By comparing current quarter and annual information to previous years, you can see how your plan is performing, where educational efforts are working, and what areas offer opportunities for additional focus. Moreover, Nationwide's status as one of the leading industry administrators allows it to leverage all plans' data so you can also see how your plan is performing compared to other similar plans.

The *Gauging Success* data can be as high-level or in-depth as plan sponsors prefer. For example, the Quick Plan Facts section reveals such key information as the total number of participants, the number of new enrollments for the most recent quarter, and total plan assets, as well as the percentage changes from quarter to quarter. The section provides a graph of historical market activity to help put the numbers into perspective. From there, you can dive deeper into the data.

The reports include a five-minute presentation that walks plan sponsors through key pages of the report and highlights relevant insights and action steps that they can use to enhance their plan. It also gives them cutting edge information they need to improve participation and contribution rates, helping participants better prepare for retirement.

Learn more about *Gauging Success*

The National Association of Counties (NACo) and Nationwide Retirement Solutions, the provider of the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, can help if you would like to find out more information about *Gauging Success* and how saving for retirement can benefit your employees.

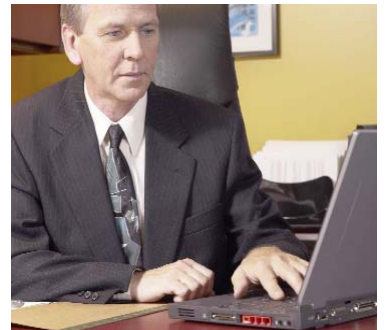
For additional information about the NACo Deferred Compensation Program, please contact Lisa Cole with the NACo by e-mail (lcole@naco.org) or by phone (202-942-4270) or contact Louie Watson with Nationwide, by e-mail (WatsonL2@Nationwide.com) or by phone (614-854-8895).

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NRM-8373AO-NX.1 (06/11)



WHAT'S ON THE MENU OF YOUR DEFERRED COMP PROGRAM?

Just like enjoying a meal at a restaurant, your deferred compensation program should be able to suit the individual tastes of your employees. Nationwide offers a full menu of educational resources, innovative planning tools and a variety of investment options to meet the unique needs of public sector employees.

Serve your employees a deferred comp program that's made-to-order.

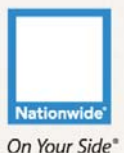
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Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) partners with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to provide counties and their employees with a competitive deferred compensation program. As part of this partnership, Nationwide pays a fee to NACo in exchange for NACo's exclusive endorsement, marketing support, and program oversight of Nationwide products made available under the program. For more information, including fees paid, Nationwide encourages you to visit NRSforu.com.

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