



VEBA is coming! VEBA is coming!

What IS a VEBA?

VEBA (Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association) will be available to Montana county employees as well as those in incorporated cities and towns, K-12 school districts, higher education units and other political subdivisions of the state. The plan allows employees and employers to make tax-free contributions to employee accounts. Each account will then accumulate earnings tax-free.

What are funding sources for a VEBA?

Funding sources of a VEBA can include:

- Excess sick leave balances as provided in State law
- Other contributions such as excess vacation leave, or
- Salary contributions.

How can VEBA funds be used?

Upon separation from service or retirement, an employee may utilize this tax-free source of funds for:

- The cost of health care expenses for individual, spouse and eligible dependents
- Any qualified pre- or post-retirement, medical, dental or vision out-of-pocket expenses (deductibles, co-payments or co-insurance)
- Post-retirement medical, dental or vision insurance premiums
- Medicare-Part B premiums
- Medicare Supplement premiums

HIGHLIGHTS—INSIDE THIS ISSUE

DISTRICT MEETINGS.....	2
NEW CONFERENCES.....	3
PRIMARY ELECTION RESULTS.....	6, 7
INITIATIVES, TAXES, BUDGETS.....	8
KRYGYZSTAN REPORT.....	9
NACo APPOINTMENTS.....	10

How can I learn more?

The Montana Department of Administration—Employee Benefits Bureau will be conducting education and question/answer sessions in various locations throughout the state. Cities, dates and times for these sessions are confirmed, but not all meeting rooms are finalized. Please call (406) 444-3745, Melanie Denning-VEBA Program Specialist, to confirm the location nearest you.

Monday, July 15	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Missoula	UM U-Center, Room 326
Monday, July 15	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Kalispell	Flathead High-Lecture Room
Tuesday, July 16	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Great Falls	Civic Center-Missouri
Room	
Tuesday, July 16	1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Helena	DPHHS Auditorium
Wednesday, July 17	9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Butte	MT Tech Highland Room
Wednesday, July 17	2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Bozeman	MSU-SUB Room 106E
Thursday, July 18	8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Billings	MSU Eastern Ballroom
Thursday, July 18	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GORDON MORRIS

The State fiscal crisis is real and significant. Initially **there was concern that the "entitlement" would be in jeopardy** and I assure everyone that it is not so. The entitlement will not be affected. To do so would require legislative action and **would be limited to a determination that the state's revenue** was significantly below projections. I suggest that the concerns in the press were premature and faulty.

The proposed agency cuts do not directly impact counties. However, the juvenile detention grant program took a \$163,000 hit. This program provides about 37% of the funding for the five juvenile detention regions. Department of Corrections Director Bill Slaughter, Board of Crime Control Director Jim Oppedahl and I met with Budget Director Chuck Swysgood to explore alternatives. We were not able to restore the funding, but we were assured that all options would be considered to mitigate the impact of this cut, including restoring the funding if alternative revenue can be identified. We pointed out that counties cannot control the costs through reductions or other budget mechanisms, since these costs **are driven totally by the "case load."**

This crisis has been a long time in the making. The effort to improve the financial picture for the state and local governments warrants a special session. I say this because budget reductions reach deep into the social fabric of the state, impact those least able to cope and ignore the fact that there is just not enough money. A special session could provide a temporary answer to the revenue needs. Implementing an income tax surcharge, a surcharge on motor vehicles or something similar would alleviate the immediate problem and allow us to find the long-term solution, such as tax reform. Legislators are being polled now to determine if they wish to convene a session in July. Encouraging them to do so would be appropriate.

This makes the Governor's focus on the "Tourist Tax" coupled to a local option tax all the more important. I don't think the tourist tax approach is the ultimate solution, but for now it seems to be the only game in town.

Finally, fiscal year 2003 and the transition to state assumption of district courts has arrived. I hope everyone has anticipated the consequences to county budgets and reimbursable expenses. Assistant Director Blattie has been very involved in this process and we both have been working with the District Court Council chaired by Chief Justice Karla Gray. There will be bumps along the way, but in the long run it will be for the best.

I look forward to seeing you at a second round of district meetings and getting your assessment of the issues that we face. Have a good summer!

MACO DISTRICT MEETINGS SCHEDULE

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Districts 1, 2 and 3 | Wednesday, July 24
Malta
Roger's Casino Banquet Room |
| Districts 4 and 5 | Monday, August 12
Dupuyer
Boone and Crockett Ranch
Education Center |
| Districts 6 and 7 | Friday, July 26
Red Lodge
Pizza Company |
| Districts 8, 9 and 12 | Friday, August 2
Deer Lodge
Broken Arrow Supper Club |
| Districts 10 and 11 | Thursday, August 1
Quinn's Hot Springs
(fairly near to Paradise) |

District Chairs are contacting member counties for local agenda items. In addition, the annual election of District chairs and possible nominations for MACo 2nd Vice President will be included. Individual Districts will also be electing representatives to the Workforce Investment Boards. Minutes from the District meeting are a responsibility of the host county and are to be submitted to MACo for distribution to all the counties.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MACo's Annual Conference will be at Huntley Lodge in Big Sky on September 22-25, hosted by Gallatin and Madison Counties. Commissioners Ted Coffman, Dave Schulz, Frank Nelson, Jennifer Smith Mitchell, Bill Murdock and John Vincent encourage you to participate in workshops, hear challenging speakers, attend important business meetings and enjoy great food and entertainment.

General sessions will include health insurance, district courts, MACo Resolutions, etc. Workshop topics cover lobbying, personnel issues and intergovernmental transfers, as well as other pertinent subjects. A three-day spouse program will also be part of the conference.

Registration forms were mailed to all counties and will also be inserted in next month's newsletter.

**NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS CONFERENCE
IN DECEMBER**

~~~~~

**LOSS CONTROL CONFERENCE  
IN JANUARY**

~~~~~

**MIDWINTER MEETING
AND D.E.S. CONFERENCE
IN FEBRUARY**

After taking into consideration the increasing length of the MACo Midwinter meeting, two parts will be reorganized and held at separate times to test interest and attendance.

A **Newly Elected Officials Conference** will be held December 9-11 in Helena at the West Coast Colonial Hotel. The sessions will be a combination of the New Commissioner Orientation and the Elected Officials Conference. All newly elected county officials are invited to attend, as are current elected officials. The training will focus on laws and procedures for county commissioners, county clerks and recorders and county treasurers.

The **Loss Control Conference** continues with the same focus but will be held January 14-16 in Helena at the West Coast Colonial Hotel, instead of during the Midwinter meeting.

The Midwinter Meeting and Disaster and Emergency Services Conference will be February 18-21 in Helena at the West Coast Colonial Hotel. The original Elected Officials Conference and the Loss Control Conference will not be held then.

**MACo PRESIDENT'S
SCHOLARSHIPS**

MACo President Dean Harmon announced the recipients for two MACo scholarships at the June 6 MACo Board of Directors meeting.

Loni Steppler, a resident of Brockton and a graduate of Culbertson High School, received the \$1,000 scholarship. Ms. Steppler's honors include membership in the National Honor Society and awards from Future Farmers of America (FFA) such as the State Degree, the Eagle Award and the DeKalb Award. She plans to attend Montana State University and major in elementary education.

Beth Ann Hansen, a resident of Froid and a graduate of Bainville High School, received the \$500 scholarship. Ms. Hansen has been a member of the National Honor Society and served as a delegate to the National Young Leaders Conference and served as an ambassador to the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership program. She plans to attend Montana State University to study agricultural relations.

**Board of Directors Member
COUNTY ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVE**



Leo Gallagher
County Attorney
Lewis and Clark County
Appointed 2001

Prior Occupation	Private practice
Favorite Part of the Job	I enjoy the constant need to analyze and to learn something new each day to address the variety of issues that I encounter.
Least Favorite Part	Politics
Personal	I married my wife, Darlene, twenty four years ago. We have three adolescent children, two cats and a Labrador dog with LOTS of black hair. I enjoy whitewater rafting, Grizzly and high school football, cross-country skiing and travel.

HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING Thursday June 6, 2002

2003 MACo Budget: William Duffield moved to adopt the budget with amendments for health insurance and the GPS project. The motion was seconded by Mike Murray and passed.

Board Resolution 2002-1--IT Staff Proposal:
Two Board members pointed out that the proposal was not generally supported in their districts. Further discussion led to motions to amend the Resolution by taking out the "recommendation" references. John Prinkki moved to adopt the resolution as amended. The motion was seconded and passed.

Personnel Policy Review Committee Report:
Carol Brooker identified issues as:
1) Each member county and commission thereof should be involved in evaluating the Executive Director.
2) The Board should be involved in the hiring and the evaluation of the Assistant Director.

3) The evaluation and personnel file of the Executive Director should be on file and be passed from President to President.

4) Candidates for "member elective positions" should not come from the same county.

The Board referred the proposed By-laws amendments to the Resolutions committee for development and recommendations for the annual conference.

WIR: Board members who attended the WIR conference noted that unlike the MACo conferences, there was little, if any, opportunity for networking and, in general, attendees were disappointed. (Additional article page 9)

Initiative 145: Joe Mazurek and Joe Roberts distributed a Legislative Services report, which demonstrated the potential property tax losses that would result in a change of ownership from private to public, if the Initiative to buy dams was successful. The Initiative contains a provision that local governments would have to be reimbursed for revenue losses associated with the purchase of the dams by the state.



L-R:
Victor Miller; 1st Vice President; Dean Harmon, President;
Gordon Morris, Executive Director; Carol Brooker, 2nd Vice
President; Joe Mazurek, presenter



L-R:
Howard Gipe, District 10; Douglas Kaercher, District 4;
William Duffield, District 3; Todd Devlin, District 2;
Sam Samson, District 8; Carol Kienenberger, District 1



L-R:
Dan Watson, Fiscal Officer;
Sue Miller, Treasurer;
Gary Olsen, Justice of Peace



L-R:
Jennifer S. Mitchell, District 9; Judy Stang, District 11;
Harold Blattie, Assistant Director; Arnie Gettel, District 5;
Ted Coffman, District 12; John Prinkki, District 7 (hidden);
Joy Schanz, District 6

COUNTY NEWS

ROADS

POWELL COUNTY is coordinating with the contractor on area Interstate resurfacing projects to receive millings, which are ground off the surface before the resurfacing begins. The millings are recycled and used on county roads.

TETON COUNTY Commissioners assisted three high school students through the process to change a speed zone on a county road. The students chose the project in lieu of taking a semester exam in their history class.

PARK COUNTY denied a petition for road abandonment which was signed by 28 area residents, some of whom have built on the county right-of-way. The road, built in 1885, is on city property on one side and has **degenerated into a trail.** **“Right now the public owns it and it is really hard to obtain new public ground,” said the Commission.**

BUILDINGS

POWELL COUNTY approved a resolution to accept the donation of a former newspaper building, with the intent to lease the building to the Economic Development Corporation.

ROOSEVELT COUNTY planned to take property in lieu of delinquent property taxes and, in turn, deed the property to Fort Peck Community College. The property owner is contesting the release of his tax deeded property.

NATIVE AMERICANS

CASCADE COUNTY has accepted applications for the new Native American Local Government Commission, created to give more voice in local government.

OUTDOOR CONCERT

PARK COUNTY is site for a nationwide telecast, July 3 and 4, with Peter Jennings as anchor of the 3-hour broadcast, which features top-name musical acts.

UNION CONTRACT

ANACONDA-DEER LODGE, after three years of negotiations, approved the police union contract on June 6. The contract will expire in three weeks.

ELECTION BY DISTRICT

BLAINE COUNTY, following Federal Court orders, re-districted the county commissioner districts and will hold a special primary election for Victor Miller's seat. Election will be by the district, not at-large. Miller does not live in the new district.

PERSISTENCE IN HIRING

RAVALLI COUNTY hopes to have finally filled the Planning Director position. Patrick O'Herren, veteran planner from Missoula, was the fourth planner offered the job. In March, the first new planner resigned after one week on the job to take a position in Colorado. The next planner accepted the job on a Friday and resigned the next Monday. The position was then offered to a local planner who did not accept.

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTION

GALLATIN COUNTY developed a schedule of fees for notifying delinquent property taxpayers. In the first notice mailed from the **Treasurer's office, property owners will be charged \$10.** If there is no response, the **next notice from the Sheriff's department** will include a \$10 fee for each of the Sheriff and the Treasurer. Finally, if there still is no **response, sheriff's deputies will serve a writ of execution, seize property to be put up for sale and charge \$20 for the Treasurer and \$80 for the Sheriff.**

SOLID WASTE DISTRICT

GALLATIN COUNTY plans to create a countywide solid waste district, despite the fact that the two communities of Belgrade and Bozeman have refused to participate. The district will oversee how garbage is handled, set policy for recycling and composting and remove the onus of daily garbage management issues from the elected officials. The city of Bozeman is proceeding with plans to build a waste transfer station to process its solid waste before shipping it to a landfill elsewhere.

PARK ACCESS

FLATHEAD COUNTY access to Wild Horse Island Park is in controversy because a private boat owner has been charging to **provide access to the island's public park.**

MEETINGS

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING STANDARDS Great Falls—June 19



CLERKS OF DISTRICT COURTS Havre—June 16-20



PUBLIC LANDS PAYMENT WORKSHOP Lewistown—June 20



COUNTY COMMISSIONER CONTESTS

* = Incumbent R = Republican D = Democrat NP = Non-partisan
I = Independent G = Green

Anaconda-Deer Lodge	* Paul Chirico	NP
	Connie Ternes Daniels	NP
Blaine	* Victor Miller	D
	Alan Lee Brekke	R
Broadwater	* James V. Hohn	NP
	Timothy Ravndal	NP
Cascade	John T. Rosenbaum	D
	Lance Olson	R
	Paul Stephens	G
Chouteau	* Harvey Worrall	R
	Timothy L. Pegar	D
Custer	#2 Curtis T. Almy	NP
	Milo Huber	NP
Dawson	#1 * Kathleen A. Alley	D
	Jim Skillestad	R
	#3 * Bill LaBree	R
	Harold Skartved	D
Fallon	Deb Ranum	R
	Steve Gonsioroski	D
Fergus	William D. Fry	NP
	Kenneth W. Ronish	NP
Flathead	Gary D. Hall	R
	Karen Reeves	D
Hill	* Douglas Kaercher	D
	Byron Welter	R
Jefferson	Chuck Notbohm	NP
	David H. Kirsch	NP
Lake	* Mike W. Hutchin	R
	Pat Erickson	D
Lewis and Clark	Steve Mandeville	R
	Ed Tinsley	D
Liberty	Kenneth J. Gagnon	R
	Don Marble	D
Lincoln	* Rita R. Windom	R
	Gary Huntsberger	D
Madison	#3 * C. Ted Coffman	NP
	Jerry Welsh	NP

McCone	* Connie Eissinger	D
	Beryl Zahn	R
Mineral	* Judy A. Stang	D
	Anton "Tony" Pearson	R
Missoula	* Barbara Evans	R
	Phoebe J. Patterson	D
Musselshell	Larry G. Lekse	R
	Judith A. Stephenson	D
Park	Traci Isaly	NP
	Jim Durgan	NP
Pondera	John Holden	R
	Joe Christiaens	D
Ravalli	Greg Chilcott	R
	Candi Jerke	D
Richland	* Henry T. Johnson	D
	Gene Foss	R
Sheridan	* Robert Nikolaisen	D
	Archie Petersen	R
Teton	* R. F. (Sam) Carlson	R
	Brad Dezort	I
Toole	* Ben M. Ober	D
	Joseph P. Pehan	R
Valley	Dave Pippin	D
	Ron Reddig	R
Wibaux	Larry "Mick" Nistler	D
	Glenn Hutchinson	R
Yellowstone	John Ostlund	R
	Janice Munsell	D

There will be new county commissioners in at least 23 counties.

County Commissioner Kelly Gebhardt (Musselshell) was elected to the State Senate and Commissioner Sam Samson (Jefferson) won nomination to his House District position. Commissioner Art Kleinjan (Blaine) was unsuccessful in his bid for a State Senate nomination.

UNCONTESTED COMMISSIONER ELECTIONS

Anaconda-Deer Lodge	* Wayne Ternes	NP
Beaverhead	* Donna Sevalstad	R
Big Horn	* John Pretty On Top	NP
Carbon	* Albert Brown	NP
Carter	* John Kerr	R
Custer	* #1 Duane Mathison	NP
Daniels	* C. William Tande	R
Gallatin	* Bill Murdock	R
Garfield	* Julie A. Jordan	R
Glacier	John Wesley Ray	D
Golden Valley	David Paugh	R
Granite	Clifford G. Nelson	R
Judith Basin	Jerome Kolar	R
Madison	* #2 Frank Nelson	NP
Meagher	* Jamie Doggett	R
Petroleum	* Lloyd N. Rowton	R
Phillips	* Richard Dunbar	R
Powder River	* Donald R. McDowell	R
Powell	Dwight O'Hara	R
Prairie	* Ann Marie Davis	I
Roosevelt	Roger Bertelsen	D
Rosebud	* Gary Fjelstad	D
Sanders	* Harold "Hank" Laws	R
Stillwater	* #1 Chuck Egan	D
	#3 Maureen Davey	R
Sweet Grass	* Lloyd Berg	R
Treasure	Mack Cole	R
Wheatland	* Richard Moe	R

**CURRENT COUNTY OFFICIALS
NOT RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION**

Beaverhead	Sheriff Keith Reeder	Liberty	Commissioner Loyd Boyer School Superintendent Krystyna Cole Treasurer Rose Campbell
Big Horn	County Attorney Christine Cooke Justice of Peace Lance Pedersen	Lincoln	Justice of Peace Marlene Herreid
Blaine	County Attorney Mark Harshman	Madison	Sheriff Lee Edmisten
Broadwater	Clerk of District Court Shari Little	McCone	Sheriff Paula Peterson Treasurer Janet McCabe
Carbon	Clerk & Recorder Roger Newman Treasurer John Michelcic	Missoula	Auditor Susan Reed Sheriff Doug Chase
Carter	Treasurer Marjorie Justice	Musselshell	Commissioner Kelly Gebhardt Justice of Peace Robert Mihalovich Sheriff George Eppers
Cascade	Commissioner Gayle Morris Justice of Peace Michael Smartt	Park	Commissioner Dan Gutebier Public Administrator Jim Burke School Superintendent Mary Sarver
Chouteau	County Attorney Allin Cheetham	Petroleum	Justice of Peace Lois Poulton
Custer	Commissioner Dan Connors Clerk & Recorder Beth Ann Milligan Public Administrator Jan Alexander	Phillips	School Superintendent Gary Baden
Daniels	Clerk & Recorder Carol Malone Treasurer Esther Kramer	Pondera	Commissioner Bill Rappold Coroner Joseph Christiaens
Dawson	Public Administrator Rita Edwards	Powder River	Public Administrator Don Heidel
Fallon	Commissioner William Duffield Coroner Jon Stevenson	Powell	Commissioner Kay Beck
Fergus	Commissioner Joe Spika	Ravalli	Commissioner Jack Atthowe Sheriff Perry Johnson Treasurer Mary Kay Browning
Flathead	Commissioner Dale Williams County Attorney Thomas Esch Clerk & Recorder Sue Haverfield	Richland	Clerk & Recorder Elmina Cook School Sup't Richard Riedmann
Gallatin	School Superintendent Jill Richards	Roosevelt	Commissioner Dean Harmon County Attorney Ralph Patch
Garfield	Clerk/Recorder Leslie Guesanburu Sheriff Charles Phipps	Rosebud	Coroner Robert Beals
Glacier	Commissioner Allan Lowry School Sup't. Darryl Omsberg	Stillwater	Commissioner Larry Gee County Attorney Robert Eddleman Clerk & Recorder Janet Parkins
Golden Valley	Commissioner Edgar Lewis	Teton	Clerk & Recorder Stella Plachetka
Granite	Commissioner Scotty Morrison County Attorney J. Allen Bradshaw	Toole	Public Administrator Corrine Merhar Sheriff Vernon Anderson
Hill	Auditor Mary Ann Trumpour Justice of Peace Carol Chagnon	Treasure Valley	Commissioner Charlotte Mackley Commissioner Marlene Erickson Public Administrator Glen Meier Sheriff Richard Wessler
Jefferson	Commissioner Sam Samson County Attorney Valerie Wilson School Superintendent Garry Pace Treasurer Susan Miller	Wibaux	Commissioner Sam Scammon Clerk & Recorder Marlene Blome
Judith Basin	Commissioner Henry Vaskey Sheriff John Shilling Treasurer LaDene Raihl	Yellowstone	Commissioner J.A. Ziggy Ziegler Auditor Susan Lupo Treasurer Cindy Sellers
Lewis & Clark	Commissioner Karolin Loendorf School Sup't Warren Morehouse Sheriff Sam McCormack		

VOTER INITIATIVES, TAXES & BUDGETS

In Colorado, voters passed a constitutional amendment that limits how much government can spend or take in. Then a few years later, they passed another amendment calling for guaranteed annual increases for education. "Pay for it," the voters seemed to say, "but do not raise our taxes."

We could call these directives 'unfunded mandates from the voters'. 13 states have put budget strictures on elected officials. In 24 states where lawmaking by ballot is permitted, voters have mandated money for drug treatment, schools, parks and roads. 40+ states have budget shortages, even though these budgets are required by law to be balanced.

Voter initiatives were created nearly 100 years ago. Phil Talmadge, a former Washington State Supreme Court judge and legislator, thinks that Democrats use the initiative process for new spending on education, health-care and the environment and the Republicans use initiatives to cut taxes or limit tax raises. Many voters vote for both approaches. "This puts us in a civic death spiral," said Richard Davis, Washington Research Council. "You give the voters the decision. They react to a single line item, and they never have to deliberate."

"Where direct democracy becomes a more dominant force than representative government, the result has no long-term co-

herence," said Brian Weberg, National Conference of State Legislatures.

To make sure Arizona state legislators got the message, voters passed a measure that lawmakers could not undo what had been voted in. Three special sessions in the last year have been called to address the budget problems, hampered by the mandate that nearly 60% of the budget cannot be touched, under orders from the voters.

"Where direct democracy becomes a more dominant force than representative government, the result has no long-term coherence."

Brian Weberg

New York Times: March 2, 2002
"They Give, but They also Take:
Voters Muddle States' Finances"
by Timothy Egan

Iowa recently required state departments to take an unpaid day off. New Jersey is considering laying off 2,400 state workers...

Some experts suggest that an antiquated tax code has deepened the crisis. "Our problems won't be solved until we change the structure we have for collecting revenue. Our taxation is on goods and property, but the nation has switched over to a service economy, and much of that is not taxed," said Scott Pattison, Association of State Budget Officers.

Christian Science Monitor
May 29, 2002 by Mark Sappenfield

In a recent Hill County meeting with the Montana Chamber of Commerce and the Montana Taxpayers Association, the results of business tax cuts to spur economic development were scrutinized. Commissioner Doug Kaercher disputed the

benefits of the equipment tax deductions. He told the group that local governments are mandated to provide certain services, and when one tax is reduced, the local government has to raise property taxes. The property tax increase for most small businesses offsets any savings from equipment tax reductions.

Havre Daily News
"Meeting produces tax debate"
by Tim Leeds June 5, 2002

45-STAR U.S. FLAGS

In 1902, Montana's first Secretary of State, Abram Yoder, used a 45-star United States flag in his office. To celebrate 2002 Flag Day, this same flag was donated to current Secretary of State Bob Brown by Yoder's grandniece, Anne McDonald from Tennessee.

Every building has cubby holes where items get stashed because those items just can't be thrown out. In March, a construction worker found a treasure wrapped in old newspapers and tucked neatly under a staircase in an old county building being renovated in Van Wert County, Ohio.

In the package were two flags, each with 45 stars which were flown during the terms of presidents Grover Cleveland, William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt. Known as the Imperialist Flag, it received the 45th star when Utah became a state in 1896 and flew until 1908 when Oklahoma was admitted to the Union.

"County News"
Ohio County Commissioners Association
Issue 1, 2002, page 38

MILLER RETURNS FROM KYRGYZSTAN



“International Workshop on Emergency Response (IWER) allowed me to learn disaster preparedness and experience a new culture at the same time. We joined 23 countries gathering at Ala-Archa National Park for the training. Monday through Wednesday followed the same pattern of working on predictions of disasters, mitigation, life and property protection, recovery after disaster, and how to get aid to the disaster area and the victims. Wednesday afternoon we learned that the entire national cabinet had resigned. But by the next morning, everything was back to normal with new officials in place.

Thursday marked the final day of the conference and involved three demonstrations. Scenario One involved a mass casualty exercise; Scenario Two involved inspecting a flood control area; and Scenario Three was the total evacuation of a village as mandated by Kyrgyzstan Constitution. I had a clear lesson that countries with limited resources and plenty of people can be very ingenious in finding ways to handle disasters. For instance, in the United States, we use ladders and ladder trucks to enter buildings. I witnessed the use of ropes for climbing into buildings and for evacuating people.

One bright point to this entire conference were the young men and women who made us feel welcome, worked very hard and gave us firsthand lessons in their country, traditions and customs. As a people, the Kyrgyzstanis are a racial mix of Mongolian, Russian and German influences. I was impressed that they all related to each other as Kyrgyzstanis. I was equally impressed that a country with evident poverty made do with what they had.

Like Kyrgyzstan, Montana has limited resources and is isolated, meaning that a major incident will have to be dealt with for at least 72 hours until outside assistance and programs can be mobilized. I learned that making tactical exercises and trainings based upon doing more with less could lead to some real innovative leadership and thinking for our disaster workers.

Finally, the hospitality and people were great. I felt secure and safe. The preplanning and logistics to make this conference successful had to be outstanding. Good planning goes unnoticed; poor planning shows up in a second. This conference ran smoothly.”



FEEDBACK ON NACo- WIR CONFERENCE

“Classes were OK, but talking with other commissioners from all over the nation was very helpful.” Ed Schilling, Park County

“It was interesting to hear from the large population counties that the problems they experience are similar to those of small rural counties. I didn’t believe that the networking was all that valuable...”

Doug Kaercher, Hill County

“I especially enjoyed the workshop on the wind power.”

Larry Gee, Stillwater County

“I enjoyed the exchange with the BLM Director and the USFS Chief.” Dan Watson, Rosebud County

“Yellowstone County...should get some sort of “Host with the Most” award!”

Connie Eissinger, McCone County

“The national perspective helped me to know some of the pressures from above. The MACo conferences have topics that may be more appropriate to our county and state needs.”

Chuck Egan, Stillwater County

“The workshops were applicable to issues in our county.”

Kathy Bessette, Hill County

“Yellowstone County was a great host!”

Ted Coffman, Madison County

“I enjoyed the workshops and displays.”

Cliff Bare, Stillwater County

“People need to attend NACo meetings. The rules and regulations which direct what we do are not necessarily made in Helena.”

Beverly Gibson
former MACo Assistant Director

NACo INFORMATION

MONTANA NACo BOARD AND NACo COMMITTEE NOMINEES

Board of Directors
Western Interstate Region Board of Directors
Agriculture and Rural Affairs
Community and Economic Development
Environment, Energy and Land Use
Finance & Intergovernmental Affairs
Health Steering Committee
Justice and Public Safety
Justice and Public Safety
Labor and Employment
Public Lands Steering Committee
Public Lands Steering Committee
Transportation Steering Committee

Gary Fjelstad, Rosebud County
Connie Eissinger, McCone County
Kathy Bessette, Hill County
Carol Brooker, Sanders County
John Prinkki, Carbon County
Allan Underdal, Toole County
Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County
Gary Fjelstad, Rosebud County
Chuck Maxwell, Yellowstone County (MSPOA)
Victor Miller, Blaine County
Connie Eissinger, McCone County
Alan Thompson, Ravalli County (Forest Counties)
Vern Petersen, Fergus County

NACo 2nd VICE PRESIDENT CANDIDATES

NACo will elect officers in July at the Annual Conference in New Orleans. Two commissioners are candidates for NACo Second Vice Presidency, a position which graduates through to the NACo Presidency in two years.

Bill Hansell

Mr. Hansell, Umatilla County Oregon, seeks to have more influence on issues affecting rural counties. He chaired the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Steering Committee for four years. He has been in office since 1983, the third-longest serving commissioner in Oregon. He progressed through committee chairs and served as President of the Association of Oregon Counties. Drawing on five terms of elected office and nearly two decades of service to NACo, he offers a steady, experienced voice for local government.

Bill Dennison,

Mr. Dennison, Plumas County California, serves on both the NACo and the WIR Boards of Directors. He is former chair of NACo Public Lands Steering Committee. Before election to county office for two terms, he served as president of California Forestry Association for over 15 years, lobbying in California and in Washington DC to testify on forestry, land use and planning issues. He believes that local government must be capable of communicating county interests and needs to all levels of state and federal government in a clear and expedient manner.

Synopsis from "The Iowa County", Volume 31, Number 6; June 2002
Denise Obrecht, Editor; Iowa State Association of Counties

NACo LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

NACo has two new priorities for the 2002 national legislative effort:

Homeland Security

Authorize a Local Anti-Terrorism Block Grant to comprehensively fund law enforcement and public safety agencies and programs.

Improve Public Health Infrastructure by improving security for county-owned facilities.

Improve Public Safety and Emergency Management Communications for both voice and data, release an additional spectrum in the 700 MHz band for public safety and emergency management use and eliminate interference problems in public safety communications.

Expanding Democracy

Implement election reform through training, statewide voter registration systems, replacing and improving voting equipment, and reduced postal rates for election material, etc.

These two priorities are added to the continued focus on:

1. Opposing unfunded mandates and preemption of county authority
2. Supporting sales taxes due on purchases made by mail and over the Internet
3. Re-authorizing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and related programs; ensuring progressive family income stability after leaving welfare
4. Supporting telecommunications services/ broadband for rural and inner city communities to respond to "digital divide" concerns.

PLEASE SUPPORT MACo SUPPORTERS


MORRISON - MAIERLE
ENGINEERS • SCIENTISTS • SURVEYORS • PLANNERS
 Providing resources in partnership with clients
 to achieve their goals
 Billings • Bozeman • Helena • Kalispell • Great Falls • Missoula • Phoenix

MACo Associate Member Phone: 406-442-3050
 Fax: 406-442-7062
 Web page: www.m-m.net

MORRISON MAIERLE, INC.
 An Employee-Owned Company


ROSCOE STEEL & CULVERT
 The **Most Reliable** Source of Products
 Required for County Road Projects
 406 / 656-2253
 2847 Hesper Road
 Billings, MT 59102

406 / 542-0345
 5405 Momont Rd.
 Missoula, MT 59802



PORTER W. YETT
Grading & Paving Contractor
Soil Stabilization

PULVERIZE BLEND
RECYCLE
Asphalt Cement Lime
Bentonite



Highways - Shoulders - Airports
 Secondary Roads
 Parking Lots - Haul Roads - Building Sites

For More Information and Job Estimates
 Steve Yett Call (503) 282-3251 Hugh O'Neal

Gordon E. Hoven
 Montana Public Finance
 406 443-4958



Securities products and services are offered through U.S. Bancorp Piper Jaffray Inc., member SIPC and NYSE, Inc., a subsidiary of U.S. Bancorp. SIO-0634

*Internet
 *Long Distance
 *Private Line
 *Equipment





Call today to learn more about Touch America
1.877.671.7426
 www.tamerica.com

*Freedom
 In Retirement*



Through our partnership with National Association of Counties, Nationwide Retirement Solutions provides financial solutions for county employees to prepare for life events through retirement planning, educational programs, and attractive and competitive investment options.

Nationwide's commitment to county employers and employees includes comprehensive communication and administrative support as well as advanced interactive systems and technology.

MACo
Risk Management and Training

Ray Barnicoat
 and
Emelia McEwen

Phone (406) 457-7210
 FAX (406) 442-5238

Board Of Directors

President: Dean Harmon
 Commissioner, Roosevelt County

1st Vice President: Victor Miller
 Commissioner, Blaine County

2nd Vice President: Carol Brooker
 Commissioner, Sanders County

Fiscal Officer: Dan Watson
 Commissioner, Rosebud County

Urban Representative: Mike Murray
 Commissioner, Lewis & Clark County

Past President: Gary Fjelstad
 Commissioner, Rosebud County

District Chairs

1. Carol Kienenberger, Phillips County
2. Todd Devlin, Prairie County
3. William Duffield, Fallon County
4. Doug Kaercher, Hill County
5. Arnold Gettel, Teton County
6. Joy Schanz, Golden Valley County
7. John Prinkki, Carbon County
8. Sam Samson, Jefferson County
9. Jennifer S. Mitchell, Gallatin County
10. Howard Gipe, Flathead County
11. Judy Stang, Mineral County
12. Ted Coffman, Madison County

Associate Board Members

Leo Gallagher, Lewis & Clark County Attorney
 Cheryl Hansen, Roosevelt County Clerk / Recorder
 Dena Tippets, Hill County Clerk of District Court
 Tim Wong, Cascade County Coroner
 Gary Olsen, Broadwater County Justice of Peace
 Dottie Donovan, Beaverhead County
 Superintendent of Schools
 Chuck Maxwell, Yellowstone County Sheriff
 Susan Miller, Jefferson County Treasurer

Staff

C. Gordon Morris Executive Director
 L. Harold Blattie Assistant Director
 Carla Smith Financial Officer
 Oline Barta Administrative Assistant
 Marie McAlear Publications Officer
 Karen Houston Meeting Planner
 Ray Barnicoat Risk Manager
 Emelia McEwen Assistant Risk Manager
 Greg Jackson JPIA Marketing Director
 Jack Holstrom Personnel Services
 Fran Monro JPA/JPIA Admin. Assistant

Affiliate Members

alternative service concepts (asc)
 formerly WILLIS

Browning Ferris Industries of Montana (BFI)
 Employee Benefits
 Management Services (EBMS)

Entranco, Inc.
 Life Care Services (BCRC)

Montana Association of County Information
 Technology Administrators (MACITA)

Montana Association of County Road
 Supervisors (MACRS)

Montana Contractors Association
 Montana Dakota Utilities (MDU)
 Montana Power Company
 Morrison-Maierle, Inc.
 MSU Extension Service
 Norman Grosfield, Helena
 Roscoe Steel & Culvert Company
 Stahly Engineering
 Tractor & Equipment Company, Williston ND
 Tractor & Equipment Company, Great Falls
 Tractor & Equipment Company, Billings

MACo News

Montana Association of Counties
 2715 Skyway Drive Helena, MT 59602
 Phone (406) 457-7207 Fax (406) 442-5238

ARTICLES MAY BE SUBMITTED BEFORE
 THE 20TH OF EACH MONTH
 E-mail: macopb@maco.cog.mt.us
 Website: <http://maco.cog.mt.us>
 Subscriptions are \$25 per year.