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PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION for COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

After two years of discussion and planning, the first MACo County Commissioner Certification training will be implemented in December after general elections.

During the strategic planning session at the November 2002 Leadership Retreat, one of the suggested actions the leadership adopted for Goal Two reads, "Develop a certification and continuing education credit program for commissioners." As a result, a MACo ad hoc Education Committee was appointed.

Following Education Committee deliberations, MACo entered into an agreement with MSU's Local Government Center to develop a curriculum for certification. The Local Government Center conducted two surveys (one with longer-serving commissioners and one with newly elected commissioners) to identify and rank sixteen training topics. The proposed curriculum was presented in October 2003.

The Curriculum is grouped into four modules of instruction. The four modules are to be scheduled in alignment with MACo events, such as annual conferences and mid-winter conventions.

The first module, titled "County Government Structure and

Authority", will be in December. This 16-hour course will cover local government law, MACo functions, commissioner roles and responsibilities, legislative process, and requirements for county services.

The second module, scheduled for March 2005 Mid-Winter Conference, will have six hours devoted to budgeting and financial management.

At the 2005 Annual Conference in September, the 6-hour presentation will delve into human resource management and the final 6-hour module (perhaps in December 2005 or at the 2006 Mid-winter meeting) will address intergovernmental relations.

A 6-hour elective module including communications techniques, functions of other county elected offices and facilities maintenance can be scheduled as needed and will be presented at the 2006 Annual Conference.

The Education Committee members who contributed to this project are:

Dan Watson, Rosebud County, Chair
Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County
Elaine Mann, Broadwater County
Peggy Beltrone, Cascade County
Bill Nyby, Sheridan County
Gordon Morris, MACo Executive Director
Harold Blattie, MACo Assistant Director

MACo GRANTED IDENTIFICATION CARD EQUIPMENT

Montana's 56 counties employ over 6,000 people statewide. Currently there is not a uniform standard for identification cards issued by counties, much less a uniform card that is easily recognizable to identify the holder as a county employee. MACo proposed to purchase, house and maintain equipment to manufacture identification cards for county employees.

Formal approval of a US Department of Justice FY02 Domestic Preparedness equipment grant funded the proposal at 100%. In-kind contributions include an estimated 1,000 hours of MACo and county staff time at an estimated value of \$10,000. Other variable costs, such as telephone and postage, will be carried by MACo and the participating counties.

Equipment provided through the grant includes three digital cameras with tripods, a photo badge printer for single side full color tags, a Dell laptop computer with full programs and supplies for the 6,000 ID tags.

The digital cameras will travel from county to county, with county staff photographing employees in each county. Each county will also enter employee specific information in a Microsoft Access database that will be linked to each digital image. Following county choice, as much or as little of this information will be printed on each card. The county will transmit the digital images and database to MACo. MACo will manufacture the cards.

MACo is responsible for assuring the location, maintenance, and operability of all equipment purchased with this grant and the retention of records.

This equipment may be used as a state resource in the event of a disaster or emergency, as long as such use does not interfere with the work for which it was originally acquired. First preference for other use shall be given to programs or projects supported by the awarding agency.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 3	Districts 10 and 11; Polson
May 6 - 7	Interim Tax Reform Committees; Capitol 317
May 7	Districts 8, 9 and 12; Philipsburg
May 11	MACo Land Use Committee; MACo; 10:00
May 11-12	Medicaid Redesign; MACo; 8:00 am
May 12	District Court Council; Missoula
May 17-19	Coroners Convention; Chico Hot Springs
May 20	Drought Advisory Committee; DEQ 111
May 26-28	WIR; Ogden, UT
May 30	Second 2003-4 property tax payment due

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 1	Clerk & Recorder notification for preliminary budgets
June 4	JPA / JPIA Defense Counsel and Trustees Retreat
June 8	Primary Election
June 10	County budget estimates due to Clerk and Recorder
June 10-12	Fire Alliance Conference; Billings Holiday Inn
June 11	MACo Board meeting; MACo; 10:00 am
June 16-18	Sheriffs and Peace Officers Convention; Polson
June 21-24	Clerks of District Court Convention; Superior
June 28-30	MACo Economic Development Committee; Libby

RE-ACTIVATE COUNTY COMPENSATION BOARD

MCA 7-4-2503(4)(a) "The county compensation board shall hold hearings annually for the purpose of reviewing the compensation paid to county officers. The compensation board may consider the compensation paid to comparable officials in other Montana counties, other states, state government, federal government and private enterprise."

Population may be used in Compensation Board deliberations. (See the next page) More population information can be found at <http://ceic.commerce.state.mt.us/EstimatesCntyPop.html> .

The **cost-of-living** adjustment factor effective July 1, 2004, is 2.3%.

The **mileage** reimbursement rate is 37.5¢ per mile up to 1,000 miles and 34.5¢ per mile for over 1,000 miles. (MCA 2-18-503)

Travel reimbursement rates remain at \$35 for a motel room until May 15, then \$55 until October 15; meals are \$5 for morning, \$6 for mid-day, and \$12 for evening (total \$23/day).

MACo has various salary publications available online and in hard copy.

MONTANA COUNTY POPULATION ESTIMATES (July 2003)

COUNTY	POPULATION	CHANGE FROM 2002	COUNTY	POPULATION	CHANGE FROM 2002
Anaconda-Deer Lodge.....	8,953	-121	Madison.....	6,967	+6
Beaverhead.....	8,919	-65	McCone.....	1,818	-30
Big Horn.....	12,894	+80	Meagher.....	1,967	+34
Blaine.....	6,729	-101	Mineral.....	3,884	+64
Broadwater.....	4,430	+31	Missoula.....	98,616	+734
Butte-Silver Bow.....	33,208	-239	Musselshell.....	4,464	+5
Carbon.....	9,770	+49	Park.....	15,840	-33
Carter.....	1,333	-22	Petroleum.....	491	+3
Cascade.....	79,561	-36	Phillips.....	4,271	-91
Chouteau.....	5,576	-63	Pondera.....	6,166	-90
Custer.....	11,369	-59	Powder River.....	1,834	+3
Daniels.....	1,940	-9	Powell.....	7,006	-30
Dawson.....	8,776	+37	Prairie.....	1,154	-32
Fallon.....	2,752	+29	Ravalli.....	38,662	+932
Fergus.....	11,695	+31	Richland.....	9,155	-108
Flathead.....	79,485	+2,044	Roosevelt.....	10,451	+23
Gallatin.....	73,243	+2,072	Rosebud.....	9,303	+35
Garfield.....	1,233	-3	Sanders.....	10,455	+23
Glacier.....	13,250	+68	Sheridan.....	3,668	-135
Golden Valley.....	1,047	-21	Stillwater.....	8,459	+8
Granite.....	2,894	+21	Sweet Grass.....	3,604	-3
Hill.....	16,350	+7	Teton.....	6,369	+44
Jefferson.....	10,499	+110	Toole.....	5,337	-87
Judith Basin.....	2,192	-53	Treasure.....	735	-42
Lake.....	27,197	+213	Valley.....	7,349	-67
Lewis and Clark.....	57,137	+663	Wheatland.....	2,106	-53
Liberty.....	2,055	+27	Wibaux.....	977	-18
Lincoln.....	18,835	+113	Yellowstone.....	133,191	+1,357

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STARTING THE TRIP TO THE 2005 LEGISLATURE

HOLDOVER SENATORS

(Senators who can request bills now)

It's not too early to re-establish contacts with State Senators. Here are the senators who are not required to run for election this year. They are available to begin work on proposals for next legislative session:

<u>SENATOR</u>	<u>COUNTY</u>
Sherman Anderson	Powell
Keith Bales	Powder River, Fallon, Dawson and Carter
Greg Barkus	Flathead
Jerry Black	Toole and Teton
John Bohlinger	Yellowstone
Mike Cooney	Lewis and Clark
Brent Cromley	Yellowstone
Aubyn Curtiss	Lincoln
Jon Ellingson	Missoula
John Esp	Park
Kelly Gebhardt	Musselshell, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Treasure
Duane Grimes	Jefferson, Meagher and Broadwater
Ken Hansen	Blaine and Hill
Bob Keenan	Flathead
Rick Laible	Ravalli
Jeff Mangan	Cascade
Dan McGee	Yellowstone

Gary Perry	Gallatin
Glenn Roush	Glacier
Trudi Schmidt	Cascade
Carolyn Squires	Missoula
Bob Story	Carbon and Stillwater
Jon Tester	Chouteau, Liberty and Hill
Joe Tropila	Cascade
Mike Wheat	Gallatin

These legislators have reached their term limits and may no longer serve in current positions:

Rep. Rod Bitney	(Senate candidate)
Rep. Sylvia Bookout-Reinicke	
Rep. Daniel Fuchs	
Rep. Kim Gillan	(Senate candidate)
Rep. Bob Lawson	
Rep. Doug Mood	
Sen. Bob DePratu	
Sen. William Glaser	(House candidate)
Sen. Dale Mahlum	
Sen. Bea McCarthy	(House candidate)
Sen. Walter McNutt	(House candidate)
Sen. Linda Nelson	
Sen. Debbie Shea	(PSC Candidate)
Sen. Mike Sprague	
Sen. Mike Taylor	
Sen. Fred Thomas	

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COUNTY OFFICE CANDIDATES

* = Incumbent R = Republican D = Democrat NP = Non-partisan

<p>Anaconda-Deer Lodge Chief Executive Officer Mark Woirhoye NP William Johnson NP Thomas McCarthy NP Gene Vukovich NP Attorney * Michael Grayson NP Joan Borneman NP Sheriff John Kelly NP Dan Blume NP Rex Lewis NP Terry Wilkinson NP</p> <p>Beaverhead Clerk of District Court * Sheila Brunkhorst R Attorney * Marvin McCann R Coroner M. Lyn Ballard R Ron Briggs R</p> <p>Big Horn Clerk of District Court Karen Yarlott NP</p> <p>Blaine Clerk of District Court * Kay O. Johnson D</p> <p>Broadwater Clerk of District Court * Valerie Middlemas NP</p> <p>Butte-Silver Bow Chief Executive Officer Ristene Hall NP Jack Hanley NP J.D. Lynch NP Paul Babb NP Dan Dennehy NP Patrick Kearney NP Burton James III NP Tony Bonney NP Mike Sheehy NP Assessor Dan Fisher NP Cindi Shaw NP Tom Williams NP Chuck Boyle NP Auditor * Danette Harrington NP Clerk of District Court * Lori Maloney NP County Attorney * Robert McCarthy NP Clerk and Recorder * Mary McMahon NP Public Administrator * Greg O'Leary NP Lou Parrett NP Sheriff * John P. Walsh NP Coroner * Lee LaBreche NP</p>	<p>Superintendent of Schools * Ed Heard NP Treasurer * Patrick Callahan NP</p> <p>Carbon Clerk of District Court Susan Godbey NP</p> <p>Carter Clerk of District Court * Carole Carey R</p> <p>Cascade Clerk of District Court * Nancy Morton D Daniel L.N. Huffman Sheriff * Kent Funyak D David Castle D</p> <p>Chouteau Clerk of District Court * Larry Stollfuss R Sydney Lopp R Laura Wood D</p> <p>Custer Clerk of District Court * Bernice Matthews NP Carla Hecker NP</p> <p>Daniels Clerk of District Court * Patricia McDonnell D</p> <p>Dawson Clerk of District Court * Judith Galle R Sheriff * Craig Anderson D David Rossi R Wally Peter R</p> <p>Fallon Clerk of District Court * Jeraldine Newell R</p> <p>Fergus Clerk of District Court * Phyllis Smith NP Sheriff * Tom Killham NP Eugene Couch NP</p> <p>Flathead Clerk of District Court * Peg Allison R Kelly Albert-Lee D</p> <p>Gallatin Clerk of District Court * Jennifer Brandon R</p> <p>Garfield Clerk of District Court * Jennifer Crawford R Charlotte Herbold R</p> <p>Glacier Clerk of District Court * Diane Anderson D Public Administrator no candidate</p>	<p>Granite Clerk of District Court * Beverly Kulaski D</p> <p>Hill Clerk of Court * Dena Tippets D County Attorney * Cyndee Peterson D Daniel Boucher D Randy Randolph D</p> <p>Jefferson Clerk of District Court * Marilyn Craft NP Superintendent of Schools * Garry Pace NP</p> <p>Judith Basin Clerk of District Court * Julie Peevey R</p> <p>Lake Clerk of District Court Julie Knutson R Trudy Pedersen R Kaylene B. Melton R Susan L. Dowdall D</p> <p>Lewis and Clark Clerk of District Court * Nancy Sweeney D</p> <p>Liberty Clerk of District Court * Anne Seidlitz-Melto R</p> <p>Lincoln Clerk of District Court * Nadine Pival D</p> <p>McCone Clerk of District Court * Trudy Kirkegard R Clerk and Recorder * Maridel Kassner R</p> <p>Meagher Clerk of District Court * Donna Morris R</p> <p>Mineral Clerk of District Court Sharon Gull D</p> <p>Missoula Clerk of District Court * Shirley Faust D</p> <p>Musselshell Clerk of District Court * Connie Mattfield R</p> <p>Park Clerk of District Court * June Little NP</p> <p>Phillips Clerk of District Court * Iris Robinson R</p> <p>Pondera Clerk of District Court * Anita Vandolah D Superintendent of Schools * Josephine Stone R Jayne Ratzburg R</p>	<p>Powder River Clerk of District Court * Aletta Shannon R</p> <p>Powell Clerk of District Court * Sharon Applegate R</p> <p>Prairie Clerk of District Court * Lisa Kimmet D</p> <p>Ravalli Clerk of District Court * Debbie Harmon R</p> <p>Richland Clerk of District Court * Arlene C. Riggs D</p> <p>Roosevelt Clerk of District Court * Patricia Stennes D</p> <p>Rosebud Clerk of District Court * Marilyn Hollister D</p> <p>Sanders Clerk of District Court * Diane Rummel R</p> <p>Sheridan Clerk of District Court * Cheryl Olson D Justice of the Peace * Lester Kolste NP</p> <p>Stillwater Clerk of District Court * Jean Bare R</p> <p>Sweet Grass Clerk of District Court * Deanna Novotny R County Attorney * Pat Dringman R</p> <p>Teton Clerk of District Court Lisa Sinton R</p> <p>Toole Clerk of District Court * Sandra Peers R Treasurer * Boyd Jackson</p> <p>Treasure Sheriff * DeWayne Bates R Wayne Robison R Beau Hedges D</p> <p>Valley Clerk of District Court Melissa Greenhagen R Leah Erickson D</p> <p>Wheatland Clerk of District Court * Janet Hill D</p> <p>Wibaux Clerk of District Court * Michael Schneider R</p> <p>Yellowstone Clerk of District Court * Laura Brent R</p>
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NORTH CENTRAL COUNTIES ADDRESS ISSUES TOGETHER

In two separate efforts, counties in the north central section of Montana have developed formal arrangements to work together.

The North-Central Montana Community Ventures Project recently received additional funding from the Northwest Area Foundation to begin implementing a 124 page strategic plan to address economic development and poverty. The project has begun the hiring process for an executive director. Eleven counties (Blaine, Cascade, Chouteau, Glacier, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Phillips, Pondera, Teton and Toole) and three Native American Reservations (Blackfeet, Rocky Boy and Fort Belknap) are participating.

The purpose of the project has been to develop a community driven plan to reduce poverty. The plan sets 28 goals with more than 100 strategies. Six criteria were developed to use in evaluating the plan and the progress:

- 1) Significant focus on reducing poverty
- 2) Substantial involvement of diverse interests
- 3) Do no harm
- 4) Thoughtful and realistic strategies
- 5) Development of local abilities
- 6) Learning and adapting to new knowledge and changing circumstances.

Copies of the plan have been distributed to all local libraries in the region and the text is available online at www.montanacv.org. Click on the "Reports" link.

The North Central Montana Mutual Aid Agreement, a long-standing nine-county version, was updated to include 15 counties and three Indian nations.

The agreement states that whenever an emergency occurs that is beyond the capability of any local jurisdiction, the affected county can request equipment or personnel from any of the other signatories. The county being asked for assistance is free to decide whether to provide the requested resources.

The agreement is based on local decisions to assist. There is no requirement that resources must be sent, and, if sent, they may be recalled at any time. The first eight hours of assistance will be provided at no charge. After the first eight hours, the requesting county will be responsible for the responding entity's costs.

"It is good for a county to have this agreement in writing," said Cindy Mullaney, Pondera County DES Coordinator, whose office played a lead role in garnering support from involved parties. She explained that if there is no signed mutual aid agreement in place prior to an emergency, Federal funds will not be available to reimburse costs, including the costs of those entities responding to requests.

The fifteen participating counties are:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Blaine | Judith Basin |
| Cascade | Liberty |
| Chouteau | Petroleum |
| Fergus | Phillips |
| Glacier | Pondera |
| Golden Valley | Teton |
| Hill | Toole |
| | Wheatland |

The Blackfeet, the Rocky Boy and the Fort Belknap Indian Nations have indicated interest in participation but have not yet signed the agreement.

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COUNTY NEWS

LEVY & BOND PROPOSALS

BUTTE-SILVER BOW is proposing a 1.6 mill levy (\$58,000) for economic development for each year for the next four years.

CASCADE COUNTY will ask for a 7.5 mill levy for the regional jail.

CUSTER COUNTY is requesting one mill annually for six years to fund the Miles City Economic Development Council.

FLATHEAD COUNTY rescinded a ballot measure for 1.62 mill levy (\$240,000) for a museum and the museum board. Other arts and cultural groups argued that the public funding should be divided among all eligible groups. The Commission suggested developing a new and more comprehensive proposal.

GLACIER COUNTY is trying a third time to pass a \$2,250,000 twenty-year general obligation bond to remodel an existing building into a 48-bed detention facility. There are currently over 137 residents who are wanted on outstanding warrants and are not incarcerated.

JEFFERSON COUNTY's citizen committee appointed to review the budget and mill levies proposed 5 mill levies. Voters will vote independently for or against each mill levy. The five levies would fund

- 1) Computer upgrades and general government operation (5 mills—\$90,970)
- 2) Health department (6 mills—\$109,164)
- 3) Three law enforcement vehicles and department operation (8 mills—\$145,552)
- 4) Road department (20 mills—\$329,400 per year for four years)
- 5) Library services (5 mills—\$90,970)

LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY proposes a \$5.7 Million levy to build a fairgrounds grandstand and exhibition hall.

PONDERA COUNTY voters will decide on a four-mill proposal (\$50,000) to form Pondera County Port Authority to be more responsive to economic opportunities.

RAVALLI COUNTY rescinded its proposal to place a 14.31 mill levy vote on the ballot. Adequate budget analysis and competition with other levy requests were the reasons.

RAVALLI COUNTY is proposing a new autonomous library district for the Stevensville area which would operate on a 6.4 mill levy carried over from the dissolved Inter Local Library agreement.

BUILDINGS & FACILITIES

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY has been working to finalize a purchase of the local National Guard Armory, which would then be used by the High School Transportation Department.

BUTTE-SILVER BOW granted a contract extension, with fines of \$750 a day after the 45-day period, for the construction firm to complete the new detention center.

CARBON COUNTY is in the process of replacing seating in the courtroom. The \$100 per foot bench seating is from Dakota Church Furniture. The current antique seating will be made available to the public through sealed bids at a later date.

CASCADE COUNTY is negotiating with a group to lease 7 acres of county land for a new community ice facility with two ice sheets and seating for over 2,000 people. The group has completed financial and business plans.

FLATHEAD COUNTY opened a second round of bids for a new livestock pavilion at the fairgrounds. The first round of bids came in \$200,000 over the budget.

GALLATIN COUNTY purchased the former headquarters of the Yellowstone National Park concessionaire. The building sits immediately south of the Law and Justice Center. The County will use its capital improvement fund for about half the cost and will use PILT funds to repay a state loan for the remainder.

GALLATIN COUNTY received an anonymous \$600,000 donation from a donor who offered to help pay for a new horse arena and a covered grandstand at the fairgrounds. Total costs have not yet been determined.

McCONE COUNTY lost power to the jury room and two adjoining offices. A replacement breaker could not be found because the system was too old. So, a low bid was accepted to upgrade the system to current electrical code.

POWELL COUNTY is testing for mold on all three floors of the courthouse, in anticipation of thorough mold removal.

STILLWATER COUNTY jail, which has not been used for eight years, was officially decommissioned. Remaining a mystery in the facility are a pair of cone-shaped devices extending from a wall in the holding area to an adjoining room, with the wide side of the cones pointing into the holding area.

TETON COUNTY honored current Sheriff George Anderson by naming the new Law Enforcement Center after him. Anderson was honored for his 30+ years of service during the recent Open House.

COME HOME MONTANA WORKSHOPS

Come Home Montana is well underway with 32 communities participating, from the largest community of Billings in Yellowstone County to the smaller communities of Judith Basin County with populations under 300.

The Come Home workshops and participation provide access to rural human capacity building and local development, web site offerings, contacts for technical assistance and other available support, a locally developed database, follow up visits, best practice information and success stories.

As more counties participate, dates and locations will be publicized. Here is the schedule for May:

Gallatin County

(Belgrade, Three Forks, Manhattan, Bozeman, Amsterdam)

May 19th - Noon, Brown Bag

Belgrade Chamber of Commerce - 10 East Main

Butte-Silver Bow County

Anaconda-Deer Lodge County

Jefferson County

(Butte, Deer Lodge, Anaconda, Opportunity, Whitehall)

May 18th - Noon, Brown Bag

*Butte Local Development / Headwaters RC&D
305 West Mercury Street, 2nd Floor*

Broadwater County

Lewis and Clark County

Jefferson County

(Helena, Wolf Creek, Canyon Ferry, Clancy, Townsend, Boulder, Lincoln)

*May 21st - Noon Brown Bag - Helena Job
Service Workforce Center - 715 Front Street*

For more information and a future workshop schedule, go to

www.comehomemontana.org

Thanks to Qwest and First Interstate Bank for support of
Come Home Montana workshops.

Attorney General OPINION

Volume 50 No. 6

Held:

1. When a crime victim requests confidentiality, the public dissemination of certain information, including the address, telephone number, or place of employment of the victim or a member of the victim's family is prohibited, unless an exception listed in MCA 44-5-311(1) applies.
2. Information directly or indirectly disclosing the identity of victims of certain sex crimes may not be publicly disseminated unless an exception listed in MCA 44-5-311(1) applies.
3. A law enforcement agency may disclose a crime scene location under MCA 44-5-311(1), (3), even if such disclosure may suggest the identity of the victim.

Requested by:

Mary Van Buskirk

Havre City Attorney

VARONE APPOINTED Montana Economic Advisory Council—Policy Subcommittee

Anita Varone, Lewis and Clark County Commissioner and MACo Economic Development Committee Chair, was recently appointed to the new Policy Subcommittee of the Montana Economic Advisory Council (EDAC).

EDAC formed three subcommittees to address policy, certification standards and awards for operation and maintenance of the Micro-Business Finance Program in the Montana Department of Commerce.

Varone is one of six appointees to the Policy Subcommittee. Subcommittee duties include advising the Governor, Department of Commerce and EDAC on access to capital for micro-businesses in Montana. In addition, the Subcommittee will develop goals, strategies and legislative actions to guide the future of the Micro-Business Finance Program.

ERGONOMIC RISKS IN HEALTH CARE

Selections provided by Emelia McEwen
MACo Risk Management Assistant

Health care employees face a myriad of challenges in ergonomic risks. In fact, when it comes to suffering injuries at work, only truck drivers are hurt more often on the job than nursing aides, orderlies and patient attendants.

80% of lost time and injury costs for health care workers is from sprains and strains.

Lifting is the primary risk to health care workers. Nurses who frequently lift patients are 3.7 times more likely to be injured than other workers, and most injuries occur during planned patient transfers, not in emergencies. The top risk is repositioning patients in bed. This action caused or contributed to worker injuries far more often than any other activity.

PRIORITIZED RISK FACTORS FOR HEALTH WORKERS

1. Repositioning patients in bed
2. Lifting patients
3. Transferring from beds to chairs and back
4. Transporting patients
5. Handling aggressive patients
6. Lateral transfers (bed to stretcher)
7. Patient falls
8. Holding, repositioning extremities
9. Helping patients to and from toilet
10. Repositioning patient for treatment or diagnostics

However, the frequency of strain and sprain injuries can be decreased substantially by implementing safety methods. The first stage to develop a safety plan is to review the facility's health care costs. The second is an in-depth task and work site analysis based on the cost statistics. The plan should be imbued with the sense that it is a program for continuous, not onetime, improvements.

Because patient positioning and lifts are implicated with the most injuries, special attention should be paid to assessing the patient transfer process. Annual training programs, trial runs of new policies and procedures and employee orientations will instill a sense of accountability.

PERSONAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT TOOL

"How's Your Health Montana?" is a new personal health assessment tool, courtesy of MSU Employee Wellness and Dartmouth Medical School.

The program allows individuals to log onto their own personal health assessment survey at www.howsyourhealth.org. The confidential survey is designed to provide Montanans with printable evidence-based health information materials and an action form designed to help them take better care of themselves and communicate with their physicians more effectively.

The project was funded by TwoMedicine, a Montana corporation engaged in preventative health and wellness and by the Commonwealth Fund, a private foundation that supports independent research on health and social issues.

The survey is simple to use. Just log onto www.howsyourhealth.org, click the "Take Survey" button, enter "Montana" as your area or region, click "start survey" and answer the questions. The program asks a range of questions from general lifestyle such as "Do you smoke?" to more in-depth questions about family history and emotional support. The survey takes most people about fifteen minutes to complete. Based on responses, each person will receive informative material and a personalized report about their health.

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**Ray Barnicoat
and
Emelia McEwen**

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AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS STEERING COMMITTEE

Kathy Bessette, Hill County

Agriculture Subcommittee

Commissioner Dave Burris, Kent County Delaware, spoke about commercial poultry problems with avian influenza.

Chris Schepis, National Farmers Union, discussed BSE and the impact on the cattle market. His organization supports farm animal identification numbers, country of origin labeling and testing "downer" cattle. (Why doesn't Montana consider state of origin labeling in addition to country of origin labeling?)

Rural Development Subcommittee

The North Carolina Rural Development Council developed a policy which involves federal, state and local agencies working together for economic development in rural areas.

Joe Dunn, NACo Associate Legislative Director, asked for support for the Rural Road Safety Act - HR 3743. He stated that it is 2½ times more likely a person would die in an accident on a two-lane highway than on an interstate.

Food Safety Subcommittee

Karen Stuck, USDA Assistant Administrator of the Office of International Affairs, Food Safety Inspection Service (which regulates meat, poultry and egg products), said they are looking at a North American (Canada, Mexico and the United States) approach to the BSE problem. She also stressed the importance of keeping balance between exports and imports.

COMBINED COMMITTEE MEETING AGRICULTURE and ENVIRONMENT

The Agriculture / Rural Affairs and the Environmental, Energy / Land Use Steering Committees combined to learn about an EPA program for water pollution trading. This program allows entities with high pollutant control costs to purchase environmentally equivalent pollutant reduction from areas with lower pollutants. Both entities must be within the same watershed. Thirty-five states have established this program.

FULL STEERING COMMITTEE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Dr. Jim Butler, USDA Deputy Undersecretary for Farm and Foreign Agriculture Services, stated that 40 countries have BSE and the United States has low risk even though we hear news reports to the contrary. He feels that "Mad Cow Disease" is used by the press because it gets the attention of the public. His agency is working to reopen the trade market with Japan and Mexico, to support farm animal identification, to tighten the feed ban, to support a North American alliance, and to certify BSE-free meat.

Carol Werner, Environmental and Energy Study Institute, asked, "How can agriculture be revitalized by renewable energy?" She described programs within the Farm Bill dealing with renewable energy (Section 9006) and value-added agricultural products (Section 6401).

Resolutions to support a National Farm Animal Identification and Tracking System and to support increased regulation of spreading bio-solid residuals or sludge on open land passed.

Rural America Economic Update

During this panel discussion, Rob Atkinson of Progressive Policy Institute caused quite a stir when he stated that "rural" should no longer be considered agricultural and all farm subsidies should be phased out over a ten year period. Those funds should be given to rural communities for economic development. He sees no problem with big corporations taking over family farms and ranches. He asked, "Since food can be purchased from many countries, why should the federal government subsidize the industry?"

Many city residents want to retire in small towns, so he suggests rural America advertise to draw these "fat wallets" to their areas.

Needless to say, members of the audience were upset and didn't hesitate to tell Mr. Atkinson they disagreed. He was invited to several rural areas so he could learn the problems there. (I don't think he'll be making many trips out of Washington, D.C.!)

**PUBLIC LANDS
 STEERING COMMITTEE**
 Connie Eissinger, McCone County

Three resolutions from subcommittees were passed:

- Reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self Determination Act
- Full Funding for Healthy Forest Restoration
- Maintenance of Dams in Wilderness Areas.

Reforms for the Endangered Species Act (ESA), which were to have been done in 1992, are still in court proceedings. There are 14 bills before Congress addressing some changes for ESA. Three different programs have been implemented to work with landowners: Landowner Incentive Program, Private Stewardship Conservation Program and Cooperative Conservation Challenge Program. Funds flow to the state and out to private landowners who apply. 130 species have been listed and only 30 have been recovered. Sage grouse has been proposed for listing.

Ten million acres of forest fuels were treated on public lands in the last 2 to 3 years. All forest managers are committed to reduce fuel hazards. Stewardship Contracting is a contract between counties and private companies to remove fuel for healthy forest management.

Resource management plans are developing to increase production of energy supplies from five basins that have the best supplies. There are 175% more reserves that originally thought.

Heritage Tourism to preserve American towns is a new program offered through each state's tourism office. It is an effort to get people to visit National Parks and other venues.

Recreation fees will stay where they have been collected. There is a backlog of maintenance amounting to \$4.9 Billion.

Six lawsuits from nine states are still in process over the roadless rule from the Clinton Administration. The roadless rule is not in effect now and the Forest Service is considering withdrawing the rule and putting in specific rules for specific states.

**LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
 STEERING COMMITTEE**
 Carol Brooker, Sanders County

Sue Mohr, a member of NACo's affiliate National Workforce Association, and I presented four resolutions to strengthen workforce programs, with emphasis on protecting rural systems.

1. Urging Congress to use the local Workforce Investment Act system for any new workforce assistance programs
2. Urging Congress to increase Workforce Investment Act funds to FY 2003 levels.
3. Urging Congress to fund long-term skill training for all workers laid off due to industry relocating offshore.
4. Urging Congress to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act.

After lengthy discussion, the resolutions were passed to the NACo Board. The discussion reflected commissioners' growing concerns that funds will be shifted during a time of high unemployment to other needs such as Homeland Security, the war in Iraq and the Medicare program.

The Committee heard from Jane Oates, Senate staff, and from Chris Strong, National Association of Manufacturers. Strong spoke on the often overlooked role of manufacturing in our communities and how this important industry keeps our country strong economically.

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**GENERAL ELECTION BALLOTS
TO BE CAST ON INTERNET
IN NINE STATES**

In the Nation's most extensive Internet voting experiment, a step toward cyberspace elections, thousands of people serving in the military and American citizens living abroad will cast general election ballots over Internet.

In the 2000 Election, 184 people participated in a tiny demonstration project to do this. This year, 100,000 people could cast absentee ballots online.

The Pentagon-run program will be limited to eligible voters whose homes are in South Carolina, Hawaii, Arkansas, Florida, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah and Washington.

If this proves successful, the program could be expanded to serve more than 6 million voters in the armed forces and their dependents and nonmilitary citizens residing overseas.

Using the Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment (SERVE), local election officials will use the system to process voter registrations, send ballots to voters and accept voted ballots instantly.

DOUGLAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Assistant County Engineer
with emphasis in design and construction

This is a full-time position with monthly salary range between \$5,150 and \$6,329 and benefits.

SUBMIT APPLICATION and RESUME TO:
Douglas County Human Resource Assistant
140 19th Street NW, Suite A
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The position is open until filled. This position is not included in the bargaining unit. Douglas County is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, treatment or employment in its programs or activities. ADA accommodations are available upon request.

Finalists will be required to provide a 5-year driving abstract at the time of interview. Full Job Description is available from MACo at macopb@maco.cog.mt.us or from Douglas County at www.douglascountywa.net.

MACo News

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