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Two new commissioners join the ranks

By Mike Harbour, MACo Communications Officer

A veteran county employee and a former Nashua, Mont., city councilman were appointed to fill vacated commission seats last month.

In Rosebud County, Bev Nile was given the nod in early November to fill Gary Fjelstad's vacated seat. Nile, who's been employed by the county for more than 30 years, most recently served as the commission's administrative secretary.

The long-empty commissioner's seat at Daniels County was filled Nov. 6 by Donald Oaks; the appointment was made to end the vacancy created when Norman Ruud resigned in January.

For Nile, becoming a commissioner was a logical step in her career. As the commission's secretary for the last decade, she gained a lot of experience in county business, such as preparing budgets, reviewing expenditures, and managing a variety of grants.

Before she went to work for the commission, Nile spent more than 20 years at the sheriff's office as an administrative secretary, dispatch supervisor, and dispatcher.

Nile is married to Jack (Zeke) Nile and

the couple has one daughter and a granddaughter.

Nile's term runs through Dec. 31, 2008, after which her seat will be up for re-election.

Oaks, a South Dakota native who moved to Montana in the late 1960s, had a slightly different motivation for becoming a commissioner: he was frustrated that the position had been unfilled for so long. He threw his hat in the ring in the fall, and began working for the county at his first commissioner's meeting on Nov. 19.

The former building supervisor and furnace engineer at Daniels Memorial Hospital in Scobey, Oaks' previous political experience consists of a two-year stint on the city council of Nashua in the early 1970s. He retired from the hospital in 1992, but has kept active as a bus driver for Scobey schools.

Oaks, who has been married to Irene Oaks for more than 50 years, has five children and 17 grandchildren.

His term, like Nile's, will end next year; if he chooses to finish the four-year term, Oaks also will need to run for re-election.

MACo, Local Government Center join to offer second phase of training, commissioner certification

MACo, together with the Local Government Center at MSU-Bozeman, will be presenting Phase II of its annual elected officials training/commissioner certification Dec. 10-13 in Helena at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel.

Courses will be taught on numerous topics, from building county budgets and managing finances to special boards governance and courthouse relations.

As in previous years, course instructors are experts in their respective fields, and come from city, county, and state government, the legal profession, and MACo.

The event will be the only opportunity during the next two years for commissioners who have completed Phase I training to become fully certified. MACo encourages all elected county officials to attend the training.

To learn more about the training and certification program, please see the complete course agenda on the next page or visit our Web site at www.maco.cog.mt.us.

For information and directions to the host hotel, visit the Red Lion Web site at www.redlion.com and click "Hotel directory."



MACo News

MACo and Local Government Center, MSU-Bozeman Elected Officials Training/Commissioner Agenda Certification - Phase II Red Lion Colonial Hotel, Helena, Dec. 10-13, 2007

Monday, Dec. 10, 2007

3 pm Registration
 5:30-6 pm No-host Social
 6 pm Dinner — Welcome: Cynthia Johnson, MACo President and Pondera County Commissioner
 Self Introductions
 Keynote Address: Vernon Petersen, Administrator

Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2007

8-10 am **Course 201.2 Building the County Budget.** A small group exercise in building a county budget to demonstrate the legal requirements of the Montana Budgetary, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS). **Norm Klein, Local Government Services Bureau, MT Dept. of Administration**
 10-10:30 pm **Break**
 10:30-12:30pm **Course 203.2 Managing County Finances.** An overview of the financial oversight responsibilities of the Board of County Commissioners and the financial management tools available to the Board. **Jeff Krauss, Bozeman Mayor and former Gallatin County Treasurer, and Norm Klein, Local Government Services Bureau, MT Dept. of Administration**
 12:30-1:30 pm **Lunch**
 1:30-3:30 pm **Course 506 County Special Boards Governance.** Examination of the options and legal requirements for creating and overseeing the activities of county boards. **Paul Lachapelle, Community Development Extension Specialist, MSU-Bozeman**
 3:30-4 pm **Break**
 4-5 pm **Course 510 Reappraisal and the Tax Appeal Process.** **Doug Kaercher, MT State Tax Appeal Board**

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2007

8-10 am **Course 202.2 County Taxation.** An in-depth review of the legal authority and limitation on county taxation, debt bonding and investment. **Mae Nan Ellingson, Dorsey & Whitney**
 10-10:30 am **Break**

Wednesday, Dec. 12, 2007, continued

10:30-12:30 pm **Course 402.2 Courthouse Relations.** A discussion of the responsibilities of the Board of County Commissioners to establish and maintain effective operational relations within the courthouse. **Ann Mary Dussault, Missoula County Chief Administrative Officer; Barbara Berens, Missoula County Auditor; and Vickie Zeier, Missoula County Clerk & Recorder/Treasurer/Surveyor**
 12:30-1:30 pm **Lunch – Lois Menzies, Court Administrator, Montana Supreme Court**
 1:30-3:30 pm **Course 401.2 Effective Relations With Other Governments.** An overview and discussion of the responsibilities of county government to other units and levels of government. **Nedra Chandler, Cadence, Inc.; Harold Blattie, Executive Director, MACo; and Jane Jelinski, Director, Local Government Center**
 3:30-4 pm **Break**
 4-5:30 pm **Course 301.2 Principles of Human Resource Management.** An overview and discussion of the principles of human resource management in the courthouse. **Jack Holstrom, JPIA Personnel Services Administrator and Jane Jelinski, Director, Local Government Center**

Thursday, Dec. 13, 2007

8-9:30 am **Course 301.2 Continued.**
 9:30-10 am **Break**
 10-11 am **Course 509 Disaster Declarations and Mill Levies.** **Steve Knecht and Tim Thennis, MT DES**
 11-12 pm **Course 303.2 Hiring, Supervising & Motivating County Employees.** An overview and discussion of appropriate and effective techniques for hiring, supervising and motivating county employees. **Jack Holstrom, JPIA Personnel Services Administrator; Jane Jelinski, Director, Local Government Center; Harold Blattie, Executive Director, MACo; Sheryl Wood, Associate Director, MACo**
 12-1 pm **Lunch – Douglas Steele, Vice Provost and Director, MSU - Extension**
 1-3 pm **Course 303.2 Continued.**
 3 pm **Adjourn**



MACo News

Tax Year 2007 (for Fiscal Year 2008 use) Assessed Value and Debt Limit of Counties

| County | Taxable Value | Assessed Value | Debt Limitation | Comparison | |
|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | | | | FY2007 Debt Lmt. | Change |
| Beaverhead | \$16,931,314 | \$514,268,828 | \$12,856,721 | \$6,868,349 | \$5,988,371 |
| Big Horn | \$22,905,173 | \$592,013,245 | \$14,800,331 | \$9,736,483 | \$5,063,848 |
| Blaine | \$12,424,609 | \$322,253,022 | \$8,056,326 | \$4,426,614 | \$3,629,712 |
| Broadwater | \$11,062,900 | \$277,228,776 | \$6,930,719 | \$3,641,277 | \$3,289,443 |
| Carbon | \$29,397,695 | \$735,912,439 | \$18,397,811 | \$9,780,349 | \$8,617,462 |
| Carter | \$6,017,385 | \$140,280,688 | \$3,507,017 | \$1,909,340 | \$1,597,678 |
| Cascade | \$116,864,998 | \$3,489,414,241 | \$87,235,356 | \$46,419,452 | \$40,815,904 |
| Choteau | \$19,919,281 | \$522,674,600 | \$13,066,865 | \$7,413,484 | \$5,653,381 |
| Custer | \$14,614,529 | \$433,434,489 | \$10,835,862 | \$5,816,375 | \$5,019,487 |
| Daniels | \$4,972,286 | \$152,529,669 | \$3,813,242 | \$2,022,083 | \$1,791,158 |
| Dawson | \$14,709,441 | \$389,463,999 | \$9,736,600 | \$5,421,459 | \$4,315,141 |
| Deer Lodge | \$10,942,944 | \$312,711,162 | \$7,817,779 | \$4,144,719 | \$3,673,060 |
| Fallon | \$20,363,042 | \$334,310,467 | \$8,357,762 | \$4,179,773 | \$4,177,989 |
| Fergus | \$23,371,447 | \$656,011,671 | \$16,400,292 | \$8,851,093 | \$7,549,199 |
| Flathead | \$193,906,136 | \$6,622,011,142 | \$165,550,279 | \$84,797,268 | \$80,753,011 |
| Gallatin | \$196,866,339 | \$6,104,448,625 | \$152,611,216 | \$77,253,458 | \$75,357,757 |
| Garfield | \$4,865,430 | \$157,306,898 | \$3,932,672 | \$2,108,993 | \$1,823,680 |
| Glacier | \$20,664,613 | \$421,020,362 | \$10,525,509 | \$5,553,610 | \$4,971,899 |
| Golden Valley | \$4,996,049 | \$102,564,506 | \$2,564,113 | \$1,383,429 | \$1,180,684 |
| Granite | \$9,608,597 | \$309,180,730 | \$7,729,518 | \$4,146,178 | \$3,583,340 |
| Hill | \$28,322,537 | \$777,149,577 | \$19,428,739 | \$10,576,184 | \$8,852,555 |
| Jefferson | \$21,712,539 | \$617,756,987 | \$15,443,925 | \$8,255,208 | \$7,188,717 |
| Judith Basin | \$10,178,439 | \$234,580,220 | \$5,864,506 | \$3,174,582 | \$2,689,924 |
| Lake | \$57,545,272 | \$1,870,835,969 | \$46,770,899 | \$24,709,031 | \$22,061,869 |
| Lewis and Clark | \$101,888,410 | \$2,962,741,713 | \$74,068,543 | \$38,691,799 | \$35,376,744 |
| Liberty | \$7,329,793 | \$209,622,667 | \$5,240,567 | \$2,850,073 | \$2,390,494 |
| Lincoln | \$27,919,292 | \$1,173,268,274 | \$29,331,707 | \$15,801,973 | \$13,529,734 |
| Madison | \$53,060,249 | \$1,580,423,281 | \$39,510,582 | \$18,106,900 | \$21,403,682 |
| McCone | \$6,116,829 | \$191,888,122 | \$4,797,203 | \$2,572,451 | \$2,224,752 |
| Meagher | \$7,855,777 | \$221,570,395 | \$5,539,260 | \$2,948,196 | \$2,591,064 |
| Mineral | \$8,574,833 | \$263,635,470 | \$6,590,887 | \$3,507,188 | \$3,083,699 |
| Missoula | \$184,460,260 | \$5,994,659,358 | \$149,866,484 | \$80,917,114 | \$68,949,370 |
| Musselshell | \$7,449,227 | \$230,915,503 | \$5,772,888 | \$3,048,516 | \$2,724,371 |
| Park | \$34,414,818 | \$1,070,061,094 | \$26,751,527 | \$14,065,459 | \$12,686,068 |
| Petroleum | \$1,732,155 | \$51,930,959 | \$1,298,274 | \$694,561 | \$603,713 |
| Phillips | \$14,390,850 | \$321,173,215 | \$8,029,330 | \$4,368,409 | \$3,660,921 |
| Pondera | \$12,443,284 | \$352,518,473 | \$8,812,962 | \$4,766,637 | \$4,046,325 |
| Powder River | \$4,132,334 | \$130,114,665 | \$3,252,867 | \$1,772,373 | \$1,480,494 |
| Powell | \$12,227,418 | \$396,850,754 | \$9,921,269 | \$5,356,218 | \$4,565,051 |
| Prairie | \$3,287,850 | \$94,403,567 | \$2,360,089 | \$1,295,781 | \$1,064,308 |
| Ravalli | \$69,311,577 | \$2,194,550,871 | \$54,863,772 | \$28,116,516 | \$26,747,256 |
| Richland | \$24,165,980 | \$633,027,943 | \$15,825,699 | \$7,433,785 | \$8,391,913 |
| Roosevelt | \$21,871,317 | \$425,396,247 | \$10,634,906 | \$5,995,031 | \$4,639,876 |
| Rosebud | \$98,383,379 | \$1,920,392,313 | \$48,009,808 | \$25,248,957 | \$22,760,851 |
| Sanders | \$30,023,573 | \$911,571,230 | \$22,789,281 | \$12,288,356 | \$10,500,924 |
| Sheridan | \$8,311,137 | \$250,950,269 | \$6,273,757 | \$3,347,808 | \$2,925,949 |
| Silver Bow | \$48,415,555 | \$1,887,070,205 | \$47,176,755 | \$25,148,569 | \$22,028,186 |
| Stillwater | \$32,919,033 | \$922,017,394 | \$23,050,435 | \$11,796,987 | \$11,253,448 |
| Sweet Grass | \$17,252,550 | \$539,311,233 | \$13,482,781 | \$6,829,279 | \$6,653,501 |
| Teton | \$14,517,679 | \$417,842,702 | \$10,446,068 | \$5,643,356 | \$4,802,712 |
| Toole | \$14,748,596 | \$393,576,211 | \$9,839,405 | \$5,323,572 | \$4,515,833 |
| Treasure | \$3,823,120 | \$86,949,984 | \$2,173,750 | \$1,175,375 | \$998,375 |
| Valley | \$22,657,191 | \$485,998,933 | \$12,149,973 | \$6,788,776 | \$5,361,197 |
| Wheatland | \$12,291,381 | \$339,454,167 | \$8,486,354 | \$4,642,691 | \$3,843,663 |
| Wibaux | \$3,243,233 | \$85,237,349 | \$2,130,934 | \$1,147,167 | \$983,767 |
| Yellowstone | \$246,297,279 | \$7,513,040,216 | \$187,826,005 | \$97,180,006 | \$90,646,000 |
| Total | \$2,028,678,954 | \$60,341,527,089 | \$1,508,538,177 | \$791,458,668 | \$717,079,510 |



MACo News

Brassard joins MACo staff, Lyman, Goltry take new jobs

Fourth-generation Montanan Wilma Brassard is MACo's new administrative assistant, replacing Kerissa Lyman, now the claims assistant at MACo Claims. Lyman replaces Laurie Goltry, who took the newly created position of administrative enrollment assistant at MACo's Health Care Trust.

Brassard is a Helena native and was the office administrator for Statewide Contracting before joining MACo. She also was the office manager for the Downtown Professional Center in Helena, the former home of MACo Claims!



Wilma Brassard

In addition to being the proud mother of three teenage boys, Brassard also owns three Missouri Fox Trotters, a breed of sure-footed trail horse.

While Brassard will handle a wide range of front-office duties for MACo, Lyman's new role includes receiving and entering first reports of injury, as well as assigning claims to MACo adjusters. Among other tasks, Goltry will be responsible for entering new insurance enrollments and making changes, as well as special research and data projects.

Risk management conference to feature variety of topics

Behavior-based safety, sign vandalism, and terrorist bombing incident response are just a few of the topics to be shared at MACo's annual Risk Management Loss Control Conference next January in Bozeman.

The three-day event, set for Jan. 15-17, 2008, will have programs and sessions tailored to safety, roads, and law enforcement personnel.

Safety seminars will include the MACo Early Return to Work effort, implementing stretching programs, and even a self-defense course.

Road Day subjects will include work zone safety, proper sign placement, and road safety audits.

For law enforcement and EMS participants, an anti-terrorism program is planned. Peace Officer Standards and Training credits will be awarded to law enforcement attendees.

The Best Western GranTree Inn, located near I-90 and within minutes of Bozeman's airport, will host the conference.

To pre-register, use the form on the next page (page 5). For information about the conference, contact Emelia McEwen at (406) 444-4370 or macorma@maco.cog.mt.us. For questions on registration, contact Karen Houston at (406) 444-4375 or

Interim Committee Meeting Dates

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Dec. 6-7 | Revenue and Transportation |
| Dec. 11-12 | Legislative Finance |
| Dec. 13-14 | Education & Local Government |
| Dec. 19-20 | Water Policy |
| Jan. 7, 2008 | State Administration and Veterans' Affairs |
| Jan. 10-11 | Law and Justice |
| Jan. 14-15 | Environmental Quality Council |
| Jan. 16-17 | State-Tribal Relations |
| Jan. 24 | Energy and Telecommunications |
| Jan. 25 | Children, Families, Health, and Human Services |

STOP!

MACo's Directory of County Officials Is STILL Available!

Call 406.444.4360 or email maco@maco.cog.mt.us to order your copy.

MACo Property and Casualty Insurance & Workers' Compensation Insurance

For Public Entities

Greg Jackson

JPIA/JPA

Trust Administrator
Phone (406) 444-4370
macoim@maco.cog.mt.us

MACo Risk Management and Training

Emelia McEwen

Senior Loss Control Specialist

Fred Hansen

Loss Control Specialist

Phone (406) 444-4370

FAX (406) 442-5238



MACo News

RISK MANAGEMENT LOSS CONTROL CONFERENCE PRE-REGISTRATION

**Montana Association of Counties
Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association
&
Local Technical Assistance Program
January 15-17, 2008**

Best Western GranTree Inn
1325 North 7th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59715
(406) 587-5261

Name: _____

County or Agency: _____

Position/Title:

Pre-Registration
\$75

On Arrival
\$85

Paid

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE BOXES BELOW:

- Yes, I will be attending the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, January 15, 2008
 No, I will not be attending the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, January 15, 2008

Registration fee includes two luncheons, coffee breaks, registration materials, and the cost of speakers and program. Make checks payable to MACo, and send with this entire form to MACo at **2715 Skyway Drive, Helena, MT 59602**. For information regarding the conference, call Emelia McEwen at 444-4370 and for information regarding registration, call Karen Houston at 444-4375.

**REGISTRATION FEES WILL BE REFUNDED ONLY IF CANCELLATION
IS REQUESTED BY JANUARY 11, 2008**

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING YOUR OWN LODGING RESERVATIONS!

MACo has blocked sleeping rooms for the nights of January 14-17, 2008, at the Best Western GranTree Inn. The cost of the rooms are \$73.00 plus tax. **TO RECEIVE THIS RATE, you must mention you are with MACo Loss Control Conference and YOU MUST MAKE YOUR RESERVATION before Friday, Dec. 28, 2007.**



MACo News

From health care to rodeo, an acronym can be a conundrum

By Owen Voigt, Health Care Trust Administrator

One day while at the MACo offices, I heard Harold Blattie and Sheryl Wood talking about SB419. They typically have so much going on I try to not get involved, but when I overheard their conversation, and being an old rodeo cowboy who has been on a lot of bucking horses, I knew this SB419 must be some rank, chute-fighting saddle bronc horse. When looking at the draw at a rodeo, the saddle bronc horses were always posted as "SB," the bareback as "BB," and so on.

Figuring 419 was probably a Larry Wirtz horse from Outlook or maybe a bad one of Sparky Dreesen's from Circle, it was beyond me why Harold and Sheryl would be talking about it. Imagine my shock when I found out SB also means "Senate Bill!" I thought some acronyms were taken and it was just not an option to use them for something else. Turned out SB419 was right up my alley as it deals with people age 19 to 25 that, under current law, may not be covered under a health plan.

SB419 has significant implications to the HCT and all enrollees under a health care plan. 33-22-140, MCA, identifies a dependent as:

(5) "Dependent" means:

(a) a spouse;

(b) an unmarried child under 25 years of age:

(i) who is not an employee eligible for coverage under a group health plan offered by the child's employer for which the child's premium contribution amount is no greater than the premium amount for coverage as a dependent under a parent's individual or group health plan;

(ii) who is not a named subscriber, insured, enrollee, or covered individual under any other individual health insurance coverage, group health plan, government plan, church plan, or group health insurance;

(iii) who is not entitled to benefits under 42 U.S.C. 1395, et seq.; and

(iv) for whom the insured parent has requested coverage;

(c) a child of any age who is disabled and dependent upon the parent as provided in 33-22-506 and 33-30-

1003; or

(d) any other individual defined as a dependent in the health benefit plan covering the employee.

This appears to mean if your employee has an unmarried child less than 25 years of age, the unmarried child may now be covered under the employee's plan at work if the unmarried child meets the definitions stated in 33-22-140, MCA. The concern comes when the above definition is compared with the definition of a "dependent" under Section 152 of the IRS tax code. For reasons of space, I am not listing the definition of a dependent under Section 152, but suffice it to say they are not the same.

What all this means is an employee may be able to cover unmarried children who are no longer their IRS dependents. The bump comes when its tax time for that employee who elects to cover the non-IRS dependent under his or her employer's health plan. The coverage for the unmarried child may now be taxable income and subject to withholding.

HCT staffers Alyce and Laurie will be mailing notices to all plan participants with a covered dependent who is 19 to 25.

If this situation comes up for you as an employee or as an employer, it would be a good idea to check with your tax and/or human resource consultants about the implications to you. Until next time, please do not reuse any acronyms that are already in use. It is terribly confusing to old cowboys like me.

Health Care Trust Calendar of Events

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Dec. 15 | Open enrollment period ends for groups renewing Jan. 1, 2008 (Please note: all changes must be received by MACoHCT no later than this date.) |
| Dec. 21 | March open enrollment notice mailed to counties and groups |
| Jan. 1-Feb. 15, 2008 | March open enrollment period |
| Jan. 3 | March renewal rates mailed to counties and groups |
| Feb. 8 | March renewal rates deadline |
| Apr. 18 | July open enrollment notice mailed to counties and groups |

MACo Health Care Trust warmly welcomes its newest members!

**Sweet Grass Conservation District
Beaverhead County**

Teton County

Carter County

Garfield County

Great Northern Development Corp.

Town of Philipsburg



MACoHCT

MACo Health Care Trust

A Cost-Effective Alternative for
Health Insurance Benefits for
Counties and County-Related Boards and Districts

406.443.8102 ♦ Fax: 406.443.8103

Email: ovoigt@macohct.com ♦ Web: www.macohct.com



MACo News

Local Option Vehicle Tax Information Fiscal Year 2006

| County | Local Option Tax | Number of Vehicles | Average | Tax Percentage |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Beaverhead | \$466,581.51 | 9,522 | \$49.00 | 0.5% |
| Big Horn | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Blaine | \$198,101.87 | 4,226 | \$46.88 | 0.5% |
| Broadwater | \$248,477.72 | 5,785 | \$42.95 | 0.5% |
| Carbon | \$533,277.53 | 11,752 | \$45.38 | 0.5% |
| Carter | \$76,372.81 | 1,620 | \$47.14 | 0.5% |
| Cascade | \$2,846,838.44 | 67,912 | \$41.92 | 0.5% |
| Choteau | \$267,454.75 | 6,027 | \$44.38 | 0.5% |
| Custer | \$491,961.95 | 11,789 | \$41.73 | 0.5% |
| Daniels | \$103,306.15 | 2,338 | \$44.19 | 0.5% |
| Dawson | \$431,412.19 | 9,182 | \$46.98 | 0.5% |
| Deer Lodge | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Fallon | \$203,597.08 | 3,789 | \$53.73 | 0.5% |
| Fergus | \$540,814.67 | 12,927 | \$41.84 | 0.5% |
| Flathead | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Gallatin | \$4,367,641.52 | 81,532 | \$53.57 | 0.5% |
| Garfield | \$76,822.30 | 1,593 | \$48.22 | 0.5% |
| Glacier | \$259,216.24 | 5,415 | \$47.87 | 0.5% |
| Golden Valley | \$45,272.25 | 1,043 | \$43.41 | 0.5% |
| Granite | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Hill | \$626,006.68 | 13,537 | \$46.24 | 0.5% |
| Jefferson | \$557,829.25 | 11,781 | \$47.35 | 0.5% |
| Judith Basin | \$119,659.14 | 2,824 | \$42.37 | 0.5% |
| Lake | \$678,387.30 | 23,502 | \$28.87 | 0.5% |
| Lewis and Clark | \$2,534,584.62 | 57,873 | \$43.80 | 0.5% |
| Liberty | \$100,375.97 | 2,055 | \$48.84 | 0.5% |
| Lincoln | \$788,729.85 | 19,989 | \$39.46 | 0.5% |
| Madison | \$571,520.38 | 10,083 | \$56.68 | 0.5% |
| McCone | \$114,816.67 | 2,461 | \$46.65 | 0.5% |
| Meagher | \$98,300.59 | 2,083 | \$47.19 | 0.5% |
| Mineral | \$171,287.82 | 4,487 | \$38.17 | 0.5% |
| Missoula | \$4,460,820.78 | 95,474 | \$46.72 | 0.5% |
| Musselshell | \$219,002.58 | 5,139 | \$42.62 | 0.5% |
| Park | \$830,421.89 | 18,254 | \$45.49 | 0.5% |
| Petroleum | \$33,398.18 | 772 | \$43.26 | 0.5% |
| Phillips | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Pondera | \$238,680.33 | 5,672 | \$42.08 | 0.5% |
| Powder River | \$108,292.92 | 2,400 | \$45.12 | 0.5% |
| Powell | \$243,807.20 | 6,050 | \$40.30 | 0.5% |
| Prairie | \$64,311.61 | 1,524 | \$42.20 | 0.5% |
| Ravalli | \$1,845,462.43 | 40,930 | \$45.09 | 0.5% |
| Richland | NO OPTION TAX | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Roosevelt | \$231,875.94 | 5,127 | \$45.23 | 0.5% |
| Rosebud | \$341,758.35 | 7,554 | \$45.24 | 0.5% |
| Sanders | \$464,163.17 | 11,433 | \$40.60 | 0.5% |
| Sheridan | \$207,103.88 | 4,422 | \$46.83 | 0.5% |
| Silver Bow | \$1,325,646.31 | 31,244 | \$42.43 | 0.5% |
| Stillwater | \$472,637.61 | 9,886 | \$47.81 | 0.5% |
| Sweet Grass | \$227,877.28 | 4,314 | \$52.82 | 0.5% |
| Teton | \$304,561.78 | 7,511 | \$40.55 | 0.5% |
| Toole | \$233,896.97 | 4,580 | \$51.07 | 0.5% |
| Treasure | \$46,972.20 | 979 | \$47.98 | 0.5% |
| Valley | \$358,767.27 | 7,826 | \$45.84 | 0.5% |
| Wheatland | \$91,509.51 | 2,244 | \$40.78 | 0.5% |
| Wibaux | \$52,636.47 | 1,272 | \$41.38 | 0.5% |
| Yellowstone | \$6,073,500.78 | 131,756 | \$46.10 | 0.5% |
| Total | \$35,995,752.69 | 793,490 | \$45.36 | N/A |



County News

Robinson named to national county affiliate board

Phillips County Commissioner Lesley Robinson has been appointed to the Western Interstate Region (WIR) Board of Directors. Founded in 1954, WIR represents the interests of public lands counties, mostly in the West, and is the oldest affiliate of NACo.

"I am eager to begin serving on the WIR board of directors," said Robinson, a Montana native and cattle rancher. "The continued use of public land is an integral part of the sustainability of our county and the state of Montana."

Robinson, 41, became a county commissioner in 2005; before that, she worked for the *Phillips County News* as an ad sales representative. Today, she runs a cattle ranch with husband Jim.

"The ranch operates with private lands as well as public land grazing leases. We also enjoy the diverse activities available on public land including wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing and sight seeing," she said.



"Consequently, I am very aware of various issues concerning multiple uses on public lands."

Robinson said she's honored to be on the board because the position will give her an opportunity to focus on public lands and other issues critical to the Western region of the U.S. Her new role also will allow Robinson to network and exchange information with other county commissioners.

"There are over one million acres of Bureau of Land Management land in Phillips County alone," Robinson said. "In addition, our county includes other public lands such as the Charles M. Russell Wildlife Refuge, Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, and State of Montana land."

Robinson, who serves on MACo's Public Lands Committee, joins the WIR board alongside another Montana director, Lewis & Clark County Commissioner Mike Murray, and MACo Executive Director Harold Blattie.

Klein retires after 34 years with state, farewell party set in Billings

Norm Klein of the Local Government Services' Accounting and Management Systems, will be retiring after more than 34 years with the State of Montana. The Department of Administration is having a farewell gathering for Klein in Billings on Tuesday, Dec. 4, at the Hampton Inn.

An informational meeting will be held at 1 p.m. and all

local governments are invited to attend to discuss the legislative changes, and meet the Local Government Services Bureau staff. At 3 p.m., cake and refreshments will be served.

For more information about the gathering and meeting, as well as to RSVP, please contact the bureau at (406) 841-2909.

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County News



Gallagher

Public Entity & Scholastic Division

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What Events Are Covered?

Second in a series

The question of what events are covered is answered through several supporting questions, which can allow you to find the specific information necessary to answer the main question.

The supporting questions include the following:

1) What perils are covered?

Perils are causes of loss (a fire burns a building), so the key concern here is to identify what perils your local government's exposures are protected against. In broad terms, contracts will either list the perils, or will

state that the contract covers all perils except for the listed perils it excludes (in the exclusion section). This information is found in the insuring agreement.

2) What property, sources of liability, and people are covered?

Normally the insuring agreement will identify in general terms the types of property, legal interests, and individuals covered under the policy, but ordinarily the declarations page will provide specific information (individuals by name, spe-

cifically covered acts, itemized lists of covered property).

3) What losses are covered? The insuring agreement commonly will indicate whether direct, indirect, net income, or consequential losses are covered. Indirect losses are seen when a direct loss to one item diminishes the value of unharmed items (the remaining pieces of an incomplete set has a reduced value). Indirect or consequential losses are seen when a direct loss reduces future revenues or

increases future expenses. Normally, only direct losses are covered in standard insurance policies.

4) What is the time frame covered?

The declarations page will indicate when coverage is in force. However, some additional information may be relevant in the insuring agreement (especially when, in the case of some liability coverages, additional coverage may exist even after the policy period has expired).

To be continued...

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County News

Mileage reimbursement rate to increase

The Internal Revenue Service recently announced the standard reimbursement rate for mileage will increase to 50.5 cents per mile effective Jan. 1, 2008. This is an increase from the present rate of 48.5 cents per mile.

Section 2-18-503, MCA, provides that public officers and employees shall be reimbursed at the standard IRS rate in effect for the first 1,000 miles traveled in a calendar month and three cents less, or 47.5 cents per mile actually traveled, thereafter. Also, if a business vehicle is available but the public officer or employee chooses to use a personal vehicle, the lower rate of 47.5 cents per mile applies.

The standard mileage rate for business is based on an annual study of the fixed and variable costs of operating an automobile.

For more information on the MCA, visit <http://data.opi.mt.gov/bills/mca/2/18/2-18-503.htm>. To learn more about the IRS mileages rates, visit <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/rp-07-70.pdf>.

Commissioners, elected officials to benefit at 2008 Mid-Winter Conference in Billings

The 2008 edition of the annual MACo Mid-Winter Conference, set for Feb. 11-15 at the Billings Holiday Inn, again will be a great opportunity for county elected officials to learn more about state and local government issues.

The event is packed with seminars focusing on a variety of timely and critical subjects relevant to every participant.

For more information about the next year's conference, call MACo at (406) 444-4360, visit the MACo site at <http://maco.cog.mt.us> or watch *MACo News*.

New book available for county officials

MSU Extension and the Local Government Center are pleased to announce their new publication, "Serving On County Boards, Districts, Commissions and Committees in Montana: A Handbook for Members, Local Government Officials and Citizens" authored by Paul Lachapelle, MSU Community Development extension specialist and Mary Anne Anderson, MSU extension agent in Park County.

The 45-page book is a resource for those supervising, serving on or interested in public boards across the state.

Among the topics covered are Montana's Open Meetings Law, code of ethics, wrongful discharge, discrimination, board liability, Robert's Rules of Order, and the use of motions. The handbook also provides details on the creation, purpose, membership requirements, authorizing language, and funding information for Montana's 43 distinct boards, committees, commissions, and districts.

Also, the publication contains footnotes and references to the Montana Code Annotated so that readers can obtain more detailed information about legislative statutes or Justice Department opinions. While the handbook is written specifically for county-level public boards in Montana, those serving on municipal, state or even private boards will find the information useful.

The publication (No. 4500) is available for \$10 through the MSU Extension Distribution Center at <http://extn.msu.montana.edu/publications.asp>.

Lachapelle also is available to present this material through workshops in throughout the state. Contact him at paul.lachapelle@montana.edu or (406) 994-3620 for more information.

MACo News Invites Letters to the Editor

If you have a compliment, complaint, or suggestion, please let us know!

Please include your name and county with your letter, then send it to:



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NACo awards free radon test kits to four Montana counties

By Scott Berry, NACo Environmental Intern

Counties across the nation will lead activities and host special events next year to increase awareness of the health effects of radon exposure and to promote radon testing, mitigation, and radon-resistant new construction.

To assist in this effort, NACo has awarded twenty-four counties and coalitions of counties, including Flathead, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, and Sheridan counties, 200 free radon test kits through its County Radon Outreach Program. The test kits, supplied by NACo, were awarded to these counties for their innovative radon outreach and education efforts concentrated in diverse and low-income population areas.

Flathead County will target its diverse rural and Native American populations as well as low-income Head Start families with educational outreach programs and free test kits. The county will partner with local Habitat for Humanity programs to test each of their homes, as well as a senior citizens community. Test results will be added to the Montana State University's radon database to better target future efforts.

Judith Basin County will host an educational session for county 4-H leaders, parents, and club leaders highlighting the dangers of radon, testing, and mitigation. Those attending will then lead a short presentation in local classrooms in each of the county schools. The county will also host a radon awareness poster contest through 4-H clubs and schools, with the winner being displayed in several buildings around the community.

Lewis and Clark County will initiate educational outreach programs through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. Families participating in these programs will be provided with health risk evaluations, free test kits, and instructions on how to use them. The county also plans outreach efforts to the Childcare Partnerships to educate daycare providers about radon in their buildings. One county commissioner there also plans a concurrent campaign where he and a team of experts from the county will travel to a radon-resistant new construction seminar in Washington D.C. This team will then deliver reports to the

commissioners and other departments.

Sheridan County will target its extensive senior population and low-income groups by distributing information through its three senior centers. These will consist of meetings and one-on-one contacts at the centers, as well as home visits for elderly citizens and young families with small children who frequently do not or cannot make it out of the home. The public health department also plans to distribute information and test kits through the WIC group as well as foster homes for county children.

Radon is a naturally occurring, invisible, and odorless radioactive gas. It originates from natural deposits of radium in the soil. As the radium decays, it turns into radon gas. Radon enters a home due to indoor air vacuums that cause it to seep through the foundation.

The only way to know if a home has a radon problem is to test for the gas. Every home should be tested, regardless of age, construction style, or previous testing results. The cost of reducing radon exposure in the home typically compares to other common home repair investments.

Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the country surpassed only by direct smoking, and the leading cause of lung cancer among nonsmokers. It is ranked by the Environmental Protection Agency as a Group A Carcinogen, which places it in the highest ranking for cancer potential, and in the same category as tobacco. The EPA has found that radon is responsible for about 21,000 lung cancer deaths every year.

The other winners are: Calhoun County, Ala.; Delta, San Miguel, Gunnison, Ouray and Hinsdale counties, Colo.; Cerro Gordo, Grundy, and Linn counties, Iowa; McHenry County, Ill.; Pike County, Ky.; Blue Earth, Pipestone, Rice, and Rock counties, Minn.; Adams, Clay, Nuckolls, Webster, Cuming, Douglas, and Sherman counties, Neb.; Bernalillo County, N.M.; Albany County, N.Y.; Butler and Licking counties, Ohio; and Pierce County, Wis.

To learn more about radon outreach efforts, contact Kelly Zonderwyk at kzonderwyk@naco.org or (202) 942-4224, or visit www.naco.org.

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Rural Health Works grants available

NACo is now accepting applications for the Rural Health Works Technical Assistance Grant for rural counties.

Rural Health Works is community assessment process that assists counties to evaluate their healthcare system and to generate county-specific data. The ultimate goal of the project is to strengthen rural economies by increasing the use and expansion of health services.

NACo will award a total of three grants on a competitive basis.

The grant, valued at more than \$18,000 for each county, includes intensive technical assistance on the Rural Health Works model. Selected counties will work with Rural Health Works consultants to:

- Identify their health care needs
- Examine the social, economic, and political realities affecting the local delivery of health care
- Determine how the health care system can best meet the community's needs
- Develop and mobilize an action plan based on their analysis and planning

Funds are being provided by the Office of Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS.

The application is available from www.naco.org/ruralhealthworks. Application deadline is Dec. 15, 2007. For more information, please contact Christina Rowland at crowland@naco.org or (202) 942-4267.

Tell NACo your favorite candidate

As part of NACo's 2008 Presidential Election Project, NACo is gathering information about the candidates county officials support in the 2008 Presidential Election campaign.

The goal of the presidential election project, which is a non-partisan effort, is for all presidential candidates to hear the same message from county officials on key issues.

Visit www.naco.org/presidential to participate.

NACo, NLC interoperability academy application deadline set for Dec. 6

NACo, in collaboration with the National League of Cities (NLC), is hosting a two-day Interoperability Policy Academy in Nashville (Davidson County), Tenn., on Feb. 7-8, 2008.

County and city officials — both in elected governing positions and management positions — are invited to attend the academy as a team of up to four people (with an optional fifth member being someone who has responsibility for development and coordination of the statewide interoperability plan).

At least one publicly elected official who is a member of the local governing board must be on the team. Nominees to participate in the Academy must be affiliated with a NACo member county or NLC member city.

Variety in composition of the team across these disciplines and jurisdictions (county and city combination) will be more highly favored for consideration of acceptance if NACo receives more applicants than can acceptable.

The event will help county, city, and municipal officials address challenges to achieving communications interoperability at the local level, as well as address involvement in statewide planning efforts.

The academy will address questions about interoperability planning and participants will learn how to advocate for and implement actions related to governance, procedures, technology, training and exercises, and usage of equipment in a seamless manner in real-time.

This is not a technical training seminar; the academy will focus on policy-level issues and concerns.

Expenses for attendance are paid (subject to certain limits) including travel, housing, and meals.

The application deadline is Dec. 6, 2007; don't delay, as space is very limited.

Both NACo and NLC personnel will review applications returned by the due date and announce the selected teams by Dec. 18.

For more information, visit www.naco.org/interop, or contact Rocky Lopes, NACo Homeland Security project manager, at rlopes@naco.org or (202) 661-8841.



The National Association of Counties (NACo), in Partnership with Nationwide Retirement Solutions (NRS), and state associations of counties, provides county employees with a Section 457 Deferred Compensation Program.

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NACo News



Acts of Caring Awards to honor top volunteer programs with cash awards

NACo's 2008 Acts of Caring Awards will again present cash awards to the volunteer programs that win the Legacy Award for Excellence, and Innovation and the Youth Service Award. The winner of the Legacy Award will receive \$1,500; the Youth Service Award winner will receive \$1,000.

The Acts of Caring Awards recognize the top county volunteer programs in the country. The programs are honored for their community service and the legacy they provide for the future. This is the ninth year for the program.

The awards will be presented in next April during National County Government Week in Washington, D.C., in a Capitol Hill ceremony. All winning programs will receive etched-glass awards and recognition from NACo and members of Congress.

Up to 18 programs will be recognized and deemed examples of outstanding Acts of Caring. Based on county size, as many as three programs will be recognized in each of the following six categories: Community Improvement, Criminal Justice/Emergency Management, Elderly Services, Health Services/Social Services, Libraries, and Programs for Children and Youth.

The types of programs that can be included in Community Improvement are arts and culture, historic preservation, housing, environmental programs, services to help animals, civic education and recreation and parks.

Awards will be presented in each of three population categories to ensure that large and small communities, as well as urban, suburban and rural areas all receive the

recognition they deserve.

The Legacy Award is presented to the program that most fully embodies the spirit of volunteerism by addressing a unique need. This award is given to the top program in the contest because it sets itself apart by providing unparalleled service in its community. It is selected from the entire field of Acts of Caring applicants.

The Youth Service Award is presented to the program that best identifies a critical need in the youth community and addresses it, in part, by engaging young people in service.

An "act of caring" is a community service provided by a county-sponsored volunteer program that enhances or preserves the quality of life. Winners will be selected by an independent panel of judges. Any county government that is a member of NACo with an active program that meets the contest criteria is eligible to participate. A county program that won an Acts of Caring Award in the past two years is not eligible in 2008.

The deadline for entries is Friday, Jan. 18, 2008. An award application and a program brochure is available at www.naco.org.

The Acts of Caring Awards is part of Counties Serve America, a NACo long-term project carried out in partnership with Freddie Mac. The project's goal is to raise public understanding and awareness about county government.

For more information, contact Tom Goodman, NACo's public affairs director, at (202) 942-422 or tgoodman@naco.org.

House overwhelmingly approves landmark recidivism-reduction act

After nearly three years of development, the U.S. House has approved landmark recidivism-reduction legislation, the Second Chance Act of 2007 (H.R. 1593).

This legislation, with an annual authorization level of \$165 million, provides comprehensive assistance to state and local governments in developing evidence-based programs that will help enable persons leaving jail or prison to successfully reenter their communities. It passed Nov. 13, 347-62. The act was strongly supported by NACo.

It has been estimated that more than two-thirds of local detainees and state prisoners will be re-arrested within three years of release, and half will be reincarcerated. Ninety-five percent of all prisoners are eventually released into the community.

The passage of the legislation represented a huge victory for state and local governments.

For more information about the act, visit www.naco.org and click on "County Resource Center,"



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Around Our Counties

County Officials

PETROLEUM COUNTY Community Library Assistant Betty Mosby retired last month after 35 years of service. Mosby began her career in 1972 at the Winnett Public Library, one year before the Petroleum County Community Library (the state's first combined county-school library) was created.

PRAIRIE COUNTY has hired Amber Plaisted-Harman as its new deputy treasurer in October. Plaisted-Harman filled the position vacated by Jamie Smith when she became treasurer in September.

LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY Sheriff's Deputy Will Kussman was named Peace Officer of the Year by the Helena Family Violence Center in October. Kussman is an 18-year department veteran and serves on the county SWAT team.

PARK COUNTY has a new detective: Michael Gehl. A former Montana Highway Patrol trooper, Gehl was hired in October to handle domestic violence investigations and other cases.

ROOSEVELT COUNTY Weed District Coordinator Maurice Gonitzke retired in late October after serving in the post for almost 11 years. He'll be replaced by Clay Petersen.

SWEET GRASS COUNTY has hired Randy Werdal as its new Public Works director. Werdal previously worked for Jack Knorr, the outgoing director, when the two men were employed by Stillwater County's road department.

RAVALLI COUNTY Deputy Attorney Bill Fulbright was recently honored with the 2007 Outstanding Prosecu-

tor of the Year award by the Montana Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence, the state attorney general's office, and the state bar association. Fulbright has been the county's lead prosecutor on child abuse cases for the last five years.

BUTTE-SILVER BOW COUNTY's Health Department named a new director in late October. Rick Larson replaced former director Dan Dennehy, who transferred to the Public Works Department.

Subdivisions

SANDERS COUNTY voters will have the chance next June to vote for the formation of a county planning board. The issue was to be decided this fall, but the vote was cancelled the day before ballots were to be mailed. If next year's vote passes, it will be the second time in recent memory the county has had a planning board. The first was abolished by voters in 2002.

CARBON COUNTY commissioners approved the 47-lot Sapphire Springs Subdivision. The subdivision also will include eight commercial lots, whose occupants must first be approved by the homeowners association.

GALLATIN COUNTY commissioners in November approved a proposed trailer park project east of Belgrade. Owners of the Faith Mobile Home Park will subdivide the existing park and recently purchased land into 105 mobile home sites, 72 commercial lots, and 13 multifamily or condominium lots.

Law Enforcement

ROSEBUD COUNTY Sheriff Randy Allies accepted an \$80,000 grant from the Montana Coal Board in October.

The money will be used to purchase onboard digital video cameras for Sheriff's Department patrol cars.

MADISON COUNTY voters defeated in October a bond issue that would've paid for new law enforcement facilities, including a new jail and offices for the sheriff and county attorney, in Virginia City. It is the second such issue to fail in the county; the first was defeated in the 2006 general election.

Facilities

JEFFERSON COUNTY commissioners, in a 2-1 vote, chose to purchase a Boulder office building for \$169,900 as part of a plan to expand county facilities. The historic former home may eventually house the commission office as well as the county attorney.

MINERAL COUNTY Public Library patrons will be able to borrow any of the more than 13,000 books from the St. Regis School Library since the two institutions have combined inventory. The St. Regis School and Community Library, which opened in early November, is located in the school.

Miscellany

CHOUTEAU COUNTY received a national award from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for efforts at linking emergency

services and public health. The county is the only rural community in the U.S. to receive the "Model Community" award.

CUSTER COUNTY dogs, cats, and domestic ferrets have been ordered quarantined following a report of a rabid skunk. The order, issued by the state livestock department on Oct. 16, requires the animals in question remain in the county for no less than 60 days unless previously immunized against rabies.

FLATHEAD COUNTY commissioners voted 2-1 to support a recommendation to use federal bypass money for a street that will connect West Reserve Drive with Hutton Ranch Plaza next year. The decision signals the start of work on Kalispell's eight-mile, four-lane bypass project, which is expected to cost almost \$76 million.

CASCADE COUNTY commissioners, along with Great Falls city commissioners, sent a letter to the Great Falls International Airport Authority requesting it to rescind a confidentiality agreements policy for its board members. The commissioners stated the policy, which was later rescinded, violated the Montana Constitution and some state laws.

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Announcements & Reminders

2008 HOLIDAYS

The following is a list of legal holidays in 2008 and the dates they will be observed by most state employees.

| Legal holidays | Observed |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| New Year's Day | Tues., Jan. 1 |
| Martin Luther King, Jr., Day | Mon., Jan. 21 |
| Lincoln's & Washington's Birthday | Mon., Feb. 18 |
| Memorial Day | Mon., May 26 |
| Independence Day | Fri., July 4 |
| Labor Day | Mon., Sept. 1 |
| Columbus Day | Mon., Oct. 13 |
| State General Election Day | Tues., Nov. 4 |
| Veterans' Day | Tues., Nov. 11 |
| Thanksgiving Day | Thurs., Nov. 27 |
| Christmas Day | Thurs., Dec. 25 |

NOTE: If the holiday occurs on a weekend, the workday closest to the holiday is treated as the holiday for pay and leave purposes.

Mark Your Calendars

December

- Dec. 5-7 Secretary of State Election Certification Training, Billings
- Dec. 10-14 Elected Officials Training/Commissioner Cert., Helena

January 2008

- Jan. 7-11 Regional JPIA/JPA Mid-Policy Year Meetings, Various
- Jan. 15-17 Risk Management Loss Control Conference, Bozeman (see pages 3-4 of this issue for more information)
- Jan. 21-25 Regional JPIA/JPA Mid-Policy Year Meetings, Various

February 2008

- Feb. 11-15 Mid-Winter Conference, Billings

March 2008

- Mar. 1-5 NACo Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.

To view additional important dates, please see the MACo Health Care Trust calendar on page 6 and the Legislative Interim Committee calendar on page 4.

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 Gary Olsen, Broadwater Co. Justice of the Peace
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Great West Engineering, Inc., Helena

Life Care Services, Missoula

MT Community Action Partners (HRDCs)

Montana Contractors Association, Helena

MT County Road Supervisors (MACRS)

MDU Resources Group, Bismarck, ND

MSU Extension Service, Bozeman

Morrison-Maierle, Inc., Helena

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NorthWestern Energy, Helena

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