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MACo JPIA/JPA

Midwinter conference a success, MACo prepares for Annual event

More than 150 people from 49 counties attended MACo's 2008 Midwinter Conference last month in Billings to learn more about state and local government issues.

The four-day event, sponsored by the Montana Department of Commerce, started with meetings of 10 MACo committees. Hard Rock Mining, Urban, and Oil, Gas and Coal counties groups also met.

The conference's second day, dedicated to employment law, had speakers from the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. Department of Labor, several state agencies, and accounting and law firms.

On the last two days, seminars were presented on a variety of timely topics, including impact fees, river and stream setbacks, interoperability, digital TV, records retention, and more.

Planning for MACo's 2008 Annual Conference, to be held Sept. 21-25 in Hamilton, already has begun and local hotels are taking reservations. For a list of lodging choices and a map, visit the MACo Web site at www.maco.cog.mt.us.

Committee seeks involuntary commitment costs info

The Montana Legislature wants to know how hard county budgets are hit when counties, pursuant to Section 53-21-132(2)(a), MCA, must pay for the detention, evaluation, treatment, and transportation of individuals who, as a civil matter, need to be involuntarily committed to the Montana State Hospital for mental illness.

To that end, MACo is assisting the legislature's Law and Justice Interim Committee by conducting a survey to identify, among other things, how many civil involuntary commitment petitions are filed, what the itemized costs are in these proceedings, and transportation costs.

The survey, developed as part of the HJR 50 study requested by the 2007 state legislature, also asks counties to comment on whether and how the statutes governing civil involuntary commitment process and

New staffer joins MACo's Health Care Trust

Pam Walling has joined the MACo Health Care Trust as its new marketing/member services representative for central and eastern Montana. Walling will be based in Lewistown.

Walling is a Lewistown native and previously worked as an Aflac agent before coming to MACo. She resides in Lewistown with her husband, Rick Sandor.

Responsible for providing services to HCT pool members in Montana's central and eastern counties, Walling also will market employee benefit plans and programs to potential customers.

"We are very pleased and excited Pam has joined the Health Care Trust," said Trust Administrator Owen Voigt. "She brings a great background in customer service and benefits knowledge to our trust. She's already started making the rounds, so expect to see her in your county soon."

Walling may be reached at pwalling@macohct.com. Her office address and phone number will be posted

costs could be improved.

The survey already has been sent electronically to each county attorney, who were asked to ensure the survey is completed promptly and accurately, then returned to MACo Associate Director Sheryl Wood no later than March 10.

The data collected will be compiled, analyzed, and reported to the Law and Justice Interim Committee in time for its April 10-11 meeting in Helena. Survey responses will be instrumental in formulating legislative policy in this area.

For more information about the survey, contact Sheryl Wood at MACo. For information on the Law and Justice Interim Committee's HJR 50 study activities, contact Sheri Heffelfinger at (406) 444-3596, sheffelfinger@mt.gov, or visit the legislature's Web site at <http://leg.mt.gov>.



MACo News

When it comes to codes, a call can clear ‘em up

By Owen Voigt, MACo Health Care Trust Administrator

I drive a 1996 Ford ¾-ton diesel pickup. It is a man’s truck; big engine, flat bed, lots of power, the fuel runs into the injectors like a creek at spring flood. In the words of Tim “The Tool Man” Taylor, it is an “Arrh! Arrh! Arrh!” kind of truck. With 186,000 miles and change, it also has worn out tires at the moment. My son and I were getting some firewood a couple of weeks ago and he asked why I had racing slicks on my pickup. I explained they are not racing slicks but worn-out LT235/75R16 tires. To my shock he said “what?” Guess he thought I just had tires. Although my knowledge of tire numbers and codes were pretty impressive to me; amazingly he did not care.

That made me think about a meeting I recently had with some road department guys in one of our member counties. I was explaining CPT and ICD9 codes as they apply to medical service billing. They were not very impressed with my knowledge of codes and numbers; they just wanted to know what they needed to do to get their medical bills paid.

So the long and the short of it is buying tires or going to the doctor is a lot alike. Both require numbers and codes. Every kind of medical service available has a code associated with it, just like a parts code or the numbers and codes for a tire. If I took my truck in to get new tires and got LT23575R13’s versus LT23575R16’s, my truck would look like an old rodeo clown rig; big body, teeny tires (note: 13-inch wheels versus 16-inch wheels).

Now the question is what does all this have to do with

a broken arm? Well, if you are at the doctor’s office and he and his nurse are fixing your broken arm but the medical coding department miscodes one of the line items on the bill by one number, it now looks to our claims department like you had a broken arm and a pap test. As Batman would say whamm, pow! Your bill processing just came to a screeching halt.

Our claims department then has to figure out why a person having medical services for a broken arm would also have a pap test at the same time (especially if you are a man). If your medical facility does not correct the code and resubmit it to the claims department, I bet you can guess what happens with that part of your bill: no payment.

When you have a bill and it or even a portion of it does not get paid, rather than discuss the questionable ancestry of the HCT staff, how about a phone call to us to see what the problem really is? Our goal here is to see how we can get your bills paid, not how to deny them. Four out of five times when a bill does not get paid, it is a coding problem. So before you get laughed out of the coffee shop for your funny looking, tiny tires and big pickup or you get mad about your medical bills not being paid, think about how important one number can be. Call us; we are here to help.

Health Care Trust Calendar of Events

Apr. 11	July renewal rates mailed
Apr. 18	July open enrollment notice mailed to counties and groups
May 1-June 15	July open enrollment period
May 13	July renewal rates deadline
Oct. 10	January renewal rates mailed
Oct. 17	January open enrollment notice mailed
Nov. 1-Dec. 15	January open enrollment period
Nov. 10	Annual MDCR Part D notice mailed
Nov. 14	January renewal rates deadline
Dec. 21-27	2009 Rx formulary mailed



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Broadly speaking, four provisions in an insurance contract will determine the amount paid out after a loss. Those provisions are:

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ferred to the insurance company.

The coinsurance clause. A provision that is seen infrequently today, it is found in the insuring agreement and it encourages the policyholder (using incentives/penalties) to insure property at or near its full value.

The deductible provisions. The declarations page commonly will identify whether there is an out-of-pocket provision (a deductible) that applies to losses. Deductibles are very common in most local government insurance policies.

The contract limits. Also found in the declarations page, the overall limits of the policy will govern the amount an insurer will pay out. Sometimes property and liability policies have internal limits (only certain amounts may be paid for certain types of claims). Information on internal limits can be found in the insuring agreement.

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County News

PERI scholarship app deadline March 3

The Public Entity Risk Institute (PERI), a nonprofit risk management training and educational organization, is accepting applications through March 3, for the 11th Annual Small Entity Scholarship Program. PERI will award up to 60 scholarships to aid small public entities and community nonprofit organizations in attending the 2008 Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA) Conference and Expo.

An application form and eligibility requirements are available on the PERI Website at www.riskinstitute.org. The Small Entity Scholarship Program is open to employees and elected officials of local governments and schools, and staff and board members of small community nonprofit organizations.

Up to 60 scholarships valued at \$1000 in financial assistance will be awarded based on size or operating budget of the organizations and the risk management responsibilities of applicants.

"The PRIMA Conference offers numerous educational and networking events to enable organizations of all sizes to exchange experiences and gain new insights on effective risk management practices," said Gerard Hoetmer, executive director of PERI. "PERI scholarships allow small public entities and nonprofit organizations to take advantage of the opportunities available during this conference."

PERI has been awarding small local

governments, school districts, and nonprofits with Small Entity Scholarships for 11 years to attend the annual PRIMA conferences. The 2008 PRIMA Conference will be held on June 1-4 in Anaheim, Calif., with an extensive lineup of workshops and presentations by prominent leaders in risk management and an expo featuring the latest products and services from vendors and suppliers. For more information on the 2008 PRIMA Conference, visit www.primacentral.org.

PERI is a nonprofit research institute that develops risk management education and training resources for local governments, school districts, small businesses, nonprofits and others. PERI's website serves as a clearinghouse and library with information on a wide range of topics including disaster management and hazard mitigation, environmental liability, risk financing and insurance, education, safety and health protection, workers' compensation, and technology risks.

PERI also operates a national performance measurement and benchmarking database known as the PERI Data Exchange, which allows local governments to compare liability and workers' compensation data with their peers and identify strategies to reduce losses and control costs.

To learn more about publications and services available from PERI, visit www.riskinstitute.org.

PERB seeks proposals

The Montana Public Employees' Retirement Board (PERB) is requesting MACo and other organizations to present retirement legislative concepts at its April 10 meeting. If your county would like to submit a proposal, please send it to MACo Associate Director Sheryl Wood at swood@maco.cog.mt.us or the MACo address listed on page 12 of this issue of *MACo News*.

As always, counties are invited, and encouraged, to attend; for more information, visit mpera.mt.gov/

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County News

Iris Lee Whittle, 1923-2008

Iris Lee Whittle, 84, passed away in Billings on Jan. 30. Whittle served as Gallatin County treasurer from 1971 to 1978.

Whittle, a Montana native, was born near Joliet, graduating from Joliet High School in 1942, where she was a proud member of the state champion girls basketball team.

She married Ben Whittle later that year, raised two daughters, and operated a beauty salon in Bozeman before being elected to county office.

Jeanne H. Spotorno, 1928-2008

Jeanne H. Spotorno, 79, passed away in Helena on Jan. 18. Spotorno served as Lewis & Clark County auditor from 1974 to 1994. She worked for the county for 42 years, and retired from the clerk and recorder's office in 2003.

Spotorno was born in Deer Lodge, then moved to Helena in 1955, where she worked for the *Helena Independent Record* before entering public service. She was active in outdoor activities as well as sports, and was state singles bowling champion in 1972.

Clark Fork water conference to address supply, growth in critical river basin

Balancing the Clark Fork's water supply with unprecedented growth is the main goal of the Water Supply and Growth in the Clark Fork River Basin conference next month at the University of Montana.

The two-day conference, set for March 10-11, will explore the basic facts and issues about supply and growth in the basin and discuss tools for managing them.

Speakers and panel participants include a variety of professionals from state government, politicians, the private sector, and legal experts.

For more information, visit the task force Web site at http://dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_mgmt/clarkforkbasin_taskforce/default.asp.

DES summit to address emergency issues

By Dan McGowan, Disaster & Emergency Services

The business of emergency management has changed since 9/11 and county commissioners play a critical role regarding public safety and protection of the citizenry before, during, and after an event, so don't miss the 2008 Governor's Emergency Preparedness Summit at the Holiday Inn Grand Montana in Billings in April 22-24.

The summit, held only during even-numbered years, will bring together all the disciplines involved in incidents, emergencies, or disasters (federal, state, local, tribal, private, first responders and voluntary agencies) to facilitate an understanding of the issues and the interface necessary between all the potential participants. The intent is to build the partnerships and networks now that will promote the most effective mechanisms possible to deal with any future event.

The agenda is packed with workshops on prevention, preparedness, response and recovery issues that affect each and every one of our disciplines. Thursday will highlight a "Senior Officials Workshop" and Incident Command Position Awareness.

The 2006 summit provided an opportunity for over 500 participants to begin networking. At this year's summit, plans call for more than 50 vendors to help you stay abreast of all the new technologies that can assist with your emergency management efforts.

For more information, contact Dan McGowan, Disaster and Emergency Services administrator, at (406) 841-3911 or dmcgowan@mt.gov.

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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County News

Prairie County seeks county attorney

Prairie County in Terry, Montana, is accepting applications for the position of County Attorney. Applicant must be licensed to practice law in the State of Montana. This is a ½-time position, salary \$40,147.58. Full benefit package including health insurance and PERS.

Starting date would be approximately Monday, March 24, 2008. Please submit resume and cover letter to Prairie County Commissioners, PO Box 124, Terry, MT 59349 -0125 or call (406) 635-5575. Deadline for applications is Wednesday, March 12, 2008, at 5 p.m. Any questions or concerns, please call the above mentioned number.

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Drought workshop to be held in Wolf Point

The National Drought Mitigation Center is sponsoring a workshop on drought management tools with the Fort Peck Reservation Drought Advisory Committee and the National Weather Service on March 12.

The goal of the workshop is to confer with agricultural producers, extension agents, and agency and organizational representatives on tools being developed in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The center is developing tools that can help with management decisions such as buying or selling cattle, irrigation or whether to plant more drought-resistant crops; have some predictive capability, though it is still highly experimental; and help communicate ground-level perceptions and experiences to far-away decision-makers, claims adjusters and others.

The workshop will be held at the Fort Peck Community College in Wolf Point at 301 Benton St.

Rolls and coffee will be served in the morning, lunch is provided, and refreshments will be available during breaks. Producers who attend will receive a small honorarium and reimbursement for mileage to and from Fort Peck Community College.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Tanja Fransen at (406) 228-2850 or tanja.fransen@noaa.gov or Donna Woudenberg at (402) 472-8287 or dwoudenberg2@unl.edu.

Conservation trust solicits projects

The Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust is accepting proposals for project funding for 2008. The trust will make available up to \$1.2 million for projects that restore and conserve fisheries, wildlife and riparian habitat, enhance public hunting, fishing, and recreational opportunities and improve access to public lands.

For this funding cycle, the trust will accept proposals until April 11. Money will be awarded for statewide projects with a minimum of \$768,000 to be provided to projects within the hydrologic drainage of the Missouri River between Holter Lake and the river's confluence.

For more information, visit www.mtwf.org.



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.

Since its inception in 1980, NACo's 457 Deferred Compensation Program has grown to become the largest supplemental retirement program available to county employees.

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County/NACo News



Volunteer, rural fire grants available

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is now accepting applications for the 2008 Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) and Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) grant programs. The deadline for applications is March 24.

Matching funds through the federally-funded Title II & IV, Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) program (U.S. Forest Service) and the Rural Fire Assistance (RFA) program (U.S. Department of Interior agencies) can defray up to 90 percent of the cost of improving wildland fire protection.

According to Doug Williams, rural fire coordinator with DNRC's Forestry Division, single applications representing countywide fire organizations are required. Eligible applicants to be included are fire departments, rural fire districts, fire service areas, volunteer fire companies or other fire service organizations in communities with populations of less than 10,000.

The maximum grant amount for a single applicant is \$20,000. Single applications for a group of communities, such as countywide fire councils, countywide fire departments, etc., may have a total population of more than 10,000. Emphasis will be placed on training, PPE and communications. Construction or improvement of fire stations for housing fire equipment, normal operational expenses and maintenance do not qualify for these funds.

For more information, contact your local DNRC office,

CASE initiative raises exploitation awareness

Child sexual exploitation isn't a pleasant subject, but it is prevalent in our society, so NACo created the Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE) to combat this growing epidemic. CASE's goal is to encourage counties nationwide to convene local task forces and adopt resolutions in support of CASE in a national effort to safeguard children from potential predators.

Counties can do the following to help CASE raise awareness of child sexual exploitation:

* Log onto the NACo Web site at www.naco.org/CASE to access numerous resources to address this issue.

* Adopt the CASE resolution during your next county commission meeting.

* Mail a copy of the approved CASE resolution to NACo (see contact information below).

* Create a community task force — consisting of law enforcement officers, social service workers, clergy members, and public health officials, for example — to protect, educate or combat child sexual exploitation in your county.

* Keep NACo informed about other activities being done in your county to combat child sexual exploitation

For more information, contact Dalen Harris, NACo associate legislative director, at (202) 942-4236 or dharris@naco.org.

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NACo News



NACo fights for Farm Bill improvements

By Erik Johnston, NACo associate legislative director

Congressional leaders and administration officials are scrambling to devise farm bill legislation that will pass muster with all sides before the current law expires March 15.

The House passed H.R. 2419 — the Farm, Nutrition and Bio-energy Act — in July 2007, and the Senate passed its version, S. Amendment 3500 — the Food and Energy Security Act of 2007 — in December. The significant differences between the bills require the House and Senate to negotiate a final measure in a conference committee.

However, neither side is willing to go to conference until an agreement on the overall funding level is reached. Deliberations have been complicated by the threat of a presidential veto. The administration said both bills spend too much money, lack needed reforms and include tax increases. This has helped lead to weeks of confusion over the timing and content of a final bill.

During the week of Feb. 11, action on the Farm Bill intensified as House Agriculture Chairman Colin Peterson (D-Minn.) and Ranking Member Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) scrambled to put together an offer that the president could sign. The offer, agreed to by new Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer and touted as a starting point for negotiations with the Senate, diverges dramatically from the House's original bill.

The proposal features a 10-year farm bill that would spend \$6 billion

over the current baseline, which puts downward pressure on funding for all the titles that directly and indirectly affect counties.

Those areas likely to be hit hardest by this lower level of funding include rural development, nutrition, conservation and energy. The biggest cut in the House proposal is \$3 billion from the \$11.5-billion increase in food stamps and nutrition programs in the House-passed bill.

In response, Chairman Tom Harkin, (D-Iowa) and Ranking Member Saxby Chambliss, (R-Ga.) of the Senate Agriculture Committee submitted a proposal to the House that is \$12.3 billion over the baseline and more than double the \$6 billion House proposal.

The details of both proposals remain in flux, but the higher number in the Senate proposal will help maintain funding levels found in the original Senate-passed bill for rural development, nutrition, conservation and energy.

The contents of the 2007 Farm Bill have been debated for five years and the final decisions on this critical piece of legislation will be decided by the Administration and key leaders in the Senate and House in the coming weeks. The conference report may look very different from the House and Senate passed versions of the bill if the final overall funding level changes significantly.

NACo and 30 other national organi-

Online registration open for NACo conference

Attendees of NACo's 2008 Annual Conference & Exposition, to be held July 11-15 in Jackson County (Kansas City), Missouri, can register online and receive a \$25 discount on registration fees.

The registration fee includes entry to all workshops, symposia, and mobile workshops, as well as general sessions. The deadline to register online is July 3.

To register, visit https://www.exposoftevents.com/secure/shows/naco_an08/public/RegFull.asp.

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NACo News



National County Gov't Week nears

National Association of Counties' (NACo) President Eric Coleman is urging all counties to celebrate National County Government Week, April 6-12. This year's theme is "Protecting Our Children."

National County Government Week provides a great opportunity for counties to show the communities they serve the many ways county government works to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of children.

This year's theme coincides with President Coleman's two presidential initiatives: The Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation, which NACo is conducting in partnership with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, and Aging Out of Foster Care, which seeks to raise public awareness about the challenges faced by children leaving the foster care system. Information about these initiatives is available on the NACo Web site under About NACo/President's Initiatives.

"I encourage all counties to celebrate National County Government Week to show their pride in county government services," Coleman said. "This year's theme is a great opportunity to communicate what counties are doing to protect children and families and reach those who are in need of services but aren't aware help is available."

First celebrated in 1991, National County Government Week was created by NACo to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of the nation's counties. The activities held during the week help citizens better understand how counties respond to their needs and serve the community.

A booklet of ideas and suggestions is available by calling NACo's Public Affairs Department at (202) 393-6226 or visiting the NACo Web site at www.naco.org, then searching the County Resource Center page.

NACo/Nationwide scholarships to be given to retirement-minded

Two forward-thinking high school seniors will each earn \$2,500 for college this spring from the NACo/Nationwide Scholarship. Winning applicants will have researched the amount of money they'll need at retirement and described how to secure their financial future.

This is the third year in a row Nationwide and NACo have teamed up to encourage high-school seniors to think about retirement. Why spur students who haven't even started full-time work to think about retirement? Three reasons – by applying for the scholarship, the students must consider the financial impact of their decisions about college and their career; begin to recognize the value of time – the power that enables compounding to deliver significant returns on investment long-term, even if there are intervening short-term declines in the investment market; and get ideas for how they can prepare for a financially successful future rather than just "letting it happen."

To be eligible, applicants must be high school seniors or graduates (age 20 and under) who are legal U.S. residents and whose parent or grandparent actively contributes to the NACo 457 Deferred Compensation Plan.

The winning applicants must enroll in a full-time undergraduate course of study no later than the fall term of the 2008–2009 school year at an accredited two- or four-year college to receive the scholarship.

Application and entry must be postmarked no later than March 31 and sent attention to: Louie Watson, Nationwide Retirement Solutions, 5900 Parkwood Place, PW-1-16, Dublin, OH 43016.

The NACo/Nationwide Scholarship is just one of the services arising out of the 28-year partnership the company has enjoyed with the National Association of Counties. As provider of the NACo deferred compensation program, Nationwide regularly reports to the NACo Deferred Compensation Advisory Committee on industry trends, updates statistics on the program and provides ongoing education on retirement issues. For more information, visit www.naco.org/retirementscholarship.



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Thanks to MACO for allowing us to be part of the Mid-winter meeting. Also, a special thank you to all who stopped by the JPT booth. You all consumed 66 pounds of bananas during the three days. One banana is equivalent to two servings of fruit. You folks have very healthy snack habits! Thank you.
Vern Petersen, Administrator



Around Our Counties

Zoning

CASCADE COUNTY commissioners in late January approved, by a 2-1 vote, a zoning change to farmland east of Great Falls that will allow for a coal-fired power plant to be built there. The land, previously zoned for agricultural use, is now designated heavy industrial. One more commission vote is needed to finalize the zoning for the \$720 million, 250-megawatt project.

GALLATIN COUNTY commissioners created a set of proposed zoning rules in January that, if approved, will apply to all unincorporated areas of the county not already bound by zoning districts. Once draft regulations are finished this spring, a series of public hearings will be required before adoption.

BROADWATER COUNTY will take legal action against the developers of the Rolling Glen Ranch Subdivision after a bond deadline was not met in February. The \$258,399 bond is intended to complete work on Rolling Glen Ranch and Wheatland roads.

Law Enforcement

SANDERS COUNTY hired a new detention officer for its jail in January. Richard Boe,

a former jailer in Missoula County, leads a staff of five at the facility. He graduated from the University of Montana with a criminal science degree in 2000.

ROOSEVELT COUNTY received the lion's share of almost \$35,000 seized by the U.S. Marshals Service during federal drug prosecutions. The county sheriff's office received \$25,285 in late January, while marshals gave sheriffs in Meagher County \$4,561, Richland County \$2,879, and Yellowstone County \$822. The money was given through a program that allows a percentage of seized assets to be distributed to law enforcement agencies assisting with the criminal investigations.

GALLATIN COUNTY's Law & Justice Center will soon get several security upgrades, thanks to a \$19,500 project approved by commissioners in January. The upgrades include electronic door locks, video cameras, and intercom systems; the enhancements augment existing security measures, such as key card access and two sheriff's deputies who provide full-time security at the center.

Legal

MUSSELSHELL COUNTY commissioners cannot dis-

solve the county's refuse disposal district or assume control of it, according to an 11-page state district court ruling issued in January. The prohibitions issued by Judge Randal Spaulding stemmed from a 2006 debate between commissioners and the Musselshell County Refuse Disposal District board over their respective powers and duties. The order is final unless a party moves for reconsideration or the case is appealed to the Montana Supreme Court.

POWELL COUNTY's treasurer's office lost more than \$250,000 due to embezzlement from 2000 to 2007, according to an investigation following the resignation, and subsequent arrest, of the former deputy treasurer in connection with the missing money last May. The accounting firm conducting the investigation presented its finding to commissioners in January; the accused pled guilty to embezzlement charges last month.

Miscellany

CUSTER COUNTY was granted more than 17 acres of state land in January formerly occupied by the Pine Hills Youth Correctional Facility. The transfer deal with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation means the county can

use the land for a variety of purposes, such as records storage, lodging for visiting summer firefighters, and storage for wildland fire equipment.

ANACONDA-DEER LODGE COUNTY voters will be able to decide in June whether to spend an additional 17 mills on Anaconda's cemeteries. County commissions in January allowed a request from the cemetery board to put the resolution on the summer ballot to make equipment and infrastructure improvements.

FERGUS COUNTY commissioners approved an agreement in January that clears the way for construction of a \$6 million grain shuttle elevator in Moore. The project will be capable of loading 110-car grain trains, so a new road will be built for additional access into town when the main roads are blocked.

RAVALLI COUNTY's cottonwood trees, planted in the county fairgrounds during the Marcus Daly era, are nearing the end of their lives, according to a state forester's report, so 17 of the 19 towering trees will be cut down. The study comes of the heels of an incident involving a passing automobile that was struck by a falling branch from one of the

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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



Announcements & Reminders

NACo fights for Farm Bill

Continued from Page 10

zations that are a part of the Campaign for Renewed Rural Development have focused attention on the need for a robustly funded rural development title.

NACo strongly supports the \$400 million in mandatory spending for investments in rural development that are contained in the Senate version of the bill. This \$400 million in mandatory funding provides critically needed resources to rural hospitals, a micro-enterprise assistance program, a rural collaborative investment program (RCIP), child day care facility grants, and one-time funding for pending water and wastewater infrastructure.

Please contact your members of Congress and urge them to support the \$400 million in mandatory spending for investments in rural development that are contained in the Senate version of the Farm Bill, especially RCIP. Visit NACo's Legislative Action Center to use a ready-made message at <http://capwiz.com/naco/issues/alert/?alertid=10862826>.

Mark Your Calendars

March

- March 1-5 NACo Legislative Conference, Washington, D.C.
- March 10-11 Environmental Quality Council*
- March 12-13 Water Policy Interim Committee*
- March 17-18 Children, Families, Health, & Human Svcs. Int. Comm.*
- March 13-14 Education and Local Government Interim Committee*

April

- April 10-11 Law and Justice Interim Committee*
- April 17-18 Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee*
- April 25 State-Tribal Relations Interim Committee*
- April 23 JPA Trustee 2008-2009 Renewal meeting*
- April 24 JPIA Trustee 2008-2009 Renewal meeting*
- April 28-29 Fire Suppression Interim Committee, Hamilton
- April 28-20 **State Admin. and Veterans' Affairs Interim Committee***

May

- May 12-21 JPIA/JPA 2008-2009 Renewal Agent meetings, various

*All meetings are held in Helena unless noted.

To view additional important dates, please see the MACo Health Care Trust calendar on page 2.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- President** Cynthia Johnson, Pondera County
- 1st Vice President** Mike McGinley, Beaverhead County
- 2nd Vice President** Carl Seilstad, Fergus County
- Fiscal Officer** Allan Underdal, Toole Co.
- Urban Representative** Greg Chilcott, Ravalli County
- Past President** John Prinkki, Carbon County

MACo ADMINISTRATION

- Harold Blattie, Executive Director
- Sheryl Wood, Associate Director
- Karen Houston, Meeting Planner
- Tom Swindle, Finance Officer
- Mike Harbour, Communications Officer
- Sara McGowan, Accounting Technician
- Wilma Brassard, Admin. Assistant

MACo INSURANCE TRUSTS

- Greg Jackson, JPIA/JPA Trust Administrator
- Emelia McEwen, Sr. Loss Control Specialist
- Fred Hansen, Loss Control Specialist
- Jack Holstrom, Personnel Svcs. Admin.
- Fran Monro, Member Services Rep.
- Keith Stapley, Claims Manager
- Wendy Sesselman, WC Claims Supervisor
- Dennis Jupka, Senior Claims Adjuster
- Bonnie Knopf, Data Specialist
- Christine Holling, Claims Adjuster
- Liz Krzan, Asst. Claims Adjuster

- Kerissa Lyman, Claims Assistant
- Owen Voigt, Health Care Trust Administrator
- Alyce Bailey, Enrollment/Eligibility Specialist
- Pam Walling, Marketing/Member Services Representative
- Laurie Goltry, Admin./Enrollment Asst.

DISTRICT CHAIRS

1. Richard Dunbar, Phillips County
2. Mark Rehbein, Richland County
3. Donald Reiger, Fallon County
4. Harvey Worrall, Chouteau County
5. Arnold Gettel, Teton County
6. Jerome Kolar, Judith Basin County
7. Maureen Davey, Stillwater County
8. Tom Lythgoe, Jefferson County
9. Bernie Lucas, Meagher County
10. Gary Hall, Flathead County
11. Judy Stang, Mineral County
12. Tom Rice, Beaverhead County

ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS

- Leo Gallagher, Lewis & Clark Co. Attorney
- Cyndy Maxwell, Big Horn County Clerk & Recorder
- Marilyn Hollister, Rosebud County District Court Clerk
- Richard Brown, Fergus Co. County Coroner
- Gary Olsen, Broadwater County Justice of the Peace
- Diane Inbody, Teton County Superintendent of Schools
- Gregory Hintz, Missoula Co. Sheriff's Office
- Jo Anne Johnson, Ravalli County Treasurer

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Phone: (406) 444-4360

Fax: (406) 442-5238

E-mail: macopb@maco.cog.mt.us