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2009 conference to be historical event

By Mike Harbour, MACo Communications Officer

There's a panoramic photograph of dozens of county elected officials from a 1928 MACo meeting in Great Falls hanging in our hallway. It's doubtful most of those in the image thought much about standing outside for a picture on that cold January day, but thanks in part to an old photo, they'll always be remembered.

We urge you to take your place in history, too, by helping us celebrate MACo's centennial this September in Helena at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel on Sept. 20-24.

That's when we'll hold our 100th Annual Conference. This monumental event, which has been in the planning stages since 2007, will be the result of many hours of work by association staff as well MACo officers and board members.

We've even changed the conference schedule to reflect its importance. For example, we'll begin Sunday night with a reception and dinner devoted to the history of the counties and MACo, as well as a recognition of those elected and former

elected officials in attendance. Tours of the Montana Capitol and the MACo buildings also will be available the next day.

We'll soon send invitations to all those dedicated men and women who've held public office in our counties, thanks to the lists recently compiled by officials and employees in courthouses across the state.

Still, we know we might miss someone, and since our centennial is of no small importance, we'd like to enlist your help to reach those who might

not receive an invitation. **Please contact our office as soon as possible with the name and address of any former county elected official who may have been left off our lists.** We'll get invitations to anyone we may have missed as quickly as possible.

For those still serving the great citizens and counties of Montana in an elected position, we, of course, urge you to be here in Helena in September. It's truly a once-in-a-lifetime event you won't want to miss.



MACo spring district meetings start this month

(Maureen Davey, 322-1010)

Winter has released Montana from its grip, and that means it's time for MACo's district meetings. The 2009 schedule is:

- June 3: Districts 4 & 5, Chester Fire Hall, corner of 6th St. W. and W. Monroe, Chester (Arnie Gettel, 466-2151)
- June 5: Districts 8, 9, & 12, Beaverhead Co. Search & Rescue Bldg., 1116 Mont. Hwy. 41, Dillon (Tom Rice, 683-3750)
- June 9: Districts 1, 2, & 3, Miles City Town & Country Club, corner of S. 4th and Eagle, Miles City (Mark Rehbein, 433-1706)
- June 10: Districts 6 & 7, Carnegie Public Library, 314 McLeod, Big Timber

- June 11: Districts 10 & 11, Quinn's Hot Springs, 190 Quinn's Canyon Road, Paradise (Carol Brooker, 827-6942)

District chairs are responsible for agenda setting and distribution to the district membership. Additionally, the district chair is responsible for the minutes and for lunch arrangements. If the lunch is nohost, please let the members know the cost so they can plan accordingly.

If any agencies, organizations, or individuals would like to make a presentation at any or all of the district meetings, please contact the district chairs noted above to make your request.



MACo News

Health care plans: if they're not broken, don't try to fix them

By Owen Voigt, MACo Health Care Trust Administrator

The more we hear about the health care system, the more I wonder if it is fixed, broken or in need of either. It makes me wonder about where we are headed with health care today. No doubt something has to be done; the inflationary trend of around nine percent for medical and double digits for prescription drugs is not sustainable.

The question, really, is it broken or is it fixed and not working right? As individuals, we need to be careful we genuinely try to understand the issues and fix them.

People who know me well know I am frugal with my resources. Some would even say my extreme fiscal control make a monk's lifestyle seem extravagant and wasteful. When I think of things that are fixed but not working, I think of the old Voigt family camper. It had a gas-operated refrigerator. When new, there was a factory installed ignition system to light the pilot.

By the time the camper ended up in our yard, it still had a gas-operated fridge but the system to light the pilot involved a match, gas and a small enclosed area. My wife later added an idiot also was required. One Friday evening as we were getting ready to camp, I went to light the pilot so the fridge would be nice and cold before we left.

I went around to the side of the camper and took off the small access panel. Now I am a farm-raised, pretty handy, college-educated man, and I've been to more than one goat roping. That day, though, I had a dumb sign firmly in my hand. I reached into the access panel, under the fridge and pulled the primer to get gas in the pilot so it would ignite. To light it, I had a wooden stick match.

My arm was in to the shoulder and I had my face in the access panel. I got the match into the panel thinking how I was going to reach the pilot to light it. That was not a problem. The moment I got the match into the panel,

the pilot lit, and so did the entire area, including my mustache, eyelashes and eyebrows.

Flames look pretty big when they are coming off your mustache and burning up around the side of your nose. Ever try putting out flames on your face? A sense of urgency did not quite describe my feelings. My glasses were on my face and the flames from my mustache were rolling up under the lenses. I was slapping at my mustache trying to put the flames out and all I did was knock my glasses off. Finally, the flames from my mustache consumed what little hair was left and went out on their own.

My wife came out of the house with her face registering fear for the intelligence of our children. We did have a really good laugh, but it took all weekend for the smell of burned hair to go away. My youngest brother has a saying: "You have to be tough to be stupid." Boy, did that fit.

Health care issues today seem to fit a similar scenario. Everyone should have access to health care. Remember health insurance was started in the 1940s as a way to entice employees to work for employers when wages were limited. Today, the cost is nearly out of hand with family premiums for really good plans costing more than a house payment. The issue now is no longer about just employee benefits nor is it just about the cost.

Given as much as health care costs, how is your plan running? Over the long run, is it fairly priced, do you have reasonable access to health care or do you have a plan that penalizes you if you go to the wrong doctor or hospital? If they penalize you, why? Is it to protect you from a bad provider or is it strictly money motivated for a cheaper up-front fee without consideration of the final medical outcome? Do you have exceptional customer service for your employees? Do you get the information you need to determine if your premiums/contributions are fair, based on your claims and the risk of your group?

Is access to good health care or access to health insurance the issue? They are not the same and I sometimes wonder if my brothers saying will come into play and the tough part of his motto is going to come from our wallets even more than it does now. Be careful you don't break what isn't fixed.

Health Care Trust Calendar of Events

May 1-June 15 July open enrollment period
October 2009 January renewal rates mailed
Nov. 1-Dec. 15 January open enrollment period



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Andy Poole; Deputy Director
Business Resources Division
Phone: (406) 841-2707
E-mail: apoole@mt.gov
Website: businessresources.mt.gov

Financing for Montana businesses that generate a positive financial and economic return for the state and its citizens:

Gary Morehouse, Asst. Division Administrator
Business Resources Division
Phone: (406) 841-2732
E-mail: gmorehouse@mt.gov
Website: businessresources.mt.gov

Herb Kulow; Portfolio Manager
Board of Investments, Infrastructure Loan Program
Phone: (406) 444-1218
E-mail: hkulow@mt.gov
Website: investmentmt.com/Programs/instate

Financing for homeownership and rental assistance for Montana families:

Bruce Brensdal; Executive Director
Board of Housing
Phone: (406) 841-2840
E-mail: bbrensdal@mt.gov
Website: housing.mt.gov

Local government financing:

Dave Cole; Administrator
Community Development Division
Phone: (406) 841-2776
e-mail: dacole@mt.gov
Website: <http://comdev.mt.gov/>

One-stop reference source for virtually all state, federal and local development based public finance programs:

Gary Morehouse; Asst. Division Administrator
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Phone: (406) 841-2732
E-mail: gmorehouse@mt.gov
Website: mtfinanceonline.com

Louise Welsh; Bond Program Officer,
Board of Investments, INTERCAP Loan Program
Phone: (406) 444-0891
E-mail: L.welsh@mt.gov
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MACo News

MACo offering liability training classes in numerous topics

By Fred Hansen, MACo JPIA/JPA Loss Control Specialist

MACo JPIA/JPA has started its liability training classes to assist member counties in limiting their exposures. The classes offered are:

Defensive Driving, DD4

This is the National Safety Council (NSC) Defensive Driving Course and uses NSC training materials and certified instructors. The course is four hours long and each student receives a certificate of completion. The course cost is \$10 per student. Instructors are Fred Hansen and Emelia McEwen.

Law Enforcement Defensive Driving and Liability

This is a driving course designed for situations officers will encounter in their daily duties. It is taught through the Montana Law Enforcement Academy (MLEA) and is a four-hour, POST-certified course. Materials covered include liability training and defensive driving. Instructors are Jerry Williams and Fred Hansen.

L.E. Policy & Procedures/Jail Standards

This course is training on daily recommended policies and procedures for road law enforcement and operations at county jails. The Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association and MACo have developed a train-the-trainer course that will be taught at the MLEA. These trainers will train regional auditors who will conduct audits on jails in their regions.

Land Use and Planning

The course is specific to issue and laws concerning subdivision, zoning and land use in Montana. Regional training will be conducted annually with request for specific training. Instructor is Myra Shults.

Personnel

The course covers the legal issues concerning personnel, i.e., hiring, discipline, discharge, the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Family Leave Act. There also is a module on sexual harassment and discrimination. Instructors are Jack Holstrom, Dee Ann Cooney and Maureen Lennon.

Basic Internal Controls

This course involves implementing internal audit procedures as well as improving existing review policies.

These policies would be used by department heads and elected officials to have control over funds handled within their departments. This course offers some very practical insights. Instructor is Rick Reisig, CPA.

Road Tort Liability

The course is directed at reducing the liability issues facing county road crews. The training can be presented as a classroom training or tailgate training at the start of the work day. The instructor in this module has many years of experience and knowledge concerning road and bridge liability. On request, he may be available to address other liability training, i.e.: signing, pipes and bridges. Instructor is Jack Knorr.

Building Inspections

This is a service to inspect county buildings for general liability issues as well as conduct thermal imaging of the buildings wiring for overloads or heated wiring. Instructor is Fred Hansen.

For more information, contact Fred Hansen, MACo JPIA/JPA loss control specialist at 444-4360 or fhanzen@mtcounties.org.

Applications being taken for safety awards

The Governor's Award for Health and Safety recognizes commitment to excellence in the workplace safety and health arena. It promotes greater awareness of workplace health and safety across the state and offers the opportunity for leaders to share model programs.

The awards are the highest honor given by the State of Montana in recognition of health and safety excellence. Counties are encouraged to apply; the awards will be given at the Montana Governor's Workers' Compensation and Occupational Safety and Health Conference Sept. 30, and Oct. 1-2 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula.

Applications must be submitted by July 31 and may be submitted online or via hardcopy by downloading and mailing the form. The application and additional information about the awards program is available at <http://erd.dli.mt.gov/upevents/governorsconf.asp>.



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MACo News

2009 Directory of Montana County Officials corrections

The only constant, so goes the saying, is change, and we've got plenty of it for the 2009 edition of our Directory of County Officials. The data in our annual is as accurate as possible at time of printing, but things do change. Here are the corrections and additions submitted to us:

MACo JPIA Board

Dave Schulz, Madison County, replaces Cynthia Johnson; term is 2009-2012.

MACo Staff (JPIA/JPA)

Legal Services' fax number is 441-5497.

Carbon County

County attorney is Alex Nixon; his e-mail is anixon@co.carbon.mt.us.

Custer County

Public administrator is Amber Trenka. Her e-mail address is jtrenka@middrivers.com; her phone number is 234-4588.

Dawson County

Clerk and recorder is Shirley Kreiman; her e-mail address is kreimans@dawsoncountymail.com (phone number remains the same).

Flathead County

County Attorney Ed Corrigan's e-mail address is corriگان@flathead.mt.gov.

Fergus County

Sheriff Tom Killham's e-mail address is fcso@co.fergus.mt.us.

Gallatin County

Justice of the peace is Wanda Drusch.

Glacier County

Clerk & Recorder Glenda Hall also is the public administrator. Sheriff Wayne Dusterhoff's phone number is 873-2784.

Golden Valley County

County e-mail is berryml@middrivers.com.

Hill County

County Attorney Gina Dahl's e-mail address is dahlg@co.hill.mt.us.

Lake County

Commissioners' e-mail address is lakecommissioners@lakemt.gov.

Lincoln County

Justice of the peace is Jay Sheffield; his e-mail address is jsheffield@libby.org.

Meagher County

Clerk and recorder is Dayna Ogle; her e-mail address is dogle@meaghercounty.org.

Treasurer is Sue Phalen; her e-mail address is sphalen@meaghercounty.org.

Park County

Commissioner Marty Malone's e-mail address is mmalone@parkcounty.org.

Commissioner Randall Taylor's e-mail address is rtaylor@parkcounty.org.

Petroleum County

Commissioner Larry Ahlgren's e-mail is skipndiane@middrivers.com.

Powell County

Commissioner Cele Pohle's e-mail address is celemt@yahoo.com.

Rosebud County

Sheriff Randy Allies' e-mail address is rallies@rosebudcountymt.com.

Sanders County

Commissioners' e-mail address is kbates@sanderscounty.mt.gov.

Valley County

Clerk of court is Shelly Bryan (phone number remains the same).

Sheriff Glen Meier's e-mail address is vcsheriff@valleycountysheriff.net.

All e-mail addresses previously ending in @co.valley.mt.us now end in @valleycountymt.net.

County safety coordinators

Dawson County's phone number is 377-2564.

Fallon County's phone number is 778-8175.

Fergus County's (Kilby) phone number is 535-8118.

Prairie County's phone number is 635-5575.

Wibaux County's phone number is 796-2484.

Yellowstone County's (Schmidt) phone number is 256-2737.

Your business could be here!



MACo News

MACo hires Lennon, Bonilla, Beneventi to staff positions

Maureen Lennon and Greg Bonilla have joined MACo as the association's new associate legal counsel, while Tom Beneventi is the new custodian and maintenance worker.

Lennon is a California native, but settled in Montana at age 19. She was a partner at Garlington, Lohn & Robinson in Missoula and worked there since 1989. Her areas of expertise include defending tort claims against counties and county officials. A journalism and law graduate of the University of Montana, Lennon also interned at the Missoula County attorney's office. She has two sons.



Maureen Lennon



Greg Bonilla

Bonilla owned a legal practice in Fort Benton, where he did civil work. He was previously the chief civil deputy attorney in Cascade County. Bonilla also did insurance de-

fense in Great Falls. A Montana native, he's a University of California-Berkeley law school and University of Montana graduate. He still lives in Fort Benton but is looking forward to relocating his wife and young son to Helena soon.



Tom Beneventi

Lennon and Bonilla will report to Chief Legal Counsel Mike Sehestedt, who joined MACo last year to serve as general counsel for the association and its insurance trusts.

Beneventi was born in Colorado, but moved to Helena a short time later when his father went to work for Carroll College; he's been here ever since. He worked for UPS for 16 years, FedEx for 11, and has had a home repair business for the last 20 years. Beneventi is an avid hunter and fisherman and also has been a hunting guide. He hunts, fishes, and still trying to bag that elusive 30th elk. Beneventi, who's married and has two grown daughters, will perform custodial, building and grounds maintenance duties.

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County News

Duane Compton, 1918-2009

Duane Compton, 91, died in Billings on April 30. He was a former Phillips County commissioner and served as a state representative.

Born in Malta, Compton taught in Dodson area schools, served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II, and was a farmer and rancher near Loring. He also owned and operated the GN Motor Hotel in Malta.

He was a Phillips County commissioner from 1971 to 1982, and served as the state representative for districts 5 and 17 from 1983 to 1989.

Betty Noonan, 1912-2009

Mary "Betty" Noonan, 97, died in St. Regis on April 22. She was a former Mineral County treasurer/assessor and commissioner.

A Saskatchewan, Canada, native, Noonan moved to the U.S. and raised eight children with her husband, Robert Noonan. She also mentored young people to serve their county, state and federal governments in a political capacity.

She was the Mineral County treasurer/assessor from 1975 to 1982, and a commissioner from 1982 to 1991.

Nationwide extends call-center hours

As the uncertainty of the investment markets as well as the economy in general continues to concern workers trying to prepare financially for their retirement, many find themselves dealing with questions or worries about their retirement accounts well after business hours.

Nationwide recognizes this need and has responded by extending its hours of service to the retirement-plan participants of the cities, counties and other governmental entities it serves. Nationwide's call centers are remaining open until 9 p.m. Mountain time, Monday through Friday. In addition, Nationwide is reinforcing its commitment to processing requests received by 2 p.m. Mountain time on the same day, every day.

For more information, visit www.nrsforu.com or call (877) 677-3678 to speak to a retirement specialist.

Fleet of wildland fire engines grows

The fleet of Montana's state-owned and county-operated wildland fire engines grew significantly last week, with the completion of 28 new engines at the DNRC Equipment Development Center in Missoula.

Thirteen of the engines were financed by a one-time appropriation of \$1.25 million to DNRC from the state's wildland fire suppression account, which eventually will fund a total of 27 additional engines. The remaining 14 engines funded by the special appropriation will be built and deployed next year.

The funding was authorized by Gov. Brian Schweitzer upon the recommendation of the 2008 Legislative Interim Fire Suppression Committee. It is intended to augment ongoing funding for DNRC that enables development of 15 new wildland engines each year.



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Crime Prevention Tips for Businesses

Part 1 of 2

There are a number of simple preventative measures any business owner can employ to reduce crime. In addition, office managers may be able to adopt the following tips and suggestions:

Robbery Safeguards

- Ensure your establishment is well lit from both within and without.
- Avoid cluttering your front windows with bulky displays or signs.
- Keep the cash register near the front of the store in a visible location that can be seen by both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Conduct bank deposits on an irregular basis. Deposits also should be performed during business hours and as often as necessary.
- Maintain a minimal float in the register at any particular time. Place excess funds in a safe which cannot be accessed by other employees. Clearly display your cash register minimal funds policy.
- Train your employees in robbery procedure and especially emphasize cooperation with the robber by handing over the till cash without objection or hesitation to prevent injury.

Burglary Safeguards

- Use deadbolt lock systems for all exterior and interior security doors.
- Remove obstacles to make the interior of your business visible to the outside.
- Install mesh-covered exterior lights for all access points and have adequate interior lighting when the business is closed.
- Leave your cash register open and empty.
- Install burglar-resistant glass or have metallic mesh or metal shutters covering the exterior of all windows.
- Avoid leaving expensive items in display windows if visible to street traffic.
- Use a safe that is not only well anchored but also fire proof. If the safe is empty, then leave it open at closing time.

CONTENT DISCLAIMER: The information provided above is provided from a general insurance/risk management perspective and is NOT legal advice. Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. (AJG) does not provide legal advice as it is not qualified to do so. AJG recommends that you seek the advice of legal counsel in order to become fully apprised of the legal implications related to the information provided above as such implications are highly dependent on the unique facts and circumstances applicable to an individual situation.

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County News

Winter hits Montana a final time with April snow storm

By Mike Harbour, Communications Officer

A record-setting storm that dumped five feet of snow in parts of Montana during the last week of April taxed county road departments as they tried to reopen school and mail routes. The storm closed parts of I-15, MT 200, Hwy. 297, MT 21, Rogers Pass, and U.S. 89, as well as cut power to 11,000 Great Falls residents.

Lewis & Clark County crews faced tall drifts near Augusta, as did crews in Pondera County, where they battled six- to 10-foot drifts to make sure an elderly woman with a heart condition was able to leave her home.

All roads to Browning, for example, were closed April 29 by four feet of snow that had been falling since two days earlier. Also, many schools were forced to close until roadways were cleared.

The storm was the result of moist air from the Oregon coast colliding with cold air flowing from Canada. Snowfall along the northern Rocky Mountain Front set many records as it accumulated over the east slopes. It was an exclamation point to an otherwise uneventful April, as precipitation had been below normal until the storm.



The late April snow storm hit Montana hard; here are a few images (clockwise from top) taken in Pondera, Lewis & Clark, and Beaverhead counties of the aftereffects.

Governor's Institute sponsors forest meeting

The Working Forests, Managing Communities conference, co-sponsored by Gov. Brian Schweitzer and the Governor's Institute, will bring together public and private entities interested in creating a sustainable future for our working forests, communities and open spaces. The conference is June 18-19 in Kalispell; the deadline to register is June 5. For more information, call 444-5634 or visit governor.mt.gov/instituteconference/registrationform.asp.



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After





NACo News



Western Interstate Region board of directors report

By Mike Murray, Lewis & Clark County Commissioner and Lesley Robinson, Phillips County Commissioner

Our WIR board of directors meeting was held in Umatilla County (Pendleton), Ore. Javier Goirigolzarri from Communities for Healthy Forests in Roseburg, Idaho, showed us a video presentation. The theme of the video was keeping forests healthy. Trees dying from bug kill are releasing carbon into the atmosphere. The same is true of trees burning in forest fires. It makes more sense to be proactive so the forests and the environment stay healthy.

The Clean Water Restoration Act (CWRA), S.787, was discussed. It seems this issue keeps returning. The CWRA proposes to eliminate "navigable" from the definition of "waters of the US" within the Clean Water Act, essentially placing all bodies of water or "perceived" bodies of water under federal jurisdiction – even those waters traditionally under state authority. It's all about jurisdiction, so call your senators and ask them to oppose S.787.

We had an update on the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA), H.R. 980. This would be the single largest wilderness designation in history excluding Alaska. It would impact federal land management in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming by designating more than 19 million acres of new wilderness and 7.8 million acres of "biological connecting corridors" to be managed as de-facto wilderness. It also includes more than 200 miles of wild and scenic rivers.

Bob Douglas from the National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition spoke about Secure Rural Schools funding and their plans to keep the funding in place.

Cynthia Moses-Nedd is the official liaison for all Department of Interior offices. This is very good for all counties that deal with other DOI officials besides the BLM.

Congratulations to Lewis & Clark County Commissioner Mike Murray, who was sworn in as first vice president at our banquet (see related story on page 9).

Humboldt County (Nev.) Commissioner Tom Fransway presented a resolution expressing disapproval of civil actions against the Nevada livestock industry and the BLM. It passed with the condition it be generalized to the West, specifically the WIR states.

Douglas said it's too soon to go after new Secure Rural Schools funding, but we should continue to thank Congressional legislators for this year's allocations. Next year, requests will be made for at least 90 percent of the current amount, as well as funding go directly to schools. We strongly suggested it should go to counties, then we'd send our schools their funding. We don't mind getting the state out of it but schools seem to forget we're partners.

Does part of our forest county dues passed on so all of us become members of NFCSC? If not, we should consider this concept at the next Forest Counties meeting.

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WIR public lands report

By Mike Murray, Lewis & Clark County Commissioner

On May 19, many members from MACo attending the WIR conference spent the day on an agricultural tour. It started with a presentation by Dr. Clinton B. Reeder, economist, farmer and Umatilla County planning commissioner. We also heard from the director of the Oregon Wheat Association.

We then moved on to Bill Hansell's farm and learned how he uses recycled water from Smith's Food and Drug to irrigate his wheat and pea operation. Some members of our group got to see how a harvester can handle very steep slopes. We then moved on to Smith's frozen food plant where corn, carrots and peas are frozen and later packed for several brand names such as Birdseye. We enjoyed a wonderful tri-tip steak lunch put on by the extension, the county and the state beef association. Our afternoon was spent learning about grapes and small wineries.

We had the opportunity to enjoy many of the fermented grapes-wine tasting. The tour ended at a winery with beverages and dinner; it was a great tour and time.

Public lands: for me, the most important presentation was the recommendations from the PILT committee. They were:

- 1). Modification of the population caps so payments are based on acreage, not population. I argued the point that population has a cost that must be considered.
- 2). Require all new federal land acquired be added to payments.
- 3). Payments to Alaska boroughs be treated as a special case.
- 4). Any new formula should be simpler than the existing formula.
- 5). Deduction of prior year payments should be eliminated.

The task force was asked to keep working on the formula and report again at the annual conference. Copies of the recommendation are available at MACo.

Murray named WIR board 1st VP

By Larry Kline, Helena *Independent Record*

Longtime Lewis and Clark County Commissioner Mike Murray climbed another leadership-ladder rung last week in the NACo Western Interstate Region governing committee, assuming the role of first vice president.

Murray, who first won county election in 1992 after serving as a Helena city commissioner, is in line next spring to take the reins of the NACo's subcommittee, which is made up of county commission representatives from 16 Western states.

The group debates policy issues specific to local governments in the region and then passes proposals up to national board members, who then iron out positions before lobbying Congress on behalf of local governments.

Last week at a conference in Pendleton, Ore., the commissioners debated new funding formulas for federal payments in lieu of taxes — which are reimbursements to counties for the tax revenues they lose through the federally held lands within their boundaries — and the Secure Rural Schools program, a federal funding source for school districts and roadways.

Both programs are fully funded through 2012, but commissioners want to address what they consider to be inequities in the funding formula.

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Around Our Counties

Personnel

CHOUTEAU COUNTY Justice of the Peace Susan Spencer swore in Matt Guderjahn as a sheriff's deputy in late April. Guderjahn, who grew up in Malta, is the son of a Phillips County deputy. He'll attend the Montana Law Enforcement Academy this fall.

BUTTE-SILVER BOW COUNTY hired Jim Jarvis as its new historic preservation officer in May. Jarvis, a former Madison County planner, was one of 28 applicants for the job vacated by Chuck Carrig in February. In addition to his county experience, Jarvis also was Virginia City's historic preservation officer for seven years.

DAWSON COUNTY commissioners are considering hiring a part-time manager for the Dawson County Fair. The August event is run by volunteers but after some research, a paid position seemed more appropriate. While the position is a priority for the commission, funding will first be necessary before it is filled.

CASCADE COUNTY and the city of Great Falls has a new health department director: Alicia Thompson. Formerly the deputy direc-

tor of communicable disease and community health for a Washington county, Thompson also worked in a community health role in Spokane. She began her duties in Great Falls in early May.

Land Use

FLATHEAD COUNTY commissioners in late April approved the creation of a committee to study water quality in the Flathead River. The nine-member volunteer would also study erosion and setback matters, as well as provide advice to commissioners. The Flathead County River Commission also would seek grants for water-quality projects.

YELLOWSTONE COUNTY is being asked to sell land to accommodate a proposed federal courthouse that's grown to 40 percent larger than planned. The General Services Administration (GSA) requested in an early May letter to buy two county parking lots and a part of North 26th Street for the 100,000-square-foot structure. The GSA has yet to start construction on the \$80-million project.

ANACONDA-DEER LODGE COUNTY commis-

sioners in early May approved a special use permit for NorthWestern Energy's proposed Mill Creek power plant. The permit carried a number of conditions the utility must first meet before construction may start. The 200-megawatt plant could add more than \$200 million to the county's tax base.

Miscellaneous

MISSOULA COUNTY'S fairgrounds buildings topped the rankings in a Missoula preservation group's list of most endangered places in the county. Preserve Historic Montana released its list shortly after a consulting firm presented three draft plans to return the fairgrounds to financial viability if the Western Montana Fair remains at the site. All three plans would retain the original 1914 signature buildings, but call for the removal of a structure added in 1940.

PONDERA COUNTY, along Glacier, Teton, and Cascade counties, are closer to receiving more tax revenue thanks to the clearing of a final hurdle faced by the Montana Alberta Tie Line (MATL) transmission line. An Alberta, Canada, court dis-

missed in May the last appeal by Canadian farmers trying to block the proposal. The counties could receive more than a half-million dollars in annual revenue with Pondera County taking the lion's share of \$259,742; Glacier would receive \$236,698, Teton \$236,698, and Cascade \$98,227.

GALLATIN COUNTY commissioners reiterated their intention in late April to contribute \$1 million to a new facility in Bozeman for the mentally ill. The new, 11-bed Hope House will replace an aging Victorian structure with five beds and no secured areas. The commissioners' decision is subject to a property appraisal; groundbreaking is set for June 4.

PARK COUNTY must immediately reinstate former sheriff's deputy Blake Blatter to duty, according to a May ruling from the Montana Supreme Court. Blatter's firing in 2007 was ruled by the state's highest court to be unjustified and improper; after a county appeal was turned down in district court, the case was appealed in Helena. While the entire case is still pending, it was ruled Blatter must be return to work.

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Announcements & Reminders

Subdivision law requires quick action

By Myra Shults, MACo JPIA Consultant Land Use Attorney

As of April 28, the provisions of Senate Bill 305 are in effect. The reason for this alert is found in section 2 of the bill. Commissioners now have 80 working days from a determination of sufficiency to act upon a subdivision application of 50 lots or more. However, if commissions fail to meet either the 60- or 80-working-day deadline for a major subdivision, the monetary penalty provisions found in the bill apply.

Each county should look up this bill so it is aware of the monetary penalty. Accurate records must be kept of the deadline, and, if it cannot be met, obtain a written extension from the subdivider. If the subdivider refuses, then the commission must act to avoid the penalty.

Section 1 of the bill requires any proportionate share for extension of capital facilities per 76-3-510, MCA, be expended upon the specific capital facility for which the payments were required.

For more information, contact Myra Shults, MACo JPIA consultant land use attorney, at 549-7224 or amocsjd@aol.com. To review the bill, visit leg.mt.gov.

Mark Your Calendars

June

- June 3-11 MACo District Spring Meetings (see story on page 1)
- June 8-11 MT Assoc. of Clerks of Dist. Court Convention, Baker
- June 15 Legislative Finance Committee Meeting*
- June 18 JPIA/JPA Budget Meeting*
- June 25 Legislative Council Meeting, TBD
- June 26 **State Admin./Veterans' Affairs Int. Committee Meeting***
- June 29-July 1 MACo Board and Trustee Meeting*

July

- July 1 Revenue & Transportation Interim Committee Meeting*
- July 4 Independence Day (state/co. offices and MACo closed)
- July 8 Economic Affairs Interim Committee Meeting*
- July 9 Water Policy Interim Committee Meeting*
- July 16 Energy & Telecomm. Interim Committee Meeting*
- July 24-28 NACo Annual Conference & Exposition, Nashville, TN

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 20-24 **MACo's 100th Annual Conference***
- Oct. 18-20 AGRIP Governance & Leadership Conf., Seattle, Wash.
- Nov. 17-19 MACo Joint Insurance Pools Trustee Retreat*

*All meetings are held in Helena unless noted.

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