

The Iowa County



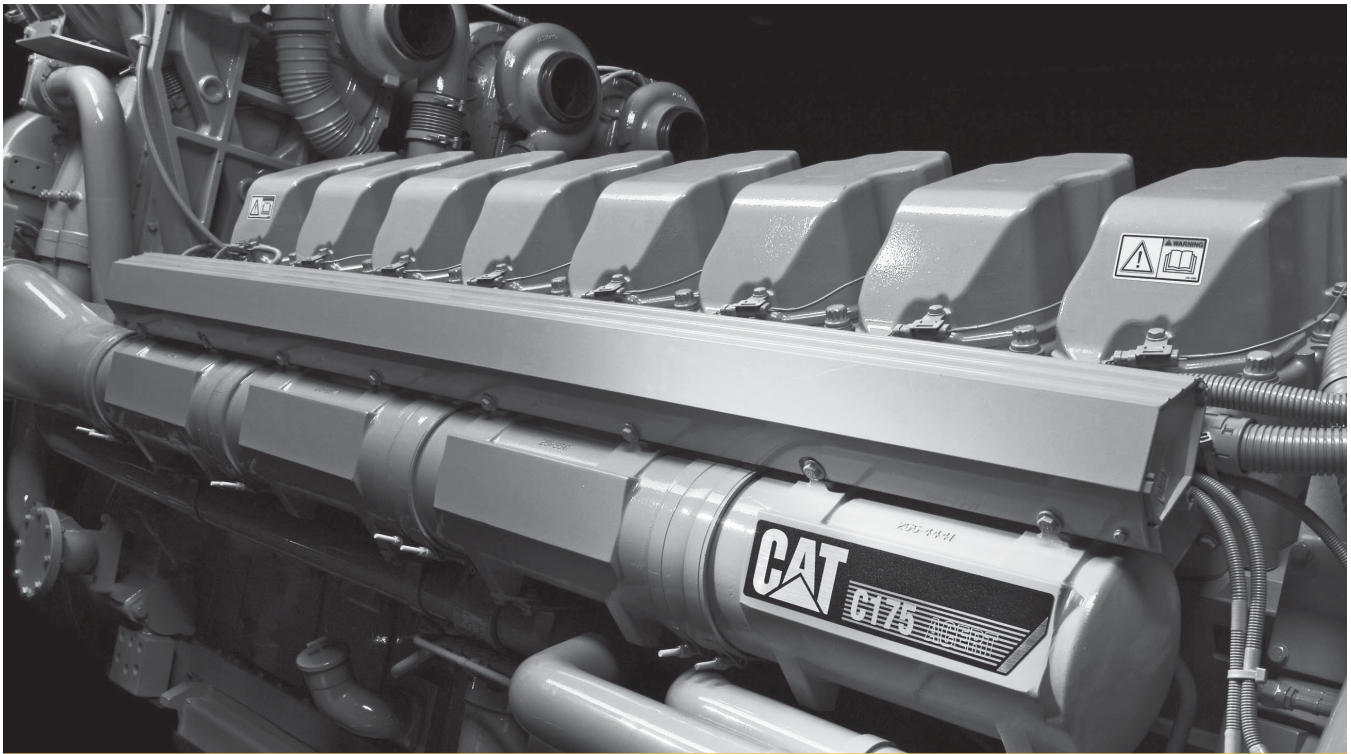
January 2016

ISAC Legislative Priorities Insert

Financial Status of the Counties

Fall School Wrap-up





Permanent or portable generators

POWER WHEN AND WHERE YOU NEED IT.

Disasters happen. Ice storms, tornadoes, floods, and more can knock out the infrastructure that your citizens depend on.

You can be prepared for unexpected power outages with a backup Caterpillar® generator set. Ziegler Power Systems sells and rents portable and permanent backup emergency power solutions to protect your critical facilities and components.

- Police Stations
- Fire Stations
- Government Offices
- 911 Call Centers
- Waste Water Treatment Plants
- Lift Stations

Whether you are planning for contingencies or looking for immediate emergency assistance, Ziegler is ready to lend a hand with the equipment and expertise you need.

Altoona, IA
 1500 Ziegler Drive NW
 800.342.7002



www.zieglercat.com

The Iowa County

January 2016 * Volume 45, Number 1

The Iowa County: The official magazine of the Iowa State Association of Counties
 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190
 West Des Moines, IA 50266
 515.244.7181 FAX 515.244.6397
www.iowacounties.org
 Rachel Bennett, EDITOR

Features

ISAC Legislative Priorities Insert

Financial Status of the Counties 4-6

Biswa Das and Amelia Schoeneman

Meetings 8-11

Kelsey Sebern

Lincoln Letters 12-13

Grant Veeder

ISAC Brief 7

Affiliate Highlights 14

Calendar of Events 16



ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. *The Iowa County* (ISSN 0892-3795, USPS 0002-150) is published monthly by the Iowa State Association of Counties, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266. Periodicals postage paid at Des Moines, IA 50318. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to rbennett@iowacounties.org. Subscriptions: \$25 per year.

ISAC OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Joan McCalmant - Linn County Recorder

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Peggy Rice - Humboldt County Auditor

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Lonny Pulkrabek - Johnson County Sheriff

3RD VICE PRESIDENT

Eric Stierman - Dubuque County Treasurer

ISAC DIRECTORS

Deb McWhirter - Butler County Assessor

Shane Walter - Sioux County Community Services

Matt Cosgrove - Webster Conservation Director

AJ Mumm - Polk County Emergency Management

Danny Waid - Hamilton County Engineer

Joe Neary - Palo Alto County Environmental Health

Joel Rohne - Worth County IT

Kathy Babcock - Chickasaw County Public Health

Wayne Clinton - Story County Supervisor

Burlin Matthews - Clay County Supervisor

Cara Marker-Morgan - Fremont County Supervisor

Elizabeth Ledvina - Tama County Veterans Affairs

Tim Huey - Scott County Zoning

Melvyn Houser - Pottawattamie County Supervisor

(Past President and NACo Board Representative)

Darin Raymond - Plymouth County Attorney (Past President)

Linda Langston - Linn County Supervisor (NACo Past President)

Grant Veeder - Black Hawk County Auditor (NACo Board)

ISAC STAFF

William R. Peterson - Executive Director

Lucas Beenken - Public Policy Specialist

Rachel Bennett - Communications and Marketing Manager

Jamie Cashman - Government Relations Manager

Kristin Comstock - Financial Administrative Assistant

Jonathan Covalt - Network Administrator

Deb Eckerman Slack - CM&MHDS Manager

Kristi Harshbarger - General Counsel

Robin Harlow - Innovation and Research Manager

Brad Holtan - Finance and Administration Manager

Andrea Jansen - Program Support Coordinator

Brynn Krekel - Receptionist/Administrative Assistant

Beth Manley - Compliance Officer

Tammy Norman - Office Manager

Dan Rees - Software Developer

Madeline Schmitt - Software Developer

Jeanine Scott - Information Technology Manager

Kelsey Sebern - Meeting/Event Administrator

Molly Steffen - CM&MHDS Specialist

Gina Wernimont - Administrative Analyst

Dylan Young - Senior Software Developer

** The views and opinions expressed in articles authored by anyone other than ISAC staff are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of ISAC.

ISAC's Mission:

To promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa.

ISAC's Vision:

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.

Emerging Trends in Fiscal Health of Iowa Counties

By: *Biswa Das and Amelia Schoeneman*

Iowa State University

Local governments in Iowa provide vital public services affecting citizens' quality of life and creating an environment for economic opportunity. While often undervalued for the role they play, local governments are an essential institution in the maintenance of civil society. The collective organizational capacity represented by municipalities, counties, school districts, and other local public entities is all too often not fully understood. Changes in demographic, economic and political factors are, however, making the task of maintaining and improving local public services more difficult and challenging for the foreseeable future.

The recent "Great Recession" of 2007 that left a lasting impact on the entire nation was more severe than any recession in the U.S. since the 1930s. Not only did it result in private sector employment loss, but also sharp reductions in state and local government employment. These public sector employment losses are a function of both the economic downturn and the rise of public sentiment antithetical to taxation and government expenditure in many states. Today, 46 of the 50 states have some form of tax and/or expenditure limitation on local governments and more than half of the states have limited their own fiscal behavior. Increasing economic downturns, continuing depopulation of rural areas, aging infrastructure and rigidly divided political ideologies are contributing toward local government 'fiscal stress.' While there are different ways of defining fiscal stress, the most important feature is the added pressure on government finances as revenue streams slow down and expenditure level rises either due to rising cost or increasing demand.

Recognition that local governments periodically experience conditions characterized by fiscal stress is not new. As we continue down a path in an environment characterized by extreme public fiscal austerity, we believe that tracking the fiscal health of local governments is warranted and essential. Efforts have been made to measure and monitor fiscal stress dating to the U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR, 1973). Since that time, there have been multiple fiscal indicator systems developed. Despite these efforts, relatively few units of local government systematically monitor fiscal conditions. This annual exercise by Iowa State University (ISU) is a step to address the situation by publishing an annual fiscal capacity and fiscal effort index for Iowa counties. The index will potentially assist local governments to understand their fiscal health and more effectively respond to the challenges ahead.

Fiscal Health

The ACIR methodology was used periodically to study interstate differences in fiscal capacity. For the purpose of assessing the fiscal capacity of county governments, this analysis develops an index that gauges each county's relative fiscal capacity as it relates to property valuation and the associated tax base. This approach evaluates county tax capacity by estimating the per capita tax yield that a uniform, hypothetical, representative tax system would produce in each county. ACIR measures tax effort, or how intensively counties tax their revenue bases, by dividing a county's total property tax (or own-source revenue) collections by the amount that it would raise under the representative tax system. These ratios are then multiplied by 100 to create indexes for which the value of the selected county group average is set equal to 100. Fiscal capacity and fiscal effort are both dimensions of fiscal health. Counties with high fiscal capacity and low fiscal effort enjoy the most fiscal comfort, while those with low capacity and high effort suffer the least comfort or the most stress.

In conducting the analysis, we use county-level data on annual property valuation, property tax levy rates and population estimates procured from Iowa Department of Management and U.S. Census, respectively. The 99 counties in Iowa are divided into four categories based on population (greater than 50K, 25K-49,999, 10K-24,999 and less than 10K), which will allow a county to make comparisons with group averages of peer counties.

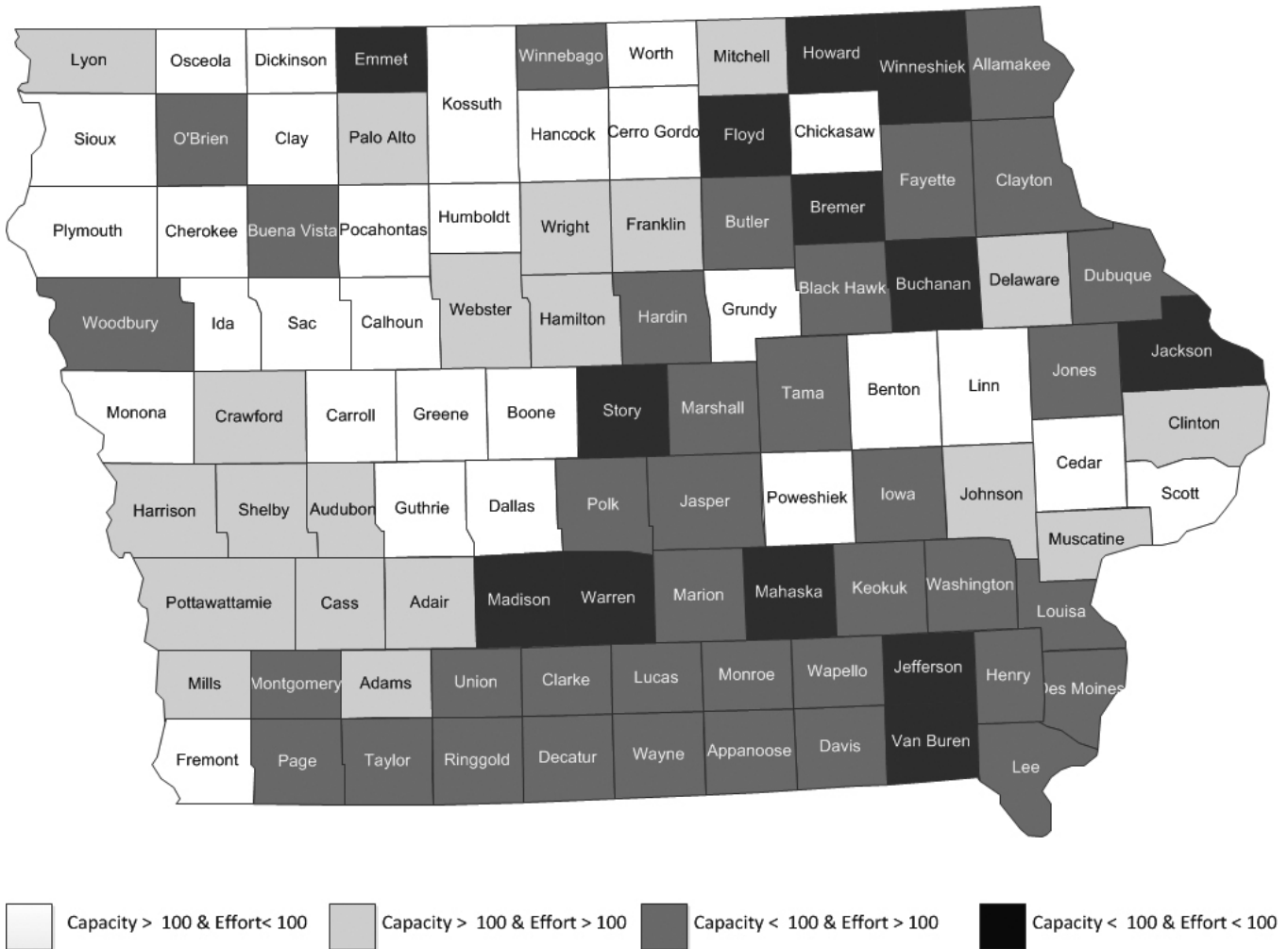
As we know, property tax is the major source of revenue for county governments. Therefore, areas that have higher property valuation tend to provide a strong base on which to levy taxes to meet expenditures. Concurrently, areas that have lower property valuation are presented with the challenges of using taxes to raise adequate revenue in order to provide essential services. In an effort to assess the fiscal health of Iowa counties, we use fiscal capacity and fiscal effort as indicators of the tax base of a county and the extent to which they are using property tax to raise revenues, in relation to a group of peers.

Fiscal Capacity and Effort Index

In developing the fiscal capacity and effort index, data of property valuation and property tax rate for 2014 were used. Based on the per capita property valuation (PCPV) for 2014, for the counties with population greater than 50K, the highest PCPV

Continues on next page.

Figure 1, source Iowa Department of Management



is \$56,900 in Dallas County, lowest is \$35,900 in Woodbury County, and average for the category is \$43,600; in counties with population 25K-49,999, the highest PCPV is \$53,700 in Cerro Gordo County, the lowest is \$31,700 in Wapello County, and the average of the category is \$41,400; in the counties with a population of 10K-24,999, the highest PCPV is \$134,000 in Dickinson County, the lowest is \$31,200 in Appanoose County, and the average is \$55,900; and in counties with a population less than 10,000, the highest PCPV is \$99,100 in Pocahontas County, the lowest is of \$30,000 in Decatur County, and the average is \$59,500. It is apparent that the PCPV is greater in smaller, rural counties when compared to larger, metropolitan counties. This is likely due to the gradual depopulation in rural

counties that either have a stable property tax base or are witnessing rising property values with the gradual improvement in the overall economic environment, including in the housing sector in Iowa and across the nation.

Figure 1, provides a map that assigns each county in Iowa to a category of fiscal health for the FYE 2014. In developing the map, we used both the fiscal capacity and effort to characterize the fiscal health of a county. There are four scenarios that were observed. While there are no clear regional trends that are apparent from the fiscal capacity and index, many smaller and rural counties actually have greater capacity and lower effort

Continues on page 6.

feature - fiscal health

Continued from page 5.

indicating fiscal comfort, and many of the urban and metro counties are confronted with fiscal stress. A number, of counties had a capacity index greater than 100 but also had effort index greater than 100, meaning they relied heavily on property taxes as a source of revenue. Several counties had both capacity and effort indexes less than 100 which indicated that they either had alternate revenue sources to fund services or the cost of providing services was met using the existing tax base. A more detailed description of these scenarios follows.

Out of Iowa's 99 counties, 29 were observed to be in fiscal comfort, or high fiscal capacity and low fiscal effort (capacity index > 100 and effort index < 100). Fiscal capacity greater than 100 means that the county has a higher property tax base to work with, relative to the representative system of counties. Similarly, fiscal effort less than 100 could be interpreted as a county not taxing its residents to a higher possible rate, defined as a weighted average of the representative system of counties.

Fiscal stress was observed in 37 counties. A scenario where the county has low fiscal capacity and high fiscal effort (capacity index < 100 and the effort index > 100) indicates a situation where the county is experiencing fiscal stress. It has a property tax base that is smaller than the average of its peers and the property tax rate is relatively higher, which is likely necessary to fund the various services it provides to the residents.

In addition, there are 13 counties that had low capacity but also had a lower effort, meaning they likely had other revenue sources besides property tax that provided the resources to provide the essential services. While clearly not a case of fiscal comfort, it is however a relatively better situation as it relates to the property tax rate. There are 20 counties that had high

capacity and high effort, meaning that they rely more on the property tax to fund services. Hence rising costs for providing essential services are met by taxing the existing property tax base at a rate more than the group average. This could be a situation that is more likely to cause fiscal stress.

The indexes of fiscal capacity and effort are annual estimates and will change from year to year. The changes will not only reflect what is going on in each county but also other counties that are grouped together as a representative system. Further, in counties that have other significant sources of revenue, the fiscal capacity and effort need to be interpreted with caution since they rely only on property valuation and property tax to develop the index. For additional details, the primary author may be contacted at bdas@iastate.edu.

Biswa Das is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist with Department of Community and Regional Planning, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

Amelia Schoeneman is a Graduate Student in Community and Regional Planning at Iowa State University.



Document management made easy

- County Wide Document Management
- Hardware, Outsourcing & Cloud Storage Services
- Integration with all County Software
- Onsite Scanner Maintenance

imagetek
Automate. Integrate. Accelerate.

www.imagetek-inc.com 1-800-422-1330 qwilliamson@imagetek-inc.com

LAW OFFICES OF
HOPKINS & HUEBNER, P.C.
Des Moines • Adel • Quad Cities

Legal Counsel Experienced In Areas Impacting County Governments
Serving All of Iowa

800-383-0111 • www.hhlawpc.com

purplewave.com

GOVERNMENT AUCTIONS



purple wave auction

- We market your equipment online and in your community.
- We sell your equipment to the highest bidder

866.608.9283 | www.purplewave.com

ISAC Fall School General Sessions Summary

November 18, 2015

ISAC President Melvyn Houser called the General Session and Presidential Candidate Forum to order and led the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Denny Wright, Sioux County Supervisor, performed the invocation.

Ray Garringer, Iowa County Supervisor, introduced former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum. Senator Santorum addressed the audience as part of the Counties Connect America initiative Presidential Candidate Forum.

Lonny Pulkrabek, ISAC 3rd Vice President and Johnson County Sheriff, introduced Keynote Speakers Carol Grannis and Cindy Maher who gave the presentation Maximizing Energy in a World that Sucks you Dry.

President Houser adjourned the session.

November 19, 2015

President Houser called the General Session and Presidential Candidate Forum to order.

Linda Langston, Linn County Board of Supervisors Chair, welcomed the membership to Linn County.

President Houser introduced the ISAC Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Bill Peterson gave conference announcements and thanked the sponsors, exhibitors and ISAC Preferred Vendors.

Bill discussed the Counties Connect America initiative and introduced a video provided by former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton as part of the Counties Connect America initiative Presidential Candidate Forum.

Scott Belt, CoSTAR Committee Chair and Pottawattamie County Supervisor, presented the 2015 ISAC Excellence in Action Award to the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards' MyCountyParks.com website and portal.

Jamie Cashman, ISAC Government Relations Manager, presented the policy creation process and an outlook of the 2016 legislative session. Peggy Rice, ISAC Legislative Policy Committee Chair and Humboldt County Auditor, presented the 2016 ISAC Legislative policy statements to the membership. The legislative policy statements were approved with one opposed.

Peggy presented the 2016 ISAC Legislative objectives to the membership. The objectives were amended to include the proposed Delinquent Taxes for Buildings on Leased Land objective and passed with opposition.

Peggy presented and the 2016 ISAC Legislative top priorities were accepted by the membership with one opposed. A handout of the top priorities and objectives is included inside the front cover of this magazine. A full listing of the 2016 ISAC legislative priorities is available on the ISAC website.

Bill gave a background on the ISAC Golden Eagle and introduced Kim Painter, Johnson County Recorder. Kim honored and introduced Sue Vande Kamp, former Story County Recorder, as the 2015 ISAC Golden Eagle. Sue addressed the General Session.

President Houser gave his thoughts on his year as president. Vice President Joan McCalmant shared the goals of her upcoming term as ISAC President.

President Houser adjourned the General Session.

fall school wrap-up

Thank You for Attending!

ISAC would like to thank all attendees of the 2015 ISAC Fall School of Instruction and Presidential Candidate Forum held on November 18-20. Around 750 county officials and employees traveled to Cedar Rapids for this year's conference that was held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cedar Rapids Convention Complex. We would also like to greatly thank all of the exhibitors, preferred vendors and conference sponsors. Exhibitor attendance and sponsorships allows us to keep registration fees low while still being able to offer coffee all day, lunches, morning refreshments, and much more. A conference of this scale would not be possible without the support of our sponsors, exhibitors and preferred vendors!

We also want to give a special thank the DoubleTree by Hilton Cedar Rapids Convention Complex, the Cedar Rapids Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Linn County Board of Supervisors for hosting us and also providing monetary support of the conference.

Conference App

We received a lot of great feedback about our first attempt at a conference app. We really hope that it enhanced your conference experience, saved you time, and helped the environment. Thank you taking the time to download and to use the app. It's a great way to provide you with much more information and networking than would normally be possible. If you have any

feedback about or need help with the app, please contact us at 515.244.7181 or rbennett@iowacounties.org.

We will be offering a conference app at the spring school again. This will be a separate app that you will have to download and register for completely separately from the fall school app. More information will be made available in closer proximity of the conference.

Trivia Night

Trivia Night was a great success in raising over \$5,800 for the ISAC Education Foundations that funds scholarships for the children of county officials and employees. We hope that you had a great time and congratulations to the district 6 auditors who took home the first prize. Thank you to all of you who participated in the event, who donated to the cause, who volunteered during the event, and who sponsored and made the event possible. We hope to offer a new and improved Trivia Night at the 2016 ISAC Fall School in Des Moines.

As always, we greatly appreciate any feedback about our conferences and events. All feedback is taken into consideration when planning and making alterations to future conferences. Please contact Kelsey at 515.244.7181 or ksebern@iowacounties.org if you ever have comments or suggestions.



fall school wrap-up



meetings

2016 Spring School

It's a new year, so mark your calendars now for the 2016 ISAC Spring School of Instruction, which will be held in conjunction with the 2016 County Day at the Capitol. Online registration for both events opens at 8:30 am on Wednesday, January 13, 2016. The two-day conference will take place on March 10-11, 2016 at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. County Day at the Capitol will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2016. Please remember that you must pre-register for the Spring School on the ISAC website before making your hotel reservation through the online housing system.

In addition to the Des Moines Marriott Downtown, hotel room blocks will be available at the Renaissance Des Moines Savery Hotel, Holiday Inn Downtown and Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown.

By: Kelsey Sebern

ISAC Meeting/Event
Administrator



All spring school activities and affiliate meetings will take place in one location again this year, the Des Moines Marriott Downtown. You can find all of the information that you need to prepare for the spring school on the conference website. From conference registration information to affiliate agendas to maps of downtown Des Moines, the website is updated on a regular basis with new and important conference details.

Affiliate agendas and miscellaneous affiliate meeting requests are due to ISAC by 4:30 pm on Friday, January 29, 2016. Online housing will close at 4:30 pm on Friday, February 12, 2016. Pre-registration for both events will close on Friday, February 26, 2016.

DEVNET

YOUR INFORMATION.
OUR TECHNOLOGY.
ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES.

DEVNET EDGE® IOWA SOLUTIONS

DEVNET's integrated Edge software and Online Edge solution works together with your current information to bring you an intuitive and efficient workflow.

- CAMA & Assessment Administration
- Billing & Collection
- Records Management
- Permitting & Zoning
- Visualization

info@devnetinc.com | 186314-DEVNET | www.devnetinc.com

Vanguard Appraisals, Inc.

For All Your Assessment Services



- Consultation
- Appraisals
- Software
- Web Sites

1-800-736-8625

www.camavision.com

AN IOWA COMPANY
SERVING
IOWA COUNTIES



**FOR COST ALLOCATION SERVICES AND
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Contact Jeff Lorenz (515)-238-7989
or Roger Stirler (515) 250-2687



True Expertise +
Working Ingenuity

ARCHITECTURE + ENGINEERING + ENVIRONMENTAL + PLANNING

Algona
515.295.2980

Des Moines
515.243.9143

Storm Lake
712.732.7745

www.is-grp.com

I+S GROUP

2016 ISAC County Day at the Capitol Agenda

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

9:30 am - 10:30 am	Affiliate Display Setup - Capitol Rotunda
10:30 am	Event Registration - Wallace Building
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Legislative Updates - Wallace Building Auditorium
12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	Affiliate Displays and Legislative Interaction - Capitol Rotunda
12:00 pm	Lunch - Capitol Rotunda West Wing
3:00 pm	Affiliate Display Teardown - Capitol Rotunda

2016 ISAC Spring School of Instruction Agenda

March 10-11, 2016

Des Moines Marriott Downtown

Wednesday, March 9

3:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Affiliate Committee Meetings (<i>Time available for small affiliate committee meetings – limited space available on first come, first served basis</i>)
4:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Exhibitor Setup

Thursday, March 10

ISAC Registration and Information Desk Hours: 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

Exhibit Hall Hours: 8:00 am - 6:00 pm

7:00 am - 8:00 am	Exhibitor Setup
8:00 am - 9:00 am	Exhibitor Morning Refreshments (Des Moines Exhibit Hall, Marriott)
9:00 am - 10:15 am	ISAC Educational Seminars (Iowa Ballroom, Marriott)
10:30 am - 12:00 pm	ISAC General Session (Iowa Ballroom, Marriott)
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Open Lunch
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Exhibitor Social (Des Moines Exhibit Hall, Marriott)
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Affiliate Time
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm	Exhibitor Reception and Vendor Drawing (Des Moines Exhibit Hall, Marriott)
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm	Hospitality Rooms (Marriott)
8:30 pm - 11:00 pm	ISAC Dance (Iowa Ballroom, Marriott)

Friday, March 11

ISAC Registration and Information Desk Hours: 7:30 am - 3:00 pm

7:30 am - 8:00 am	Morning Refreshments (Marriott 2 nd and 3 rd Floors)
8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Affiliate Time
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	ISAC Networking Lunch (Des Moines Exhibit Hall, Marriott)
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Affiliate Time

Please don't hesitate to contact me at 515.244.7181 or ksebern@iowacounties.org if you have any questions about our upcoming events in 2016!

Lincoln the Lawyer #10: Historiography and Lincoln

This is the story of a story. We're going behind the scenes of our recent look at Lincoln's Almanac Trial. I will show how I tried my best to give you reliable facts, and how I failed. I blame history.

The trouble with history is that we're never sure if we got it totally right. The generally accepted history of any given event is subject to change over time. Some popular history books concentrate on entertainment to the detriment of solid fact. And a lot of the Lincoln story, especially in his pre-presidential years, is more folklore than history. I have omitted telling some very enjoyable anecdotes because the weight of evidence does not support their veracity. The Almanac Trial, however, most definitely took place, and such is its entertainment value that no Lincoln biography is complete without it. But it seems like no Lincoln biographer ever tells it exactly the same as another Lincoln biographer. When I set out to include it in the last installment, I went to pains to be satisfied that my version was supported by reliable sources. When I was nearly finished, I came across a 2014 book called *Abraham Lincoln's Most Famous Case: The Almanac Trial* by George R. Dekle, Sr. The author is a retired state prosecutor and law professor who was similarly disturbed by the often widely differing accounts of this "Most Famous Case." He dug deeply into the original sources and analyzed various aspects of the story in light of the facts on record. I found that several of the elements that I included in my version either were untrue or gave false impressions. Although some parts of the story must remain forever untestable, Dekle's research brings us as close to the truth as we're likely to get. Dekle also addresses charges that Lincoln acted improperly or unethically in his conduct at the trial.

Rather than rewrite my version of the story, I decided to let it stand, and then put it to the test of Dekle's research. The results are instructive. Let's start with the story of the fatal fight that led to the trial. I said that Pres Metzger "allegedly got belligerent with [Duff] Armstrong and James Norris, and the two later allegedly attacked Metzger, one with a neck yoke and the other with a slungshot, and Metzger died three days later of head injuries." There is little doubt that Armstrong and Norris both struck Metzger, but my implication is that they attacked Metzger in concert. None of the testimony or evidence supports this. Armstrong said Metzger kept goading and physically abusing him until he struck him in the eye with his fist. Some witnesses (Armstrong's friends) supported this, others said he used a deadly slungshot, a heavy oval of lead and zinc sewn into a

By: Grant Veeder

Black Hawk County Auditor,
ISAC Historian



leather pouch and attached to a long strap. The coroner's report said that Metzger was struck so hard that a piece of bone was forced into his brain. That would seem to weaken the claim that Metzger died three days later, but remarkably, this fact is not in dispute. After more violent struggle and confrontation with Armstrong, Metzger lurched away and at some point was struck on the back of the head. The next morning he got on his horse and rode home. The coroner said that either blow could have caused the death three days later.

Then I said, "...Thomas Edwards, one of the old Clary Grove Boys, looked [Lincoln] up and asked him to come to Duff's aid," and that when Edwards assured Lincoln on behalf of Duff's mother Hannah that he would be paid, Lincoln said, "You Ed'ards! You ought to know me better than to think I'd take a fee from any of Jack Armstrong's blood." Much of my running around to different sources was just to feel safe in saying that Lincoln exclaimed "You Ed'ards!" It's a homey touch, the sort of unexpected detail that enhances readability. Which is why it throws up a red flag. The source is Edwards himself, and the quote is uncorroborated. The justification for using it is that there was little reason for Edwards to lie about it. As a longtime acquaintance, he could be relied on to know how Lincoln talked in everyday conversation. And no one disputes that Lincoln accepted no fee. Dekle doesn't mention the quote, but says that Lincoln resisted Hannah Armstrong's attempts to hire him, including the visit from Edwards, probably because he was afraid of disappointing an old friend if he failed to get an acquittal.

So there were some misapprehensions that I labored under. From various sources I had the impression that Lincoln was engaged for the defense shortly after the arrest, that he led the defense, that he worked on the trial throughout. In fact, Hannah Armstrong hired Caleb Dilworth, who won a change of venue, and it was only coincidental that Lincoln was in Beardstown on another Eighth Judicial Circuit Court case the day before the trial took place there on May 7, 1858, more than six months after Duff's first court appearance. It was at this point that Hannah Armstrong was finally successful in coaxing Lincoln to assist with the defense, and when he agreed, he had less than a day to prepare. He met with Dilworth at his hotel, and discussed the case with the defense's twenty-odd witnesses late into the night.

Continues on next page.

One of these was an expert witness, Dr. Charles Parker, who was prepared to testify that the blow Metzger received to the back of the head, for which James Norris had already been convicted of manslaughter, could have caused the wound in the front of his head, creating a reasonable doubt that Armstrong's blow was fatal. I gave Lincoln credit for bringing this witness, when in fact he had nothing to do with it except to question him on the stand. Another assumption of mine which may or may not be apparent was that the trial took several days. Actually, it was over in one, and it was the second trial of the day in that court.

Then comes the key event of the story: The chief prosecution witness, Charles Allen, claimed that he witnessed both attacks on Metzger and could identify the assailants by the light of the moon. Lincoln made him repeat that the moon was about the height of the sun at 11:00 am. "Lincoln then produced an almanac that showed that the moon, rather than being high in the sky, was close to setting at 11 pm on the night in question," says my article. "...Allen's credibility was laughed out of court." Later I allude to the lingering suspicion that Lincoln doctored an almanac to suit his purposes. This gets to the heart of the differing accounts of the trial. Dekle found that the first published accounts of the story were (1) a Republican newspaper article supporting Lincoln's 1860 run for president, which played fast and loose with the story to make Lincoln look more heroic, and (2) a response in a Democratic paper written to put Lincoln in an unfavorable light, and including the charge that he tricked the court with a false almanac. When one consults an 1857 almanac, one finds that the moon was indeed close to setting at the time that most witnesses agreed the struggle took place. The problem is that the pro-Lincoln legend usually has Lincoln claiming that there was no moon at all, which is refuted by the facts. Proponents of the fake almanac story say the moon was full, and even on the horizon it would have given enough light to identify Metzger's attackers. Dekle says the fight took place in a grove of trees, which would have placed the participants in shadows. In any case, having only reviewed the case the night before, Lincoln had little time to mount a scam involving an inaccurate almanac that would convince the judge, the jury and the opposing counsel.

My next plot point, that Lincoln brought the courtroom to tears with his closing speech, is well attested. Some say that this emotional appeal was irrelevant and improper, but Dekle said it was an accepted practice at the time, and notes that the prosecution didn't object. But I also said that Lincoln then turned down Hannah Armstrong's tearful offer to pay him. This may have really happened, but the implication that it happened in the courtroom is damaged by the recollections of those who said Hannah was at a hotel when the jury returned with its verdict of not guilty.

Dekle straightens out much more of the story, his detective work showing, for instance, that a highly influential source was an 1887 novel serialized in *Century Magazine* that gave an imaginative account of the trial, using Lincoln and fictional characters. A judge used one of the magazine articles in writing a legal text, which was then taken as fact by a lawyer writing another legal text, which was the basis of many later versions of the Almanac Story. Most of them included a transcript of Lincoln's cross-examination of Allen – which never existed. One of the key disadvantages in telling the story is that court reporters were not common at that time in Illinois, thus no transcript survives with the other court records. What court records there were are included in Dekle's impressive appendices, along with all of the written accounts from eyewitnesses that he could find. (By the way, Dekle doesn't believe that Armstrong struck Metzger with a slungshot. He believes that he used a wagon hammer.)

Dekle's book is of a type that students of a circumscribed field find intensely interesting. It makes the specialized reader feel s/he is getting as close to the real truth as possible. In other words, what it lacks in thrills and excitement it compensates with tedious detail. This is not a ticket to the Best Seller List, even the History Book Best Seller List. But Dekle's book is an excellent tool for showing how history is written and miswritten.

Next is the spine-tingling conclusion to the Lincoln the Lawyer series.

affiliate highlights

IPHA Receives National Honor for Advocacy Word

At the 2015 annual meeting of the American Public Health Association (APHA) in Chicago, the Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA) was honored during the Council of Affiliates reception with the “2015 Affiliate Award for Advocacy.”

IPHA’s Affiliate Representative to the Governing Council, Deb Vander Plas, accepted the award presented by APHA Executive Director, Dr. Georges Benjamin.

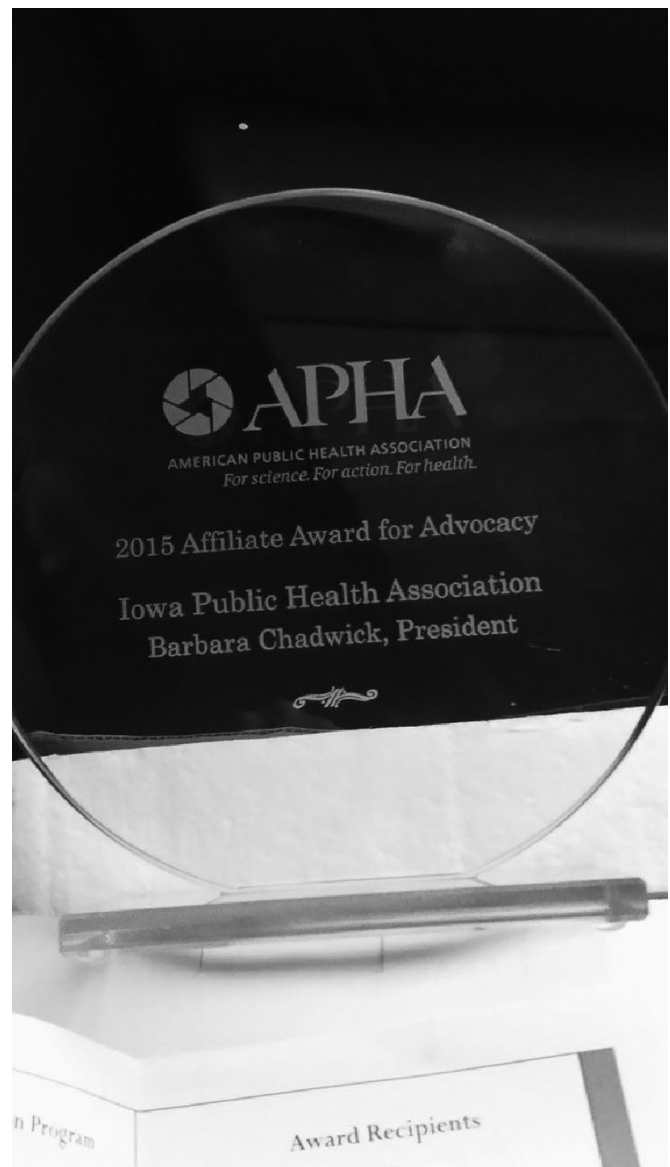
APHA cited IPHA’s advocacy initiatives at the federal level including members’ perennial efforts during the annual Public Health Action (PHACT) campaign (meeting with Iowa’s Congressional delegation), media advocacy and work to protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund. IPHA’s response to opportunities to advocate for federal public health investments through sign-on letters and action alerts were highlighted as well.

This award was occasion for IPHA to celebrate and a great opportunity to thank the many IPHA members who consistently respond to action alerts, who will readily agree to submit a letter to the editor or show up for a legislative hearing to share how policy and funding decisions made at the Iowa State Capitol impact the health of their communities. It also afforded IPHA the chance to shine the spotlight on the members who serve on the IPHA Advocacy Committee doing the hands-on advocacy work of IPHA and committing to meeting twice-a-month year-round. Due to the nature of the local, state and federal level advocacy work in which IPHA engages, there is no off-season for IPHA advocacy, and this committee’s commitment reflects that.

IPHA Advocacy Committee

- Eric Bradley
- Angie Doyle-Scar
- Dr. Mary Gilchrist
- Brian Hanft
- Kady Hodges
- Shelley Horak
- Beth Jones
- Katie Jones
- Dr. Louise Lex
- Frederick Lumeh
- Julie McMahan
- Pam Mollenhauer (Co-Chair)
- Susan Pohl (Co-Chair)
- Lina Tucker Reinder
- Deb Vander Plas

The mission of the Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA) is to be the voice for public health in Iowa through advocacy, membership services and partnerships. Advocacy is an integral part of that three-legged stool and is most frequently identified by our members as a key niche which IPHA occupies on Iowa’s public health landscape. This award will surely motivate IPHA members to amplify that voice and be present as a credible, evidence-driven community of professionals urging wise policy and financial investments that value the health of Iowans.



Attend the NACo Legislative Conference

Sign up today to attend the 2016 NACo Legislative Conference being held February 20-24 in Washington, D.C. This meeting brings over 2,000 elected and appointed county officials from across the country to focus on legislative issues facing county government. Attendees hear from key Administration officials and members of Congress and are offered a myriad of additional educational opportunities addressing current and hot topic issues. ISAC plans meeting with Iowa's congressional delegation to provide for lobbying on Capitol Hill.

Meeting in Washington, D.C. gives you access to key decision makers that no other city can provide. The NACo Legislative Conference focuses on timely and pressing federal policy issues that have an impact on America's county governments. Attendees help shape NACo's policy priorities and positions, advancing our message to key federal decision makers, and receive training on the latest information and tools.

Educational offerings will cover cutting-edge solutions to help you lead your county and networking provides valuable interaction and time to share and learn from county peers across the U.S.

See more at: <http://www.naco.org/events/naco-legislative-conference#sthash.njdYCyOO.dpuf>

Featured speakers include:



Chris Wallace
February 22
Award-Winning Veteran Journalist & Host of Fox News Sunday

Chris Wallace is the anchor of Fox News Sunday. He also plays a major role in Fox News Channel's America's Election HQ coverage. This summer,

he was a moderator of the Fox News Republican Presidential Debate that drew an audience of 24 million viewers. Throughout his career, Wallace has worked with Fox News, ABC News and NBC News and has won every major broadcast news award for his reporting.



Ron Brownstein
February 23
Political Director, Atlantic Media Company
Editorial Director and Columnist, National Journal
Senior Political and Election Analyst for CNN

Twice a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, Ron Brownstein has been cited for "the clarity, consistency and quality of his political reporting." He produces sharp analysis on politics, policy, the electorate, media, healthcare and the range of issues informed by his strong sense of American political and national history. He appears regularly in The Atlantic and pens a bi-weekly column in National Journal and the Los Angeles Times.



The Capitol Steps
February 22

The Capitol Steps, a Washington D.C.-based comedy troupe that began as a group of Senate staffers, will present a brief show based on songs from their current album "Mock the Vote."

They have been a D.C. institution for more than 30 years, providing a unique blend of musical and political comedy to our nation's capital and beyond. They have appeared on "The Today Show," "Nightline," "CBS Evening News" and in specials for National Public Radio.

Plan for a More Beautiful Iowa

By: *Gerald F. Schnepf*

Keep Iowa Beautiful Executive Director

Many people will wait to plan their 2016 resolutions until after the New Year starts. Rather than waiting – let’s use this month to start laying out the plans for how you can help improve your home, neighborhood, community and Iowa.

Consider tackling small projects that are relatively easy to achieve thereby enabling you to be successful and fuel the fire to do more. It becomes too easy to put off any resolution, however, one to help improve your area can pay back large dividends on your investment.

Your success on these projects makes you feel good about doing the project and making a difference, but also, provides an outstanding example to others (younger and older). Additionally, it builds a sense of pride– not just for you, but, for all those that benefit from or see the results of your efforts.

Samples of the types of projects you might consider are:

- Planting a tree or shrub on your property;
- Planting flowers in an area that needs improvement;
- Fixing a fence that is in disrepair;
- Painting the garage, out building, fence or house;
- Volunteering on a local improvement committee;
- Helping improve a public park or facility by painting or planting;
- Working with the school on a school garden;
- Helping your teachers explore new opportunities like Teachers Going Green (KIB Website);
- Working to clean up and / or fix public property;
- Improving the entryway to your community;
- Helping to support recycling efforts;
- Picking up litter on the streets, parks, parking areas and trails; or
- Assisting in a community service project with youth from the school.

Those are just a few examples of how each of us can plan for the New Year and make a resolution to help improve our communities and the state of Iowa. Each small project makes a difference and helps. In many ways and without your knowing, it can influence people’s lives and encourage them to make their “gift back” to the area.

My resolution is to increase my level of volunteering to projects that improve Iowa. I have a history of community service but there is more to do and frankly it gives me sense of pride and accomplishment.

Your Keep Iowa Beautiful resolution (along with the actual follow through) is one way to give back or in today’s vernacular – “pay forward.” Not a bad gift for the season.

Maybe it will become habit-forming!

Phone: 515.323.6507

Email: gschnepf@keepiowabeautiful.com

Website: www.keepiowabeautiful.com

*Keep Iowa
Beautiful*  SM

Ballot Storage
Ballot Printing
Election Coding
Election Support
Envelopes
Secrecy Sleeves

Voter Accessibility
Voting Booths

NEW Voting Equipment

And Much More!



Your Election
2016
Headquarters

NEW YEAR NEW SALES



VISIT US ONLINE
www.electionsource.com
www.mattparrott.com

ElectionSource MATT PARROTT
A Storey Kenworthy Company

2015 ISAC Preferred Vendors

Endorsed Elite Preferred Vendor

County Risk Management Services, Inc.
representing ICAP and IMWCA

Platinum Preferred Vendors

Election Systems & Software
Henry M. Adkins and Son
Matt Parrott/ElectionSource
MidAmerican Energy
Northland Securities, Inc.
"Solutions," Inc.
The Schneider Corporation
Tyler Technologies
Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Iowa

Gold Preferred Vendor

ACES Empowering Technology
Cost Advisory Services, Inc.
DEVNET, Inc.
Diamond Mowers
Dorsey & Whitney LLP
I&S Group

ImageTek-Inc.
ITC Midwest, LLC
Murphy Tower Service LLC
Purple Wave Auction, Inc.
Speer Financial, Inc.
Vanguard Appraisals, Inc.

Silver Preferred Vendors

Cott Systems, Inc.
D.A. Davidson and Co.
Delta Dental
Nyhart
SilverStone Group
The Sidwell Company
Windstream

Endorsed Preferred Vendors

Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust (IPAIT)
National Association of Counties (NACo)
Nationwide Retirement Solutions
U.S. Communities



A Proud Supporter of ISAC and Iowa Counties

DORSEY & WHITNEY
BOND LAWYERS

Robert Josten
David Claypool
David Grossklaus
Cris Kuhn
John Danos
Amy Bjork
Brian Damman

801 Grand, Suite #4100
Des Moines, IA 50309-2790
(515) 283-1000

www.dorsey.com/des_moines

Hiding from your IT problems?

TRUST *IT* TO US



5417 Nordic Dr. Suite B • Cedar Falls, IA 50613
acesiowa.com • 319-266-9800



SPEER FINANCIAL, INC.

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC FINANCE CONSULTANTS SINCE 1954

Registered Independent Municipal Advisors



40+ Years
Experience
In Iowa
Public
Finance

Larry Burger, Vice President

lburger@speerfinancial.com



9 Years
Experience
In Iowa
Public
Finance

Maggie Burger, Vice President

mburger@speerfinancial.com

We're on Your Side!

Iowa Office:

531 Commercial Street, Suite 608, Waterloo, IA 50701

Website: speerfinancial.com Phone: (319) 291-2077

THE IPAIT DIFFERENCE... Since 1987



Knowledge.

We have long been honored to serve the investment, liquidity, and cash management needs of Iowa's public agencies.

We know how important it is to understand your needs and offer peace of mind through money market and fixed-term investments.

Safety ~ Liquidity ~ Yield



Iowa Public Agency Investment Trust | (800) 872-4024 | www.ipait.org

Call us today to let us know how we can serve you!

Sponsored by ISAC

Investment Advisory Services provided by Miles Capital, Inc.

2016 calendar

January 2016

- 20-21 ISAC University
(West Des Moines Marriott)
22 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

February 2016

- 11 Supervisors Statewide Meeting
(Embassy Suites Des Moines Downtown)
12 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)
20-24 NACo Legislative Conference
(Washington, D.C.)

March 2016

- 9 County Day at the Capitol
(Iowa State Capitol, Des Moines)
10-11 ISAC Spring School of Instruction
(Des Moines Marriott Downtown)

April 2016

- 14 ISAC HIPAA Program Training
(Courtyard by Marriott - Ankeny)
17-20 ISSDA Civil School
(Holiday Inn Airport)
28 Smart Connection Conference
(Airport Holiday Inn, Des Moines)
29 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

June 2016

- 15-14 ICIT Midyear Conference
(West Des Moines Marriott)
21-23 Records Summer School
(Honey Creek Resort, Moravia)

July 2016

- 7 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)
13-15 ISACA Summer School Conference
(West Des Moines Sheraton)
22-25 NACo Annual Conference
(Long Beach, CA)

August 2016

- 25-26 ISAC LPC Retreat
(Hotel Renovo, Urbandale)
31 ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser
(Toad Valley Golf Course, Pleasant Hill)

September 2016

- 18-21 ISSDA Jail School
(Holiday Inn Airport)
21-23 ISAC Board of Directors Retreat
(Linn County)
29 ISAC LPC Meeting
(ISAC Office)

October 2016

- 27-28 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

November 2016

- 30-2 ISAC Fall School of Instruction
(Veteran's Memorial Community Choice
Credit Union Convention Center, Des
Moines)

December 2016

- 4-7 ISSDA Winter School
(Holiday Inn Airport)
6-8 ICEA Annual Conference
(Scheman Building, Ames)
14 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting
(ISAC Office)

If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC calendar, please contact Kelsey Sebern at ksebern@iowacounties.org.

tyler makes



future-proof

Is your public sector software ready for the future?

Why worry about the future? Tyler Technologies delivers software upgrades and the latest technology as part of your maintenance agreement. No surprises. No new license fees. Scheduled, convenient, and easy to learn. With our evergreen commitment, Tyler is with you every step of the way. To find out more, visit tylertech.com or email us at info@tylertech.com.



Empowering people who serve the public®



**PARTNERING
FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Today's businesses require more than abundant and economical energy; they require energy partnerships that support development and efficiency. MidAmerican Energy Company's commitment to our communities and our customers has played an important role in the growth, retention and attraction of businesses in Iowa.

Our **EconomicAdvantage®** programs provide access to a dedicated staff of economic development experts that help communities and site selectors with project management, research, planning and long-range strategies.

Call us today to learn how a partnership with the number one utility owner of wind generation capacity in the United States, who offers the 5th lowest electric rates in the nation, can add power to your business.



Rooted in  **cultivation
CORRIDOR**

800-358-6265

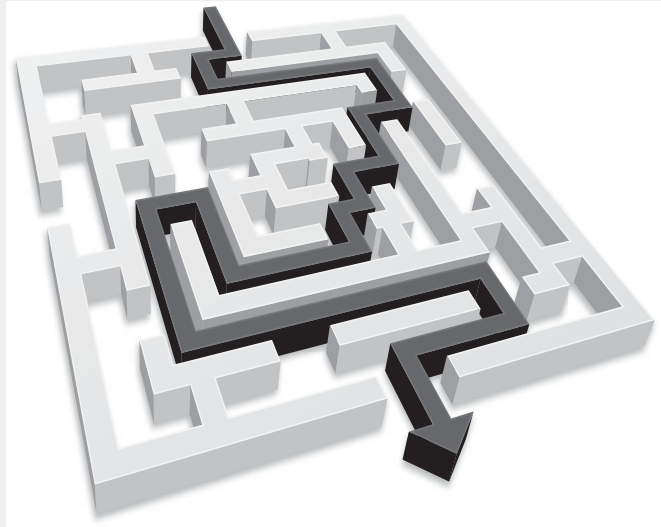
www.MIDAMERICANENERGY.com

NORTHLAND SECURITIES

6600 Westown Parkway, Suite 255
West Des Moines, IA 50266
515-657-4675
www.northlandsecurities.com
Member FINRA and SIPC

Helping Iowa counties
navigate the maze of
local government finance.

- Bond Underwriting
- Competitive Bonds Sales
- Bank Private Placement
- Debt Refinancing
- Continuing Disclosure
- Property Tax Impact Analysis
- Tax Increment Financing
- Financial Management Plans
- Capital Improvement Plans
- Referendum Assistance



RC 14-367

WELLMARK CELEBRATES ISAC BY THE NUMBERS

HERE'S TO YOUR:
99 MEMBER COUNTIES. 44 YEARS
OF ACHIEVEMENT. 34 YEARS WITH
WELLMARK. 100% DEVOTION TO IOWA.

Thank you for joining us in making a healthier, better state!

Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield, a Platinum Preferred
vendor of the Iowa Association of Counties.



Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. © 2015 Wellmark, Inc. #11022_10/15



Experience the ES&S Difference

Election Systems & Software is the most experienced provider of total election solutions. For more than 40 years, ES&S has remained true to our vision,

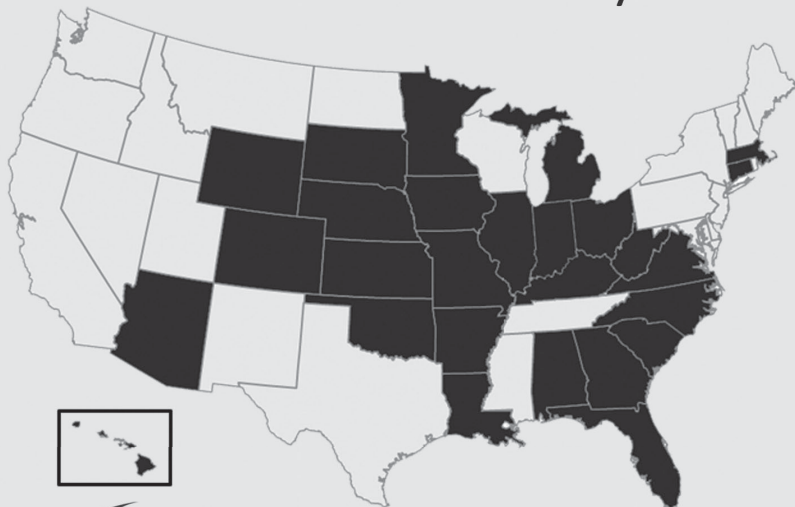
*"maintain voter confidence and
enhance the voting experience."*

Providing our customers with trusted, quality and timely election services and products is our purpose, our promise and our passion.

Learn more about our mission by visiting our website:

essvote.com

Serving Local Governments Across The Country



Ryan S. Smith
866.973.7100 x2121
<http://schneidercorp.com>



*County information,
public records, and
GIS via an online
portal!*



*Online, easy-to-use,
affordable solution!*



*Assists in complying
with the new
ag adjustment rules!*

COUNTY RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.

representing



We provide **comprehensive property, casualty and workers' compensation** coverage packages to 75 Iowa counties.

The fact that we do so through group self-insurance programs that are member-owned and operated?

Well that's just



**the
icing
on
the
cake.**

www.icapiowa.com | www.imwca.org | 800-397-4947



DEMAND BRILLIANCE.

Diamond Mowers is a company built from the ground up with American values and a Midwestern work ethic. Our first priority is to provide you with the toughest, smartest, most reliable and safest equipment in the market. For over 40 years we've offered face-to-face, handshake guarantees on every product we construct.

NJPA
National Joint Powers Alliance®
PURCHASE WITH NO-BID



HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF DIAMOND'S INNOVATIVE, VERSATILE AND DURABLE PRODUCTS:

- Boom Mowers
- Excavator Attachments
- Flail Mowers
- Forestry Heads
- Rotary Mowers
- Skid-Steer Attachments

DIAMOND MOWERS
350 East 60th Street N.
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

**100% SATISFACTION
GUARANTEE**

★ GET IT, LOVE IT *or* LEAVE IT! ★

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT:
Brad Block | 319.231.6392
bblock@diamondmowers.com
diamondmowers.com