

MAC LOOKING FOR POSITIVE RESULTS IN 2007

December 29, 2006

MAC's 35th Annual Conference Held In November Was A Huge Success

The Nov. 19-21 Annual Conference at Tan-Tar-A was one of the best! Attendance was good; our speakers were top-notch; exhibit space sold out early; and sponsors contributed handily to defray overall costs. Due to the generosity of our gold, silver, and bronze sponsors, we were able to keep MAC registration fees at a very reasonable rate. Please extend your appreciation to them when you have a chance! Company names are posted on our web site – www.mocounties.com.

Meet Your New Executive Board

At conference, the following persons were elected to serve as executive officers for the coming year: President and **Greene County** Recorder of Deeds Linda Montgomery, President-Elect and **Cole County** Associate Commissioner Mike Forck, 2nd Vice President and **Carroll County** Clerk Peggy McGaugh, 3rd Vice President and **Livingston County** Presiding Commissioner Eva Danner, Treasurer and **Iron County** Treasurer Jack Adams, and Past President **DeKalb County** Clerk Mary Berry.

These are the people that you will be working with (along with the full board of directors and MAC staff) to implement the association's policy in the coming year.

Gearing Up For A New Session ... The General Assembly Convenes On Wednesday, January 3

MAC Legislative Services For 2007

With the Missouri General Assembly convening on Jan. 3, the MAC staff will utilize a number of legislative tools to keep you abreast of what is going on in Jefferson City. Periodic bulletins (including bill numbers, brief summaries, and dates of importance) will be sent out to help you track county legislation. Urgent messages will be sent out by broadcast fax and/or e-mail (for those of you who prefer it). Our website, www.mocounties.com, is also a great tool for tracking legislation and keeping informed of governmental changes. The website is connected to the state government website and will allow you easy access to the Missouri Senate and House web pages.

2007 Missouri County Government Platform

The membership adopted the following six resolutions during the Nov. 20 annual business meeting:

(The following resolution summaries are in no particular order. All six are MAC priorities and will be given the same attention.)

1. **SUPPORT STATE APPROPRIATIONS TO FULLY FUND STATE MANDATES ON COUNTY GOVERNMENTS.** Support the Missouri General Assembly's consideration of the financial burden that state mandates have on county government and the corresponding impact they have on a county's ability to provide other necessary and essential services to Missouri citizens. This resolution refers specifically to the following: (1) legislation that would increase or keep intact the state's per parcel reimbursement to the statutory amount per parcel, (2) an increase in the appropriation for prisoner per diem reimbursement authorized under 221.105, *RSMo*, in the state's fiscal year 2008 budget, (3) reimbursement to counties to fully fund the personnel needed in the public administrator's office pursuant to 473.737, *RSMo*, (4) full funding of any new obligations placed on the election officials of this state regarding elections, and (5) legislative efforts that would relieve counties of the cost of providing office space and certain utility expenses for the various state public defenders' offices. Furthermore, MAC will oppose legislation that would have a negative budgetary effect on local governments without guaranteed replacement revenue.
2. **OPPOSE THE EROSION OF THE LOCAL TAX BASE & SUPPORT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN ADDRESSING MISSOURI'S ANTIQUATED TAX STRUCTURE.** Oppose legislation that would have a negative budgetary affect on local governments without guaranteed replacement revenue, and request that the General Assembly address Missouri's antiquated tax code, especially as it relates to sales tax, so that both state and local governments are well positioned in the future to meet the increasing service needs of our citizens.

3. **SUPPORT A BALANCED COMPROMISE REGARDING LOCAL CONTROL OF CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS.** Support working with the agricultural community to strike a fair balance between protecting the interests of local residents against those of large-scale agricultural operations that may wish to locate in one of the state's 114 counties and support legislation that is consistent with the principles that have been addressed by the MAC Agriculture Impact Task Force.
4. **SUPPORT PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL CALLED TO ACTIVE DUTY WHERE THEIR PERSONAL PROPERTY IS DORMANT AND UNUSED FOR A PERIOD OF AT LEAST ONE YEAR.** Support a constitutional amendment exempting, upon voter approval, the personal property of Missouri residents who are on active duty in the United States military from taxation under Article X, Section 6, of the *Missouri Constitution*.
5. **SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS AMBIGUITIES IN STATE LAW REGARDING THE MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION'S PERMITTING AUTHORITY.** Support of legislation to eliminate any ambiguities in state law regarding permitting authority by the Missouri Public Service Commission for utilities within the unincorporated area of any county of this state.
6. **SUPPORT MINIMAL CHANGES TO THE EXISTING TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) LAW.** Support of changes to the current TIF law that would give county governing bodies the final approval on the amount of any voter approved county sales tax used for TIF projects.

Counties Are Urged To Join MAC's Self-Insured Workers' Comp Fund

We are happy to report that for the 15th time in the fund's 19-year history the MAC Workers' Comp Board has declared a \$177,609 dividend for 2007. Throughout the pool's long and successful history, dividends totaling roughly \$6.9 million have been issued to members (in good-standing) based on their cumulative percent of premium paid into the pool.

The dividend is performance driven -- rewarding those with an experience mod of 1.0 or below with a 5% dividend credit to be applied to their renewal premium. Unlike many pools, entities with unfavorable losses (experience mods over 1.0) will not be penalized at this point in time. However, these members will be the primary focus of the fund's loss-prevention coordinator, who will make a concerted effort to assist them in enhancing/upgrading their safety programs.

Another benefit of membership in the fund is a 10% scheduled credit. The board has again approved the use of this credit which automatically reduces your total premium by 10%.

In other action, the board approved a rate increase of 5% for the coming term. This continues to be at the low end of the industry standard of 5% to 15%. By keeping our necessary rate increase at a minimum, the fund continues to shield members from unfavorable market conditions while keeping the financial stability of the pool intact. Both the dividend return and the 10% scheduled credit will help to offset the effect of this increase.

We strongly urge those of you not in the pool to consider the benefits of membership. Deciding whether to enroll in the Fund will be one of the most important budget decisions county officials can make. There are too many advantages to ignore: (1) ownership in the company, (2) improved loss control/cost containment, (3) stability during highs and lows in the market, (4) national pooling for re-insurance, and (5) cash flow benefits (rather than turning over profit to an outside insurer, MAC has invested your unpaid loss reserves and has earned over \$7 million in interest to date).

Additionally, the Board of Directors of the MAC Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Fund appointed Greene County Presiding Commissioner David Coonrod to fill the unexpired term of retiring board member Rodney Miller at their December 15 meeting in St. Louis.

Former Buchanan County Presiding Commissioner Tom Mann will remain on the board and serve as the new chairman. While he is no longer an elected official, Mr. Mann will continue to be employed by Buchanan County. Under Article III, Section 3(b) of the Fund's by-laws, "the five (5) Directors of the Fund shall be elected for staggered three (3) year terms and must be from a participating member entity." The by-laws do not require that a director be an elected official.

Consider Joining MAC's Prepaid Legal Services Program

Thirty-three counties have signed up to take advantage of the Prepaid Legal Services Program managed by Ivan Schraeder, the association's legal counsel.

Under contractual agreement, Mr. Schraeder will provide to participating counties 10 hours of advisory or opinion services per month via telephone or written communication.

Participating counties pay an annual fee, based on their assessed valuations. The charge for Level 1 counties (with assessed valuations under \$500 million) is \$1,200 per year (or \$100 per month). Level 2 counties (with assessed valuations between \$500 million and \$1 billion) pay \$1,800 per year (or \$150 per month). The remaining Level 3 counties (with assessed valuations over \$1 billion) are charged an annual fee of \$2,400 (or \$200 per month). Of Missouri's 114 counties, 85 percent fall under Level 1.

Counties who are interested in the program should contact Cindy Wells at the MAC office (573-634-2120) for an application form.

Attorney Ivan Schraeder may also be contacted at 314-454-1500 for more information about the program.

Your State (MAC) & National (NACo) Membership Service Fees Are Due

All of the 114 counties were members of MAC in 2006, so naturally we are anxious to reach 100 percent participation in 2007. What happens this year in the halls of the State Capitol will not only have impact on your duties, but it will also influence the public's perception of your ability to extend much-needed services to the friends and neighbors who elected you.

You have already received the formula for estimating your 2007 member service fees and may compute the exact calculation, as long as you obtain the figure that your county assessor submitted to the State Tax Commission for your 2006 assessed valuation.

MAC will be happy to do the calculation for you, however, as soon as we receive the current assessed valuations from the Tax Commission the first week in January. **Immediately after receiving the figures, we will send out the invoices for MAC member service fees. We will also include a National Association of Counties' (NACo) membership invoice to facilitate payment to both organizations. If you choose to join NACo, too, you may include the national dues in your check to MAC, and we will forward the appropriate amount to Washington.**

Receive MAC News Via E-Mail

If you would like to be added to our e-mail distribution list, please contact MAC's Communications Assistant Jay Shipman -- jshipman@mocounties.com.

**Congratulations and welcome to the many newly elected county officials who took office on January 1. We're here to serve you!
On behalf of the MAC board of directors and staff,
we hope you had the happiest of holidays and
we wish each and every one of you
a prosperous new year.**