

“There she stands, proud in all her glory.”

Missouri County Record

Winter 2011



Carroll County Courthouse, Carrollton, MO

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Executive Committee Leads MAC In 2012

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(By District)

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As we look forward to 2012, the year promises to be an exciting and challenging time in county government. As we, elected county officials, strive to best serve our citizens, we must meet the challenge of providing needed services with limited resources. We can only achieve this by working together. With redistricting, many of us will have the opportunity to interact with new legislators and share with them the functions of county government. The Missouri Association of Counties is a great asset to all county officials and when all affiliates work together, we can do great things. I consider it a privilege to serve as your president for 2012.

-- Rodger Reedy, MAC President



Carol Green



Shelley Harvey



Bonnie McCord



Darryl Kempf



Debbi McGinnis

Officers elected by the membership at the association's fall annual meeting include Benton County Assessor Rodger Reedy, president; Phelps County Treasurer Carol Green, president-elect; Audrain County Clerk Shelley Harvey, 2nd vice president; Vernon County Presiding Commissioner Bonnie McCord, 3rd vice president; Cooper County Clerk Darryl Kempf, treasurer; and Polk County Collector Debbi McGinnis, past president.



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The Missouri Association of Counties, founded in 1972, is a nonprofit corporation and lobbying alliance of county elected and administrative officials who work to improve services for Missouri taxpayers. The board of directors meets on the third Wednesday of designated months in Jefferson City to promote passage of priority bills and monitor other legislation before the state General Assembly and the United States Congress. The Missouri County Record is produced four times annually by the association staff. Subscription rates for non-association members are \$15 per year prepaid. Rates for association members are included in membership service fees. All articles, photographs and graphics contained herein are the property of the association and may not be reproduced or published without permission. Advertising rates are available upon request.

Association Votes On 2012 Legislative Priorities At October Annual Meeting

At its annual conference at Tan-Tar-A in October, the MAC membership approved seven priorities for the 2012 legislative session.

Support Upgrading Missouri's 9-1-1 Wireless Emergency Services

Missouri trails the nation in wireless 9-1-1 accessibility. MAC will support legislative action to design a complete and detailed plan for upgrading Missouri's 9-1-1 wireless emergency services.

Support Fully Funding State Mandates On County Government

MAC will respectfully request that the Missouri General Assembly and Gov. Nixon include in the state's fiscal year 2013 budget (1) an increase in the appropriation for prisoner per diem reimbursement authorized under Sec. 221.105, *RSMo*, (2) an appropriation to fully fund state assessment maintenance reimbursements, (3) an appropriation to fully fund any new obligations placed on the election officials of this state, (4) both an appropriation to fully fund the reimbursement for the detention and care of neglected and/or delinquent juveniles and the salaries of juvenile court personnel in single county circuits, (5) an appropriation that would relieve counties of the cost of providing office space and certain utility expenses for the various state public defenders' offices, and (6) also requests that the General Assembly continue to refrain from implementing the requirements of SB 711 relating to property tax enacted in 2008 until full state funding for the same is authorized. Additionally, recognizing the difficult budgetary constraints that the state of Missouri is experiencing and the dim prospects for additional state appropriations for these programs and, as a partner with the state in

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the delivery of these services, MAC requests that Gov. Nixon and the Missouri General Assembly hold county governments harmless from any further state budget cuts in these areas.

Oppose The Pre-emption Of Local Authority

MAC will oppose legislation that would pre-empt a county's authority to deal with local issues and problems.

Oppose Legislation That Erodes The Local Tax Base And Call Upon The General Assembly To Address Missouri's Antiquated Tax Structure

MAC will be calling upon the General Assembly to limit legislation that would have a negative budgetary effect on local governments without guaranteed replacement revenue. Additionally, MAC will request 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 their citizens.

Support A Transportation Funding Package That Will Address This State's Dire Infrastructure Needs

MAC will respectfully request the General Assembly's support for a transportation funding package that will address Missouri's dire infrastructure needs.

Support Funding For The County Assessment Maintenance Fund From Additional Withholdings

MAC will support legislation to allow additional withholdings from local property tax collections to offset the lack of adequate funding from the State of Missouri. Additionally, MAC seeks to protect and

preserve all current funding levels, regardless of source, and to cooperate in finding new funding sources, or increasing existing sources, for the betterment of the assessment process.

Support Legislation To Allow County Offices To Continue Conducting Official Business In The Event Of A Vacancy Of The Elected Official

MAC will support legislation that would allow the chief deputy in any office within the county to perform all official acts of the office until such time as a successor is duly elected or appointed and qualified, unless sooner removed, notwithstanding any other provision of state law. If no such deputy was previously designated, the county commission of the affected county may designate an acting deputy.

MAC is getting a new website!

Watch for it in February at [www.mocounties.com!](http://www.mocounties.com)

2012 Conference Dates

NACo Legislative Conference --
March 3-7, Washington Hilton,
Washington, DC

MAC Legislative Conference --
April 16, Capitol Plaza Hotel,
Jefferson City

NACo Annual Conference --
July 13-17, David Lawrence Convention Center
Allegheny County (Pittsburgh), PA

MAC Annual Conference --
Nov. 18-20, Tan-Tar-A Resort,
Osage Beach

2011 Missouri Awards for County Excellence

Atchison County Concrete Box Inlet Rehabilitation

Atchison County received its first award for its concrete box inlet rehabilitation project, which saved the county time and money while keeping residents' travel uninterrupted and safe. The county's highway department rehabilitated a damaged under-road concrete box inlet in its maintenance shop and never had to close the road to the public. Department personnel constructed concrete panels reinforced with I-beams and installed them at the site of the damaged box. The damage to the original box inlet was not expected and had not been budgeted for; thus, the repairs came directly from the county's highway department funds. If the county would have closed the road for repairs, area farmers would have had to take a much longer route to reach their land and livestock. Had they replaced the original box inlet with a brand new one, the road would have been torn up and impassable for days.



Atchison County Communications Challenges During A Natural Disaster

Atchison County received its second award for its exceptional handling of communications challenges during a natural disaster. This year, the county and the surrounding region were faced with a flooding event described by many to be historic in both scope and severity. Over 1,700 people were directly affected. County personnel realized quickly that communication was the biggest challenge. They needed to be able to communicate with each other, citizens, neighboring counties, and state and federal governments on a daily basis. To this end, the county began morning briefings on Memorial Day that lasted through the end of June. The county utilized its previously established Facebook page for emergency management and 911 information. Personnel posted summaries of morning briefings, levee breach information, calls for volunteers, and rumors that were squelched in a timely manner. Local residents were able to see what their homes and land looked like through pictures when they were unable to access them by air or boat. The county utilized

its broadcast text/e-mail program to provide hazardous event information. They also conducted countless media interviews, believing that it takes less time to give an interview than to deal with bad information that went out by another source.

Audrain County IT Services Plan



Audrain County was recognized for meeting growing technology needs on a budget. For several years the county contracted with a local provider for limited IT services. He provided 4 hours of service per month at a rate of \$60 per hour. It simply wasn't enough. Early in 2011, the county commission was meeting with the Mexico city manager when the subject of IT came up. The city was having the same problems, and it agreed to hire a full-time employee with full benefits and retirement. The county then contracted with the city of Mexico to receive 16 hours of IT services per week and pay proportionally. The partnership is very beneficial. The provider has developed a plan for the systematic replacement of personal computers in the courthouse and is putting in a security system for their road shed. The provider also started "Tech Tuesday," an hour-long hands-on training session to upgrade both city and county employees' computer skills. He has also identified problems with their server and has recommended a replacement to fill the county's needs for the next few years. Audrain County believes that small communities and 3rd-class counties should look into such a partnership for their own IT needs.

Johnson County Jail Project



Johnson County received an award for its jail project. The sheriff's office and jail had been housed in a building that was originally a grocery store built in the

1950s. Three attempts to pass a sales tax to tear down the existing building and construct a new jail failed, despite the sheriff's attempt to educate voters on dangerous and worsening conditions. In 2009, the owner of a private jail located in the county approached the commission and sheriff about purchasing it and renovating it to meet state and federal requirements. On a fourth try, voters finally passed a 1/4-cent sales tax that will roll back to 1/8-cent once the bonds are paid off. The cost of the project was just under \$7 million to purchase the building with minimal construction and improvements. It also included over 100 acres of land, which could allow for the possibility of a small farming and gardening operation that would provide meat and vegetables for the inmates. The law enforcement staff now has better and safer working conditions. Video arraignment means reduced prisoner transportation. The additional prisoner capacity also allows for boarding arrangements with other jurisdictions.

Pettis County Responsible County Government



Pettis County received an award for its fiscally responsible county government initiative -- saving money the old-fashioned way. The goal was to reduce expenditures and explore every possibility of grant funding. All county elected officials and department heads got on board and supported the initiative. Total savings in 2011 exceeded \$100,000, and most of these savings will be duplicated in subsequent years. Some examples of savings include an energy audit; replacing two ice machines with new, slightly smaller and more efficient units; re-negotiating equipment maintenance costs; increasing bill paying frequency to three days a month, thereby eliminating late fees; eliminating time clocks; eliminating telephone landlines and re-negotiating cell phone contracts; cleaning out the courthouse to find more storage space so supplies can be purchased in larger quantities; selling surplus items on govdeals.com; reducing benefits for new hires; reviewing original insurance policies on equipment; setting up a video arraignment system; and eliminating pre-printed forms and printing pay stub on plain paper. (All the grant funding opportunities Pettis County found are another story in themselves.)

Congratulations to all the award winners, and thank you to all counties who submitted entries. We appreciate the tremendous efforts Missouri counties put forth each day to make their communities stronger and the state a better place for all Missourians.

The road to success

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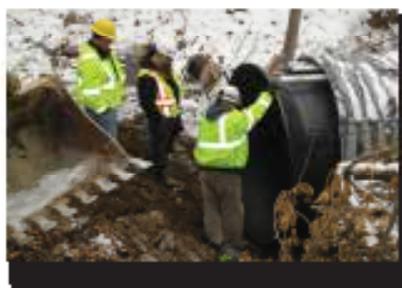
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Man Made: Disaster At Birds Point Levee

Editor's Note: Much of this article was taken from a professionally produced video. It can be viewed in its entirety at www.disasteratbirdspoint.com.

Heavy spring rains led to massive flooding events in southeastern Missouri. The flooding destroyed fertile farmland that had the potential to feed over one million people for a year. Agri-businesses – those supporting the farming industry – were also wiped out.

Engaging in what was considered a very controversial plan, the Army Corps of Engineers on May 2, 2011, blew a 2-mile hole in Birds Point Levee located in Mississippi County in southeastern Missouri.

The blast destroyed over 200 square miles of prime farmland and communities, and this was all done to save the small historic town of Cairo, IL, population 2,831 (2010 census). Missouri farmland has been rendered useless and the region's economy has suffered.

KTVI TV in St. Louis described the situation as a border war between Missouri and Illinois.

Missouri Attorney General Chris Koster asked the U. S. Supreme Court to review the ruling from the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals which gave the Corps the "green light" to blow up the 2-mile stretch of Birds Point Levee.

Regarding the effect on agri-businesses, U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (who represents Missouri's 8th congressional district) said, "You've got 30 to 40 percent of those whose business is done with the producers right there in the flood plain. You've got all of the farm hands and their families who depend on the salaries they earn from the farmers when they're planting. You've got the grocery stores, the hair dressers, pharmacists and you name it – all the way down the line – whose income suffers because the Corps won't help them put their lives back together again."

Following the first blast that released Mississippi River waters into the floodplain, the mayor of East Prairie said, "We feel like we were sacrificed."

A second blast was meant to connect a new path back to the Mighty Mississippi.

A third blast was meant to get the rising waters out of the spillway, but it had the direct opposite effect.

Carlin Bennett, Mississippi County presiding commissioner, said, "The third hole they blew in our levee is probably the biggest mistake of this entire operation."

Congresswoman Emerson said, "The most shocking thing to see – short of the levee detonation, which was horrifying – was the amount of water that had settled in the floodway. I'm out in a boat. I felt like I was on a bay. I felt like I was in Lake Michigan.

"It was hard to fathom! It was incredulous! The government caused these people's lives to no longer exist," she commiserated.

The Food & Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI), a joint research program between Iowa State University and the University of Missouri – Columbia, estimates that \$85 million in crops were lost and the broader economic impact is over \$156 million.

Commissioner Bennett summed up the disaster with a good analogy: "If you don't have your brakes working right and you run your car right through the middle of my house and tear it all to pieces, I expect you to fix it. And that's kind of where we are.

"This is not a disaster created by God. This is a disaster created by man," said the Mississippi County presiding commissioner.

A Year Of Natural Disasters

Personnel in the office of Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon explain that because of the state's geography, it is frequently visited by natural disasters. Ice storms, tornadoes, severe storms, and flooding are all common occurrences in Missouri.

Since 1990, Missouri has received more than 30 federal major disaster declarations.

The year 2011 was particularly memorable in so many unfortunate ways.

Feb 1, 2011 – severe winter storm/blizzard

April 19 – June 2011 – severe flooding in the northwestern, southwestern and southeastern parts of the state

April 22, 2011 – tornado hit Lambert-St. Louis International Airport

May 22, 2011 – Joplin tornado

May 25, 2011 – Sedalia tornado

2011 Flood: From A Personal Perspective In Holt County

By Kathy J. Kunkel, Holt County Clerk & Carla Markt, Holt County Assessor

There have been other notable floods, but none with such lasting strength and such devastation as we've seen with the siege of 2011. This flood will have a name: *Corpstrina*. Our children will know its name and the reckless administration and policies that set this debacle in motion.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) sounded the alarm bells in late May of 2011 as they came to terms with high snow melt and unanticipated rainfall in the northern Rockies. Water was filling the vast reservoir system at such a heightened rate the storage capacity there would not hold. Water would be released downstream in a deluge never seen in the United States. Communities along the Missouri River from Montana southward would see higher than normal levels of river flow and flooding was imminent.

Holt Countians, being no recent strangers to flood woes, took heed of the warnings and began preparations. In a 3-week period citizens packed up their lives, moving household belongings, equipment, livestock and pets to higher ground. Families rented homes, moved in with neighbors, family and friends, as electric and gas meters were pulled at their homes in the danger zone. Businesses closed. Workers became unemployed. Farm equipment and grain was moved at a rapid pace to rid the Missouri River floodplain of valuable assets. What couldn't be moved or saved were thousands of acres of planted corn and soybeans enjoying fertile ground and bright sunshine and promising a bumper crop; the remaining homes, buildings and grain bins sat empty in a vast ghost town waiting for the coming tempest.

Holt Countians understand floods. We recognize that naturally occurring weather patterns bring rise to the Missouri River and occasionally create the potential for flooding conditions. This is a risk we are willing to accept and have done so for over 170 years.

This flood is different, and it falls on the heels of four preceding years of flood activity on the Missouri River in Holt County. It is this recurrent cycle – that seems so obviously tied to the management practices of the US Army Corps of Engineers – which we wholeheartedly question.

Following enabling legislation to apply the Endangered Species Act to the management practices of the Missouri River, Holt County became a target zone for seasonal flooding. Localized rainfall in the basin added to an increased river height, creating flood conditions in May 2007, June 2008, April 2009, and June and July 2010. This (coupled with years of land acquisition in Holt County to restore the Missouri River to a pre-Lewis and Clark, low-water, meandering river) has rendered the non-federal levee system in Holt County nearly useless. Pallid Sturgeon chutes, river dike notching, and other mitigation efforts to create endangered species habitat have degraded the levee system substructure

so significantly that yearly failure is occurring. It is no wonder that Holt County's citizens feel the USACE has a target on their ground and intends to flood it repeatedly until they choose to sell out. Standing beside a farmer who has lost 1,000 planted acres as he surveys 8 to 10 feet of water over his planted fields, you begin to understand the despair and question the motives of those operating the floodgates.

It is not only farmers who are impacted in Holt County and the entire Missouri River corridor. Businesses, homeowners and recreational properties are directly affected by the floodwater. In Holt County, even businesses that are high and dry were forced to close after Interstate 29 was detoured for nearly 4 months due to flooding across the border in Iowa. Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad was forced to cease all operations as the main rail line was swamped for miles, shutting down coal trains and costing the company millions of dollars.

Tragedy rippled through our small towns when news that a 19-year old National Guardsman was killed on his way home from duty in our county. His life was lost in a car accident, where another guardsman was injured and the young driver was left trying to pull his life back together after he fell asleep at the wheel.

On Aug. 1, 2011, tragedy found us again as 17-year veteran Highway Water Patrol Trooper Fred Guthrie and his K-9 partner were lost in swift floodwaters.

In the end 32 levee breaches occurred in non-federal and private levee districts within the county boundaries. The breaches range in size from 50 feet to nearly one-half mile. The levee system is in shambles and the USACE says they do not have enough money to assess the damages, let alone begin repairs. In many cases rebuilding will be completely at the cost of the local levee districts.

There are only two federal levees in Holt County. Both have sustained heavy damage from the torrent of water over the summer. Both levees have been on 24-hour patrol with USACE daily inspections. The federal levees held, but not without great cost.

Throughout this tragedy the USACE inquired by letter to landowners asking: Wouldn't they like to sell their ground to the Corps now? Though money is not available for damage assessment or repairs, money is available to continue to purchase land in Holt County. The long-term social and economic losses to our county cannot be measured at this time, but certainly there will be losses that will never be recovered.

Infrastructure costs to repair levees and drainage systems, roadways and water lines will be in the millions of dollars. Loss of real estate property is estimated at \$1.5 million, with loss to crops for the year 2011 estimated at \$110 million. Residual economic impacts will be felt throughout the region, state and on a

national level as the Missouri River corridor produces vast amounts of corn and soybeans used in over 2,500 different items on grocery shelves – penicillin, aspirin and virtually everything that is made with plastic. Acres that transfer to the USACE Missouri River Recovery Program will cease to contribute to the economy at all.

At this point, there seems to be no success story for any of the stakeholders in the Missouri River Basin with the management system currently implemented by the USACE. It is clear that flooding wipes out all conservation efforts for retaining quality land, habitat and vegetation, as well as agricultural crops for food and products.

No one wins. This is magnified in Holt County, but certainly those flooded in North and South Dakota are equally calling for change, along with Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. Common sense must have a role in guidance of the river. We concur with the governors of the impacted states that flood control must become the No. 1 operating purpose of the river, with all other interests falling after that goal. Billions of dollars have been spent to fight the 2011 flood and millions, if not billions, will be spent to remedy its damage. The people of Holt County recognize that if the policies and procedures governing the focus of river management do not move to flood control, our way of life will cease to exist.

MAC Remembers Joplin

On May 22 at 5:41 p.m., one of the deadliest tornados to hit the country (the most deadly since 1953) hit Joplin, MO. Jasper County Associate Commissioner Darius Adams, Collector Steve Holt, Recorder Donna Grove, and Auditor Richard Webster shared reflections on the devastating events. Commissioner Adams described how his daughter and parents lost their homes. He called his daughter to warn her of the coming storm. “It’s too late dad, we’ve already been hit,” she said. “What do you mean?” He replied. She said, “The house, it’s gone.”

Collector Steve Holt observed a particular phenomenon among area churches. “Every church that was destroyed, the cross was still straight up,” he stated. “With one particular church, the roof and everything was gone, but the pews were in place, the alter was set, and the hymnals were still in their places.”

Among the losses, Jasper County lost a longtime county employee and friend, Randy Mell, to the storm. “He was a great man,” Adams stated. A courthouse memorial has been established in his remembrance.

Recorder Donna Grove shared how the Recorders’ Association of Missouri collected donations and brought them to distribution centers.

Auditor Richard Webster reflected, but also looked forward. “Natural disasters happen, and areas are destroyed, torn up,” he stated. “But Joplin, MO, will be renewed.”

To help with the relief effort, MAC donated \$1,000 to the Joplin Chamber of Commerce Foundation. To see how you can help, please visit www.joplincc.com.

www.mocounties.com

Communication Was Key During Taney County Flooding

On April 21, Taney County experienced its most rapid regional flooding in recent memory.

Rain began falling on the entire Beaver Lake and Table Rock Lake water shed from Fayetteville, AR, to Springfield, MO, for six days straight. The total cumulative rainfall for the region over this period was 13.5 inches, with 12 inches simultaneously falling over 50 percent of both the James and White River Basins. Due to this tremendous rainfall and lack of foliage, the rain quickly saturated the soil, pushing water into the reservoirs. Table Rock Lake rose an astonishing 21 inches in 48 hours alone.

On Tuesday, April 26, The Army Corps of Engineers announced they would increase the release of water from Table Rock Dam. In conjunction with the actions of the Corps, Taney County developed a detailed plan to effectively communicate to residents. It held phone conferences twice daily, as well as a news conference, in conjunction with stakeholders and the Corps. It designated a spokesperson responsible for communicating with the media, and the county looked to the Corps to be the lead media resource. Taney County and the Corps held three town hall meetings as well.

The county also utilized new technology to most quickly communicate with residents and to squelch inaccurate rumors. Using a combination of text alerts, Facebook updates and website postings, the county was able to successfully assure residents, tourists and the media that Taney County (Branson specifically) was open for business and that, despite a surface landslide and rumors to the contrary, the dam was in-tact and functioning properly.



The mudslide along the dam was a catalyst for rumors via social media. Taney County and the Corps acted quickly to assure residents that Table Rock Dam was structurally sound.

The Corps followed the dam’s flood plan, conducting a series of controlled water releases. During the process they were able to give the county and the public two hours notice to evacuate as flooding became eminent throughout the area. In the end, 100 homes were damaged, along with several businesses. However, due to successful communication and cooperation, the damage was minimized and residents remained safe. “We encouraged the Corps to take the lead, and we worked with it and other agencies together with one common voice,” Taney County Associate Commissioner Jim Strafuss stated. “By working together, we did the best we could with a bad situation.”

MAC IT Committee, MU Extension Explore Solutions For Counties

Over the past year, the Missouri Association of Counties' Information Technology (IT) Committee has been exploring options to help counties adapt to the Digital Age. Many counties (especially 3rd-class, rural counties) do not primarily use Web or computer-based communications. Currently, 57 counties do not have websites, and many county officials do not use e-mail.

IT committee member and Boone County Associate Commissioner Karen Miller has been instrumental in identifying the need and facilitating discussion on solutions. "There are still several county officials who don't have or use e-mail," Miller stated. "In this day and age when those in the workplace rely on e-mail to communicate, this poses a challenge."

Taney County Associate Commissioner Jim Strafuss is chair of the committee. (He is also vice-chair of NACo's IT committee). "We are trying to close the technology gap," Strafuss stated. "Along with e-mail, step one is to get all counties to adopt a basic website." Currently, many counties do not have IT departments, nor are they budgeted for the expense of ongoing website and IT maintenance. Especially in this challenging economic climate, many counties have no money available for even the most modest IT infrastructures.

Recently, the committee began working with the University of Missouri Extension to explore how it may be able to assist. Extension has offices in all but three counties across the state (those three counties receive

assistance from neighboring counties' offices). On Dec. 12, committee members, MAC Executive Director Dick Burke, MAC Communications Director Jay Shipman, and MOBroadbandNow Director Damon Porter met with MU personnel on campus to discuss options in-depth. Among the MU personnel facilitating the meeting was Manager of Constituent Relations Mary Anne McColium. "We have the resources as the flagship institution and as a land-grant institution to reach out and work with you," she stated. "We want MU Extension to be your resource to assist in any way and help pull this together."

A number of personnel spoke to the committee. Lori Croy, director of Web communications, presented how to build a website. "Building a website is a lot like building a house. You have to start at the beginning." The foundation of the site is key. Ms. Croy discussed how a website should be a framework, a tool used to effectively deliver content to constituents. "A website is a direct reflection of who you are and what you do for the people you serve every single day."

Tim Haithcoat, program director and sr. research specialist at the Geographic Resources Center, shared how counties could utilize the university's wealth of geographic data as layered mapping programs on their websites. "This mapping data deployed successfully on your website can be a great resource and add value to

(Continued On Page 14)

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(Continued From Page 12)

the site for your citizenry," he stated.

Chris Koukola, assistant to the Chancellor, discussed how to use a website to effectively deliver urgent, time-sensitive, or crisis-related information. "The biggest thing you have to think about is speed," she said. "In the age of social media, you have to go fast; we're talking a matter of seconds, not minutes."

Following the meeting, the committee and Extension have agreed to establish a pilot program with Carroll County to provide it with a website,

hosting, and e-mail accounts for officeholders.

If your county does not have a website or e-mail communications and would like to begin the process, please contact Jay Shipman by phone at 573-634-2120 or by e-mail at jshipman@mocounties.com.

MoBroadbandNow Summit A Success

Government officials, business leaders, and residents from across the state attended MoBroadbandNow's 2nd Annual Broadband Summit on Nov. 17 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City. MoBroadbandNow has formed customized regional strategic plans by partnering with citizens, businesses, local governments, and regional planning commissions -- all with the goal of bringing broadband accessibility in Missouri to 95 percent by 2014.

"The public-private partnership initiative is the way to go," MoBroadbandNow Director Damon Porter stated. "We want to see every part of the community engaged."

Partnerships with Internet Service Providers (ISPs) across the state have grown from 41 to over 100 in 2011. These ISPs have provided a wealth of information to help MoBroadbandNow map out statewide broadband service availability.

Breakout sessions highlighted the greatest areas of need across the state based on community and business surveys conducted in 2011. "Sadly, many local jurisdictions are not online or not communicating with their citizens or the global community," Porter stated. University of Missouri Geographic Resources Center Director Tim Haithcoat and his team shared extensive research data and survey results. "Local jurisdictions show the greatest weakness right now," Haithcoat said.

Utilizing survey data and regional plans, MoBroadbandNow is scheduled to roll out a statewide strategic plan in January. For up-to-date information, please visit mobroadbandnow.com.

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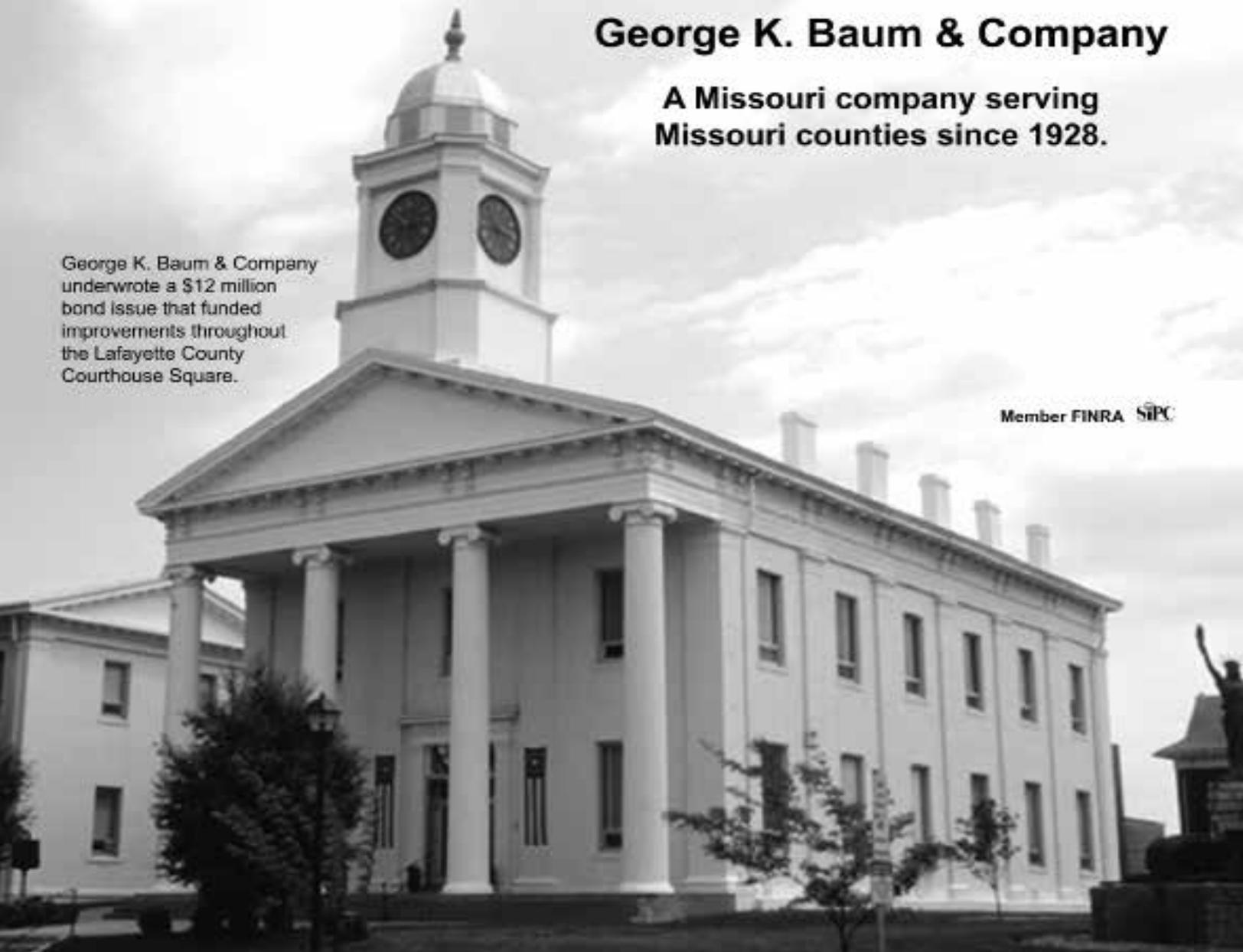
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U. S. Department Of Transportation Proposes To Eliminate Deadlines For Replacing Traffic Signs

On Aug. 30, 2011, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that the Obama Administration is eliminating dozens of burdensome regulations on traffic signs which cash-strapped state and local governments expect will save them millions of dollars. The U.S. Department of Transportation is proposing that communities replace traffic signs when they are worn out, rather than requiring signs to be replaced by a specific deadline. The proposed changes will eliminate 46 deadlines mandated by federal traffic control regulations.

In January, President Obama called for an unprecedented government-wide review of regulations already on the books. The purpose was to identify rules that needed to be changed or removed because they were unnecessary, out-of-date, excessively burdensome or overly costly.

“A specific deadline for replacing street signs makes no sense and would have cost

communities across America millions of dollars in unnecessary expenses,” said Secretary LaHood. “After speaking with local and state officials across the country, we are proposing to eliminate these burdensome regulations. It’s just plain common sense.”

The regulations establishing deadlines for street and traffic sign replacement came from the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), which is a compilation of national standards for all pavement markings, street signs and traffic signals. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which has published the manual since 1971, updates it periodically to accommodate changing transportation needs and address new safety technologies, traffic control tools, and traffic management techniques.

FHWA issued a Notice of Proposed Amendments to eliminate 46 of the deadlines in the manual.

“Local and state transportation agencies are best-equipped to determine when they need to

replace signs and other items in the course of their daily work,” said FHWA Administrator Victor Mendez. “We are proposing these changes to give them the flexibility they need to balance their many responsibilities and make the best use of taxpayer dollars.”

The deadlines requiring that certain street name signs be replaced by 2018 to meet minimum retroreflectivity standards and requiring larger lettering on those street name signs are among the series of deadlines eliminated under the proposed amendment. The proposal would also eliminate deadlines for increasing the size of various traffic signs, such as “Pass With Care” and “One Way,” as well as warning signs, such as “Low Clearance” and “Advance Grade Crossing.” Instead, communities will be able to replace and upgrade these signs when they reach the end of their useful life.

DOT has retained 12 deadlines for sign upgrades that are critical to public safety. These safety-critical sign upgrades include installing “ONE WAY” signs at intersections with divided highways or one-way streets and requiring “STOP” or “YIELD” signs to be added at all railroad crossings that don’t have train-activated automatic gates or flashing lights.

In November 2010, FHWA published a request for comments in the *Federal Register* on deadlines and received almost 600 comments from highway agencies, state departments of transportation, other organizations, and private citizens. FHWA took these comments into consideration as it developed the Notice of Proposed Amendments.

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation website at www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1143.htm.



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Missouri Working Group On Sentencing And Corrections Issues Report

In his 2010 State of the Judiciary speech, then-Chief Justice William Ray Price stated, "Perhaps the biggest waste of resources in all of state government is the over-incarceration of nonviolent offenders and our mishandling of drug and alcohol offenders. It is costing us billions of dollars and it is not making a dent in crime."

In 2011, Judge Price, Gov. Jay Nixon, President Pro Tem Robert Mayer, and Speaker of the House Steven Tilley, in collaboration with the Pew Center on the States, formed the inter-branch, bipartisan Missouri Working Group on Sentencing and Corrections to address this growing problem. The Working Group has met several times since its inception and has diligently compiled a year-end report of its findings and policy recommendations.

As outlined in the report, the Working Group conducted extensive analysis of state data and trends and has reached consensus on a package of reforms that will improve public safety, hold offenders accountable, and contain corrections costs by strengthening community supervision. This package is estimated to reduce Missouri's projected prison population at the end of FY 2017 by 245 to 677 inmates at a savings of \$7.7 to \$16.6 million. The Working Group recommends that \$4 million of those savings be directed to swift and certain sanctions at the local level and a portion of the remaining savings be reinvested in evidence-based practices.

The group's in-depth, multi-source analysis found that from 1990 to 2005 Missouri's prison admissions increased 142 percent. Contributing to this growth is the large number of people who fail on probation and parole -- a staggering 71 percent of prison admissions are revocations of probation or parole, and approximately half of those revocations are due to technical violations (not following the rules of supervision). In addition, two-thirds of Missouri's prison admissions are for non-violent offenses.

Missouri's average duration for probation is 4.5 years, 40 percent higher than the national average. However, most technical violations occur within the first two years of supervision. This suggests that Missouri is not getting a good return on its investment in the final years of supervision and that resources could be better allocated to high-risk offenders during the initial re-entry process. Indeed, supervision case loads have increased by 18 percent while the parole/probation budget has increased less than 8 percent.

The first set of Working Group policy recommendations addresses revocations to prison by targeting high-risk offenders; frontloading supervision resources; responding to violations with swift, certain, and proportional sanctions; incorporating incentives; and balancing surveillance with treatment:

- Incentivize offenders who comply with the conditions of supervision by awarding a credit that reduces the term of supervision by 30 days for every 30 days of compliance.
- Grant probation and parole officers the authority to utilize short administrative jail stays as a sanction for violations of supervision and reimburse counties at a rate of \$30 per day.
- Require that probationers be placed in one of the Dept. of Corrections' 120-day or alternative programs (shock incarceration or drug treatment) on their first revocation for technical violations.

The second set of recommendations helps ensure these reforms are sustained through quality implementation, ongoing oversight, evaluation, and additional study:

- Statutorily create a formal oversight body to monitor implementation of the above reforms, evaluate outcomes, and certify savings.
- Ensure the criminal justice system holds offenders accountable for victim restitution and policymakers address the concerns of crime victims and survivors.
- Revisit Missouri's criminal code, which has grown too large and inconsistent.

The full report can be viewed online at www.senate.mo.gov/12info/comm/special/MWSC-Report.pdf

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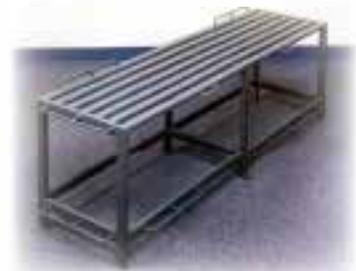


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Commission Announces New State Legislative Districts

The Missouri Appellate Apportionment Commission has filed new state Senate and House of Representatives redistricting plans and maps with the Missouri Secretary of State. The Commission was appointed by the Supreme Court of Missouri as prescribed by the state *Constitution* when bipartisan citizen apportionment commissions failed to reach agreement on new district lines in September. The state *Constitution* gave the six appellate court judges 90 days to complete the task. This is only the second time in state history that a judicial panel has redistricted both chambers of the General Assembly. Commission Chair Lisa White Hardwick said, "We have worked collaboratively to draw maps that comply with the *Constitution*, the Voting Rights Act, and other legal requirements." The districts take effect for primary and general elections next year. Candidate filing for election to the new districts begins Feb. 28, 2012.

Redistricting occurs every 10 years following the census. Based on the 2010 Census, Missouri's resident population increased by seven percent to 5,988,927. This increase, combined with regional population shifts, required significant changes in the state's 34

current Senate districts and 163 current House districts to meet the constitutional requirement that districts be as equal in population as practicable.

The Senate redistricting plan has an overall difference in population of 7.46 percent between its largest and smallest districts. The new plan has four African-American majority districts.

The House redistricting plan has an overall population difference of 7.80 percent between its largest and smallest districts. The new plan has 16 African-American majority districts. It also has two districts wherein combined racial minority populations comprise a majority. Thus, the House plan has a total of 18 districts where racial minorities constitute a majority of the population.

Summary maps and demographic reports describing the new legislative districts are posted on the website at oa.mo.gov/bp/redistricting. Additional detailed maps and census descriptions filed with the Secretary of State are also available. To access, download and print the new maps, visit oa.mo.gov/bp/redistricting and click on "New State Legislative Districts" in the left-hand menu under the "Appellate Apportionment Commission" header.



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Film Crew Focuses On Amsterdam



The Dutch film crew has dinner in Butler County. (From left) Rob Rombout, Ben Wolf, Matthew Menter, Peggy Buhr, Rogier van Eck, Donna and Randy Gregory

There's a movie being made not in Hollywood or New York, but all across the USA, and it includes scenes featuring little 'ol Amsterdam, MO.

That's right -- a Dutch film crew is making a documentary about all the cities named Amsterdam in the United States and, of course, that would include a stop in Bates County.

While dining at the Inn Building Wednesday, Nov. 2, Peggy Buhr, along with Donna and Randy Gregory, learned about the project that will include footage from all 16 Amsterdams in the USA that stretch from New Jersey to California.

Besides filming, the crew had a good time visiting new-found friends in and around Amsterdam and Butler. This included filming at the Amsterdam Cafe and the Fur, Fins & Feathers taxidermy shop on the South edge of town. And lots of still photos were taken as well.

From their blog -- "We ended the night how all nights should end... good food and good drinks with new friends. Peggy and Donna, two great women of Butler MO, invited us to a meal at Majestic Cellars. It was such a spectacular evening. I recommend the steak and crab. After a long day of filming, dinners like this are so essential. A big thank you to everyone who made today so productive and memorable."

The crew's blog can be seen here at www.amsterdamstoriesusa.com, and it encompasses every detail of the project and their journey as it takes them across the USA in "One American Adventure" as it's been coined.

This article was originally published in the Nov. 4, 2011, edition of the Bates County News Wire. Reprinted with permission.



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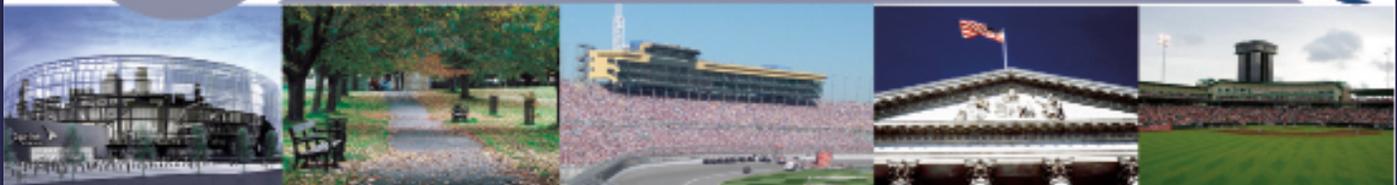
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Government Potential To Achieve Greatness

By Steve Hamill, General Manager,
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Over the past few years, Americans have become increasingly critical of government and cynical about government's ability to "do good." Despite these stereotypical views and criticisms, we see countless compelling examples to demonstrate that government can be all of these things and can indeed achieve greatness. We applaud the dedicated government officials and employees who work tirelessly for the overall benefit of the American public and would like to offer a helping hand by sharing real life examples of governments achieving greatness.

There is no better time for government to exhibit greatness than the present. Governments, under intense economic pressures, are still expected to preserve life and public safety, as well as quality-of-life -- public benefits that are often taken for granted. At least 48 states in the U.S. are facing a cumulative budget shortfall of \$166 billion, or nearly a quarter of their budgets. More than ever, government at every level is faced with the burdensome challenge of doing more with less.

This article is the first in a series that will examine the different ways that governments have been successful in delivering efficient, effective, fiscally responsible and innovative results in the communities they serve. The series, titled the *Great Government Series*, will demonstrate how incremental budget reductions and revisions to standard models of operation have the potential not only to close budget gaps but also to improve outcomes.

The *Great Government Series* will explore the role that Improved Operating Results (IOR) plays in the path to achieving greatness. IOR will be used in the series to refer to new knowledge, ideas, methods or innovations that have been used by one or more government agen-

cies to increase productivity, reduce costs and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, services and programs.

A simple, yet innovative method of achieving IOR is through the use of cooperative procurement. Cooperative procurement (or piggy-backing off another government agency's previously solicited contract) has been proven to reduce administrative and product costs, increase efficiencies and stretch shrinking budgets during difficult times. Cooperative procurement aggregates the purchasing power of multiple government agencies in order to drive down deeper discounts on goods and services. Cities, counties, states and school districts across the country are demonstrating IOR and greatness today by utilizing cooperative procurement.

A 10 percent savings in the cost of goods and services was recently illustrated by the city of Los Angeles, which currently purchases its office supplies from Los Angeles County's contract with Office Depot. Since 2006, the city has estimated savings and rebates of approximately \$1.8 million based on the purchase of \$18 million in office supplies. When the city was outfitting 4,400 new workstations in its new police administration building, it saved over \$13.5 million by using Fairfax County, VA's pre-competed contract with Haworth.

Fairfax County also purchases its office supplies from Los Angeles County's contract with Office Depot. The county received discounts of up to 72 percent on certain products and achieved rebates of nearly \$700,000 in fiscal year 2009 alone.

Due to its budget constraints, the city of San Antonio was recently unable to replace aging construction equipment or procure additional equipment, therefore relying exclusively on renting equipment. The city currently utilizes four contracts for equipment rental, each with its own contractor, and realizes combined annual spending of \$679,000. Through the use of North Carolina State University's contract with Hertz Equipment Rental, the city is forecasting a direct savings of \$132,000 annually or an approximate 25 percent decrease in costs from its current rental equipment contracts.

Throughout the U.S., governments are demonstrating efficient, effective, fiscally responsible and innovative ways of meeting their constituents' needs. Utilizing cooperative procurement is just one example of governments achieving IOR, even during difficult times.

We view the *Great Government Series* as a collaborative and living effort. We welcome input from our government leaders and the public at large. If you have thoughts on great government or would like to share some examples of great government in your community, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact us at greatgovernment@uscommunities.org.

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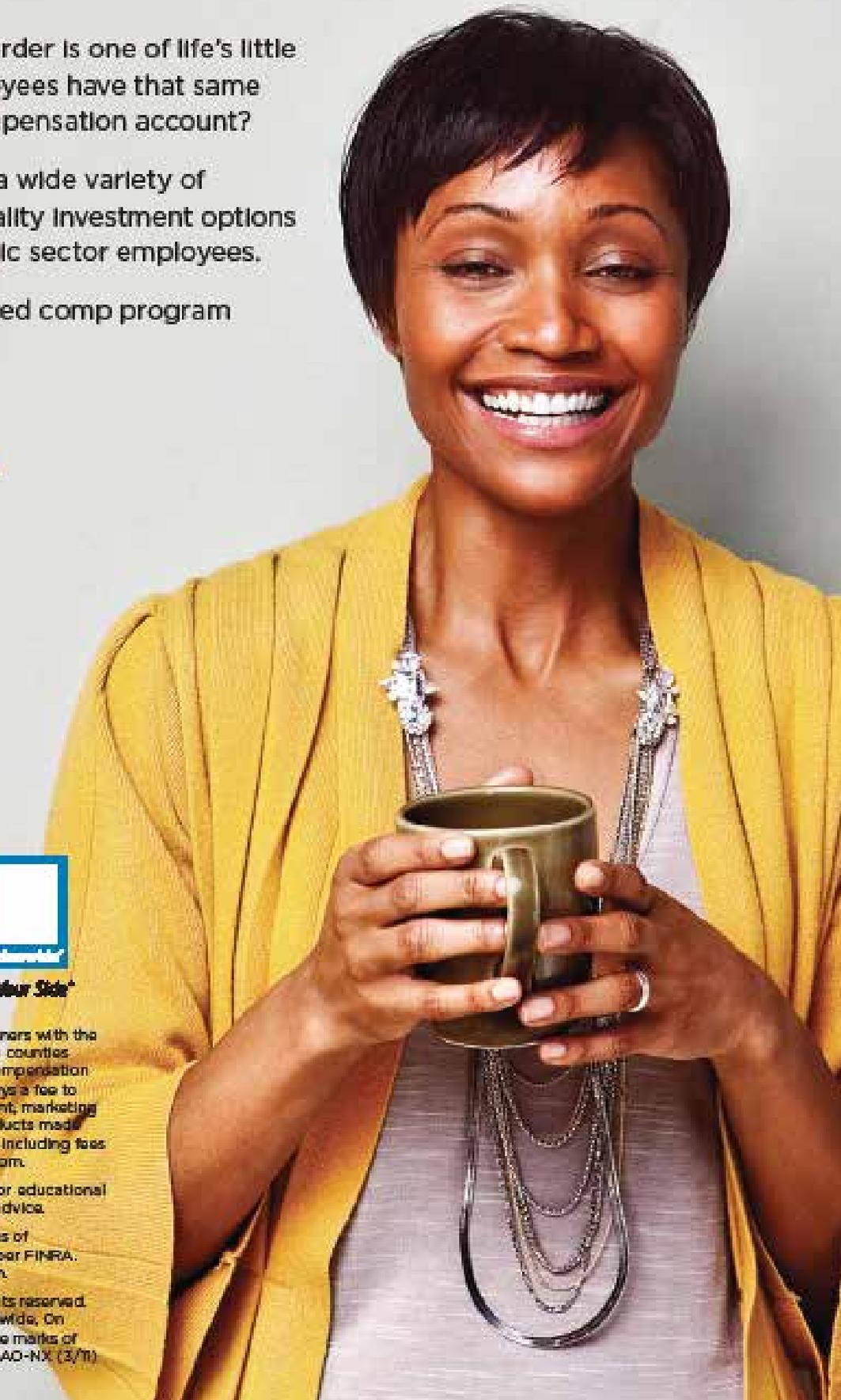
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