

NACE News



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Mark A. Craft, P.E., Engineer-Manager, Gratiot County Road Commission, MI

This past month I had the opportunity to represent NACE at the Wisconsin County Highway Association (WCHA) Annual Conference in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. Their meeting was a distinctive milestone for their association, as it was their 100th Annual Road School Meeting. They hosted an excellent conference, complete with a great program and speakers, as well as indoor and outdoor exhibitors. They had over 600 conference attendees. While I was there, it was easy to recognize that they have a very strong, dedicated state association.

The theme of their conference was "100 Years of Commitment to Wisconsin".



WCHA Officers: Front Row (L to R): Gary Kennedy (Treasurer), Charlie Rayala (Past-Chair), Arlene Benrud (Chair), Alan Kletti (Vice-Chair); Back Row (L to R): Dan Fedderly (Executive Director), Paul Halverson (Secretary), Mark Craft (NACE President), Mark Servi (NACE Secretary-Treasurer), Bruce Stelzner (NACE State Director), Alvin Geurts (WCHA President).

It was a very fascinating program, as they stepped back in time presenting projects and the equipment used long ago, for build-

ing and maintaining roads compared to what is used today. It really makes one reflect and appreciate how much our capabilities and efficiencies have improved over the years.

There are approximately 5.7 million people that live in Wisconsin and the state is comprised of 72 counties. The Wisconsin County Highway Association is an affiliate of NACE with 100% of their counties as members. I would like to thank the Wisconsin County Highway Association for inviting me to their conference and for making me feel like a part of their organization.

Our new NACE Executive Director, Brian Roberts, has officially started. Please take the time to introduce yourself and welcome Brian; he can be reached at the NACE office (202-393-5041) or via email at BRoberts@naco.org.

The next NACE Board of Directors meeting will be held on Saturday, July 16, 2011 in Portland Oregon in conjunction with the Annual NACo Conference. All of our members are welcome to attend.

WITNESSING HISTORY

By Richie Beyer, County Engineer, Elmore County, AL and NACE President-Elect

Through our lives we witness historic events that effect us in different ways. Just over two months ago now, two of these such events occurred for me in a week's time.

First, the NACE conference proved not only to be an excellent event for our association, but it also marked the end of the career for an icon of county government. Tony's retirement and the events leading up to his final remarks as NACE Executive Director at the conference are moments I will never forget. His departure sets a benchmark for NACE as he elevated the organization to a level never seen before. With all this focus on the retirement, it would have been easy for Tony to just coast for his last several months, but what will stick with me most is Tony's tireless efforts to prepare NACE for its next chapter. A chapter with much promise because it has a

strong foundation built by icons like Tony Gianacola.

My second experience occurred the week I returned to work after the NACE conference. April 27th will live on in history as one of Alabama's worst natural disasters. We are accustomed to hurricanes, floods, ice events, and even the occasional tornado, but on this day over 50 tornadoes ripped through the state ending many lives (258 at last count) and forever altering the remaining ones. Devastation impacted 42 of our 67 counties and dumped some 10 million cubic yards of debris in the state. My county was one of the affected counties as an EF-4 tornado plowed a path 1/2 to 1 mile wide for 16 miles in the northeast quadrant of the county. Six people lost their lives in our county due to the storm. As we recover from this life changing disaster, one of the experiences that will forever be engrained in my memory is the outreach from fellow engineers in Alabama and across the

nation. The calls, emails and texts I received shortly after the event to ensure mine and my family's safety, to offer assistance or to just offer advice and comfort, are items that will stay with me forever.

Two historic events separated by days in my life. Both, though, remind me to what drew me to NACE back in the mid 1990's. The friendships and professional growth that NACE helps foster is unlike any other association we can be a part. Whether sharing triumphs or tragedies, you can be assured that involvement in our membership translates into being connected with quality professionals (and icons) and developing lasting friendships that will outlast our professional careers.

SHOW YOUR NACE PRIDE! ORDER YOUR OWN NACE SHIRT

You can order a shirt/item with just the NACE logo or also tagline: The Voice of County Road Officials through Lands' End special NACE website at: <http://ces.landsend.com/NACE>.

SUMMARY OF SENATE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROPOSAL RELEASED

In early June the bipartisan leadership of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) released an outline of its legislation to reauthorize the surface transportation program. The recommended funding level would remain at current funding plus inflation, which translates into \$339.2 billion over six years. The projected Highway Trust Fund revenues would not support this funding level and therefore the assumption is that a source such as the general fund, would have to be tapped to fully fund the six-year program.

Other issues addressed in the outline were an increase in the TIFIA program; elimination of all earmarks; consolidation of existing highway programs; creation of a freight program; and streamlining of project delivery without sacrificing the environment. While the EPW proposal includes both highways and transit, it is the Senate Banking Committee that has jurisdiction over transit. The Obama administration has proposed a \$556 billion program while the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has been rumored to be developing a bill that would be funded at a level no higher than the Highway Trust Fund could support. Contact: [Bob Fogel](mailto:bfogel@naco.org) • 202/942-4217 or email: bfogel@naco.org

NCHRP REPORT EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF SMALL SCALE FEDERAL-AID PROJECTS PUBLISHED!

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Synthesis 414: Effective Delivery of Small Scale Federal-Aid Projects, has been issued. The report examines streamlines methods for achieving federal requirements for small-scale projects, and explores ways that state departments of transportation can work with local agencies to implement small projects that are eligible to receive federal funding. The report is available for review at: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_syn_414.pdf

RECLAIMED ASPHALT PAVEMENT IN ASPHALT MIXTURES: STATE OF THE PRACTICE

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration has released a report that examines the state of the practice for reclaimed asphalt pavement (RAP) use in the United States as well as best practices for increasing the use of RAP in asphalt pavement mixtures. To view the report, see: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/infrastructure/pavements/11021/11021.pdf>

SAFETY EVALUATION OF THE SAFETY EDGE TREATMENT

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration has released a report that evaluates the safety effectiveness of the safety edge treatment in conjunction with resurfacing. The safety edge treatment is designed to reduce roadway drop-off-related crashes. To view the report, see: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/11024/11024.pdf>

Visit the NACE website at: www.countyengineers.org

HIGH RISK RURAL ROADS SAFETY ACT LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

On June 3, 2011, Rep. Michael Michaud (D-Maine) introduced H.R. 2107, the High Risk Rural Roads Safety Act. The legislation authorizes \$400 million annually for six years to fund cost effective safety infrastructure improvements for rural roads throughout the country. The language also broadens the definition of a high risk rural road to make it easier for states and local governments to decide which roads and projects would be applicable under the program. Funds are also set aside for data collection to help states identify roads that need improvements. Please take a moment to reach out to your Representative to ask that he/she cosponsor the bill. Reps. Pete Stark (D-Calif.) and Bob Filner (D-Calif.) are cosponsors of H.R. 2107.

The Roadway Infrastructure Safety Coalition (RISC) members, which NACE is a member organization, have endorsed the bill and have been pushing for introduction for the last few years to focus on this important issue. For more info on RISC:

www.atssa.com/GovernmentRelations/RoadwayInfrastructureSafetyCoalitionRISC.aspx

MARK V. MASSARO, P. E., SELECTED AS ONE OF APWA TOP 10 PUBLIC WORKS LEADERS OF THE YEAR

Congratulations go out to Mark Massaro, Director of Public Works, Orange County, FL for his selection as a Top 10 Public Works Leader of the Year. Mark has been a long standing member of NACE and chaired our NACE 2004 annual conference held in his county in Orlando, Florida.

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WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE

By David Babbitt, Public Works Director,
Bingham County, ID and NACE State Director

The Idaho delegation recently returned from the National Association of County Engineers (NACE) conference held April 16th to the 21st in Minneapolis – St Paul, MN.. Each year there are about 6 representatives from the Idaho Association of County Engineers that attend the NACE conference. This year's theme of the conference was "North Star NACE 2011 – Guiding with Vision."

Idaho is faced with some of the same challenges that many other agencies throughout the nation are facing. Lack of adequate financing, and increasing costs are only part of the challenges road maintenance workers and elected officials face. Officials and road authorities now have to decide what roads are going to be maintained while other roads maintenance activities are postponed. Roads and bridges continue to crumble as our infrastructure has outlived its designed life. With a lack of current maintenance dollars, the need for money is going to dramatically increase as the roads deteriorate. Roads without timely maintenance will have to be rebuilt costing much more to rebuild the roads than maintenance dollars can divert at this time.

Road Officials are faced with the dilemma of insufficient money to provide maintenance to the road systems. There is no way they can maintain them in their current condition without more money. We expect the roads and bridges we drive on to be safe no matter where we drive in the nation. Many bridges are failing because of their age and lack of maintenance.

We have also improved the roads and oiled more roads creating a standard that we can no longer afford. We have also become accustomed to the roads in these conditions. We expect and some even demand that this level of service is continued. Where is the money going to come from to support our infrastructure? Until more money is available, maintenance is going to have to be deferred. The sooner they get more money; the less it will cost.

Not too far in the future, many roads are going to give their final signs of their useful life. Roads deteriorate from the bottom up. When potholes form and road breakage happens, the roads have failed. Roads fail when the sub-base intermingles with the aggregate that is used for road base. The sub-base often lubricates and reduces the friction of the base material. This is easily understood when gravel is put on a road or driveway and the gravel seems to disappear. When in reality the gravel is still there, and it has mixed with the sub-base. Oil roads are no different.

Roads fail when the layers of sub-base mix with the base. This process is accelerated from overloaded vehicles, water (sprinkling) on roads, Cracks in the road allowing water to penetrate to the sub-base. (gravel roads don't shed water, so they are as susceptible to road failure as oil roads) Overloaded trucks can cause damage to both oil and gravel roads too.

As roads begin to break up it will be easy to pass blame on the local road agency or elected officials. Highway maintenance workers and local officials are doing the best they

can with the funds that are available. In Idaho the last funding increase was in 1994. Other states are suffering with the same issues. From 2001 to present, equipment costs have increased and fuel and road oil have increased over 400%.

Every dollar spent now will save us many dollars in the near future. Roads need to be chip sealed every 5 to 7 years to avoid oxidation and keep the friction surface maintained on the road. In general there seems to be a general distrust of the government. There also is the sentiment, "don't you dare raise taxes." While we are going through this concerning time, our roads and bridges are crumbling and deteriorating. The longer we wait, the more it is going to cost to repair our neglect.

Marla Vick, President of the Idaho Association of County Engineers and Road Supervisors said at a Local Roads Efficiency Summit in Boise last fall, "We need to place value in and protect our infrastructure."

We encourage everyone to support a method to provide the roads the money that is needed to maintain them and make necessary improvements. It is everybody's community. Who is going to maintain and protect your road if you don't?

10TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LOW-VOLUME ROADS

This TRB sponsored conference held every four years, will be held on July 24-27, 2011, in Lake Buena Vista (Orlando), Florida. It is designed to foster communication about new and innovative ways of building, maintaining, and managing low-volume road systems.

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A CONFERENCE TO REMEMBER

By Duane J. Ratermann, County Engineer, Knox County, IL and NACE North Central V.P.

It's been two months since many of us gathered in Minneapolis, MN for the NACE 2011 Annual Meeting and Management & Technical Conference. I want to compliment the Minnesota delegation for a job well done in all aspects of the 2011 conference. I've been fortunate to attend fourteen NACE conferences over my short career and 2011 will certainly go down as one to remember for me on a professional as well as a personal level.

In March of 1994 I attended my very first NACE conference in Reno-Sparks, NV. I had been employed as a Civil Engineer at the Knox County Highway Department for a little less than 6 years and didn't really have much knowledge of the National Association of County Engineers. My boss at the time, the late Francis Griffin, gave me an opportunity to attend the conference that year. Francis was a huge supporter of NACE and I am very fortunate that he introduced me to the NACE family so early in my career. Many of the same delegates that I met in 1994 were in attendance in Minneapolis. The friendships I have developed over the years with engineers from all across the country are one of the great benefits of attending the annual conference.

In 1999, the NACE conference was held in Niagara Falls, NY. For me this conference was unique because I attended as a NACE delegate but also as the son of the incoming president of NACE. At the banquet in Niagara Falls, my father, Dan Ratermann, was sworn in as the NACE President. It was customary back then that the incoming President's family members attended the banquet. To this day, Tony

Giancola is still trying to digest the large number of reservations my dad requested. It took a little planning but we were able to get my three brothers, my three sisters, three spouses, my two children and two other nieces and nephews to the conference in Niagara Falls. My dad, being the youngest of thirteen children, was pleasantly surprised when several of his siblings and their spouses showed up to share the special moment with him also. It was a Ratermann Reunion in Niagara Falls.

Overland Park, KS was the site of the NACE 2000 conference and was the first time I attended as a County Engineer. Due to the untimely passing of Francis Griffin, I was named the County Engineer of Knox County, IL in November 1999. I was very proud to be following in my father's career path. It was very neat to see my father carrying out the NACE President's conference duties and be able to share that with him. It was inspiring to think a county engineer from rural west central Illinois could become the president of a national association like NACE.

Milwaukee, WI was the location for the NACE 2007 conference. My fellow County Engineers chose me to represent them on the NACE Board of Directors. Now it wasn't just about going to the exhibit hall, attending the technical sessions and other conference activities. I was expected to attend a board meeting on Sunday afternoon as well as Thursday morning with a couple of breakfast meetings mixed in. The NACE Board of Directors is made up of engineers and highway superintendents from all across the country. There were 30 states as well as Ontario, Canada represented on the NACE board.

In 2009, the annual NACE conference made

its first stop in Illinois. I was very fortunate to play a role in the planning and delivery of the conference in Peoria. One of my fondest memories of the 2009 conference was my father giving the invocation at the opening ceremonies. Having served as a County Engineer in Illinois for over 30 years, I'm glad my father was able to finally attend a conference in his home state of Illinois, even though he had retired and moved to Missouri in 2001. Hosting the NACE 2009 conference made our state association stronger and gave many of our Illinois County Engineers a look into the NACE family that they may never have seen otherwise. I look forward to the next time the NACE conference visits Illinois.

That brings us to 2011 and the recent conference in Minneapolis. I was about to experience something very special to me and quite frankly something I doubt any other NACE delegate had ever experienced previously. At the Annual Business Meeting on Wednesday morning the results of this year's election were read. I had been elected as the North Central Region Vice President. Most of you are probably thinking that should not have been such a huge surprise since I was running unopposed but you just never know.

I have attended many NACE banquets over the years and honestly I never knew how well the people at the VIP tables were treated. My wife, Diane, and I were seated at one of the front tables with the other Regional Vice Presidents and spouses and next to the table with the NACE officers and spouses. I should mention here that they are a fine bunch and I look forward to working with them to make NACE something we can all be proud of.

Since serving as the NACE President, my father has been chosen to induct the new NACE officers at the banquet on several occasions. It was a very emotional moment for both of us when he introduced me as the North Central VP. I consider serving as a NACE VP my finest professional accomplishment to date. Being sworn in by my father has to be one of my finest personal experiences. I want to thank Phillip Demery for making that special moment possible.

A few short weeks after our annual banquet in Minneapolis, I was told I was responsible for an article for the June newsletter. I was at a loss for a topic. I decided to reflect on my personal experiences with various NACE conferences. I am very proud to be my father's son and now have a better understanding of the tremendous influence he has had on me. Thanks Dad!

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GOVERNOR'S VISION FOR MICHIGAN

By Luke D. Houlton, P.E., Engineer-Manager,
Cheboygan County Road Commission

Earlier this year, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder addressed attendees at the 2011 County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) Annual Highway Conference; calling on county road agencies to adopt the best practices concept of government reforms, along with creating an easy to understand financial guide and "dashboard" metrics to measure the success of operations.

Gov. Snyder has promised to deliver a series of special messages on policy issues vital to Michigan's future throughout his term. Although his plans to address the crumbling of Michigan's transportation infrastructure will not be announced until this fall, he gave road commissions much to consider in his first address on transforming local governments.

Although county road commissions were not specifically addressed, the reforms mandated for local governments to receive statutory revenue sharing (now referred to as the Economic Vitality Incentive Program or EVIP) provide a glimpse into what the Administration deems as efficient practices for all governmental entities. The Governor called these reforms "the first steps" in local government reform.

Governor Snyder cleared the first major hurdle when these reforms were signed into law as part of the FY 2011-12 omnibus state budget.

Cities, villages and townships would qualify for EVIP funding only after achieving each of three best practice categories: transparency; consolidation of services; and pub-

lic employee compensation.

Transparency: By October 1, 2011, local governments were asked to implement the Citizen's Guide to Michigan's Financial Health and create a dashboard for citizens that must include unfunded liabilities. By pushing for these reforms, Gov. Snyder is hoping to bring transparency to state and local government finances, including recognition of any unfunded liabilities, and the cost of public employee benefits.

Consolidation of Services: By January 1, 2012, communities must develop a plan with one or more proposals to increase existing levels of cooperation, collaboration and consolidation both within the jurisdiction and with other local government entities. The plan must list previous efforts of cooperation, collaboration and consolidation, with any cost savings realized through the partnerships; and make a good-faith effort to estimate potential savings and costs associated with sharing critical services.

The Governor has made it clear that he expects local governments to, look beyond their immediate townships, city and county boundaries in order to build a stronger Michigan. Recent surveys show many areas where road commissions and municipalities are working together to deliver services including: swapping plow routes to gain efficiency; sharing equipment and staff and coordinating joint projects.

Public Employee Compensation: By May 1, 2012, communities must certify they intend to implement the following employee compensation criteria for any new, modified or extended contract or employee agreements.

· Place all new hires on a defined contribu-

tion plan or hybrid retirement plan that caps annual employer contributions.

· Where applicable for defined benefit plans, establish a maximum multiplier that could be used to determine employee pensions. The multiplier ranges from 1.5 to 3 percent depending on eligibility for Social Security and/or provision of retiree health care.


· Implement controls to avoid pension spiking such as using a minimum three-year salary average that does not include more than 240 hours of paid accumulated leave and overtime to determine benefit levels; and

· If health care is offered, all new hires must pay a minimum of 20 percent of the health care premiums. Alternatively, a dollar amount could be assigned to local health care plans and compared to the state preferred provider organization health plan on a per-employee basis.

Gov. Snyder has also called on the legislature to consider revising policies and statutes that are intended to enable the consolidation of jurisdictions, not by mandate, but instead removing what he refers to as "barriers to consolidation".

The CRAM Board of Directors considers the reforms laid out for local governments to be an indicator of where the Snyder Administration may start when seeking reforms of county road commissions this fall. We are using this opportunity to get a head start in implementing reforms and expanding efficiencies.


CRAM has created a Special Committee on Transparency to develop a sample dashboard for road commissions and to adapt the one-size fits most financial reporting tool (Citi-
See "Michigan" continued page 6.



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"Michigan" continued from page 5.

zens Guide to Financial Health) to the idiosyncrasies of road commission financial data. The committee is also charged with creating a performance management report that could be used to monitor a variety of activities from year to year as well as with other road commissions.

Governor Snyder has selected two transportation-related indicators as part of the MiDashboard used to measure how Michigan compares with other states. The number of deficient bridges is used as a measure of economic strength and the number of fatal or serious injury accidents is used as a measure of public safety.

The dashboard for road commissions will

allow Michigan's county road agencies to measure their success against other local road agencies in the state and across the country. Unfunded liabilities are likely to be a required measure, and local agencies will be judged against the state on bridge conditions and the number of traffic incidents.

Dashboard measures for road commissions could include a variety of areas including pavement conditions, customer service, safety records, operations costs, and levels of service provided. Michigan county road agencies vary significantly from large urban road agencies to rural road commissions with limited administrative staff. The challenge will be to create measures that are simple, easy to understand, and that can be implemented by

any county road agency.

By proactively addressing the reforms and transparency tools supported by the Snyder Administration, Michigan's road commissions will be in the position to prove we are good stewards of the resources currently provided, and to help state residents understand the genuine need for increased funding for the state and local transportation infrastructure.

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June 2011 Issue

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