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ELECTION 2010



Guest Contributors:

- A review of the 2010 South Dakota Election by SD Secretary of State **Chris Nelson**
- Reflections on election experience from Minnehaha County Auditor **Sue Roust**

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY KAREN LAYHER



SDACO President & Grant County Auditor Karen Layher

Well, another month has gone by and now it is getting into the time of the year that I love – the holiday season. I really enjoy driving around and looking at all the lights and decorations people display from now through Christmas.

This month as we reflect on what we are thankful for, let's include our SDACO family. This year members of our SDACO family have received blessings of restored health while other members are still struggling with health issues. Please continue to keep the members of our SDACO family in your thoughts and prayers. I am thankful for many things

and at the top is my family, good friends, my faith community, my health & the freedoms I enjoy as an American.

As an auditor, I am thankful the election is over! Now, I will be able to get some other work accomplished. I would like to extend congratulations to the Auditors and Register of Deeds who won their races. Good job! Also, our organization will have some new faces in January. I am sure all of us look forward to meeting them. Lastly, we will be saying good bye to members who will be retiring at the end of their terms. I would like to wish good luck to Kay Schmidt, Lake County Auditor; Sue Roust, Minnehaha County Auditor; Betty McCambridge, Clay County Register of Deeds; Karyl Sandal, Haakan County Register of Deeds; and Judy Busack, Brule County Register of Deeds. We will miss them, but if truth be known we are envious. I would personally like to thank all of them for their dedication to county government and wish them a wonderful retirement.

Another person I am thankful to have the privilege of knowing and having his expertise in the field of elections is

Chris Nelson. In my opinion, we have had the best of the best for 22 years guiding the auditors through the election laws and rules. One of my early memories of elections is waiting and waiting (and not too patiently) for that last precinct to finish counting the ballots – finally at 5 AM we were done! Now, with the M100 and the 650 ballot counter if we go past 10 PM, I consider it a late night. As Chris told us in September, change does happen and we will move forward. I can accept that fact, but our loss will be someone else's gain. I wish Chris the very best in the future as he has been a great leader. I would also like to extend a sincere heartfelt thank you to him and his excellent staff for all they have done to make my job as auditor easier. THANK YOU!

The executive board will be meeting in December. If anyone has an item of business to bring before the board, please contact me or Carrie. So, in closing I would like to wish everyone a blessed Thanksgiving. Enjoy the turkey and the trimmings!

MISSION STATEMENT SOUTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY OFFICIALS

"The mission of South Dakota Association of County Officials is to promote effective and efficient county government for the citizens of South Dakota."

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BY CARRIE GONSOR

Each month brings exciting and fun changes to both SDACO and to South Dakota. I started with SDACO in June, 2010 and have been pleasantly surprised by the exciting activities that county officials see as the months goes by. October and November have been exceptionally busy as each county prepared for elections and a new wave of leadership for the 2011 Legislative Session.

After working with county Auditors for the past 6 months, I have a new found respect for the election process and the work put into an election cycle by the entire courthouse staff. Each person in the courthouse is aware that voters come to the courthouse to exercise their constitutional right to cast a ballot for the candidate and ballot measure of their choosing. Courthouse employees must maintain the integrity of the voting process each day for the six weeks leading up to election and then, in most South Dakota counties, it is all hands on deck for election day as the county Auditor leads the charge for a successful election cycle.

Shelliie Baumgart, Hughes County Finance Officer, was kind enough to allow me to witness this process first hand. Baumgart invited me to her election school in late October and I was amazed at the amount of details she goes over with her election workers - I had no idea of the amount of responsibility that is put in the hands of election volunteers and county Auditors! Baumgart invited me back again to see her office at work on election night. Her office ran like a well oiled machine, with many courthouse employees and county officials working into the night to ensure the speed and success of the election. I enjoyed this example of what talented, competent, and hard working county officials we have working in our great state. Great job on a successful election cycle!

Now that South Dakota voters have chosen our Legislative and State wide leadership, we must work together to educate the leadership on our role in county government. County Auditors, Treasurers, and Registers of Deeds run the day-to-day functions of the courthouse and are



Executive Director Carrie Gonsor

integral in many constituents daily lives. I encourage all of you to take the time to introduce yourself to your legislators and invite them to your office. Show your legislators what skills you bring to your county and how, through your daily work, you make the lives of people in your county a little better. By working together, we can bring positive changes to South Dakota.

For the SDACO office the next few months will focus on making the voice of county officials heard to our legislative and state wide leadership. Thank you for making my job easy by being so good at yours!

South Dakota County News

The *South Dakota County News* is the official newsletter of the South Dakota Association of County Officials.

The *South Dakota County News* is published ten times a year by the South Dakota Association of County Officials (SDACO). It is distributed to all elected county officials in South Dakota's 66 counties. Other readers include SDACO Associate Members, purchasing agents, budget and planning administrators, appointed department heads, state legislators and state agency personnel.

Companies interested in **advertising** in the *South Dakota County News* should contact Carrie Gonsor, SDACO Executive Director.

SDACO member counties may place classified ads, story ideas, articles and photographs in this newsletter at NO Charge. Please send your information to SDACO@sdcounties.org.

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SDACO OFFICE HAPPENINGS

NCCAE

In October, Executive Director Carrie Gonsor traveled to Gleneden Beach, Oregon to participate in the annual meeting for National Council of County Association Executives. Forty two other Executives joined Gonsor in learning how to increase revenue for associations, raising awareness for the associations, and "branding" association logos.

SDACO

Administrative Assistant

The SDACO office in Pierre is still without an Administrative Assistant. SDACO will take advantage of this situation by helping to introduce internship possibilities throughout SDACO and county government. Graduate students from local universities will work with the SDACO office to provide clerical functions and support during legislative session.

District Meetings

November brings third quarter district meetings for many county districts. The Sioux Valley, Black Hills, Southeast Central, and James River Valley Districts will meet during November. Representatives from the SDACO and the SDACC office try to attend all district meetings. If you have any suggestions for the SDACO office, please bring them to your district meeting.

TECHNOLOGY MATTERS

BY CHRIS HAMZE



SDACO Technology Coordinator
Chris Hamze

an eye out for interesting and beneficial webinars from the SDACO CEC Portal.

An added benefit of the CEC Portal is that all webinars that our members attend will be recorded and saved in our archives. We have all had great training classes that we have attended years ago and wished we could remember more of what was taught. Now with the CEC portal any-time you feel you need to brush up on a particular subject, you can just log onto the portal and refresh your knowl-edge.

Keep a particular eye out for technology and website training webinars. SDACO is developing a curriculum of courses to help every county use technology to its fullest. Some topics include: Using Your SDACO Website, Using Social Media, Using Technology to Simplify Repetitive Tasks, What to Look For in a New Computer, How to Create Editable PDF Documents, Must have Software Applications, and any other technology topic that would be helpful for SDACO members.

Links that work for you:

SDACO Website
www.sdcounties.org

NACo Website
[Www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

License Plates
www.sdcars.org

Voter Information
apps.sd.gov/applications/st25cers/

SoDakLive
home.sodaklive.com/

Tip of the month:

To switch quickly between two screens on your computer, press "Alt" and "Tab" simultaneously



SDACO

Continuing Education Certification Portal

Providing Valuable Training Opportunities for the Busy

County Official

Have you ever felt like it would be great to have training opportunities all year round, instead of just twice per year, but you are just too busy to leave the office more? The SDACO understand how busy the life of a county official can be. To help our members SDACO has created a continuing education portal to provide you with educational and helpful webinars. As the New Year approaches, keep

SOCIAL NETWORKING TOOL CONTINUES TO KEEP COUNTIES CONNECTED



Facebook has become the social media home of a growing number of businesses and non-profits. Many South Dakota counties use their interactive Facebook pages to post announcements for their courthouse and to connect with constituents. Facebook is an inventive & useful way to help counties.

SDACO has had a Facebook page for over a year. County elected officials & employees are encouraged to become fans if they are interested in getting SDACO conference updates, reviewing county-related legislation, & getting links to recently published county-focused news articles.

Facebook members can "like" county Facebook pages by visiting www.facebook.com, searching for the county, and selecting the "like" button. Keep an eye out for the Facebook icon on all materials including newsletters, magnet mails, new hire postcards and more.

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Each month NACo provides publications specifically geared towards educating county officials and leaders. The October publications focused on health care in the workforces. Find NACo publications at: www.naco.org/research/

Workforce Investment

Healthcare workforce investment is a significant opportunity for both economic and health infrastructure development. This issue brief outlines the effects of healthcare workforce investment; and, highlights considerations for county leaders interested in starting and/or supporting healthcare workforce investment in their communities.



Rural Health Works: Community Health Engagement for Local Elected Officials

This publication summarizes the Rural Health Works Community Health Engagement Process which measures the economic impact of the health sector on the county economy and provides a community health assessment process.



Across the country, counties are facing tough times in a stubborn economy. Now more than ever, NACo President Glen Whitley believes it is crucial that counties develop dynamic ways to promote essential and effective county services available to residents. That's why Whitley's Presidential Initiative is County Government Works: An Initiative to Raise Awareness and Understanding of Counties.

Though many counties concentrate publicity efforts during National County Government Month in April,

Whitley is encouraging all NACo member counties to promote county services and programs throughout the year.

"Many families and businesses in our communities have fallen on hard times," Whitley said. "Promoting county services can help strengthen your community despite hardships shared by all."

Learn more about the County Government Works initiative at



Whitley urges all counties to use the theme in throughout their court house and in educational opportunities:

"Counties are encouraged to link this year's theme - Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families - to as many National County Government Month activities as possible. Popular events include holding public tours of county facilities; talking to students, community organizations and business leaders about county programs and services; holding essay and art contests; and sponsoring County Family Day events on the Courthouse grounds. You can hold media events, write newspaper columns, or be a guest on local radio and TV shows to discuss new county programs or highlight existing ones."

Find the full press release for the April 2011 theme at: www.naco.org/newsroom/

NACo President Glen Whitley has announced that the April 2011 theme for the National County Government Month (NCGM) is *Serving Our Veterans, Armed Forces and Their Families*. National County Government Month (NCGM) is celebrated each April by the nation's counties to raise public awareness and understanding about the roles and responsibilities of county government

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Don Larson
Brookings County
Commissioner

dlarson@brookingscountysd.gov

Nancy Hansen
Brown County
Commissioner
nancyh@nvc.net

County Officials Elected in 2010

Bon Homme County
Register of Deeds
Sandra Frasier-Shaffer

**Campbell County Register
of Deeds**
Mandy Horner

Charles Mix County Auditor
Sherri Fuchs

Davison County Auditor
Susan Kiepkke

Deuel County Auditor
Pam Lynde

Faulk County Auditor
Aaron Lorenzen

Hutchinson County Auditor
Jeanie Simonsen

Hyde County Auditor
Colleen Leisinger

Jackson County
Register of Deeds
Mitzi Mitchell

Lake County Auditor
Roberta (Bobbi) Janke

Minnehaha County Auditor
Bob Litz

Roberts County Auditor
Dawn Stattler

State Wide Elections

SD Governor
Dennis Daugaard

SD Secretary of State
Jason Gant

SD Auditor
Steve Barnett

SD Treasurer
Rich Satgast

SD Attorney General
Marty Jackley

GENERAL ELECTION 2010

BY CHRIS NELSON



SD Secretary of State
Chris Nelson*

Great work by county auditors across this state made the 2010 General Election one of the smoothest and best run elections that I can remember. A successful election day is the culmination of two years of planning, preparation, and training. All of that paid off for voters who were able to cast their votes easily and have those votes counted quickly once the polls closed.

Turnout of registered voters averaged 62.27% across the state. That percentage varied greatly with highs of 83.66% in Jerauld (nothing like a hot sheriff race to push turnout), 77.86% in Jones, and 74.59% in Douglas County. Turnout in individual precincts also showed some impressive numbers. McPherson 101 had 88.89% (who were the seven people that didn't vote in that precinct?), Harding Poplar Grove had 86.76%, and Meade Fairpoint #29 had 86.36%. Low turnouts were reported in Shannon at

34.9%, Corson 37.12% and Todd at 40.27%. The statewide turnout percentage was five percentage points less than the 67.3% turnout in 2006.

Approximately 19.2% of ballots were cast absentee compared to 27.35% absentee in 2006. 411 military or overseas voters requested their absentee ballot be sent electronically. 274 of those ballots were returned by election day for counting. The new federally required system for electronic ballot distribution worked very well and was much appreciated by those who used the system.

“Great work by county auditors across this state made the 2010 General Election one of the smoothest and best run elections that I can remember.”

Very few problems were reported on election day. Typical calls fielded by our office asked where to vote or to confirm a voter registration. Two counties reported that the wrong ballot style was sent to a precinct but the error was resolved and didn't affect the election result. Several precincts reported poll workers who were not “in position” at the opening of the polls but alter-

nate workers were quickly put in place.

The counting of ballots at the close of the polls went quickly with no major problems with any of the ballot scanners. The last of our 791 precincts reported at 12:50am which is an early finish for a general election.

The computer system used by county auditors to report their official results to the Secretary of State worked flawlessly. This system posts the results to a public website every five minutes throughout election night. The demand by the public to view the website was so great that the state web servers could not keep up with the query requests and unfortunately response time suffered. A thorough review of this problem by those responsible for the state web servers will be conducted to ensure that this lapse in service does not occur in future elections.

I want to thank each county auditor and election worker throughout South Dakota for the professional job that they did in conducting this election. You did good!! It has been an incredible privilege for me to work with you and for the people of South Dakota as Secretary of State.

* This picture of Chris Nelson is from the SD Secretary of State website. Visit the site at www.sdsos.gov

REFLECTING ON 20 YEARS OF ELECTIONS

BY SUE ROUST

With the end of my 20-year run in sight, I thought I'd do a little accounting. The results were scary - I've counted ballots for 53 elections, 24 county-wide and 29 for Sioux Falls city and school district. We first bought ES&S scanners in 1994, and ran 36

"I've overseen the counting of 1,328,033 ballots."

elections on our old Model 550's before they were replaced in 2006 with the Model 650's. So I'd have to say these are durable machines!

Since I'm a numbers geek, I had to add it up - I've overseen the counting of

1,328,033 ballots.

And we've had 8 recounts in my time with Minnehaha County, soon to be 9. Some of them were very straightforward, but others ended in court cases. In 1998, I was ordered to transport the District 12 ballots to Pierre for the opening day of legislative session, and for a while it looked like Chris Nelson and I were going to be ordered to recount them ourselves!

Recounts are extra work,

but I think they're valuable for us as well as the candidates. They're a way to validate the work we do and show how accurate our processes and our ballot counters are.

Some-times recounts lead to new laws which can improve the election system. Some changes that have occurred in part because of Minnehaha

County recounts are doing away with straight party

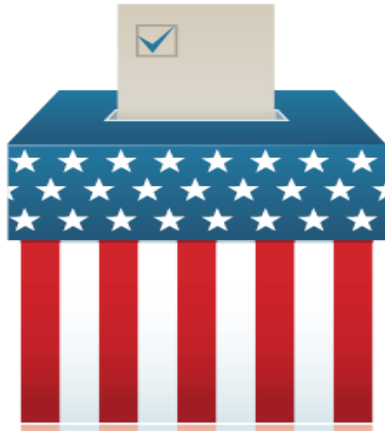
voting and the identifying marks law, and allowing for multiple recount boards if needed to complete the recount in 5 days or less.

"(Recounts are) a way to validate the work we do and show how accurate our processes and our ballot counters are."

I'll be thinking of you all as the next election cycle starts. May your elections be problem-free and your recounts few and far between!

Read more about Roust's life as a public servant and her dedication to Minnehaha County at:

www.argusleader.com



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South Dakota Voters Approve New Laws and Constitutional Changes

During this election cycle South Dakotan voters faced ballot questions to change both SD Codified Law and the SD Constitution. On November 5, voters were asked to cast their vote on four major topics: the right to vote by secret ballot, the smoking ban, a constitutional change regarding the SD cement plant, and medical Marijuana.

Two of the ballot measures garnered enough support to become new laws in South Dakota. An astonishing 79% of voters checked "yes" for amendment K, which guarantees the South Dakota Constitutional right to vote by secret ballot. Amendment K will add to the Article IV of the South Dakota the following language: "The rights of individuals to vote by secret bal-

lot is fundamental. If any state or federal law requires or permits an election for public office, for any initiative or referendum, or for any designation or authorization of employee representation, the right of any individual to vote by secret ballot shall be guaranteed."

South Dakotans also voted to pass Referred Law 12. Referred Law 12 received over 60% support from South Dakota voters. The passage of Referred Law 12 means that the smoking ban will apply to all restaurants, bars, package liquor stores, Deadwood casinos and video lottery establishments.

The two remaining ballot measures,

Amendment L and Initiated Measure 12, both failed to garner the support of South Dakota Voters.

The failure of Amendment L will allow the state to continue to draw from the cement plant trust fund

This is the second time that the Medical Marijuana question was on the South Dakota Ballot. The failure of Initiated Measure 12 will keep medical marijuana out of South Dakota.



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November is Adoption Awareness Month

RELEASED BY South Dakota State News on Monday, November 8, 2010

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) will join thousands of individuals, government agencies and child advocacy organizations during the month of November to promote the critical need for adoptive parents. To help recruit and retain foster and adoptive parents for children who are waiting for forever homes, Gov. Mike Rounds has declared November as Adoption Awareness Month.

“There continues to be a need for families in South Dakota to step forward and become foster and adoptive parents. This includes other relatives of the child or other South Dakota citizens who are willing to provide a warm and loving home,” stated Gov. Mike Rounds.

Since July 1, 2009, 185 children in South Dakota were adopted through the Department of Social Services; several other adoptions also took place through independent and private agencies. Currently, DSS is in the process of identifying adoptive resources for 116 children. The children range widely in age and may have physical or emotional challenges, developmental disabilities or are part of sibling groups, who all need a place to call home. It is a DSS priority to place children in homes that provide for their needs on a permanent basis. Children awaiting legal clearance for adoption live in foster homes, group homes or other facilities. They need families that can understand and meet their needs, provide stability, and offer permanent

parent-child relationships.

“The lives of these children can be brightened forever by just one person or a family taking them in and providing unconditional love and care,” Gov. Rounds stated.

“The lives of these children can be brightened forever by just one person or a family taking them in and providing unconditional love and care.”

In honor of National Adoption Month in November, the *Dakota Heart Gallery*, a unique

photo exhibit of children in South Dakota currently waiting for adoptive families, will be available for viewing from Nov. 1-15 at the Empire Mall in Sioux Falls. Free information and materials regarding adoption of children from foster care will also be available with the *Dakota Heart Gallery* exhibit. If anyone is interested in hosting the *Dakota Heart Gallery* exhibit at their church, business, or event; please contact the Children’s Home Society at 605-965-3172.

The Department of Social Services offers services to adoptive families to help them meet the unique needs of the children adopted through the department. For more information, visit www.dss.sd.gov/adoption.

SOUTH DAKOTA HAPPENINGS

November

- Nov. 15th: Sioux Valley District Meeting in De Smet, SD
- Nov. 17th: Black Hills District Meeting in Phillip, SD
- Nov. 18th : Southeast Central District Meeting in Alexandria, SD
- Nov. 18th: James River Valley District Meeting in Huron, SD
- Nov. 24th-Dec. 26th: Christmas at the Capitol
in Pierre, SD
- Nov. 27th-28th: WJ Ranch Cowboy Christmas
in Yankton, SD

December

- Dec. 6th: SD Budget Address
- Dec. 10th: Black Hills District Legislative Meeting
in Sturgis, SD
- Dec. 15th-16th: SDACO Joint Executive Board Meeting
in Pierre, SD
- Dec. 25th: Christmas Day

Mark your Calendars!

SD County Day

February 14, 2011

SD Capitol Rotunda, Pierre

SDACO New Officials Workshop

March 16-17, 2011



Pierre Ramkota Hotel

SDACO Spring Workshop

May 18-20, 2011

Pierre Ramkota Hotel

November 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	 11	12	13
14	Sioux Valley District Meeting 15	16	Black Hills District Meeting 17	Southeast Central & James River Valley District Meeting	19	20
21	22	23	24	 25	SD State Offices Closed 26	27
28	29	30				

December 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	Black Hills Legislative Meeting 10	11
12	13	14	Executive Board Meeting 15	Executive Board Meeting 16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	SD State Offices Closed 24	Christmas 25
26	27	28	29	30	SD State Offices Closed 31	

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Associate Members play an important role in the ongoing activities of the SDACO through education, fellowship, and financial support. As such, the SDACO continually strives to improve benefits Associate Members receive. Together, we can make a difference for South Dakota counties. I look forward to working with you this year & for years to come.

Carrie Gonsor, Executive Director
 South Dakota Association of County Officials

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*Promoting effective and efficient county
government for the citizens of South Dakota*

Founded in the 1950's and incorporated in 1991, the South Dakota Association of County Officials is geared toward promoting the general welfare of county officials and to establish more uniform methods of procedure in those county offices. Our goal is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Legislature on matters of county administration and procedure.

The South Dakota Association of County Officials continually strives to help counties improve their capacity to serve their citizens. SDACO currently offers member counties these services:

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