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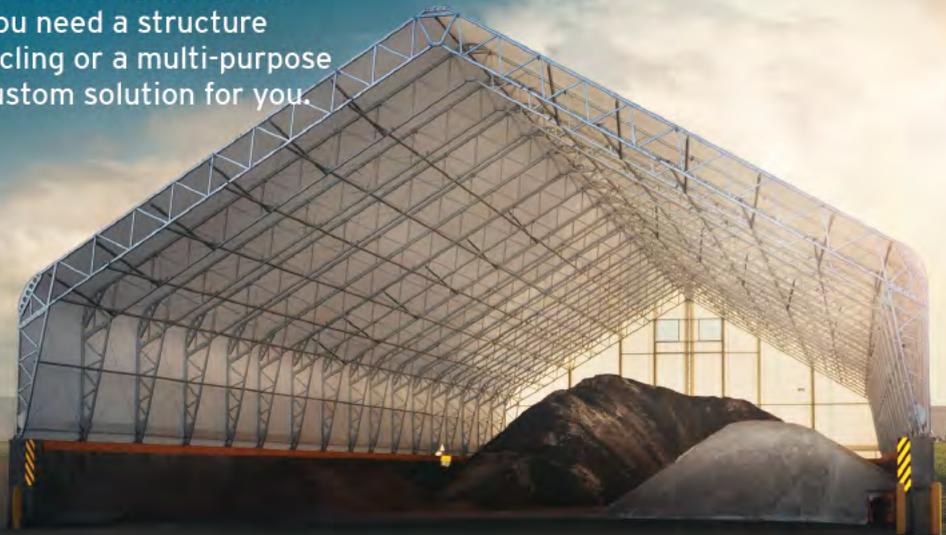
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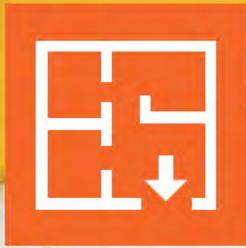
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# Research disagrees on advantages of public vs. private sector employment



Jodi Marlin | Editor

**The grass is perennially greener on the other side of the fence, so it's little wonder that much thought – and even more indignation – has arisen regarding who has it better: employees of state and local governments, or those in the private sector.**

A consensus only seems to start to form when speaking strictly in terms of wages and benefits. A recent Bureau of Labor Statistics report on employee benefits points out that, for example, public union workers' share of premiums for medical coverage are lower compared to their counterparts: 13 percent for single coverage and 16 percent for family, compared to 23 percent for single

coverage and 35 percent for family among private industry, nonunion workers. The same report noted private sector employees receive holidays off of work at a slightly higher rate than public employees.

Regarding the picture in terms of pay: Even though most public sector state and local jobs require higher-than-average education and training, wages are usually lower. Many observers figure that better benefits offset the difference. But there are so many pieces to the puzzle that it's hard to reach a definitive conclusion.

One of the intriguing papers on the subject has been written by Dr. Jeffrey Keefe, who authored it for the Economic Policy Institute, dated Oct. 13, 2015. It's titled

"Eliminating Fair Share Fees and Making Public Employment 'Right to Work' Would Increase the Pay Penalty for Working in State and Local Government," and it addresses some of the issues of public vs. private pay and benefits.

According to David Bensman, professor of American Labor History at Rutgers University, "Keefe's analysis is a lot more detailed and accurate than the Bureau of Labor Statistics,' because the BLS data compared apples and oranges whereas Keefe and the people he cited compared data about similar works."



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**The main findings of the report include:**

- Twenty-five states now have right-to-work laws that are applied to public-sector workers.
- State and local government employees earn less than similar private-sector workers, even though their education level — the most important predictor of earnings — is often higher; however, they receive better health benefits and pensions. Previous research has found a public-sector compensation “penalty” — how much less they earn in wages and benefits than comparable private sector workers — of 2 percent to 11 percent. Studies alleging that public employees are overcompensated do not control for skill levels and education.
- The current public employee union wage boost of 5 to 8 percent is rather modest and considerably less than the boost that private sector unions provide. Thus, public employee unions, on average, do not raise wages to meet the wages paid to similar private sector employees.
- Only public employees in states with full collective bargaining make as much as their private-sector peers. Using American

Community Survey data, this report finds that the public-sector pay penalty is 1 percent in non-RTW states and 10 percent in RTW states, a net compensation penalty of 9 percent.

- Consistently, regardless of the data, methods or period, the public-sector union wage premium is half of what is reported for private-sector union employees and appears to be declining over time. Pooled analysis from 2009–14 reveals a public sector union wage premium of 8 percent and a compensation premium of 9 percent compared with non-union public employees.
- Most research has shown that firefighters have benefited from collective bargaining particularly because it reduced their weekly hours. Early studies from police unions found they were associated with higher earnings — a 2014 study by Fransden determined 5 percent — but studies also revealed a difficulty in isolating a union wage effect because of what is referred to as “spillover effect,” where nonunion employees set wages, and most likely benefits, to be comparable to those in surrounding communities.
- Approximately 30 percent of public-sector employees are not covered by Social Security. Pensions are mostly legislated by state and local governments and are not collectively bargained.

- Public employee unions do have some ability to negotiate health benefits. Public employees receive similar health

benefits as private-sector workers, but public employees are much more likely to participate in employer-provided benefits.

- Four studies conducted from 2010–14 cited by Keefe in this paper comparing public and private sector employee compensation concluded that public sector employees are undercompensated between 2 and 11 percent.

Keefe’s conclusions as to why include: Many Americans do not like to pay taxes, especially when they don’t understand the public services they receive in return; politicians often promise lower taxes and improved services by cutting waste; the public sector — particularly K-12 education, which accounts for about 53 percent — has historically taken advantage of paying females less; state and local governments rely on property taxes, and homeowners resist increases in property taxes; state and local government jobs have historically produced stable employment and pensions plans, encourage employees to remain in those jobs; and lastly, some of the most difficult jobs for public employees are in former industrialized cities that have high crime rates, high poverty rates and few jobs with an inadequate tax base to address the challenges.

Further information and a contradictory opinion can be found on pg. 20 of this magazine. Whichever way your research and experience leans, we hope this month of May finds you both appropriately compensated and fulfilled for the effort you give every day to keeping your city up and running. **M**

Jodi Marlin



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# Emerson Manufacturing Corporation: *Listening to the heavy-equipment customer*



By **HOLLIE KOOPMAN** | Controller, Emerson Manufacturing Corp.

**E**MERSON MANUFACTURING CO. has been delivering quality products and customer service for over 50 years. It offers the highest level of service and strong commitment to 100 percent satisfaction, and manufactures every product to the highest possible standards. One hundred percent of Emerson products are made in the USA.

Emerson is a family-owned and -operated company that has been designing, building and selling professional maintenance shop service equipment since 1960. Company founder and owner Fran Voss had a jack repair business in high school and later started building bumper jacks for cars. A few

years later, he changed focus to fill a need in the market and decided to specialize in jacks for trucks and heavy equipment.

Besides its air-operated and air/hydraulic jacks, which feature lift capacities from 14,000 to 60,000 pounds, the company also builds and sells portable ramps, stands, safety locks, brake drum caddies and pressurized fluid transfer systems for handling waste anti-freeze and oil. As the company expanded and needed more space, it moved from its hometown of Emerson, Neb., to Pender, Neb., in 2004. It continues to sell its American-made products directly from the factory.

Voss said selling directly to customers has challenged the company to continuously

**ABOVE:** *The Emerson Model 25 is seen here effortlessly lifting a fire truck. (Photo provided)*

**RIGHT:** *Emerson Model SC-60's twin cylinders provide 60,000 pounds of the smoothest power you will ever experience. (Photo provided)*

improve its products. Listening to the customer is the best way to find out what the customers need. Selling directly also trims costs, which allows Emerson Manufacturing to charge less than many competitors for its well-engineered and durable products.

Emerson's products are backed up with longer than standard warranties — from two to five years and a no-questions-asked return



**ABOVE:** Emerson's OC-16A oil caddy offers clean, efficient oil changing with no pressurized pump to wear out. (Photo provided)

**LEFT:** Use Emerson wedge locks to safely lock up bodies and beds on dump trucks, roll-offs and trash trucks. (Photo provided)

policy within the first 30 days of ownership. "If people buy our jacks once, we tend to have a customer for life," Voss said.

Emerson takes pride in its innovative designs, such as the removable, shielded-cylinder sleeves on its axle jacks to guide and protect the cylinder from the elements. This makes it easy and efficient to use anywhere. You never know where you will need to change a tire.

The powerful Emerson Model 25 Axle Jack has a 25-ton capacity. It comes with three different options, making it the perfect choice for trucks, tractors, trailers, shops, farm implement or off-road tire and repair shops. It's the only axle jack on the market with a shielded cylinder, giving you years and years of rust protection and trouble-free service.

The newest product in the lineup is the SC-60, a twin cylinder, air-over-hydraulic lift with a 60,000-pound lift capacity. Primarily designed for the truck, heavy construction and agricultural markets, the SC-60 features a 16- $\frac{1}{4}$  inch starting height to ensure easy access to lifting points across a wide variety of machines. The SC-60 comes standard with one height-adjustment bar, and two optional lift bars are available to achieve a maximum lift height of 90- $\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Another popular product the company manufactures is waste oil and antifreeze caddies. The ATF-16A and OC16-A offer clean and efficient oil changing. Both

devices hold up to 16 gallons of fluid and are 9- $\frac{1}{2}$  inches high and 30 inches wide. The catch pans are 20 inches in diameter and 3 inches deep, and feature splash guards to diffuse fluid as it drains. The system is pressurized so there is no pump to wear out. The antifreeze caddy has a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch flow-control valve on the hose and a reusable 100-micron tubular screen filter. The caddies stand on end for easy storage and include drip guards in the drain pans to prevent fluids from leaking on the floor. It could not be easier.

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*In memory of Fran Voss, 1932–2016. Voss passed away unexpectedly subsequent to contributing to this article.*



# Spreading the love of peanuts

## Suffolk, Va.



**Though the status of Suffolk as the nation's leading producer of peanuts has waned in the last half century, the role the popular legume played in the city's history is beyond question.**

Suffolk was first hailed as "The Peanut Capital of the World" on the strength of Italian immigrant Amedeo Obici setting up shop downtown in 1913. His enterprise consisted of six employees, two large roasters and some crude machinery; it was named Planters Nut and Chocolate Company.

It all started when, during his brief tenures as a bellhop and fruit stand vendor in Scranton, Pa., Obici noticed peanuts were a snack food favored by his customers. He invested in a peanut roaster, dubbed himself "The Peanut Specialist" and peddled his wares by horse and wagon.

In 1906 he briefly partnered with Mario Peruzzi, who had developed an efficient method of blanching whole roasted peanuts. He subsequently moved to Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where he incorporated Planters. He settled permanently in Suffolk, where his company, now owned by Kraft Foods, has been an industrial mainstay for more than a century. It remains one of the 10 largest employers in the city.

In 1916 Planters held a contest to design a logo. A local grade school student, 11-year-old Antonio Gentile, submitted a drawing of Mr.

Peanut to win the contest. His original design was tweaked by a commercial artist and has undergone several revisions throughout the years, but still stands as one of the most recognizable brand icons in the world.

Young Mr. Gentile won \$5 for the contest, according to Kevin Sary, supervisor for the city's tourism office. "And when he graduated from high school, Mr. Obici paid his way through medical school."

The legendary Planters company wasn't the first successful peanut-related business in town, though. That honor goes to the Suffolk Peanut Company, established in 1897.

Nowadays peanut farm acreage is a fraction of what it was in the industry's prime, though the decrease is offset somewhat by more efficient farming techniques. The old Planters' factory was demolished in the 1990s and replaced with a newer, more compact facility.

Obici's dairy farm is now a golf course. His original homestead underwent extensive renovation four years ago, Sary said. "It's now a special events venue. We kept the original flooring, and the stained glass windows are still intact."

**ABOVE LEFT:** The character that has become synonymous with peanuts represents Planters Nut and Chocolate Company, one of several Suffolk, Va., businesses that capitalize on the snack food's popularity. (Photo provided)

**ABOVE:** The current reincarnation of the Suffolk Peanut Fest, now held in October and attended by about 150,000 people, is in its 39th year. The first event, minuscule by comparison, was held in January 1941 and attracted 10,000 visitors. (Photo provided)

"There is still a huge presence of peanuts and our peanut heritage in Suffolk," he noted. Mr. Peanut statues dot the city, and visitors can take educational tours of Planters and learn about the history of peanuts.

The Planters Peanut Center opened in 1967, offering tours and a variety of peanut products. In addition, Suffolk sports several gift shops and other outlets featuring peanuts and peanut items such as magnets.

"One of our peanut museums is operated by the historical society, and we have an HO scale model of 1907 Suffolk and a portion of a peanut farm," he added. Other currently operating peanut companies include Producers, Golden and Birdsong.

# Theodore Koch

## Clara City, Minn.

**Theodore Koch, founder of Clara City, was born in the Netherlands in 1854. An exemplary student, he mastered four languages before his formal education was cut short for lack of funds. After that, the energetic and frugal entrepreneur schooled himself through his experiences in the business world.**



*The former Dutch colony of Clara City in west-central Minnesota was given its name by founder Theodore Koch in 1887, in honor of his new bride. (Photo provided)*

After several years working on his father's estate, Koch, then in his mid-20s, entered into a partnership with a commodity business, brokering produce and livestock between Holland, Germany, France, Belgium and Great Britain. He cultivated relationships with several Dutch banking houses, one of which served as the immigration agent for several American railroad companies.

This contact prompted Koch to sail to America in 1884 with a load of cattle. After delivering the 50 milk cows, Koch met one of his Dutch financial backers, who was heading to Minnesota to arrange land deals for Dutch immigrants. The Dutch had been immigrating to the United States for several generations; largely a cloistered lot, they shunned the urban life of the East Coast in favor of the spacious rural prairies of the Midwest, establishing settlements in Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan.

He seized the opportunity to entice his fellowmen to avail themselves of the vast untapped natural resources of Minnesota and began a lifetime career brokering real estate, founding Dutch communities there.

He frequently traveled back and forth to Europe for his brokerage business. In 1886, Koch visited the home of a German customer who had purchased 100 carloads of baled straw. There he met the customer's eldest daughter, Clara Hoeborn, deemed her "beautiful" and returned a month later with a marriage proposal.

The two were married on April 12, 1887, in her hometown of Hemer, Germany. That same year Koch founded a Dutch colony 110 miles west of Minneapolis and named the settlement Clara City, after his beloved bride. The small burg, population 1,318, comprises an area of a little over 1,100 of the more than one million acres Koch and his partners sold during his 30-year career in real estate.

The keys to his success in establishing colonies in Minnesota and throughout the Midwest were fourfold. First, he possessed an unerring instinct for recognizing good farmland. Second, he intimately knew his target market. Employing a multilingual staff, he circulated advertisements in the language of his intended Old Country audiences, particularly his fellow Dutchmen. Third, Koch always secured financing from several banking sources. Fourth, he personally kept a tight rein on his affairs. His on-site agents included his trusted brothers, and his sister-in-law served as his cashier and bookkeeper.

Despite some financial setbacks, Koch's legacy stands as one of the pioneers who helped propel Minnesota into its status as an agricultural giant.

Oddly, however, the Kochs lived only a short time in Clara's namesake community. They found Clara City to be intolerably bleak, and they hated the cold wind and treeless prairie. They opted instead to settle in St. Paul and later moved to Texas.

They did, however, revisit Clara City in 1937 for the town's—and their—50th anniversary. **M**



**ABOVE:** *The palpable presence of peanuts and peanut heritage continues to permeate Suffolk, Va. Mr. Peanut statues dot the city, and visitors can tour the Planters' factory and learn about the history of peanuts. (Photo provided)*

Sary's department works with the non-profit Suffolk Festivals Inc. to stage the four-day Suffolk Peanut Fest every October. The festival outgrew its downtown venue several years ago and now draws more than 100,000 visitors annually to a 50-acre site adjacent to Suffolk Executive Airport.

But the sprawling 430-square-mile municipality, the largest in Virginia, is about more than just peanuts. "We still have an agricultural heritage," said Sary, citing crops like cotton and corn. "The Lipton Tea Company has been here since the 1950s, and we have several warehouses for companies like Target, QVC and several in the medical field."

The city's location is fortuitous, enticing visitors with its proximity to the oceanfront and ports.

"We're a short drive from Williamsburg, and we have much Civil War history here. A lot of visitors have done the beach and want to explore other sites." He described Suffolk as an ideal tourist destination, featuring "small-town charm with big-city amenities." **M**



*Focus on:*

# *City & Town Management*

***“There has to be an open, trusting relationship between all elected officials, the city manager and mayor.”***

*Manchester, Iowa, Mayor Milt Kramer on the city’s council-manager government model*

*Read the full story on page 24*

**PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS**

**30 percent >**

Although wages are not often above average in public sector unions, benefits are. Employee-provided retirement benefits, for example, were available to 61 percent of local government workers in even the lowest wage category of a 2015 study; only 31 percent of private industry workers had access to them.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, March 2015

Learn more on page 20

**INNOVATION: USCM AT SXSW**

For the first time, Austin, Texas, Mayor Steve Adler and the U.S. Conference of Mayors hosted more than a dozen of their peers at the renowned South by Southwest technology, film and music festival this spring. The mayors attended interactive panels about transportation, innovations in housing, autonomous vehicles and others.

Source: usmayors.org

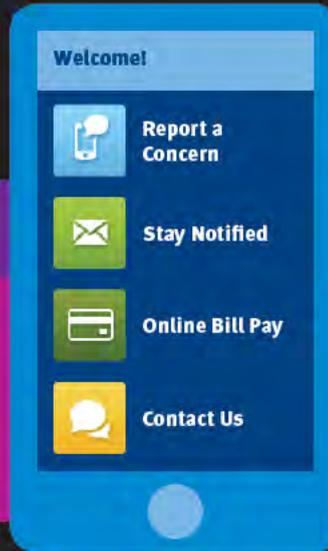


**about 15,600**

Accounts serviced by the online self-service portal of the city of Leesburg, Va. Since going live they have had 4,862 visitors, 24,444 page hits and 308 customers sign up for high usage alerts.

Source: Sherri Jackson, utility office customer service supervisor

Learn more on page 26



**“Good design can be one path to better communication between citizens and their government.”**

Mary Barrett, public relations and special projects manager for the Chattanooga Public Library, on the city’s new typeface, Chatype

Read the full story on page 28



**BUDGETS**

**3 years**

Although they remain below pre-recession levels, city budgets across the country have grown for the last three consecutive years.

**91.6 percent**

However, the current municipal revenue base is still only 91.6 percent of the 2006 base.

Source: nlc.org

**BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

**\$109,000**

Amount Schenectady City Hall, N.Y., saved on its electric and gas bill during a three-year initial phase of a energy efficiency performance contract; proving local governments can lead the way in improving the energy efficiency of buildings and lowering operation costs.

Source: dec.ny.gov



## Are unions a hindrance to city budgets?

By DENISE FEDOROW | The Municipal

**Do public employee unions hurt city budgets? Do union employees receive higher pay and benefits than their nonunion counterparts in the private sector?**

The answers seem to depend on who you ask, as studies on the topic conflict. But for the most part, within a brief survey of municipalities in Florida, Indiana and West Virginia, officials say their union and nonunion employees receive the same pay raises and benefits; and negotiations with unions tend to go fairly smooth.

### Clarksburg, W.Va.

Anthony Bellote, assistant city manager for Clarksburg, said it has approximately 40 union employees, as only the city's public works department is union. They belong to AFSCME Local 743.

"The union's pay scale is a pay scale that is adjusted routinely for cost of living, the same as our other employees. There are no other special benefits to our union employees," he said.

Bellote has been employed with the city for 43 years, starting out as a union employee in

*Heritage Foundation think tank member James Sherk published an article reporting that the average state or local government employee earns \$39.83 an hour in wages and benefits, compared to \$27.49 an hour in the private sector. Sherk claims the differences remain after controlling for education, skills and demographics; but other studies on the topic are at odds with the findings. (Photo provided)*

the public works department. Clarksburg Public Works Department includes streets, traffic, compost, vehicle maintenance, storm and sanitary sewer services.

"Throughout my career, the union has never been a drain on any of our city's budgets," he said.

*“There has definitely been an attack on public sector wages and benefits that’s been going on for a long time.”*



David Bensman is a professor in the Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations at Rutgers University. His evidence says private sector union employees earn higher wages than their public counterparts, and public sector union members must also endure the predicament of underfunded pensions. (Photo provided)

### Public vs. private sector

So many factors figure in to a comparison of public sector wages and benefits versus private sector, including education and whether the state is a right-to-work state or not.

Most studies find that public service union employees make less in wages compared to their counterparts, but they may have better benefits. Unions and union membership differ greatly between public and private sector employers, however.

James Sherk of The Heritage Foundation, a think tank established in 1973, published an article titled “Majority of Union Members Now Work for the Government.” It reported that union membership in the private sector fell, especially in the recession, because unionized companies do not fare as well in the marketplace and lose more jobs to nonunion counterparts. From 1980–2008 union membership in the private sector fell from 20.1 percent to 7.6 percent, and in 2009 private sector unions lost 834,000 members while the public sector gained 64,000 members. The article also stated that the private sector lost millions of jobs during the recession while government jobs increased slightly.

Also according to the article, the average worker for state or local government earns \$39.83 an hour in wages and benefits, compared to \$27.49 an hour in the private sector. Sherk claimed the differences remain after controlling for education, skills and demographics, something that Dr. Jeffrey Keefe, research associate for Economic

## Bureau of Labor Statistics Employee Benefit Study

Here are some findings from a March 2015 study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on employee benefits.

### RETIREMENT: Public vs. Private

Retirement benefits were available to 66 percent of private industry workers in March 2015. Employee-provided retirement benefits were available to **31 PERCENT** of lowest-wage private industry workers while **88 PERCENT** of highest-wage private industry workers had access to retirement benefits.



In state and local government, **61 PERCENT** of workers in lowest-wage category had access, while **98 PERCENT** of highest-wage workers had retirement benefits.



### MEDICAL BENEFITS: Union vs. Non-Union

The share of the premium that workers were required to pay for medical coverage varied by bargaining status. Private industry, non-union workers were required to pay for **23 PERCENT** of total single coverage and **35 PERCENT** of family coverage, while union workers share was typically **13 PERCENT** for single and **16 PERCENT** for family coverage.

### OTHER BENEFITS: Public vs. Private

Full-time workers in state and local government had higher rates of access to major benefits: 99 percent had access to retirement and health benefits; 98 percent to paid sick leave. For part-time workers, 39 percent had access to retirement, 28 percent to medical care and 42 percent to paid sick leave.

For paid holidays, **90 PERCENT** of full-time, private industry workers and **37 PERCENT** of part-time workers had access to paid holidays.



**74 PERCENT** of full-time state and local government workers and **30 PERCENT** of part-timers had access to paid holidays.



**“People are starting to realize they’re paying out of pocket for things the government used to pay for.”**

Policy Institute and retired professor at Rutgers University, says is not always considered when compiling such data.

However, David Bensman, professor of American Labor History at Rutgers University, said there are studies that refute the claims that public employees are compensated higher than private sector employees. Keefe, his former colleague, has published several papers on the topic that Bensman said are “consistent with research done over the last 25 years or so.”

“We’ve known for a long time that wages in the public sector are lower than the private sector,” Bensman said. “In the past that was compensated for by public workers having better pensions, but in the last 20–30 years state governments haven’t adequately funded budgets, creating shortfalls in pension funds—and that’s gone on for a long time.”



He said in some states, New Jersey being one, state and local governments started looking at risky ventures as a way of compensating for pension fund shortfalls. He said New Jersey even turned to hedge fund managers and paid high fees to them that could’ve instead been put in the pension funds.

He added that decisions made in New Jersey regarding pensions created animosity between private and public sector workers. Governor Chris Christie cut pension benefits in the name of reform to

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**LEFT:** Faculty of the Rutgers' Labor Relations Study Department have published several reports comparing public sector jobs and private sector jobs. (Photo courtesy of Rutgers)

**RIGHT:** This block building is home to the Clarksburg, W.Va., public works garage, supply storage and Local 743 AFSCME assembly room. Clarksburg public works employees are union members, while other city employees are not. (Photo provided)



balance the state's budget, promising to increase the fund later — a promise Bensman said he failed to keep.

"Those efforts by the governor split public and private workers. "But now the state legislature is united in calling for full funding of the pension. There has definitely been an attack on public sector wages and benefits that's been going on for a long time."

So, are public employees' pay and benefits hurting local government's ability to pay for other municipal needs?

"What's hurt municipal budgets is state and local governments cutting taxes to the point that they don't have sufficient revenue to carry out the services people need and expect. As a result, pensions are falling short, roads are not repaired, bridges are falling down and salaries are being cut," Bensman said.

In his opinion, one small part of municipal budget woes were unfunded federal mandates, which go back to former President Ronald Reagan. However, he thinks that's now turning around.

"It's been a trend for 40 years, but this trend is ending as people are starting to realize they're paying out of pocket for things the government used to pay for," he said.

Recent political primary campaigns may indicate the same as most political observers noted a substantial amount of voters did not select candidates calling for lowering taxes. According to Bensman, 40 percent of Republican voters and almost all Democratic voters rejected the idea that taxes need to be lowered.

"This seems to represent a change. The Flint lead scandal is a great symbol of how the attack on public revenue and treasury has gone too far. (People) are rethinking whether starving the government is the solution to the economy's problems," he said. **M**

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# A mayor/administrator city management model



By LAUREN CAGGIANO | The Municipal

**A** COUNCIL-MANAGER FORM OF local government can yield great rewards, according to one Iowa mayor. Within this type of framework, the city administrator, or manager, is the chief administrative officer and appoints all officers other than the attorney and municipal judges. He can also appoint all necessary subordinates and fix the compensation within the limits set by the governing body and statutes. The mayor and city council members act as the political head of the city. They are responsible for setting policy, approving the budget, determining the tax rate and formulating broad long-term policies that outline the city's public function.

The manager is appointed by the council to carry out policy and ensure that the entire community is being served. Most communities adopt this form of government through a charter, local ordinance, state enabling law or by voter referendum.

According to Manchester, Iowa, Mayor Milt Kramer, council-manager government combines the strong political leadership of elected officials — in the form of a council or other governing body — with the strong managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. Approximately 47 percent of U.S. cities with populations of 5,000 agree, having adopted the form, he noted. Manchester has a population of just

over 5,000, according to the most recent census data.

This model has worked for Manchester for quite some time. Kramer has held office of mayor for more than three decades. He served as an at-large city councilman from Jan. 1, 1970, to Sept. 18, 1974. He was elected mayor on Sept. 19, 1974, and has been elected to 13 terms as mayor since that date.

Having served over 35 years, he has had the privilege of bringing many city projects to fruition. He listed the development of the industrial park, street improvement projects, a parks and recreation program, the city's compost site, various library and parks improvements and the ongoing development

**RIGHT:** Manchester, Iowa, Mayor Milt Kramer and Mayor Pro-Tem Ron Struble pose with city council members. The council-manager form of local government was designed to combat corruption and unethical activity in local government by promoting effective management within a transparent, responsive and accountable structure. (Photo provided)



of an excellent police and fire department as most memorable.

A retired schoolteacher, he's deeply passionate about the community and serving it. The town may be small, but the high level of community engagement compares to that of a larger area. According to Kramer, there are 33 boards and commissions composed of 110 people in the city of Manchester. Citizens are willing and able to get involved in local government. In fact, they are usually excited to serve.

"When I go out (to recruit for civic positions), I seldom get a "no," he said. "They like their community and want to get involved."

He attributes this interest and enthusiasm to two factors: honoring the volunteers on an annual basis and cultivating relationships. Kramer said he's a big believer in the power of public relations, which is one reason why he visits schools on a weekly basis.

It also doesn't hurt that the city manager, Timothy Vick, is effective in his position — and well-qualified. He earned an undergraduate degree in community and regional planning in 1995 from Iowa State University and subsequently earned a master's degree in public administration from ISU in 2005.

Vick has been with Manchester for 11 years. During his tenure, the city has completed a \$7 million upgrade of its wastewater treatment plant and a \$3.2 million



*Manchester, Iowa, City Manager Timothy Vick has been with the city for 11 years. He works side-by-side with Mayor Milt Kramer and the Manchester City Council; a more and more common form of local government that distinguishes the political head of a local government entity from the administrative one. (Photo provided)*

***"There has to be an open, trusting relationship between all elected officials, the city manager and mayor."***

upgrade of its water treatment facility. It has also completed over \$8 million in street improvements.

Those are material achievements, but another strong yet abstract point Kramer acknowledges is the town's open relationship with the local media.

"We have a lot of exposure to our citizens so (information) is here if they want it," he said.

That transparency extends to the city's finances, which Kramer said benefit from the mayor/administrator relationship. Vick's knowledge and background saves the city money on consultant fees, for example.

The International City/County Management Association notes that many local governments have found that their overall costs reduced under competent

management, which is more and more frequently taking the form of mayor/administrator. Savings can come from decreased operating costs, increased efficiency and productivity, improved revenue collection and effective use of technology. The economic health of the community may also benefit from implementation of improved business development and retention strategies.

Speaking of retention, Kramer said he doesn't take the mayor/administrator relationship lightly. It's one he's worked hard to maintain and foster. That means working through conflict and talking about events and issues.

"There has to be an open, trusting relationship between all elected officials, the city manager and mayor," he said.

Kramer meets with Vick and the police chief regularly to understand the issues facing the city and work through how to address them. Although they all get along, it's a bit of a balancing act, he said. In his words, "You've gotta have a group of people who don't micromanage." ■

# Citizen self-service portals

*Customizability, demand offer good fit for any size locality*



By ANNE MYER-BYLER | The Municipal

## Americans encounter customer self-service portals in dealings with banks, hospitals and doctor's offices. At the municipal level such interactions are becoming almost as common.

Leesburg, Va., has a population of approximately 48,000. Sherri Jackson, utility office customer service supervisor, said the city arrived at using self-service portals a couple of years ago.

"Our portal is a combination of our municipal billing software, our automated meter reading system and the work of a private programmer that we hire especially for his knowledge and ability to complete complicated interfaces."

Leesburg's costs for implementation were limited to programming since the first two components were already in place. The city's

decision to implement the portal with the specific offerings of online bill pay; daily, weekly or monthly consumption information; and high usage alerts, such as an email or text when usage exceeds a customer requested threshold, was driven by the availability of the data. Two stand-alone databases were combined to educate and meet requests for more information.

In an entity the size of Leesburg, what was the usage data for the service?

"We service approximately 15,600 accounts," said Jackson. "Since we went live, we have had 4,862 visitors, 24,444 page hits and 308

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*Because of its widespread installation in the public sector, online bill paying is a service Americans are adopting at a rapid pace. Municipalities that have incorporated the option have also found it to be well received; and as customers embrace it, employees' time can be redirected from customer service to other tasks. (Shutterstock photo)*

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customers sign up for high usage alerts." Demographic information on users is not collected.

In terms of the effect on the municipal employees, Jackson said they have found the service to be a valuable one.

"It's great to be able to refer customers to their current usage data. We can take the mystery out of high water bills by showing them exactly what days or weeks they used the water. Customers can also enjoy the 'self-service' options when it suits their schedules, not the typical 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday. We refer customers to the self-service options whenever possible."

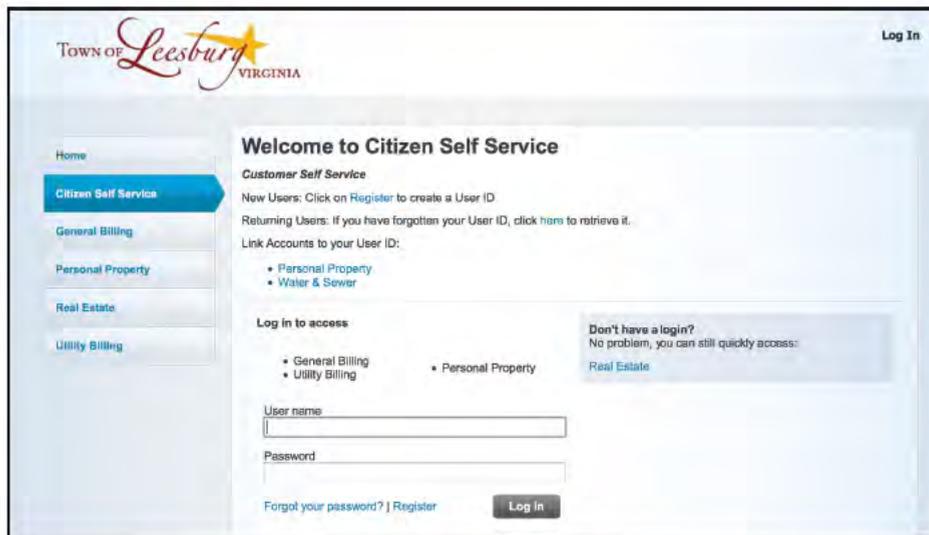
Jackson found that her team spent extra time with customers at first, educating them to the benefits of using the information at their fingertips. "They assist our less technologically inclined customers through the programs so they, too, can benefit from the additional information."

Leesburg received special recognition for its customer portals at the 2015 Virginia Municipal League awards programs. The VML judged its entry as the best in the category for its particular population threshold. The entries were evaluated on criteria that emphasized innovation, efficiency and entrepreneurship.

Inverness, Fla., is much smaller than Leesburg, with approximately 7,000 residents; but it, too, has made significant use of customer

**TOP RIGHT:** The customer service portal for Leesburg, Va., is a combination of the town's municipal billing software, its automated meter reading system and the work of a private programmer who completes the interfaces. Implementation costs were limited because the first two components were already in place. ([leesburg.munisselfservice.com/citizens](http://leesburg.munisselfservice.com/citizens))

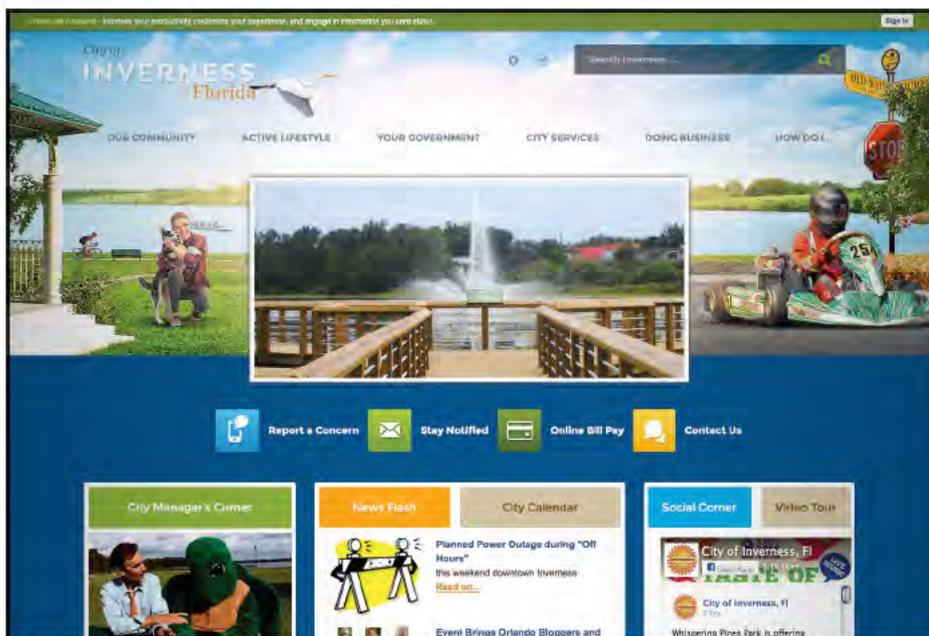
**BELOW RIGHT:** Since it went live two years ago, about 15 percent of the 7,000 residents of Inverness, Fla., have made use of the city's customer self-service portals, said Finance Director Cheryl Chiodo. The town also created a step-by-step, online user's guide. ([www.inverness-fl.gov](http://www.inverness-fl.gov))



self-service portals since the option was rolled out 24 months ago.

"Approximately 15 percent of the customer base utilizes the self-service portal at this time," said Cheryl Chiodo, finance director. We anticipate the usage to increase over the next one to three years as we add self-service functionality."

The city provides water and sewer utility customers inquiry access to their billing and consumption data and provides online payment options. Customers can communicate with utility personnel through an email portal. Capability will be added soon for customers to apply for building permits, request building inspections, inquire on pending building permit applications filed with the city no later than July 1; and a citizen transparency



***"In the 21st century, residents should be able to conduct their business online and not have to come into city hall."***

module providing revenue and expense data inquiries went live in early April. A portal that will allow businesses to apply for and renew businesses licenses online and should be in place by July 1.

Inverness experienced a decrease in customer service calls after the portal's launch, as well as a reduction in the number of over-the-counter customer payments processed by customer service. Any savings in staff time

has been redirected to water loss prevention: primarily in services related to customer water leak notifications, Chiodo said.

Despite its small size, the cost for Inverness to offer the portal was minimal. The town hosts its portal, so expenses were limited to software license acquisition, minimal implementation costs and annual software support fees.

Code for America is a nonprofit organization that partners with local

governments to improve key services and build healthier, more prosperous and more just communities. Representative Nicole Neditch has worked with municipal entities specifically to convert their websites into a "digital front door" to city services. Her initial advice is normally to conduct user research and build the site out iteratively, based on user needs.

Neditch concurred with Chiodo that moving services online doesn't necessarily add work, but it does require some upfront investment to restructure how they are delivered. She operates under the belief that there is a bottom line.

"In the 21st century, residents should be able to conduct their business online and not have to come into city hall." ■

# Unifying font freshens image



By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

**S**OME PRODUCTS ARE KNOWN BY their logo colors and designs, even if the name is omitted — think Coca-Cola, Arby's, MasterCard and Chevrolet. And how about those Bears, Colts and Packers?

But fill in the names and consider what a huge difference their exclusive typefaces make. Imagine, for example, substituting Arial Black for the Coca-Cola logo or Lucida Calligraphy for McDonald's, and you've totally lost the individuality that sets them apart.

Marketing itself in a similar way is Chattanooga, Tenn., the first U.S. city to have a signature font. ChaType was the

brainchild of Jeremy Dooley of Insigne Design and Robbie de Villiers, along with colleagues D.J. Trischler and Jonathan Mansfield. Dooley and de Villiers are two of approximately 300 professional, full-time, international typeface designers and are recognized in their fields — Dooley for designing Nike, several blockbuster films and Turntable.fm, and de Villiers for his typefaces for Crush, G.E., Kraft Foods and the city of Erfurt, Germany.

Chattanooga's goal in wanting its own typeface was to brand itself. In order to create an entirely new font for the city, the team's homework consisted of studying

*Custom-designed ChaType font is visible on the Chattanooga Municipal Library. It was commissioned by the city and embodies its warmth and vibrancy, among other qualities of the locality. (Photo provided)*



**Chatype Bold**  
**Chatype Medium**  
**Chatype Regular**  
**Chatype Thin**

*Chatype Bold Italic*  
*Chatype Medium Italic*  
*Chatype Regular Italic*  
*Chatype Thin Italic*

Chattanooga, its landmarks and high points, entertainment venues and other things that the city wanted to be—or already was—known for. A historian was hired to explore the city’s past, and he held a public forum. All these things were taken into consideration as they began to work.

A fundraising Kickstarter campaign in January 2012 was next on the list, and the team involved the community for input and feedback as they worked on the various sketches of their project.

Through the grassroots campaign more than \$10,000 was raised for production costs. The crowd-funding platform offered reasonable fees and it accepted creative projects

such as art, music, film and technology. Additionally, it served as a gauge for public interest and fostered a sense of community pride and ownership. It endorsed further discourse and valuable feedback.

Other reasons for adopting a proprietary municipal typeface can sometimes include getting a makeover after sprucing

up the area, fixing streets and sidewalks, bringing in more businesses and presenting a newer, fresher face to the world. An entity may want to assume an entirely new personality; or maybe something phenomenal has happened to the city, that officials think it should become known for. Whatever the motivation, ▶

*Plins, a trash mat and billboard in Chattanooga all sport the official city font. It’s use beyond city hall and the local tourism office is encouraged, and as can be seen here, some businesses and organizations have incorporated it into their signage and marketing. (Photos provided)*





Chattanooga city banners carry the ChaType Identifier, as does the library snack shop, Circulation & Percolation. (Photos provided)



the new font should be used in tourism materials, which will help it become a signature for the city.

In addition to the design of a new font, several more things have to happen for it to come to represent a municipality. Numerals, special characters, kerning and spacing, Webfonts and passing the legibility check for street signs are a few of them. A new font also depends on a magnitude of paint.

Mary Barrett, public relations and special projects manager for the Chattanooga Public Library, said it uses ChaType on promotional

posters as well as on exterior signage for buildings, especially the downtown branch.

"We do not use one font for everything connected with the library, but we have embraced using ChaType on our promotional title graphics, library card identity, our cafe and select exterior signs," said Barrett. "As with any font, there is a hierarchy of usage, and we employ ChaType selectively and appropriately with other companion fonts that preserve our identity while referencing the city font. "Our impulse was to be a part of the initiatives in Chattanooga that aim to unify our city. It is such a fun idea. We are also a steady partner with the Chattanooga chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Artists and co-developed creative citizenship civic engagement programs as part of our belief that good design can be one path to better communication between citizens and their government." ■

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# 'It's called occupying your own space'

*Charleston, W.Va., turns urban flight problem around*

By CHRISTINE BEEMS | The Municipal

The city of Charleston, capital of West Virginia and hub for government, education, banking, health care and commerce, hugs the confluence of the Elk and Kanawha rivers. A valley town that prospered from salt, natural gas, coal and chemicals, it has a population hovering around 151,000. ▶



**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Civic leaders in the city of Charleston, W.Va., led a successful campaign to invest a large amount of funding in quality-of-life projects and strategies that were prioritized by members of the community. (Photo provided)

**ABOVE:** For decades residents fled the center of Charleston for the suburbs. Now, heavy investment in redevelopment, transportation and aesthetics, and a plan to take things to the next level, are bringing them back. (Photo provided)

The driving economic force acting on the entity, according to Mayor Danny Jones, has become tourism.

“We’re building a niche for groups, conferences and conventions as a destination,” he said. “In the past four years, when you include the rehab to the mall and hotel, we’ve seen a \$50 million investment in this kind of development.”

“We’re also doing the Charleston Civic Center, which will be a \$100 million project. We did the minor league ballpark, which was \$23 million. And we have just generally cleaned up the city and done a lot of downtown development.”

People are moving back into Charleston. For a long time, back to the 1970s, people just didn’t want to live downtown. After the expressways came through in the ‘60s, most moved to the suburbs, and the exodus saw the city’s population significantly decline for decades.

Now, said Jones, “We have apartments and condos springing up, right in the heart of downtown. It’s being built, and they are coming.”

It did not, however, come without an equally substantial investment in community infrastructure.

“We have put over \$100 million into improving affordable housing. Former HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, when he visited, said he had never seen anything like it in a city this size. But you know, if you don’t reach out to lower income folks, it’s not going to matter what you do in other areas.”

The overarching objective is for the whole community to look and feel good about itself, because if one part of town or another doesn’t, it drags the whole community down, he said.

The process started 13 years ago. At that time, the downtown area was blighted with poorly maintained, unattractive, rent-subsidized apartments. One of those, Spring Hill, was privately owned and going broke.

The city decided its subsidy money would be better spent if it was more directly involved with management, so officials plugged into HUD and the Virginia Housing Development Fund to get some help. The results, said Jones, have been incredible.

“These are just better places to live,” he affirmed, relating how the makeovers made the affordable housing nearly indistinguishable in general appearance from upscale housing; and how that not only makes things more attractive for visitors; but, just as importantly, helped bolster people’s confidence both in their community and in themselves.

“I learned this over 40 years ago in the restaurant business: People draw people. The more people you have, the more you are going to have. There is no question: If you want to work on quality of life issues for local people, (then) when you make this city a better place to come visit it will overlap into other issues. It will also become a better place for the people who live here.”



*Two city council members formed a network and gained support for a vision of Charleston as the “cultural, recreational and business capital of the Appalachian Mountains”. Their plan built on recent successes, including the creation of the Schoenbaum Stage and renovation of Haddad Riverfront Park. (Photo provided)*

With local needs for affordable and accessible housing, medical services and good public transit clearly in mind, civic leaders focused on cultivating a vibrant and vital place to live, work, have a business, visit and invest in the future.

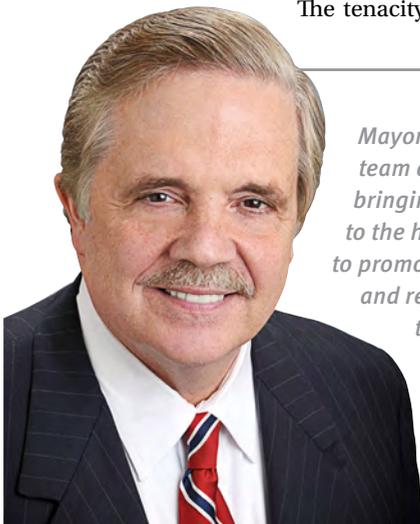
The tenacity of

these well-thought-through efforts propelled Charleston to a semi-finalist slot in the \$10 Million America’s Best Communities Competition.

“Council members Suzy Salisbury and Ron Blackstone advanced the idea,” Jones said. He told how the pair, working with a network of other people, talked up a vision for Charleston

as the “cultural, recreational and business capital of the Appalachian Mountains.” This greater emphasis on arts and culture built on the accumulating successes of FestivALL Charleston, opening of Appalachian Power Park, free Friday evening “Live on the Levee” concerts, creation of the Schoenbaum Stage and renovation of Haddad Riverfront Park.

The America’s Best Communities competition seeks to instill new hope and to help inspire economic revitalization in small towns and cities across the country. Charleston is one of 15 communities to advance ▶



*Mayor Danny Jones leads a team committed to not only bringing its own residents back to the heart of Charleston, but to promoting the city as a cultural and recreational destination as well. One of their many successes had been the opening of Appalachian Power Park, a Minor League Baseball field, in 2005. (Photos provided)*





into the semifinals. It is now eligible to win major investments to implement its innovative Community Revitalization Plan, which aims to do more aesthetic and recreational development, revamping urban parks, creating a higher density housing mix and connecting downtown to area trails and bike paths.

**“If you don’t reach out to lower income folks, it’s not going to matter what you do in other areas.”**

The plan, “Imagine Charleston: Your Dream. Our Future,” outlines a single set of prioritized recommendations as a unified vision to guide decisions on land use, development and capital improvements that will ensure Charleston remains a highly desirable place to live, work, learn or visit. Its purpose is to assist city leaders in making substantive, thoughtful decisions for the next 10 to 20 years about neighborhood and transportation improvements, as well as special strategies for key areas in the city. It also strives to balance the interests and rights of individual private property owners with those of the entire community.

The plan was presented to the general public for input at open houses and feedback solicited through social media, Web pages, Facebook and Twitter. The strategy was to ask people “What if...?” questions and get them to share their dreams for the future — to tap local creativity and build a shared vision for the whole community

*Spring Hill apartments was one of several blighted housing complexes that have undergone renovation, making them “nearly indistinguishable in general appearance from upscale housing.” The new look helped bolster people’s confidence both in their community and in themselves, believes the mayor. (Photos provided)*

and for each individual neighborhood. To look at existing situations and wonder out loud: “What if we were to try something new? What if we were to do things differently? What if we could learn from successes in other places and apply those lessons here?”

Concepts were then further developed, a draft plan was proposed and after public consensus was reached, the city council adopted it.

The key to Charleston’s success is exemplified by Mayor Jones and the team he leads. Do the best you can working with your council, Jones preaches. Move partisan politics out of your city council chambers, because the farther you get away from the issues that directly effect the public, the more dysfunctional things get.

“We need to be constantly asking: What’s real? What works? What’s the cause and what’s the effect? To focus every decision on that.”

Even the mayor isn’t a one-man miracle worker or fortune teller, he added.

“The man or woman who does this job does not have to be the best student in the class. It just takes good instincts, normal intelligence, being willing to work and to motivate other people to work, and to lead.” He paused, then double-emphasized: “You have to lead. Take risks. It’s called occupying your own space.” ■

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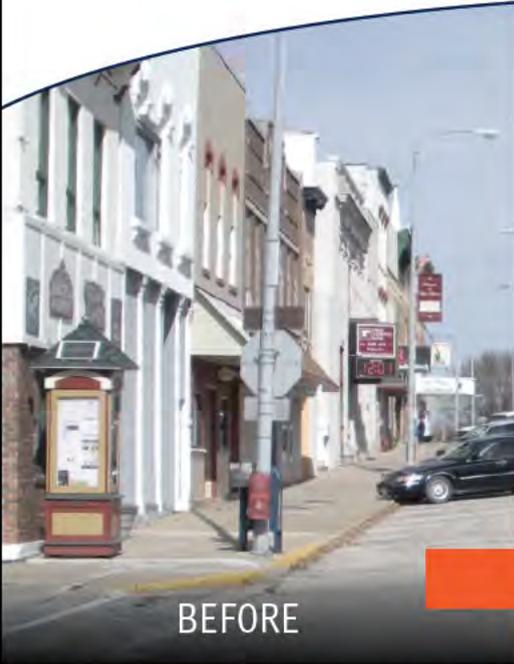
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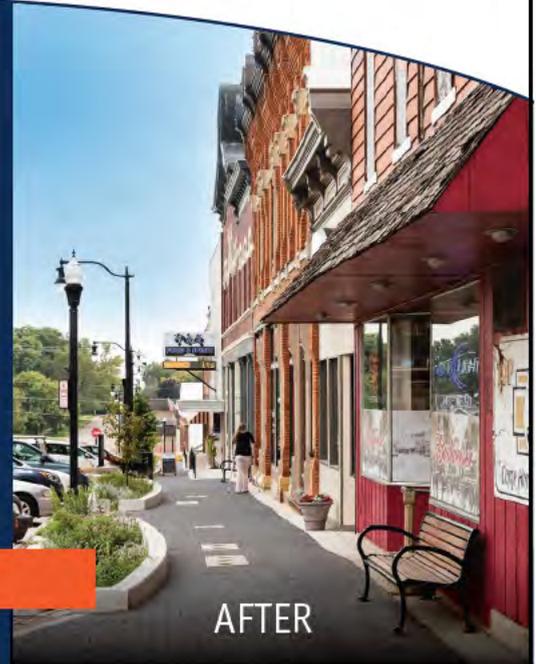
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# PUBLIC WORKS ALWAYS THERE



**NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK**

MAY 15 - 21, 2016



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# National Public Works Week

## May 15-21

The 2016 NPWW poster theme is "Public Works Always There." This theme showcases the pervasiveness of public works. Communities depend on public works and on the men and women of the profession, who are always there and always ready.

### About the Artist

The artwork for the 2016 National Public Works Week poster was done by British-born artist Michael Crampton. After studying at the Art Center College of Design, Crampton went on to become the art director at Neiman Marcus in Dallas. Six years

later he moved to New York City and now freelances in the U.S. and in Europe. His favorite subjects include lifestyle and travel, and his artwork tends to evoke a sense of romance found in posters from an earlier era. (Poster courtesy APWA) 



**#NPWW**  
Join the #NPWW party taking place all weeklong on Twitter. Upload a photo of your public works department, or of someone showing love for a local PW department.

**TOP 3**  
In a recent survey, the top three areas of city management mayors would prioritize to receive a significant amount of new money, were it available, are areas of public works purview: **roads, mass transit and water/wastewater/stormwater.**  
*Source: 2015 Menino Survey of Mayors*



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# Engineers challenged to think creatively to solve infrastructure crisis



By BARB SIEMINSKI | The Municipal

**“We actually know that our crumbling pipelines, roads and bridges are ticking time bombs. That is why President Obama and Congressional Democrats have pushed to fund jobs that repair our roads, runways, and railways — we can’t have first rate American communities with third-world American infrastructure.”**

— Democratic strategist Christine Pelosi

According to 2016 American Society of Civil Engineers President Mark Woodson, for over 20 years the U.S. has had a critical need for infrastructure funding. Even so, elected officials continue to win on mandates that include not raising water and sewer rates.

“That’s a mandate that’s saying we’re not going to maintain our infrastructure,” he observed.

That fact, along with the infrastructure crisis, prompted an announcement at last year’s ASCE Convention. At its onset, Thomas Smith III, executive director, spoke on behalf of the organization’s board of direction. He issued a challenge to civil engineers to “significantly enhance the performance and value of infrastructure projects over their life cycles, reducing the life cycle cost of infrastructure by 50 percent by 2025 and



*Thomas Smith III, executive director of ASCE, has committed the organization to engage every area, from its technical institute to strategic initiative areas, in supporting achievement of the Grand Challenge over the next decade. (Photo provided by the ASCE)*

fostering the optimization of infrastructure investments for society.”

In the Dec. 4 issue of ASCE News, he suggested reaching this goal by “advocating and influencing major legislative, regulatory and policy changes, and infrastructure funding, while challenging ourselves and each other to focus on innovation, to rethink life cycle costs and to initiate transformational change—from planning to design to delivery.”

The catalysts for the challenge to close the gap between infrastructure needs and funding were, of course, the 2013 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure and the Failure to

*The Grand Challenge calls on civil engineers to reduce the life cycle cost of infrastructure by 50 percent by 2025 and foster the optimization of infrastructure investments for society. (Photo by Jodi Marlin)*

Act Economic Studies. The two documents illustrate that Americans’ quality of life is increasingly threatened by woefully inadequate infrastructure investment.

“We need to rethink every stage of project delivery and embrace the challenge to innovate and to transform our practice,” he said.

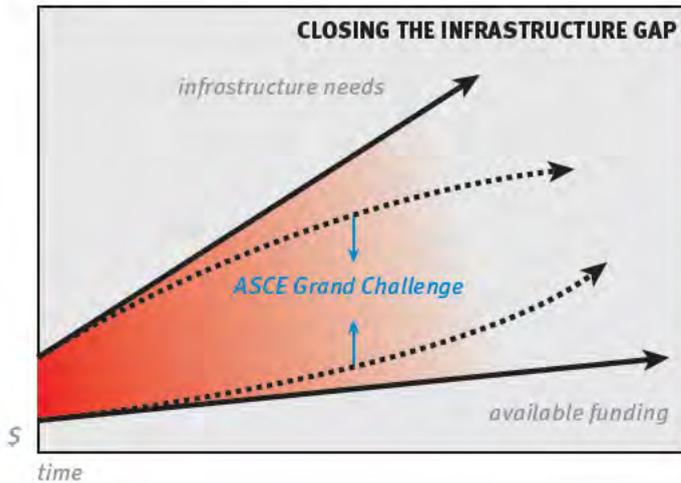
So, how might the Grand Challenge’s goal happen, and what are some examples of the progress so far?

Currently, the challenge is concentrating on four areas of interest: life cycle cost assessment, innovation, resilience and performance-based standards. The convention opened with a session on disruptive thinking to spur discussions and thinking about its transformative power. There were also technical sessions and case study presentations on life cycle cost assessment, resilience and innovation.

“To help develop a renewed culture of innovation within civil engineering, during the convention, ASCE also launched an Innovation Contest to encourage professionals, educators and students to share their most creative ideas for revitalizing our infrastructure. The contest covers four topics areas: innovative business models and technologies, the Internet of Things, green engineering and resilience.”

In March of this year, 15 winners were announced whose entries best embody the core values of the Grand Challenge. Those winners were invited to present their ideas to industry leaders at special networking events.

They will be considered for research grants, recognized in trade publications and will receive special recognition and awards.



ASCE's Challenge Initiative seeks to close the gap between the nation's infrastructure urgency and the funding available to address it, through a multifaceted approach involving innovation, performance-based standards, resilience and life cycle cost assessment. (Data provided by the ASCE)

**Four proposals were honored with special awards show trends in innovation and creativity:**

- Greatest Impact on Achieving the Grand Challenge: "Rise of the Drones: How Unmanned Surveying Can Help Make our Coasts Resilient" by Jason Magalen, P.E., M.A.S.C.E., HDR Engineering, Oregon.
- Best New Concept: "Big Picture Resilience via Ocean Forests" by the ASCE Los Angeles Section Sustainability Committee, Calif.
- Best Student Innovation (tie): "Advanced Drone Technology to Handle Disaster in Underground Construction and Mining Sites" by Purushottam Gupta, India; and "Capitalizing on the Internet of Things to Promote Water Conservation" by Morgan Dicarlo, S.M., ASCE, Thiells, N.Y.

"Also, ASCE is engaged in a major, ongoing effort to develop guidelines for life cycle cost assessment, and we recently established an Infrastructure Resilience Division," said Smith. "As we work to support achievement of the ASCE Grand Challenge over the next decade, every area of ASCE will be engaged, from our technical institutes to our strategic initiatives areas."

Although the Grand Challenge was conceived by the organization's Industry Leaders Council, the heads of some of the largest civil engineering companies and agencies are co-champions of the need for it to achieve results.

ASCE members embraced the importance of the goal and have begun formally pledging their support. Another hopeful indicator of the likelihood that emergent thinking will effect change has been the willingness of the next generation to engage the difficult task, said Smith.

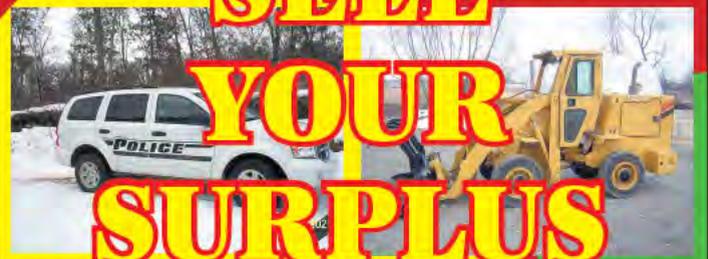
"The enthusiasm from the entrants to the Innovation Contest, many of them students and young professionals who will be developing the infrastructure of the future, was outstanding." ■

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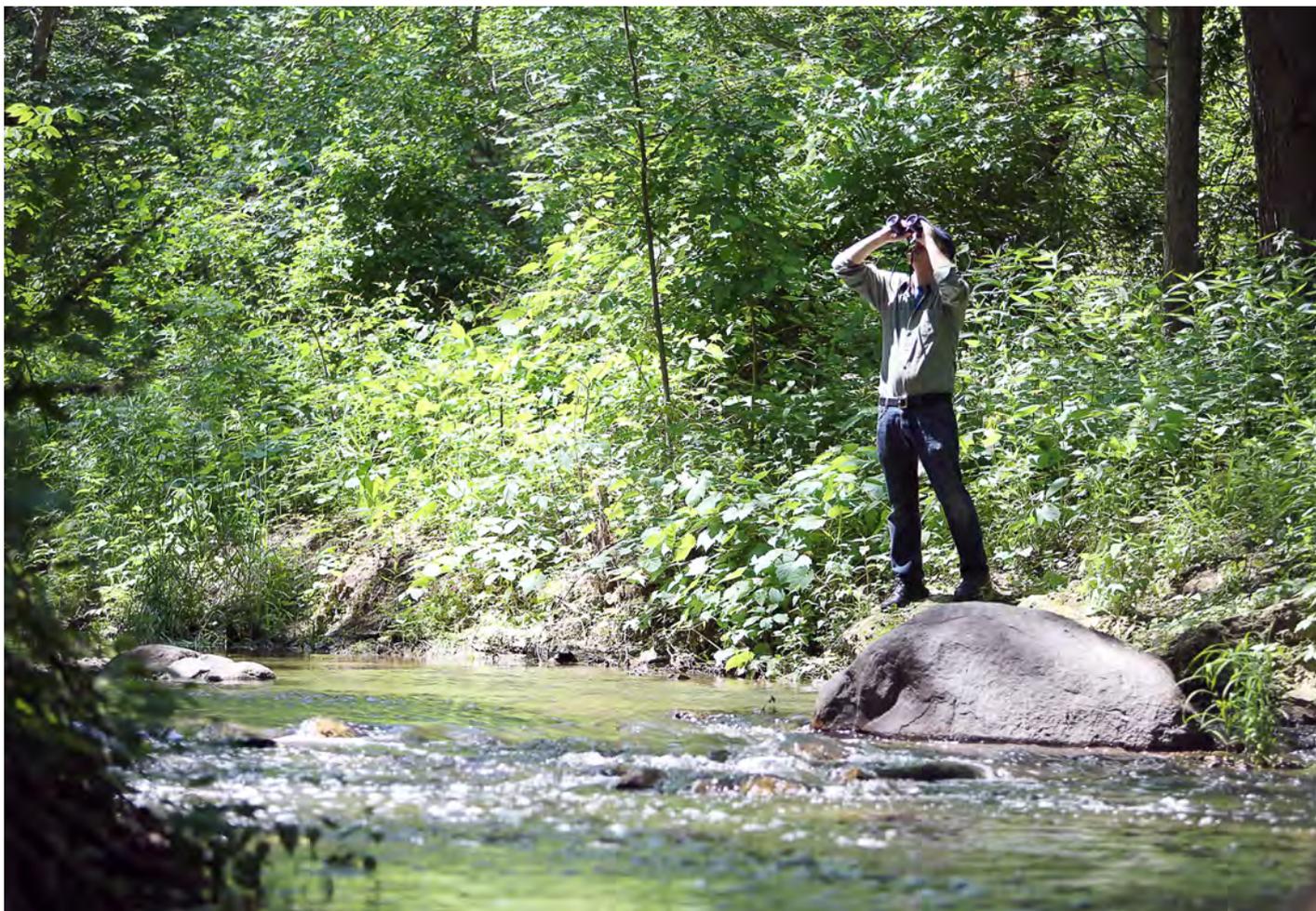


15-0499



## No 'middle' ground

*Wisconsin parks department consistently aims high and scores*



By JODI MARLIN and AMY WENGER | The Municipal

**“W**OW — WHAT SHOULD we do first?” Is this the reaction visitors have to your local park facilities? Certainly the sentiment is the holy grail of park and recreation management: but actually putting one’s finger on the pulse of residents’ interests, employing the vision needed to turn what is into what could be and funding the whole kaboodle — well, it’s arguably tougher than getting an African-American nominated for an Oscar.

It might not be an exaggeration to say that Middleton, Wis., has succeeded in the former, however. A 2015 Public Lands Annual Report lays out exactly why the National Recreation and Park Association Class 5 city — which means it boasts approximately 30,000 residents — enjoys heavy acclaim from both locals and visitors to the Madison suburb.

**Network**

A large network of parks and conservancy lands exist in and around Middleton, taking the shape of 53 parks of varying sizes. Each has its own charm and popular amenities: the dog park; splash pad; skate park; six community parks, one offering fishing and five with ball diamonds; eight neighborhood parks; eight mini-parks; eight ponds and other conservancy lands; a golf course; boat launch; public pool; and more.

The Department of Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry maintains 558 acres of designated municipal park land. It’s also responsible for 823 acres of conservancy area. Pheasant Branch Conservancy alone is 550 acres that boast more than 90,000 annual users, three times the local population.

Twenty-seven or so miles of trails run throughout. They’re utilized on a daily basis

**PREVIOUS PAGE:** Hansi Johnson of the International Mountain Bicycling Association called Middleton Bike Park the type of facility that has “the true potential to change communities and influence economies.” (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)

**ABOVE:** Replete with wildlife, abundant natural beauty and an extensive trail system, Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Middleton, Wis., consists of 550 acres of forests, fields and wetlands. The opportunities for birdwatching are particularly outstanding. (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)

for walking, running and biking during the summer, skiing and snowshoeing during the winter. The design of one, Graber Pond Accessible Trail, earned Middleton a Trail Design of Merit Award of Excellence from the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association



Water conservation measures, community involvement and universal access were all considerations that went into the construction of the largest splash pad in Wisconsin, at Lakeview Park in Middleton. (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)



Improvements were made to the popular, 18-year-old Walter Bauman Aquatic Center in 2015, including new paint and floors. (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)

**“This will ensure that we keep doing the right thing to preserve what we have for the generations to come.”**

in 2015. Part of the motivation for that recognition came from the fact that it features an Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible kayak launch and fishing pier, the first of its kind in the state.

**Golf, bikes and trails**

Duffers enjoy municipal-owned Pleasant View Golf Course for its beautiful environs that consist of a panoramic view of Lake Mendota to the east, ice-age terrain to the west, an urban landscape to the south and dense woods plus savannah to the north.

Sharing that aesthetic is Middleton Bike Park, a hilly course that’s open free of charge and includes a pump track laid out by renowned designers Mike Riter and Ben Blich. The National Recreation and Parks Association describes the attraction as an “innovative 8,500-square-foot, 3-mile Bike

Skills Park (that) presents an exciting BMX and mountain bike experience.”

Ice skating on public ponds and a 10,000-foot public rink is another in-demand Middleton winter activity; additionally, an off-road walking and biking trail that runs near the golf course converts in the fall to what’s widely regarded as the best skiing trail in the region. During warmer months, an extensive local trail system, featuring Wisconsin’s first two total body Energi Fitness Systems, draws heavy numbers of walkers, runners and bikers.

**Universal access and dolls?**

The headquarters of a highly popular line of children’s dolls, American Girl, is located in Middleton. In 2011 MPLR and Lee Recreation coordinated 300 park employees, American Girl Fund for Children volunteers and

**BY THE NUMBERS**

The parks and conservancy lands in and around Middleton include:

- 53 PARKS** of varying sizes including a dog park, splash pad and skate park
- 6 COMMUNITY PARKS**, 1 offering fishing and 5 with ball diamonds
- 8 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**
- 8 MINI-PARKS**
- 8 PONDS** and other conservancy lands;
- 1 GOLF COURSE**
- 1 BOAT LAUNCH**
- 1 PUBLIC POOL**
- ...AND MORE**

community members who showed up to construct one of the largest playgrounds in the county: an American Girl playground consisting of innovative Playworld Systems structures. The company’s charity had previously donated to and helped construct a state-of-the-art splash pad at the same park. The Lakeview Park Splash Pad contains 29 Vortex elements and a flow-through design with unchlorinated water that returns to the groundwater supply. At 4,800 square feet, it’s the largest municipal splash pad in Wisconsin. ▶

In 2014 another state “first” took place in Middleton: an all-accessible NEOS playground was built, adding 11.2 acres to Taylor Memorial Park. Two new youth centers and a new arts facility have also been constructed, and recreation program offerings at these and other facilities are as diverse as youth engineering courses, art, music, support groups, dance, driving courses for seniors, and sports leagues and clinics. It’s no wonder MPLF program participation doubled in 2014 across the board.

Many of MPLR’s enviable land holdings, facilities and programs have been made possible by grants and local donations, said Penni Klein, public lands director.

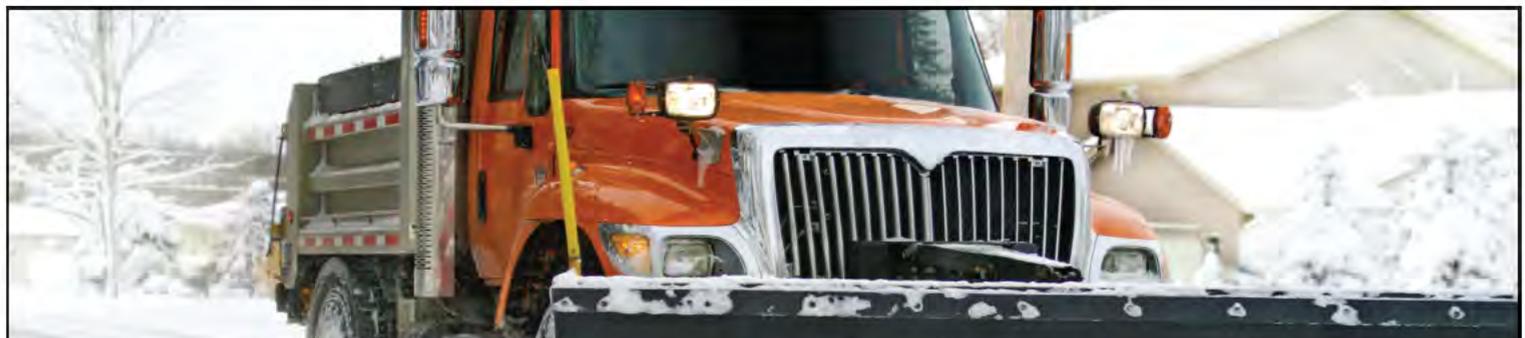
“When you can finish a project on time and under budget, and keep it well-maintained, people want to work with you. So our goal is to make it easy for them to do so,” she said.

### Preservation

The commitment of Middleton Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry to preserving the economic and education benefits of parks, using them to improve nutrition and fight hunger, obesity and physical inactivity and to demonstrate universal access to public parks and recreations caught the attention of the National Recreation and Parks Association. Last year the NRPA named it a finalist, for the third time, in its annual National Gold Medal Awards for excellence in park and recreation management.



Not resting on its laurels, the department is currently finishing a Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial and shelter in Lakeview Park that will feature an interpretive labyrinth of local veterans’ history. In addition and among other projects, sediment removal that began last fall in Orchid Heights Park will continue this year. That sediment will be spread on an expansive area of the park to create six new soccer fields.



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**LEFT:** Visitors and residents alike appreciate the extensive effort put into maintaining Middleton's natural environment. (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)

**RIGHT:** Pleasant View Golf Course offers panoramic views of Lake Mendoza and nearby ice-age terrain, among its other amenities. (Photo courtesy Middleton Tourism Commission)

A parks endowment fund for future use within the community is also being finalized. Klein is looking forward to working with a group of people who want to do great things for their city, county and state, she said.

The PLRF is also moving forward to become Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation certified. This national certification recognizes agencies for excellence in operation and service while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards of best practice.

"From a management standpoint it makes sense. We have worked hard at establishing best practices for the long haul: good business management practices, good policies, good procedures, maintenance and staffing. This will ensure that we keep doing the right thing to preserve what we have for the generations to come," said Klein. **M**



**BY THE NUMBERS**

The Department of Public Lands, Recreation and Forestry maintains:

**558 ACRES** of municipal park land

**823 ACRES** of conservancy area

**27 MILES** of trails offering walking, running and biking during the summer, skiing and snowshoeing during the winter

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# Snow hauling and relocation



By JODI MARLIN | The Municipal

**Snow relocation is only an occasional event in the lives of street departments and grounds crews at educational institutions. It's of some inconvenience when it is required, however.**

Safety considerations are paramount when relocating snow. They should be, given that — particularly in the municipal arena — operators of the loader, trailer and excavator are the same crew members who have already been de-icing and plowing for a full shift.

Lester Lawson's grounds maintenance team at Iowa State University typically winds up hauling snow off-site two or three times a year. The team has been trained in relocation operations, but to maximize safety needed procedures are scheduled for early morning, when fewer cars and pedestrians are present.

"Our equipment operators usually haul our snow and they're well-versed in operation so we have few issues with this task," Lawson said.

The facilities planning and management department at ISU prioritized purchases of multi-use and highly maneuverable snow removal equipment. Single axle and tandem dump trucks transport the snow to a dump site on campus, and an articulating loader speeds up the process.

The trucks have to travel a good distance from some pickup sites to get to it, however.

"We do have longer travel times with only one location," he noted.

The nighttime and weekend nature of relocation is pretty much a given on college campuses, for the reason mentioned by Lawson. That's the timing Kent State University in Ohio will also choose to converge a couple of loaders or skid steers and dump trucks, if the plows have run out of room to stack snow on grassy areas in and around parking lots.

"We try to use a couple of loaders and two to three dump trucks to maximize time and efficiency," said Parking Services Manager Larry Emling. "If you only use one dump truck, time is wasted because the loader is sitting idle while the truck is off site dumping the snow. If you use a couple of dump trucks, one is always getting loaded while the other is taking snow off-site."

Off site, for Kent State, is a retention pond or the corner of a remote lot. "The dump trucks will dump snow in and around the dump site, and then a loader will come by and push all of the snow up and out of the way."

---

*The need for snow relocation arises only occasionally for most entities. It becomes a large problem at the worst of moments, however, if public works and university grounds departments don't have a plan of action established. (Shutterstock photo)*

---

On the municipal side, issues stemming from significant snow events are most often handled by private contractors.

"Plowing roads versus plowing municipalities are two different businesses," said Eric Hartmann, vice president of sales and marketing for Tovar Snow Professionals and a 15-year member of the American Public Works Association Winter Maintenance Committee.

"What I've found is that although they have the equipment to plow and de-ice, when it comes to removing snow from the downtown, it's hard to get to because they're working around the clock to clear the roads. And do you really want guys who have been out there for 12 hours and are beat doing something that's only an occasional procedure? With heavy equipment?"

Not among the least of considerations is the amount of miles that have to be covered by the plow team, keeping track of where on the road a truck is and when it's going to be finished and available for relocation work.

By contracting with a private company for services like plowing a library parking lot and relocating plowed snow from downtown sidewalks, not only can a public crew devote more time to roads but the need to purchase that extra \$200,000 dump truck that maybe



## How to choose a snow relocation contractor

When it's time supplement with or to change snow relocation providers, know what to ask in order to make a qualified decision.

Eric Hartmann of Tovar Snow Professionals suggests:

1. Ask to see proof of proper insurance
2. Ask if they have like work to confirm their experience at the particular task
3. Visit the sites from which removal might be necessary, and the site to which it will be relocated
4. Ask to see the company's financials (PNL balance sheet and insurance)
5. Visit the company's facility
6. Ask about the number of "boots on the ground" and equipment available at any given moment
7. Request references
8. Require certification by a snow removal industry authority such as the Snow and Ice Management Association

only works a few times a year is eliminated. Supplementing services this way can also be a solution for understaffing at a time when the level of expectation has risen in regard to how quickly transit should be able to resume after a snowstorm.

Using a private contractor for big events can be cost effective, providing that's not the only time he's used. Any contractor who keeps his equipment off the street on the chance a municipality might call will be out of business in no time, so large snow removal companies won't sign storm-only contacts.

Instead, contract out the regular plowing of a few municipal lots and add a blizzard contingency consisting of a couple loaders and a semi to haul snow from the central businesses after a large winter event. Or hire him for some regular winter work, like the library and city hall, and add a clause asking for him to add, say, snow removal from the police department when a storm dumps more than 8 inches. ▶

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The contractor will be self-insured. Don't forget to include a performance bond before you sign, however: The practice has become commonplace during the last five years or so and prevents last-minute surprises.

"A lot of times, in a blizzard, everybody needs everything they can get," Hartmann said. "I've had cities call me and say, 'Hey, I had a guy lined up but I didn't call him in time and his five loaders are already working. So go hit,' say, O'Hare. But this guy had a contract in place, so now it's sticky for him."

*A viable alternative to the relocation of particularly large quantities of snow, or snow from a large property, is onsite melting. This option saves gas, wear and tear on local roads and the relocater's equipment, plus time. (Steve Collender / Shutterstock.com)*

Lastly, there's the significant consideration of a place to dump the relocated snow. Many cities point a finger toward a local park.

That's sometimes fine, Hartmann said, but give some thought to what might be in that snow and whether you want it melting onto a grassy area, mud/gravel, asphalt or concrete surface. Whichever you choose, chances are good the spot will need cleanup in the spring.

For cities with an agreement to dump on property owned by another entity, Hartmann has a stronger warning.

"One thing that tends to be forgotten is, although we may take a municipality's snow from their property, it's still theirs. As it melts it remains theirs, so whatever's in that snow, if it causes a problem later, they're responsible for addressing it." He has seen the need to remove silt and even pull garbage manually from snow piles.

Wrappers, debris and chemicals contained in relocated snow can cause problems, too. These release into the local groundwater, waterways and sewers during the melting process.

"I recommend going to the site pre-season and looking at all the possible environmental concerns that might arise from dumping there." ■

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# Garner, N.C., implements officer fitness requirement



Physical fitness is a requirement to gain employment in the field of law enforcement. Not all departments obligate officers to remain physically fit throughout their careers, however, even though studies have shown increased effectiveness and fewer injuries sustained by officers who do. (Photo provided)

**About 80 percent of police officers in the U.S. are overweight. Another report suggest that 40 percent of the same officers are considered to be obese.**

By JULIE YOUNG | The Municipal

**Communities ask a lot of their members of law enforcement. They want them to be able to respond at a moment's notice when something goes awry, and officers are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. They must adhere to best practices to ensure public and personal safety, and stay on top of classroom, firearms and practical training programs in order to remain certified. However, when it comes to physical fitness, a requirement is too often nonexistent.**

When Brandon Zuidema became chief of police in Garner, N.C., in December 2009, he was determined to change that. To best execute their duties to the best of their ability, police officers must remain physically fit, he believed. He set out to develop and implement a fitness requirement for sworn law enforcement officers.

"This was something we did not have at my old work location, so when I was getting ready to become chief, I started thinking about what I could do that would make a difference in the lives of officers not only now, but in the future," Zuidema recalled.

### Writing on the wall

The statistics are sobering. According to a report released by the FBI in 2014, about 80 percent of police officers in the U.S. are overweight. Another report suggest that 40 percent of the same officers are considered to be obese.

According to the Mayo Clinic, there are a number of reasons why law enforcement

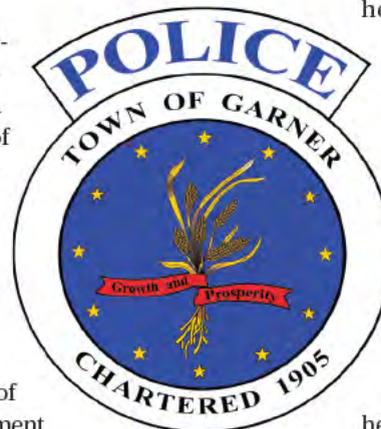
officers have weight control and fitness issues. Recruits begin their careers in good shape, but along the way a change occurs. While the stress of the job is a big contributor, poor eating habits, loss of sleep, inactivity and the lack of a fitness program play their parts as well.

When there is no accountability for weight gain and no incentive to take it off, it can lead to serious and potentially life-threatening issues.

Zuidema is convinced creating a fitness requirement will not only improve officers' performance, but also help prevent illness and work-related injuries, reduce

health care costs, enables his personnel to maintain a positive image in the community and even lengthen lives.

"I've read that police officers don't have the longest lifespan post-career; they die about 10 years earlier than the general public. So it's important that we do all we can in order to encourage them to adopt healthier habits." ▶



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### Passing the POPAT

In 2010 Zuidema began an internal dialogue with members of his department to determine what their fitness standard might look like and how it would be implemented. After considering several possibilities, it was decided they would adopt the North Carolina Police Officer Physical Abilities Test. POPAT is a two-phase, 15-step procedure given to every officer prior to employment. The state standard for its completion is 7:20 minutes, and Zuidema said it emphasizes the general fitness goals his department hopes to set for its personnel.

"The POPAT is a test our officers are already familiar with so that made the most sense for us. We could have gone with the more rigorous Cooper test, which is used in some departments, but we thought the best route for us was to use the test our officers were required to pass in the first place."

Zuidema began talking up the POPAT in the summer of 2010 so officers could begin training long before they had to take it two



years later. Zuidema said it was important to him to be fair with his employees and 63 sworn officers in his charge.

He knew there would be some who could pass the test immediately and some who

could not. Because he wanted to give them the best possible outcome, a new station, complete with a wellness center, was opened, and he encouraged everyone to work out for at least an hour a day while on duty.



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**LEFT:** Garner, N.C., and some other U.S. cities have decided maintaining a minimum level of physical fitness among officers is of enough value to institute it as a requirement for continued employment. (Photo provided)

"We also offer fitness coaches, classes and other assistance in order to give them the best chance for success," he noted.

So far, the results have been promising. According to the Garner Police Department's annual report, the average time of employees taking the POPAT in the fall of 2012 was 8:29.

In the fall of 2013, that time fell to 7:52. By 2014, the spring and fall combined average was 7:32. Zuidema is confident that 100 percent of his officers are on track to pass it within the state standard by 2018.

He has already seen life-changing transformations. One employee shed 50 pounds, and others who were struggling have been doing much better since recommitting to a fitness plan.



Although Garner is not the only department to implement this kind of fitness standard for sworn officers, it is one of the first in North Carolina to do so.

"We are far ahead of the curve in terms of doing it as part of the job requirement, as opposed to those who make it incentive-based. That only encourages folks who are already in shape and those departments that don't do anything at all." **M**

Ana Kennedy, a 2012 graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, found that in a 2010 study by Police Executive Research Forum Executive Director Chuck Wexler, **68 PERCENT** of departments nationwide have reduced or discontinued physical fitness training as a result of strained budgets.

The main concern for many agencies during the economic downturn has been keeping officers employed

and on the streets rather than directing that money toward other areas. The factor that needs to be emphasized is that officers who are in good overall health can actually reduce the financial strain on a department.

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GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

# Don't let grants pass you by



By SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

**Grant writing is a daunting task for fire departments of all make-ups; however, dangling funds, ripe for the picking, prompt savvy departments to reach for them to ease budgetary concerns.**

While some reap grant success others have sidelined themselves, deeming the process too time-consuming or overly complicated. But they may want to reconsider not going after the available funds.

"It (grant information) is the No. 1 thing our members ask for," Dave Finger, chief of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs for the National Volunteer Fire Council, said. Despite the council providing this information, he noted within the past six to seven years there has been a significant falloff in the number of departments seeking grant funding, particularly volunteer departments.

For instance, in fiscal year 2009 11,204 volunteer departments applied for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, or AFG. That number decreased to 8,828 applicants the following fiscal year. By the time fiscal year 2014 arrived, the number of volunteer department applicants had dwindled to 4,609.

Across the board, the number of AFG applicants in combination departments; in paid, on-call departments; and in career

departments also saw decreases in varying scales from FY 2009 to FY 2014. The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant, known as SAFER, has also seen decreases in applicants during different fiscal years.

On an anecdotal level, Finger stated one of the biggest reasons he's heard for drop-offs has been the federal System for Award Management, or SAM.

"You have to be regular on it, know the (department's) exact name as it appears in SAM and have all the same information (as in SAM). It's difficult to change any information or get information from SAM. If you have a chief who retires, it's possible that no one knows any of the needed information."

SAM, however, is not the only deterrent keeping departments from pursuing grant funding.

*Each year fire departments are letting funding dollars for a variety of key components — gear, apparatuses, training and more — pass them by as they opt not to submit grant applications. (Shutterstock photo)*

## ON THE WEB



**Check out these grant resources available online:**

- [www.nvfc.org/hot-topics/grants-funding](http://www.nvfc.org/hot-topics/grants-funding)
- [efficientgov.com](http://efficientgov.com)
- [www.firegrantshelp.com](http://www.firegrantshelp.com)
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- [www.federalgrantswire.com](http://www.federalgrantswire.com)
- [www.dhs.gov/how-do-i/find-and-apply-grants](http://www.dhs.gov/how-do-i/find-and-apply-grants)

## Competitive pursuit

"Every year FEMA gets about 10,000 applications for AFG funding and 20 percent of those are accepted," said Jerry Brant, a volunteer firefighter with approximately 46 years of experience, a columnist for FireRescue1.com and a grant writer for FireGrantsHelp and EMSGrantsHelp. "It's highly competitive."

The situation is complicated, according to Finger, by the fact there is less funding to go around. For example, the federal AFG program saw \$565 million in appropriations in FY 2009. That number was reduced to \$340 million in FY 2014.

Because of the decrease, some departments are not going to be successful. "If Congress would provide more funding, that would be good, but it is what it is," Finger said. "We are glad for what funding is available."

With so much competition, it's vital to put a department's best foot forward

***"Emphasize a plan and do it early; don't wait until the last minute, because it shows."***



Appropriations from the SAFER grant program can be used by fire departments to hire personnel or implement volunteer recruitment or retention programs. \$340 million were dispersed as appropriations through the SAFER program in fiscal year 2014. Several other federal and nonfederal grant programs exist to aid fire departments with a variety of needs. (Shutterstock photo)

through its narrative. Brant stated a narrative should describe the project a department wants to complete and be as specific as possible.

"In 2011 FEMA switched from one large narrative to several smaller narratives in order to get the information it needed from applicants," Brant said. "Under the single narrative setup, applicants were not providing enough information for the reviewers. Over the past five years FEMA has now expanded this and asks for seven narratives in an application."

Departments should first cement a plan for those narratives. Brant suggested they be clear and give information, but also be concise because the narratives have character limits attached to them.

"You have to have time to plan," he said. "Know the demographic profiles of your community. Since AFG funds are very limited, in general, only high-priority items are receiving consideration. Focus your application on these items."

"You will need a cost estimate for any item you are applying for. You should get this estimate early on in your process so that you know how much funding you are applying for and vendors tend to be busy once a grant period opens."

He noted FEMA asks for a narrative if the department protects critical infrastructure of the state, which has thrown some departments for a loop because they think the statement applies only to property owned by their respective state governments. On the contrary, Brant said. It largely means big structures that draw people, like schools, large factories or large commercial districts. "Know your structures and communicate those in your narrative."

Finger praised the FEMA process, noting the fire service has input into its criteria.

"The fire service is involved all the way through." Fire service members help determine which departments should receive funding. ▶



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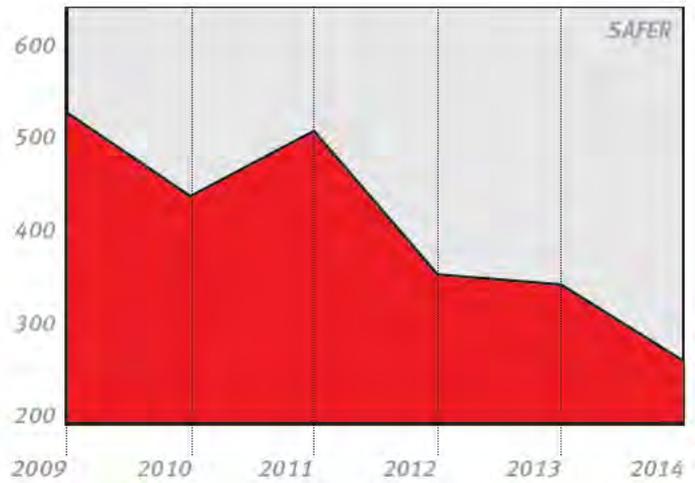
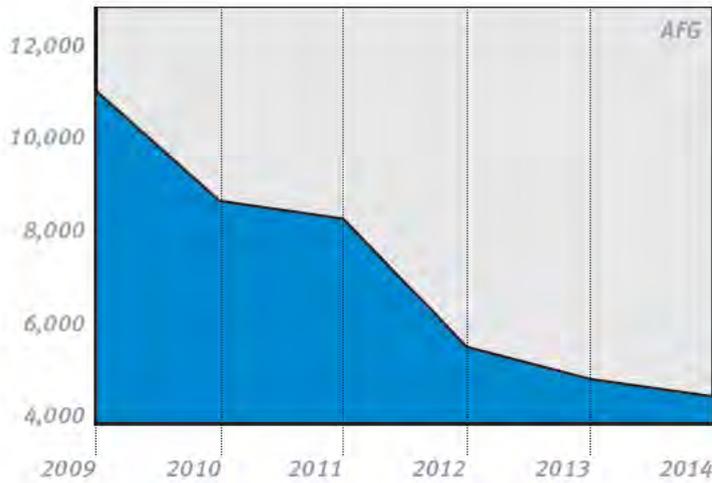
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Pictured are comparable graphs that highlight the total number of volunteer department applicants for the AFG, left, and SAFER grant programs during the course of six fiscal years. (Information provided by the National Volunteer Fire Council)

While funding is down, success rates have remained nearly the same from FY 2009 to FY 2014, though the low number of applicants plays a role in that. The percentage of successful departments actually rose from FY 2013 to FY 2014: volunteer departments to 23.60 percent from 21.30 percent; combination departments to 20.50 percent from 19 percent; paid on call departments to 14.50 percent from 12.70 percent; and career departments to 25.80 percent from 22 percent. SAFER success rates over the fiscal years have also remained comparable and exhibited improvement from FY 2013 to FY 2014, except for career departments which experienced a success rate decrease from 25.10 percent in FY 2013 to 22.90 percent in FY 2014.

**“We have received new gear, new SCBA, rescue tools, a new tanker and a new engine.”**

**“Don’t give up”**

“Emphasize a plan and do it early; don’t wait until the last minute, because it shows,” Brant said. He cannot stress enough taking the time to properly plan can lead a department to success.

The fire department Brant volunteers with in rural, west-central Pennsylvania has experienced plenty of success in the grant process. Five out of eight years they received needed funding.

“We have received new gear, new SCBA, rescue tools, a new tanker and a new engine,” he said. Success came from the department sitting down to discuss needs and then planning out their next steps. “Don’t give up,” he added. “There are resources out there.”

The federal government offers tools to aid grant seekers, like webinars that become available when it gets closer to grant openings.

FEMA also has regional offices departments can call to get help. NVFC has developed a Fire and Emergency Services Grant Writing Guide; an Assistance to Firefighters Grant Checklist, with help from FireGrantsHelp; video podcasts; grant and funding training; and more. Sites like FireGrantsHelp.com, EfficientGov and EmsGrantsHelp.com, provide tools as well, some of which are free.

Both Brant and Finger agree it is vital to have a third party read a department’s narratives before submitting a grant. NVFC has a peer review program available to its members; though Finger said many are not taking advantage of the opportunity.

“It’s not all gloom and doom. There are thousands of grants,” he said. While a grant here or there might feel like a drop in the bucket, Finger pointed out it can be a big drop. ■

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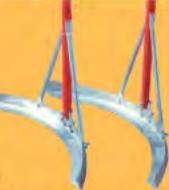
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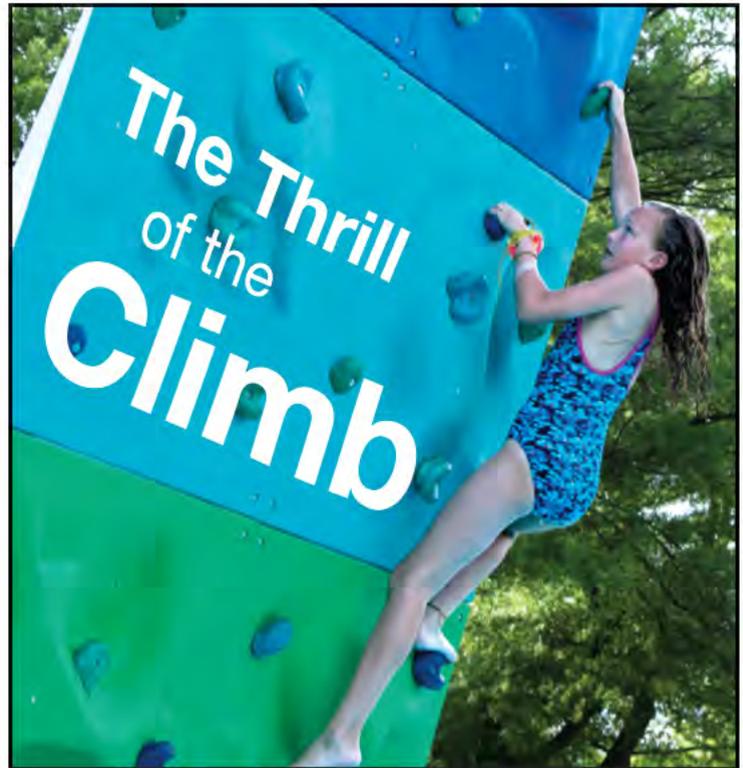
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## Going for it:

# Massachusetts Fire Department experiences grant success

**BELOW:** West Barnstable Fire Department might be small, but it has accomplished major successes in grant writing, securing about \$900,610 to support needed purchases such as a used ladder truck in 2004, training, and hiring a deputy fire chief. (Photo provided)



By SARAH WRIGHT | The Municipal

**Since 2001, the West Barnstable Fire Department, servicing the seaside town of roughly 3,200, has received just shy of \$1 million in grants. Part of that success came about from simply taking the first step: applying for a variety of them.**

Chief Joe Maruca said he happened across the first grant, for EMS jackets, in 2001. “It was just paper,” he said, noting the department wouldn’t be out anything else by trying. “We got that grant back in 2001 and another one in 2002 — it just blossomed from there.”

In 2014 alone the department received five federal or state grants, including Assistance to Firefighters Grant program funding for a propane training prop and an AFG regional grant for rapid intervention team training. A third amount for \$252,203 came from the federal Staffing for Fire & Emergency Response grant, which allowed the department to hire a deputy fire chief. That particular grant started May 16, 2014, and will pay for all costs associated with the deputy fire chief position

during fiscal year 2015 and most of FY 2016, minus about 7.5 weeks. In FY 2017 the fire district will take over costs associated with the position.

WBFD also took advantage of a state grant, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency grant, in 2014 to replace all of its fire station windows with new, hurricane-resistant glass. The windows were original to the building, which was built in 1988 and had reached the point where they’d need to be replaced whether or not the department received the money.

The project was estimated to cost \$75,000; the \$56,250 grant made up 75 percent of the cost, leaving the department with a much smaller bill than it would have had otherwise. Installation of the windows began in July.

Other federal and state grants over the years have secured wildland personal protective equipment, a used ladder truck, a computer and printer, self-contained breathing apparatuses, lighting trailer, firefighting foam, chainsaws, Wildland Fire Training, diesel exhaust system for the fire station, air trailer, training software, wildland firefighting equipment and more.

Maruca attributes some of the department’s success to having members with writing skill sets. “I’m a fire chief and a lawyer; I write trusts,” he said, adding he is a writing lawyer rather than a trial one. “Writing complex legal documents turns out to be great practice for writing grants.”

He is not alone in the grant writing process. The MEMA grant was put together by Lt. Chuck Marshall of the WBFD and Katherine Garofoli, a former grant writer for Barnstable County and the wife of WBFD Lt. John Garofoli. Additionally, Maruca has worked with the new deputy chief, teaching him to continue the practice.

“He helps write them now,” he said, noting it was important to teach him because “it’s



**ABOVE:** With a grant, WBFD covered 75 percent of the cost of replacing its fire station's windows with new hurricane-resistant glass — matching current building code for all windows within a mile of the ocean. Work on replacing the windows happened in July. (Photo provided)

***“It’s keeping the skill set alive within the department. It’s not just going to stop when I leave.”***

keeping the skill set alive within the department. It’s not just going to stop when I leave.”

Looking at the grant writing process, Maruca said small departments are just not getting AFG grants because their goals are usually very basic and require smaller amounts of funding, compared to large departments like Chicago or New York City. The essay requirements place small departments at a further disadvantage.

“The typical small department doesn’t have a grant writing force,” he said. “I feel the problem with AFG is its one-size-fits-all approach.”

For instance, a small department with a fire protective gear need seeks a grant; that grant may be for \$8,000 or \$9,000. Meanwhile, a larger department, like Chicago, seeks out a much larger grant, with its department having people specifically trained to write it. “They (small departments) have to write the same grant as Chicago,” Maruca said.

Smaller departments are especially hobbled when they get to the essay about cost benefit analysis. “They don’t know how to answer it,” he said, noting this causes small departments to score low on this portion of the AFG.

While WBFD has had much success, it has been turned down for grants in the past, too. Maruca stated persistence pays off, and recommends other small departments keep at the grant process. “We constantly write grants. We never give up. A lot of smaller departments try once or twice, are turned down and get discouraged.”

He stated WBFD tried for three years to secure funding for the deputy chief position, but met with no luck. It didn’t give up, though, and the SAFER grant came through in 2014. ▶

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The federal excess property program and donations have also helped WBFD buy needed supplies. Pictured, WBFD firefighters train to use an automatic CPR machine, the purchase of which was made possible by donations from West Barnstable citizens. (Photo provided)

**“We constantly write grants. We never give up. A lot of smaller departments try once or twice, are turned down and get discouraged.”**

WBFD has also found additional means of getting needed equipment, such as through donations and the federal excess property program. Through the federal excess property program it has received two trucks—a tanker, a former Air Force fuel truck repurposed into a water tender, and the department’s Forestry 288, a military truck now used for storm operations, accessing Sandy Neck and wildland firefighting—plus a free set of Jaws of Life and about 90 chairs for its training room.

It has also been blessed with donations, including its other forestry truck, a F-290, which was then built out using existing equipment

and equipment bought with VFA grant funds and about \$20,000 of department funds. More recently, in February, West Barnstable firefighters began training with the department’s new automatic CPR machine, purchased through the donations of 215 West Barnstable citizens.

Options exist for finding needed supplies. Sometimes all that is required is measures of persistence. And while a grant might be small in volume, Maruca said, “Just because it’s small doesn’t mean it’s not worth the effort.”

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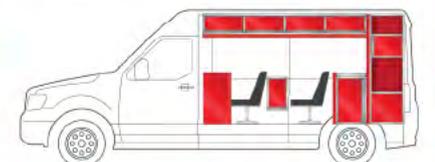
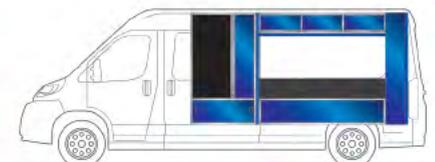
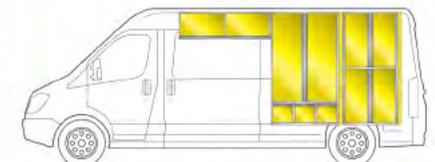
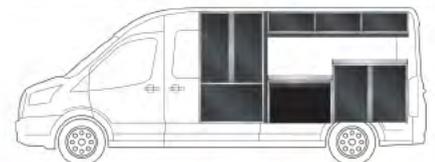
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*— Author Joseph Campbell*

**The Municipal joins all who remember and honor the men and women who have fallen while serving in the armed forces of the United States of America.**

*Happy Memorial Day*

## Donna Clark promoted to American Traffic Safety Services Association vice president, member services

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.** — Donna Clark, a project management professional, was promoted to the American Traffic Safety Services Association's vice president of member services position after serving as director of training for more than 16 years. Clark began her employment with ATSSA as training course manager nearly two decades ago.

Clark oversees training, new programs, business development, meetings and conventions and member engagement departments in addition to the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation. In her new position she will steer ATSSA's strategic goals of maintaining the association's position as the industry leader in advocating roadway infrastructure safety and the primary resource for knowledge exchange, education and training. She will continue to work on behalf of ATSSA to ensure the association is recognized as the voice and authority on roadway safety and to support ATSSA members' business development.

## NTEA recognizes 50-year member companies

**FARMINGTON HILLS, MICH.** — At the President's Breakfast and NTEA Annual Meeting, held in conjunction with The Work Truck Show 2016, NTEA honored four companies celebrating 50 continuous years of association membership. Representatives from Cook Truck Equipment & Tools Inc., Monroe Truck Equipment Inc., Northern Truck Equipment Corp. and Washington Auto Carriage were recognized.

"These companies have demonstrated a steadfast commitment to NTEA membership," said Steve Carey, NTEA executive director. "The association is proud to represent them and the industry they have helped build."

Among the honorees is Monroe Truck Equipment Inc., Monroe, Wis., which specializes in the design, manufacture, distribution and installation of truck equipment, including snow and ice control products, for the municipal and commercial markets. Founded in 1958, the company evolved from its roots as a one-person blacksmith shop. Today, Monroe Truck Equipment has six locations and is a commercial vehicle pool and nationwide ship-through for Chevrolet, GMC, Ford and Ram.

## Nashville facility earns Envision Platinum Award for sustainable infrastructure

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — The Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure announced in March that the Nashville Metropolitan Government West Park Equalization Facility earned the Envision Platinum award for sustainable infrastructure, the highest rating of the Envision system. This is the first joint wastewater and park project in the U.S. to receive an ISI Envision rating award and the 10th project in North America to receive recognition.

Nashville MWS, charged with eliminating unpermitted discharges from its wastewater collection system, implemented a strategy that included wastewater storage throughout the system during wet weather. The design for the West Park Facility originally called for a second tank on the existing pump station site. However, updates to the flood zones made in response to a historic 2010 flood resulted in an unsuitable original location. The alternative, remote location would have required multiple tanks and additional piping.

By relocating this project in the park, the cost savings funded much-needed park upgrades and new recreational facilities. The project's interagency collaboration provides two different community benefits: valuable park improvements and cleaner rivers and streams.

## Inaugural Construction Event held at The Work Truck Show 2016

**INDIANAPOLIS, IND.** — NTEA, Allison Transmission Inc. and key partners worked together to produce The Construction Event — a unique first-time experience held in conjunction with The Work Truck Show 2016. Sponsors included Odyne Systems LLC, Palfinger North America, Palfleet Truck Equipment Inc., Roll-Rite LLC and Truck Bodies and Equipment International Inc.

The event began with a reception at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Educational sessions were offered the next day at Allison Transmission headquarters. Participants were then able to take advantage of a plant tour, as well as an outdoor ride-and-drive — complete with product demonstrations.

## American Traffic Safety Services Association offers training tailored to law enforcement, first responders

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.** — The American Traffic Safety Services Association offers "Safe and Effective Use of Law Enforcement Personnel in Work Zones," a train-the-trainer course and "Incident Traffic Control for First Responders" for police officers, firefighters and emergency management services personnel.

The four-hour "Safe and Effective Use of Law Enforcement Personnel in Work Zones" course is designed to provide awareness and guidance to law enforcement personnel who work in active highway work zones, whether on or off duty.

"Incident Traffic Control for First Responders" is a training course for police and fire rescue personnel involved with traffic control when responding to an incident or enforcing traffic control in work zones.

For more information, hosting options and pricing, contact ATSSA's training team at (877) 642-4637.

## APWA announces new certified public fleet professionals

**KANSAS CITY, MO.** — The American Public Works Association published in March the names of public works fleet professionals who received Certified Public Fleet Professional certification. CFPF certification is for those who actively supervise, manage, oversee or administer fleet services within a public or private fleet entity.

The purpose of the certification is to promote excellence in fleet management by advancing the knowledge and practice of public fleet professionals to benefit their communities through quality fleet services. Since its inception, a total of 100 U.S. and Canadian fleet professionals have received the CFPF certification, and the program continues to have more applicants who strive for excellent public works service in their communities.

The most recent APWA Certified Public Fleet Professionals are: Jared Divett, CFPF, Bernalillo County Fleet Albuquerque, N.M.; Gilbert English, CFPF, city of Raleigh, N.C.; Jeff Lawver, CFPF, San Bernardino County, Calif.; and Carlos Osterroth, CFPF, city of Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada. ▶

# Buyers converge on NTEA



**A record number of work truck professionals attended North America's largest work truck event, NTEA's The Work Truck Show, March 1-4 at the Indianapolis Convention Center.**

*A big attraction at The Work Truck Show 2016 trade show and exposition was a 3-D printer version of a Shelby Cobra, created by Cincinnati Inc. (Photo courtesy NTEA)*

Truck premieres, exclusive ride-and-drive opportunities and unmatched training drew a record-setting 11,905 industry professionals to The Work Truck Show 2016. This breaks the event's previous attendance record of 11,005, set in 2015. Attendees came from all 50 states, eight Canadian provinces and 19 countries.

The show featured more than 500,000 square feet of vocational trucks and equipment. Attendees discovered new products, talked business and explored the newest clean vehicle technologies during two afternoons of ride-and-drive opportunities. Work Truck Show exhibitors highlighted significant propane fleet adoptions and even converted

a pickup truck to run on propane, right on the show floor.

Particularly well-attended events included the president's breakfast, featuring comedian Jay Leno, and industry educational sessions such as "Leadership Development and Transition in the New Economy — Critical Insights and Practical Strategies for Building Bench Strength," which broached trends in the new economy and essential leadership competencies necessary to compete in the 21st century.

For the first time, an expanded curriculum united Green Truck Summit and Work Truck Show concurrent sessions. Press conferences, like one presented by VMAC

Global Technology about its rotary screw air compressor, were plentiful; and traffic on the exposition floor remained heavy and steady after opening on the second day. A big expo draw was a 3-D printed replica of a Shelby Cobra by Cincinnati Inc. The display was designed to increase the legitimacy of big area additive manufacturing and was presented with truck equipment examples by the same company.

Setting an all-time attendance record was a feat. The Work Truck Show will attempt it again next year. Join them! The Work Truck Show 2017 is slated for March 15-17 in the same location. Educational programming, including the Green Truck Summit, begins March 14. 



**ABOVE:** Conference attendees heard strategies to enhance fleet productivity, control fuel costs and more. (Photo courtesy NTEA)



**ABOVE:** At the Green Truck Summit general session, work truck professionals heard clean energy perspectives from a panel of experts. (Photo courtesy NTEA)

**BELOW:** Participation in The Work Truck Show 2016 ride-and-drive was heavy, as was attendance in general. (Photo courtesy NTEA)



## Matthew Wilson to serve as 52nd NTEA president

**FARMINGTON HILLS, MICH.** — Matthew Wilson, chairman and CEO of Switch-N-Go, AmeriDeck & Bucks Divisions of Deist Industries Inc., Hadley, Pa., was installed in March as the 52nd president of NTEA — The Association for the Work Truck Industry. He accepted the position from immediate past president Jeffrey Messer, president of Messer Truck Equipment, Westbrook, Maine, at the President's Breakfast and NTEA Annual Meeting held in conjunction with The Work Truck Show 2016.

Wilson joined Deist Industries in 2006 as a division manager, becoming general manager three years later. In 2010, he was appointed president, and later that year he and his wife acquired full ownership of the business. He maintained the position of president until 2015, when he transitioned to his current role as chairman and CEO.

Also serving on the board are executive committee members First Vice President Adam Keane, executive vice-president of Allied Body Works Inc., Seattle, Wash.; Second Vice President Todd Davis, vice president of Phenix Enterprises Inc., Pomona, Calif.; Third Vice President/Treasurer Ross Haith Jr., president of Leggett & Platt Commercial Vehicle Products, Atlanta, Ga.; and Secretary Steve Carey, executive director of NTEA, Farmington Hills, Mich.



## Nate Smith named American Traffic Safety Services Association vice president of government relations

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.** — Nate Smith, who began his career

with the American Traffic Safety Services Association's Government Relations Department as manager in 2009, was elevated to associate director and director before recently being promoted to vice president. Smith's responsibilities include advocating for roadway safety infrastructure policies and funding at the state and federal levels on behalf of ATSSA's membership. His team works to educate elected officials about the importance of increasing funding for roadway safety infrastructure products and services.

Smith has been integral in increasing ATSSA's visibility to state and federal legislators and representing ATSSA's membership on Capitol Hill for the passage of the five-year, \$305 billion transportation bill that was passed by Congress last December. The passage of Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act includes significant roadway safety infrastructure investments that will substantially improve the safety of the nation's roadways for motorists. ▶

For a complete list of all upcoming events please visit [themunicipal.com/events](http://themunicipal.com/events).

To list your upcoming conference or seminar in The Municipal at no charge call (800) 733-4111, ext. 2392, or email the information to [jmartin@the-papers.com](mailto:jmartin@the-papers.com).

**MAY**

**May 17–20 International Parking Institute Conference & Expo**  
Gaylord Opryland Resort & Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn.  
[www.parking.org](http://www.parking.org)

**May 20–22 Lancaster County Fireman's Association Annual Fire Expo**  
Pennsylvania State Farm Show & Expo Center, Harrisburg, Pa.  
[www.lcfa.com/InIndex.php?src=events&srctype=detail&category=Event&refno=43](http://www.lcfa.com/InIndex.php?src=events&srctype=detail&category=Event&refno=43)

**May 21–25 International Association of Fire Chiefs Fire-Rescue Med**  
Green Valley Ranch, Henderson, Nev.  
[www.lafc.org/conferences](http://www.lafc.org/conferences)

**May 22–25 APWA North American Snow Conference**  
Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford, Conn.  
[newengland.apwa.net](http://newengland.apwa.net)

**May 22–27 Community Transportation Expo**  
Oregon Convention Center, Portland, Ore.  
[web1.ctaa.org](http://web1.ctaa.org)

**May 23–26 AWEA Windpower 2015 Conference & Exhibition**  
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, La.  
[www.windpowerexpo.org](http://www.windpowerexpo.org)

**JUNE**

**June 5–8 Electric Utility Fleet Managers Conference**  
Williamsburg Lodge & Conference Center, Williamsburg, Va.  
[www.eufmc.com](http://www.eufmc.com)

**June 6–9 WasteExpo**  
Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev.  
[www.wasteexpo.com](http://www.wasteexpo.com)

**June 7–10 Public Risk Management Association 2016 Annual Conference**  
Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta, Ga.  
[www.prlmacentral.org](http://www.prlmacentral.org)

**JUNE**

**June 11–14 Tennessee Municipal League Annual Conference**  
Gatlinburg Convention Center, Gatlinburg, Tenn.  
[www.tml1.org](http://www.tml1.org)

**June 12–15 American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators Region II Conference**  
Louisville Marriott Downtown, Louisville, Ky.  
[www.aamva.org](http://www.aamva.org)

**June 13–16 National Fire Protection Association Conference & Expo**  
Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev.  
[www.nfpa.org/training/conferences](http://www.nfpa.org/training/conferences)

**June 14–17 League of Minnesota Cities Annual Conference**  
Intercontinental Saint Paul Riverfront, St. Paul, Minn.  
[www.lmc.org](http://www.lmc.org)

**June 15–18 New York State Association of Fire Chiefs 2016 Fire Industry, Rescue & EMS Expo/ Fire 2016**  
Turning Stone Resort, Verona, N.Y.  
[www.nysfirechiefs.com/events/fire-2016/fire-2016-gen.html](http://www.nysfirechiefs.com/events/fire-2016/fire-2016-gen.html)

**June 16–19 International Hazardous Materials Response Teams Conference**  
Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore, Md.  
[www.lafc.org/hazmat](http://www.lafc.org/hazmat)

**June 20–23 Government Fleet Expo & Conference (GFX)**  
Music City Center, Nashville, Tenn.  
[www.governmentfleetexpo.com](http://www.governmentfleetexpo.com)

**June 22–24 Snow & Ice Management Association 19th Annual Snow & Ice Symposium**  
Rhode Island Convention Center, Providence, R.I.  
[www.slma.org/show](http://www.slma.org/show)

**June 24–28 Georgia Municipal Association Annual Convention**  
Savannah International Trade & Convention Center, Savannah, Ga.  
[www.gmanet.com](http://www.gmanet.com)

**June 26–29 American Society of Safety Engineers Safety 2016 Professional Development Conference & Exposition**  
Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga.  
[safety.asse.org](http://safety.asse.org)

**June 28–29 Police Security Expo 2016**  
Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, N.J.  
[www.police-security.com](http://www.police-security.com)

**JULY**

**July 8–12 Florida Fire Chiefs Association Executive Development Conference**  
The Vinoy Renaissance Resort & Golf Club, St. Petersburg, Fla.  
[www.ffca.org](http://www.ffca.org)

**July 17–20 American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators Region I Conference**  
Louisville Marriott Downtown, Louisville, Ky.  
[www.aamva.org](http://www.aamva.org)

**July 17–21 Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America Mid-Year Training Institute**  
Mirage Hotel & Resort, Las Vegas, Nev.  
[www.cadca.org/mytl](http://www.cadca.org/mytl)

**July 18–20 Fleet Safety Conference**  
Renaissance Schaumburg Convention Center Hotel, Schaumburg, Ill.  
[www.fleetsafetyconference.com](http://www.fleetsafetyconference.com)

**July 19–22 Municipal Association of South Carolina Annual Meeting**  
Marriott Hilton Head Island, Hilton Head Island, S.C.  
[www.masc.sc](http://www.masc.sc)

**July 22–25 National Association of Counties Annual Conference & Expo**  
Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach, Calif.  
[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org)

**July 24–27 National Association of Police Organizations 38th Annual Convention**  
Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa, Palm Beach, Fla.  
[www.napo.org](http://www.napo.org)

**AUGUST**

**Aug. 14–17 Institute of Transportation Engineers 2016 Annual Meeting & Exhibit**  
Anaheim Marriott, Anaheim, Calif.  
[www.ite.org/annualmeeting](http://www.ite.org/annualmeeting)

**Aug. 16–17 Midwest Security & Police Conference/Expo**  
Tinley Park Convention Center, Tinley Park, Ill.  
[www.mspsc.com](http://www.mspsc.com)

**Aug. 17–20 International Association of Fire Chiefs' Annual Conference & Expo (Fire-Rescue International, FRI 2016)**  
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas  
[www.lafc.org/micrositeFRIconf](http://www.lafc.org/micrositeFRIconf)

**Aug. 18–20 Florida Municipal League Annual Conference**  
Diplomat Resort, Hollywood, Fla.  
[www.floridaleagueofcities.com](http://www.floridaleagueofcities.com)

**Aug. 19–23 NIGP Forum – Annual Meeting**  
Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center, National Harbor, Md.  
[nslite.nigp.org/forum2016/home](http://nslite.nigp.org/forum2016/home)

**Aug. 22–25 StormCon, the SurfaceWater Quality Conference & Expo, & WasteCon 2016**  
Indiana Convention Center, Indianapolis, Ind.  
[www.stormcon.com](http://www.stormcon.com)  
[swana.org/Events/WASTECON.aspx](http://swana.org/Events/WASTECON.aspx)

**Aug. 27–30 International Municipal Signal Association Forum & Expo**  
Renaissance Atlanta Waverly & Dobb Galleria, Atlanta, Ga.  
[www.lmsasafety.org](http://www.lmsasafety.org)

**Aug. 28–31 American Public Works Association Public Works Expo (PWX)**  
Minneapolis Convention Center, Minneapolis, Minn.  
[www.apwa.net/PWX](http://www.apwa.net/PWX)

**Aug. 29–Sept. 1 Florida Recreation & Park Association Annual Conference**  
Caribe Royal Resort, Orlando, Fla.  
[www.frpa.org/conference/confgeneral](http://www.frpa.org/conference/confgeneral)

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**NTEA presents '2016 Fleet Purchasing Outlook'**

**FARMINGTON HILLS, MICH.**— NTEA recently released the "2016 Fleet Purchasing Outlook," which monitors and evaluates vocational fleet acquisition activity. Companies can use this study as they seek to navigate market fluctuations and understand shifts in fleet buying patterns.

The Outlook, based on survey responses from a diverse pool of fleet professionals in mid- to high-level management with decision-making authority, carefully examines the latest results and benchmarks against data from NTEA's 2013-15 reports. NTEA members can access the "2016 Fleet Purchasing Outlook" for free in print or a downloadable PDF. Nonmembers can purchase the report for \$199. To receive a copy, visit [ntea.com/shopntea](http://ntea.com/shopntea) or call (800) 441-6832.

**APWA Awards 2015 Public Works Leadership Fellows**

**KANSAS CITY, MO.**— The American Public Works Association has announced the awarding of the 2015 Public Works Leadership Fellows. The 2015 group of PWLFs received credentialing from the APWA Donald C. Stone Center for Leadership and Management.

There are currently 258 APWA PWLFs who provide one-on-one mentoring for aspiring public works leaders enrolled in three of APWA's Leadership and Management professional development programs, including the Public Works Executive, Public Works Manager and the Public Works Supervisor.

The APWA 2015 Public Works Leadership Fellows include: David Derrick, city of Greenville, S.C.; Thomas Driscoll, town of Jupiter, Fla.; Steve Hoambrecker, city of Burlington, Iowa; Louis Jearls, city of Florissant, Mo.; Douglas Layton, P.E., city of Atlantic Beach, Fla.; Jeff May, city of Clive, Iowa; Brian McReynolds, city of Waynesboro, Va.; Dena Mezger, city of Lee's Summit, Mo.; Jobst Schulte, city of Moline, Ill.; and Sammy Vanderzee, city of High Point, N.C.

**American Traffic Safety Services Association partners with Federal Highway Administration on work zone safety grant training courses**

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.**— The American Traffic Safety Services Association has partnered with the Federal Highway Administration to offer work zone safety grant training courses to state and local governments, transportation and public agencies, and departments of transportation for \$25 per person for each course through Sept. 30. Federal employees can take advantage of the courses for free.

The grant courses were made possible through the FHWA's Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, which addresses the safety of motorists, pedestrians and highway construction workers in roadway work zones by funding work zone safety training. ▶



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**News & Notes**

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**3M raises more than \$30,000 for American Traffic Safety Services Foundation with 'Toward Zero Deaths Pledge Wall'**

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.** — 3M raised nearly \$14,000 from pledges on the first-ever "Toward Zero Deaths Pledge Wall" during the American Traffic Safety Services Association's 46th annual Convention & Traffic Expo in New Orleans, La., Jan. 31-Feb. 2. The company, which also sponsored the Pledge Wall for \$5,000, matched the pledges for a grand total of \$32,724 for the American Traffic Safety Services Foundation's Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarship.

The wall was available for attendees to donate to the foundation, which promotes roadway safety through charitable giving and public awareness with the National Work Zone Memorial and a scholarship program. Donors had the opportunity to write a message, honor a fallen roadway safety worker or write the amount of the pledge on 3M Post-It Notes that were placed on the wall.

The Roadway Worker Memorial Scholarship provides continuing education financial assistance for spouses and dependents of roadway workers who have been killed or permanently disabled while making the nation's roads safer for motorists and pedestrians. Individual scholarships have a value of up to \$5,000. In addition, applicants who demonstrate a strong commitment to volunteerism are eligible to receive an additional \$1,000 in honor of Chuck Bailey, an esteemed member of the roadway safety industry who died in 2002.

**Robby Wehagen named director of government relations for the American Traffic Safety Services Association**

**FREDERICKSBURG, VA.** — Robby Wehagen, who began at the American Traffic Safety Services Association's Government Relations Department as associate director in 2014, was recently promoted to director. In this position, Wehagen is responsible for educating decision-makers about roadway safety and advocating for roadway safety infrastructure policies and funding. He meets with approximately 200 representatives and their staffs a year to discuss roadway safety infrastructure, share the impact that ATSSA member companies have on their districts and states and ensure continued support of ATSSA members in their districts. ▶



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**2012 Kenworth T800 chassis**  
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**2013 Kenworth T800 chassis**

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**2000 International Bare Tandem Chassis**

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**2002 Sterling Single-Axle Plow**

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Wehagen worked with Vice President of Government Relations Nate Smith to represent ATSSA's membership on Capitol Hill for the passage of the five-year, \$305 billion transportation bill that was passed by Congress last December. The passage of "Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act" includes significant roadway safety infrastructure investments that will substantially improve the safety of the nation's roadways for motorists. Keeping up the momentum on Capitol Hill, he's already meeting with representatives to work for the next five years of funding when the FAST Act expires in 2020.

Wehagen and his wife, Stefanie, live in Washington, D.C. **M**

News releases regarding personnel changes, other non-product-related company changes, association news and awards are printed as space allows. Priority will be given to advertisers and affiliates.

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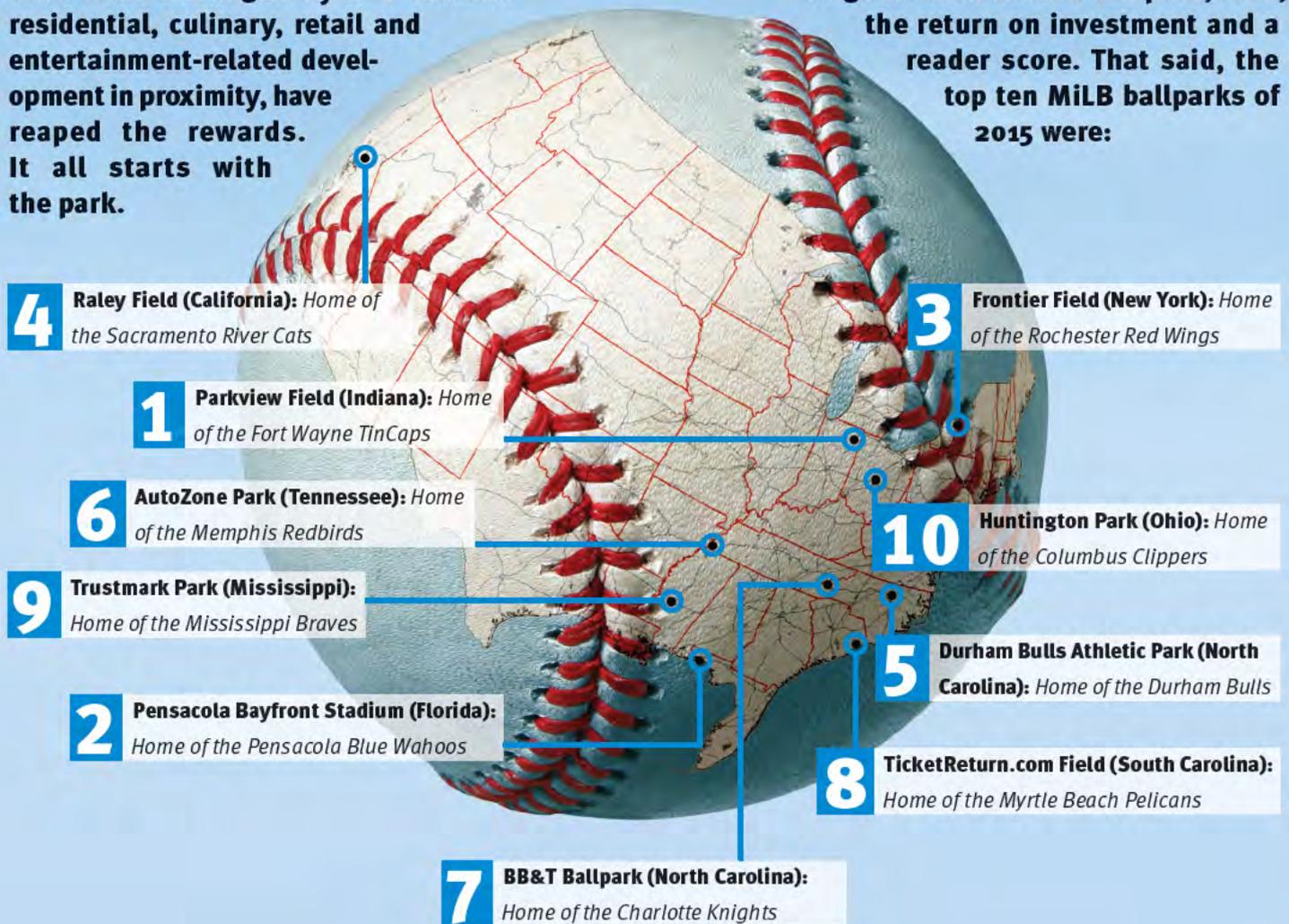
# TOP TEN Minor League Baseball ballpark rankings

The 2016 Minor League Baseball season is underway. The teams have emerged ready to impress, and fans are already bringing the love to their hometown hopefuls.

Besides being the training ground of America's pastime, Minor League Baseball stadiums are darlings of economic development. Among the cities where teams are located, those that have upgraded their facilities regularly and realized residential, culinary, retail and entertainment-related development in proximity, have reaped the rewards. It all starts with the park.

Last fall [www.stadiumjourney.com](http://www.stadiumjourney.com) writer Paul Swaney and other site correspondents chimed in on their picks for MiLB stadiums that appeal to a wide range of fans. As Swaney noted, "A big part of the draw to a minor league ballpark is the overall experience of attending a game."

[www.stadiumjourney.com](http://www.stadiumjourney.com)'s ranking includes the food and beverage options, overall atmosphere, neighborhood around the park, fans, the return on investment and a reader score. That said, the top ten MiLB ballparks of 2015 were:



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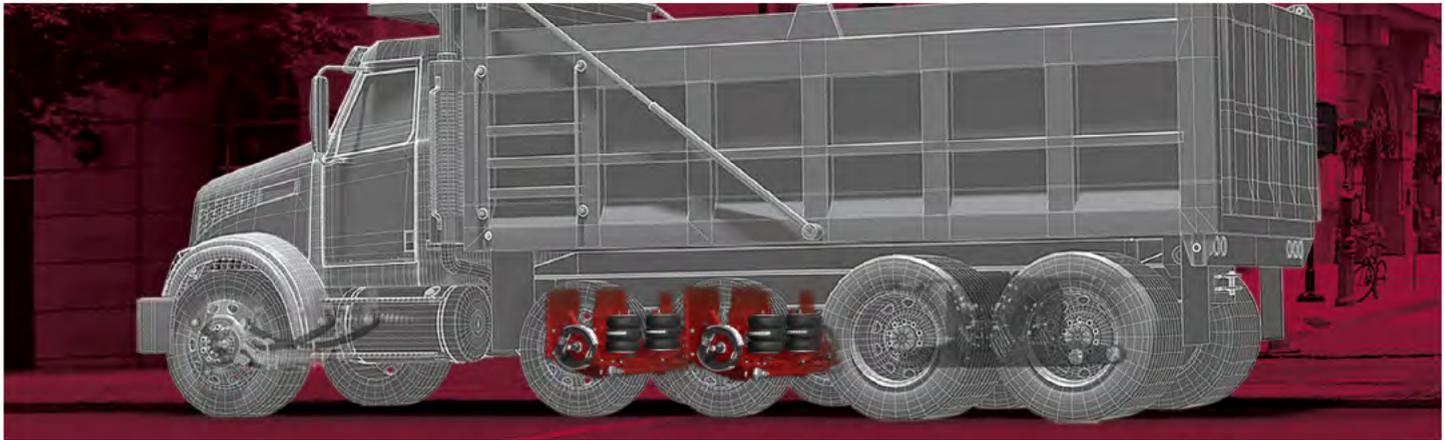
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