



ACAA Today

Official quarterly newsletter of the Association of County Administrators of Alabama

Fourth Quarter 2008

It's Time We Look Ahead to the "Big Picture"

A few weeks ago it was my pleasure to represent the affiliate organizations at the two-day annual seminar held by the ACCA Board of Directors. It was educational and has given me a new perspective on our role in this important organization.



Gwen Richardson, CCA
Monroe County
ACAA President

Sometimes we can get caught up in our daily routine – responding to requests from the public, county commissioners and county employees; working on the financial challenges that confront us from every side; attempting to be a positive force in the growth of the community and its economic expansion; solving the mountain of problems that seem to occur whenever we turn our backs for more than five minutes – and forget the “big picture.”

The role of county government is ever-expanding. During the seminar, we focused discussion on a wide variety of subjects from road and bridge issues, to general revenue, liability matters, workers' compensation questions, and much more. The county administrator is, of course, a central player in all those matters.

Over the last several years there have been significant changes in the role and responsibility of county government. Most of those changes have come from initiatives generated by ACCA and its affiliate organizations, like ours. If we want improvements, we have the responsibility to raise issues and concerns, help direct the discussion and research and, most importantly, to be actively involved in the efforts necessary to affect change.

Without our input at the local level and within the ACCA, the forward progress we have made will come to a standstill.

As we prepare for the 2009 Legislative Session, the importance of our role in the development of the ACCA Legislative Program cannot be overstated. It is essential that county administrators actively participate on the ACCA Steering Committees, offer their insight and opinions and help influence the Association in a direction that will allow the organization and county government to continue its growth and improvement.

For that reason, I'd like to thank the county administrators who are serving on the ACCA Steering

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ONLINE REGISTRATION COMING SOON!

ACCA is now handling more conferences and events than ever before. It seems that we are ALWAYS asking you to register for something! While this is wonderful, and we welcome the challenge, the “old” way of doing things has become outdated and inefficient. Technology today allows us the opportunity to move to a more efficient and well organized process. That said, ACCA has purchased a new online registration system, and we are now working to get it up and running. **The new system will require you to log in and register through our Web site.** This may seem different at first, but we think you will see the long-term benefits. Look for more information to come your way after the first of the year.

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Committees this year with me: **Jenoice Bevis, CCA; Brenda Petty, CCA; Jeanette Medders, CCA; Sherrie Kelley, CCA; Diane Kilpatrick, CCA; Melvin Vines, Matt Sharp, CCA; Steve Golsan, CCA; Bill Dempsey, John Pafenbach, CCA; David Smyth, Mark Tyner, CCA; Roger Rendleman, CPA and Ken Joiner, CCA.**

Such service requires a commitment of time away from the daily routine back home. However, there's no question such participation is mandatory if we are going to be able to do our jobs effectively.

I'd also like to recognize and thank **Houston County Administrator Bill Dempsey** for his leadership in re-establishing a district meeting in the Wiregrass area of the state. Such meetings provide a great opportunity for information sharing, team building and problem solving. As we often say, you don't really know what it is like to be a county administrator until AFTER you are hired. I know those involved plan to continue these meetings on a regular basis and look forward to gaining insight and advice from each other.

I hope others around the state will be inspired by this move and set-up similar meetings in other parts of the state. A few years ago, such meetings were commonplace. But, I guess, everyone has gotten so busy with that daily routine I mentioned earlier that we've lost this item in the shuffle.

We can all learn from each other. Certainly our challenges are different based on the specific circumstances of our counties. But, the core issues don't change simply because you cross an imaginary county line.

In addition, we have more than a dozen administrators who are still very early in their careers. The old-timers out there (like myself) have a responsibility to provide advice and to help the new-comers adopt to this most unique job.

There are only 67 of us. We need to stick together if we're going to continue to have a positive impact on our association, the ACCA and the State of Alabama!

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR PLANS?

ACCA's Legislative Conference is just around the corner. Have you made your plans to attend? If not, we've included a registration form in this newsletter for your convenience.

The deadline for early registration is **TODAY, Friday, Nov. 14**, and registration cancellations after Friday, Nov. 28, will not be refunded. Early registration is **\$125** per person before Nov. 14. (Registration after Nov. 14 is **\$150** per person.)

While the deadline to acquire rooms at the Renaissance Ross Bridge Resort has already passed, accommodations have been made at the Hyatt Place Hoover, which is about 10 miles from the host hotel. Rooms are **\$129** and can be reserved by calling (205) 988-8444. The deadline for making hotel reservations at Hyatt Place is **Tuesday, Nov. 18.**

Register for ACAA's Educational Programs

There is one more educational program remaining this year that could help you achieve your Certificate in County Administration or your designation as a Certified County Administrator. Don't let these opportunities pass you by!

Personnel Management, Policies and Procedures will be **Dec. 9-10** at the **Renaissance Ross Bridge Resort** and Spa in Hoover, Ala., in conjunction with ACCA's Annual Legislative Conference.

This course reviews the major federal and state workplace laws and the obligations they place on counties. Included are such significant laws as those covering workers' compensation, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity. Also included are recommended practices regarding hiring, firing, compensation and benefits and other major human resource issues.

County government, like every workplace today, is subject to a myriad of federal and state laws that outline what is considered appropriate treatment of employees. Get ahead of the curve...register today.

To register for this class, you may log on to www.jsu.coned.edu and follow the instructions. Registration is **\$155** per person. For more information, please contact Mary Davis at (334) 983-0005.

ACCA Announces Dates for District Meetings and County Commission Days

With the 2009 Legislative Session just around the corner, the Association staff wants to make sure all ACCA members are prepared for what's ahead in the coming months.

During the three-week period set aside for **ACCA's District Meetings**, county officials and employees gather to discuss legislative and other important issues.

Please mark your calendars for the meeting that is most convenient for you. **All meetings will begin at 6 p.m.** A registration form and specific locations will be available soon. All county commissioners, chairpersons, clerk/administrators, engineers, county attorneys, EMA



directors, county revenue officers, and 9-1-1 directors should plan to attend the district meetings.

Monday, Jan. 5, 2009Jasper, Ala. (Walker County)

Tuesday, Jan. 6, 2009.....Decatur, Ala. (Morgan County)

Thursday, Jan. 8, 2009.....Gadsden, Ala. (Etowah County)

Monday, Jan. 12, 2009.....Linden, Ala. (Marengo County)

Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2009Clanton, Ala. (Chilton County)

Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2009Clayton, Ala. (Barbour County)

County Commission Days are scheduled during each Legislative Session to give counties the opportunity to come to Montgomery and lobby on Association measures. *This is your county's opportunity to have a sure presence in Montgomery during the Regular Legislative Session.*

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend your district's County Commission Day. All participants should convene at the ACCA office for a briefing before visiting the State House.

Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 11 a.m. – District 8: Bullock, Chambers, Clay, Coosa, Lee, Macon, Randolph, Russell and Tallapoosa Counties

Thursday, Feb. 19, at 9 a.m. – Districts 10 and 12: Baldwin, Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Marengo, Mobile, Monroe, Washington and Wilcox Counties

Tuesday, March 24, at 11 a.m. – Districts 7 and 9: Autauga, Calhoun, Cleburne, Elmore, Lowndes, Montgomery, Shelby and Talladega Counties

Tuesday, March 31, at 11 a.m. – District 11: Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Dale, Geneva, Henry, Houston and Pike Counties

April 8 and 9 – County Day at the Legislature at the Alabama Activity Center in Downtown Montgomery

Tuesday, April 21, at 11 a.m. – Districts 2 and 4: Blount, Cullman, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Morgan and St. Clair Counties

Tuesday, May 5, at 11 a.m. – Districts 5 and 6: Bibb, Chilton, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Jefferson, Perry, Pickens, Sumter and Tuscaloosa Counties

Thursday, May 7, at 9 a.m. – Districts 1 and 3: Cherokee, Colbert, DeKalb, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Jackson, Lamar, Lauderdale, Marion, Marshall, Walker and Winston Counties

2008 LEGISLATIVE Conference

Dec. 10-11, 2008 • Renaissance Ross Bridge • Hoover, Ala. • REGISTER TODAY!

ACCA BREAKOUT AGENDA

- **Examiners Update**
Mike Scroggins, Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts
- **Distribution of Revenue from the Sale of Property for Unpaid Taxes**
- **ACCA Trust Fund for GASB-43 Compliance**
Buddy Sharpless, Executive Director, ACCA
- **Red Flag Rules**
Mary Pons, Staff Attorney, ACCA

2008 ACCA Legislative Conference Registration Form

County or Company Name: _____

Person Completing Form: _____

Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

E-mail Address: _____

ACCA member registration is **\$125** per person **before Nov. 14**. (After Nov. 14, registration is \$150 per person.) *Company registration is \$175 per person.*

\$ _____ Total amount enclosed. **Please do not ask ACCA to bill you.**

List below those you are registering for the conference. Please indicate if each person is a (C) Commissioner, (CA) Clerk/Administrator, (CE) County Engineer, (ACE) Assistant County Engineer, (EIT) Engineer in Training, (AAEM) Emergency Management, (CROAA) County Revenue Officer, (AAND) E-911, (G) Guest or (S) Spouse.

Please note that cancellations will not be refunded after Friday, Nov. 28.

Please return completed form and check payable to ACCA by Nov. 14, 2008, to:

ACCA Legislative Conference • 100 N. Jackson Street • Montgomery, Ala. 36104 • Fax (334) 263-7678