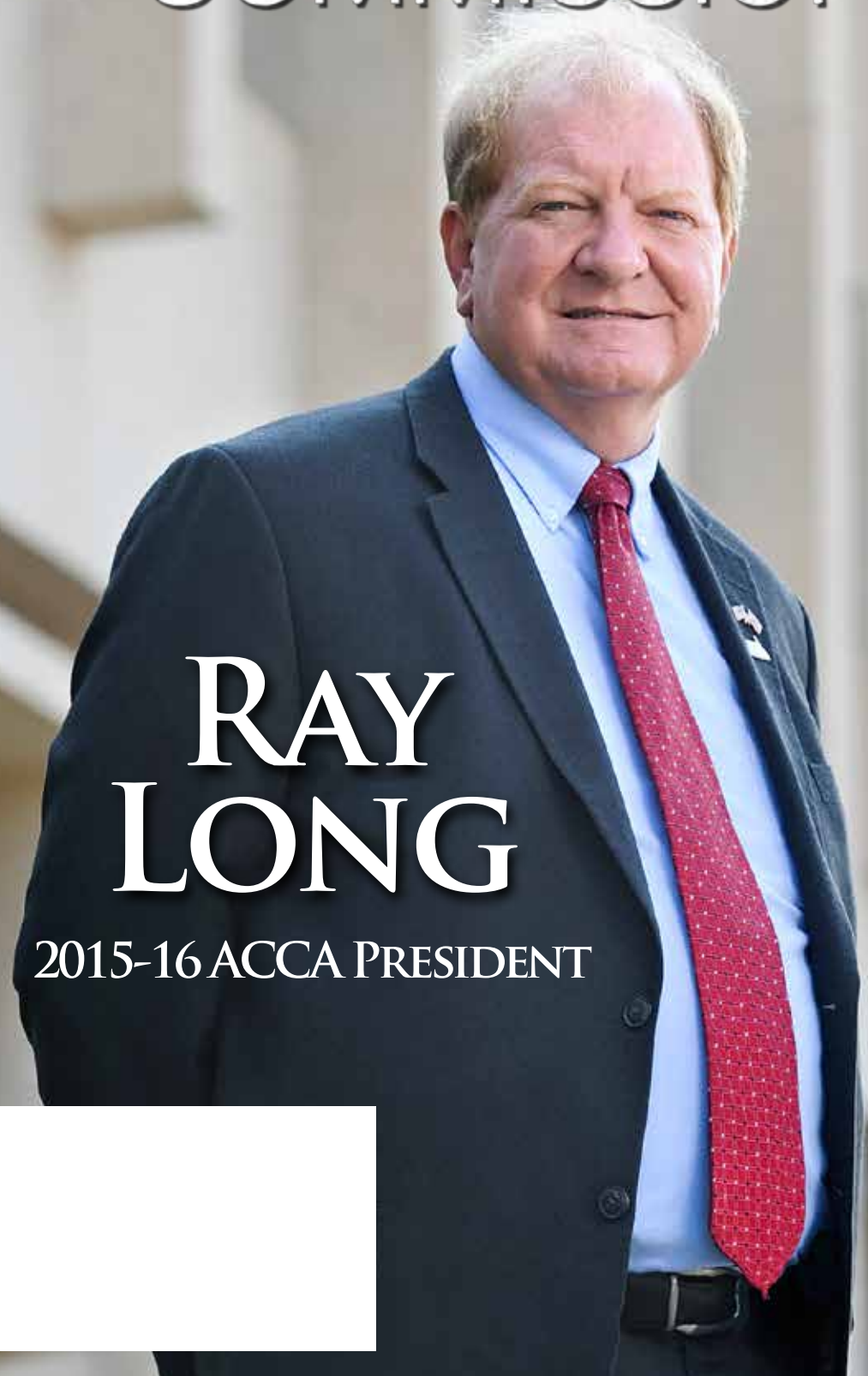


PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY COMMISSIONS OF ALABAMA

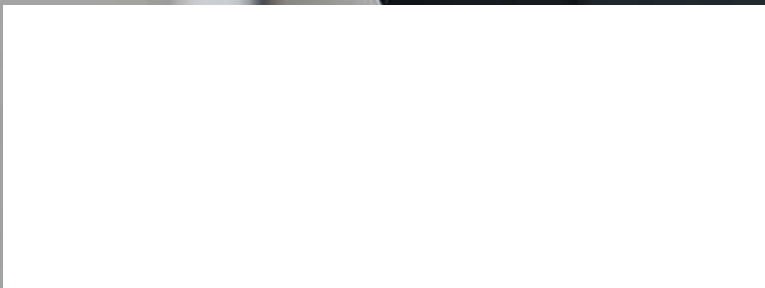
COUNTY COMMISSION

Volume 59, Number 5
October 2015



RAY
LONG

2015-16 ACCA PRESIDENT



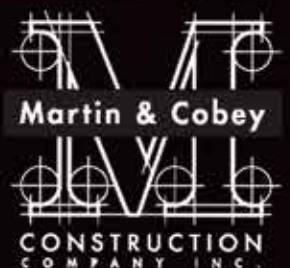


CONSULTING - PLANNING - CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT



FOR
INFORMATION
CONTACT

Brian Moore P 256.232.5384
BMOORE@MARTINANDCOBEY.COM
WWW.MARTINANDCOBEY.COM





in this issue

VOLUME 59, NUMBER 5



ACCA President Ray Long, chairman of the Morgan County Commission, was photographed at his county's courthouse in Decatur.

Photo: Jeronimo Nisa

**Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation
As of October 2015 - County Commission
Published bimonthly**

Association of County Commissions of Alabama
PO Box 5040, Montgomery AL 36103
Publisher and Editor Sonny Brasfield
Managing Editor Sallie Owen Gowan

Circulation - Average of preceding 12 months	
Number of copies ordered	1,710
Paid circulation (mail)	1,235
Free Distribution	195
Total Distribution	1,535
Office Use	185
Grand Total	1,720

COUNTY COMMISSION is published bi-monthly by the Association of County Commissions of Alabama, Inc.; P.O. Box 5040; Montgomery, AL 36103. Subscription rates are \$20 per year, which is included in the dues of members. Additional copies, when available, are \$2 each to non-members. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, Alabama. Postmaster: Send address changes to COUNTY COMMISSION; P.O. Box 5040; Montgomery, AL 36103. USPS 985-380

news you can use...

- VP's Goal: 'All of us as a team together' 15
- 'She's 150% county government' 18
- FAQ: DRIVE Alabama.....21
- Extreme makeover ' cited for excellence.....25
- Lee Co. sold voters on 1-cent sales tax28
- Tax simplification for businesses gets underway30
- PLAN 2016.....31
- Property insurance start-up ahead of schedule32
- Brothers in Service.....34

point of view...

- President's Perspective4
Collaboration, communication are key for local leaders
- The County Line..... 6
All is not well
- In Legal Terms8
New guidance from Alabama Ethics Commission

in every issue...

- A voice from Alabama's 67 counties.....39
*Kristi Stamnes, Covington County E 9-1-1
President, Association of 9-1-1 Districts of Alabama*

who we are...

- 2015-16 ACCA Board of Directors42
- ACCA Staff.....42



President's PERSPECTIVE



Hon. Ray Long
President

**Collaboration,
communication
are key for
local leaders
this year**

**On any issue,
counties are stronger
when speaking with
'One Voice'**

Editor's Note: This is the prepared text of the inaugural address that Ray Long delivered at the 2015 ACCA Annual Convention.

As we begin another year in county government, I want to thank you for allowing me to be your President. As we start a new year, we will focus on continuing the programs that are already in place and working hard – together – to carry forward the standard that has already been established by this Association.

For example, just this past year, we started our own unique leadership program we call PLAN 2016. Its purpose is to take commissioners that were re-elected to a second term and try to get them more involved in our association and prepared for being leaders inside our organization and in their communities back home.

We need more people to step up to the plate and take a leadership role in the Association. Every year we lose some of our leaders through retirement, health issues, and yes, some are defeated in their re-election bids. As you look around this room tonight, I want you to think about the turnover rate among commissioners.

Today, more than 70 percent of all commissioners in Alabama took office for the first time in the last 10 years. This means that less than 30 percent of our commissioners have at least 10 years of experience. This is the very reason why we need more involvement from each of you, because those of us in this room today ARE the leaders of our Association – even if we don't realize it. We have 18 people who are actively participating in PLAN 2016. Thank you for taking the challenge.

We are also working on our plans for the future of this very important – and rapidly-growing – organization. We have a committee called Team 2021 that is helping us chart goals for the next 5 years. If you have any ideas, goals or activities you would like us to include in our strategic planning, please let one of these committee members know.

In the coming year, we will begin our new property insurance program. This program will go along with our present Liability Fund and will be a complement to our Workers' Compensation Fund as well. Presently we have 57 of our 67 counties participating in our Liability Fund. These funds are set up specifically for counties. When we all work together and support these programs, it makes them stronger. The counties can only benefit from being on this team. I don't know of any negatives or any reasons why all 67 counties should not be participants. Our goal this year is to see every county join our Liability and Property Funds.

As we get ready to start another year, we face many challenges. The prison reform laws passed by the legislature this year didn't solve all the problems relating to our prisons and our county jails. We are very concerned that the new laws may simply shift more of the burden to us, the counties. I know many of you worked very hard on this legislation, including the sheriffs who stood side-by-side with us, to help ensure that counties didn't take all the hits, and I thank you for that. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm here to tell you tonight, it's not our place to solve the prison problem in Alabama. The current challenges in the state

prison system have been created over decades of neglect and inattention as our state has consistently kicked the can down the road without finding real solutions.

Clearly this new law contains positive programs, but we are uncertain how the changes will impact counties. Tonight I want to challenge you to be ready when the 2016 legislative session begins. More prison reform is on the way – as we have heard during our convention – so it is time for us to re-commit ourselves to being outspoken advocates for county government so that the buck is not passed down to us.

I don't need to tell you tonight about the importance of increased funding for maintaining and improving county roads and

“
***We need to improve our communication
 with our city colleagues so that both of our
 voices can be stronger.***
 ”

bridges. You live with the problems every day, just as we do in Morgan County. I doubt if there is a county represented in this room tonight that isn't struggling to keep their roads up to standards. The revenue we receive today has not been increased since 1993 – yet all our costs have sky-rocketed since then. We can't

buy a house for the same that we could in 1993. We can't even buy a gallon of milk for the same thing we paid in 1993. Why should anyone

think we can provide a safe transportation system in 2015 by using 1993 revenue? A bill was introduced during the special session to address this issue, and during this convention we've talked

about ways to promote our needs back home.

In the next few months I want to challenge each of you to contact your legislators, put them in the car, and show them the conditions of your county roads. Show them, first-hand, the needs in your county.

>>> **MORE** page 11

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF ACCA'S 2015-16 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

DISTRICT 1	Hon. David Black	Colbert County	DISTRICT 9	Hon. Trey Taylor	Elmore County
DISTRICT 2	Hon. Ben Harrison	Limestone County	DISTRICT 10	Hon. Tucker Dorsey	Baldwin County
DISTRICT 3	Hon. Marcie Foster	Cherokee County	DISTRICT 11	Hon. Doug Siquefield	Houston County
DISTRICT 4	Hon. Don Stisher	Morgan County	DISTRICT 12	Hon. Connie Hudson	Mobile County
DISTRICT 5	Hon. David Carrington	Jefferson County			
DISTRICT 6	Hon. James Kelly	Bibb County			
DISTRICT 7	Hon. Mike Vest	Shelby County			
DISTRICT 8	Hon. Paul Perrett	Coosa County			





Sonny Brasfield
Executive Director

Sonny Brasfield

**All is
not well**

**More state services
will likely be lost as
agencies adjust to
2015-16 budget**

The temptation is to take a deep breath and assume that all is well.

All is not well.

With the close of the 2014-15 state fiscal year looming like a sledge hammer, the Alabama Legislature enacted a patchwork General Fund budget that included a net increase in revenue to a few agencies (most notably Medicaid), level funding for some, and significant cuts to others. As is usually the case, the most troubling issues have begun to surface only AFTER the budget was passed and signed by Gov. Robert Bentley.

Any Monday-Morning-Quarterbacking of the details that allowed for the passage of a budget is completely unfair. The significant challenges faced by those with the task of filling an ever-widening hole in the state's General Fund were doubled by the growing number of legislators who simply oppose any revenue measures – regardless of the content, context or justification.

Over the course of three legislative sessions, Senate Budget Chair Arthur Orr and his House colleague Steve Clouse were blocked – seemingly – at every turn. The only significant new money injected into the state coffers came after a six-month-long lobbying effort that produced the passage of a 25-cent per pack cigarette tax increase – by a whopping TWO-vote margin on the House floor.

Somewhere in the neighborhood of a dozen other tax proposals were shot down in the light of day, while another 20 or so additional ideas were floated in the back rooms but did not garner enough support to even be introduced.

Without any significant new revenue to use, the budget dilemma

could have been solved – some believed – by putting all the state's revenue, both education and general fund, into one budget pot for the Legislature to allocate. Although both Orr and Clouse would have probably accepted that approach as a stop-gap measure, such a move would have produced a host of long-term difficulties that would have probably been worse than this year's budget shortfall.

In addition, there was never any real chance that the education community would give up its position of strength that comes with having a separate budget and earmarked revenue. And no one, when being honest, would have expected any less.

So, like a couple of tired lawnmower mechanics on a hot August afternoon, Orr and Clouse began trying to build an engine that would crank – and run for 12 months – from a big stack of old, discarded, rusted and unworkable parts. In the end, a budget was passed and signed into law.

But, perhaps, the problems are just beginning.

Here's what I mean. In the midst of the final budget negotiations, there was a last-minute "discovery" that Medicaid actually needed \$16 million in additional revenue. When this came to light – on the last day of the second special session – the extra \$16 million was snatched from a host of other agencies producing a basket full of new troubles.

It started with the announcement of the closure of several part-time drivers' license instruction offices in rural Alabama. The decision made by the head of Alabama's Law Enforcement Agency was a direct reaction to a \$10 million cut in his

agency's budget. The outcry was loud and came from as far away as our nation's Capital and beyond. Work is underway to reopen the offices on a more limited basis.

A handful of State Parks are also set to close as of the time of this writing. And one can imagine the public response to this simple – and small – cost-cutting measure.

Our partners at the Alabama Emergency Management Agency received an unexpected cut in state funding of about 20 percent. About half of this reduction will be passed down to the county emergency management programs, which must be ready to respond to the public and pick up the pieces after the next horrible event.

At the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, the state's recycling fund was raided and the resulting money is being diverted away from local programs and used

to shore up the General Fund budget in other areas.

As we march further into the fiscal year, expect more "news" to unfold.

“
From a county perspective, the most troubling trend in all these announcements is that some of the cuts are – essentially – being passed down to the local level.
”

From a county perspective, the most troubling trend in all these announcements is that some of the cuts are – essentially – being passed down to the local level. And that's why we started this discussion by saying, "All is not well."

For example, bills were introduced in the special session to require counties to pick up expenses rightfully paid today by the state, and to prohibit the state troopers from investigating automobile accidents on county-maintained roads. Both bills died, but the simple introduction of measures like this signals a change in outlook that is troubling, at best.

I don't remember who gave me this advice, but years ago I was told that the most difficult part of advocating for local government is that counties are the end of the line. Projects that are passed down to the counties – without the money to fund them – either simply go away or are rescued only by the county commission being forced to close down some other program.

The Legislature will return to work in February and another budget disaster will be on the horizon.

All is not well. ■

ACCA SALUTES COMMISSIONERS HONORED IN 2015 FOR THEIR LONG AND FAITHFUL SERVICE TO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

28 Years

HON. FRED ARMSTEAD, MARENGO COUNTY

24 Years

HON. DAVID STOKES, ESCAMBIA COUNTY

HON. LATHONIA WRIGHT, RANDOLPH COUNTY

20 Years

HON. FRANK STRAUGHN, BARBOUR COUNTY

HON. J.D. HESS, CALHOUN COUNTY

HON. LARRY WHITE, ESCAMBIA COUNTY

HON. JOHN ANDREW HARRIS, LEE COUNTY

HON. ROBERT BERRY, MACON COUNTY

HON. J. ALLEN BAILEY JR., WASHINGTON COUNTY

HON. ROGER HAYES, WINSTON COUNTY

16 Years

HON. UNZELL KELLEY, COOSA COUNTY

HON. TODD ADAMS, COOSA COUNTY

HON. ROBERT HARRIS, LOWNDES COUNTY

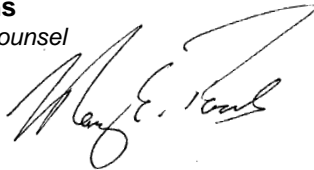
HON. JEFF CLARK, MORGAN COUNTY

HON. THOMAS T.C. COLEY, TALLAPOOSA COUNTY





Mary E. Pons
Association Counsel



New guidance from Alabama Ethics Commission Addresses issue of county officials & employees serving on other boards or commissions

In addition to the direct services provided to county citizens as part of county government, it is common for county officials and employees to serve on other boards and commissions within the community, whether created by the commission or through private means. Ala. Code § 11-3-2 specifically authorizes such service for county commissioners, providing that “any member of a county commission may be appointed to and may serve on public boards, commissions, and authorities within this state unless otherwise prohibited by law.” This section does provide that only one member can serve on any particular board at one time, although all commissioners can serve on different boards simultaneously.

This service is very important to the county as a whole by ensuring that county government is well represented in the community and is an active participant in programs across the county that impact the lives of its citizens. That said, there have been questions raised over the years concerning whether there is or may be a conflict of interest for county officials and employees when serving on these community boards. Frankly, past opinions issued by the Ethics Commission have been a little confusing and have left many uncomfortable with serving. This is unfortunate since persons within county government should be a part of any discussions or programs aimed at moving the county forward and providing assistance to citizens in need.

In an effort to clear up some of the confusion about service on public boards and commissions, a new Ethics Opinion released on October 7, 2015, takes a fresh approach to

this issue and attempts to address many of the issues that have created uncertainty about when service is acceptable and what, if any, issues might warrant abstention from deliberation and voting. See, Ethics Opinion # 2015-15. Following an analysis of relevant sections of the Ethics Law defining conflict of interest and business, the Ethics Commission holds generally that officials and employees serving “may vote and participate in issues coming before the [board] that directly affect the public entity that employs them or on which they serve, when the benefit is a public benefit and accrues to that public entity and, therefore, to the public which that entity serves.”

The Ethics Commission does caution that when a matter presents an opportunity for the members or their families or businesses to benefit personally or be affected uniquely or financially, they may not participate and vote on those items. This important caveat speaks to abstention on particular issues, *not* to prohibiting any service on the community board or commission.

Ala. Code § 36-25-1(8) defines a conflict of interest as, “A conflict on the part of a public official or public employee between his or her private interests and the official responsibilities inherent in an office of public trust.” Under this definition, a conflict involves any action or inaction by a public official or employee which materially affects his or her financial interest or those of a family member or business with which the person is associated in a manner different from other members of a class to which the official or employee belongs. Important in determining whether

a conflict exists is the definition of a “business with which the person is associated”. Ala. Code § 36-25-1(1) defines business as “Any corporation, partnership, proprietorship, firm, enterprise, franchise, association, organization, self-employed individual, or any other legal entity”, and under Ala. Code § 36-25-1(2), a person is “associated with a business” if he or she or a family member hold more than five percent of the fair market value of the business.

Important to the rationale for the Ethics Commission’s holding in this opinion is its finding that the definition of “business with which a person is associated” is not intended to prohibit participation and voting on boards which have as their function assisting a governmental entity to better perform their public responsibilities or which exist for

those relying on governmental services even if some government services or entities benefit to the exclusion of others.

The Commission rightly points out that, “The key is that the recipient of the benefit, however applied, is the public.” This clearly is the reason for any member of the county commission or any member of its staff to serve on a board or commission that provides some service or function for the community. The “benefit” is not personal in nature, but for the public the official or employee serves every day. The Ethics Commission is very careful to distinguish between a public and personal benefit in this opinion – and cautions persons in this situation to carefully examine whether there is a personal benefit which would necessitate abstention.

There will be instances where an official or employee serving on a board has some private, personal interest that must be considered – just as in considering issues that come before the county commission. All commissioners and employees must keep careful watch for issues that may present a *personal* conflict, and when in doubt, contact the Ethics Commission for guidance or abstain. Of course, the ACCA Association Counsel is always available to talk through these issues as well. As this opinion points out in its discussion of these issues, service on these boards can be very beneficial to the community as a whole. Hopefully, the opinion also provides some guidance to county officials and employees that will make them more comfortable in accepting such service. ■

Congratulations to these commissioners who completed education programs in 2015

Alabama Local Government Training Institute

A Partnership of ACCA and Auburn University’s Center for Governmental Services

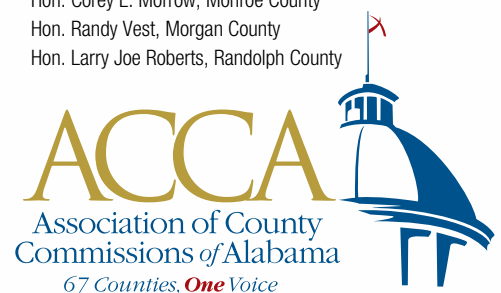
LEVEL I

Hon. Frances Person-Crews, Barbour County
 Hon. Lee Patterson, Calhoun County
 Hon. Joseph Parnell, Chilton County
 Hon. Lloyd S. Hutto, Clarke County
 Hon. Bill H. Taylor, Clarke County
 Hon. Terry W. Hendrix, Cleburne County
 Hon. Bertha Kelly, Coosa County
 Hon. Garry Marchman, Cullman County
 Hon. Kerry Watson, Cullman County
 Hon. Joe Acker, Fayette County
 Hon. Bryan Hatton, Geneva County
 Hon. Lester “Bop” Brown, Greene County
 Hon. Michael L. Williams, Greene County
 Hon. Jay W. Calhoun, Henry County
 Hon. Brandon Shoupe, Houston County
 Hon. Joe Hackworth, Lauderdale County
 Hon. Danny Pettus, Lauderdale County

Hon. Jason Spencer Black, Limestone County
 Hon. Stanley Hill, Limestone County
 Hon. Mark Yarbrough, Limestone County
 Hon. Roger Knight, Marion County
 Hon. David Kelley, Marshall County
 Hon. Jessie C. Swords, Marshall County
 Hon. Jerry L. Carl, Mobile County
 Hon. Andrew Hall, Montgomery County
 Hon. Bobby Bain, Pickens County
 Hon. Charles Drew Elmore, Pickens County
 Hon. Mike Vest, Shelby County
 Hon. Pat Ezell, Sumter County
 Hon. Archie Lee Hall, Jr., Sumter County
 Hon. Mark D. Platt, Washington County
 Hon. Joseph Green, Wilcox County
 Hon. Charles Edward Lawson, Wilcox County
 Hon. Marion McIntosh, Wilcox County

LEVEL II

Hon. Allin Whittle, Butler County
 Hon. Laura Morrow Cobb, Cleburne County
 Hon. Johnny Andrews, Conecuh County
 Hon. Paul Perrett, Coosa County
 Hon. Brandon Smith, Escambia County
 Hon. Allen Turner, Jr., Greene County
 Hon. Sheila Eckman, Lee County
 Hon. Calvin Martin, Marengo County
 Hon. Corey L. Morrow, Monroe County
 Hon. Randy Vest, Morgan County
 Hon. Larry Joe Roberts, Randolph County



PROTECT YOUR REVENUE. IT DEPENDS ON YOU.

Few local government contracts involve as much revenue and directly impact your budget like franchise fees. Underpaid franchise fees and non-compliant practices by utilities can seriously impact your local finances. Take the right steps to ensure that procedures are in place for enhanced compliance.

Take Action to Protect Your Revenue:

- Determine if franchise fees have been properly accounted for and paid
- Exercise the audit provisions contained within your franchise agreements
- Get an expert on your side

Contact RDS Today!

Yolanda Watkins-Bailey
334-272-9995
ywatkins@revds.com

Ashley Hancock
205-423-4178
ashancock@revds.com

www.revds.com

DON'T LET FRANCHISE FEE REVENUE GO MISSING

RDS
revenue discovery systems

Increase Compliance. Increase Revenue.



President's PERSPECTIVE



ACCA's newly elected leaders for 2015-16 are, from left, Vice President Steve McKinnon (Dale County), President-Elect Bill Stricklend (Marshall County), President Ray Long (Morgan County) and Minority Director Tony Cherry (Choctaw County).

>>> **MORE** Get to know Steve McKinnon, ACCA's new vice president, page 15

We cannot fail. We must secure additional funding for our roads and bridges this year.

We have two constitutional amendments that will be on the ballot for voter consideration next year. The ACCA worked very hard during the last session to get these amendments on the ballot. Sonny and his staff will continue to send you information on how these two amendments will improve county government. Please be ready to actively support these amendments, and let's get them passed next election.

The ACCA has a great working relationship with the Alabama Legislature. Now Sonny will be the first to tell you we don't get everything we want. But we do pretty well. We want to continue that relationship into the next session. I have many friends that serve in the

Legislature, just as most of you do. But as we begin to work side by side with other groups, like the Sheriffs' Association, the Association of Tax Officials, and our affiliate groups, we become stronger.

This year, I am going to reach out to the League of Municipalities and our friends in city government. Sure, from time to time we may have differences with our city friends, but when it comes time to defend the Alabama Trust Fund, for example, we have a common goal. We need



For his inaugural address as ACCA president, Morgan County Commission Chairman Ray Long, center, was joined by his four colleagues on the commission. From left, Randy Vest, District 2; Don Stisher, District 3; Long; Greg Abercrombie, District 4; and Jeff Clark, District 1.

to improve our communication with our city colleagues so that both of our voices can be stronger. You see, I really believe the old saying that all government is local. I really do believe that the real answers can be found at home, with local leaders. We must stick together and work out solutions to the problems we face

together.

This is the fourth year that we have had the slogan, “67 Counties, One Voice.” I really believe these words capture what our Association is all about. During the past year, we have seen the fruits of our labors and we’ve enjoyed a true partnership. But we still have some work to do.

Even inside our group we have more work to do. We still have county commissions that allow themselves to be split along party lines. Now, I realize there is nothing wrong with belonging to either of the political parties. When I ran for

my position as chairman of the Morgan County Commission, I had to sign up for one of the parties. I ran on the Republican ticket. My friends, when I sit down at a commission meeting, I sit down as chairman of the Morgan County Commission, not the Republican chairman. You see, there is no place for party politics in a commission

“
*If we are to
truly be 67
Counties,
ONE Voice,
it must
start inside
our county
commission
meetings.*
”

meeting, and there is no place for party politics in county government.

I’ve talked to some of you and you say “I can’t vote with the Democrats” or “I can’t vote with the Republicans.” My challenge to each of you during this coming year is to forget what party you belong to

when the commission meeting starts. Tonight, as I begin my year as your leader, I am asking you to put aside the party label. I understand that political parties are important at the state and national level. They are part of the “political” world in which we all live. But there is no place for party

politics during county commission meetings.

If we are to truly be 67 Counties, ONE Voice, it must start inside our county commission meetings. And I challenge you to join me in putting aside party issues and picking up county issues this year. ■

Webb & Eley
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



The attorneys and staff of Webb & Eley, P. C. support and appreciate all of the county commissioners and their staff.

P. O. Box 240909, Montgomery, AL 36124
(334) 262-1850 Website: www.webbeley.com
E-mail: contactfirm@webbeley.com



Procurement. It's everywhere.

The Statue of Liberty, New York, NY. Maintained by the National Parks Service.

During its 1984 restoration, scaffolding rising 240 feet was erected around the **Statue of Liberty**; just one of the products procurement professionals purchase every day.

Like the Statue of Liberty, **NIGP is a landmark**. Since 1944, the Institute has been providing groundbreaking professional development programs to government procurement professionals throughout the world. It's a legacy we are proud of.

Join us and discover the time-saving resources, collaborative peer-to-peer communities, and innovative best practices our members enjoy. **Visit nigp.org/membership or call.**





GET THE **CERTAINTY** YOU NEED
WHEN IT COMES TIME TO SELL
YOUR EQUIPMENT



STRAIGHT COMMISSIONS • NET GUARANTEES • ONSITE AUCTIONS • INTERNET AUCTIONS
ASSET MANAGEMENT • EQUIPMENT PREPARATION

www.jmwood.com



JMWOOD

AUCTION COMPANY, INC.

THE EQUIPMENT AUCTIONEERS



Call "The Equipment Auctioneers" to discuss your needs:

800-447-7085

334-264-3265

VP's Goal: 'All of us as a team together'

Dale County Commissioner Steve McKinnon, newly elected vice president of ACCA, comes into office as an enthusiastic supporter of "67 Counties, ONE Voice."

"I appreciate the people of this Association putting their faith in me," he said. "I will do everything I can to work hard and help this Association move to the next level."

He said he received encouragement from ACCA board members to seek these leadership responsibilities.

"I thought maybe I could help with the direction we're going," he said. "And I think we're going in a positive direction."

Following the usual officer rotation, he is in line to become ACCA president in 2017.

As McKinnon talks about ACCA's strengths that he would like to see grow, it is clear he has passion for teamwork among the 67 counties and increased commissioner impact on the legislative process.

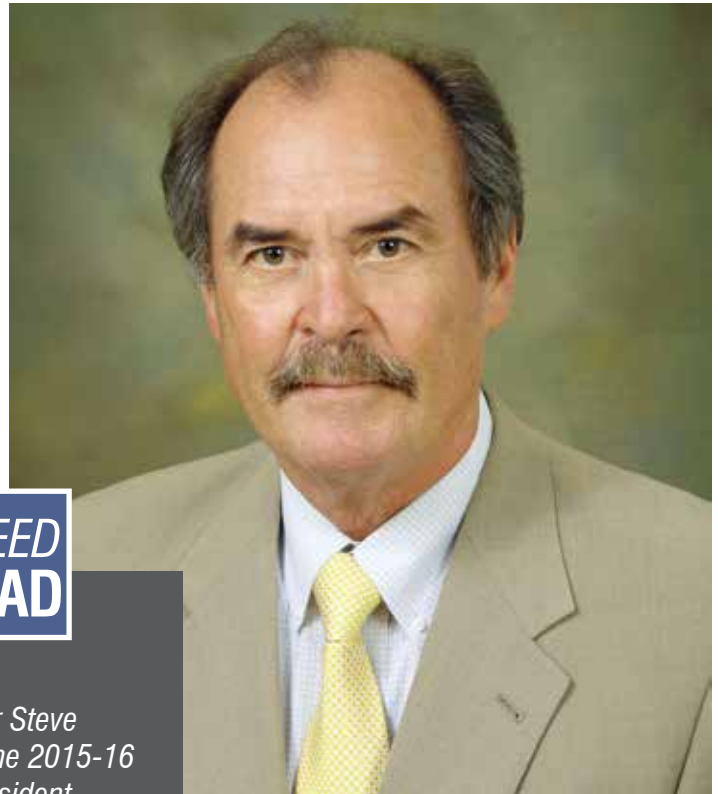
Each year, ACCA members gather in regional District Meetings to prepare for the upcoming legislative session. McKinnon said he wants to multiply the enthusiasm, engagement and unity generated by those meetings.

"We need 350 commissioners, 67 counties, 1 voice," he said, noting that any differences between counties should be "settled among ourselves, so when we get to the State House, we're of one accord."

Sure, the legislative process in Montgomery has its intricacies, but at the most basic level commissioners have more in common with legislators than local officials might realize. "Those people are elected by the same people who elected us," he said.

Many of McKinnon's priorities for his time in leadership run parallel to priorities put forward by all 67 counties to inform ACCA's direction for the future.

Led by a group called Team 2021, the Association is in the midst of strategic planning for the next five years. Among the priorities identified in preliminary analysis are:



SPEED READ

» Dale County Commissioner Steve McKinnon is the 2015-16 ACCA vice president.

» The 63-year-old businessman has been on his commission since 2009.

» He is interested in boosting commissioner engagement, especially at the State House.

» McKinnon said he is eager to hear from commissioners across the state. His cell is 334-301-1468 or email is smckinnon552@yahoo.com

Steve McKinnon

- More opportunities for member involvement;
- Expand the ACCA's research network;
- Advocacy and public relations training for ACCA members;
- Stronger peer-to-peer relationships with new commissioners;
- Continued growth of ACCA programs.

McKinnon, 63, received a gubernatorial appointment to the Dale County Commission in September 2009. He won election to a two-year term in 2010 and a full four-year term in 2012.

McKinnon has already completed the Level II/graduate education program for commissioners offered by the Alabama Local Government Training Institute.

He owns a pair of dry-cleaning & laundry businesses, with more than 40 years in the industry.

News You Can Use



McKinnon currently serves on the Alabama Dry-

cleaning Environmental Response Trust Advisory Board, and he also has leadership experience with the Daleville Area Chamber of Commerce, Southeast Regional Planning and Development Commission and the Dale County Solid Waste Authority.

Partisan politics do not belong in ACCA, McKinnon said. He is active in his political party at the state level, which helps make connections with other elected officials, but county issues transcend partisanship.

“I want us to all be united,” he said. “What’s good for Dale County is good for Marengo County.”

His home county is situated near the southeastern corner of Alabama in the Wiregrass region. On the commission, McKinnon represents District 2, which takes in the towns of Level Plains, Clayhatchee and Daleville. District 2 also includes much of Fort Rucker, known as the Home of Army Aviation.

He is on the board of the Friends of Fort Rucker, a civilian support organization that works year-round. McKinnon said this involvement has strengthened his understanding of how to be an effective advocate at the federal level.

He and his wife Ann live on “40 acres in the middle of nowhere,” he

says. The couple has three daughters and nine grandchildren. In his leisure time, you are most likely to find him outside, whether he is fishing or hunting quail, dove or deer.

McKinnon is an avid bass tournament fisherman, and anglers are notoriously tight-lipped about

their best fishing holes. But as he talks about how he envisions commissioners mentoring each other around legislative advocacy, it sounds like the veteran is more than ready to share what he knows about Montgomery. He said, “I believe it takes all of us as a team together.”

Alabama’s Source for Quality Products and Service Since 1978



TRUCKWORX

Truckworx is an Alabama based, family-owned company that has brought high-quality trucks and equipment to our area since 1978. As Alabama’s exclusive Kenworth truck dealer, we strive for excellence with the products we carry, the services we offer, and the people who are part of our team.

As a partner of the ACCA, Truckworx in Montgomery provides you with a convenient, cost-effective way to get the quality equipment you need.

With six full-service dealerships throughout Alabama, we can provide any warranty work or maintenance that your truck may need. We are an approved vendor for the ACCA’s Joint Bid Program for these high quality products.



2016 Pitts 55 Ton Lowboy Trailer



2016 Kenworth T800 Dump Truck with Stampede Body



For more information, contact Mike Henderson at Truckworx Kenworth
Office: (334)263-3101
Toll Free: (888)241-3101
Cell: (334)707-5588
E-mail: mikeh@truckworx.com



Count on the auction experts

Proven results for counties big and small

Your time is valuable. So is your equipment. Get the most from both with the experts at Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers. Every year we help tens of thousands of people market and sell equipment for its true global market value.

- ▶ Time-saving, all-inclusive service
- ▶ 50+ years of experience selling equipment
- ▶ Flexible consignment options
- ▶ Any amount of equipment accepted
- ▶ Competitive bidding, on site and online
- ▶ Sale and payment dates you can count on

Sell your equipment with the experts. Contact your local rep:

Southern Alabama – **Fred White** | 334.207.4294

Northern Alabama – **Jody Lenderman** | 205.837.9033

Learn more at rbauction.com/sell

‘She’s 150% county government’

ACCA presented its highest honor, the Outstanding Contribution to County Government Award, to Association Counsel Mary Pons this year, recognizing 20 years of dedicated service to “67 Counties, One Voice.”

“She is an anchor. She is a trusted partner for all of us, an insightful expert who has no equal,” said ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield at the awards ceremony. “For twenty years the leadership of our organization has depended on her advice, knowledge and the reassurance that when she offered you her opinion you could follow it without worry.”

As in-house attorney for two decades, Pons has made a significant impact on every facet of the Association’s service to Alabama counties. Drafting legislation is a specialty, as is drafting amendments to legislation that would otherwise affect counties negatively.

It might be tempting to stack up all the laws from throughout the Code of Alabama that carry her fingerprints, Brasfield said. The stack would be immense, but it would not come near to representing her importance to the Association.

“It’s the fact that when the chips are down, everyone in county government reaches for the phone with the thought, ‘Let’s see what Mary thinks,’” he said. “That’s the best compliment anyone can be paid.”

County commissioners and employees throughout the state pay that compliment often, which means much of Pons’ time goes to phone calls and emails and texts advising them how the law applies to their particular situations.

Members seem to know her as not just the Association’s attorney, but as “their attorney” because of



Association Counsel Mary Pons accepts the 2015 Outstanding Contribution to County Government Award from Commissioner Merceria Ludgood, 2014-2015 ACCA President.

both her help with urgent needs and, just as importantly, her commitment to training and education programs that equip them to meet daily challenges.

Her methods for protecting and enhancing county government also extend to countless other duties, from lobbying the Legislature to overseeing a multi-million dollar cooperative purchasing program.

“I can truly say that each and every person who has worked with Mary Pons for the last 20 years has absolutely no idea what she has really done for them and their county,” Brasfield said. “She’s 150 percent county government.” ■



ROLL WITH PITTMAN TRACTOR

Atlas Copco Dynapac rollers are designed to make your job as fast, simple and profitable as possible. Whether you are compacting soil, base materials or asphalt, Pittman Tractor has a model to get the job done.



Atlas Copco

Sustainable Productivity



PITTMAN TRACTOR COMPANY, INC.
9652 Milton Jones Road • Daphne, AL 36526

Phone: (251) 621-3555
Fax: (251) 621-5626
Website: Pittmantractor.com

Midland Road Widener now available + Serving Alabama and the Gulf Coast since 1988



PITTMAN TRACTOR COMPANY, INC.

9652 Milton Jones Road • Daphne, AL 36526 • (251) 621-3555 • PittmanTractor.com



THE BEST WAY TO BUY AND SELL USED EQUIPMENT. **PERIOD.**

IronPlanet is the leading online marketplace for used heavy equipment and an innovative participant in the multi-billion dollar heavy equipment auction market. Since 2000, IronPlanet has sold over \$4 billion of used equipment online and has built a database of more than 1.3 million registered users worldwide. IronPlanet connects buyers and sellers of used equipment with its exclusive IronClad Assurance® buyer protection program and family of sites.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE

NORTHERN ALABAMA

Bob Winnette

bwinnette@ironplanet.com | 256-683-0795

SOUTHERN ALABAMA

Philip Parker

pparker@ironplanet.com | 251-421-2209

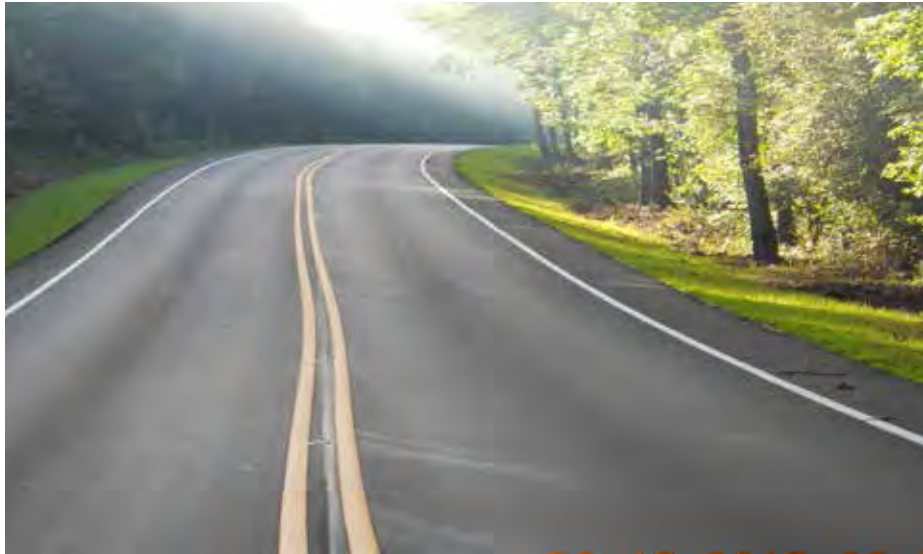
FAMILY OF BRANDS



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.IRONPLANET.COM

drive

DEVELOPING A ROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE VISION FOR EVERYONE IN ALABAMA



Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ: DRIVE Alabama

What is DRIVE Alabama?

The DRIVE Alabama campaign is focused on Developing a **Road & Infrastructure Vision for Everyone in Alabama.**

DRIVE Alabama is a coalition of county commissioners, community leaders, and citizens led by

county engineers who want to bring more attention to Alabama's growing infrastructure needs. Currently, 64 of Alabama's 67 counties are actively involved in the campaign.

The multi-faceted communication campaign is designed to highlight the positive impacts of investing in Alabama's infrastructure in hopes of building support for a long-term, sustainable plan for local roads and bridges.

The benefits of such investments are best demonstrated by the Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (ATRIP) – Gov. Robert Bentley's plan to invest more than \$1 billion to address critical transportation needs at the local level.

As a result of ATRIP, many counties are completing 15-20 years' worth of road and bridge projects in just 3 to 4 years – but the program was temporary. While the 2012 initiative had a monumental impact statewide, many communities are still left with roads and bridges in desperate need of maintenance and upgrades, but without the funding from ATRIP.

Why is DRIVE Alabama important?

ATRIP's major investment in local roads and bridges is making a difference in people's daily lives all over the state. From making roads safer for children traveling on school buses, to cutting costly detour routes that extend daily commutes – local infrastructure improvements play a critical role in all Alabamians' quality of life. But as a one-time program, the positive momentum from ATRIP will end soon. DRIVE Alabama is a grassroots effort to develop an infrastructure vision to make sure the state is prepared to meet its 21st century mobility needs.

BUTLER | SNOW

Public Finance, Tax Incentives and Credit Markets Group

SALUTES THE ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONS OF ALABAMA



PUBLIC FINANCE, TAX INCENTIVES AND CREDIT MARKETS GROUP
AUSTIN A. AVERITT, CAITLYN T. SMITH, E. ALSTON RAY, DAVID R. KINMAN

Public Finance Legal Services to State and Local Governments

- Infrastructure
- Education
- Housing
- Industrial Development
- Economic Development Incentives
- Structured and Pool Financings
- Rate Swaps and Derivatives
- Arbitrage Rebate
- Utilities
- Privatization

ONE FEDERAL PLACE
Suite 1000, 1819 Fifth Ave. North, Birmingham, AL 35203
Tel: 205.458.9400 • Fax: 205.458.9500

butlersnow.com

LAW ELEVATED

In compliance with Alabama State Bar requirements, no representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.



**Allow Deanco Auction to Put Our
Years of Experience to Work for
YOUR Benefit !!**

**Contact Deanco Auction to Professionally
Handle All of Your Auction Needs. Our personnel
have over 90 years of combined auction
experience to provide the service you need.**



2015 Deanco Auction Calendar

15th Annual Springtime Contractors' Equipment & Truck Auction

Wednesday, March 25th thru Friday, March 27th

HUGE 2-Day Contractors' Equipment & Truck Auction

Wednesday, May 27th & Thursday, May 28th

HUGE 2-Day Contractors' Equipment & Truck Auction

Wednesday, July 15th & Thursday, July 16th

HUGE 2-Day Contractors' Equipment & Truck Auction

Wednesday, September 16th & Thursday, Sept. 17th

HUGE 2-Day Contractors' Equipment & Truck Auction

Wednesday, November 18th & Thursday, Nov. 19th

**We Specialize in the
auctioning of:**

Governmental Surplus

Construction Equipment

All Types of Heavy-duty Trucks

Specialty Trucks - Trailers

Logging Equipment

Farm Tractors - Row Crop Equipment

Aircraft - Watercraft - Real Estate

Auctioneers: Donnie W. Dean, MS Lic. 733, AL Lic. 907;
Wes Dean, AL Lic. 5219; MS Gallery Lic. 835F

Deanco Auction & Real Estate

Phone: 334-677-3192

Fax: 334-671-0149 soldal@deancoauction.com
3664 S Oates St
Dothan, AL 36301

Deanco Auction Co. of MS

Phone: 601-656-9768

Fax: 601-656-0192 sold@deancoauction.com
1042 Holland Ave PO Box 1248
Philadelphia, MS 39350



www.deancoauction.com

News You Can Use



“Like” on Facebook
DRIVE ALABAMA



“Follow” on Instagram
DRIVEALABAMA



“Follow” on Twitter
@DRIVEALABAMA

Where is DRIVE Alabama focused?

The “E” in DRIVE stands for EVERYONE. This campaign is focused on infrastructure improvements for all 67 of Alabama’s counties. The secure economic growth that communities strive for will require stakeholders – rural and urban – to work together to ensure every county has the necessary infrastructure to support any opportunities that may come its way.

When will the DRIVE Alabama campaign begin?

DRIVE Alabama is already at work, producing a custom fact sheet for each county featuring facts, figures and photos to illustrate ATRIP’s impact and outline what’s next for local roads and bridges. Some counties have already begun releasing their fact sheets to news media.

The campaign is also spreading the word through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. A website is expected to launch in mid-November. One of the biggest campaign

elements is scheduled for January, when legislators will be invited on the DRIVE Alabama County Road Tour to see the state of local roads and bridges first-hand.

How can I help?

DRIVE Alabama needs your help collecting testimonials, examples and news clippings that show the importance of improving local infrastructure and explain your county’s long-term needs. **Please send your photos** – the good, the bad and the ugly – along with news links **and other items to Terri Sharpley Reynolds at treynolds@alabamacounties.org**.

You can also support DRIVE Alabama through the social media listed above.

One thing is clear: The DRIVE Alabama campaign is strengthened each time county commissioners and county employees help a friend learn more about long-term infrastructure needs in their county. ■



VISIT ANY OF OUR 3
JCB OF ALABAMA LOCATIONS
FOR A DEMO TODAY!

A DIVISION OF SOUTHLAND MACHINERY

AUTOMATE – because work can never be too easy.

Standard on all 3CX Super and 4CX backhoe loaders, JCB’s unique AUTOMATE system allows for the ultimate operator experience by making the JCB backhoe loader easier to operate, more productive and more efficient than any other backhoe on the market.

3CX-14 SUPER THE AUTOMATE CHECKLIST



AUTOCHECK

Automatically carries out all routine engine checks



AUTODRIVE

Provides cruise control-type characteristics when desired



AUTO THROTTLE

Automatically returns engine speed to pre-set hand throttle position



AUTO IDLE

Automatically reduces engine speed when the machine isn’t in use for ultimate fuel efficiency

8920 Weaver Avenue, Leeds, AL 35094
791 Anderson Road, Montgomery, AL 36110
30 Plunkett Avenue, Anniston, AL 36201
(888) 791-3173
www.jcbofalabama.com



WILMER & LEE

A Professional Association

Attorneys at Law

Our attorneys have been advising County Commissions for over thirty-five years on all matters including competitive bid issues, public works issues, open meetings issues, employment matters, zoning matters, and representing commissions in litigation in both state and federal court.

Please contact

Mike Cole, Fred Fohrell,
Robert Lockwood or Mark Maclin
at (256) 232-2010.

No representation is made that the quality of the legal services to be performed is greater than the quality of legal services performed by other lawyers.

‘Extreme makeover’ cited for excellence

For the second year in a row, the Chilton County Commission took home ACCA’s Excellence in County Government Award in the category for counties with populations less than 50,000.

The commission, which called the project “Extreme Makeover – The Chilton County Airport,” was honored in 2015 for work to upgrade an important community asset that had long been in decline.

The facility, key for economic development, had gone 25 years without an operating license because of numerous safety issues, ranging from obstructions in the flight path to a deteriorated runway surface.



These Chilton County Commissioners accepted the county’s award for Excellence in County Government from ACCA’s 2014-15 President Merceria Ludgood, second from left. Standing, from left, Heedy Hayes, Shannon Welch, Ludgood, Allen Caton, Joseph Parnell and Bobby Agee.

JMR+H
Architecture, PC

445 Dexter Avenue
Suite 5050
Montgomery, AL 36104
t.334.420.5672
f.334.420.5692

www.jmrha.com



“This project of the Chilton County Commission is a great example of what can happen when local leaders work together for the common good,” ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield said. “Chilton County officials collaborated with leaders at the city, state, and federal levels to overcome these obstacles, and the result is a long-term economic development boost for the community.”

The award recognizes innovative and effective programs initiated or completed between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, and it is designed to recognize programs implemented by the commission itself and not its agencies or boards.

The commission, in conjunction with the airport authority, initiated the makeover, a project that required moving the county fair from its traditional site to a new Agricultural Exposition Center & County Fairgrounds.

The county’s only aviation facility had been on an “endangered” list for years and the makeover has been a multi-year project, helped along by a federal grant.

Licensure for the facility was achieved in 2012, and several important milestones were completed in 2014:

- Resurfaced runway and standard safety markings and signage were put in place;
- Installed runway lighting, the first LED system in Alabama

that is also projected to reduce maintenance needs and operational expenses;

- Eliminated obstructions in the approach path by acquiring additional property.

The commission, motivated by the goal of “investing in Chilton County today for a better Chilton County tomorrow,” has also made strategic decisions to enhance the airport for years to come.

The commission has committed funding over the next 12 years for building a new 10-bay hangar, which will help the airport become financially self-sustaining.

A sitting county commissioner has also been appointed to the airport authority to improve coordination and communication. ■

Congratulations to county staff members who completed these education programs in 2015

Certified Revenue Examiner, Alabama Local Tax Institute of Standards and Training

Heather Gwynn, Baldwin County
Loren B. Lucas, Baldwin County
Gerald Osburn, Jefferson County
Paula Mitchell, Jefferson County

County Government Education Institute

Certified County Administrator

Connie Powell, Chilton County
Jessica Hare, Choctaw County
Rod Morgan, Coffee County
Kathy Polk, Colbert County
Brenda Bryant, Lauderdale County

Certificate in County Administration

Raye Ann Calton, Barbour County
Zac Marsh, Blount County
Jennifer Yates, Calhoun County
Kim Brown, Cleburne County

Patti Culver, Coffee County
April Bearden, Colbert County
Stephanie Brown, Conecuh County
Heather Frost Conn, Cullman County
Debra DeLoney, Dale County
Shannon Atkins, Elmore County
Monica Holloway, Lee County
Douglas Hathcock, Mobile County
Alisha Rowland, Mobile County
Tonya Mitchell, Montgomery County
Susie Washburn, St Clair County
Rachel Bowling, St Clair County
Cheryl Ganey, Walker County

Certificate in County Engineering Administration

Charles King, Elmore County
Trent Dykes, Lee County
Tyler Martin, Mobile County
Peter Olivero, Mobile County

Certificate in Emergency Communication Administration

Terra Scott, Chilton County
Kristi Stamnes, Covington County
Howard Summerford, Jefferson County
Michael Lee, Jefferson County

Basic Level Certificate

Deanna Broadhead, Baldwin County
Matthew Wade, Calhoun County Sheriff’s Office
Linda Varner, Clay County
Sharon Hines, Coffee County
Tracy Lawson, Covington County



Successful plans take partnership.

We partner with you to connect the dots between your retirement plan participants and our 300+ field reps, proprietary tools and our tailored approach to education. Every step of the way.



To find out more about how we put participants first, contact:

- 📞 Martha Sutton 256-509-1389
Elaine Graham 205-249-8423
Jeremy White 334-689-0947
Keith McGraw 251-263-2857
- 💻 nrsforu.com



Nationwide®



Nationwide, through its affiliated retirement plan service and product providers, has endorsement relationships with the National Association of Counties and the International Association of Fire Fighters-Financial Corporation. More information about the endorsement relationships may be found online at www.nrsforu.com. Nationwide, its agents and representatives, and its employees are prohibited by law and do not offer investment, legal or tax advice. Please consult with your tax or legal advisor before making any decisions about plan matters. Retirement Specialists are registered representatives of Nationwide Investment Services Corporation, member FINRA. Nationwide and the Nationwide N and Eagle are service marks of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company. © 2015 Nationwide

NRM-10174AL-NX (05/15)

Lee Co. sold voters on 1-cent sales tax

The Lee County Commission was honored with ACCA's 2015 Excellence in County Government Award for a project that resulted in new funding for vital county services.

Some 60 percent of Lee County voters approved a 1-cent sales tax in a September 2014 referendum. Proceeds, estimated to reach \$1 million in the 2015 calendar year, are targeted for public safety – especially school resource officers – and recreation.

“Lee County Commissioners decided they wanted to make an impact in the lives of children and families with additional support for school safety and recreation,” ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield

said. “And they brought together an influential coalition, and it resulted in a strong show of support from voters for public services they value.”

The award recognizes innovative and effective programs initiated or completed between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, and it is designed to recognize programs implemented by the commission itself and not its agencies or boards. Lee County won in the category for counties with populations more than 50,000.

Two characteristics stand out about the Lee County Commission's successful effort to secure new revenue in an anti-tax environment: the cooperation and the creative cause.

The Lee County Legislative Delegation, which worked together to pass local legislation for the referendum, had the backing of the county commission, the sheriff and the Lee County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

Once the vote was set, the coalition of the commission, sheriff and advisory board expanded to include recreation organizations and some civic groups, all working to educate voters in town hall meetings and using an informational brochure.

As for the cause, the commission paired two high-visibility needs. The county had once budgeted more than \$200,000 a year for parks

VOLKERT

**Engineers, Planners, Environmental Scientists,
and Program Managers**



Volkert provides planning, design, construction engineering, environmental and program management services in more than twenty areas of specialization through offices in eleven states and the District of Columbia. These offices are supplemented by construction and right-of-way acquisition field offices throughout our geographic area.

Alabama Office Locations:
Mobile, Birmingham, Montgomery,
Decatur, Foley, and Tuscaloosa



www.volkert.com

News You Can Use

and recreation, but had eliminated this funding during the economic downturn. That left communities around the county with, at best, an unfinished park – or none at all.

At the same time, there was strong support for additional deputies, with special priority for increasing the number of school resource officers.

The sheriff's office had five officers for 14 schools, and national events sparked discussion about increasing this presence.

County officials are happy to report that the cooperation has already had a big impact on the cause. After collecting only six months' receipts from the new levy, Lee County had hired eight deputies and issued a request for proposals for planning and designing parks. ■



2014-15 President Merceria Ludgood, fourth from left, presents an Excellence in County Government Award to Lee County. On hand to accept the award were, from left, Patrick Harvill, Trent Dykes, Commissioner Robert Ham, Justin Hardee, Probate Judge Bill English, Sheriff Jay Jones, Commissioner John Andrew Harris, Commissioner Johnny Lawrence and Wendy Swann.



AUTHORIZED JOHN DEERE DEALER

NORTHPORT
(205) 339-0300
FAX (205) 333-0101
www.warriortractor.com

ATHENS
(256) 233-1914
BIRMINGHAM
(205) 988-4472
MONTGOMERY
(334) 277-7260
OXFORD
(256) 831-0921
MONROEVILLE
(251) 575-7111



Simplified Seller Use Tax Remittance

Tax simplification for businesses gets underway

Even without black-eyed peas and bowl games, October 1 can have a New Year's Day feel for county and state government in Alabama.

This year, the day marked the beginning of a new budget year – and the beginning of the Simplified Seller Use Tax Remittance Program, an innovative way to improve collections of a long-standing levy.

Implementation is in the hands of the Alabama Department of Revenue, which is encouraging retailers to apply. Two applications were approved in the first week, with others under review. The state expects to collect the new program's first revenue in late November.

"We appreciate the efforts of the Alabama Department of Revenue to launch this program quickly and smoothly," said ACCA Executive Director Sonny Brasfield. "Simplified Seller Use Tax Remittance is optional, so we are encouraged by the interest shown by retailers thus far."

Because of the unique nature of the innovative program, it is difficult

to forecast revenues, Brasfield said. Participation is limited to sellers without physical presence in Alabama that meet no other existing requirement to file or pay taxes here.

For years, Congress has considered various nationwide approaches to taxing online

sales, but has reached no consensus. Act 2015-448 (known as the "Amazon bill") was designed to work until there is action at the federal level.

State and local use taxes – which properly apply to many online retail purchases of tangible personal property – have been difficult to enforce. Consumers rarely remit these dollars, and sellers without a presence in the state have no obligation to do so.

This program uses a flat, 8 percent rate statewide, which eliminates the need to determine the exact city, county and state rates on each transaction.

Companies that opt in will collect and remit this simplified substitute use tax. And, in exchange, they will receive a discount to cover collection costs, some audit protection as well as advantages when a federal system is in place.

Net revenue from the program will be divided as follows: 50 percent to the state, 25 percent to counties and 25 percent to cities. Local government dollars will be divided according to population. ■

>>> **MORE** www.alabamacounties.org/blog/dornotice

Civil Engineering
Transportation Engineering
Land Surveying
Land Planning



GONZALEZ-STRENGTH & ASSOCIATES, INC.
Ensuring Excellence In Site Civil Engineering Since 1993

BUILD ON US



2176 PARKWAY LAKE DRIVE
BIRMINGHAM, AL 35244
PH: 205.942.2486
www.gonzalez-strength.com

**FINANCING FOR
COURTHOUSES, JAILS
ROADS & BRIDGES
& OTHER PROJECTS**

CALL US FOR
INFORMATION

**JOE JOLLY
& CO., INC.**

420 N. 20th St., Ste. 2350
BIRMINGHAM, ALA. 35203
(205) 252-2105
1-800-826-1378

SIPC FINRA

News You Can Use

Since January, members of the inaugural class of PLAN, the Practical Leadership Action Network, have been working together to strengthen their knowledge, skills and relationships that help them to be highly effective county commissioners at the local, state and national levels. First-term commissioners who win re-election in 2016 will be eligible for the next class.

Pictured, from left: Dean Calvert, Blount; Marcus Campbell, Sumter; Robert Ham, Lee; David Quarker, Escambia; Tommie Armistead, Sumter; Michael Thompson, Marengo; Allen Armstrong, Blount; Randy Vest, Morgan; Frederick Kennedy, Pickens; Bobby Everett, Winston; Douglas Sinquefield, Houston; Bobby Burch, Lawrence; and Tucker Dorsey, Baldwin.

(Not pictured: George Bowman, Jefferson; Charles "Chic" Gary, Dale; Joey Hargrove, Lawrence; Emmett Owen, Cleburne; and Carolyn Parker, Etowah.)

PLAN 2016: The Practical Leadership Action Network



Safety. Security. Service.

When tornadoes and severe weather threatens, SAFE-T-SHELTER® saferooms & storm shelters will help your family -- "weather any storm".

- Manufacturing and installing safe rooms and storm shelters since 1995
- Serving local communities within Alabama and across the nation
- A+ Better Business Bureau Accredited
- Licensed & Bonded General Contractor with the State of Alabama
- Possess Manufacturing, Installation, & Retail Licenses with Alabama
- Manufactured Housing Commission (AMHC)
- Portfolio of Products that Meet or Exceed FEMA 361 Guidelines



1-800-462-3648
www.safe-t-shelter.com

1 best in business award RECIPIENTS



Property Insurance Start-Up Ahead of Schedule

County officials have long called for the Association's self-funded insurance programs to provide coverage for county-owned property—and in less than a year, fund members will be able to fill “all” of their insurance needs through the county-owned program.

Though the Association's Workers' Compensation and Liability self-funded programs have flourished for decades, it took approval from the Alabama Legislature

to include property coverage. Sponsored by Rep. Richard Lindsey and Sen. Clyde Chambliss, himself a former county commissioner, the 2015 law expanded the ACCA Liability Self-Insurance Fund Inc. to include coverage of county buildings, automobiles, construction equipment and other property.

Coverage for counties that currently use the Meadowbrook-owned STAR property insurance company will begin on

Oct. 1, 2016, as STAR transitions out of the county-market in Alabama. All other members of the liability program will have the opportunity to be added shortly thereafter.

“It is an aggressive timetable, and the project is very complex. It's really comparable to starting a new company,” said Henry van Arcken, the ACCA's Director of Insurance Services. “But the members have called for this service for a long, long time and we're excited.”

According to van Arcken, the project has been made easier due to the Association's long-standing relationship with Meadowbrook and the significant resources available through County Reinsurance Limited (CRL)—a national company created by county-owned insurance pools, including the ACCA's funds.

“This transitional period is a real challenge for us,” said ACCA Executive Director

County Revenue Officers Association of Alabama AWARDS 2015



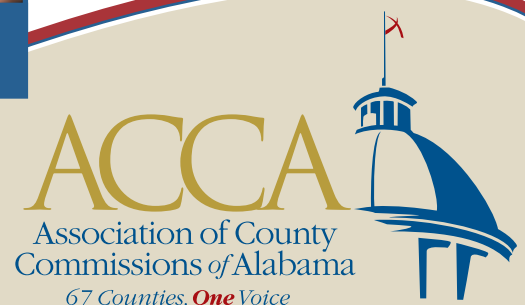
Mary Pons, ACCA
Outstanding Contribution to CROAA



Kirk Keith, Tuscaloosa County
County Revenue Officer of the Year



Hon. Mark Culver, Houston County
Chairman, Alabama Streamlined
Sales and Use Tax Commission
Honorary Membership



News You Can Use

Sonny Brasfield. “But the financial resources of the Association’s liability program make this new offering possible. We know it will be a roaring success.”

At this point, Association officials say there is no action required by counties. The Board of Trustees of the ACCA Liability Self-Insurance Fund will meet in November and then later in the spring of 2016 to finalize the legal details and to ensure the program is operational by October 2016.

van Arcken, who is heading the project, said

the new property coverage will be tailored for counties. Over the next several months, the Association will develop coverage documents, applications, pricing models and a methodology for appraising and inspecting county property.

Because the coverage will be provided through the liability program, only those counties and entities who are members of the fund will have access to the new property coverage. This new line of coverage is, van Arcken says, just another reason why the few remaining non-member

counties should join the Liability Fund.

“This will be comprehensive coverage and the service we provide will meet the

“
The financial resources of the Association’s liability program make this new offering possible. We know it will be a roaring success.
”

– Sonny Brasfield

high standards that have been set by the funds for the last three decades,” he concluded. “No one knows counties better than county officials and employees, so we’re confident that everyone will be very pleased.

Everyone has been talking about property coverage for a long time, and right now, the project is ahead of schedule.”

Anyone with questions is encouraged to contact ACCA Director of Insurance Services Henry van Arcken, 334-263-7594 or hvanarcken@alabamacounties.org.

2015 Safety Awards

Presented by the ACCA Liability Self-Insurance Fund Inc.

Category 1

First Place.....Coosa County
Second Place.....Bullock County
Third Place.....Marion County

Category 2

First Place.....Barbour County
Second Place.... Conecuh County
Third Place..... Cherokee County

Category 3

First Place..... DeKalb County
Second Place..... Calhoun County
Third Place..... Houston County





Shelby County Commissioner Dan Acker, left, is a mentor for his brother, Fayette County Commissioner Joe Acker.

Brothers in Service

2 Brothers + 2 Counties = 1 unique moment for a family long-steeped in public service

Newly elected county commissioners often face a steep learning curve as they step into the complex duties of county government.

Through ACCA, each newcomer elected in 2014 was paired with a seasoned commissioner for mentoring. However there's one commissioner who had a natural mentor in his older brother, a county commissioner with more than two decades of experience.

"If I have something I'm concerned about, he's usually the first one I call," said Fayette County Commissioner Joe Acker of Shelby County Commissioner Dan Acker.

The brothers are 19 months

apart in age, and have been banding together for years. "We had to stick together when we were kids, because our sister wanted to boss us around," recalls Joe with a laugh.

At first glance, it might seem

their two counties are much further apart than the 110-mile drive from one courthouse to the other.

Situated to the northwest, rural Fayette County has a declining population of just less than 17,000. Unemployment is more common than the state as a whole.

Whereas centrally located Shelby County has a surging population of more than 200,000 and the state's best unemployment rate. The state's major north-south artery, I-65, runs through a good portion of the county.

"I have more people in my district than he has in the whole county," observes Dan. "They just don't have the people or the money."

While Shelby County is thriving today, Dan said the balance sheet looked quite different when he was first elected in 1992. The county was at the "brink of bankruptcy," he says, with \$50 million in debt. Pressure on the commission to raise taxes was immense.

Joe said it has been helpful to hear how Shelby County navigated that situation, ultimately paying off the debt in less than 8 years.



PH&J Architects
INCORPORATED
ARCHITECTS & INTERIOR DESIGN
Founded 1957 • Pearson, Humphries, & Jones Architects

Office Buildings
Courthouses
Detention Facilities
Emergency Management

334-265-8781
www.phjarchitects.com
Professional Member


News You Can Use

In Fayette County, “although we don’t have a lot debt, we have a lot of things we need to do,” Joe said, such as replacing the county jail.

As Dan nears the end of his commission service in Shelby County, he can look back on accomplishments such as a regular budget surplus, 13 senior centers and improved roads. He says he’s a small part of the team, giving generous credit to his fellow commissioners and the county’s 600 employees.

Citing health concerns, Dan has said he will not seek re-election in 2016.

On the other hand, Joe, with a background in education and business, is at the beginning of his commission service. As he talks about his vision for Fayette County, it is clear that he is keenly aware of the challenges common to rural counties in Alabama – and he is ready to tackle them straight away.



As noteworthy as it is to have the Acker brothers serving simultaneously on county commissions, this would be no surprise to anyone familiar with their family history. They can claim two sheriffs in their family line – a grandfather and an uncle – plus an aunt was a tax collector. Not to mention a cousin who has been a mayor, and there’s also kinship to State Rep. Mike Hill, whose sister holds local office.

These brothers, once college roommates, seem unlikely to grow out of teasing each other any time soon.

Dan likes to say he is the better looking of the two, and they both give the other credit for a stubborn streak.

Could Dan have learned anything from hearing Joe’s new perspective on county government? “Not really, he’s too hard-headed,” said Joe.

But, according to Dan, his brother’s “got a mind of his own.” ■

a dash of the UNEXPECTED™
NORTH ALABAMA

Come Experience a Mountain Autumn in Alabama’s 16 Majestic Appalachian Counties!

Totally Free Awesome App for You
Search “North Alabama Road Trips” in the iPhone or Google Play app store

800.648.5381 / www.NorthAlabama.org

ALABAMA MOUNTAIN LAKES TOURIST ASSOCIATION

The advertisement features a collage of images: a woman in a green vest, a tiger, a boat on a lake, and a waterfall. A logo for 'ROAD TRIPS' is also visible.

The Halcyon Group at Morgan Stanley
is a proud supporter of the

Association of County Commissions of Alabama

Paul Winn
Senior Portfolio Manager
Senior Vice President
Financial Advisor

Lewis Gayden
Financial Planning Specialist
Financial Advisor

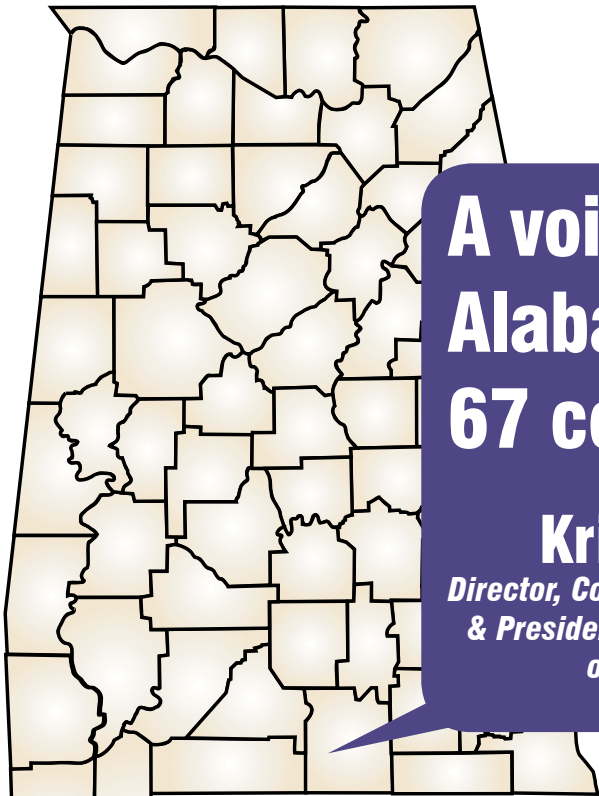
Travis Winn
Financial Planning Specialist
Financial Advisor

April Watson
Senior Registered Associate

Pam Kimble
Senior Registered Associate

Morgan Stanley
7515 Halcyon Summit Drive | Suite 300
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-270-2634
paul.winn@morganstanley.com

© 2015 Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC. Member SIPC. CRC1108472 02/15



A voice from Alabama's 67 counties...



Kristi Stamnes

*Director, Covington County E 9-1-1,
& President, Alabama Association
of 9-1-1 Districts (AAND)*

Q How long have you worked in county government?

A I have worked in county government for 17 years. I am proud to say that I have been with Covington County E 9-1-1 the entire time.

Q What is your biggest challenge as a 9-1-1 director?

A Staffing. In this field, it is hard to find people that will take shift work and be dedicated to the job. This is not a job that we can just show them the telephone or radio and expect them to answer calls. It takes months to train someone to be a call taker or dispatcher. We spend a lot of time and money to train and certify people to handle emergency calls.

Q What are some of the technological changes that are affecting 9-1-1 service in Alabama?

A Text to 9-1-1 is here and a lot of agencies in our state do not have the capabilities to receive this method for contacting 9-1-1. Equipment to upgrade 9-1-1 systems to handle this new technology is expensive, and many communication centers can not afford to replace existing systems.

Q What advances are ahead to improve the ability to locate 9-1-1 calls from mobile phones? What percentages of calls come in from landlines versus wireless in your district?

A Approximately 80 percent of our 9-1-1 calls come from cell phones. One of the biggest challenges that we face is trying to pinpoint the location of the wireless caller.

Not too long ago, a group – including the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), National Emergency Number Association (NENA), Association of Public-safety Communications Officials (APCO) and wireless carriers – came together to develop new standards to improve location accuracy for wireless calls. These

ALABAMA GUARDRAIL, INC.

Catherine Huff
President / Owner

Physical Address ~ 60701 US Hwy 231, Oneonta, AL 35121
Mailing Address ~ P O Box 126, Cleveland, AL 35049

Office Phone: (205) 625-3880
Fax: (205) 625-3879
E-mail: chuff@alguardrail.com

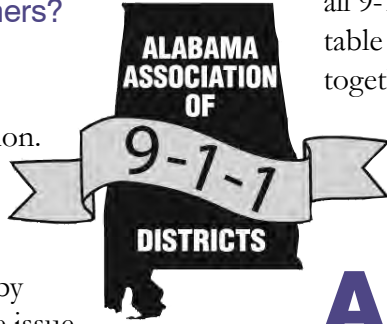


Specializing in the Installation of Highway Guardrails, Signs & Fencing

changes will hopefully, greatly improve response times in locating callers. It has been proven that seconds save lives, and these changes will help even more.

Q What is your best advice for establishing and maintaining good working relationships with county commissioners?

A Communication. A lot of problems can be fixed or corrected by discussing the issue and coming to a solution together. Another way of maintaining these relationships is to invite commissioners to attend your board meetings and/or training sessions.



Q What are the biggest benefits of AAND membership?

A Networking with other 9-1-1 directors throughout the state. We all face some of the same issues and we can help each other overcome the hurdles that affect us all. It is so important that all 9-1-1 agencies have a seat at the table to help ensure that we all come together as one voice.

Q What are AAND's priorities for 2015-16?

A To continue to work closely with the Alabama 9-1-1 Board to keep Alabama 9-1-1 in the forefront with emerging technology, such as with Next Generation 9-1-1. This project is an IP based network system. This system will drastically improve the delivery of 9-1-1

services in Alabama and will prepare Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) to take advantage of text, video, images, and other data that will improve response to emergency calls.

As of December 5, 2014, 100 percent of wireless 9-1-1 calls in Alabama were routed via this IP based system. The delivery of landlines on this system is still being worked on.

Q Auburn or Alabama or ___?

A Both, but I do tend to say Roll Tide more than War Eagle.

Q What is the home screen/ lock image on your cell phone right now?

A A picture of my daughter and me. ■

Liability Self-Insurance Fund, Inc.

Workers' Compensation Self-Insurers' Fund

Henry van Arcken
 Director of Insurance Services
 334-263-7594 | hvanarcken@alabamacounties.org

Sponsored by ACCA

ARCHITECTURE
 AIRPORTS
 ENGINEERING
 ENVIRONMENTAL
 GEOTECHNICAL
 HEALTH CARE
 INTERIOR DESIGN
 LANDSCAPE
 PLANNING
 SURVEYING
 TRANSPORTATION

GOODWYN | MILLS | CAWOOD

GMCNETWORK.COM
 OFFICES ACROSS THE SOUTHEAST

ACCA Board of Directors 2015-16



Hon. Ray Long
President | Morgan County



Hon. Bill Strickland
President-Elect | Marshall County



Hon. Steve McKinnon
Vice President | Dale County

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

- Hon. Rex Bursleson, District 1 Colbert County
- Hon. Roger Jones, District 2 Madison County
- Hon. Carolyn Parker, District 3 Etowah County
- Hon. Jeff Clark, District 4 Morgan County
- Hon. Sandra Little Brown, District 5 Jefferson County
- Hon. Drucilla Russ-Jackson, District 6 Sumter County
- Hon. Jackie Swinford, District 7 Talladega County
- Hon. Robert Ham, District 8 Lee County
- Hon. Stephanie Daniels Smoke, District 9 .. Elmore County
- Hon. Tyrone Moye, District 10 Clarke County
- Hon. David Money, District 11 Henry County
- Hon. Jerry Carl, District 12 Mobile County

PAST PRESIDENTS

- Hon. Merceria Ludgood Mobile County
- Hon. Debbie Wood Chambers County
- Hon. Ricky Harcrow DeKalb County
- Hon. Tim Choate Etowah County
- Hon. Ricky Burney Clay County
- Hon. Larry White Escambia County
- Hon. Joe Faulk Elmore County
- Hon. Rhondel Rhone Clarke County
- Hon. Mark Culver Houston County
- Hon. Roger Hayes Winston County
- Hon. Hardy McCollum Tuscaloosa County

MINORITY DIRECTOR

- Hon. Tony Cherry Choctaw County

AFFILIATE REPRESENTATIVES

- Steve Golsan, President, ACAA Autauga County
- Derek Brewer, President, ACEA Dale County

ACCA Staff

Sonny Brasfield Executive Director and Publisher sbrasfield@alabamacounties.org

POLICY

Mary E. Pons Association Counsel mpons@alabamacounties.org
 Chase Cobb Governmental Relations Specialist ccobb@alabamacounties.org
 Brandy Perry Executive Assistant bperry@alabamacounties.org

ADMINISTRATION

Lauren Westbrook Director of Finance lwestbrook@alabamacounties.org
 Henry van Arcken Director of Insurance Services hvanarcken@alabamacounties.org
 Marcia Collier Executive Assistant mcollier@alabamacounties.org
 Paulette D. Williams Receptionist pwilliams@alabamacounties.org

COMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATION

Donna Key Director of Events and Education dkey@alabamacounties.org
 Terri Sharpley Reynolds Director of Public Affairs treynolds@alabamacounties.org
 Jennifer Datcher Executive Assistant jdatcher@alabamacounties.org



QUALITY CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE

Your complete inmate health care solutions provider.

Nursing Care | Physicians | Dental | Pharmacy



OUR VISION

To become the recognized leader in correctional healthcare.

OUR MISSION

To seamlessly integrate cost effective affordable and quality correctional healthcare into the corrections environment.

www.QCHCweb.com

200 Narrows Parkway, Suite A | Birmingham, AL 35242

205.437.1512



Track-Type Tractor
Model D6K2 LGP

INVEST WITH CONFIDENCE



Cat® Truck
Model CT660



Backhoe
Model 430F



Motor Grader
Model 140M3

Save valuable budget dollars by investing in the industry's best machines

Manage risk and avoid the unpredictability of a low-bid scenario by investing in equipment that delivers reliable performance, long life and the industry's best total Life Cycle costs.

As a leading provider of solutions to the governmental market, you can count on Thompson Tractor to provide the industry's best machines with quality service and support to match.

If you're interested in saving time and money while increasing productivity, contact Thompson Tractor today.

Thompson 

800-547-0670

ALL MACHINES SHOWN ARE ON THE
2015 ALABAMA COUNTY BID ALLIANCE

www.thompsontractor.com