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In an earlier column, I mentioned a few of my experiences at the NMML Annual Conference. I wrote about the value of new ideas, and interacting with fellow public officials about common issues and solutions. I just got back from the National League of Cities Annual Conference in Los Angeles, and I wanted to similarly share some experiences from my trip there. As with my earlier column, I hope that it will inspire some of my fellow NMML members who haven’t participated before to consider attending a future conference. Next year the NLC conference is in San Antonio, practically our backyard! There were sessions on all sorts of topics, from affordable housing, to “big ideas for small cities”, to innovation on city streets. I will discuss two sessions I attended, the first “low-tech” but important, and the other “high-tech” and scary.

My first session was about “rethinking recycling.” It started with a discussion of good news, but ended with a lot of issues that were left unresolved. Recycling has been one of the public awareness success stories of the last half-century. Growing up in New York, the only thing we recycled were aluminum soda cans, because we got 5 cents back (when 5 cents meant something) for each can we returned to the grocery store. But in the last 30 years, recycling rate has tripled to a little over 25%, and many communities, including my hometown of Los Alamos, now recycle all plastics, paper, and glass, and we pick up brush and grass clippings every other week.

Recycling at one point was a money-maker, but now it is definitely a money sink. China became the recycling capital of the world when they realized that those shipping containers arriving in West Coast ports full of Chinese toys could return to China with our waste instead of empty, and could be recycled there more cheaply than domestically. The latest statistics say that the U.S. exports about 1/3 of its recyclables, and half of that goes to China. This results in 4000 shipping containers with recyclables arriving in China every day. However, China recently implemented strict new policies on how much contamination can be present in recyclables and this has led to a crisis, with some towns accumulating bales of recyclables hoping for an alternate market. But with China out of the market, revenues for recyclables are rock bottom, which is why recycling went from a money maker to a money sink.

Unfortunately, there isn’t a happy ending to this story. Some processors are trying to be more meticulous about their sorting, including some robotic sorters, but that increases the cost. There is some potential for other countries accepting our waste, but eventually, the expectation is that those countries will also have more strict standards. In some states, landfilling of recyclables has returned, getting waivers where it would normally be illegal to do so. Burning garbage is much cleaner than it used to be. Maybe we can develop ways to capture carcinogens that are emitted like the technologies that are being developed to capture carbon dioxide in smoke stacks?

However, like energy and water conservation, waste conservation seems like the only short-term way forward. Like using less energy and less water, we need to make less waste. When I look at the supermarket shelves, it is hard to see how we can do this. Everything is packaged in individual portions, and long behind us are the days of glass milk and Coke bottles that we would return and refill.

Well, if you are feeling depressed now, wait until next month. I’ll be discussing the session I attended on cybersecurity risks for local governments...
Our very own Jackie Portillo, League Services Director received the John G Stutz Award for 25 years of service from National League of Cities earlier this month. We sat down and asked a few questions about Jackie Portillo, Support Services Director.

MR: When were you hired at the League?  
JP: January 4, 1993

MR: Can you tell us a little about yourself?  
JP: I come from a family of five and have two younger brothers. I have been married to Andy Portillo for 28 years (together a total of 33), we have two children Adam and Amanda. Adam and his wife Leah have given us four awesome grandchildren and our beautiful daughter Amanda works for Santa Fe County. I am a native Santa Fean who has also lived in Winthrop MA, Claremont & Nashua NH. And, as most of you know...I’m a die-hard Denver Bronco fan.

MR: What attracted you to the League?  
JP: I worked for Manpower Temporary Agency and had actually spoken to Anita on a few occasions in order to set up placements for the receptionist position at the League. I left Manpower to work for Xerox and within a year and a half they began to downsize and restructure. I knew it was last in first out – I had to find something permanent and stable. I had been told by the NMML Receptionist at that time (who I had initially recommended to the NMML while at Manpower), that the NMML was looking for a word processor. I applied for the job, interviewed Anita and then Bill and was hired.

MR: How long have you been Support Services Director Coordinator?  
JP: I started out as Word Processing Specialist (1993), then became Office Specialist (1995) and have been Support Services Coordinator since 2001.

MR: What are your job responsibilities, those on paper and not  
JP: I was initially hired to do word processing, office work like filing, conference registration, municipal reporter distribution, legislative support duties and soon after being hired, I also became the database manager. Most of these I continue to do now, or have a part in the processes. I’ve taken on several other duties and responsibilities throughout the years, too many to mention, but one of the major responsibilities and one that I also consider an honor, was being asked to serve as Liaison to the New Mexico Fire Chiefs Association. I’ve learned so much from the NMFCA Board Members (past and present) and I hope they know how much I appreciate their
knowledge and wisdom. I feel that over my 25+ years at the NMML, I’ve performed just about every aspect, task and assignment associated with support services both internal and external. I really love the work that I do. I’m also a member of the NM Infrastructure Finance Conference Planning Committee and have been since the inception 23 years ago. There is statement in my job description “all other duties as assigned”, and that seems to encompass a great deal of what my job has entailed over the years. Many unexpected requests and assignments come up that take may precedence over BAU (business as usual). I have become a better person and more knowledgable for having taken those on, learning to juggle and prioritize.

MR: Has the league changed and if so how?
JP: There have been several changes at the NMML over the years. When I first started almost 26 years ago, email was just coming about and the internet was a tool that was still new and exciting. Now I’m responsible for the on-line directory, turning on the on-line event registration (and figuring out the glitches) and on-line live subsection membership lists, just to mention a few. I remember when we had to sort the reporter mailing by zip code and zones and now it’s just a touch of a button and it’s distributed throughout the state.

MR: 25 years, that is a long time. For some of our members retirement is the next step, what are your goals for the next 25?
JP: That’s a tough one. Prior to coming to the NMML, I lived back east where I worked as a Temp in several placements from Dartmouth Medical School, Warner Cable, add department of a major Grocer, to Real Estate and Law offices. I enjoyed the change in scenery and taking on different job assignments, learning new processes, equipment, terminology and so on. I couldn’t imagine that I would have been at any one job for more than 20 years. The League is my family and I’m at home here.

As for the next 25 years? Hmmm, not too sure, retirement sounds good but I’m still so young (lol). I’d like to stick around for at least another five to ten years, God willing. There is still so much to learn and I’m looking forward to it!

MR: What did it mean for you to receive the National League of Cities’ John G. Stutz Award for 25 years of service award?
JP: Although receiving a plaque and attending the Conference in Los Angeles was awesome and I appreciate both, I look back on my 25 years here and think about all that I have learned, the people I’ve met and the beautiful cities, towns and villages that I’ve been to in and out of New Mexico. Opportunities that I may never have had, had I not been part of the NMML staff. I feel truly fortunate and appreciate what I have here. I’ve learned what I know about Municipal Government, Legislative and Office Processes from the best in the state! Someone at the NLC City Summit asked me how I had managed to be at the NMML for so long, and my response was “It’s easy to work hard, be dedicated and loyal when you work for good people, internally and externally.”
CORRALES HAS A NEW POLICE CHIEF

Victor Mangiacapra began his law enforcement career in 1988 as a deputy sheriff in the chilly climate of Rensselaer County NY. It borders Massachussetts and Vermont. He patrolled those highways (“It was really cold”) for about three years when he heard of a job in Farmington N.M. It was a no-brainer.

“The cost of living was lower, career opportunities were better and the pay was much higher. It was an offer I couldn’t refuse.” For nine years, he went through the ranks at Farmington PD: patrol officer, detective, field training officer. Chief Mangiacapra describes it as a “very busy town” with high rates of violent crime and other illegal activities. “It was a good place to learn police work.”

The birth of a child was reason to reconsider Farmington. The Albuquerque area was a better place to raise a child and he had family here to help, so the Chief packed up and moved south.

First, he worked briefly at the Corrales PD, and then for the State Lottery Division doing investigative work, but had to travel the state. Soon, he was back in Corrales. In 2003, he put on the uniform of the Corrales Police Department and did patrol, detective, sergeant, lieutenant and captain’s work. Mayor Scott Kominiak appointed him acting chief, and a few months later, he took the permanent position.

“We are really trying to promote a community-based policing culture here. The Corrales community buys into crime prevention and makes our jobs a lot easier. Citizens are very supportive of our efforts. The Chief often tells his audiences to call in suspicious activity. “We’d rather go to a thousand false alarms than miss a real crime in progress.”

“Even with the occasional receipt of a traffic citation, folks here understand it is for the greater good of the community,” said the Chief.

There have been some skinny budget years, but CPD is now fully staffed with a fairly stable workforce of 15 officers. One of his biggest challenges used to be getting and keeping sworn personnel. “Now we have the right people and a lot of help from the community” so Corrales will likely remain one of the safest communities in the Land of Enchantment.

SUNLAND PARK HONORS EMPLOYEES FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

Please join us in congratulating two of Sunland Park’s outstanding employees who have served the City of Sunland Park for three decades. We thank Gloria Irigoyen for her 30 years of service and Concepcion Medina for her 33 years of service. Their valuable contributions and commitment to the employees of Sunland Park is greatly appreciated. We acknowledge that the City continues to stay strong and moves forward due to the efforts and success of employees like these.
Farmington recently recognize several individu-als who demonstrated exemplary performance, not only in their work duties, but in their duties as fellow citizens. in a recent council meeting When most of us hear the word humanitarian, we think of someone who actively engages in promoting human welfare and social reforms in a global capacity. Their goal is to save lives, relieve suffering and maintain human dignity. But a humanitarian can be one person whose single act accomplishes those very same goals, which is exactly what Officer David King and City of Farmington Electric Utility linemen, Dave Elder and Jacob Snowbarger, did.

On Tuesday, November 6, Officer King was flagged down by a construction worker near the Auto Zone at Broadway and Lake Street after a vehicle crashed into the side of the business. The officer made contact with the driver, a 70-year-old man from Cortez, Colorado, and recognized he was in need of emergency assistance. Officer King and Mr. Elder pulled the driver from the vehicle. Officer King began administering CPR to the driver and asked one of the linemen to get his radio so he could request assistance for the male who was in cardiac arrest. One of the linemen retrieved the officer’s radio and another brought his AED from his work truck. The officer radioed for additional assistance while the linemen took over chest compressions and applied the AED. Through their professional course of actions, CPR was continued seamlessly and two shocks were delivered to the patient prior to the fire depart-ment arriving on scene. Once fire and EMS personnel arrived, Mr. Elder and Mr. Snowbarger remained in the immediate area ready to assist and delivered a thorough briefing of events. They remained on scene until the patient, with a pulse, was transported to the hospital.

It is apparent that the swift actions of Officer King, Mr. Elder and Mr. Snowbarger greatly contributed to a positive outcome for the gentleman, who has since been discharged from the hospital and returned home.
Trees and lights. Wreaths and Holly. Santa and Jesus. Elves and Wise Men. All of these are associated with a holiday that is decidedly Christian in its origin. During the Christmas season we receive numerous questions concerning what activities are constitutionally permissible to be undertaken by the government. One of the most common questions concerns whether the government is permitted to decorate for the holiday season. The issue has its roots in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The First Amendment guarantees that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. . .” This has traditionally been accepted as a restriction on local governments as well. In short, the government is prohibited from enacting laws, or taking other actions that tend to either establish or promote religion, or to prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the exercise of one’s chosen religion.

One of the most common decorations or symbols traditionally placed by the government is the nativity scene. Many questions have arisen concerning the propriety of a nativity scene on public property. The U.S. Supreme Court has addressed this issue in Lynch v. Donnelly, 492 U.S. 573 (1989). In Lynch, the Court held that so long as the nativity scene is part of a larger display that includes secular symbols as well, (such as Santa Clause, elves, snowmen and so forth) such that the primary effect of the entire display is secular, then the display is constitutional. It is still undecided whether a display of just a nativity scene would be interpreted as a violation of the Establishment Clause. Context, however, is very important. See: Salazar v. Buono, 559 U.S. 700 (2010), “the goal of avoiding governmental endorsement does not require eradication of all religious symbols in the public realm”.

Christmas trees in public places have also been the subject of questions in the past. This issue has also been addressed by the U.S. Supreme Court in County of Allegheny v. ACLU 492 U.S. 573 (1989). In County of Allegheny the Supreme Court decided that Christmas trees are not considered to be a religious symbol, so displaying a tree does not offend the Constitution. In the Court’s words:

The Christmas tree, unlike the menorah, is not itself a religious symbol. Although Christmas trees once carried religious connotations, today they typify the secular celebration of Christmas. . . . Numerous Americans place Christmas trees in their homes without subscribing to Christian religious beliefs, and when the city’s tree stands alone in front of the City-County Building, it is not considered an endorsement of Christian faith.

What about private individuals erecting religious symbols on public property? In many instances, the government allows private individuals or groups to display holiday themed items on public property. The Supreme Court of the United States has identified three types of public property for First Amendment purposes: the traditional public forum, the open or designated public forum, and the non-public forum. See: Perry Educ. Ass’n v. Perry Local Educators’ Ass’n, 460 U.S. 37, 46 (1983). Certain government properties are presumed to be traditional public fora (streets, sidewalks, and parks). See: United States v. Grace 461 U.S. 171 (1983)
As the Supreme Court has stated, “Wherever the title of streets and parks may rest, they have immemorially been held in trust for the use of the public, and time out of mind, have been used for the purposes of assembly, communicating thoughts between citizens, and discussing public questions.” Hague v. Comm. For Indus. Org. 307 U.S. 496 (1939). And while the First Amendment does not require the government to allow privately owned permanent or seasonal displays in public parks, the government must act in a viewpoint neutral manner if it chooses to do so. Pleasant Grove City v. Summum, 555 U.S. 460 (2009).

Other areas may be considered open and available for display of religiously themed displays. Areas that “the state has opened for use by the public as a place for expressive activity” may be considered “open or designated” public fora. Whether the property in question is considered a traditional public forum (e.g., street, sidewalk, park, or plaza) or a designated public forum (e.g., a government building, community center or other state-owned facility), the ability of governing authorities “to limit expressive activities [is] limited.” See: Perry. State officials may not prohibit religious speakers from these places on the basis of viewpoint unless they demonstrate a compelling government interest for doing so. The principle that has emerged from Supreme Court cases is that the First Amendment forbids the government to regulate speech in ways that favor some viewpoints or ideas at the expense of others. Members of City Council v. Taxpayers for Vincent, 466 U.S. 789, (1984).

Here are a few things to keep in mind if you are debating whether or not to erect a holiday display:

1. Consider context: The Supreme Court has put a heavy emphasis on context. Religious symbols are permitted, but the overall context of the display must be of a secular nature to survive scrutiny. A mixture of religious and secular symbols is the only way to save your display from constitutional scrutiny.

2. Private vs. Public: Who erects and maintains the display is important. Government-sponsored displays are more strictly regulated than private displays in public places.

3. The “Reasonable Observer” Test: This has been used in other Establishment Clause cases. Would a reasonable observer of the display in question believe (even mistakenly) that the government was endorsing a particular religion or religion in general?

4. Signs: Pay particular attention to the signs posted around your local display. The court has frowned on “Gloria in Excelsis” but smiles on “Happy Holidays” or “Salute to Liberty!” And a sign indicating that the display was sponsored by private parties goes a long way to curing the impression that the government has endorsed it.

So, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Kwanza, Celebrate Winter Solstice!
PERSONNEL PRIMER—PART TWO
"LETTING GO"

By Randy Van Vleck, League General Counsel

Although nobody anticipates this, sometimes it becomes apparent that a municipality and one of its employees must go their separate ways. The act of separation from public employment is stressful for all that are involved. Separation from employment is also one of the most common of lawsuits filed against municipalities. There is certainly no “silver bullet” solution to such employment issues, but, by following a few simple rules, a municipality’s exposure to risk can be limited. The procedures we are going to discuss pertain to both “at will” employees as well as merit or “tenured” employees. The procedures also vary slightly based on the municipal form of government.

Mayor-Council Forms of Government

In Mayor-Council forms of government, the procedure for the discharge of employees is outlined in NMSA section 3-11-6. There are two different processes that must take place to legally dismiss an employee from employment with the municipality. The first procedure, which is also the most common begins, much like the hiring process, with the mayor. Section 3-11-6.D states that

Subject to the limitation of a merit system ordinance adopted as authorized in Section 3-13-4 NMSA 1978, the mayor may discharge an appointed official or employee upon the approval of a majority of all the members of the governing body.

In most cases this means that the mayor makes a recommendation to dismiss the employees to the governing body. Once this recommendation is made, the question must be subject to a vote of the governing body and a majority of all members of the governing body must vote in favor of dismissing the employee.

The second procedure begins with the governing body itself. NMSA section 3-11-6.A states:

Subject to the limitation of a merit system ordinance adopted as authorized in Section 3-13-4 NMSA 1978, the governing body may discharge an appointed official or employee by a majority of all the members of the governing body.

This means that a majority of the members of the governing body may dismiss an employee, without the recommendation or approval of the mayor.

Now comes the confusing part. There are two potential stumbling blocks in those two short sections. Stumbling block #1: “Subject to the limitation of a merit system ordinance adopted as authorized in Section 3-13-4 NMSA 1978”. Section 3-13-4 permits a municipality to establish by ordinance a merit system for the hiring, promotion, discharge and general regulation of municipal employees. A municipality may establish rules and regulations which include methods of
employment, promotion, demotion, suspension and discharge of the municipal employees. Adoption of a merit system creates a contract of employment between the municipality and an employee in a position covered by the merit system. See: section 3-13-4.C. It is imperative that a municipality comply with all of the provisions of the merit system ordinance BEFORE submitting the question of discharging an employee to a vote of the governing body.

Stumbling block #2: “approval of a majority of all the members of the governing body”. This requirement is often misunderstood. An absolute majority of the governing body is required to either affirm the mayor’s recommendation to dismiss an employee, or for the governing body to dismiss the employee on its own suggestion. A majority of the governing body is one more than half of the council people, regardless of whether they are present or whether they cast a vote. The “magic number” is easily calculated. To arrive at the vote requirement take the total number of council people NOT INCLUDING the MAYOR, DIVIDE by two and ADD one. Another way of looking at this is the magic number is the same as the number required to have a quorum of the body.

Commission-Manager Forms of Government

Commission-Manager forms of government that are established in accordance with the provisions of section 3-14-1 and the sections that follow have a very simple means of addressing the dismissal of employees. Quite simply, section 3-14-14.A(2) states: the manager shall employ and discharge all persons engaged in the administrative service of the municipality. Most commission-manager municipalities interpret the words “administrative service” to mean ALL employees. In other words, the manager is solely responsible for dismissal of employees and is not required to seek the approval of the mayor or the commission members. Of course most managers will keep the commission apprised of their activities because the manager serves at the will of the city commission. There is one stumbling block under this form of government as well.

Stumbling block #1: “administrative service of the municipality”. The administrative service of the municipality may be properly defined to include all city employees in nonexempt status, and to specifically exclude all appointed officers of the city. What this means is that the commission could decide that certain appointed officials of the city, could be considered as being in the “executive service” of the municipality. This designation is normally limited to the police chief, city clerk, and in some cases the fire chief. The danger in designating position in the executive service is that

Continued on page 26
The early 1900s found a few homesteaders arriving in Elida, but the surge of people began around 1906 and come they did! Many came by train, bringing livestock and household goods. Others arrived by covered wagon, with as many possessions as they could bring. Some came on horseback. The “free” land, healthy climate and perhaps adventure enticed the settlers to come. All were anxious for the promise of a new land. As the homesteaders came, so did the merchants. The Elida town site was platted and filed the seventh day of January 1903 by W.E. Lindsey and John H. Gee. There were 24 blocks in the original town site. Block 18, which was undivided, became the town square and was the location of the park where picnics and gatherings where held. Mr. Gee is credited with naming the town but the origin of the name has two stories. One is that he had two daughters name Ella and Ida and in putting their names together he came up with Elida. Another is that he found a stake in the ground near where a lumber yard was built that had the name Elida on it. Whatever the origin, Elida was the name chosen.

Early meetings of the town council indicate the citizens’ ongoing interest and concern in improving the town by planting trees, putting a fence around the park square, improving the streets, adding hitching posts and sidewalks, trash and garbage clean-up, anything that would make the town better. In 1929 the bandstand was built and used as a place for the Town Band to perform.

Water for the town has been a concern of the council throughout the years, not only for the resident’s use, but also in fighting fires. The council voted for more wells and large storage of water. This was an aid to the bucket brigade fire equipment. So many of the early plank board buildings had burned that insurance was almost impossible to obtain that would cover loss by fire. In November 1908 a group of merchants petitioned the city council to pass restriction on new buildings, that they be made of brick or other noncombustible materials, in order to prevent disastrous fires such as had occurred in the past. From that time on the new buildings were built following these guidelines.
1913 was the year of the grasshopper plague. They are described as being an army, a surge, millions of grasshoppers “as waves in a wheat field” that was an estimated area of five miles by 20 miles and destroyed everything in its path. Fields, grass and gardens were stripped. They ate bark off fenceposts. They stopped the train between Kenna and Elida. The tracks were piled high with the grasshoppers and became very slick. The train could not get enough traction to pull. Men with brooms were placed on both sides and in front of the engine to sweep the track. The trains carried sand to put on the track to help gain traction. The men broke a westbound freight train into three sections and pulled each section with town engines. It took more than an hour to go a mile. There were methods to try to kill the grasshoppers. Insect parasites and predators killed and consumed some of the grasshoppers. A rain provided relief by drowning many of them.

The Municipal building, Town Hall or City Hall,
Continued on page 14
was built on the south side of the park square. It was completed in 1939. The building was a project of the Federal Work Progress Administration using local labor. Office space was provided for the town clerk, a council meeting room and the jail, which was a small room on the northeast corner of the building, thus making obsolete the old jail northwest of the town. The cement slab and some sidewalks were built at the time also. An addition to the west end of the Town Hall was built in 1951 for the fire truck and equipment. The Town Hall is still in use today.

Elida was the site of Independence Day celebration for many years beginning in 1904. The celebrations started with a queen contest and parade and included numerous activities including baseball games, children games, a fiddlers contest along with a rodeo, speeches by governors and other dignitaries and finished with fireworks. At the two-day celebration for July 4, 1923, the crowd was estimated at two to three thousand people. Some traveled many miles to attend. Elida became known as the place to be for the Fourth of July, a tradition that continues today.

Horse races in Elida were a popular sport. The racetrack was laid out near the stock pens and west of the railroad tracks. Local people, as well as those from other communities on the eastern side of New Mexico, brought their horses to race for the title of the fastest. The local merchants were anxious for the races to bring more people to town. In June 1939 it was estimated that 800 people attended the horse race. At one of the races in late July a horse ran into the crowd. One man was knocked down, receiving fatal injuries. The community was saddened and shocked over the accident. There were no more organized races in Elida.

There were numerous saloons in the early days. Some of them were Aendell’s Saloon, and Fred Crosby’s Saloon, that was sold to Wilson Orr. Wilson Orr sold to Charles Chitwood. W.A Light, Vernon & Hollis, followed by Vernon & Doss and McGraw & Knittle has retail liquor licenses. In addition, they had a gaming license issued in 1907 for stud & draw poker and in 1908 to operate a pool hall. The saloons were closed in 1918. To this day Elida is a dry community with no liquor licenses.
Starting in the 1960’s, the busy Saturdays in downtown Elida were beginning to dwindle due to modern vehicles and shopping in the larger cities like Portales and Clovis. The days of people bringing their cream and eggs to sell in Elida had all but subsided. Some of the businesses had closed and, as always, the water situation was a big problem. In spite of this, it was still a good time for this part of the state. One could buy eggs for 39 cents a dozen; hamburger meat was three pounds for $1 and a pound of coffee cost 69 cents.

Droughts, wars the Depressions, technology, and policies of the government have all brought changes to Elida and the trade area. One thing that has remained constant is the desire to improve the town and an optimistic view of the future.

Over the last 15 years, Elida has seen improvements in many areas of its infrastructure. With the award of CDBG funds and capital outlay funds, the Town of Elida has built a new Senior Community Center, a new Fire Station and made improvements to the main water system. Grants and other funding programs have allowed the town to improve the current water system, make improvements to streets around the town square and other local roads within city limits. The Town has also purchased new equipment with capital outlay funds.

While times have changed the needs of the citizens have not. The Town of Elida Council, Mayor and employees continue the early settlers’ interests and concerns to provide safe water, trash services and keeping our community clean and inviting to all that travel through.
Twitter is a bit of a monster to untangle. It’s clearly taken a foothold in American culture over the past couple of years. Accounts like President Trump, Elon Musk and many other prominent brands have likely solidified Twitter as a social media platform that is here to stay and to be reckoned with. It’s a platform quite unlike any others out there. It’s simplistic, yet profound in the ease to which one can disseminate opinions, subject content and information. I’d like to take a look at why Twitter works for both the consumer and the creator. Whether you’re looking for or creating breaking news or soundbite updates pertaining to personal interests, Twitter is your playground.

There is no better case study to understand the power of Twitter than looking at the 2016 presidential election. President Trump used this remarkable platform in the 2016 election process to enhance his marketing reach into new audiences and demographics across the political spectrum (including those who follow him out of hatred). In 280 characters, Trump was able to speak to large swaths of the country, with short yet powerful soundbites that resonate with his target audiences. He’s allowed to have a voice in a way that no president has ever had before. Twitter represents a constant supply of his thoughts (at least what he wants us to think are his thoughts), in short easily consumed tweets. The brevity, consumability and ease of repeating, along with controlling the overall narrative is what makes Twitter such an amazing platform for simple mass communication. Additionally, Google has a hand to play in what has made Twitter such a strong platform.
With more than 218 million Facebook users in the US one would think Google’s algorithm would be feeding Facebook user generated content into the search result stream. Twitter, however, with 77 million users is featured with nearly all searches within the tool. Tweets dominate page one of Google search results. But why? After a few rendezvous through the years Twitter and Google entered into partnership in 2015 and both parties appear to enjoy the relationship for now. Twitter gets prime carousel placement on Google’s first page which gives prominence to the social platform and makes them a relevant player when it comes to collecting information. Google has direct access to Twitter’s stream of Tweets (Twitter’s firehouse stream some 9,000/second) and their algorithm analyzes and provides relevant real-time person to person keyword search appropriate information to their users.

The partnership means your Twitter content can be featured on Google’s carousel, which plays quite well for heavy Tweeters. The partnership is also advantageous for news organizations who can provide snippets throughout the day. The algorithm focuses on a number of variables, but posting frequency plays a large role in carousel placement. For brands (and personal users) large and small there is equal opportunity you will have your content featured on the first page carousel if you post frequently relevant topical information. The partnership with Google is currently slated to last through 2020 and a renewal isn’t guaranteed. Google has concerns over the authenticity of the information they are decimating by featuring the Tweets. So what should a brand do in the coming years with the partnership looming?

Brands should invest time and energy in Twitter. The partnership with Google, in conjunction with an Search Engine Optimization (SEO) or Pay Per-Click (PPC) campaign, means you have the opportunity to control first page google content in your industry. As of now the energy is worth the effort and Twitter is extremely valuable to brands looking to gain or maintain relevance. A healthy posting strategy of 20-30 tweets a day will play well into your SEO campaign, particularly when matched with your SEO keywords. When 2020 rolls around we can all review our social media strategy and determine if Twitter is still a key player in the game.
Manufacturing Day is a national initiative that puts a spotlight on manufacturing. In New Mexico, it’s a month-long celebration of New Mexico-made products and the more than 26,000 New Mexicans working in the manufacturing industry. It’s an opportunity to enhance public knowledge about the economic impact of manufacturing in our state and communities and introduce students to careers in manufacturing.

In October, 31 events took place in 10 New Mexico communities. Twenty-five manufacturers and resource organizations hosted public or student tours, gave presentations or held open houses. Six schools sent 150 students to private tours and 3,700 students attended career fairs.

Thanks to Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller, Aztec Mayor Victor Snover, Bloomfield Mayor Cynthia Atencio, Kirtland Mayor Mark Duncan, Las Vegas Mayor Tonita Gurule-Giron, Rio Rancho Mayor Gregg Hull, Roswell Mayor Dennis Kintigh, Socorro Mayor Ravi Bhasker, Sunland Park Mayor Javier Parea and others who joined Gov. Susana Martinez in proclaiming October Manufacturing Month.
VIDEOS AIM TO REINFORCE MAINSTREET MESSAGE

By Damon Scott, Finance New Mexico

New Mexico’s 30 MainStreet communities support small businesses across a large and diverse state, but organizers admit it can be tough to explain exactly what the MainStreet program does and how it impacts local economies.

Four new videos aim to clarify the MainStreet message that business opportunities can be leveraged by the program.

Rich Williams, co-director of New Mexico MainStreet, which falls under the New Mexico Economic Development Department, said the program is more than a dollar value of ROI. “While we like to measure public dollars in return on investment or job creation, this leaves out the qualitative impact of building economically healthy communities,” he said.

Williams argues that social infrastructure is often overlooked, but it is the basis of community safety and economic well-being. The social opportunities that spur project development take place at libraries, community centers, parks and other public places, he said.

These are “the spaces that cut across age, race, ethnicity and gender, creating the context for social capital to be nurtured and community economic wealth to grow,” Williams said.

The four Voices of MainStreet videos are more like mini movies. Each is about three minutes long and they feature rural and urban entrepreneurs under the headings Engage People, Rebuild Places, Creative & Cultural Enterprises and MainStreet Entrepreneurs.

“This was a way to tell the MainStreet story from the people side, not the state program just describing a series of initiatives,” said Anna J. Blyth, communications and media specialist for New Mexico MainStreet. Blyth said the videos give voice to the people who live, work or visit the MainStreet districts. “Those who value them as places of connectivity and economic activity, and tying together some of how that happens,” she said.

Narrative Media of Santa Fe, which produced the videos, highlighted the people who are actively rebuilding streets, restoring buildings, and creating economic opportunities in traditional and historic downtown districts. The company also focused on efforts to shift consumer purchases from the internet to “buy local.”

Blyth said buy-local campaigns are as relevant today as they’ve ever been and they tie into the work of New Mexico MainStreet. “We understand that when we buy local, there are significant economic, job and environmental benefits,” she said.

And the numbers speak for themselves: About 75 percent of every $100 spent in a locally-owned business is recirculated in the community. Blyth said money spent close to home has three times the community impact because local businesses create local jobs and are more likely to contribute to charities in the community.

MainStreet communities take this to heart, especially during the holidays when consumers increase spending. Many businesses have embraced Small Business Saturday — the Saturday after Thanksgiving — by utilizing the buy-local toolkit and strategies offered by the MainStreet program.

Williams said it matters. “Our historic and traditional town centers reflect the cultural and economic roots of a community,” he said. “Restoration of the built environment not only roots each generation to community heritage and history, it opens the door for new commercial enterprises with local entrepreneurs and creatives seeking an opportunity to make a living within the community they choose to reside.”

To watch the videos and learn more about the MainStreet program, visit nmainstreet.org.

Finance New Mexico partners with the New Mexico Municipal League on the Grow It! project and other economic development initiatives. To learn more, go to www.FinanceNewMexico.org and www.GrowItNM.org.
ICMA RELEASES NEW WHITEPAPER ON BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY AND ITS APPLICATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Report highlights benefits and risks of blockchain technology and explores local government applications and implementation challenges.

Local governments worldwide are exploring emerging technologies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their service delivery. Although in its infancy, some jurisdictions are taking a close look at potential applications, even as they recognize the risks and challenges of implementation.

ICMA and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) released “Blockchain Technology: Local Government Applications and Challenges,” which explores potential blockchain applications in U.S. local governments, as well as more established international applications in other levels of government.

U.S. local governments are exploring a range of potential of blockchain technology applications:

- Land registries (Cook County, Illinois)
- Homeless Identity documents (Austin, Texas)
- Energy microgrid (Brooklyn, New York)
- Micro municipal bonds (Berkeley, California)

ICMA Executive Director Marc Ott observed that while blockchain technology is in its infancy, over time it may improve efficiency and effectiveness in local government service delivery. “There are risks to this new technology,” he said, “but blockchain technology has the potential to enhance data integrity, communication, and transparency.”

The paper describes blockchain basics, explaining that blocks are data records that are collected in a chain and stored as an encoded digital ledger on multiple computers in a public or private network. Security advantages are that these data records cannot be changed or deleted by a single actor. As author Julie Hamill stresses, “Blockchain technology is not a magic solution: information must be organized and digitized for blockchain to work but when a local government has already improved efficiency and organization through digitization, incorporating a blockchain network into its systems could add transparency and trust.”

 ESTANCIA LIBRARY WELCOMES ALL

By Angela Creamer, Head Librarian
Estancia Library

The Estancia Library began to serve the community in 1906 with a large book donation by the A.H. Garnett family. In 2005 a new building was built in Estancia after the town received a trust for one million dollars from Corinne Williams French and Willis Williams, the children of Henry Clay and Jennie Gertrude Williams, who homesteaded south of Estancia between 1904 and 1940. The “Williams Memorial Library” is in honor of Henry and Jennie Williams.

The Estancia Public Library is a place for the entire family to enjoy! The library has many adult and children audio and book titles to choose from. The Library offers fax, and copy service also. We have free wi fi and 14 computer available for patron use. The UNM GED tutoring meet twice a week for tutoring. Take a moment to enjoy your library. We have many seating areas to enjoy the newspaper or a magazine. Young adults can hang out in our teen area and children will enjoy the building blocks, games and puzzles in the children’s area. We have an afterschool children’s reading club and a Preschool Storytime that meet weekly. The Library has a Southwest room with a large collection of southwest titles.
Society demands more data, more rapidly to meet the needs of the changing landscape of America’s communities.

At the same time, response rates to surveys that have traditionally provided the data to meet these needs have been declining in recent years.

Why? Because there is survey fatigue from the multitude of surveys that come from all corners of the public and private sectors. Add time constraints on an increasingly busy population, plus growing concerns about privacy and confidentiality, and the result is lower response.

Improving Quality While Saving Money

Administrative records have the potential to reduce the amount of information the U.S. Census Bureau requests from respondents.

They can also improve the quality of the data by offering more information used in the Census Bureau’s editing and imputation methodologies, to address missing or inconsistent responses. They ensure final data are as complete and consistent as possible.

Using administrative records also saves money. Census Bureau enumerators may not need to return to respondents’ homes to collect survey answers because administrative records fill the void.

In addition, Title 13 of the U.S. Code, which governs Census Bureau data collections, authorizes the use of administrative records in place of direct inquiries “to the maximum extent possible with the kind, timeliness, quality, and scope of the statistics required.”

The Census Bureau Has Used Administrative Records For Years

The Census Bureau has a long history of using administrative records to provide quality information about the U.S. population and economy. For decades, these data have helped produce population estimates and projections.

Since 2000, the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) program has been integrating existing data from state administrative records on workers and employers with existing censuses, surveys and other administrative records. The records are used to create a longitudinal data system on U.S. employment.

The Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program uses administrative records to provide annual estimates of income and poverty statistics for all school districts, counties and states.

The Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE) program also uses administrative records to develop model-based estimates of health insurance coverage for counties and states.

What are administrative records?

Administrative data (or "administrative records") refers to government records collected by federal or state agencies while they are administering programs or providing services. Commercial data, or third party data, refers to information collected or aggregated by companies. Administrative records are distinct from systems of information collected exclusively for statistical purposes, such as those the U.S. Census Bureau produces under the authority of Title 13 of the U.S. Code.

Testing New Ways To Improve Data

The Census Bureau is now looking for new, inno-
Innovative ways to incorporate administrative records into the decennial census and other surveys, including the American Community Survey (ACS).

The goal is to improve the quality of existing data, expand upon the information currently available in Census Bureau data products, and improve the experience of respondents by asking fewer questions and taking up less of their time.

A number of projects are underway to make these objectives a reality. The Census Bureau is:

- Evaluating the coverage and quality of a variety of governmental and nongovernmental administrative records to identify the most promising sources.
- Testing replacing ACS housing questions with data from administrative sources to learn about the impact on ACS estimates and data products.
- Testing replacing ACS income questions with data from administrative sources.
- Testing using administrative records for item imputation of race, age and Hispanic origin on the 2020 Census. We also plan to test these data for item imputation on the ACS.
- Using administrative records to evaluate census data and coverage issues, such as the undercount of young children.
- Identify vacant housing units to reduce non-response followup costs for the 2020 Census.
- Leveraging existing data sources through linked approaches will be an important component of demographic and economic research in the coming years.

“The field of survey research is shifting,” said Ron Jarmin, performing the nonexclusive functions and duties of the director of the Census Bureau. “We must optimize survey design, accounting for information already available from administrative records and other sources to produce timely and accurate data products while minimizing burden on survey respondents.”

Protecting Confidentiality

The Census Bureau is legally required to maintain strict confidentiality. It is bound by Title 13 of the United States Code to ensure that information about any specific individual, household, or business is never revealed, even indirectly through published statistics.

It continues to be a leader in the development and application of disclosure avoidance methods to protect data, continually working to create new, advanced procedures for protecting respondents’ information and identity while meeting the data needs of our complex nation.

Jennifer M. Ortman is assistant division chief for survey methods and measures in the U.S Census Bureau’s American Community Survey Office.
WASHINGTON, Nov. 16, 2018 – Assistant to the Secretary for Rural Development Anne Hazlett today announced that USDA is investing $501 million in 60 projects to help improve health care infrastructure and services in rural communities nationwide.

“Creating strong and healthy communities is foundational to increasing prosperity in rural America,” Hazlett said. “Under the leadership of Secretary Sonny Perdue, USDA is committed to partnering with rural leaders to improve quality of life and economic development through modern and accessible health care.”

Hazlett made today’s announcement as part of USDA’s commemoration of National Rural Health Day, which is held annually on the third Thursday of November to focus on the specific health care issues facing rural communities. The Department is investing in 60 projects through the Community Facilities direct loan program. These investments will expand access to health care for approximately 2 million people in 34 states including a project in New Mexico.

This Rural Development investment in New Mexico will be used to provide additional financing for the second phase of the expansion of the Pecos Valley Medical Center (PVMC). The center’s caseload increased from 2,500 patients a year in 2013 to 3,300 in 2015. To meet this increase in demand, the facility has converted storage rooms into temporary offices. It has converted provider offices into exam rooms. Once Phase II is completed, the building will be a two-level structure. The lower level will house dental operators, telehealth work stations, a conference room, laundry and offices. The upper level will house offices, conference rooms, a lunch room and lockers. Additional funding includes a $3 million USDA Community Facilities loan and a $1 million grant from Health Resources and Services Administration.

“Arthur A. Garcia, USDA Rural Development State Director (second from right) joined Kevin Norris, Chief Executive Officer (far right) of the Pecos Valley Medical Center and others to break ground on the medical center’s second phase of construction.”

Hazlett’s funding announcement complements the finalization of a partnership between USDA and the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) to identify issues causing financial strain on rural hospitals, which are an important part of the rural health care system. NRHA and the Department will work together to identify management and financial indicators that impact rural hospital operations. This technical assistance will help rural hospitals continue to operate and provide critical health care services to serve rural communities.

In April 2017, President Donald J. Trump established the Interagency Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity to identify legislative, regulatory and policy changes that could promote agriculture and prosperity in rural communities. In January 2018, Secretary Perdue presented the Task Force’s findings to President Trump. These findings included 31 recommendations to align the federal government with state, local and tribal governments to take advantage of opportunities that exist in rural America. Increasing investments in rural infrastructure is a key recommendation of the task force.

To view the report in its entirety, please view the Report to the President of the United States from the Task Force on Agriculture and Rural Prosperity (PDF, 5.4 MB). In addition, to view the categories of the recommendations, please view the Rural Prosperity infographic (PDF, 190 KB).

USDA Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities and create jobs in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov.
their appointment and ultimate dismissal is subject to a vote of the commission, thus politicizing those positions.

Mayor-Council-Manager Forms of Government

Similar to commission-manager form of government, this form of government retains the mayor-council structure with the retention of a profession city manager. The personnel responsibilities of the manager in this form of government is the same as the authority of the city manager in the commission-manager form of government discussed previously. Like the other two forms of government, there is a stumbling block in the mayor-council-manager form. This stumbling block is too convoluted to discuss in this forum, but I do urge you to consult with your municipal attorney if you have further questions.

Home Rule Municipalities

The rule here is simple. Personnel responsibilities, including dismissal of employees is governed by the provision of the city charter. The charter should outline the particular steps that must be followed when the time comes for employee and employer to part ways.
WASHINGTON — November 15, 2018 — To improve municipal waste management practices, boost local green jobs and help address climate change, the National League of Cities (NLC), in partnership with Starbucks, today released Recycling Reimagined, a new action guide designed for city leaders. Released on America Recycles Day, the action guide provides cities the tools they need to establish a circular economic framework for recycling and to work towards zero waste.

“For decades, cities have led the charge for reducing waste and reusing valuable materials,” said Clarence E. Anthony, CEO and Executive Director of the National League of Cities (NLC). “City leaders care deeply about health of their citizens and the safety of their environment. From coast to coast, cities large and small can use the tools and recommendations in this action guide to reduce waste and build a more sustainable future for our communities.”

Americans generate more waste than any other country in the world, and that amount is growing fast. But the EPA suggests that as much as 75 percent of all waste is recyclable and compostable, even though over half of that material ends up in landfills.

Currently, much of the global economy operates in a linear fashion: Resources make products, products are consumed, and both the products and any byproducts of manufacturing are disposed of. This “take-make-waste” model depletes resources, harms the environment and ultimately traps valuable materials in landfills.

In contrast, the “circular economy” model aims to keep resources within a closed loop of reuse, regeneration and recycling. A circular economy closes the loop by connecting the two ends of the linear cycle — using waste as a feedstock for production and limiting actual disposal. It ultimately aims to achieve zero waste by prioritizing the highest and best use of materials and resources.

The benefits are manifold. A 75 percent diversion rate by 2030 could produce 1.1 million new jobs and reduce carbon dioxide by 276 million tons, as well as save billions of dollars.

Recycling Reimagined offers case studies from cities like Phoenix, Arizona, Boulder, Colorado, Austin, Texas, Copenhagen, Denmark and Vancouver, Canada, who are already leading the way on zero waste. The action guide also includes recommendations and data for city leaders looking to build sustainable waste management systems in their communities.

“Starbucks is committed to serving our communities sustainably,” said Rebecca Zimmer, global director of environment at Starbucks. “We are proud to partner with National League of Cities as they work to help cities increase access to recycling, reduce waste and create equitable, prosperous communities in cities across the country.”

Recommendations for achieving zero waste include:

1. Performing waste characterization studies
2. Doing continuous outreach and marketing
3. Prioritizing the best use of materials and resources
4. Considering instituting standardized recycling and composting programs
5. Using city procurement to boost sustainable products and end markets
6. Building partnerships and regional support
7. Finding innovative funding models
8. Investing in infrastructure and improved technology
9. Piloting programs

The action guide is available here.
LiUNA Local 16 partners with responsible contractors, public and private entities, elected officials, and community groups to build and maintain the infrastructure needs of communities throughout New Mexico while providing residents a career in the construction industry.

| PEOPLE | PROJECTS | PARTNERSHIPS |

Have you checked your city’s other website lately?

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Events + Resources for your local business community. All in one place. Continually updated for you.

Business Grow it!

A New Mexico Municipal League economic development initiative that empowers your municipality.

505-265-7933
www.LIUNA16.org
www.LIUNAbuildsNM.org
Save a life
What everyone should know to stop bleeding after an injury

1. Ensure your safety.
2. Look for **life-threatening bleeding**.
3. Is a **trauma first-aid kit** available?
   - No: Use any **clean cloth**. Apply steady **direct pressure** directly on the wound.
   - Yes: Where is the wound?
     - Arm/Leg
     - Neck/Shoulder/Groin
5. Is a tourniquet available?
   - Yes: Pack the wound with bleeding control (hemostatic) gauze (preferred), any gauze, or clean cloth. Apply steady **direct pressure**.
   - No: Apply above the bleeding site. **Tighten** until the bleeding stops.

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