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A New Paradigm: County Government Restructures Capital Improvement Program to Stimulate Business—A Stellar Example of Carnegie-like Leadership in this, Our Time to Make Structural Changes

by Bob McEvoy, Managing Editor

Sarasota County Administrator Jim Ley was envisioning future local government—business structures when we discussed his writing, which you will experience shortly. If you know Jim, you are prepared for a daring mental exercise, much of it in a language that will be spoken in 2020 with platforms, enterprises, just in time funding, and optimized enterprise processes. As you rise with Jim above your normally negative reactions to recession generated threats of collapsing businesses, you will be uniquely motivated, as I was, by the Jules Verne like genius in his words, presented for you below:

Economic Stimulus

by Jim Ley, County Administrator, Sarasota County Government

Economic Stimulus Program



In November 2007 Sarasota voters approved by referendum the second extension of a Local Option Sales Tax. This tax would be levied from September 2009 through December 2024. County voters approved what is perhaps the largest single source of infrastructure construction funding in the region. This \$1.4 billion program includes funding for construction for roads, public buildings, improvements to parks and other public lands, and economic development. These projects were originally planned to be spread over a 15-year period starting in 2010. It was determined that as much as \$300 million in County bricks and mortar projects could be accelerated to occur within as little as a two year period, and as a result Sarasota County's local economic stimulus program was born.

Sarasota County's economic stimulus program unfolded in January 2008 with the following community goals:

- Put people and businesses to work constructing capital projects
- Stimulate tourism and visitor promotion through increased marketing
- Make Sarasota "business friendly"
- Provide targeted job creation assistance
- Diversify from the traditional economic strengths of construction and tourism
- Align construction projects with federal stimulus package

(continued on page 3)

by Patrick Urich, County Administrator, Peoria County, IL



The NACA Board of Directors met March 6, in Arlington County Virginia, during the NACo Legislative Conference. A fantastic idea exchange was held in Arlington County, Virginia, where managers present were able to learn about the smart growth efforts of Arlington, and to engage their peers on a number of current issues and challenges. A general membership meeting of NACA was held on March 8 in Washington DC. At these meetings, the annual budget and work plan of the association were approved and vacancies on the Board of Directors were filled. In addition, a new program designed to recruit corporate partners was adopted.

Membership in NACA has declined over the past two years from 557 members to 476. While we have welcomed Maine as the newest block membership state, California, Oregon, and Michigan have dropped their block membership status. This means that individual NACA members from these states will have to pay annual dues of between \$75 and \$175 instead of the \$50 block membership. The benefits of block membership are significant. The dues cost is lower and every County Administrator in your state would become members of the association. Because of the declining membership, the Board took steps to rein in costs as well.

The FY2011 budget reduces the expenses of the association by \$12,470 from FY2010. Furthermore, beginning with this issue, the Journal of County Administration will no longer be printed and mailed to you. The Board approved a work plan for ICMA to provide staff and association management support to NACA. Rita Ossolinski of ICMA provides the association management for NACA. During the next year, she will be tasked with assisting Bob McEvoy in the production of the *NACA Journal of County Administration*, coordinating meeting logistics, managing and increasing membership in NACA, working to promote NACA within ICMA and updating our website and discussion forums. NACA is fortunate to have such a good relationship with ICMA to assist with the association management.

The three vacancies on the Board of Directors were filled. Lee Worsley, Assistant County Manager in Catawba County, North Carolina has agreed to fill the Southeast Vice President position. Jeanine Alday, Chief Administrative Officer of Hamilton County, Tennessee, has agreed to fill the Southeast Director position, and Veronica Ferguson, County Manager in Sonoma County, California, has agreed to fill the West Vice President position.

Last, the Board of Directors adopted a "Friends of NACA" Corporate partnership program. As an association, we believe that encouraging private sector and strategic partnerships can enhance our knowledge and understanding of the expertise, services and programs available to County governments across the country. This program is designed to encourage corporate memberships in the association that will provide added value to you as a manager and the corporate partner. As the program is finalized over the next few weeks, we will share the details with you. Please share your thoughts with the Board of Directors on how we can make NACA a stronger association for County Administrators. ■



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Does NACA Have Your E-mail Address?

Members are encouraged to alert NACA staff of changes to their e-mail addresses. New addresses or corrections to addresses can be e-mailed to naca@icma.org.

Visit the NACA Web Site

The NACA Web site can be accessed at <http://www.countyadministrators.org>.

The NACA members-only area of ICMA.org can be accessed at <http://icma.org/nacamembers>.

(“Economic Stimulus” from page 1)

Sarasota County’s economic stimulus program is an adaptive response to a collapsing housing market and job vaporization. Sarasota County’s innovation evolved from economic duress. To address the challenge, quick and direct communication with the community was required, as well as subsequent process improvements to financial, procurement and construction management systems to timely deliver economic stimulus today and tomorrow. Today’s stimulus relates to immediate construction projects and immediate jobs. Tomorrow’s economic stimulus relates to new business relationships and a more diverse economy based on 21st century industries, including new energy technologies, research centers, and medical services.

The focus of the program was a fast track capital construction program. Over the past year and a half, \$69.5 million in projects have been put on the street, creating or saving approximately 850 jobs. Over the next year, we expect to award the majority of the remaining \$54 million in fast track funds bonded to date. How we got to where we are today is a story of voters “getting” the value proposition and trusting their county government. Additional tourism promotion and business climate have been further enhanced and public/private partnerships involving infrastructure enhancements that were never politically likely, now became the norm.

The Economic Landscape

Sarasota County, Florida, has a well-deserved reputation as a very desirable place to live and work. Its white-sand beaches, year-round sunshine, world-class cultural activities, and comprehensive health care system all contribute to an enviable quality of life for its residents. Sarasota County has a history of being highly dependent on construction and tourism. These industries are in the doldrums. Residential housing construction has stopped, as asset values decline. The

tourism industry is reduced by the reduction of discretionary household spending.

The local economic landscape has been shifting during the past few years. The County’s unemployment rate in October 2008 came in at 7.8 percent, the highest it has been since at least 1990 and well above the national rate of 6.5 percent. Current unemployment rates are hovering in the 12.5 percent range.

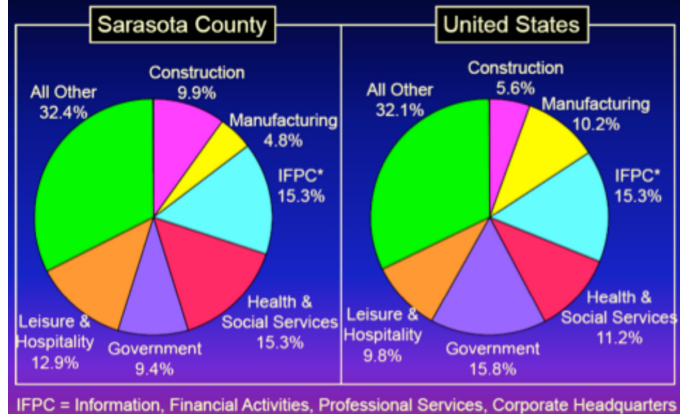
Four years ago the County’s jobless rate was only 2.9 percent, and firms were having a difficult time finding qualified workers to hire. Now there is a surplus of available labor, and business establishments are closing all over the County.

In 2007, hand-in-hand with the bursting of the real estate bubble, total employment in Sarasota County fell by 2.8 percent. Employment in the construction industry dropped by 14.1 percent. In contrast, employment in non-construction and non-real-estate-related industries fell by a much more modest 0.3 percent. Despite the job losses in 2007, *the local economy remains perilously dependent on the construction industry as a source of jobs.* Outside of manufacturing, the largest variance between the two geographies is in the construction industry, which accounts for 9.9 percent of all jobs in Sarasota, almost double construction’s share in the U.S. economy.

Sarasota County Employment, 2007–10
Selected Declining Industries

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2010 | Change 2007–10 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Construction | 15,410 | 11,093 | 8,840 | –6,570 |
| Manufacturing | 7,482 | 6,810 | 6,548 | –934 |
| Retail trade | 21,847 | 21,923 | 21,050 | –797 |
| Food services | 12,644 | 12,598 | 12,093 | –551 |

Distribution of Employment, 2007



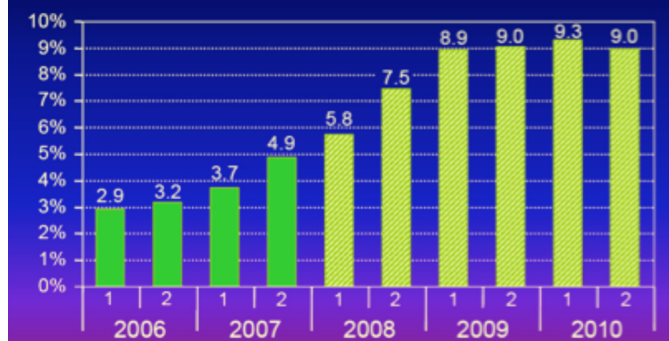
IFPC = Information, Financial Activities, Professional Services, Corporate Headquarters

Put People to Work

With the economic stimulus program, Sarasota County seeks to moderate the impact of the construction industry’s boom/bust cycle. In the face of macro challenges, the County has crafted a local economic stimulus plan that is projected to create thousands of direct and indirect jobs. Simultaneously,

(continued on page 4)

Sarasota County Unemployment Rate,
Seasonally Adjusted
First Half 2006 to Second Half 2010



(“Economic Stimulus” from page 3) because of the general dearth of construction related activity, this capital projects acceleration program will deliver cost effective roads, parks and other infrastructure for the benefit of all citizens.

The economic stimulus program has multiple community objectives, including:

- creating a sense of hope and optimism during a challenging economic period
- enhancing business climate with a collaborative and cooperative spirit
- meeting infrastructure improvement goals at highly competitive costs
- creating local jobs and business activity

Internal Impact

The internal impact of the economic stimulus plan included a dramatic and swift re-thinking of the outcomes and processes associated with public communications, finance, local business preference, and the rapid business alignment of capital management services.

Public Communications

The economic stimulus program established a target to get up to \$300 mil-



Original vs. Revised Bonding Schedule

| Original | | |
|---------------|----------|----------------------|
| Bond 1 | 09/24/08 | \$64,900,000 |
| Bond 2 | 10/16/08 | 12,250,000 |
| Bond 3 | 11/13/08 | 9,000,000 |
| Bond 4 | 12/18/08 | 15,375,000 |
| Bond 5 | 01/15/09 | 13,645,000 |
| Bond 6 | 07/01/09 | 17,000 |
| Bond 7 | 07/01/10 | 5,400,000 |
| Bond 8 | 04/01/11 | 30,350,000 |
| Bond 9 | 01/01/12 | 14,150,000 |
| Total: | | \$182,070,000 |

| Revised | | |
|---------------|----------|----------------------|
| Bond 1 | 09/24/08 | \$64,900,000 |
| Bond 2 | 12/18/08 | 59,540,000 |
| | | |
| | | |
| Bond 3 | 07/01/10 | 13,130,000 |
| Bond 4 | 04/01/11 | 30,350,000 |
| Bond 5 | 01/01/12 | 14,150,000 |
| Total: | | \$182,070,000 |

lion of capital projects under design or construction contracts in the next 24 months. In order to accelerate several of these projects and advance funding to them using bonds based on the surtax revenue, the voters had to be asked for additional authority and they were asked to approve a referendum that would raise the debt limit on infrastructure projects. An extensive public information campaign was undertaken, with substantial detail published on the County’s Penny Wise webpage.

Besides general information on raising the debt limit, the County introduced an interactive Capital Improvement Program webpage that would allow citizens and neighborhoods to see the detail of capital projects that were planned for construction in their community.

On May 6, 2008, voters approved borrowing up to \$300 million to fast-track dozens of projects over the next 72 months to create more than 2,000 jobs and stimulate the local economy. With the passage of the FY 09 budget later that fall, and the initial sale of debt (one week before the market collapsed) we were on our way.

Finance

Bonding: The economic stimulus program is a “fast-track” effort. Following the May 2008 citizen referendum allowing the County to borrow up to \$300 million for the economic stimulus program, a detailed bonding pro-

gram was initiated. Constructing these projects now can save money because construction costs are low.

The original plan was to produce a just-in-time funding plan with a series of “as needed” bonding efforts over three years. In October of 2009 our best laid plans were stopped in their tracks as the stock market crashed, and finance dried up as the implications of mortgage backed debt securitization became evident. Bond insurance markets disintegrated. As the credit markets tightened, the debt plan adapted to the realities of the financial marketplace as shown in the schedule below. The passage of ARRA and the creation of the Build America Bond (BAB) program offered a stable platform for debt formulation.

Fast-Track Effort: In the end it was determined that an estimated \$248 million in projects could be fast-tracked. The surtax bonding would provide \$187 million in funding, and \$61 million would come from other sources.

- The fast-track period was to cover 72 months. The bond authorization lasts until the County reaches \$300 million of eligible debt or the end of the surtax.
- Projects are being fast-tracked if they can be started or completed in 72 months.
- No new taxes are involved for the projects.

(continued on page 8)



Facebook and its Social Network friends as tools to rethink government...

Facebook, Twitter, and many other “odd-sounding” applications that run on smart phones and laptops are the rage today. So much so that governments are considering their use, and many elected officials are establishing Facebook “pages” and asking their electorate to “follow them” on Twitter! Shannon Flanagan-Watson from Arlington County wrote an excellent article in these pages some months back, giving sage advice as to how a County should put their toe in this swirling water of Social Networks as these tools are called.

However, we may want to take this an extra step. We may want to think of ways that these modern tools can not only give governments new ways to communicate with their citizens, but to in fact change the way they operate their businesses altogether. Speaking at a recent e-Gov workshop I attended at the National Science Foundation, the CIO for Minnesota, Gopal Khanna, struck up the fight song by calling for nothing but the re-birthing (my words) of government structures because of what IT enables us to do these days. Gopal resisted the easy strategy of using the IT resources within the paradigm of government we feel comfortable with today, and instead encouraged other CIOs and academic leaders in e-Gov to be bold and rethink the very essence of government.

I think he is on to something! And to show an example of such a rethink, let’s consider the smart phones and lap tops that our citizens currently carry around with them. Mobile, ever-present and constantly in use, they represent a tremendous computing resource which is currently applied to their personal and professional

problems. In a county of 100,000, just imagine adding up all the memory capacity, computing power and applications inventory to be found in our residents’ small machines! It would outsmart the smartest computers if they were harnessed together and made to work towards a governmental goal. And the Social Network applications allow the users to connect, identify trends, help each other and get things done in large groups.

In order to take advantage of such a capacity, we would need to rethink how we approach and deal with technology today. There are three tiers of management challenges for the public administrator when it comes to technology:

1. To make sure that we manage the technology well
2. To ensure that we manage well WITH the technology- by using it wisely to reengineer service delivery, find new ways to improve services and reduce labor costs and reach our residents with compassionate services and
3. To manage in a responsive manner WITHIN a world full of technology- in the hands of our residents, our business owners and our visitors. Our surroundings have changed, and yet most of us are organizing and expending resources as if the world danced to Rock and Roll and Sputnik was still twirling around our skies

Now shift forward to a non-technology issue: our preoccupation as government managers to constantly think of the problems our residents have in terms of our own internal organizational structures. My unsafe addition I just built is a Planning

Department issue, and your request to register your daughter for a baseball team becomes a Parks and Recreation Department “ticket” to be fulfilled. So the Planning Department develops a computer application for addition oversight, and the P&R department pays big dollars to set up a system for team management. These systems are, of course, contained within their own department, and interoperability is either impossible or too expensive to achieve. And so it goes, department by department.

Fast forward to a future full of smart phones and Facebook-like applications! Instead of a departmental view of accomplishment, the county would have an individual resident orientation, and organize data in order to store accomplishments and responses in citizen systems, not governmental ones. And this would reduce governmental costs for equipment and personnel, while making citizens our enthusiastic unpaid governmental resources!

Of course what I have described is a bit extreme and impractical, but hopefully it whispers the wind of change that is possible. . . . There are many issues that would have to be resolved: security, governmental separation of powers, accountability. Much to do, and difficult decisions to make. But today’s administrative life is equally difficult, complex and full of pitfalls. It only depends on where we pick to fight our battles, and who benefits. And a networked approach towards citizen services is one of the wild dreams that could someday become a reality. Are we in local government ready to experiment with such ideas? Perhaps my friend Gopal is right- we need to rethink government altogether, and there is no better time given the generous, powerful tools of technology that we have been
(continued on page 6)

by Joan McCallen, President and CEO, ICMA-RC and John Saeli, Vice President, Marketing Services, ICMA-RC

FY2011 Budget Proposal Mostly Unchanged; Health Care Reform Debate Still Ongoing



The month of February marked a number of developments on the retirement-related legislative and regulatory fronts.

The President submitted his FY2011 budget proposal to Congress early in the month. Although it generally mirrors the previous year's proposal with regard to retirement plans, it does include revisions that would expand automated IRA enrollment and the Saver's Credit.

If approved by Congress, the auto-IRA proposal will require employers that do not currently offer a retirement savings plan to automatically enroll their employees into a Roth IRA administered by the employer in a non-fiduciary capacity. Employees would be enrolled at a default rate of

three percent of compensation. Auto-enrolled employees would have the option of ceasing participation, switching to a traditional IRA, or changing contributions from the default rate.

The Administration sees the auto-IRA as an opportunity to widely promote saving for retirement and increase employee participation in employer-sponsored savings vehicles. Critics argue that the auto-IRAs may become a disincentive for employers to offer a retirement plan. Most public employers do offer a retirement plan, and as such the change would not impact public employers.

Proposed changes to the Saver's Credit would make the credit fully refundable for up to \$500 annually per person and require the credit to be deposited into an individual's retirement plan or IRA. The Administration has said that the changes would make

the credit similar to an employer match and increase the likelihood that low- and middle-income households will save for retirement.

Additional changes include increasing the modified adjusted gross income (AGI) limits for married couples jointly filing from \$55,500 to \$65,000; for singles from \$27,750 to \$32,500; and for head of households from \$41,625 to \$48,750. The impact of enhancements to the Saver's Credit on the Federal budget is priced at \$29.8 billion over 10 years.

With regard to regulations, the Department of Labor and Department of the Treasury issued a joint request for information seeking input about lifetime income investment products and how they can best be used by plan sponsors and participants. They specifically want to know how the market is addressing demand for lifetime income options; what legal, regulatory or other reasons keep plan sponsors from offering lifetime options in their plans; why plan participants often do not select such options; and what steps the two departments can take to facilitate access. ■

("Technology Corner" from page 5) granted by the innovators and pioneers of IT. Perhaps we should not let them down!

Let me hear your reactions to these provocative thoughts- too crazy for government? Or perhaps ideas whose time is coming? You will be the ultimate judge by your actions! ■

Tentative Schedule

NACA EVENTS AT NACo Annual Conference

July 2010—Washoe County, Nevada

Saturday, July 17

- 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.: NACA Executive Board Meeting
- 11:00 a.m. to 04:00 p.m.: NACA Idea Exchange; off-site site visit to Washoe County

Sunday, July 18

- 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.: NACA General Membership Meeting

Keep an eye on the NACA Web site at <http://countyadministrators.org> for updated information on these July 2010 events.

by Mike Johnson, NACA Representative to NACo

As the NACA representative to the NACo Board of Directors and the NACo Finance Committee, I have the following to report as a result of the NACo Legislative Conference held March 6-10, 2010 in Washington, DC.

The NACo Finance Committee met on Saturday, March 6th to review the overall fiscal condition of NACo as well as to review the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

NACo had good financial results for the 2009 fiscal year as net operating income was \$1,046,627 or \$826,559 greater than the \$220,068 budgeted and the investment activity was \$2,238,198 greater than the \$382,000 budgeted. As a result, net assets increased by \$3,095,775.

The NACo Consolidated Statement of Net Assets continues to be strong with net assets of \$23,242,416 up nearly \$3.1 million from the prior year.

Although attendance and registration was down for the Legislative Conference the NACo staff has gone to considerable efforts to reduce expenditures to live within the projected resources for the year. Based on the above, the Finance Committee

took action to recommend no dues increase for NACo for the FY2010/2011 fiscal year. It was noted this marks the fourth consecutive year in which NACo will not have a dues increase.

On Monday, March 8, 2010, I attended the NACo Affiliates Council meeting.

NACo has a combined affiliate group of 24 associations of not only administrators but attorneys, health professionals, intergovernmental relations specialists, parks and recreation officials, surveyors, tax collectors, and others. Next time you are at a conference take a look at the Alphabet Soup of acronyms that go along with each of the groups.

The common theme discussed at this affiliate group meeting was the efforts of the affiliates to reach out and broaden their bases throughout the country. It should be noted that some of the affiliate groups have full scale conferences that coincide with the NACo Conference some start a day or two earlier while others run concurrently with the NACo Conferences.

There was discussion again this year of encouraging NACo to allow for single day or reduced rate registrations at the NACo Conferences in order to

encourage affiliate group members who are at their affiliate meetings to also participate or to stay over for NACo functions. The NACo staff and Executive Committee of the Board have agreed to consider this for subsequent conferences.

The second point of discussion centered around the need for each of the affiliate groups to be incorporated so as to differentiate their legal status from that of NACo itself. According to the documentation handed out at the meeting NACA has already been incorporated so this should not be an issue for us in the future.

The NACo Board of Directors held their business meeting on Monday, March 8th in the morning. Of the many Board of Directors meetings that I have attended over the years this was by far the least controversial and quickest running meeting in sometime.

Each of these standing and steering committee chairs made presentations to the Board of Directors on the various policy resolutions that had been considered the prior two days. Only one resolution obtained a single NO vote while all the remaining policy resolutions were adopted without dissent. ■

NACA Needs Your Views: Respond to Online Member Survey by May 15, 2010

The Executive Committee and Board of Directors of NACA met recently in Washington, DC during the NACo Legislative Conference. As always, part of our discussion revolved around judging the needs and expectations of our members. Please take a few moments to respond to this survey to help your association leadership determine how best to serve you. Your answers to these five questions will help the board respond to your needs. Click here (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2010nacasurvey>) to respond today.

(“Economic Stimulus” from page 4)

IMPLAN—“Economic Impact Modeling System”: The following table estimates the total number of direct and indirect jobs associated with the economic stimulus program.

Total Estimated Number of Jobs and Economic Impacts

| | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Direct output (1) | \$125.2 million | Direct jobs: | 1,184 |
| Indirect output | 72.7 million | Indirect jobs: | 642 |
| Total output: | \$197.9 million | Total jobs: | 1,826 |

(1) Based upon historical data that approx. 50.4% of projects will be awarded locally.

Construction Spending: The County’s CIP Program is not just founded on the fast tracking of the sales tax surtax. From the start of FY 2009 (October 2008) through February of 2010, Sarasota County awarded more than \$80.3 million in capital project contracts that are not part of the fast track program. We expect to encumber an additional \$30 million in nonsurtax funds for road and utility capital projects over the next six months.

Total Economic Impact to Date: The total amount of fast track contracts awarded is \$69.5 million, and of that, \$55 million was awarded to local firms. These efforts have created or saved an estimated total of 850 jobs with a total compensation of \$31.9 million (average wage of \$37,529). The direct expenditures within Sarasota County of \$55 million are estimated to have an additional economic expenditure “ripple effect” of \$36.2 million within the County.

Local Business Preference

Procurement regulations have been revised to give preference to a “local business” in the purchase of commodities and services. Professional services procurements were weighted to provide credit for several factors determined to indicate that they were local businesses. Bidding procedures were modified to permit any local vendor who bid within 10 percent of a winning non-local vendor to match the low bid and therefore be assigned the contract. The wages paid by these

construction related industries are an important element in the local economy. These wages support workers in many of the small and large businesses in the community, the workers that, in many cases, are the founda-

tion of the County’s in situ middle class.

Capital Management Services

Responsibilities for all county capital improvements were consolidated into one enterprise unit, and Capital Management Services was created. Capital Management Services (CMS) is an enterprise platform for managing capital programs. CMS is responsible to ensure that all programs are clearly identified and validated. CMS provides transparent information to the public regarding ongoing projects. CMS ensures:

- Commitments are met regarding capital improvements and the economic stimulus program.
- That the Board, Administration and senior management are aware of the progress and status of all programs.
- That optimized enterprise processes and standards are utilized.

At the same time all operations and maintenance functions were also reorganized into a bill for service O and M enterprise function. Millions in unproductive heavy equipment was surplus, operators cross trained and a fully burdened cost was developed for a variety of O and M services. We were able to eliminate over 60 positions without loss of response and the fully burdened rate system allows for the functions that purchase the service of O and M to compare them against competitive options. We cannot find another medium to large government

in the U.S. that has created such a system.

Enhance Tourism and Visitor Promotion

In January 2009 an additional \$400,000 was allocated to increase advertising and promotion of Sarasota County. This funding specifically supports the Sarasota Convention and Visitors Bureau for a Winter Marketing Stimulus Campaign.

Targeted Business Assistance

In the FY 09 budget \$2 million was allocated to support business assistance and relocation when job increases were promised. To date about a one million has been spent on five partnerships that will produce in excess of 500 jobs.

Business Friendly Climate

It has been stated that doing business in Sarasota County is sometimes made difficult by the County’s processes or practices. The following are action steps to improve this perception:

- Senior management is working with local developers.
- Expedited review processes for redevelopment projects as well as green and affordable housing projects.
- Improvement to the development review committee’s work processes.
- Working with all the Chambers of Commerce in Sarasota County to identify practices and processes that help businesses grow.
- Develop high quality developer agreements that allow for infrastructure improvements.

Diversify From Traditional Economic Strengths

An economy that relies on construction and tourism is doomed to be cyclical and is an unsustainable source of community support. A focus on diversification is more important than

(continued on page 9)

(“Economic Stimulus” from page 8) ever. Government has a limited role in influencing the broader economy. Sarasota County is pushing to move the economy from one that is overly dependent on cyclical components, like construction and tourism, to one that is more diverse and focused on growth industries like clean energy, high tech, specialty manufacturing and medical services related. County actions include:

- Re-invigorating economic development efforts toward attracting clean technology.
- Working with the state legislative delegation to secure funding for a renewable energy center.
- A goal of building a renewable energy project using landfill gas this year.
- A strategy to place 40 acres of County owned land into play as an incubator strategy, a university research and design program, or an Energy Center of Excellence.

Public Private Partnerships

Three major road projects are being developed through public private partnerships where the private sector is building the project and receiving impact fee credits, right of way exchanges and financial inducements. A \$30 million upgrade to the spring training facilities for the Baltimore Orioles is being planned jointly by the club and the County, but will be contracted for and the construction managed by the club.

And through one such partnership, and the creativity that often is the positive by product of stress, the County is on the verge of creating the only FISA Gold 2,000 meter rowing venue in North America. There are less than a half a dozen of these in the world. An abandoned gravel pit, the creativity of the private sector, a major road project and a conversation with the State DOT born of the federal stimulus efforts converged to birth an unseen treasure that will add to our recreational tourism strategy and

the creation of a world class rowing venue that will attract 200,000 visitors a year within the next five years. This success in the making is a story of its own that I won't dwell on.

Summary

Sarasota businesses and citizens benefit from the acceleration of capital projects. To date, the economic stimulus effort has created 900 jobs with a total compensation of \$5,656,308. These direct expenditures within Sarasota County (\$9,575,718) are estimated to have a total economic “ripple effect” of \$15,170,835 within the County.

The innovation was initiated by the Board of County Commissioners by committing to a voter referendum on capital bonding. The program was implemented by communicating with the public, issuing the debt, fast tracking the projects, implement-

Innovation is the “act of introducing something new.”

ing a common template for procurement, aligning capital management resources, and partnering with the Chambers of Commerce, developers and small businesses.

The real innovation for Sarasota County was not to continue to run a traditional multi-year capital improvements program in a manner that would be blind to abundant fiscal stresses. The County quickly realized the unfolding impact of housing deflation and construction related unemployment, and restructured its capital improvements program to rapidly deliver jobs and business activity. Sarasota's innovation is its deliberate, adaptive, strategic response to a deteriorating economic climate.

“Economic Stimulus” is the current buzzword of the day. Well over two years ago, the community, the Board of County Commissioners and

the enterprise recognized the potential to increase local economic stimulus through an accelerated capital improvements program, and the need to diversify the economy. Beginning in January 2008, the County detailed an economic stimulus program, received public support, and began aggressively creating jobs and business activity by early 2009. The Sarasota community, through its own resolve and capabilities, moved to independently build an economic stimulus platform for the benefit of its citizens. At the time, there was no Federal or State economic stimulus funds available to accelerate capital construction projects.

Because Sarasota County has already organized a multi-pronged strategy for economic stimulus, community infrastructure is being built, and the opportunity to benefit from a federal stimulus package is maximized.

Risks inherent in this program were ensuring community understanding and transparency of all projects, bonding capability in a deteriorating financial marketplace, staff capacity to manage the breadth and depth of procurement and construction management, and managing effective enterprise processes.

The innovation of the economic stimulus program occurred in a rapidly changing economic environment in which residential property assets were collapsing, the construction industry sustained massive unemployment, tourism slowed dramatically, and financing resources were nearly withdrawn from the marketplace. The depths of this recessionary economy remain a sustaining influence in the reduction of economic activity across the nation.

The primary costs incurred were increased bond rates that were the result of the lack of market liquidity. However, construction savings and local job creation more than compensated for this additional financing

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(“Economic Stimulus” from page 9) cost. Due to extreme competition for work, many construction projects are now coming in 10-20 percent under the allocated budget. There is a huge economic and social return associated with 148 local jobs created with this economic stimulus program.

In order to achieve this innovation there needed to be a trusting relationship founded on clear and


direct communication between the County Commission and Sarasota citizens; agile organizational response and adaptation to changing external economic conditions; and the internal capability to shift priorities and alignments to achieve defined outcomes. ■

Jim Ley, Sarasota County Administrator, championed this innovation. He prepared the strategy, engaged

the Board of County Commissioners, framed the program goals, and inspired senior staff to a bias for action, which drove rapid and effective implementation of tens of millions of dollars of local economic stimulus that has supported and continues to support local businesses and families.

New County Appointments (January 1, 2010–March 31, 2010)

- **Patrick S. Blacklock** has been appointed county administrator of **Yolo County, CA.**
- **Michael Aaron Church** has been appointed deputy county manager of **Yadkin County, NC.**
- **Veronica A. Ferguson** has been appointed county administrator of **Sonoma County, CA.**
- **James Kevin Griffin** has been appointed planning and development director, **Florence County, S.C.**
- **Lisa E. Henning** has been appointed assistant director of community revitalization of **Dakota County Community Development Agency, MN.**
- **Jo Ella Hoye** has been appointed management & budget analyst of **Johnson County, KS.**
- **Robert W. Jasper** has been appointed county manager of **Summit County, UT.**
- **Sandra L. Kerl** has been appointed deputy general manager of **San Diego County Water Authority, CA.**
- **Kenneth F. Larking** has been appointed assistant county manager of **Moore County, NC.**
- **Robert C. Lawton** has been appointed intergovernmental relations/health & social services/resource management of **Solano County, CA.**
- **Melissa Peacor** has been appointed county executive of **Prince William County, VA.**



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About the Future

An editorial by Bob McEvoy

Joe Klein spoke to many of us at the recent NACo Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Whether you agree with Joe on his many different views, he is a distinguished journalist and author and a member of the prestigious Council on Foreign Affairs. His message to me was that Presidents should be looking for what will affect our children and grandchildren and decisions should transcend polls. I was also particularly struck by his reflections following his trip to Iraq and Afghanistan where he spoke to our troops. My impression of what Joe was saying here was that he is more optimistic following those discus-

sions because he saw future leaders amongst those currently serving our country who experienced the horrors of war and that their future decisions will be made with grave concern for all the world's children. In a very similar, but uncanny recent experience, I read the account of Len Matarese and the mission he organized with his Florida Police colleagues to help at the World Trade Center immediately following the attack. Len is a credentialed city manager who has also had a distinguished career in public safety including serving as a chief of police. He is currently Director of Public Safety Services with ICMA Consulting

Services. Len's passionate writing and his new vision for our future is presented for you below. ■

Editor's Note: Leonard Matarese was President of the Miami-Dade County Police Chiefs Association. After the attacks of 9-11, the Miami-Dade County State Attorney organized a contingent of South Florida police officers to report to NYPD to provide assistance. Matarese was selected to command the group and he kept a journal throughout the event and sent email back to South Florida daily. This is that journal.

September 2001 | South Florida Police Officers Support to NYPD After 9/11 Attacks

by Leonard Matarese, ICMA

As many of you know, I am leading a group of 40 police officers from South Florida who are in New York City assisting the NYPD. Here's my report to you.

Report from NYC: Journal Entry #1

We left as a group in 15 marked police vehicles after a send off from the Dade County State's Attorney's Office in Miami about 5 PM on Friday. After a few brief speeches we loaded up to a send off by several hundreds of clapping, flag waving men and women who work in the Justice Center. It was a very moving experience and the beginning of what I am now sure will be the most memorable week in my life.

We ran as convoy up I-95 and as we passed vehicles we received waves and applause. Although we had no signs on our cars explaining where we going, everyone could figure it out. Everyone except a Florida Highway Patrol Trooper who actually pulled the

convoy over for speeding (I'm not making this up). I explained to him where we were going and he sent us on our way. Through every other state the troopers saluted us as we went by, put their lights on for us or escorted us.

We drove straight through, taking turns at the wheel, stopping only for a quick bite to eat and pit stop and arrived in New Jersey about 5 PM on Saturday. After making phone contact with NYPD we were instructed to go to the Holland Tunnel. The tunnel is closed to civilian traffic and only being used for emergency vehicles. As we approached the tunnel in Bayonne, New Jersey I got to see Manhattan of the first time. It was a crystal clear day, bright and sunny, and for the first time I saw the city without the two white giant towers.

I was in college in Newark when the towers were being built and lived and worked in New Jersey several time over the past 30 years. Charlene and I and our kids visited New York many times and each visit involved

a trip to lower Manhattan. Two years ago we stayed for a week in Battery Park City, next to the WTC. The towers were how you oriented yourself in NY and when I saw the skyline without them it was, I think, the first time that I mentally grasped the enormity of what had happened.

We entered the Holland Tunnel passing hundreds of police officers enroute. Going through the tunnel with no traffic, red and blue lights silently flashing was a very eerie experience. But it did not prepare me for what was next. Entering lower Manhattan was like entering an occupied city. Thousands of police officers from neighboring states, cities from around the country were guarding every street corner. The streets were virtually empty and there were simply cops and National Guardsmen everywhere.

We made our way to Greenwich Village to report to the 6th Precinct where we have been assigned for the week. Arriving there we found the
(continued on page 12)

(“September 2001” from page 11)
block around the police station to be a high security area, blocked off to all vehicle traffic and open only to pedestrians living in the area. We reported to the Precinct XO for our assignments.

The lobby of the building had become a shrine to the two officers from the 6th killed at the WTC. I’ll tell you more about them later. Photographs of a smiling Dad holding his kids, another of an officer laughing, flowers, lighted candles, letter from kids, drawings of the towers being hit by airplanes with thank you notes written by local school kids set the tone for what we were going to be doing for the next week.

The 6th is adjacent to the 1st Precinct, just north of where the WTC was. From every avenue in the 6th you used to be able to see the towers. Now you see the smoke, lessening every day but still there. The officers of the 6th have been working virtually non stop since the 11th, always at least 12 hours but sometimes 18 to 20 hours a day. Generally they have had one day off in the past twenty days. Since they are the neighboring precinct they initially spent their first days on the pit, digging out by hand. That detail now has been reduced to ten officers per 12 hour shift. While most of the digging is now being done by machine, they are still allowed to work in the pit since they are looking for two of their own.

We were told that if we could cover some of the security posts the officers currently assigned there could have a day or two off. The precinct has several high concern buildings as well which also required constant patrol. And the NYPD bomb team is housed there as well making it an especially high risk target. Additionally we were asked if we could partner up with NYPD officers to patrol the precinct as well. We told them whatever they needed we would do it.

Next: Our Assignments and First Tour and a visit to Ground Zero.

Report from NYC: Journal Entry # 2

We decided to split our group into 2 platoons Alpha & Bravo with me taking one group; another chief taking the second. With a coin toss we determined who would take day shifts and who would be nights. Days and nights really do not properly describe what our schedule is; “Days” starts at 0400 (4 AM) and goes to 4 in the afternoon when the next shift works 4 PM to 4 AM. I lost the toss and the other chief took “days”. That was fine with me because if I had won I still would have taken the Bravo shift—getting up at 2 AM to get ready for work is just too hard (and these guys and gals have been doing it non stop for three weeks).

We next had to find lodging and reported as a group to the Jacob Javits Convention Center where a lot of the logistics are being arranged. As we drove through the streets of Manhattan, people were streaming out of bars, restaurants, shops, their apartments to come to the street and applaud us and yell “Thank You” and “God Bless You”. We had not done anything yet and we were being thanked. Not one of us made that drive without tears in our eyes.

There was a huge kitchen set up at the Center, cooking really good food, but none of us ate. We were tired, dirty, and just wanted to get into bed to get ready for the next day. Again, hundreds of cops in the area. They found us a hotel that donated beds in the west side at Broadway and 77th. As a convoy we began our ride there. Checked in and learned that we only have a two day commitment from the hotel and our next home may be the YMCA.

After cleaning up and winding down some, we ended up getting something to eat and then off to sleep. Everyone slept through till noon or so when we began preparing to report for work. After a platoon meeting we drove to the 6th, arriving around 1500 hours.

The 6th is a small precinct in one of the City’s most unique neighborhoods. I remember visiting the Village many times as a student at Rutgers in the late 1960’s and early 70’s. Very upscale, sophisticated area, lots of restaurants, shops, etc. The station house is in the middle of the block on 10th street and the entire block has been made a security area. Everyone entering must show ID; only residents and their guest are permitted. No vehicles allowed on the street in front of the house. Every precinct station in the city is operating under these conditions. The situation here is complicated by the fact that the NYPD bomb squad is housed here as well, making this a real possible target.

Our officers are here to relieve the NYPD officers so they can get a day or two off. Most have worked virtually non stop since the 11th. The first couple of weeks they were working 18–20 hours a day, then down to 12–14. Most have had only one, or at most two days off since the attack. This would be draining under the best of circumstances. But every officer has worked on the pit, at least every other day, hand digging and removing victims. I am not going into the details here but as a 32 year police veteran who has worked my share of airplane crashes and other disasters I have never heard of anyone doing the kinds of things these men and women have done. I am certain that lots of them will need counseling to get past this especially once this high state of alert and constant working lessens. Because we are here they will now be able to be given some time off which each terribly needs. What the firefighters have gone through is even worse.

Our officers have taken over the precinct security as well as providing patrol assistance. No one gets into the station without an ID check. It really struck me how upside down things were when I was watching one of our South Florida police officers checking the identification of an NYPD officer

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("September 2001" from page 12)

reporting for duty at the precinct he has worked in for 9 years. Not one of them objected and each thanked our folks as they came into the house. We have our police vehicles at the four corners of the block; our cops check everyone in and out of the area. What strikes me is how cooperative everyone is no matter how many times they are asked for ID. New Yorkers come up to us, shake our hands, thank us, give us food. It seems a little like the allies must have felt when they arrived in Europe.

Our police vehicles are really appreciated. We were initially planning to take a bus up but they asked us to bring cars. Many cars were lost in the attack and with virtually every one of the 40,000 NYPD officers working 12 hour days there are not enough cars to go around. Officers standing a post do so in the rain and cold for the full 12-14 hour shift. Our vehicles give them some shelter. Additionally we are putting our vehicles out on patrol, parking up one Florida cop and one NYPD officer.

Our arrival was supposed to allow ten officers to have their first day off in three weeks. We were relieving a group of officers from Virginia. One of the VA cops working here left his partner at home and he was gunned down Saturday night in an arrest. So instead of taking the day off the NYPD officers traveled to Virginia for the funeral. What a terrible irony.

The neighborhood has opened their hearts to the precinct. There are cards, letters, photos everywhere. Huge amounts of food in the station constantly and many of the locals stay at the station all day and night cooking and serving to the officers. The cops tell us that on September 10th, no one really appreciated their presence; the community was somewhat indifferent to them. Now things are so different.

The past two nights I have been patrolling the streets of Greenwich Village in an Indian Creek Police Car

with an NYPD officer. Last night I paired up with a young officer who also graduated from Rutgers, a really wonderful guy. You could not make this stuff up; it's so upside down that at times I can't believe it. The cops are constantly thanking us for being here and we all feel like we wish we could do more to help them find their lost brother officers or let them stay home for a week or two.

The streets are almost empty at night. NYC is at almost a standstill no one in the restaurants, shops. Calls for police service are way down. The radio which is normally crackling is silent for minutes at a time. Our hotel is at the corner of 77 and Broadway, normally a noisy area but it's very quiet here, almost no horn honking at all, very different for the New York of September 10th.

Of course the drug dealers are still working and lots of the patrol work involves chasing them out of the residential neighborhoods and Washington Park. Seems like the dealers have a uniform just like us cops do. While there is a little difference between the Florida dealers appearance and the city's you can tell they are on the same team.

One of our cops responded with an NYPD officer to a possible burglary in progress and she got a real taste of what it's like working here, climbing up the rusting fire escape to get to the roof of the apartment building. Our folks are leaning a lot.

You can see that the NYPD officers are wearing down. Last night HQ announced the 12 hour shifts are going to continue indefinitely and the alert was heightened. Even the precinct commanders doesn't know what is going to happen but the buzz is that someone knows something and that's why everyone remains on the highest level of alert for the city. They also announced that shifts were changing from 4-4 to 6-6. So tonight we are working 13 hours. The NYPD cops are really upset by this; many travelling in by train and this makes

the connections hard, sometimes adding an hour or more to their travel times each way. They are also worried about being in rush hour in the event of another attack which is the constant topic of conversation. These guys and gals are wearing down. You can see it in their eyes, hear it in their voices. They are physically and emotionally exhausted and I wonder how much more they can take of this. There is a lot of concern that their tiredness will result in a mistake, an accident, injury or worse...

Report from NYC: Journal Entry #3

After we started our first shift on Sunday night the precinct Executive Officer made arrangements to have me taken to the site. The cops don't call it Ground Zero or the Pit—I guess those were media names. They just ask if have seen "it", or been downtown. It's almost like it is too horrible to give it a name. Getting all of the visiting cops there is a priority for the NYPD officers. I get a sense that they want us to see just how terrible it is so that we can tell others it is not like you see on TV, it is something far different and worse.

I was assigned to two patrol officers. A male and female, in their early 30's, John and Nellie. They have been cops for 9 1/2 years, went right to the 6th after the academy and have been partners since. Both have turned down promotions and assignments so they can stay in the precinct and work with each other. Both married, with kids. Just a completely different perspective than cops in Florida.

It was starting to rain hard and getting quite cold which added to the sense that we were going into a world far different than anything I had ever seen. We drove to the perimeter which is now being guarded by National Guard troops. Non-law enforcement and emergency personnel have been prohibited from entering the area, much different from the first week when all volunteers were welcomed.

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Although we were in uniform and driving a marked vehicle we were required to produce our police credentials to get through the perimeter.

It was about 2200 hours and the site was just around the corner. The whole area is lit up brighter than day time; a very bright white shining onto the site then bouncing up bathing the surrounding, remaining and badly damaged buildings. As we walk in we pass the temporary morgue—two large white tents adjacent to the site where the victims are taken then moved to other places.

We turn the corner and the scene just takes your breath away, for a moment I was just stunned, like someone or something had completely immobilized me. Right in front of me is a pile of rubble perhaps 15 stories high. Giant I beams twisted like a piece of licorice, chunks of concrete the size of a car and what I thought was dirt everywhere. Turns out it is not dirt, it's the pulverized remains of the millions of yards of concrete that used to be the towers. Still standing is a part of the building's facade that you've seen on TV so many times and standing next to it is an empty stairwell, maybe four or five flights high.

The scene is so enormous that you can not take it in within the field of vision. Sixteen acres of complete and total devastation. Although I have visited here many times I can't orient myself to the where I am in relation to where the buildings used to be. After the cops help me get oriented I realize that I am standing almost exactly where I once stood, looking up the towers, with Charlene and Justin, Shawna and my Mom and Dad in 1986. We continue to walk around the perimeter passing the National Guard supply rooms. It and the other supply points are housed in the lobbies of the buildings surrounding the Trade Center still standing and deemed to be safe. Here in the entry to what were some of the country's most magnificent business buildings are now stock-

piles of heavy equipment, food, rescue supplies. Everything that the rescuers could need is there—towels, eyewash, gloves, shoes, socks, blankets, it looks like a military supply base crossed with a pharmacy.

In the next building's lobby is a makeshift cafeteria, the next one is setup with temporary toilets, the next one holds cutting torches and jack hammers. All where men and women in business suits and carrying brief cases walked only a few weeks ago. Everything lit with emergency lighting. As we walk around the perimeter we see the rescuers working non stop although the rain continues to be heavy and cold. As we stand there and watch hundreds of people climbing over beams, hanging from cranes I realize that some of the real unsung heroes are the ironworkers pulling the scrap pile apart. I mention this to the cops with me and they tell me that the workers are donating about a quarter of their hourly wage to the victim's fund. Here's these men literally risking their lives daily in a very dangerous environment and giving away part of what they are earning.

I mention to the cops that we and the firefighters knew what the possibilities were when we signed up, but these guys, hey, they just wanted to build buildings.

We continue around the perimeter and at one point needed to move back a city block to get around some equipment. Here's where you get an even greater sense of the damage to the area. Blocks away, thousands of windows are blown out, damage to the buildings substantial. We come around the corner, walk north back to the site and are challenged again by troops and asked to produce our credentials once more. We are now at the edge of what the media has called the pit and it truly is. An area about the size of half a football field, maybe a hundred feet or more deep. It is very hard to get a sense of the real dimensions because there is no longer a reference point to compare to.

About 500 feet away the wrecking machines are attempting to bring down the last ten or so floors of what used to be Building 7. This has been going on for several days and according to the cops they seem to be making little progress, the building resisting the efforts to break it completely down. On the other side of the street is the building that teetered on a collapse the first several days of the rescues. John and Nellie tell me that when they were digging they had to evacuate several times, running like crazy, after hearing it strain and crack, to get away from the building until it stabilized, and they going back in to dig more, searching for one of their precinct's officers.

They tell me to turn around and look back, south, at another building maybe 50 stories high. I look up and see a giant hole, maybe five stories high, cut right out of the center of the building. Then they tell me to look west at another building. Here's another hole, maybe seven stories high cut right out of the corner. Either one of these would have been a major disaster—now they are an afterthought to the main scene.

We continue our walk around the site, down the street bordering the north side of the site. Dozens of small business, bars, restaurants, copy centers, shoe repairs, all closed covered with dust and debris, surrounded by chain link fence. I wonder what is happening to the owners and workers from these stores. Probably they'll be wiped out financially, even with government help, losing their lifetime's work and savings.

We get back to our starting point and walk towards the water front where a dinner cruise boat has been converted to a emergency service workers cafeteria. We walk down a dock and pass the makeshift memorial set up under a tent at the edge of the site. Here each of the services that lost people has set up a shrine to their brothers: NYPD, FDNY, and the Port

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(“September 2001” from page 14)
Authority Police. A photo of everyone lost is here, along with candles, poems, dolls, mementos. It is truly devastating to see the faces of the heroes who now lay under the pile of rubble to my left and you simply can not see this without your heart breaking. We pause silently there for several minutes as firefighters and other officers come by, touch the pictures, wipe their eyes, pray silently. I pull myself away because it really hurts to stay there.

We walk down a dock to the disinfectant station. No one knows what they are actually handling, walking on, breathing and everyone washes and disinfects after they pass through the area. We walk to the boat and join hundreds of others to eat a meal served by Red Cross volunteers, sharing a table with the steel workers taking a meal break. I want to tell them how proud the rest of America is of them, but I don’t because I sense they just want to sit here and eat alone for a few minutes before going back into the hell they are working in. I talk instead to a firefighter who tells me they have just entered the stairwell where they have found many firefighters and police officers. I can tell that he is relieved that they have made this grisly discovery. “It’s good we got them. Now their families can have some closure” he tells me, and then thanks me for coming here. The real heroes, thanking me for coming here! I wish him safety and good luck.

The former cruise boat is a beehive of activity; hundreds in and out hourly. There are free long distance phones for the workers who come from everywhere. Volunteer chiropractors and massage therapists working on the rescuers. Religious people giving counseling. A scene out of another world.

We leave to walk back to our police car and the rain seems to have slowed. I look back at the site, still unable to get my mind around what I am seeing. John and Nellie tell me

how much better things look than just a few days ago. “They’ve removed about 25% of what was here just a couple of days ago” they say. “Now that it is a recovery situation, the heavy equipment is moving things much faster. The area we just walked in only a few days before was littered with crushed police cars and fire trucks, steel and concrete, completely impassable”

We drive away and I wonder how these folks will ever get this out of their heads.

Report from NYC: Journal Entry # 4

Last night provided a little comic relief to what has been a trying and wearing experience. Three knuckleheads decided to break into an apartment about two blocks from the precinct house. Mind you there must be 100 law enforcement officers within a five block area. Anyway, someone sees them and calls the cops. The sector patrol unit responds and rolls up on these guys who take off on foot. The officers jump from their car, and the chase is on!

A 10-13 goes out (officer needs help) and about 50 cops from the precinct house start running down 10th street. Cops are actually jumping through the window of the station to get a head start on others. I run around the front of the station and see this gang of blue suits racing full bore up the street. Cops from NYPD, Indian Creek, Medley, Aventura, Boston, Massachusetts Corrections—It looks like a foot race from the Police Olympics. The perps are running away from the radio patrol guys, turn the corner and run right into this crowd of 50 or so blue knights. Their eyes open up like saucers and they look like the proverbial deer in the headlights. The two of them dive under a parked car, pushing each other to try to get the best space. Suddenly they find themselves surrounded by what looks like half an NFL team with guns drawn. The bad guys meekly slide out from under the car, look up and see

all these different police uniforms. I’m sure they are still figuring out what happened.

Meanwhile, the third guy takes off in a different direction with two other cops chasing him. A citizen is in the process of unlocking his personal vehicle as the bad guy runs by and this good Samaritan casually sticks his leg out as the perp runs by, tripping him up and right into the arms of another cop. A scene right out of the movies.

But the best part comes next. Apartment residents up and down the street watching the episode through their windows suddenly opened them up and give the cops a long ovation yelling “Thank you NYPD, thank you officers!” The senior cops are really moved by this. One tells me he has never had that kind of thing happen to him in his 20 years on the job.

It’s really clear that the residents of the city have finally come to understand and appreciate their cops and firefighters. I went by Station 18 last night, an engine and ladder, were housed there. It was shift change at the time of the incident so the oncoming and off going crews were in the station. The cops and firefighters, everywhere, always hang around for a few minutes, chatting with their buddies before going home. Well the alarm comes in and all of them, on and off duty, jump on the trucks and race to the Towers; 28 firefighters. The station house door that closed behind them as they raced from the station has not been opened since—every one of them gave their lives trying to save the victims at the WTC—every single member of the squad lost.

Officer James Leahy from the sixth precinct where I am working was on routine patrol as the plane flew low across the precinct. He immediately knew something had to be wrong, the precinct was not in a flight path and the aircraft was far too low. He and his partner raced to the WTC about ten blocks south, in the 1st Precinct. Leahy was helping firefighters carry

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oxygen bottles up the stairs when the building came down.

Fire units from miles away responded to the scene; many returned to the station, days later, without their full crews. Ladder Company 118 from Brooklyn raced across the Brooklyn Bridge with both twin towers fully ablaze and clearly visible to them as they made what was to be their final run. Imagine seeing the horrible images that we all watch on our TVs, but seeing them for real and racing, running as fast as possible towards them? Imagine arriving at the scene, and in the midst of the chaos, bodies, building parts falling around you, making your way through the debris and crowds, carrying hose and oxygen bottles, running into the doomed skyscrapers with one goal in mind—to save a fellow human being. Thousands of men and women did that and hundreds never returned. None of the six men on Ladder 118 did. Today’s Daily News has an actual photo of Ladder 118 crossing the bridge and driving into what a priest has called the “gates of hell”.

Another man who made that journey that day was firefighter Tom Kelly. Tom was also from a ladder company from Brooklyn, L-105. So he and his crew must have seen the towers ablaze as they also raced across the bridge. Knowing full well when what they were going into, they unhesitatingly pushed on to do what they had committed their lives to do—protect others. Someone said that every one in America has been touched by the attack. That we are all connected to this tragedy in some way. Golden Wolves Hockey Team families do not need to search very far for our connection to this disaster. Fire Fighter Tom Kelly is our PW Minor, Patrick Kelly’s, loving Uncle.

The 6th had cops at the site last night and so I was down there again. This visit was really far more enlightening because I was able to think through what I was seeing with a little less emotion clouding my vision. It

has now become a huge demolition site. Hundreds of pieces of equipment moving millions of tons of steel and debris. Most of the labor is being done by the iron workers and construction equipment operators with the firefighters climbing over the piles of rubble whenever there is a possibility of a victim being found. What strikes me is how there is nothing but steel and dirt. I stare for minutes at the pile of rubble which is only feet away and can see nothing but dirt. No pieces of computers, parts of desk, telephone, cabinets, nothing but dirt. Everything has been incinerated totally and completely. That is why it is so important that the victim’s families see this to understand why there are so few bodies. “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust” is a reality here.

The firefighters have that 1000 yard stare you hear about with combat veterans. You can’t capture in words what you see in their eyes as they walk by you. As each passes we acknowledge each other without a word being said. I can’t understand how they keep going or how they are going to handle this in weeks and years to come.

As I drive through the city I meet hundreds of cops—different uniforms from different states—big cities—small towns. There is this unbelievable bond amongst us. We stop and chat, as if we are long time friends, then move on to our posts. The camaraderie is overwhelming. I think we all sense that we are in for a long haul on this nationwide and we all know that at anytime we can be called on as the NY people have.

As I meet and work with these wonderful firefighters and cops and paramedics, most of them younger than our daughter, I have never been prouder to be part of the public safety profession and I thank God for letting me do so.

Final Report from NYC

Friday was our last day of work.

It seemed like the City was picking up a little; more people out but still fairly somber. As tired as we were and

as much as we wanted to get home we had settled into a routine and now we were feeling a little sad about leaving. The NYPD cops were terrific, giving us shirts, badges, patches, one gave me his old NYPD jacket. At the morning roll call we presented the precinct with a framed poster with all of our departmental patches and a note from each department. The precinct has a nice museum of police paraphernalia and I left them an Indian Creek badge which they promptly put up in the display case.

After work on Friday, at 6 AM, we met with a group of the NYPD guys and gals at a local meeting place and shared a couple of beers and pretzels and chips. For the rest of the world it was early in the morning but for us it was about 5:30 in the afternoon. It was really a going away party for us and the NYPD folks, over and over thanked us for our efforts. I have been to lots of after work cops parties, usually lots of laughs and joking around. Same here, but there was this constantly overhanging sense of sadness that seems to cling to everything. Several times the NYPD cops got weepy and very sad. I’m afraid this is just the beginnings of a very long period of mourning for them.

We went to the hotel and slept most of the day. Our original plans were to see a little of the city during the day but we were all so tired that just didn’t happen. The five of us from Indian Creek had dinner together and then went to a fund raiser for the family of Officer Leahy. The cops from the precinct had shirts made up with his name and shield number and the picture of “the other twin towers” on the back. You may have seen that in the papers; a cop and firefighter standing where the WTC used to be. They gave each of us a shirt.

A tattoo parlor in the Village has been giving free tattoos to firefighters, paramedics and cops all week. Emblems of the WTC attack, usually badges with the date on it. Non-stop lines of medics waiting to get perma-

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nently marked. I suspect that if they had waited two or three weeks most would not have done it; really a in the heat of the moment thing. I am sure that a couple of weeks or months from now they’ll be lots of regrets.

We were facing the drive home with real sense of dread. We were really tired as it was, the 14+ hour days, the long ride up, was taking its toll. The adrenaline rush of coming up was over and now we just had another 24 hours of non stop driving ahead of us. Lots of the officers were scheduled to work the day after they arrived back home. Since we had our cars with us we couldn’t fly home. I called AMTRAK asking about the possibility of us taking the Auto Train home. After the Director of the Auto Train, Sharon Malones and her assistant Wanda Cundy got involved, us and our police cars got a free ride home—their contribution to the cause as they put it. The ride was a wonderful way to end this odyssey and if you haven’t taken a train lately I suggest you do. Wonderful service, very nice people. Thank you AMTRAK!

After we returned to South Florida we ended up being invited as a group

to several breakfasts for Rotary and other civic groups. They asked us what we did in New York and I told them we did just what cops do every day—protect people.

Once we were home, a reporter asked me what I had learned from this experience. There were several things. First was a reaffirmation of my career choice. The newspapers were full of stories about how people were re-evaluating their lives and careers as a result of the attack, often walking away from successful jobs to seek out something more meaningful. That’s something none of us had to do.

I was also struck by the fact that if we are at war then the front line troops in “Homeland Security” are the cops, and firefighters and paramedics. Already we have begun receiving schedules for training on terrorism; this job is going to change dramatically.

And finally I learned that we really have outstanding young men and women protecting our nation. Typically the older generation has questions about whether the next generation has “the right stuff”. Frankly I am not too sure that those of us baby

boomers who are now in our early 50s gave back enough to this wonderful country. Lots of us who were so into peace and love in the 1960s ended up chasing the almighty dollar and BMW’s and giant houses, and 401 Plans, and really did not give too much back.

But watching these brave firefighters, meeting these dedicated cops and medics, working under conditions none of them even dreamed about a couple of weeks ago, talking with the National Guardsmen standing in the cold rain, seeing the ironworkers risking their lives to retrieve victim’s bodies, watching my officers, none of whom had ever worked in a big city, perform so admirably, so professionally, seeing the Red Cross volunteers and people from all walks of life, all races and religions, giving daily, convinced me we have nothing to worry about—these guys and gals, our young Americans, definitely have the right stuff!

I hope that in these word pictures I have been able to share with you some of what we have experienced.

God Bless America! ■

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- **Monday: Diane Swonk**, Chief Economist for Mesirow Financial and one of the top economic forecasters in the U.S., will use her expertise to forecast the latest economic outlook with a particular focus on implications for local governments.
- **Tuesday: Carl Guardino**, CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, will lead a panel of Silicon Valley CEOs in a discussion of technological innovations on the horizon that will have an impact on local government.
- **Wednesday: Tim Brown**, CEO of design firm IDEO (*EYE-dee-oh*), considered to be one of the world’s most innovative companies, will discuss how to use design techniques and strategies to match people’s needs with what is technically feasible and strategically viable for an organization.



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