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Members of the Inyo County Employees Association voted overwhelmingly recently to affiliate with the 1.3 million member American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the nation's largest public employee and health care workers' union.

The move comes after completion of a contract about a year ago, and during a current struggle with county administration to address salary issues for a number of employees.

According to ICEA President John Snyder, county employees saw a need

and work in the 21st Century, and believed that an affiliation with the larger organization was the best way to help them achieve that goal.

"The unfortunate reality is that the administration is becoming increasingly confrontational toward county workers, both in negotiations and on day-to-day matters," Snyder said, adding that the larger union "has the professional expertise to help us match wits with the bosses in labor-management situations."

Director of Personnel for Inyo County, Gayle Todd, said the news shouldn't affect the current contract employees are working under.

tal survey will help future of facility

board of directors in June," Spencer said. "The actual approval of the survey took place at the hospital board meeting in July."

"We talked about current needs in health care across the country, and we really want the people to know that while the hospital is a big entity, it's a necessity for the whole community," Grubbe stated. "To keep it viable we have to know the needs of the community, not just the patients. We want to let people to know we're here for them."

The questionnaire, formally called the "Northern Inyo Hospital Community Assessment," was placed into employee paychecks, and delivered to the community as an insert and printed advertisement in the *Inyo Register*.

Consisting of five questions, the thrust of the assessment is to find out what services the hospital does not currently provide district residents think should be provided, and which services currently offered that should no longer be provided.

"We tried to limit it to a general idea of what people need," Grubbe explained. "We're asking them 'are

you comfortable with what's here or do we need more?'"

The deadline for returning the assessment is Sept. 30, and Spencer urges those who received the form to return it as soon as possible.

"So far, between the employees and district residents, we have received only about 100 responses," Spencer explained. "The big three answers are that people want a kidney dialysis unit, expand the emergency room area, and for us to keep pushing for the skilled nursing facility. There were others who wanted the extremes, from those who wanted many more things to others who didn't want any more services at all."

Grubbe added that they have been sounding out local civic organizations to find out what they think as well

Safe drivers should see lower premiums

By Steve Geissinger
The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO (AP) — Experienced, safe drivers who aren't on the road much will pay less than anyone else for car insurance — no matter where they live — under rules the state proposed Thursday to implement Proposition 103.

Meanwhile, younger drivers and people who drive a lot, or have a history of accidents and moving violations, will pay more.

The rules on setting premiums were immediately criticized by insurers, who said that the system won't be fair because territory will be much less of a factor.

But the regulations are a consumer triumph after eight years of struggle, according to a co-author of Proposition 103, an initiative that voters

approved in November 1988 to reduce the cost of auto insurance.

Much of Proposition 103, including provisions on calculating premiums, has been tangled in legal battles between insurers, the state, and consumer advocates, since 1988.

The new regulations proposed by Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush would replace temporary rules enacted by his predecessors. But the permanent rules will not take effect until they are reviewed by the Office of Administrative Law and go before a public hearing Dec. 1 in Los Angeles.

The new rules force insurers to reduce consideration of where a driver lives, instead requiring that insurers primarily weigh three factors: driving safety record, experience, and mileage driven annually.

ICSO investigating discovery of body

The badly-decomposed body of a yet-to-be-identified individual was discovered by hikers earlier this week in a remote location about 13 miles southeast of Olancha.

According to Lt. Bill Lutze with the Inyo County Sheriff's Department, an autopsy on the individual was com-

pleted Tuesday, but the exact cause of death has yet to be determined.

Lutze said the body had apparently been at the location for about six months, leading to its decomposed state. The body was found in a sleeping bag. A dental records check is being conducted in order to make positive identification.

Ticket sales strong for Millpond Music Festival

Let a variety of music ring through your ears at the Millpond Traditional Music Festival the weekend of Sept. 15-17 at the Millpond Recreation Area just a few miles north of Bishop.

"Ticket sales are up and we have already exceeded last year's pre-ticket sale," Nancy Tallent, Inyo Council for the Arts spokesperson, said. "Approximately 65 percent of the phone callers requesting more information and tickets have never heard of Bishop and have no idea what our environment is like."

She added that "about 65 percent of the ticket sales are new, first-timers; many times it's due to the fact that they had such a good time last year, families have planned their vacations around attending Millpond and bringing more relatives," she said.

Headlining the festival is John Sebastian and his J Band, who will perform their blues and bluegrass jug band music. Sebastian is best known for his work with the '60s group, The Lovin' Spoonful.

Another favorite attraction is

Ramblin' Jack Elliott, who is a storyteller and musician. Elliott left home at 14 wanting to be a cowboy and ended up hitchhiking, riding trails and creating music filled with the stories of the people he met along the way. He traveled and worked with cowboys, miners, sailors, met beautiful women and mountain men.

A variety of music will include folk, blues, Cajun, gospel and Celtic. Other featured bands include Laurie Lewis and Grant Street, Bob Brozman, Sons of the San Joaquin, Queen Ida, Doyle Lawson and Quicksilver, Tannahill Weavers, Sukay, Austin Lounge Lizards and Elkwhistle.

The first day of the event, at the Friday Night Gathering, there will be many locals performing along with professional musicians. This year the gathering will be moved to the main stage. Those performing will include Bob Brozman, Ramblin' Jack Elliott and the Austin Lounge Lizards. This year tickets for the Friday gathering will be sold in advance to cut the long

wait at the gate for tickets.

Millpond offers a variety of family fun, and a lot of things for kids. There are workshops with the musicians, instrument workshops for first-time beginners, storytellers, free activities for children, including arts and crafts, music, game and puppet shows, gourmet food vendors, an arts and crafts show displaying work by local artisans, dancing, jamming, an open mike stage, and nightly dinners.

Inyo Council for the Arts is also looking for volunteers to place posters and brochures around town. Volunteers can earn tickets for their work.

For more information on prices or volunteer work call the Inyo Council for the Arts at (619) 873-8014 or 1-800-874-0669. There is no fee for Inyo and Mono students to attend the festival.

The event is sponsored by the Inyo Council for the Arts, the County of Inyo, the City of Bishop, the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

lling Festival s its return

International Literacy Day, Altrusa International will once again host its annual Storytelling Festival on Saturday, Sept. 9, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Millpond Recreation Area. A number of stations located near the area will introduce youngsters to the world of reading. The stations will highlight animals, fairy tales, Disney stories, wild west feature called "When I Grow Up." The "When-Story" station, where children can create their own stories.

Participants will receive a free book of their choosing from the Inyo Council for the Arts, and the *Inyo Register* newspapers, while supplies last.

Participants can be characters in costume, face painting, balloon animals and refreshments available.

For more information contact either Florene Ross, 872-2215, or Nancy Tallent, 873-8745.