

Editor, Melody Valiant, CMC, City of Tumwater



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www.WMCAClerks.org

Founded in 1970, WMCA is a non-profit association that promotes the professional and education standards of Municipal Clerks, County Clerks, and Transit Board Clerks in various local governments of the State of Washington.

President’s Message

Diana Quinn, CMC

Wow, what a conference! Is anyone else wondering what the effect of the lotion you put on this morning is going to have on your body? That class was amazing!

First, a huge kudos to Carol Etgen, our new “Clerk of the Year,” and Molly Towslee who received the “President’s Award of Distinction.” These ladies were perfect choices for these awards. Congratulations to both of you!

I would like to acknowledge our new attendees, and say I hope you felt the camaraderie at the conference. You are a member of the finest group of people bar none. Please don’t hesitate to call on any of us for help or guidance. We’re so happy to have you!

I would be remiss if I didn’t thank our two new Executive Board members, Dee Roberts and Shannon Corin. These two women are a valuable addition to our board. Welcome!

Spring has sprung! I love this time of year, new growth, fresh beginnings...the promise of life. It’s the time of the year when the sun comes out and feeds us with vitamin D, which many of us have been denied throughout the winter.

Going to conference always signals “spring” to me. The classes I attended, the friendships I renewed, the opportunity to see the latest and greatest technology offered by the vendors, all have me excited to apply them at work and home. It also helps us reflect on the past year and celebrate those things accomplished. We had such excellent speakers at our conference. They taught us how to work more effectively with our co-workers and customers, how to take care of our bodies, and relieve stress.

I hope you feel like I do, so hopeful, fresh, and excited to make a difference in my world. If I could give you anything, I would wave my magic wand and make sure this feeling stays with you throughout the year.

Sometimes reality smacks us in the face and we struggle to use the tools we have in our tool box. This is when you reach out to that special PD friend, or that person at conference who made you feel welcomed, or the clerk in the city next to you. Give them a call

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President's Message

and have a little chat, go to coffee, meet for an adult beverage, help each other rejuvenate. I encourage some of you seasoned clerks to reach out to those new faces you saw at conference. Sometimes it takes that initial contact to create a mentorship that could encourage, and change a career. I think you'll find your magic is there. It just needs to be taken out, dusted off, and waved for all it's worth.

Mentoring, accountability, genuine commitment, inspiration, and collaboration – these are the tools we use on a daily basis to serve our communities. In another word, it's our magic.

Thank you so much for the trust you have bestowed upon me. I am honored to be your President and to serve you with my whole heart. You are all the bestest of the best!

Wave your wand, and **"WORK YOUR MAGIC!"**

Diana

FUNDRAISING RESULTS

WMCA – YOU ARE THE BEST!

The WMCA Fundraising Committee would like to say THANK YOU to everyone who generously donated auction items, bid and won auction items, sold tickets, bought tickets, and shopped at the WMCA store. As a result of YOUR fundraising efforts, a total of \$11,719 was raised as follows:

Store Sales \$1,332
Grand Raffle \$3,855
Dollar Raffle \$487
Silent Auction \$2,712
Live Auction \$3,196
50/50 Raffle \$100
Donation \$37

GRAND TOTAL: \$11,719



2014 ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECAP



President Passey at the President's Reception

The mission to Seek Excellence and Destroy Mediocrity under the leadership of now Immediate Past President Scott Passey is complete! Attired in camouflage with Seek and Destroy temporary tattoos, Scott arrived on Monday, March 17th along with the Conference Planning and Fundraising Committees to get things prepared for the Advanced Academy on Tuesday morning and events later that evening.

68 of us attended the Academy Session with Jan Dwyer Bang, who taught "Service Leadership – Serving with Excellence, Clarity, and Heart." She encouraged developing and writing standards for customer service and team norms, and suggested developing answers to the "most frequently asked questions" for team members to use when responding to internal and external customers. Jan reminded us that our customer service goals should tie back into our entity or department's mission statement, and we evaluated our own personal levels of customer service and learned where we can make improvements.

Tuesday night at the President's Reception, we were all surprised to see how the Conference Planning Committee Chair Paula Swisher outdid herself this year – she acquired a Humvee from the local National Guard. President Passey was very pleased indeed.

Wednesday morning, the Membership Committee, under the leadership of Liz Smoot, hosted the First Time Attendee Breakfast and introduced them to the Executive Committee, NCI Director Dema Harris, Region IX Directors Alice Attwood and Joann Tilton, IIMC Vice President Monica Simmons and representatives from AWC and MRSC.

Later that morning, we held an opening ceremony to officially open the conference and recognize some of the milestones of the year including new CMCs and MMCs, retirements, etc. Host Clerk Debbie Clark of Pasco and her Mayor welcomed attendees and the ceremony was followed by the keynote speaker, Dr. Brian Luke Seaward, who spoke about managing stress in the workplace. Dr. Seaward made two more presentations in the afternoon about the importance of diet and sleep. Our own Elizabeth Alba, from the City of Toppenish, taught sessions on governmental accounting which were very well-received.



Brian Luke Seaward, Keynote & Wellness Speaker



WMCA Fundraising Gurus!

The Region IX lunch featured updates from State Presidents Janey Hovenden of Alaska, Nanci Lima of California, and Norma Alley from Oregon and of course, Scott Passey, as well as our Region IX Directors, Dema Harris, and Monica Simmons.



Dema Harris with the beautiful quilt that Gwen Robson made for her as a parting gift.



Having Fun at the Grizzly Bar on Wednesday night

Wednesday night, the evening began with a celebration in honor of Dema Harris, our beloved NCI Director who is retiring in June. The Conference Planning Committee had a few surprises including presentation of a beautiful quilt for Dema that was made by Gwen Robson from the City of Orting. Gwen stepped out of her comfort zone and got on the microphone to present the quilt with Paula Swisher. Thank you, Gwen! A slide show with photos of the Northwest Clerks Institute and conference was shown and the Executive Committee presented Dema with a gift certificate to Suncadia Resort for some much needed and well-deserved R&R, and an engraved vase from WMCA.

2014 ANNUAL CONFERENCE RECAP

The Fundraising Committee under the guidance of Chair Deb Jermann from C-Tran in Vancouver shined in their live auction event with Auctioneer Extraordinaire Ali Spietz from the City of Mercer Island. Bidding wars ensued with the big ticket items being Mariners tickets, a magnum of wine, and seats at Dema's table for the annual banquet night. In total, the live auction raised \$3,197 and combined with the silent auction and raffle ticket sales, our awesome Fundraising Committee garnered \$11,719 for future scholarships. Thanks to everyone who participated in selling, buying, donating or all of these.



Ali Spietz facilitating a roundtable

Wednesday night, the "after party" included a lot of dancing with the bear at the Grizzly Bar located inside the hotel and lots of green "Keep Calm, Clerk On" shirts that were provided by one of the vendors.



2013-2014 Executive Committee w/Out of State Guests

Thursday morning, we held our annual business meeting. A bylaws amendment to remove term limits on the Treasurer and Secretary positions passed. Education sessions started with the choice of four roundtables. Facilitators Dema Harris, Debbie Clark, Ali Spietz, and Darla Reese (City of Granite Falls) oversaw discussions about certification, public disclosure, elected officials, and small city issues. Great job, ladies!!

In the afternoon, three breakout sessions were held with Jeff Myers and Mike Connelly presenting information on dealing with difficult public records requests, Pat Mason providing a legislative update, and Rick Martinez speaking about living with purpose.

The annual banquet night featured the exciting announcements of Carol Etgen, City of Fife, receiving the Clerk of the Year Award and Molly Towslee, City of Gig Harbor, the President's Award of Distinction. Newly elected Executive Committee Members were sworn in and 2014-15 WMCA President Diana Quinn ushered in the new year with her theme, Work your Magic. DJ Scott Passey spun the tunes and a huge crowd danced til midnight! Even the cardboard cutout soldiers joined in.



Diana Quinn being sworn in as President

Friday morning was spent with our very own Region IX Director, Joann Tilton, who spoke to us about ethics. We were able to really look at our own values, and talk about different scenarios where ethical dilemmas were played out.



President Passey passing the torch onto Diana Quinn

We (the Education Committee) are very interested in hearing your thoughts about what you want *next*. Dema has already made arrangements for PD IV, but we will be busy planning Fall Academy and next year's conference. Please shoot an e-mail to Education Committee Chair Carol Etgen with any great speaker/topic ideas you come across or would like to have at

cetgen@cityoffife.org.

Thanks to the Conference Planning, Education, Fundraising, and Membership Committee members for making the 2014 conference fabulous! According to the classroom evaluations, this year's conference was an educational success. It is always a balancing act – to bring WMCA members quality educational sessions that will both enhance skills and provide opportunities to nurture the mind, body, and spirit. It is our hope that you found this year's sessions to have met your expectations.

CLERK OF THE YEAR



CAROL ETGEN, MMC

City Clerk
Fife, WA



Congratulations to Carol Etgen, MMC, City Clerk for the City of Fife, who was named “Clerk of the Year” at this year’s annual conference in Pasco. Now Past President Scott Passey cited Carol’s exceptional devotion to public service, her continuing contributions to WMCA, and her dedication to the City of Fife and the profession of City Clerk during his presentation.

Carol was surprised by a crowd of supporters that included her City Manager, friends, and several family members at the annual banquet event. She played an integral role in the success of this year’s conference as the Education Committee Chair.

Fife City Manager Dave Zabell stated, “Carol is an exceptional person who has the combination of tremendous skills and drive including integrity, a very strong work ethic and the gift of being a great team leader.” In his nomination letter, Zabell cited Carol’s leadership abilities in an array of high profile projects such as redesigning and retooling their city’s records management program and implementing Laserfiche to promote transparency. Carol serves as the Council’s Parliamentarian, a position once held by the City Attorney, who now defers to Carol.



Carol has made an impact throughout the State of Washington, having served the communities of Bremerton, Fife, Port Orchard, Poulsbo, and Richland as City Clerk and she served in the Kennewick Police Department and as Clerk of the Board for Benton County Board of Commissioners.

Carol said, “I don’t have a quote – just immense gratitude that I grew up in the family I grew up in, that I’m working where I’m working, married to the man of my heart and dreams, and that I have the wonderful friends and loved ones around me that I do.” Guess what, Carol? We made that a quote! On behalf of WMCA, we thank Carol for all that she has does for this organization and in her community!



PRESIDENT'S AWARD OF DISTINCTION



MOLLY TOWSLEE, MMC

City Clerk

Gig Harbor, WA

Kudos and congratulations are also in order for Molly Towslee, MMC, City of Gig Harbor City Clerk, who garnered the "President's Award of Distinction" at this year's annual banquet and awards ceremony.



Gig Harbor City Manager Dennis Richards nominated Molly and noted her leadership abilities, much needed common sense, and knowledge in finding solutions to solving difficult problems, even at the expense of her own comfort. Richards touted Molly's professional yet no-nonsense leadership style to stabilize the city organization and keep everyone on track to get work done.

Over the past year, Molly was the point of contact for training the HR Analyst, brought back their city's Wellness Program, and served as Risk Manager. Molly heads up records management, including retention and public disclosure requests, serves on the Insurance Pool Board, and she's Chair of the Civil Service Board. Her City Manager added that as a 22-year employee and resident of Gig Harbor, Molly is also active in many civic events.

Thank you, Molly, for your contributions to the City of Gig Harbor and to WMCA!

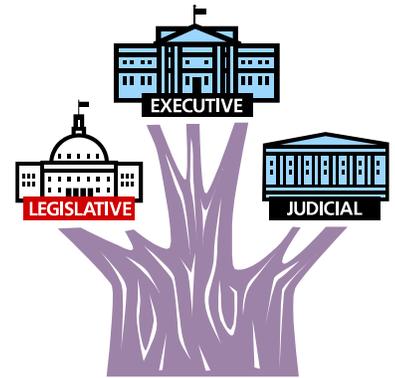


LEGISLATIVE REPORT

By Sandy Paul MMC, Legislative Committee Chair

It's almost impossible for lawmakers to do anything important in an election year. The 2014 Legislature did not fail to disappoint.

Lawmakers didn't do much to satisfy the Washington Supreme Court's demand for full funding by 2018. The court wants the Legislature to submit, by April 30, a detailed plan on how it plans to get there. Legislators didn't do anything noticeable over the last two months to get ready for that deadline.



The Legislature's failure to pass a highway-and-transit package — which would have paid for infrastructure improvements across the state — was a straightforward case of election year jitters. The package would have paid for such critical projects as the completion of State Route 167 from Puyallup to the Port of Tacoma, an improvement even Eastern Washington lawmakers should covet in order to get their goods to market.

More bizarre was the last-minute collapse of a bill that would have moved medical marijuana into the system of licensed cannabis stores now being approved by the state Liquor Control Board. The U.S. Justice Department has probably just lost its patience with Washington's lax attitude toward the "medical" dispensaries that are breaking both state and federal drug-trafficking laws. No one wins here beyond the dispensary owners who will keep collecting big cash from recreational users a little longer. Stepped-up federal raids are almost certainly coming, bringing a sad end for some of these folks.

The Public Records Act was not updated, either. There were bills that, if passed, would have provided cost recovery for public disclosure; cost recovery for commercial requests; and fees for use of public equipment for citizens to copy public records.

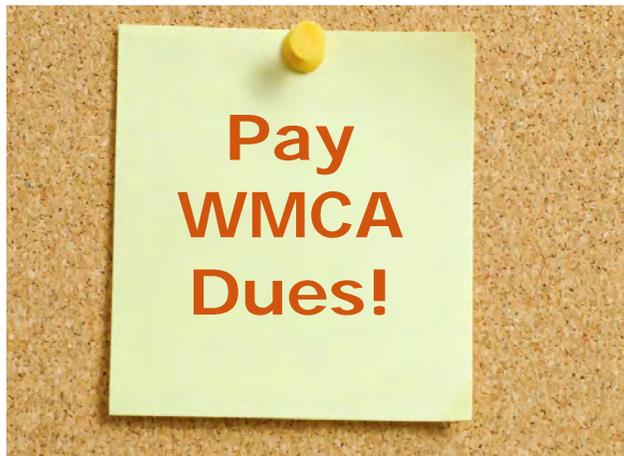
What DID the Legislature do? Meeting agendas are now required to be posted on websites 24-hours prior to Council meetings unless yours is a small entity with less than 10 employees, we have already been doing that. But thanks for the opportunity to weigh in!

Something we can all rejoice is a new training requirement: all governmental bodies, including clerks (as if we have not already been doing this), must attend training on the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act every 4 years. Much of this training is likely to take the form of webinars. Love technology!

Other items approved include: 1) public utility customer information is no longer required to be disclosed (commercial information already is exempt); 2) employers can now provide 2 additional unpaid days off for holidays of faith or conscience; 3) exemption of driver's license and identification card numbers; 4) exemption of juvenile court records; 5) and exemption of patient health care information. Oh, and we got a state oyster (the Olympia instead of the Pacific) and a state waterfall (Palouse). And, a Super Bowl winning football team!

Were those taxpayer dollars well spent? Just the Super Bowl win, which was not taxpayer dollars for the most part. NOTE: the next general election is November 4, 2014.

WMCA DUES



The 2014-2015 WMCA membership dues for May 1, 2014 through April 30, 2015 can be paid now. You can pay your dues in one of the following ways:

1. Log on to the WMCA website at www.wmcaclerks.org, click on the Membership button and pay online,
2. Log on to the WMCA website at www.wmcaclerks.org, click on the Membership button and mail in your payment or
3. Mail in the membership application and payment.

Membership applications can be found in this newsletter and on the website. If you have questions, email Treasurer Gina Anderson at andersong@ci.woodland.wa.us or call 360.841.5287.

Dues paid after May 30, 2014 will incur a late fee of \$25.00.

Thank you for making WMCA such a great organization!!

WMCA DUES FORM



WASHINGTON MUNICIPAL CLERKS ASSOCIATION

www.wmcaclerks.org

2014 WMCA Membership Application
May 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015

Name: _____ Title: _____

CMC MMC

Renewal? New Member? Replacing a clerk? Who? _____

Jurisdiction Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Jurisdiction website address: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Supervisor Name: _____ Title: _____

Please mark any committees you are interested in joining (if not already signed up):

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audit | <input type="checkbox"/> Awards | <input type="checkbox"/> Bylaws | <input type="checkbox"/> Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical | <input type="checkbox"/> Legislative | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship | | |

IMPORTANT! If you do not want to have your name listed on the WMCA website membership page, please check this box.

Please mail your completed application along with a check **made payable to WMCA** to:

Gina Anderson
PO Box 9
Woodland, WA 98674

Questions: (360) 841-5287 or
andersong@ci.woodland.wa.us

2014 DUES:

Active Member	\$75
Affiliate Member	\$105*
Associate Member	\$15*
Honorary Member	\$0*

*these membership categories are not eligible to vote.

A \$25 late fee will be assessed for all dues postmarked after May 30th

Affiliate Members: Any business representative (such as attorney, financial consultant, corporate representative, etc.) that seeks to assist in the accomplishments of the objectives of WMCA (no voting privileges).

Associate Members: Any former active member, upon payment of annual dues, may be an associate member without voting privileges.

Honorary Members: Retired charter members and retired past presidents of WMCA shall automatically become honorary members, without voting privileges, upon retirement from public employment in the State of Washington.

LOL!

LAUGH OUT LOUD

True Story

Four police officers were standing in line as they were being scolded by a Citizen. The Citizen shouted angrily, "I'm taking all of your names down and going to the Police Chief. What is your name?"

The first Officer replied "Davis."

"And what is your name," the Citizen asked looking at the second Officer. "Davis, Sir."

Turning to the third Officer, the Citizen asked "Yours?" "Davis," was the reply. All of them Davis? The Citizen began to think these officers are pulling one over on him. He turns to the fourth Officer.

"And I suppose you are going to tell me your name is Davis, too!" To which the Officer replied "Knot."



Submitted by Shannon Corin, City of Bremerton



When Signs Go Wild



Joke of the Month

It was all so different before everything changed.

Do you have a funny story, joke or cartoon you would like to share? Please submit them to Shannon.Corin@ci.bremerton.wa.us.

REGION IX DIRECTOR'S UPDATE



Joann and I recently returned from the Washington Municipal Clerk's Conference in Pasco, WA. The conference was well attended and there were great sessions to choose from. For those of you that were not able to attend some of the sessions offered were on public disclosure, legislative updates, dealing with elected officials and several round table discussions, to name a few. Our own Joann Tilton provided the Friday morning session on "Ethical Leadership." It was a great class and as you are probably aware, when it comes to questionable ethical behavior, it doesn't matter which state you are from, someone is always trying to "push the envelope" when it comes to unethical behavior. It is always important to refresh our memories on what is right and what is wrong. Joann's class did just that!

Scott Passey was a gracious host and as his theme "Seek and Destroy" stated, he encouraged clerks to "seek out" those things that make them a better municipal clerk and person, and "destroy" those things that challenge them or keep them from fulfilling their utmost potential. Seek education and positive ways to enhance your life and destroy the negative thoughts and self-doubt that keep us from reaching our full potential. President Passey, (now Past President) asked Joann and I to assist with the administering of the oath's of office to the newly elected WMCA Board members. Also there to assist with the oath's of office was Monica Martinez-Simmons, IIMC Vice President, City Clerk for the City of Seattle. Diana Quinn was sworn in as the new WMCA President, Debbie Burke as President Elect, Shannon Corin as Vice President, Virginia Olsen as Secretary, and Board Members Paula Swisher and Dee Roberts.

In IIMC business, there have been some staffing changes taking place. As you may have already heard, Jennifer Ward, Associate Education Director, has left IIMC to pursue other career opportunities. Jennifer worked constantly to approve the education programs provided for Clerks and ensure those programs would assist in improving the Clerk profession. The process to fill her position is taking place. From the latest report we have received, a revised ad has been created with the idea that the new position may lead to becoming the Director of Education. Jennifer worked diligently for IIMC and she is appreciated for her dedication to IIMC.

Emily Maggard, Communication Coordinator, left IIMC in February to pursue other endeavors, but will be continuing on a freelance basis with the weekly e briefs, and social media until the end of June. She is also greatly appreciated for her contributions during her employment with IIMC. Ashley Carroll will be the person to take on the questions regarding certification and education. Ashley will also be undertaking responsibilities that were done by Jennifer regarding the annual conference and the Education Department.

Now is the time to sign up for the IIMC Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin! If you need a printable form click [here](#) . Click [here](#) to register by credit card. There are still rooms available at the Hyatt! CCAC will be hosting the Region IX Dinner at the IIMC Conference this year. It will be Monday, May 19th, at 6:30 pm at Ward's House of Prime. The restaurant is less than one mile from the host hotels. Weather permitting, there may be a group walking to dinner. There will be a shuttle available. The cost for the dinner is \$40 per person and information was sent 4/7, the flyer is on the WMCA website. Joann and I look forward to seeing you at the dinner.

At this time, I would like to take a moment to say that our thoughts and prayers are with our friends, colleagues, families, and the responders who are all being tragically impacted by the mudslide in Oso, WA. If you would like to help the mudslide victims article will give you the information you need. <http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20140327/NEWS01/303289999/Resources-Where-to-go-how-to-help-mudslide-victims->

Joann and I look forward to a busy 2014—so far it has been awesome! Please know that we are interested in your ideas and what is happening with you and your Associations. You are the makers and the shakers of your Cities, Counties and Transit Authorities and we want to hear from you!

Joann Tilton, MMC
jtilton@ci.manteca.ca.us
(209) 456-8011

Alice Attwood, CMC
tonasket@nvinet.com
(509)-486-2132

NORTHWEST CLERKS INSTITUTE

Northwest Clerks Institute Early Registration Due by May 6, 2014

Professional Development Classes I, II & III

Location: University of Puget Sound – Tacoma, Washington

Dates: Professional Development I June 1-6, 2014
Professional Development II June 8-13, 2014
Professional Development III June 15-20, 2014

Invest in Your Future—Attend the 2014 Northwest Clerks Institute

All successful professionals sharpen their skills on a regular basis. Your job is multi-faceted and changing. New citizen demands, legal changes in procedures and new information technologies have increased the pace of your work and require you to plan and expedite many different tasks at once. *You* are the citizen's first point of contact in your local jurisdiction, and your elected officials count on you to make sure that your public meetings, records, elections and other special projects operate smoothly.

The job of Clerk is not getting any easier and you know the importance of keeping abreast of the latest issues and trends. **The best way to do just that is by investing in continuing education and obtaining certification as a CMC and MMC.** The Northwest Clerks Institute provides a comprehensive curriculum in public administration management, technical skills and professional/personal development.

The Institute experience is a unique combination of state-of-the-art classroom training, high impact networking, and one-on-one mentoring with municipal leaders and instructors. The professional friendships you will develop at the Northwest Clerks Institute will prove invaluable over the course of your career.

Join us at the 2014 Northwest Clerks Institute. Decide to make a difference in your organization, career and future.

Professional Development IV – Master Academy

Location: University of Puget Sound – Tacoma, Washington

Dates: Professional Development IV June 9-12, 2014

We are pleased to announce that Dr. De Hicks, President and CEO of SCGI, will be presenting an "Advanced School of Leadership Academy" for our Master Academy. The course content includes: The Leadership Conversation; Leadership and Power; Leadership and Communication; Leadership and Problem Solving; Resilient Leaders; Sustaining the Vision; and Leaders Create Leaders.

Please go to the Washington Municipal Clerk's website and click on the link for "Northwest Clerk's Institute – Register Now" for more information and registration.



Once again WCIA members may take advantage of their reimbursement policy for one member of each entity to attend as many of the courses as they would like to take! WCIA members need to register and pay for the class(es) and then submit a reimbursement request to memberservices@wciapool.org, including a copy of course certificate and of the invoice received from WMCA when submitting the request.

SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

The following received a scholarship for registration and training and housing to attend PD1	
Tanya Craig	Okanogan County
Deana Dean	City of Arlington
Susan Duncan	City of Ferndale
Hanna Miles	City of Tumwater
Julie Naillon	City of Okanogan
Rebecca Perez Ozuna	City of Othello
Patricia Phillips	Adams County

The following received a scholarship for registration and training and housing to attend PD II, PD III, and PD IV	
Renee Cameron	City of Bonney Lake
Laura Divis	City of Okanogan
Rosemary Murphy	City of Sultan
Gretchen Sagen	City of Raymond
Bonnie Wilkins	City of Des Moines
Jodi Coggins	City of Omak
Shannon Corin	City of Bremerton
Tamara Gunter	City of Battle Ground
Ashlee Sund	City of Montesano
Gina Anderson	City of Woodland
Gwen Robinson (Code Publishing)	City of Orting



Exciting News! The Executive Committee has **REOPENED** the application period for **NCI Professional Development I Scholarships** - **deadline is April 14th!** If you were hesitant about applying or missed the original deadline now is your chance to apply. This is a great opportunity so please take the time to apply for a scholarship – you won't be sorry! If you have any questions about NCI or the scholarship application process please send me an email or give me a call!

Dee Roberts, 360-875-5571, dee.roberts@southbend-wa.gov

THE TOP 5 THINGS TO KNOW—MUNICIPAL CLERK POSITIONS

by Amy Holt and Abraham David Benavides

On April 17, 2013, the small city of West, Texas, experienced a major tragedy. A massive explosion at a fertilizer plant killed 14 people, including 10 first responders. More than 50 percent of the buildings were damaged, and for a short time, the city was in disarray.

Joey Pustejovsky, who was the city secretary with the responsibility to manage the city and also served as a volunteer firefighter, was one of those first responders. Municipal clerks are sometimes also known as city clerks, town clerks, or city secretaries. As a credit to their profession, municipal clerks in Texas immediately offered assistance to step in and help fulfill the necessary duties for the city clerk's office in West.

The role of a municipal clerk is often a misunderstood position in local government. To the uninformed, clerks are often thought to fulfill a primarily clerical role. The importance of the position's role, however, is quite clear. The tasks are dictated by law or statute and include some of the most basic services expected by residents.

In fact, municipal clerks are often the first and most direct link between residents and government. The position is also responsible for providing transparency in local government.

While clerks are tasked with some functions that are clerical in nature, the professionalism associated with this position is apparent to those familiar with local government functions. Clerks are knowledgeable about day-to-day operations in their communities, and managers can be among the people who benefit from their knowledge and strengths.

1. Professionalism. A strong, positive professional relationship between the clerk and the manager is important for effective service delivery to residents. Clerks work behind the scenes to ensure the smooth operation of local government. In order to facilitate this role, the clerk's office is becoming professionalized. Many states mandate professional certification to secure or maintain the position of clerk. The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) has 5,828 members with active Certified Municipal Clerk and Master Municipal Clerk designations. Certification through the states and the international organization requires a minimum of 120 hours of in-class training. Some states require a higher standard. Texas, for example, requires 200 hours of independent study and attendance at eight, two-day seminars.

2. Secretariat to the governing body. The clerk position is one of the oldest in local government. When the early colonists came to America, they set up forms of local government to which they had been accustomed, and the office of clerk was one of the first to be established. Today, as in those first positions, clerks are selected for their attention to detail, as well as their ability to be forward thinking and to anticipate problems. One task associated with this role is to ensure that public meetings are properly posted. This might seem mundane, but consider the following true story. A city secretary described what happened at a gathering of individuals to celebrate the opening of a new store. A resident reported to the city secretary that the assembly being held was illegal. This group involved local residents and a quorum of council members. While no business of the city was expected to be discussed, it inevitably was and thus, constituted a meeting of the council. The Open Meetings Act dictates that meetings must be posted. The secretary, who assures compliance with the act, was able to advise that the meeting had been posted.



3. Records management. A clerk is the official keeper of records. This responsibility includes the legal liability associated with tasks that involve enormous legal accountability for a local government. While state and local laws and ordinances may vary with respect to specific tasks and functions, in general clerks maintain official records, documents, vital statistics, and financial records. They also record and publish council meetings, ordinances, and resolutions; retain custody of the official seal; issue licenses and permits; retain historical records; and record contracts and agreements, bids, deeds, maps, and various licenses.¹ A clerk was recently on the

THE TOP 5 THINGS TO KNOW—MUNICIPAL CLERK POSITIONS—CTND.

witness stand at a hearing involving land that had been donated to a city almost 100 years earlier. The land included mineral rights that were conveyed and a family member was suing the city, claiming she was the rightful beneficiary of the millions of dollars the city had earned because of these rights. The family member's lawyer produced a document that was incomplete and seemed to indicate that mineral rights had *not* been conveyed. The clerk told the lawyer from the stand that the document was incomplete and was not what she had originally submitted as evidence from city records. The judge asked if she could produce the original document, which originated from the early 1900s. The clerk noted that this particular document was located in the clerk's office vault. When she produced the evidence, one juror stated it was the "magic" that decided the case, and the city retained the mineral rights and money associated with it. This type of attention to detail related to records can save a local government time and money.

4. Public information. Clerks are now reporting that fulfilling requests for access to public information is the greatest demand on their time. Thousands of individuals and entities are requesting hundreds of thousands of pieces of public information for a variety of reasons, and state and federal laws dictate that public information be made available to those who request such information. Managing this role is proving to be a weighty obligation. While some localities are able to provide staff to assist in this role, not all do even though the number of requests may not be proportionately smaller in these places. A business, for example, may request information that does not get proportionately smaller with the population size. Or, an individual resident may repeatedly ask for large amounts of information. This, too, is not dependent on the size of the town or the number of staff the community may have for fulfilling public information requests. In a recent publication by a state's municipal league, the authors encourage public officials to fully understand laws related to public information above all other laws.² In 2011, a city manager commented in *PM* that she wished she would have more fully understood the impact that requests for public information were having on her city secretary's office and the resulting criticism because of such high demand.³

5. Elections. Clerks are often tasked with administering local elections. This can include such duties as: ensuring that polling places meet standards of accessibility; distributing election supplies and equipment; obtaining lists of registered voters; preparing ballots in the manner dictated by law; processing applications from potential candidates for elected office; properly publicizing elections and results of elections; and properly recording necessary information from the election with state officials.



Clerks have had to become familiar with the Supreme Court decision (June 25, 2013) that changed parts of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Fifteen states (nine states and parts of six other states) that had required preclearance for any changes to election procedures or practices are now (tentatively) freed from this requirement, pending decisions from recent legal challenges to this decision. As the primary election officials, clerks are working closely with officials to learn the practical implications of this decision for their jurisdictions.⁴

References

¹Dolan, Drew A. (2007) "The Clerk," *Managing Local Government Services: A Practical Guide*, ICMA Press.

²Texas Municipal League (2013) *Texas Town and City*, "50 Survival Tips for Elected Municipal Officials."

³Yelverton, Shana (2011) "On Point" *Public Management*, July 2011, page 4.

⁴History of the Municipal Clerk, IIMC website (2013).

NCI DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENT

Hello members of AAMC, OAMR and WMCA,

We are happy to announce that we have hired the next director of the Northwest Clerks Institute. As most of you know, Dema Harris announced last fall that she would be retiring after this summer's Institute. In December, the NCI Education Committee (made up of three members from each state association) issued an RFQ to find the next director. We received five responses, interviewed four candidates and selected Peggy Flynn as the next director.

As a leader of people, projects and organizations, Peggy is a versatile and resourceful professional. Her expertise includes project management, public affairs, training, communications and strategic planning.



Peggy's career began in the U. S. Congress working for a senior member of Congress. This experience sparked her life-long interest in the legislative process and provided a firm grasp of the workings of government. Peggy joined Seattle's Washington State Convention Center on the ground floor and served as Vice President and Corporate Secretary spanning the design and construction phases, through opening of the facility. The Convention Center was Washington State's largest public works project at the time and opened on time and within budget. Subsequently, Peggy has started up several organizations and consults in the public, private and non-profit sectors. She was adjunct lecturer at Washington State University's Seattle Center for Hotel and Restaurant Administration. As a certified trainer, Peggy leads seminars and workshops on communication style.

Peggy notes, "Although my graduate work was in business administration (earning an MBA from the University of Washington), the threads of public service have been deeply woven into my career tapestry. I've had a close affiliation with most levels of government – from national to state, county and local – in a variety of capacities. I place a high value on the role of government and appreciate those individuals who dedicate their careers to public service. That is why I'm eager to begin my work as Director of the Northwest Clerks Institute and carry on the excellent professional development programs that Municipal Clerks have come to expect from the Institute."

Peggy leads an active Northwest lifestyle and participates in many outdoor activities. She is a passionate community leader and volunteers in both Seattle and Anacortes.

Dema and Peggy will be meeting over the next few months to help Peggy transition into the director position on July 1. Peggy will be intermittently attending this summer's Institute to learn how things run and to meet as many of you as possible.

If you have any questions about the RFQ and selection process, the director transition, or would like more information about Peggy, please contact Ali Spietz, City Clerk, City of Mercer Island, WA at 206-275-7793 or ali.spietz@mercergov.org.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

April
2014



WMCA and our Membership Committee would like to welcome our newest member:

**Kristin Memovich,
City of Buckley, Deputy City Clerk**

Congratulations to our newest Certified Municipal Clerk:

**Heidi Napolitano, CMC,
Town of Woodway**

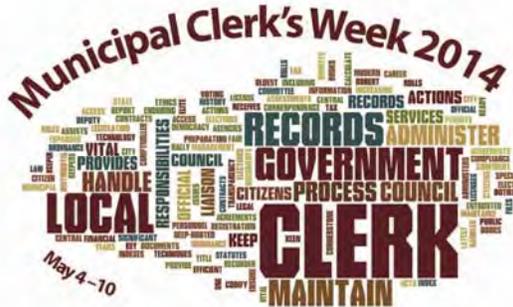
CMC

45TH ANNUAL MUNICIPAL CLERKS WEEK

Clerks Matter!

IIMC's 45th Annual Municipal Clerk's Week is set to take place May 4-10, 2014. Here is a link to helpful promotional materials at <http://www.iimc.com/index.aspx?nid=156>.

How will you promote it? While it can seem daunting and time consuming to promote the week—especially with “doing more with less” in the new normal—there are one or two things you could do with minimal time and effort. One—do the proclamation! Have your Mayor or City Council read the proclamation at your City Council Meeting. It's in the promotional materials on IIMC's site—just fill in the blanks. And two – put a flyer in your office, on the employee board, or on a public notice board announcing the week and how your Clerks Office serves the municipality and community. Make sure people know what you do and appreciate you for it.



Published by Clerks for Clerks!

If you have any great news to share or ideas for articles for the next edition of the WMCA Newsletter, be sure to email them to Melody Valiant at mvaliant@ci.tumwater.wa.us & Rachel Shaw at rshaw@cityofprosser.com

Fabric of the Forest Quilt Show & Classes

Forks, WA
April 25-27, 2014
www.piecemakersquiltclub.org

119th Sequim Irrigation Festival

Sequim, WA
May 2-11, 2014
www.irrigationfestival.com

Les Schwab Classy Chassis Parade & Car Show

East Wenatchee, WA
May 2 & 3, 2014
www.east-wenatchee.com

Armed Forces Day Parade

Bremerton, WA
May 17, 2014
www.bremertonchamber.org

Kitsap Harbor Festival

Bremerton, WA
May 24-25, 2014
www.kitsapharborfestival.org