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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

Scott Passey, MMC

As the dog days of summer go by I'm continually reminded of the beauty and splendor that is the Pacific Northwest. I'm excited to pick up my air tanks from the scuba shop this week so I can do some crabbing, one of the many things I enjoy doing in the Puget Sound. Summertime means different things to different people. For some, it's a time to relax and vacation; for others it's a time to mow the lawn, do some gardening, or catch up on the backlog of work that's been accumulating. For others it's a time to plan for the future.

August is often a month that many clerks begin their budget process for the coming year. Budgeting is essentially a process of planning and prognosticating. Prognosticate means "to forecast or predict (something future) from present indications or signs; prophesy." I have never been very comfortable with predicting the future, because more often than not I am surprised by unforeseen events or circumstances beyond my control. What resources will I need to support the City Council and their meetings? How many public records requests will I get, and how much time will I spend on them? What changes in the community or organization will impact our level of service? The quick and easy way to make predictions is to look to the past for trends and patterns. However, we all know that patterns can and do change.

Dealing with unforeseen events and circumstances beyond our control is often addressed under the umbrella of *change management*.

Have you seen or heard this buzzword lately? It seems every conference I attend features presentations about something related to change management. There are undoubtedly many kinds of changes we experience: mission changes; strategic changes; operational changes; technological changes; organizational changes; attitude, behavior, and cultural changes...the list goes on. Our attitude towards change will largely determine our ability to handle the changes in our work and personal lives. "Attitude determines altitude" as the saying goes, and staying positive about the future goes a long way in helping us cope with changes that are forced upon us, as well as changes we want to make. Do you remember the breathing exercise taught by Robin Rose? Her card is stuck to my computer monitor reminding me to breathe, which helps me maintain or regain a positive attitude. If you look to the future with fear and apprehension, use the tools at your disposal to destroy that fear and seek a positive attitude. SEEK AND DESTROY!

Scott

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FALL ACADEMY UPDATE

He (she) said WHAT?

(aka – Fall Academy’s Coming!)

By Carol Etgen, MMC, City Clerk, City of Fife

So – what do you do if an employee comes to you and tells you that they just “know” a fellow employee is abusing sick leave? Or ... what do you do if an employee tells you that her boss told her she was so angry at her she just wanted to hit her? As a member of the Municipal Clerk’s office are you legally obligated to do something with that information?

The topic for Fall Academy this year is “When the Roles of Advisor and Decision-Maker Intersect,” and speaks directly to Municipal Clerks and the role we play in our working environment. Because we are the “center” of our working environment (knowing just enough about *everything* but not enough to be an expert on it all), we often find ourselves in the middle of conversations with people who are very comfortable with us. Sometimes we cringe – sometimes we just shake our heads and laugh (or want to cry) – but the point is, we often hear things that we don’t necessarily want to have heard – or what to do with it once we hear it.



Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg

Please join Janice Corbin for **Fall Academy** on **Friday, September 27th** at the Hal Holmes Center in Ellensburg – you will walk away with answers to all those “what if” questions! You can register on-line or find a registration form to mail in on WMCA’s website at <http://www.wmcaclerks.org/Default.aspx?pageId=1642053>. Registration deadline is September 13, 2013.

CONFERENCE AUCTION REMINDER

END OF SUMMER SALES - GOOD DEALS TO BE FOUND!

By Debbie Jermann, MMC, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board, C-TRAN



Unbelievably, we are inching towards the end of summer, which means flea markets, farmers markets, garage sales, and end of summer sales are in full swing. These are all great places to find bargains for auction items for our WMCA Annual Conference.

I have found baskets at garage sales, unique gifts at farmers markets, and bargains on basket fillers at flea markets.

The silent and live auctions held during the WMCA Annual Conference (March 2014 in Pasco, WA) are very important fundraising activities for the WMCA Scholarship funds. If each person attending conference brings one item, we can “bank” on a successful event.

If you have any questions, or need some ideas, please feel free to contact Debbie Jermann at 360-906-7303 or debbiej@c-tran.org.

WMCA @ AWC

WMCA Attends the AWC Conference

*By Sandy Paul, MMC, District Clerk of Des Moines Pool District/Metropolitan Park District
& Randy Hinchliffe, CMC, City Administrator, City of Waitsburg*



Randy Hinchliffe and I were attendee representatives of WMCA at the Association of Washington Cities Conference in Kennewick in June at the Three Rivers Convention Center. Or was it Pasco? Tri-Cities served well to confuse! That's why they call it Tri-Cities, because they all run together. At the many and very good wineries, it's all good. Tri-Cities is the location of the 2014 WMCA Conference - Pasco is the location for that one - and will be enjoyed by all WMCA members who are able to attend there.

Randy and I attended all functions, chose seminars, workshops and classes, and chatted with many other attendees from all over the state. We checked in with each other each day. Once again, it was a very rewarding experience to be able to attend and promote the Washington Clerks.

Speaking from past experience, we would recommend two things. The first is that all City Clerks everywhere in the State of Washington become active in AWC and attend the conferences. Develop whatever relationships are needed within your city and council in order to be encouraged to attend the AWC Conference. Electeds DO want to know what City Clerks think about issues. Surprisingly, Clerks have their undivided support in all things that would improve public disclosure processes. Mayors and City Managers, as well, do enjoy being able to speak with clerks in a casual setting about the issues that are current and/or being studied in the seminars, both that affect City Clerks' offices and cities, as a whole. And, yes, Clerks DO form life-long relationships with representatives from all over our state.



Secondly, we would recommend that WMCA not be intimidated by the cost of a vendor booth in the future. AWC changed its vendor format this year, upped the ante to \$2500 from \$1500 for a booth, increased the excitement and (in our opinion) value of attending the vendor fair, held for only one day. All the same receptions and drawings which have previously taken place over two days, were condensed into one day this year.

The value of having the booth over being roving spokespersons is that for a few minutes WMCA can present visuals of our myriad routine tasks, vast knowledge, training available, much of which is provided by WMCA and NCI. In other words, WE provide it and we pay for much of it. In a booth, delegates give their undivided attention, however briefly. That was missing this year. Walking down a corridor bending the ear of a mayor or city council member just does not provide the same opportunity to get our message out to them. Next year's Board should contact AWC early, negotiate a different rate for a booth (since we are not selling anything but ourselves) and reinstate the WMCA booth at the AWC Conference vendor fair.

Fundraising Questions For You!

WMCA - FUNDRAISING NEEDS INPUT

By Debbie Jermann, MMC, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board, C-TRAN



Each year, we add items to our WMCA Store inventory for sale to members. We have a few ideas that have been floated for the 2014 conference and would like some input.

If you have a moment, please copy and paste the questions below into an e-mail and send me your feedback at debbiej@c-tran.org or call 360-906-7303.

As always, the WMCA Fundraising Committee appreciates your support and participation - CLERKS ROCK!

1. Is your preference to purchase items at conference or pre-order/pre-pay in advance of conference?
2. What is your typical spending limit on clothing items?
3. Are you willing to spend more if the items are higher quality?
4. Would you consider purchasing an April 2014 through March 2015 calendar, which features photos of WMCA Clerks in action?
5. What would you be willing to spend on a WMCA Clerks Calendar?
What items would YOU like to see sold in the WMCA Store?

Donations to the Tacoma Rescue Mission

By Sandy Paul, MMC, District Clerk of Des Moines Pool District/Metropolitan Park District

Volunteering is the most rewarding endeavor anyone could embrace. The feedback is always positive, there is no criticism, every contribution of time and/or resources is appreciated. No less was true when the items collected at the March 2013 WMCA Conference in Tacoma were delivered to the Tacoma Rescue Mission. The gratitude and appreciation of the staff at the Mission were overwhelming. Each and every one of you who donated should have been there that day for the outpouring of love and thanksgiving. The place has grown so much and serves all in need, an expansion from previously only serving homeless men. There are now six locations throughout the City of Tacoma.



Janet Wallin, Donor and Community Relations Coordinator, commented in an email: *Bras and (new, disposable) diapers are a big need because most people don't think of them, so thank you for putting this drive on! So great!*

In addition to the bras and new disposable diapers donated by City Clerks of Washington, the Conference Planning Committee 'moved' the remainder of our conference totes and some fleece vests with our old logo on them. Both will be much appreciated by those trying to rebuild their lives. An additional plus is that the Conference and Fundraising Committees will not be storing the items, either.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, WMCA, you did it again!!!

FEATURED CLERKS



Paula Swisher

City Clerk/Treasurer, City of Brier



Paula Swisher

Born and raised in Edmonds, WA, Paula Swisher is currently the City Clerk/Treasurer for the City of Brier -- population 6,100 in Snohomish County. Paula's Mayor works as the Parks Director in the neighboring City of Lynnwood, so she's in charge of things while he's busy at his daytime job. Basically, she's a Jack of All Trades!

Brier is unique in that they have huge lots in a semi-rural environment and many people have horses. In fact, Paula's office overlooks a public horse arena that is situated in between the ball fields of Brier Park and City Hall. There are only five businesses in Brier, not including home occupations.

Paula's been married to Cameron or "Cam" for 17 years and she says they've been together for almost 23 years. Her daughter, Kayla (age 13), keeps her busy by playing club volleyball and beach volleyball this summer. She's tall and blonde and

Paula calls her "Mini Me".

When she's not busy with family and work, Paula volunteers for WMCA serving on the Awards, Conference Planning and Scholarship Committees. Most people are aware of Paula's talent of making the conference come alive in the spirit of our WMCA President's conference theme. She has a knack for conjuring up the creative decorations at the annual banquet to make it a truly special night in honor of the President's hard work the previous year. Paula is also currently serving in her first term as a WMCA Board member.

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Sam Taylor

City Clerk, City of Ferndale



Sam Taylor

Sam was born in Kellogg, Idaho and grew up in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho where his younger brother and parents still live today. Sam's brother is also in municipal work, serving as a wastewater treatment operator for the City of Coeur d'Alene.

Sam has been married to Kathryn Taylor for seven years this August. They met at the University of Idaho and moved out to western Washington when Sam was hired as a journalist at The Bellingham Herald.

They now have two children, Wesley, who is 3 in August, and Asher, who was born in February this year. As of June, Asher was an 18-pound, 6-ounce hulk of a baby and will likely be a linebacker for the Seattle Seahawks if Sam has anything to say about it.

Wesley still amazes people every day when they hear how well-spoken he is for his age, and his parents are very proud of their future professional communicator (as long as he's not a politician).

Sam's path to the Clerk's Office in Ferndale is a fairly unique one, having spent nearly a decade in journalism and specializing in open government initiatives and law. One day he was writing an

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Swisher's daughter Kayla, 13

Paula Continued from Page 5 Paula had trouble choosing her favorite food and couldn't choose just one. Mexican food, ice cream and her homemade lasagna came to mind first. She's spent 10 years at the City of Brier and before that she worked as an office manager for a flight school and she's had various jobs in the automotive, roofing and restaurant fields.

Paula and her family have season tickets for the Seattle Sounders. "I don't like to watch sports on TV much, but I love being at the game and totally get into it," she said. Paula added, "I love sitting on my deck relaxing; it has a nice panoramic view of the Cascades minus Mt. Baker, because our neighbor's house blocks it.

And now you know a little more about Paula

Swisher!

Sam Continued from Page 5 article about how the mayor violated the Open Public Meetings Act, and the next day he was offered a job by the mayor, who asked him to come help them learn more about open government laws. That background has translated well as a clerk and Sam is very thankful he was hired by a mayor seeking to further enhance the communications and transparency in the city of 12,290 residents. Since being hired in January 2011, Sam has implemented several new health benefit plans for employees, reduced the City's risk insurance costs by \$100,000 annually and built a brand-new website for Ferndale at no cost. He's excited to begin sharing this website creation with other jurisdictions in the future in order to save even more cities money!

Being in Whatcom County – the very most northwest county in Washington – Ferndale is uniquely situated in an area primed for growth and where a ton of Canadians travel down for shopping opportunities.

When Sam isn't working, he's largely spending time with his family but enjoys reading geeky fantasy novels where people have magical powers, likes to play his guitar, piano and sing poorly and watch TV or movies that make him laugh, because laughing is the best.

His favorite color is blue and considering his current weight he has many favorite foods.

In 2012 Sam served on six different WMCA committees and decided that may have been too much. This year he is focused on the Education Committee and Newsletter Committee.



Sam and sons Wesley (left) & Asher (right)

2014 CONFERENCE NEWS

SEEK & DESTROY

By Paula Swisher, Conference Planning Chair

I was finally able to make my site visit out to Pasco in July. Boy do I wish we had our conference during the summer. The pool was great and the weather was beautiful and not too hot. We are all in for a treat next March. The folks at the Red Lion are very helpful and the rooms are very nice. Each room has a microwave and refrigerator. The beds were super comfy and I got a good night's sleep. A renovation of the conference rooms is beginning this month, so we will be treated to beautiful redecorated facility.

Ideas are swirling through my head to make this conference memorable and fun. I'm looking forward to meeting with the Conference Planning committee in the fall and get the ball rolling. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Congratulations to our newest Certified Municipal Clerks:

Cindy Marbut, City of Yacolt
Evelyn Jahed, City of Lake Forest Park
Keri MacDonald, City of Cheney
Carrie Koudelka, City of Spokane Valley



Congratulations to our newest Master Municipal Clerk:

Debbie Clark, City of Pasco



SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

By Dee Roberts, CMC, City Clerk, City of Southbend

Are you planning on attending the Fall Academy on September 27, 2013 in Ellensburg, WA? Have you obtained your CMC status and are now working towards your MMC? If so, you may be eligible for a Margery Price Scholarship. Please look at the Margery Price Scholarship guidelines on the WMCA website.

Applications are due August 12, 2013. For more information, please contact Dee Roberts, City of South Bend at dee.roberts@southbend-wa.gov

PDIV RECAP

By Deb Estrada, CMC, Deputy City Clerk, City of Mercer Island



This year's PD IV Clerks hard at work!

Clerks attending PD IV this year were met with a different program than in past years, but as always it challenged us. The course, "Project Leadership: Align your leadership, project management and presentation skills for success", used a three-prong approach to project management:

Project Dashboard – The dashboard provided us with a valuable tool to outline our projects, define the end result, its goals, and project deliverables, while tracking key milestones and deliverable results.

Effective Communication – Through the four steps of Principled Negotiation, we learned to 1) separate the people from the issues, 2) focus on mutual interests, rather than positions, 3) generate creative options for solving a problem, and 4) use objective criteria to resolve differences.

Presentation Skills – Using PowerPoint, we practiced various tips and tools designed to organize and highlight our project in a way that elicited enthusiasm and support from our peers.

The coursework and discussion challenged me to look at project management from a different perspective. In the past, my projects were defined by lists, a rainbow of Post-its, detailed Excel spreadsheets, and the occasional dialogue with other players. The Project Dashboard took my varied lists and brief discussions and created an organized map with a purpose and defined outcomes. Prior to this course, I "chunked up" projects into tasks and deadlines. Now, I step back and look at my list, consider what we want the end result to be, define it, track our successes or setbacks, and reevaluate as needed. As for the occasional 'dialogue' with others, I now give considerably more attention to the other players and project stakeholders. Instead of controlling the project (a habit I find most of us are challenged by), I try hard to step back, consider where we need buy-in, and look at the bigger picture – the end result.

In the end, all training aside, the true treasure of PD IV is the opportunity to spend 3+ days with my peers, many of whom I call friends. We study, absorb new information and techniques, share experiences, and grow as a group. We do a lot of learning and twice as much laughing.

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

August 2013

Washington Midsummer Renaissance Faire
Buckley
August 3-4, 10-11, 17-18
www.washingtonfaire.com

Evergreen Classic Horse Show
Monroe
August 7th to 11th
www.evergreenclassic.com

Morton Loggers Jubilee
Morton
August 8th to 11th
www.loggersjubilee.com

Blue Water Bluegrass Festival
Medical Lake
August 9th to 11th
bluwatersbluegrass.org

Festival at Mount Si
North Bend
August 9th-11th
festivalatmtsi.org

Celebrate Woodinville
Woodinville
August 10
celebratewoodinville.com

National Lentil Festival
Pullman
August 16th to 17th
www.lentilfest.com

WA State International Kite Festival
Long Beach
August 19th to 25th
www.kitefestival.com

Ferndale Street Festival
Ferndale
August 23rd-24th
ferndalestreetfestival.com

Chehalis Garlic Fest and Craft Show
Chehalis
August 23rd to 25th
www.chehalisgarlicfest.com

NW Maritime Fest
Tacoma
August 24th to 25th
www.maritimefest.org

Vintage Aircraft Weekend
Vancouver
August 30-September 1st
vintageaircraftweekend.org