

Editor, *Bonnie Wilkins, City of Des Moines*



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Visit our Website:

[www.WMCAClerks.org](http://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

Shannon Corin, CMC

The last week of April, I attended the City Clerks Association of California (CCAC) in sunny Newport Beach, California. What a great event. The theme was *Promoting Our Profession Effectively*. Patrick Ibarra opened their conference with **Sense of Place: The Value of Government**. As some of you may remember, Patrick opened and closed our conference in Vancouver, Washington a couple of years ago.

I met with old friends and made some new ones. We talked of similarities and differences between the states and what is required of clerks. Record Management is similar while Elections are not. We all have the same passion to serve the public.

I enjoyed the All Conference Event, which was an evening at the New Port Theater. We were treated to a sneak peek of *Mother's Day*. It was fun and delightful.

One of the break-out sessions I participated in was *Simple Steps for Strategic Planning in the City Clerk's Office*. It was an interesting concept. We think about strategic planning for our municipalities and perhaps our Public Works, Parks, Planning, Police or Fire Departments. How many of us have one for our office? One of the first things we had to do was come up with mission, vision and value statements for the Clerk's Office. If any of you have one or all three, please share on the WMCA Forums.



Partners Power Lunch in the Rose Garden  
"All those going to IIMC Conference in Omaha, please raise your hands."



White Party Award Banquet  
L-R: Laurie Sica, AAMC President; Monica Martinez-Simmons, IIMC President; Alice Attwood, Region IX Director; Dr. Jane Long, IIMC Director of Professional Development; Tracy Davis, Region IX Director; Shannon Corin, WMCA President; Colleen Nichols, MCEF President; Michele Eldridge, OAMR President

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED

I shared with the California clerks, WMCA's message this year during the Power Lunch in which all of the Region IX association presidents and directors were heard. *Live, Laugh, Love* can be their gears in *Promoting Our Profession Effectively*.

**Live** your ethics and morals on the job and off.

**Laugh** at Life. Humor helps keep one graceful under pressure.

**Love** the job. You may not always like it, but have a passion for it.



*Shannon*



PD Buddies Reunited!  
L-R: Marsha Moore, City of Concord Deputy Clerk and former WMCA member; Shannon Corin, WMCA President

## WANTED: FUNDRAISING SUGGESTIONS

The Fundraising Committee is looking for some new fundraising events to raise money for WMCA Education Scholarships. The Executive Committee will be discussing and considering potential events at their June board meeting. Think about items you would like to see in the WMCA Store (clothing, wine glasses, coffee mugs, etc.) as well as events in which you would like to participate. (Raffle drawings, Basket Auction, Heads or Tails, etc.) We appreciate your input!



# SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

Congratulations to everyone who applied for PD scholarships! We are happy to announce that we were able to provide 18 scholarships to Clerk's to attend PD this year, for a total award amount of **\$15,900!**

## NCI PD 1:

Judy Brown, City of Bridgeport  
Darla Clifton, City of White Salmon  
Maria DeGoede, Town of La Conner  
Connie Ellis, City of Colfax  
Mitchelle Harvey, City of Mountlake Terrace  
Michelle Honeycutt, City of Port Orchard  
Yuritzbi Olivas, City of Wapato  
Tami Pevey, City of Sultan  
Kym Smith, City of North Bend  
Nurjamal Smith, City of Bothell  
Lily Torres, City of Granger

## NCI PD 2:

Susan Haigh, City of Bonney Lake  
Michelle Skylstad, City of Okanogan

## NCI PD3:

Tanya Craig, Okanogan County Commissioners  
Rebecca Perez-Ozuna, City of Othello  
Robin Schaefer, City of Bothell  
Trisha Summers, Town of Wilkenson

## NCI PD4:

Virginia Olsen, Mountlake Terrace



Thank you to all our members who make these scholarships possible!



# Dues are due!

Register online and pay online, register online and mail in a check or mail your membership application and check. It's your choice!

Make sure to get your dues paid. There is a \$25.00 late fee after May 30<sup>th</sup>.

There are many benefits to maintaining your membership in WMCA. A few of these include:

- Availability of scholarships for the 2016 annual WMCA conference; 2016 & 2017 Academy sessions; and Professional Development sessions. You aren't eligible for scholarships unless you are a WMCA member!
- Reduced registration costs for the annual conference, Academy sessions and other training opportunities.
- A monthly e-mail newsletter and e-mail blasts keeping you abreast of happenings within WMCA, including changes to legislation affecting our profession and training opportunities.
- WMCA website, with access to "members only" areas.
- Eligibility for the prestigious "Clerk of the Year" award.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

We have a newly-formed Legislative Committee for WMCA. Thank you to those who offered to be a part of this committee!

Now is the time for us to be thinking of issues we would like to see addressed in the next legislative session. If you have any issues that you would like to see brought forward, please let me know. The AWC Legislative Committee will be meeting during the AWC Conference in June. Let's have a list of problems and potential solutions ready to discuss.

For example, I would like to see changes to the law requiring public hearing notices and ordinance summaries to be published in the newspaper of record. Additionally, adopted ordinances don't become effective until five days after publication, so if it takes several days before the summary can even be published, the legislative process is slowed down.

Right now people have to look through the newspaper every day to see if a public hearing is scheduled or a new ordinance has been adopted – a time-consuming, hit-and-miss process. This current outdated publishing requirement not only costs taxpayers time, it costs a significant amount of tax dollars. In the interest of accessibility and efficiency, we propose that such publications become effective once they are made on a city's website.

We are in the process of gathering data and are asking for your help! Please send your input to [kkuznek@sequimwa.gov](mailto:kkuznek@sequimwa.gov) with the name of your newspaper of record, how many days it takes for you to get something published in the newspaper, as well as how much your city spent in publication costs for 2015. Your help is needed and appreciated.

Thank you for all you do!

Karen Kuznek-Reese  
City Clerk, City of Sequim  
Legislative Committee Chair

# , and

## THE OXFORD COMMA

We all know the most common grammar errors that we run into every day: homophones and their appropriate usage, for example there/they're/their, your/you're, or two/too/to; verb usage and tense issues; sentence fragments and/or lack of punctuation; or ending a sentence with a preposition. Many feel these examples are like nails on a chalkboard, but do you know the most hotly debated grammar item? The Oxford Comma is that one item that inspires feuds and downright contempt between those that ardently embrace it and those that find it unnecessary and even elitist.

The Oxford (or serial) comma is the final comma in a list of things meant to provide clarity. It is not required, but it is a courtesy for your reader to avoid confusion over what you've written.

For example: *I love my parents, Wonder Woman, and Superman.*

It is very clear that you're talking about four different people here based on the placement of the final comma.

What if you leave out the Oxford comma? *I love my parents, Wonder Woman and Superman.*

The meaning of what you wrote is less clear. Are you saying you love your parents who are Wonder Woman and Superman or listing four people that you love? Adding that extra comma before the conjunction, in this case "and", clarifies your intent.

## Nerd Quirk #52



You not only know what oxford commas are, but you love them and look for them when you are reading, and are slightly put out if you don't find them.

If clarification is the point, why is the use such an issue? Wouldn't you think that clarification would be enough to justify its usage? Those that are anti-Oxford comma commonly reference the *Associated Press Stylebook* which states not to use a comma before the conjunction in a simple series: *The flag is red, white and blue.* Many writers have interpreted this to mean that you should never use it, although the style guide still advocates the use in a complex series.

Should you use the Oxford comma? It is considered optional, more of a helping hand and not a rule. The consensus seems to be that unless you write for a newspaper and/or utilize the *The AP Stylebook*, the decision whether or not to utilize the Oxford comma is up to you.



# FEATURED CLERK

## Patricia Myrdal, CMC Deputy City Clerk, City of Stanwood

The energetic, Aries-born Patricia Myrdal admits she's an introvert when it comes to speaking up in large groups but says she's quite comfortable talking with a few people at a time. Patricia is the Deputy City Clerk for the City of Stanwood in Snohomish County. Although she manages the Clerk's Office, the Finance Director carries the City Clerk title in Stanwood. As in many other cities, "Deputy" is a relative term.



Patricia lives on nearby Camano Island where she moved from Kentucky in the early 90's. Her former husband's family lived there and she agreed to the move and to help him run a Farmers Insurance Agency but not for more than ten years. In 2001, the City of Stanwood had a temporary job opening in utility billing and accounts payable. Patricia only served a one-month stint before it turned into a full-time position.



In 2007, Patricia began working half time in the Clerk's Office doing records management and half time in the Human Resources Department as an HR Specialist. In 2010 she was cut back to 20 hours a week doing records management and was eventually restored to full-time work as the economy strengthened. In 2012, the previous City Clerk took another job and there was some reorganization within the city. The person who had served as Deputy City Clerk decided the clerk job wasn't her cup of tea, so Patricia stepped into the position on a temporary assignment. In 2013 she became the Deputy City Clerk.

New to the position, Patricia asked to attend a training session on writing minutes at the 2013 conference in Tacoma. She attended the certification class with former NCI Director Dema Harris. There she learned about the Northwest Clerks Institute and the scholarship program. She applied for and received a scholarship to attend. "I feel fortunate to have been in one of the last PD classes with Dema," Patricia stated. "She motivated and encouraged me to work toward certification." Having completed PD 3 last summer, Patricia just received her CMC in late March of this year and just after this interview, her co-workers presented her with a cake and a big bouquet of tulips to congratulate her!



Patricia is the third of five children with two girls and two boys in between. The sisters go on a trip each year with Mexico being one of their favorite locations. This year the destination is still undetermined but she said the husbands will be tagging along.

Patricia grew up in Port Townsend where her dad worked in the Street Department for the city. Her dad was formerly in the navy, so Patricia lived in a multitude of places including Tennessee, California, and on Midway Island. She was born on the naval base on Whidbey Island and later graduated from high school in Port Townsend.

One of her favorite hobbies is spending time with her children and grandchildren. Her daughter Elise is 33 and has two sons, Beckett (5) and Ryker (7 months). Her 31 year-old son Michael lives just a block and a half away from his sister in Lake Stevens. He has two children, Keenan (2) and Olivia (9 months).

When not with her kids and grandkids, Patricia burns off energy with a number of hobbies from race walking and playing acoustic guitar to stage management of local theatre. She met her husband Don in 2006 while working on a community theatre production.

Patricia said race walking is very popular in Oregon but not as much in Washington. She race walks in running events in Washington but notes that if you want to learn how to race walk, you probably need to find a trainer or instructor in Oregon.

Another little known fact is that Patricia is a Past President of her local Toastmasters Club. Although she may be shy about addressing large groups, she's well-equipped to do so! Patricia really recommends joining a local club to improve your public speaking skills.

LOL!

# LAUGH OUT LOUD



## The Time Traveling Soldier

When a soldier came to the clinic where I work for an MRI, he was put into the machine by an attractive, young technician. Sometime later, when the examination was over, he was helped out of the machine by a far older woman. The soldier remarked, "How long was I in there for?"

*Joanne Korman, Bedford, Nova Scotia*

## How to Find a Foxhole

My gunnery sergeant and I were inspecting a Marine training exercise when we spotted a second lieutenant ambling about. "Where is your foxhole, Lieutenant?" I asked.

He snapped off a salute and responded, "I don't know, sir!" Turning to the sergeant, he asked, "Gunnery, where is my foxhole?"

"You're standing in it, sir," said the sergeant. "All you have to do is remove the dirt."

*Ret. Lt. Col. Joseph Como, Greenwood, South Carolina*

## Left. Left. Left, Right, OUCH!

"Halt!" shouted our drill instructor. He had noticed that, for the umpteenth time, a recruit kept going to his right on a left command. Our instructor approached the directionally challenged Marine and stomped on his left foot. "Now," he said, "when I say 'left,' it's the one that hurts."

*Wayne Schroeder,  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

## Landmarks and Spacemarks

While on maneuvers in the Mojave Desert, our convoy got lost, forcing our lieutenant to radio for help.

"Are you near any landmarks that might help us locate you?" the base operator asked him.

"Yes," said the lieutenant. "We are directly under the moon."

*Jesse Joe Wingo, Gaylord, Michigan*

## Forget Everything You Know About Guns

After leaving the Army, I applied for a hunting permit but was told I would first need to take a hunter's safety course. "I'm a veteran, trained in handling firearms," I said. "Why wouldn't I get a waiver?"

The clerk replied, "Because we teach you *not* to shoot people."

*Fred Jarrett,  
Philadelphia,  
Pennsylvania*

***If you really need an officer in a  
hurry, take a nap.***

***~Murphy's Eighth Military Law***

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

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Dianne Allen, Town of Darrington  
Raelynn Jones, Town of Darrington



## DISCLOSURE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT RECORDS

**Date:** Wednesday, May 25, 2016

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

**Location:** Webinar

**Cost:** \$35.00

<http://mrsc.org/Home/Training/Training-Calendar/Disclosure-of-Law-Enforcement-Records.aspx>

The proper disclosure of law enforcement records can be challenging for local governments. While they are subject to the Public Records Act (PRA), like all local government documents, there are a variety of special statutes that are unique to this often sensitive information. In this webinar, we will help you understand the common exemptions and prohibitions that apply to disclosure of law enforcement records. We will also provide practical examples of applying the exemptions and the prohibitions. Issues covered will include:

- How the disclosure requirements change depending on the stage of an investigation
- Release of personal information
- Juvenile records
- Heightened access to records by certain requesters

### Presenters

**Flannary Collins** has been a legal consultant with MRSC since 2013. At MRSC, Flannary has completed several special projects on the PRA, including, most recently, a guide to law enforcement records management and disclosure. Before joining MRSC she spent 10 years as the assistant city attorney for the City of Shoreline. Flannary received her B.A. from Loyola Marymount University in L.A., graduating cum laude, and her J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law.

**Sara Di Vittorio** is the Public Records Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for Snohomish County where she handles all public records litigation involving Snohomish County. Prior to joining Snohomish County, Sara worked as an assistant attorney general for nine years including seven years in the Corrections Division. She is currently one of the Governor's appointees to the Public Records Exemption Accountability Committee (the "Sunshine Committee") and often provides training and guidance on the PRA and GR 31.1 to local government groups across the state. Sara received both her B.A. and her J.D. from the University of Washington.

## 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](mailto:mvaliant@ci.tumwater.wa.us) & Rachel Shaw at [rshaw@ci.prosser.wa.us](mailto:rshaw@ci.prosser.wa.us)