

Editor: Debbie Jermann, MMC, C-TRAN

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### Visit our Website:

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

Founded in 1969, 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

Virginia Olsen, CMC



This month I'd like to thank our fantastic Institute Director Joann Tilton for three fabulous weeks of professional development courses at the Northwest Clerks Institute. She does a really terrific job juggling all the parts with WSU who administers the program, UPS who provides the facilities and equipment, the speakers, and the students.

I really enjoyed co-presenting "The Role of the Clerk" at PD 1 and PD IV's "The Clerk's Role in Emergency/Crisis Management and Understanding/Recognizing Threats and Attacks." It's been a few years since I stayed in the dorms and it was fun having conversations with the PD II and PD IV clerks who were there that week.

Serving as WMCA President this year, I was asked a lot of questions at NCI about how things work and what the "costs" and the "perks" are for being a member of the Executive Committee. Some of you suggested I write an article in the newsletter so everyone could read the answers. So I'm taking your advice.



First I must say that WMCA is a volunteer, non-profit organization that has an annual budget, two audits per year, 12 committees, and in the neighborhood of 350 members. As busy as municipal clerks are, imagine adding many, many hours each week to your jobs. Each Executive Committee "EC" member has a role as President, President-Elect, Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Treasurer or Board Member. The job

descriptions for these positions are on our website.

Part of the job is serving as a liaison to one of the 12 WMCA Committees. Two of those 12 committees, Awards and Budget, are chaired by the Immediate Past President and the President-Elect according to our Bylaws. A few of the EC also chair the other committees, however that is often due to the fact that no one else volunteered, someone quit or was not able to make the commitment once they were named, or no one has enough experience to chair a particular committee that requires it. In other words, some committees are more difficult to chair than others. We also have an Elections Auditor and Elections Officer that are selected by the Audit Committee and Membership Committee Chairs, respectively.

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## President's Message (Continued)



Each year, the President-Elect asks if people want to chair committees so we can help prepare people to either jump in as a chair or prepare them to do so in the future. Only one new person expressed interest in chairing a committee when I asked last year and that person is chairing a committee this year. In total, I selected four people to chair a committee for the first time and a few others are in their second year. I believe it's important to find a balance between experience to provide continuity and "new blood" to provide fresh ideas and get

more people involved. So please, if you're interested in chairing a certain committee, let us know now so we can have someone mentor you! Sometimes it takes a year or more to get up to speed and take a leadership role on a committee to prepare to chair it in the future. And if you're not on a committee but would like to be, please let me know.

Thanks to everyone who gives time to WMCA. It's a huge effort that can be very rewarding. For the questions that were asked and my answers to them, check out the article on page 3! Until then, ***"Don't Sit Out the Dance!"***



# Q&A WITH VIRGINIA



As referenced in my July President's message, I was asked a lot of questions at NCI this year and frankly since March when I took office. Thanks to your suggestions, I thought I'd prepare an article to answer those things that make you go HmMMM about WMCA.

*What is the out of pocket expense to serve on the Executive Committee or 'EC' is a question I've been asked a lot. At a minimum, you must be able to attend four board meetings per year, one of which is at the conference location and you should also be able to attend the annual conference that alternates between the east and west sides of the state. WMCA does not pay for your travel or accommodations to attend board meetings, however your agency may pay for that. For example, my city only grants me time away from work for professional development but does not pay for anything. There is quite a time commitment to serve on the EC as we handle business via email and phone on a weekly and sometimes daily basis. You must be able to multi-task and handle this responsibility with your job and your agency must be in support of that commitment.*

The only exception to paying your own way is the annual conference hotel room that WMCA budgets for the incoming President and the current WMCA President's room that is usually comped by the hotel as part of the contract we sign for the conference. The President's registration is also paid by WMCA as they must facilitate several meetings and events at the conference. The President's travel, accommodations and food not included in the registration at the other Region IX and IIMC conferences is paid for by WMCA. The President-Elect receives a paid registration, travel and accommodations for the IIMC conference only. These are outlined in detail in the WMCA budget that is posted online and reviewed with the membership at our annual business meeting held each spring at our conference.

All other EC members must pay their own way to attend conferences and WMCA does not pay for any of our travel to our board meetings or the conference. In my first eight years on the EC, the only "perks" I received was about a \$12-\$15 lunch at each of our four board meetings per year and one dinner following the President's Reception at our conference. The past two years as President-Elect and President, I represented WMCA at the other conferences but still paid my own way to the board meetings and conferences not referenced above.

I've also been asked about the *purpose for the Tuesday night dinner that follows the President's Reception* at our conference and who is invited to that. The intent of this dinner is to welcome and get to know our out-of-state guests that are invited to our conference including the IIMC President, other Region IX Presidents, and our Institute Director. At this dinner, the President has the opportunity to thank the board for their service over the past year and often times we exchange cards, gifts, etc.

Likewise, the President usually has a *pre-func reception* in their room prior to the vendor reception that precedes the banquet night. This is not paid for by WMCA and is just a room party like many of you have on banquet night. The President pays for the soft drinks, food and alcohol and sometimes the EC members bring a bottle of wine to share. This is an opportunity for the board to present its gift (that it pays for personally) to the President for their service over the past year. It's also our last opportunity to say goodbye to those members leaving the Executive Committee as new members will be sworn in that night. Please know that WMCA is not paying for this get-together and the "President's Reception" in the budget is the Tuesday night welcome event for all of our members, out-of-state guests, vendors, speakers and all conference attendees.

We do have policies about expenditures including alcohol in case you're wondering. They are listed in the "Members Only" page of our website under "*Financial Policies*". In a nutshell, the purchase of alcohol is allowed for approved gifts, raffles and auctions items. It must be in its original container or packaging, and not meant for consumption at the event. The purchase of alcohol is also allowed for the Clerk of the Year toast at our conference. If a member of the EC or our guests want alcohol at the dinner during conference, we must pay for it ourselves.

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# Q&A WITH VIRGINIA (CONTINUED)

*What are the perks of serving on the Executive Committee?* Well, a heck of a lot of professional development, interruptions to your workday, and the opportunity to work with a bunch of really great municipal clerks during the term you are elected. There's a couple of free lunches and a dinner and a handful of conferences if you serve as President and one if you're President-Elect. On average, I'd say the average member gets about \$100 or less per year in meals and spends hundreds of hours volunteering. The best perk is meeting lifelong friends through WMCA service, whether you're on the Executive Committee, one of the other committees or just meeting people at our trainings.



One last thing that we discussed at our board meeting in June... *membership dues*. WMCA's fiscal year is May 1 through April 30 which we know is a pain with most of us having calendar year budgets. Each year there's confusion about someone leaving an organization and their replacement's membership, becoming a member to qualify for a scholarship, and the cutoff for the current calendar year versus the upcoming WMCA fiscal year.

This spring we did make some adjustments to our website to ensure that it's clear on the membership page that dues are not prorated. Over the past year and after this meeting, we have updated the membership form to make the fiscal year clearer and make the form reflect the agency, as opposed to the person.

Please note that the membership stays with the agency, not with the person unless they paid for the membership themselves. We can and will do a better job getting the word out on this through our newsletter. We try and do a good job when someone retires or we know someone is leaving an organization to contact them and find out who the replacement is and add them as a member. According to our Treasurer, if the funds are received in the month prior to the fiscal year (when we start writing newsletter articles about renewing), they are applied to the upcoming year. If you join in January when your agency's fiscal year starts, your membership is for the current year because there's still four months left in WMCA's fiscal year.

Again, thanks for the opportunity -- I don't mind being asked questions and sharing. I just really appreciate the fact that people are not intimidated to ask things they would like to know because I want this organization to be inclusive and friendly. Just like you, I was new to WMCA and didn't know anyone or how anything worked. The important thing is that we are here to help each other learn and grow personally and professionally and have a little fun with all that hard work! Feel free to contact me if you have more questions. - *Virginia*

## LOCAL RECORDS GRANT PROGRAM

**Applications are currently being accepted for the local records grant program.** The local records grant program, administered in the office of the secretary of state by the Washington state archives, provides financial assistance to local governments to support records management and preservation efforts, to improve records retention compliance, and to provide technology information systems that improve public records disclosure.

If you have questions about the program or would like help with completing your application, Email [recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov](mailto:recordsmanagement@sos.wa.gov).

**\*\*\* Grant Applications Close 5:00 pm July 31, 2018 \*\*\***

# WMCA GENERAL SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Scholarship applications for the Fall Mini-Conference are currently being accepted. The mini-conference will be held on October 11 and 12 at Campbell's Resort in Chelan. Scholarship applications are due by August 31. Visit the scholarship page of the WMCA website for more information.



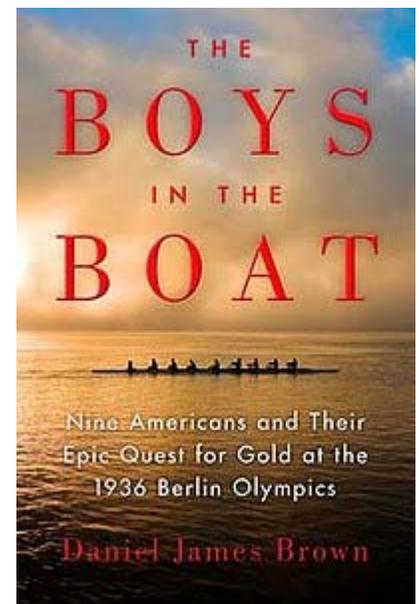
## FALL MINI CONFERENCE

Thursday, October 11 is the Athenian Dialogue facilitated by Mary Lynne Stratta from Bryan, Texas. The book to read is *Boys in the Boat*, a story about nine Americans and their quest for gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics--and what makes this story even better is the fact that this eight-oar crew were from the University of Washington.

Friday, October 12 is the Academy with Jan Dwyer Bang facilitating a six hour session called *The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback*. "This session will provide clerks with strategies and tools to effectively give and receive feedback in a respectful and productive way."

The mini-conference will be held at Campbell's Resort in Chelan, WA. The rooms are available now. Call for reservations 800-553-8225 and tell them you are with the WMCA. Rooms are \$93.00 single occupancy, \$113.00 double occupancy.

The registration fee is \$150.00 for the Athenian Dialogue and \$150.00 for the Academy. If you would like to attend both you would save \$50.00, the cost then would be \$250.00. Look for registration before the end of July!!



# FEATURED CLERK



Lela Wall is the Deputy Clerk at the Snohomish County PUD and is working toward obtaining her CMC. She describes her job in the Commissioner's Office as "pretty straight forward" and focuses mainly on board meetings, and every Clerk's favorite task, meeting minutes! Meeting audio malfunctions however are the least of her favorite job challenges. In fact, she wouldn't shed a tear if setting up the recording equipment for Board meetings wasn't on her list of duties.

Snohomish County PUD is the second largest publicly owned utility in Washington State, serving over 348,000 electric customers and 20,000 water customers. The PUD covers over 2,200 square miles, including all of Snohomish County and Camano Island.

Lela began her journey at the PUD in 2015 when a former co-worker at the City of Marysville accepted a job at the PUD and suggested Lela apply for a customer service representative position. After not getting a call back for the customer service position, as fate would have it, Lela saw the Deputy Clerk job opening and was intrigued. Having no clue what a Deputy Clerk was, the tasks and qualifications seemed to match her work history so she took the leap and applied. She credits her manager's ability to think outside the box and is grateful she was offered the position in the Commissioner's Office.



When asked about her involvement with WMCA, Lela said she's been to one Fall Academy class and PD1. "I enjoyed hearing the experiences of the other clerks and I met really great people!"

Lela and her husband Dave of 23 years have two cats, Nemo and Chloe. Dave stills says, "We should have named her Dori." Together they enjoy traveling to warm sunny places and fondly recommends a VIP Universal Studio tour. "The tram makes stops along the way and you get to tour a film set and the studio property house. Also included is a gourmet buffet lunch. It was pretty awesome and well worth the bit of extra money!"



Aside from traveling, Lela says she's a big fan of the BRAVO "reality" shows, and really enjoys a great shopping deal "(especially designer handbags)". If Rob Thomas is in town, she's sure to catch one of his performances. Rob Thomas is the lead singer for the group Matchbox 20 and a solo performer. His biggest hit so far was probably the song "Smooth" with Santana. "A friend and I have been going to his concerts for 13 years and finally got to meet him three years ago. In addition to being a great singer, he is a super nice guy!" said Lela.

In 5 years, Lela describes the vision of her life to be happy "as long as I have my husband, our cats, my family and friends. Being somewhere with an ocean view and palm trees wouldn't be awful." We are with you on that one Lela! And thank you for letting WMCA get to know you better!

# THANK YOU WMCA!



What a fabulous honor it was to serve as your IIMC Region IX Director for the last 3 years, representing IIMC members from the great states of Washington, Oregon, California, and Alaska. Being one of a 26-member Board of Directors, each with diverse backgrounds and views, who worked together for the betterment of our constituents, was truly a rewarding experience and one that I will never forget. However, my favorite part serving as a Region IX Director was traveling to each of the state conferences, renewing friendships, making new friends, participating in your educational sessions, and witnessing the great pride we all take in our profession. I was truly blessed to have such magnificent Region IX partners – Alice Atwood and Sheri

Pierce. Both served as their state association president during my term as OAMR president, so it was really fun to rekindle our friendship.

Region IX has always had a strong presence on the IIMC Board of Directors, especially promoting the areas of Education and Professional Development. Our Region is the second largest of the 11 IIMC Regions with just over 1500 members. I know the Region IX tradition will carry on with Sheri Pierce and Dawn Abrahamson at the helm for the next year. Thank you to those Region IX Directors who served before me and paved the way for us to carry on our strong tradition.

In Norfolk at the IIMC Conference, the Region IX states presented me with an Alaska Airlines travel certificate valued at \$500 as a going away gift. I am still in awe and can't wait to plan a getaway to some tropical sunny place. Thank you so much for your generosity!

I encourage each of you to be involved in WMCA, sign up for an IIMC Committee, or consider serving as a future Region IX Director. It is an experience that allows you to grow not only professionally, but personally. Thank you again for allowing me the opportunity to take this journey.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Nicole Schunke – Office Assistant, City of Pacific  
Leanne Peters – Clerk of the Board, Columbia County  
Austen Wilcox – Deputy Clerk, Town of Yarrow Point  
Melanie Pedroza – Clerk of the Council, King County  
Sadie Schaneman – Deputy City Clerk, City of Bonney Lake

### **New Partnership Pairing:**

Brooks Wall (Normandy Park) with Monica Lusk (Burien)

## 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 Newsletter Committee Chair, Rachel Shaw at [rshaw@ci.prosser.wa.us](mailto:rshaw@ci.prosser.wa.us).