



VMCTA *News*

NEWSLETTER OF THE VERMONT MUNICIPAL CLERKS' AND TREASURERS' ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING
almost
80 YEARS!
1936-2015

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VMCTA Newsletter / PR Committee

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Educational Opportunities New Clerk & Treasurer Training

It's spring training time in Vermont!

The VMCTA is offering a full day of training for new and seasoned clerks and treasurers — an opportunity to have a professional day of meeting with colleagues, having great learning opportunities and getting some tried and true tips to bring back to the office. The registration fee is \$25.

The dates and locations are:

April 28—Hartland Town Offices, 1 Quechee Road

May 6—Barre Civic Center Alumni Hall

The topics being covered are:

Clerks

- Vital Records & Licensing: marriages, dogs, liquor, fish and game, DMV
- Elections
- Record retention and public records

Roundtable: Do you have questions from your

day-to-day activities for which you need answers? Discussion lead by fellow clerks.

Treasurers

- Duties and Responsibilities of a Treasurer
- Principles of banking (investments, checkings accounts, etc.)
- Taxes (current and delinquent) and cash handling
- Payroll
- Fiscal year-end closing and audit preparation

Roundtable: Do you have questions from your day-to-day activities for which you need answers? Discussion lead by fellow treasurers.

Additionally, lunch will be provided and will be included in the cost of the training.

Any questions, contact South Burlington City Clerk Donna Kinville (846-4119 • dkinville@sburl.com) or any member of the education committee.

Welcome New Clerks and Treasurers!

LuAnn Bingham, Town Treasurer, South Royalton

George Blakeslee, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Guildhall

Jennifer Book, Town Treasurer, West Haven

Melissa Boutin, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Grand Isle

Nedra Boutwell, Town Clerk, Castleton

Kathleen, Clark, Town Treasurer, Huntington

Wendy Covill, Town Clerk, North Stratford

Melanie Dexter, Town Treasurer, Shaftsbury

Thomas Galinat, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Peacham

John Gifford, Town Treasurer, Milton

Lisa Hart, Town Treasurer, Groton

Alison Joseph Dickinson, Acting Town Clerk/Treasurer, Ripton

Tina, Labeau, Town Treasurer, South Londonderry

Sandra LaDeau, Town Treasurer, Lowell

Bonnie Lovell, Town Treasurer, Guildhall

Alyson Marcucci, Town Treasurer, Stratton

Tracey Martel, Town Clerk/Treasurer, North Concord

Kellee Mazer, Town Treasurer, Waitsfield

Michele Murray, Town Clerk, Isle La Motte

Sheryl M. Prince, Town Clerk, Milton

Sandy Reidy, Town Treasurer, Sandgate

Betty Ritter, Town Clerk/Treasurer, Cabot

Nanette Rogers, Interim Town Treasurer, Westford

Gail Rutkowski, Town Treasurer, Woodford

Douglas White, Town Treasurer, Danby

Donna Williams, Town Treasurer, Peru

Irene Zaccor, Town Treasurer, Bridport



Executive Board

PRESIDENT

Tammy Legacy, Roxbury Town Clerk
(802) 485-7840; Fax (802) 485-9160

PAST PRESIDENT

Sandra Pinsonault, Dorset Town Clerk
(802) 362-1178, Ext. 2; Fax (802) 362-5156

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

Lucrecia Wonsor
Killington Town Clerk & Treasurer
(802) 422-3243; Fax (802) 422-3030

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

Donna Kinville
South Burlington City Clerk
(802) 846-4105

SECRETARY

Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Fairlee Town Clerk
(802) 333-4363; Fax (802) 333-9214

TREASURER

Patti Lewis, Fayston Town Clerk & Treasurer
(802) 496-2454, Ext. 23; Fax (802) 496-9850

AUDITOR

Donna Kelty, Barre Town Clerk & Treasurer
(802) 479-9391; Fax (802) 479-9332

MEMBERS AT LARGE*

Tracy Borst
Thetford Town Clerk
(802) 785-2922, Ext. 10; Fax (802) 785-2031

Karen Richard
Colchester Town Clerk & Treasurer
(802) 264-5500

Kathie Felch
Orange

Stacy Jewell
St. Johnsbury

*Term until 2015

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<http://www.vmcta.org>

President's Message

A message from VMCTA President Tammy Legacy

Wow, can you believe it is spring already. Time has certainly been moving at a quicker pace or is it I am getting older. I think it is best for my moral to say time is moving faster. I don't like to think I am getting older just getting better.

I would like to welcome all the new Clerks and Treasurers. The position you have been elected to is a unique one. There are so many duties that you will need to learn, so many statutes that you will need to follow. If you have any questions, please contact your neighboring Clerk or Treasurer or a VMCTA Mentor. We are all here to help you, just ask.

There are a few Clerks, Treasurers and Assistants that have chosen to retire. I want to wish them all good luck in whatever they choose to do after leaving their position. You will be missed.

The VMCTA Legislative Committee has been working so hard on our behalf. They have spent endless hours testifying, emailing and researching. I can't thank them enough. With the help of our lobbyist, Heather Shuldice, they have got the attention of those in Montpelier. Thank you Karen Richards, Carol Dawes, Deb Beckett and Dawn Custer.

The Certification and Education Committee are offering trainings in April and May

for new clerks and treasurers. The trainings will be beneficial for all clerks and treasurers. Any one attending will learn something; I know I always learn something new when I attend trainings. Not only are they planning these trainings but are also busy planning the educational sessions for the annual conference in September.

I would like to remind everyone to save the

Treasurer of the Year



Karen Richard of Colchestser, 2014 Vermont Treasurer of the Year with VMCTA President Tammy Legacy, left, and First Vice President Lucrecia Wonsor at the 2014 Conference in Killington. Photo: Heidi Racht

dates of September 21 and 22. The annual conference will be held at the Stoweflake Resort and Conference Center in Stowe. The annual golf tournament will be on September 20. I hope everyone will save the dates and join us in Stowe. The Certification and Education Committee offer valuable educational sessions, you won't be disappointed. The networking that happens at these events are wonderful. There will be vendors there ready to show you what they have to offer. Don't forget, scholarships are available. You can contact Pattie McCoy in Poultney for further information on scholarships. More informa-

continued

Prez Message from page 2

tion on the conference will be coming to you soon.

Other dates that you should consider remembering is the New England Association of City and Town Clerks annual conference on the 18th - 20th in November. Vermont is hosting this conference and it will be held in Woodstock. The New England Municipal Clerks Institute and Academy (NEMCI) is from July 11 through July 16. If you have never attended these events, please consider doing so. They are both wonderful educational opportunities.

Of course, many of you know the annual International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) conference is in May; this conference is being held in Hartford, Connecticut.

Thank you to all those who participated in the Mud Season Calendar Raffle. Enjoy spring and mud season, it will be warm outside someday (I think).

New Statewide Voter Checklist Training

The Secretary of State's Elections Office will be introducing a new statewide voter checklist this summer which will replace the current system (known by many as the "HAVA" system). This new system will be less complicated to navigate, will include many features that the current system does not provide, and has been designed to make the Town Clerks work easier.

In addition to a new voter checklist, the software also includes an election management database that will streamline and expedite many of the pre- and post-election responsibilities, including the reporting of election results. Of course, there will be a learning curve, but once we are all familiarized with the new system, I believe we will all agree that it is a significant improvement

The Elections Office has scheduled four separate trainings in late May and early June, and another four separate trainings in August, at locations from north to south across the state (Jay, Montpelier, Killington, and Manchester). It is our hope that, by providing four different options in both the late spring and late summer, that all Town

Clerks will be able to find a training that meets scheduling needs.

The course outline is as follows:

Objectives: Upon completion of the training, attendees will be able to accomplish the following:

1. Access and navigate the system with ease;
2. Create Voters within the system;
3. Maintain District/Street Data;
4. Maintain Absentee Ballots and Voter History;
5. Maintain accurate Voter Lists by interfacing with the DMV;
6. Understand how to conduct inquiries, produce reports, and utilize messaging functionality.

Duration: 3 ½ Days, Monday - Wednesday 9 am to 4 pm, Thursday 9 am to 1 pm.

Full breakfast served daily at 8 am.

If you have not enrolled in any of the training dates, please contact the Elections Office at (802) 828-2363 or email Lori Bjornlund at lori.bjornlund@sec.state.vt.us.

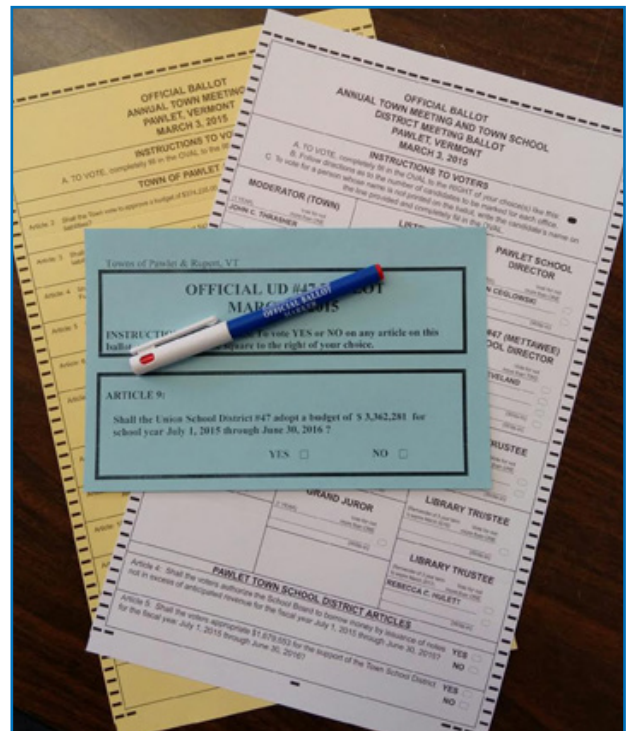
Tip Top Tips

I have begun to use a photo (shown, at right) to remind folks of our town election. This is the one that I used this year and posted it to my Town Clerk Facebook page. Things went pretty smoothly here in Pawlet with a 30% turnout. That seems to be typical for our town meeting and I guess if I were to do anything differently it would be to order fewer ballots.

—Deb Hawkins
Town Clerk, Pawlet

I purchase a small stack of pencil cases for three-ring binders. They are soft canvas material on one side and have a clear window on the other side, with a large zippered pouch. I place the ballot bag contents list with the date of the election in the pouch, and run my ballot bag sealing tag right through one of the holes for the three-ring binder attachments. This way, the label for the bag is very well protected and doesn't rip off like the manilla tags often do. When late ballots arrive, I can just place them inside the zippered pouch and they will get discarded when I destroy the contents of the whole bag at the proper time. I use the smaller ballot bags without wheels and pockets, because they take up less room in the vault, so the pencil cases become the exterior pocket.

—Sally Ober, LincolnTown Clerk



Legislative Update in Brief

Submitted by Karen Richard

H. 35 (S.49)

Water Quality, including fees to support new staff within the Agency of Natural Resources and Agriculture to address the needs of the State to improve the water quality of the lake and other waterways. Without action Vermont will be subject to the Federal EPA requirements. The House bill, H.35, raises revenue through an increase in the property transfer tax, environmental conservation and permit fees as well as new taxes on fertilizer, feed and pesticides.

The current Senate proposal, S.49, would impose a new per parcel fee that would raise \$11 million.

The fee structure would as follows:

- \$0.50 per acre on enrolled forestland and \$1 per acre on other land
- Minimum of \$25 per parcel, up to 25 acres; each acre above 25 will be assessed \$1
- Not assessed on exempt parcels
- Collection done by municipalities as part of property tax bill
- Listed separately but collected together with the tax bill
- Municipality shall not be required to remit to the State the full amount for all parcels within a municipality
- \$10 additional fee for failure to pay – along with other applicable fees
- Repealed on July 1, 2021

The Legislative Committee has opposed this for two years.

Legislative Committee

Karen Richard, Colchester (Chair)
Deb Beckett, Williston
Dawn Custer, Hubbardton
Carol Dawes, Barre

<http://www.vmcta.org>

As President of VMCTA, I would like to recognize the dedication of the Chair of the Legislative Committee. Karen has done an amazing job keeping up with all the action going on in Montpelier. I am in awe of her dedication. While she was on vacation in Florida, sitting on the beach, she was answering emails on her phone. Can you believe that—that shows dedication to her profession and our organization.

And then she goes to visit her family in Michigan, what does she do there - answer emails regarding more changes Montpelier is trying to make. We, Clerks and Treasurers, owe Karen a big Thank You.

—Tammy Legacy

S. 29

Same Day Voter Registration: The association was surveyed and the numbers were strong in opposition to the pro-

posal. There was testimony from other states that currently have same day registration. The Legislative Committee testified to the demands of early voting that other states do not have, with the exception of Maine.

The Association asked for the following:

1. Effective date January 1, 2017 so that we are able to get through a primary and presidential election using the statewide checklist
2. Internet access at all polling locations prior to implementation
3. Back off Early/Absentee voting prior to an election (as Maine does)
4. Ability to process Early/Absentee ballots into machine on Monday (as Maine does)
5. Documentation of residency in order to register at polls

The bill passed out of the Senate with a requirement of a report from the Secretary of State to the Legislature on some of the implementation issues.



The VMCTA Officers take their oaths of office from Vermont Secretary of State Jim Condos (at right, not pictured) at the VMCTA Annual Conference in September. Photo: Heidi Racht

History Highlight

Long Serving



Former Vermont Governor Jim Douglas shares a light moment with Milton Town Clerk John Cushing, who retired on March 3. Assistant Town Clerk Paulette Lafond submitted the photo, writing in that she “couldn’t think of a better picture for retirement than to have John sitting in a rocking chair and Jim overlooking.” (*The Clerk/Finance Offices gave him a Rocking Chair inscribed ‘Rocking With Your Friends - 1969 - 2015’.*)

The recent retirement of Milton Town Clerk John Cushing on Town Meeting Day prompted this question, “Is John Cushing, recently retired Town Clerk of Milton, the longest serving Vermont Town Clerk at 46 years?”

Well, it turns out, not by a long shot.

The question generated a few responses. Huntington’s longest serving Town Clerk is 32 years (George W. Sayles, 1874-1906). Olga Hallock was the first female clerk, elected the same year as John Cushing (1969), serving 31 years.

Moses Gove served for 45 years in Lincoln, from 1875-1920. The next longest was W.W. Pope for 31 years. Sally Ober writes, “I’ve been here for a whopping 9 years now!”

Clyde Jenne reports that Philip H Royce served 50 years in Hartland, 1915-1965. Now, he reveals the truth about the workload gender discrepancy in early Hartland... Jenne remarked, “The nitty gritty is his wife

did most of the work as Assistant!”

Carol Dawes wrote in that Barre City Clerk and Treasurer Ralph Oliver served for 50 years (1926-1976). She said, “Imagine the things he saw in that time – the Depression, WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, the summer of love, space travel... Just to give you a point of reference, the downtown streets in Barre City weren’t paved until 1927!”

Kim Moulton, Hyde Park Town Clerk, wrote in about Brigham W. McFarland, who served from 1920 to 1961.

Mary Hodeck, Bennington Town Clerk, served from 1939-1995, according to newly elected Town Clerk Cassandra Barbeau, who has been Assistant Clerk for 20 years.



Mary Hodeck, Bennington Town Clerk for 56 years

And then there is Elwin O. Aldrich... In Shrewsbury, Mark Goodwin reports that Elwin O. Aldrich was the Town Clerk from 1873-1934 (born November 13, 1843) — 61 years!

Still hanging in there is Judy Coolidge, Pawlet Treasurer, for 34 years. She noted, “I see I have a ways to go to catch up.”

—Heidi Racht



Elwin O. Aldrich, Shrewsbury Town Clerk for 61 years

Photo Essay



Maple sugaring photos from Bobbi Brimblecombe of Marshfield. Can't you just smell the sweet aroma of the sugarhouse at night!



Town Highlight

Topsham Restores Old Cemeteries



On May 30, 2013 a Memorial Day ceremony was held at the oldest cemetery in Topsham, Currier Hill Cemetery, as part of Topsham's 250th celebration. A volunteer day began the preparation. Soil was brought in to fill the sunken graves. A new sign and flagpole were erected and the access road was improved. Invitations were sent to local Veterans. A National Guard Veteran was the emcee. The ceremony included the Cub Scouts placing flags on the Veteran's graves, the raising of a new American and MIA flag as well as poem readings, music and stories. The event was so well received it was decided to make the Memorial Day ceremony an annual event. The most common comment, especially from the Veterans was "can we do this next year?"

The answer was "yes!!"

On the traditional Memorial Day of May 30 each year, Topsham will honor its past and present with a ceremony. A work bee is scheduled for volunteers to come help with the initial clean up. Town funds are used for stone repair, fencing issues etc. New flagpoles will be erected, that are harvested from local Topsham forests. The Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and local Veterans are asked to participate.

Not only is this a great way to gather the community but also an initiative to restore one of the ancient cemeteries annually.

—Submitted by Cynthia Flannigan
Topsham Town Clerk/Treasurer

New Offices in Waterbury

The Waterbury Municipal office was flooded during Tropical Storm Irene in August of 2011. After almost four years later, two bond votes, and one failed rescission vote, the Town of Waterbury had a ground breaking ceremony on Monday, April 13, for the new Municipal Complex located at 28 North Main Street. The project will involve the renovation and restoration

of the historic Janes House (former library) and will include new Municipal offices, a new expanded Library, the Historical Society and a Community Meeting Room. Construction will start later this month and the estimated completion date is January 20, 2016.

As an aside, I was elected Town Clerk in 2008. Since TS Irene, I have spent more time in our temporary office at the Main Street Fire Station than I did in our former Municipal office. I have attached a photo showing where most of our records have been stored since the storm. This is a container located at the Maple Street Fire Station in Waterbury Center that I access regularly, as there is no room for all of our records here. Through it all, the entire Municipal staff has persevered and we're really looking forward to our new digs.

Exciting times!

—Carla Lawrence



Something New

The Barre Town Recreation Department is catching the CRAZE. They are now offering Pickleball lessons. Don't know about this? Visit our website. From the page, there is also a link to a story recently done by CBS on the Pickleball Craze.

Inexpensive sport that other community boards might want to investigate.

—Donna Kelty,
Barre Town Clerk-Treasurer