



# VMCTA *News*

NEWSLETTER OF THE VERMONT MUNICIPAL CLERKS' AND TREASURERS' ASSOCIATION

**CELEBRATING  
OVER 80 YEARS!  
1936-2018**

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## VMCTA Newsletter / PR Committee

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**Welcome to the ninth edition of the VMCTA newsletter.**  
Your submissions are welcome — or feel free to contact a member of the committee with an idea.

## VMCTA Conference is September 20-21

**T**he VMCTA Fall Conference is upon us! The conference and annual meeting this year will be held on Thursday and Friday, September 20 and 21, in Colchester. It has much to offer to Vermont Clerks and Treasurers, including writing skills, security in the workplace, an Athenian Dialogue on Wednesday - and the required cycle of courses for the certification of clerks and treasurers. There is still a narrow window of opportunity (one day) to get in on the workshops,

hear inspirational speakers, and network with your colleagues at this big event.

Meet with vendors who will be onsite to answer your questions about their services and products.

Bring your spare change for fun fundraising for VMCTA: a Silent Auction and 50/50 raffle, and lots of door prizes and vendor raffles.

For more information: [www.vmcta.org](http://www.vmcta.org).

## Fall Workshops Offer Opportunity for Vermont and IIMC Certification Credits

If you are clerk or treasurer considering the opportunity to become certified, the VMCTA Fall Conference offers workshops to meet the criteria for CVC or CVT credit. This year, clerks will have sessions in Election Procedures and Vital Records. Treasurers will learn about Municipal Accounting and Principles of Banking.

Clerks who wish to become certified through

IIMC can attend and write a brief evaluation of presentations that will count toward education credits.

If you have any questions about the process for certification or need some help getting started, talk with a member of the Education and Certification Committee (list on page 3).

## VMCTA Committees

The following is the VMCTA Committee List:

Awards	Curriculum	Nominating
Budget	Fundraising	Public Relations/Newsletter
Certification & Continuing Education	Legislative	Scholarship
Constitution	Membership	Website
	Municipal Records	

If you are interested in being on one (or more) of these, please visit this link: [https://www.vmcta.org/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC={D688563A-F6B9-485D-A4CC-](https://www.vmcta.org/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={D688563A-F6B9-485D-A4CC-)



## Executive Board

### PRESIDENT

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

### PAST PRESIDENT

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

### FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

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

### SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

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

### SECRETARY

Dawn Custer  
Hubbardton Town Clerk & Treasurer  
(802) 273-2951; Fax (802) 273-3729

### TREASURER

Audra Girouard, Concord Treasurer  
(802) 695-2910; Fax (802) 695-2552

### AUDITOR

Deanna Robitaille  
Montgomery Clerk & Treasurer  
(802) 695-2910; Fax (802) 695-2552

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

#### Two Years Term until 2019

Karen Richard  
Colchester Town Clerk & Treasurer  
(802) 264-5500; Fax (802) 254-5503

Stacy Jewell

St. Johnsbury Town Clerk  
(802) 728-4331

#### MEMBERS AT LARGE

#### One Year Term until 2018

Diane Judd  
Holland Town Clerk & Treasurer  
(802) 885-4440; Fax (802) 895-4440  
Debra Hawkins, Pawlet Town Clerk  
(802) 325-3309, Ext. 1; Fax (802) 325-6109

# President's Message

Happy fall to everyone! This summer has been one for the records. With the hottest July and August on record and with the warmer than normal predictions for September, I am not sure when fall will arrive. I am eagerly awaiting apple picking, hot cider, pumpkins and VMCTA's annual conference.

This year the Executive Board of VMCTA decided to move the annual meeting and conference dates to days of the week that work better for the treasurers of our Association. After much discussion, the days of Thursday and Friday were chosen as the best two consecutive days of the week to hold the meeting. This year the conference will be held on September 20 and 21 at the Hampton Inn by Hilton in Colchester. The Certification and Education Committee have worked hard to bring you quality educational sessions ranging from correspondence, strategic

ing experience. As we all know, how well we do our jobs is not always a reflection of how much you know the laws, but how well you handle yourself whether addressing your select board or members of your community. That is why the personal development classes in this program are important. If you are interested or slightly intrigued to attend that you find a buddy clerk to attend as well.

The following were attendees at this year's NEMCI&A

Board members: Tracy Borst, Thetford, and Tammy Legacy, Roxbury

NEMCI graduating class: Dawn Custer, Hubbardton and Julie Graetner, Colchester

NEMCI second year students: Dianna Vachon, Shelburne and Susan Mc-Namara Hill, Essex

NEMCI first year students: Anita Sheldon, Manchester, and Kathleen Neathawk, Rockingham, and Marlene Hall who were unavailable for this picture

Academy attendee: Donna Kinville, South Burlington

As this fall election season will be starting in full swing next week, I wish everyone has an uneventful election season, no more tax bill revisions and a quiet legislative session with no major election or tax bills.

—Donna Kinville, VMCTA President



Dawn Custer and Julie Graetner

planning, and dotted line leadership in addition to the required clerk and treasurer courses.

Congratulations! I wish to extend congratulations to Dawn Custer, Hubbardton and Julie Graetner, Colchester, for graduating from the NEMCI&A this July. As anyone who has attended this three-year program will tell you, it is truly a life chang-



# Congratulations!

**Donna Kinville**, South Burlington City Clerk, who earned her MMC (Master Municipal Clerk) from the IIMC (International Institute of Municipal Clerks) in August. In Vermont, five active clerks have this prestigious designation; in the United States, there are 1333. The MMC program is the second and more advanced of the two professional designations granted by IIMC. The MMC program is an advanced continuing education program that prepares participants to perform complex municipal duties. The program has an extensive and rigorous educational component and a professional contribution component. The MMC applicant must demonstrate that they have actively pursued education and professional activities.

**Tracy Borst**, Thetford Town Clerk, who earned her CMC (Certified Municipal Clerk) from the IIMC (International Institute of Municipal Clerks) in August. In Vermont, 18 active clerks have this prestigious designation; in the United States, there are 4569. To earn the CMC designation, a Municipal Clerk must attend extensive education programs. The CMC designation also requires pertinent experience in a municipality. The CMC program prepares the applicants to meet the challenges of the complex role of the Municipal Clerk by providing them with quality education in partner-



## Certification & Continuing Education Committee

- Tracy Borst, Thetford (Chair)
- Deb Beckett, Williston
- LaDonna Dunn, Westfield
- Clyde Jenne, Hartland
- Diane Judd, Holland
- Donna Kelty, Barre Town
- Patti Lewis, Fayston
- Heidi Racht, Huntington

# Karen Richard Retires

## Farewell to Karen Richards, Town Clerk Extraordinaire

by Inge Schaefer

**A**nnoying. Nag. Could those be the words used to describe a friend, co-worker and parent? And, especially, could those be the words uttered about our beloved, well-respected and retiring Town Clerk/Treasurer Karen Richard? Yet “annoying” was the word



*Colchester town manager Dawn Francis (left) and town clerk/treasurer Karen Richard pose for a photo at the Vermont State House on Friday, April 13, after being recognized in concurrent resolutions. (Courtesy Photo)*

used by Senator Dick Mazza as he talked about the persistent, unrelenting efforts by Richard to get legislation through that was important to Vermont’s towns and cities. Sen. Mazza at the June 25 retirement gathering at the Hampton Inn, said, “Karen (Richard) always gets what she wants . . . for instance, the Vital Records Bill in the legislature this year. Somehow she got it attached to the big bill (the Budget bill) and it passed!” With tongue in cheek, he continued: “Karen annoyed me at least once or twice a week until she got what she wanted.”

While jesting about her annoying and unwavering loyalty to the needs of the Vermont Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Association and her own community, Sen. Mazza did seem relieved that perhaps she would not be back to the legislature next year. Before he left the podium, however, it was clear that should there be a need, Karen would again be visiting the State House. Karen and the crowd attending her retirement party at the Hampton clearly loved every minute of Mazza’s ribbing.

In between the annoying and nag references, others stepped up to speak of her long record of service to the town, first in the Assessor’s office, then as lister and twenty years as town clerk. Under her watch, the town records for public access were digitized and Colchester was one of the first towns in the State to put their land records online. The Town’s antiquated

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# Freedom & Unity Dragon Boat Team



We had a successful Town Clerk boat in the Dragon Boat Festival this year on Sunday, August 5. Held at the waterfront in Burlington, 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steersperson make up a boat.

Deb from Williston was our drummer. We had members from Cornwall, Essex, Fayston, Huntington, Jericho, Richmond, Royalton, Shelburne, Westford and Willston Town Offices.

We managed a very respectful second place in both of our races with our second race finishing seven seconds faster than the first. And, we were able to out paddle the CPAs in our second race.

—Jessica Alexander, Jericho

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## Richard Retires

*continued from page 3*

and inadequate voting machines were also replaced in order to have more reliable voting records and tabulation. She has chaired the Vermont Municipal Clerks and Treasurers' Legislative Committee for ten years . . . during which I suspect she and Sen. Mazza became good friends. A longtime volunteer for the Champlain Water District Board of Commissioners, and currently chair of that board, Karen has also served on the Vermont League of Cities and Towns Board. She is a recipient of the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer awards from the VMCTA.

Letters of recognition were presented to Karen from the Washington legislative delegation, and accolades were shared from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Jim Faye of the Champlain Water District, David Coates, along with newly named Town Manager Aaron Frank, who acknowledged the presence of past managers Dawn Francis and Al Voegele, who also attended the event.

Annoying was a surprising enough descriptor, but who would dare to call our esteemed Town Clerk and Treasurer a nag? Why, her

<http://www.vmcta.org>

children, of course. Christine and Suzie several times referred to their Mom – with pride and conviction – as a “nagging mother, who rarely took ‘no’ for an answer.” Her nagging – urging them to always do the very best that they could – carried them through to the successful career and family members that they are today. Needless to say, eyes were not dry at the Richard table.

Julie Graeter, the town's new Town Clerk/Treasurer and the entire Clerk's office staff ended the evening by sharing a lovingly prepared slide presentation and poem entitled THE MANY FACES OF KAREN.

After being referred to as an annoying nag most of the evening, Karen was gracious in her thanks to everyone in the room and several who were not – acknowledging the support of Dick Paquette, Roger Derby and especially Joyce Sweeney, all now deceased. As our 29th Clerk/Treasurer, Karen clearly will rank among our most distinguished past town clerks – not the least of which was our first, Ira Allen, who served in 1793. Thank you for your service, Karen, and God's speed.

*(This article was published in the COLCHESTER SUN, July 3, 2018 issue.)*

# Scenes from the VMCTA Spring Training



Spring training in West Rutland, Photos, courtesy of LaDonna Dunn



## Welcome

Corinth has a new Treasurer. Susan Fortunati retired in March 2018 after 20 years with the Town of Corinth. The new Treasurer is Neysa Russo.

## Legislative Committee

Karen Richard, Colchester (Chair)  
Deb Beckett, Williston  
Dawn Custer, Castleton  
Stacy Jewell, St. Johnsbury  
Carol Dawes, Barre

## Website Committee

Lucrecia Wonsor, Killington  
(Chair)  
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Marshfield  
Donna Kelty, Barre Town

## Fundraising Committee

Nellie Noble (Chair), Granby  
Karmen Bascom, South Royalton  
Priscilla Aldrich, West Burke  
Susan Johnson, Cornwall  
Diane Judd, Holland  
Betty Ritter, Cabot

## Scholarship Committee

Sandy Pinsonault, Dorset (Chair)  
Audra Girouard, Concord  
Tammy Legacy, Roxbury

## Nominating Committee

Tracy Borst, Thetford (Chair)  
Priscilla Aldrich, Burke  
Patti Lewis, Fayston

## Membership Committee

Priscilla Aldrich, Burke (Chair)  
Sara Haskins, Morristown  
Patti Lewis, Fayston  
Nellie Noble, Granby  
Diana Vauchon, Sherburne

## Tip Top Tips

I attended the Delinquent Tax Collector training in Montpelier this summer. One of their tips, if you have a hard time finding someone, is to use this website. Fastpeoplesearch.com I know a neighboring DTC has already used it since the meeting and had good results tracking someone down.

—Nellie Noble, Town of Granby



I've been working on a retention plan similar to Bobbi's in Marshfield. She keeps most of her records for 7 years (unless permanently) so I've filed each year's records in two boxes, tagged them with a destroy date in 7 years. Then the entire box can be recycled or shred in 7 years. This seems to be the easiest for me. I've filed the dog licenses with their rabies certificates in a separate box and purge those every 4 years.

—Julie Sharon, Wallingford

## Next Issue

The goal is to have a quarterly newsletter, but it seems to be working out to be more like three times per year. So, depending on the news and the response for submissions, look for the next issue either in early January or in late March.

# News from Coventry

## Trashasaurus

**C**asella (a landfill located in Coventry) supported the residency of Steve Myott coming and working with Coventry Village School students this past school year. Students from kindergarten through 8th grade brought



in recyclable items. The foundation of this dinosaur is a wooden sculpture covered with chicken wire that students hung their recyclable items from. It was located within our Village School until Coventry Day in July – when Trashasaurus got to escape the gym to the outside and experience sunshine

He was later moved to the Coventry Common for a week for residents to view and admire. Although Trashasaurus will become extinct once again; his legacy and teachings of recycling will remain with Coventry residents, Teachers and Students for many years to come!! This Fall, the Coventry Village School students will “officially” give Trashasaurus a name in his honor with the help of the Coventry Solid Waste Committee members.

## Vault Neglect & Recovery

**A**s many Towns are aware, Coventry has been negatively in the news for the last couple of years for various reasons with the prior Town Clerk/Treasurer. In July 2017, I was appointed to the position of Town Clerk by the Select Board members. For Coventry, this transition was a huge task as the business

offices were in such disarray and this expanded into our Town Vault. Many researchers avoided coming to Coventry, if possible, as anything and everything associated with our Town Vault was in a dire state of neglect and not easily accessible. The disarray involved Land Recordings, filings, Vital Records, survey maps, election documentation, town proceedings – so basically anything regarding Town permanent records.

In March 2018, I was elected for a one year term to fulfill the remaining term of the prior Town Clerk. During this past year, there have been many challenges getting the Town Office back into a state of operation and efficiency. However, the permanent records was an evident Top Priority in getting back in control – so the “Vault Neglect” status started a transformation into the “Vault Recovery” operation. It has been almost a year being in

this office and our Town Vault and permanent records has started to see some brighter days. Researchers and residents are enjoying coming back to Coventry as the trust is becoming instilled once again with our Town permanent records with accuracy but also the organization of being able to find the items they need.

It’s just a good reminder for all Clerks – regardless of the situation I came upon – that regular and routine maintenance of the town vaults should be a priority but also a staple of our character as Town Clerks. I look at where I started last July, and look to see where the vault is today – and accomplishment and gratitude comes to mind when I see researchers leaving with a good feeling instead of a frustrated feeling. Although Coventry’s town vault is not at the end result where I want to see it, but as the saying goes “We have come a long way, baby!!” and I will continue to work on improving our vault.

I placed a raccoon picture on my back vault wall



*Before (above) and After (below)*



– which I have attached as well. It’s my signature piece that imposes my character and effort in getting the Town Vault back to a state of welcoming smiles.

—*Deb Tanguay*, Coventry Town Clerk