



COLORADO CORONERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2007

Presidents Message

So much has been happening within your organization that it is hard to know where to start. So let's begin with what will be happening in the next month. Many of you received communications concerning the status of CCA, how it is governed and how it functions.

First of all, let me assure you that the Colorado Coroners Association is a legal entity with all the proper state and federal tax numbers, filings and yearly reporting. However, in the course of researching all the concerns, it was realized that the organization has grown beyond the scope of the original articles of incorporation and bylaws. Additionally, many new laws have been enacted with regards to non-profit organizations and we needed to include the new information in our organization structure. Like any other growing and expanding organization, we needed to have a professional look at how we operate, how all of us fit together and how the organization has changed.

I, as president and then members of the Board of Directors visited with an attorney that specializes in non-profit organizations. He came highly recommended by similar organizations and has been engaged by CCA to review the organizational structure. He begins the work next month. He has already suggested that we begin to develop a policy manual to accompany the by-laws. Any of you that want to help with that project, please contact me.

Also, next month the Colorado Legislature will go into session. While there is no specific legislation regarding Coroners on the table, we will be monitoring legislation that affects our work. In the past we have supported driving restrictions for youth, seatbelt and helmet legislation and child fatality monitoring, among other things.

In October, CCA members Chris Herndon, Jeff Nohr and I conducted a training for the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. The role of the Coroner, what to expect at autopsy and cooperation during investigations were topics that generated excellent

discussion. The two groups have pledged to continue interactive trainings and discussion.

We have a big year ahead of us: The legislature; organizational revamping; another outreach seminar and our 20th training conference. I think 2008 will be our best year ever.

Sharon Morris
CCA President

Next CCA Meeting:

January 19th, 2007 at the El Paso County Sheriff's Training Academy, right next door to the Coroner's Office!

Please let Chris Herndon (719-649-1865) know if you are planning to attend the meeting so she can order food for lunch.

Be sure to check our website for upcoming training and other great information:

Coloradocoroners.org

Sad News to Report

Triena Harper, Chief Deputy Coroner for Jefferson County, is retiring as of December 31 after 23 years of service to her county and to Coroners throughout the state.

Triena is a founding member of CCA, starting with the first meeting when Coroners just thought they should get together every once in awhile to share knowledge, get to know each other and learn from each others' experiences.

Always willing to share her knowledge, Triena has been the one that so many of us call when we need advice, when we come up against something we have not dealt with before or when we just need someone to confirm what we have already diagnosed on a case. AND sometimes we just call to hear that unique, never to be duplicated, joyful laugh.

There will be a time, probably at June conference, for us to share our Triena memories and for us to thank her for all she has done, for all the time she has given to CCA and to so many of us individually. However, Triena assures us that she is not going away, just going to do different things. After taking "at least two months" to catch up on her sleep, she intends to remain active in CCA, exercising her commitment to more and more training opportunities for Coroners.

From those of us who have known Triena professionally and from us who have the privilege of calling her our friend, you have our gratitude and our continuing friendship.

Committee Reports

Education Committee

The Education Committee duties are to develop programs for the Outreach Seminars, June Conference and any other education programs offered by CCA.

Committee members are: Chris Herndon, Chair, El Paso County, Triena Harper, Jefferson County, Carlette Brocius, Fremont County and Joe Giadone, Prowers County.

We are very pleased to tell you all that our Outreach Classes and June Conferences have been accredited by ABMDI and the CCSTB for continuing ed. For the first time we were also approved for POST credits at the Sterling Outreach.

Our outreach in Sterling turned out to be very successful. There were 45 people in attendance from the surrounding area. Our thanks to Dave Tennant for hosting us. The next outreach will be in April somewhere in the Grand Junction area.

We are working on plans for June Conference. We have read and re-read the critiques from years past to come up with what we hope is our best conference. The biggest complaint about the Hotel in Cripple Creek was the smoke, as of January 1st there is no more smoking in casinos, so that solves that problem. Another complaint was that spouses had nothing to do, so Sharon has been in contact with a few friends in the area and will be setting up tours and such for spouses. We should have brochures ready to mail out in April.

We need some case presentations!!!! These are always the highlight of the conference. Call Chris if you have a case to present!

Legislation Committee

The Legislative Committee duties are to monitor legislation during the legislative session, develop legislation when needed, seek Coroner opinion on legislation, work with the CCA lobbyist on legislative strategy, and organize testimony on legislation when needed.

Committee members are: Sharon Morris, chair; Park County; George Crocket, Jackson County; Chalmer Swain, Delta County; and Triena Harper, Jefferson County. This committee represents the various sizes of counties and state demographics well.

No legislation, affecting Coroners, as been developed to date.

Coroner Assist Team

The Coroner Assist Team coordinates requests for assistance and referrals from any Colorado County Coroner. The team maintains a list of available equipment, qualified personnel, and forensic specialists.

The Coroner Assist Team is Co-Chaired by Chris Herndon, El Paso County and Steve Stogsdill, Mesa County. Sandy Graeff, Elbert County is also a member.

Luckily no one has had the need to call on the Coroner Assist Team so far this year.

Certification Committee

The Certification Committee is responsible for keeping the records of Certified Death Investigators, including new applicants and continuing education.

Committee members are: Brenda Bock, Chair, Triena Harper, Jefferson County and Chris Herndon, El Paso County.

For those Coroner's that need to be certified by the Colorado standards and training board your time is running out. Make sure to get me your completed application before the end of the year. There are several people who have sent in but have failed to

send in the copies or documentation with the application. This will delay your application being processed. So make sure to call or email me if you have any questions. BBock@rkymtnhi.com or (970) 724-0083

The new guidelines take effect January 1, 2008. Mail your applications to me at:

Brenda Bock, Grand County Coroner
CCA Certification Chair
PO Box 828
Kremmling, CO 80459

CCA Representatives to other Committees

This committee coordinates representatives to: Donor Alliance, Child Fatality Review, GEERC, SEMTAC, and any other council that asks for or require a CCA representative.

This committee is chaired by George Crocket, Jackson County.

There are several committees that are outside the structure of CCA that require Coroner representation. During the last quarter of the year it seems that many of these committees are finishing their year's projects and there is very little news to report.

SEMTAC: Zane Laubhan, Gilpin County was appointed in September by CCA to this committee which deals with emergency services. He missed the deadline for the October meeting and one has not been held since. As a Coroner who is also involved in EMS Zane will be able to provide information on new techniques, standards for administration of new procedures and how our groups can work together.

STATE CHILD FATALITY: Kelly Lear-Kaul represents the Coroners on this state mandated committee. Currently the committee is seeking a means of funding its activities such as providing information to Corners on child fatality cases.

GEERC: This Governor appointed Board deals with resources and activities during an emergency situation such as pandemic flu, mass casualties and mass fatalities. Dr. Mike Dobersen and Dr. James Wahe are the Coroner representatives on this committee. The committee has not met recently.

DONOR ALLIANCE: The final version of the Colorado Coroner Protocols for Organ and Tissue Donation has been sent out to each Coroner. The protocol can be used as is, or used as a template

for individual protocols. The document is all encompassing, covering the needs of both the large and small counties. The protocols sent to Coroners are to be agreed upon and signed by the Coroner and his/her District Attorney. After signatures are obtained return the document to Sharon Morris, CCA President who will take them to Donor Alliance for final signatures.

Ike Miller

The Ike Miller committee is responsible for managing the award process for the special award created by Dr. Ben Galloway, and any other awards that the Board of Directors deems appropriate.

Committee Members are: Dr. Earl Byrne, Chair, Teller County, Triena Harper, Jefferson County, and Sharon Morris, Park County

The Ike Miller memorial committee has funded one person to attend a major death investigation school. Cindy Eller of Grand County was chosen to receive this scholarship. She will attend the St. Louis Medicolegal Death Investigation class in October. The next cycle for scholarship applications will begin in the spring of 2008. The successful applicant will be announced at June conference.

Marketing

This committee is responsible for the CCA website, providing information to the media and providing a selection of merchandise for members to purchase.

This committee is comprised of: Sandy Graeff, Chair and Mike Graeff, Elbert County.

Sandy and Mike Graeff are enjoying themselves picking out new stuff to have for sale at the Outreach classes and June Conference. They would like to hear from anybody who has any special requests or suggestions for items. They are hoping to design some special 20th anniversary merchandise for next year.

Guest Column

(We need some help from all of you; send us some ideas for guest columns!!)

STANDARDS BOARD EXTENDS DEADLINES

The Colorado Coroners Standards and Training Board (CCSTB) have given a 6-month extension to those Coroners needing to obtain and submit documentation for medicolegal death investigator certification. The decision was made at the December 5th meeting of the board. This applies to Coroners elected or appointed during the past year **and** coroners that have been in office.

Coroners elected or appointed on or after July 2005 are required to become certified as a death investigator within one year of taking office. That deadline was January 8, 2008 but has been extended to June 30, 2008. These new Coroners must attend an approved 40-hour medicolegal death investigation class, complete the required number of case investigations and attend the required number of autopsies. The CCSTB Training Standards and Death Investigation Certification log are on the website at www.coloradocoroners.org. Participation in the death scenes must be signed off by a ***certified*** death investigator. Presence at the autopsies must be signed off by the pathologist.

There are four exceptions to the statutory requirement of attending the 40-hours MLDI class:

- (1) 4 years certification as a death investigator by CCA or ABMDI.

- (2) Board-Certified Forensic Pathologist

- (3) Current or past Colorado POST certification with two years additional education and experience in death investigation within the past four years

- (4) Submission of certificates for equivalent training received in the past four years ***and*** completion of the required number of case investigations and autopsies.

It is fully understood that counties with limited numbers of cases may have difficulty obtaining the required autopsies or case investigations. The metro area counties and other larger counties throughout the state provide opportunities for Coroners to spend a day or two in their offices to view autopsies and observe case investigations. Just call the office you wish to visit and set up a time. All Coroners offices are listed on the CCA website.

ALL CORONERS need to provide proof of 16 hours of continuing education per year. Training providers approved by CCSTB are listed on the Training Standards. Other training

must get CCSTB approval.. Again, the CE Application form for submission of CE's is on the Colorado Coroners Association website at www.coloradocoroners.org. The Board has extended the deadline for submission of 2007 hours to June 30, 2008. You will also need an additional 16 hours of training in 2008 to meet this years requirement.

Those of you that attended the CCA June conference or outreach training will have completed your required CE's for 2007. Remember, since the format does not change, you may get credit for only one outreach training.

Training opportunities are posted on the CCA website. Next outreach will be in the spring 2008 in the Mesa County area. June conference is in Cripple Creek June 12, 13 and 14, 2008. Watch the website for other training opportunities.

If you have questions about CCA death investigator certification, contact Brenda Bock, Grand County Coroner who heads that committee.

Be aware that the CCSTB extension for certification is a one-time opportunity. The Board recognized that during the first year there will be a need for schedule adjustments and has made the extra time available.



"I'm stumped.
We'll have to wait for
the autopsy."