



COLORADO CORONERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Winter 2008

Presidents Message

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. These are simple and often used phrases used so much at this time of the year.

I have been struggling with how to convey that these are my sincere wishes for all of you. It seems that these are still the best words to say, to all of you that do this work of speaking the truth for the deceased, you are appreciated. I do wish for you and yours, the blessing of the holiday season and the best the New Year has to offer.

Sharon Morris
CCA President



Holidays Humor:

I went to my friend's house recently and noticed that his Christmas tree was bare except for a shotgun shell near the top.

I asked, "What's the deal, no decorations?"

Puzzled, he looked at me and said, "What do you mean? It's a cartridge in a bare tree."



Next CCA Meeting:

Saturday January 10, 2009. Holiday Inn in Golden, I-70 & Colfax. This will be an all day business meeting starting at 9 a.m. The agenda will go out by January 1, 2009.

Please let Chris Herndon (719-649-1865 or herschweer@msn.com) 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

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.

CCA is proud to have trainings approved for continuing education credits both locally and nationally.

If you'd like us to bring an Outreach Training to your area please let Chris know. A location has not been selected for the Spring outreach class.

The 2009 June Conference will be June 11th, 12th and 13th in Colorado Springs. Mark your calendar!!

Ike Miller

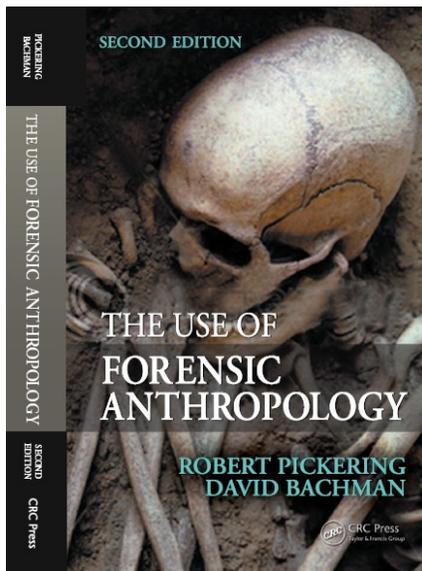
The Ike Miller committee is responsible for managing the award process for the special award created by Dr. Ben Galloway, and any other awards that the Board of Directors deem appropriate.

This special funding has paid for training, room and board at the medicolegal death investigation classes in either St. Louis or New Mexico. This funding is available again this year. Don't let this pass you by! Contact any of the Board members to get an application if you need one.

Marketing

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

Just wait until you see all the new stuff we have for sale at the Outreach classes and June Conference.



Coroners and forensic professionals alike can add to their professional library with the updated version of "The Use of Forensic Anthropology, 2nd Edition".

This book is authored by two names familiar to many of us. Dr. Robert Pickering, Ph.D; has assisted many of us with our cases through his work at the Museum of Natural History in Denver. Co-author Dr. David Bachman is the former Ouray County Coroner. And... to add another familiar name, the authors have dedicated the book to our own Triena Harper, retired Chief Deputy Coroner of Jefferson County.

The book is described as a practical guide for Coroners, pathologists and other forensic experts for the use of forensic anthropology in determining

cause of death, identification and age, ethnicity and numerous other aspects of conducting investigations of found remains. It is written by authors who have a wealth of experience, as scientists and coroners in the field.

Drs. Pickering and Bachman will be available to sign your book at a special book signing on Feb. 19, 2009 from 3-5 p.m. at the Museum of Natural History, 2001 Colorado Blvd in Denver. The publication is also available for preorder from Amazon.com or your local bookseller.

Note that the book signing is in conjunction with the dates of the American Academy of Forensic Science scientific meeting. Plan to attend part of the meeting and also the book signing event.

Speaking of the American Academy of Forensic Science scientific meeting:

The American Academy of Forensic Science will be holding its annual meetings and training conference in Denver Feb. 16-21. This national gathering of forensic professionals from all areas of expertise is the first for Denver. The offerings of professional papers, training sessions, vendors and networking is phenomenal. Check out the AAFS website (aafs.org) for information on registration, classes and events. This training opportunity is one not to be missed.

A quick look at the presentations at the AAFS meeting shows subjects ranging from Colorado's famous Alfred Packer to Coroner ethics and new investigative techniques.



Guest Columns



Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

**Coroner Reporting of Pediatric Influenza-Associated
Deaths 10/9/08**

Influenza surveillance for the 2008-09 flu season
officially began last week

- Pediatric (age <18 years) influenza-associated deaths are a reportable condition in Colorado.
- Please report any SUSPECTED influenza-associated deaths in children to the state health department or your local health department.
- "Influenza-associated" is defined as a compatible illness with either ante-mortem or post-mortem positive influenza test results (rapid flu test, DFA, PCR, culture, or IHC).
- Immunohistochemical (IHC) testing of autopsy tissue can be arranged through CDC.
- The state health dept. can be reached during business hours at: (303) 692-2700 and after-hours at: (303) 370-9395 (answering service).



Establishing Paternity When the Alleged Father Is Deceased

The miracle of birth is a time of joy and a time for family bonding and loving. For some new mothers, however, there is also sadness. If the alleged father has passed away either before the child was born or before paternity could be established. For situation such as these, DNA testing can provide an answer even after the alleged father is gone.

When an alleged father has passed away, there are several testing options to determine the paternity of the child.

The best option is to work with the coroner's office, medical examiner or funeral home to obtain a sample to test. The next of kin or the individual who has Power of Attorney can discuss the process to obtain DNA samples from the coroner, medical examiner or funeral home.

1. The medical examiner can draw blood in a purple-topped tube and store for pickup. For a blood collection from the deceased to be considered a "routine" sample, it must have been collected less than 30 days from the date of death and stored properly, or a viability study will have to be preformed.
2. The medical examiner can prepare a blood stain card using 7-8 drops of blood on the FTA paper. Blood cannot be transferred from a tube to a blood stain card. It must be submitted for testing as it was originally collected.
3. A trained DNA collector can go to the coroner's office to collect the DNA by swabbing the mouth, ears and nostrils of the deceased using buccal swabs. The samples must be collected within 24-48 hours of the time of death and stored in a climate-controlled environment. The DNA collector can also collect hair, with follicle intact and nail clippings and label each separately in a paper envelope.

Once a sample is obtained, the next of kin will sign a Deceased Patient Custodian Consent form to allow the lab to test the deceased alleged father's sample. For a legally admissible test, the DNA collector will be present to take possession of the sample from the medical examiner or funeral home and complete a Postmortem Specimen Identification for to maintain chain of custody. It is extremely important for the mother and the alleged father to understand that a DNA test to establish paternity should be done as soon as the child is born. This may eliminate any future issues if the alleged father passes away and the child needs to have a legal document to prove who should have custody or whether social security benefits might apply. DNA Services of America can help coordinate and assist families during this emotional time. Please feel free to contact our office if you have any questions.

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Other Information we've come across:

Some great web sites for training (mostly free)

- <https://www.co.train.org/>
- <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>