



The Examiner

<http://www.wcmea.com>



Fall 2011

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	1
Post-Mortem Eye Care	2
Death Notifications	3
Waukesha County Welcomes Investigator	3
New Kenosha County Medical Examiner	4
Two Great Losses	4
Interesting Cases	5
Wisconsin's Heroes	6
Myth buster	7
Marathon County Retirement	7
Training Opportunities	7
Don't Fall Behind	8



As I near the end of my 15-month term as President of the WCMEA, I have very mixed feelings as to where the Association is at, and more importantly, where we are going. It seems as though we have three distinct groups of members with various levels of dedication and support to the Association.

The first group (Group A) is a small group. They are active members that provide what is needed to keep the dream alive. This group has its finger on the pulse of our profession and focuses on improvement and survival. This group sees to it that they are on a committee, perhaps run for office, help plan and attend most conferences, attend some Board of Director meetings, pays annual dues, and asks, "What can I do to help?" This group has been around for 75+ years....they just have different faces and names.

Next we have a middle of the road group (Group B) that is more or less along for the ride. This group likes the idea of belonging to the WCMEA because it offers a degree of credibility and professionalism at a small cost. They enjoy the fact that the Association offers education as well as an opportunity to interact with other members in a social setting. This group supports the Association primarily by paying annual dues and occasionally attending a conference. They are generally good for the Association as they usually represent themselves and

our profession honorably. They want to be

more active in the Association but they really have a lot on their plate and simply cannot find the time to do more. This group also has been around for 75+ years. They too have different faces and names.

The third group (Group C) thankfully is also a small group. This group formed out of two subgroups....those that were, and those that never were. Some were active members that once upon a time were in Group A or B.

Somewhere, or somehow something happened and they chose to distance themselves from the Association. The other subgroup is those that work in the field, know that the Association is here and what it has to offer, but choose to do things their own way. They do not like the idea of membership because they see that as a loss of authority and oversight. Overall Group C is generally the type that inform the uninformed with misinformation. They feel that they can train themselves and their few employees on their own, and see our organization as merely a "social group" with an education problem. Often they will claim that the Association was better in the old days and that they don't get anything for their dues. Unfortunately, this group also has been around for 75+ years with different names and faces. What group are you in?

Thank you for the opportunity to once again serve you as President.

Post-Mortem Eye Care- Helping Coroners and Medical Examiners Ensure Optimal Donations

The Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin is dedicated to the mission of fulfilling the wishes of donor and donor families to give the “*Gift of Sight*”. Coroner and Medical Examiner staff plays a vital role in ensuring the donation wish is honored, and can directly help improve the transplantation rate of the corneas by performing post-mortem eye care on the potential eye donor.

Tear production stops at the time of death, so it does not take long for the cornea to dry out. The protective epithelial layer of the cornea becomes dry; when the cornea becomes dry, it can begin to slough away, putting the eye tissue at risk for infection. Lubricating ointments used prior to death have a tendency to congeal, which can pull the delicate epithelial layer of the cornea away, causing corneal edema.

For all deaths that are potential eye donors, the following eye care regimen should be performed. The Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin is sensitive to the donor family needs; eye care should be performed at first available opportunity, taking donor family needs into consideration.

A saline rinse prior to giving the family time with their loved one is a good idea to keep some moisture in the eye. After the family is finished, another rinse followed by the remaining steps should be performed.

Post-mortem Eye Care for the Potential Eye Donor



- Rinse both eyes with sterile saline or balanced salt solution. This will help remove residue from the eye area.
- Gently close both eyelids using your fingers.
- Cover both closed eyes with saline soaked compress (4 x 4's). The compress should be dripping wet if possible. Do not press the gauze hard onto the eyes, set it firmly on top of the lids ensuring it covers the lid line. If no refrigeration within 3 hours of death, if possible place small, light chipped ice packs to the eyelids.
- Elevate the head using a pillow or head block. This helps fluids drain from the head, minimizing the chance of bleeding or bruising.

To request additional information regarding post-mortem eye care, or to schedule on-site training, please contact Joyce Kratz, Technical Director for the Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin at 1-888-233-2354, ext. 3, or jkratz@lebw.org.

Submitted by Joyce Kratz, Technical Director for the Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin

Death Notifications: Tips for the Investigator

Though there are many challenges in the realm of death investigation, notifications tend to hover at the top of the list. Grief reactions are as unique as the individuals who experience them, making notifications unpredictable and unnerving. Whether you are a veteran investigator or new to the field, it is important to review ideal practices when making a death notification to ensure professionalism and sensitivity.

I had the honor of interviewing a man who I consider an expert in death, dying, and the grief process- Pastor Steven Kielley. A Wisconsin native, Kielley has been an ordained minister for nearly 28 years and involved in Chaplaincy since 1983. He has served as a Chaplain in a variety of settings over the years; however, is currently the Director of Spiritual Care at Pro Health Care Regency Senior Communities and is the Lead Chaplain for the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department. It is through his experiences as a Chaplain that Pastor Kielley has learned valuable lessons regarding death notifications...lessons that he is willing to pass along to law enforcement officers and death investigators alike.

Grief can be categorized into five stages- denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Each person will move through the grieving process at his/her own pace, and often bounce between stages. Pastor Kielley explains, "As the person goes through the stages of grief, you become solely a facilitator of their journey...The greatest gift that can be presented in these types of situations is sincere sympathy and compassion and most of all presence." Pastor Steven Kielley states, "I have learned the first fifteen minutes of a death notification are the most difficult... there is often little rationality...This is difficult for everyone involved for grief can be overwhelming." Pastor Kielley compares grief to a flood as it "sweeps in...and for a time, carries everything in its path until it is able to be controlled." In an attempt to limit the amount of flood damage, Pastor Kielley offers the following suggestions for executing a death notification:

- Set the stage for what you are about to do *before* you do it. In most cases, people can sense what is coming just by your presence.
- Make sure the family is seated, if possible, before delivering the news.
- Be a listener.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Touch the back of the hand if allowed.
- If possible, make sure someone is present to be with the family before you leave. Clergy or immediate family is a great place to start.
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As investigators, it is crucial to show the utmost patience, compassion and understanding to the families that we serve. Notifications can be volatile and exhausting for all of the parties involved. Preparedness is key, and with that in mind, Pastor Kielley recommends the book, [Death notification: A practical guide to the process](#) by R. Moroni Leash, as an additional resource.

Jennifer Schroeter, Deputy Medical Examiner for Waukesha County

Waukesha County Welcomes Investigator

In early September, a vacancy erupted in Waukesha County as Deputy Medical Examiner Patrice Hall resigned to accept a new position in Kenosha. Fortunately, for Waukesha County, an eager and well-qualified candidate filled the vacant position. Kathryn Dougherty began her post as deputy medical examiner on September 12, 2011 and has already made great strides in her training. She graduated from UW-Milwaukee in 2010 with a bachelors degree in Art History, a bachelors degree in Criminal Justice, and a certificate in Death Investigation. Dougherty completed an internship, as well as volunteer work at the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office throughout her studies, which only confirmed her desire to pursue a career in death investigation.

Kenosha County Appoints New Medical Examiner



On August 20, 2011, Kenosha County Executive, Jim Kreuser, announced that the medical examiner position had been filled. There had been a vacancy since late last year after Dr. Witeck stepped down as Medical Examiner to focus on his private practice. Following Witeck's departure, the chief deputy medical examiner, Gina Carver, had been overseeing the office until the new medical examiner was named.

Patrice Hall, Waukesha County Deputy Medical Examiner and co-editor of *The Examiner*, has been appointed Medical Examiner of Kenosha County. Hall is the first non-forensic pathologist in this position since the county became a medical examiner system in the 1980s. This move will save Kenosha County the cost of paying a forensic pathologist. The county has instead contracted its autopsy services out to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office, an arrangement that has worked out since it began in January.

Hall, a Michigan native, had worked in the Macomb County Medical Examiner's Office in Mount Clemens, Michigan before accepting a position as deputy medical examiner in Waukesha County in 2007. In addition to her forensic experience, Patrice has degrees in both mortuary science and criminal justice.

Two Great Treasures . . . Two Great Losses

September in Wisconsin marks transition. The warm summer temperatures turn brisk as the trees and foliage change into their vibrant fall colors. The end of another year is fast approaching, and September sends us a gentle reminder with the start of autumn. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Wisconsin lost two of its finest people during this time of transition . . . two people who lived full lives, but never had the opportunity to see their "winter."

Former Clark County Coroner, Robert Lulloff, died at his Neillsville home on September 24, 2011. He was a man with many talents, and wore many hats. He served in the military during the Korean Conflict before beginning his illustrious career. In 1955, Lulloff was a news reporter and morning radio announcer with WCCN Radio through the late 1960s. He was elected Clark County Coroner in 1956, and served as coroner for 42 years. Throughout his tenure as coroner, he served in various offices for the WCMEA. By 1980, Lulloff was Mayor of Neillsville and remained in office for 14 years. Robert Lulloff was loved and respected by many, and will be greatly missed.



On September 26, 2011, Waukesha County lost one of its greatest treasures. Lone Patterson, Department Secretary for the Waukesha County Medical Examiner's Office, died at her Waukesha residence of natural causes. Patterson, had been a fixture in Waukesha County for 36 years. In 1975, Lone started her career as a Clerk Stenographer for the County Board Chairman. She joined the then coroner's office in 1984 with a promotion to a Clerk Typist III position where she had remained. During that time, her hard work, fiery spirit, and dedicated service, Lone gained the love and respect of many. A Legacy Tree will be planted in Lone's honor at Moor Downs Golf Course.

Interesting cases handled by Wisconsin's death investigators.....compiled by Jon Hagen.

- In Washington County, a 21-year-old Jackson man was killed when the farm implement he was repairing dropped on him. The victim worked for Mid-State Equipment in the Town of Polk and was working on an eight-row forage harvester at the time of the accident.
- In Racine County, a Town of Burlington man has died from injuries sustained in a crash near Highway 11 and Crossway Road. He had been thrown from a sport-utility vehicle when it rear-ended a dump truck. The truck driver was not injured.
- In Fond du Lac County, an acclaimed Wisconsin distance runner died from injuries suffered when he was struck from behind by a suspected drunk driver while bicycling in the Town of Taycheedah.
- In Walworth County, infant twins were found unresponsive in the bathtub of their East Troy apartment after being left unattended while under their mother's care. The infants were transported to Waukesha Memorial Hospital where they were pronounced.
- In Green County, there has been 1 reported death and 8 infected in an E. coli outbreak. A 20-month old infant died at Children's Hospital in Madison. The outbreak has been isolated to Green County, though a common source of the exposure has not been identified.
- In Rusk County, a 40-year old female passenger was killed and the driver injured when their ATV struck a deer on Rusk County Road. Neither had been wearing a helmet. Speed appears to have been a contributing factor.
- In Racine County, a 24-year old female was killed following a hit-and-run. The young woman had been the passenger of a motorcycle that lost control on Lathrop Avenue. Both the woman and the driver were ejected from the bike. The driver fled on foot, but was apprehended a day later after authorities received an anonymous tip about his whereabouts.
- In Kenosha County, a 40 year old male behind held at a Kenosha County jail, hung himself in the jail.
- In Crawford County, the death of an 82-year-old woman was attributed to the heat.
- In Marathon County, a 61-year-old man died after he hit a horse that was on the highway. The man was driving a motorcycle.
- In Chippewa County, a total of 4 men were killed when two boats collided on a river. Three of the men were members of a wedding party; the crash occurred on the day before the wedding. The driver of one of the boats was the bride's father; he was charged with driving a boat while intoxicated. One of those killed was the brother of the groom, who also suffered serious injuries.
- In Calumet County, an 18-year-old man died when his vehicle left the roadway and hit a tree.
- In Wood County, a 48-year-old man and his wife, 42, died in a murder-suicide pact. Their bodies were found on a bike trail after they sent text messages to family members, informing them of their plans.
- In Superior, authorities were investigating an apparent suicide of a man at a motel.
- In Fond du Lac County, two people died when their plane crashed into Lake Winnebago. The couple, a man who was 47 and a woman, 36, were en route to EAA at Wittmann Field in Oshkosh when the crash happened.
- In Juneau County, one person died and two were injured in a house explosion.
- In Columbia County, a 77-year-old woman died after she was struck by a vehicle while walking.
- In Milwaukee, a 10-month-old boy died while sleeping on the same mattress with his grandmother and two-year-old sister. The grandmother, who was found to have put morphine and oxycodone in the child's bottle in April, has a history that includes killing the child's grandfather after she shot him 20 years ago.

Wisconsin's Heroes: Fallen but not Forgotten

This year marked the 10-year anniversary of the greatest tragedy on US soil. As we reflect on September 11, 2001, let us remember and honor our fallen heroes. Please read the list of names below. All of the brave men and women of Wisconsin who lost their lives protecting our freedom :

Corporal Michael C. Nolen, US Marines (Spring Valley) Specialist Tyler R. Kreinz, US Army (Beloit) Private Ryan J. Larson, US Army (Friendship) Sergeant Matthew D. Hermanson, US Army (Appleton) Specialist Paul J. Atim, US Army (Green Bay) Corporal Justin D. Ross, US Army (Green Bay) First Lieutenant Daren M. Hidalgo, US Army (Waukesha) Private First Class Jacob A. Gassen, US Army (Beaver Dam) Specialist Scott T. Nagorski, US Army (Greenfield) Corporal Justin J. Cain, US Marines (Manitowoc) Staff Sergeant Matthew J. West, US Army (Conover) Private Adam J. Novak, US Army (Prairie du Sac) Lieutenant Colonel Paul R. Bartz, US Army (Waterloo) Lance Corporal Jacob A. Meinert, US Marines (Fort Atkinson) Sergeant Nickolas A. Mueller, US Army (Little Chute) Sergeant Ryan C. Adams, Army National Guard (Rhineland) Private Steven Drees, US Army (Peshtigo) Sergeant Daniel J. Thompson, Army National Guard (Madison) First Lieutenant Nick A. Dewhirst, US Army (Onalaska) Sergeant Joshua C. Brennan, US Army (McFarland) Sergeant First Class Merideth Howard, US Army Reserve (Waukesha) Senior Airman Adam P. Servais, US Air Force (Onalaska) Staff Sergeant Patrick L. Lybert, US Army (Ladysmith) Lance Corporal Nicholas R. Anderson, US Marine Corps (Sauk City) Lance Corporal Ryan J. Nass, US Marine Corps (Franklin) Specialist Robert J. Cook, US Army (Sun Prairie) Specialist Robert M. Rieckhoff, US Army (Kenosha) Sergeant Steven J. Christofferson, US Army (Cudahy) Lance Corporal Dean D. Opicka, US Marine Corps (Waukesha) Corporal Richard J. Nelson, US Marine Corps (Racine) Staff Sergeant Christopher S. Frost, US Air Force (Waukesha) Private First Class Keith E. Lloyd, US Army (Milwaukee) Sergeant First Class Matthew I. Pionk, US Army (Superior) Private First Class Timothy R. Hanson, US Army (Kenosha) Corporal Jason F. Lemke, US Army (West Allis) Second Lieutenant Tracy L. Algers, US Army (New Algiers) Sergeant Louis A. Griese, US Army (Sturgeon Bay) Corporal Rachel L. Hugo, US Army Reserve (Madison) Specialist Keith A. Nurnberg, US Army (Genoa City) Captain Derek A. Dobogai, US Army (Fond du Lac) Corporal Matthew R. Zindars, US Marine Corps, (Watertown) Sergeant Tyler J. Kritz, US Army (Eagle River) Sergeant First Class Jesse B. Albrecht, US Army (Hager City) Private First Class Nicholas E. Riehl, US Army (Shiocton) Staff Sergeant Robert J. Basham, Army National Guard (Kenosha) Lance Corporal Harry H. Timberman, US Marine Corps (Minong) Private First Class Jon B. St. John, II, US Army (Neenah) Lance Corporal Andrew Matus, US Marine Corps (Weyerhaeuser) Specialist Matthew T. Grimm, US Army (Wisconsin Rapids) Corporal Joshua M. Schmitz, US Marine Corps (Loyal) Private Evan A. Bixler, US Army (Racine) Captain Kevin M. Kryst, US Marine Corps (West Bend) Lance Corporal Jesse D. Tillery, US Marine Corps (Vesper) Captain Rhett W. Schiller, US Army (Waterford) Sergeant Luke J. Zimmerman, US Marine Corps (Luxemburg) Corporal Kenneth Cross, US Army (Superior) Specialist Shaun Novak, US Army (Two Rivers) Sergeant Ryan D. Jopek, Army National Guard (Merrill) Specialist Stephen W. Castner, Army National Guard (Cedarburg) Petty Officer Second Class Jaime S. Jaenke, US Navy Reserve (Bay City) Private First Class Grant A. Dampier, US Army Reserve (Merrill) Private First Class Eric D. Clark, US Army (Pleasant Prairie) Sergeant Nathan Vacho, US Army Reserve (Ladysmith) Lance Corporal Eric A. Palmisano, US Marine Corps (Florence) Lance Corporal Adam J. VanAlstine, US Marine Corps (Superior) Sergeant Andy Stevens, US Marine Corps (Tomah) Private First Class Alex Gaunky, US Army (Sparta) Specialist Benjamin A. Smith, US Army (Hudson) Sergeant First Class Matthew R. Kading, US Army Reserve (Madison) Specialist Michael J. Wendling, Army National Guard (Mayville) Sergeant Andrew P. Wallace, Army National Guard (Oshkosh) Sergeant First Class Trevor J. Diesing, US Army (Plum City) Staff Sergeant Chad J. Simon, US Marine Corps Reserve (Madison) Specialist John O. Tollefson, US Army (Fond du Lac) Captain Benjamin D. Jansky, US Army Reserve (Oshkosh) Specialist Charles A. Kaufman, Army National Guard (Fairchild) Lance Corporal John J. Mattek, Jr., US Marine Corps (Deerbrook) Specialist Eric J. Poelman, US Army (Racine) Chief Warrant Officer Joshua M. Scott, US Army (Sun Prairie) Sergeant Mark A. Maida, US Army (Madison) Staff Sergeant Andrew L. Bossert, US Army (Fountain City) First Sergeant Donald W. Eacho, US Army (Black Creek) Lance Corporal Travis M. Wichlacz, US Marine Corps (West Bend) Staff Sergeant Todd D. Olson, Army National Guard (Loyal) Lance Corporal Richard D. Warner, US Marine Corps Reserve (Waukesha) Private First Class Brent T. Vroman, US Marine Corps Reserve (Oshkosh) Lance Corporal Ryan J. Cantafio, US Marine Corps Reserve (Beaver Dam) Sergeant Benjamin C. Edinger, US Marine Corps (Green Bay) Private First Class Isaiah R. Hunt, US Army (Suamico) Corporal Brian P. Prening, US Marine Corps Reserve (Plymouth) Staff Sergeant Todd R. Cornell, US Army Reserve (West Bend) Corporal Robert P. Warns II, US Marine Corps Reserve (Waukesha) Lance Corporal Shane K. O'Donnell, US Marine Corps Reserve (DeForest) Lance Corporal Daniel R. Wyatt, US Marine Corps Reserve (Caledonia) Private First Class Andrew Halverson, US Marine Corps (Grant) Corporal Adrian V. Soltau, US Marine Corps (Milwaukee) Staff Sergeant Stephen G. Martin, US Army Reserve (Rhineland) Staff Sergeant Charles A. Kiser, US Army Reserve (Cleveland) Specialist Michael McGlothlin, US Army (Milwaukee) Specialist Michelle M. Witmer, Army National Guard (New Berlin) Private First Class Ryan M. Jerabek, US Marine Corps (Oneida) Corporal Jesse L. Thiry, US Marine Corps (Casco) Private First Class Sean M. Schneider, US Army (Janesville) Captain John F. Kurth, US Army (Columbus) Private First Class Bert E. Hoyer, US Army Reserves (Ellsworth) Private First Class Nichole M. Frye, US Army Reserve (Lena) Major Christopher J. Splinter, US Army (Platteville) First Lieutenant Jeremy L. Wolfe, US Army (Menomonie) Specialist Eugene A. Hull III, US Army (Amherst) Sergeant Warren S. Hansen, US Army (Clintonville) Private First Class Rachel K. Bosveld, US Army (Waupun) Specialist Paul J. Sturino, US Army (Rice Lake) Sergeant First Class Dan H. Gabrielson, US Army Reserve (Spooner) Major Mathew E. Schram, US Army (Brookfield) Sergeant Kirk Allen Straseskie, US Marine Corps (Beaver Dam) Lieutenant Colonel Dennis M. Johnson, US Army (Port Edwards)

Myth Buster

It happens every month. Emergency room personnel, law enforcement, coroners and medical examiners alike are heard uttering “*it must be a full moon!*”

Whether it is the most bizarre of cases, or an unusually high caseload, the full moon lands the blame. We tend to link the full moon to increased violence, crime, suicide and mental illness. Is there any truth; however, behind our suspicions?



Scientific evidence proves otherwise. Numerous studies have been done over the decades looking at the lunar cycle and its affect on human behaviors such as violence/aggression, depression, psychosis, traffic accidents, emergency room visits, and homicide/suicide rates among other things. Back in 1996, a group of psychologists reviewed over 100 of such studies. They concluded that the studies had failed to show any correlation between the full moon and abnormal human behavior. They blamed four factors in creating these lunar myths- the media, folklore, misconceptions, and cognitive biases. So, next time you get ready to blame the full moon . . . think again!

Marathon County Chief Deputy Medical Examiner Retires



In April 2011, Jean Finley, Chief Deputy Medical Examiner for Marathon County, retired after eight years on the job. Finley, a registered nurse by trade, was passionate about death investigation and a true asset for Marathon County. She was a dedicated public servant whose sense of humor and compassion made her one of the best in the field. Finley’s decision to retire had been a difficult one, as it came at a time of personal loss. A decision; however, that proved necessary allowing her to move to Racine to be closer to family. Jessica Blahnik, BSN, has transitioned into the position of Chief Deputy Medical Examiner since Jean’s retirement.

Upcoming Training Opportunities

23rd Annual John Teggatz Forensic Science Seminar. Sponsored by the Milwaukee Medical Examiner’s Office.
November 1 & 2, 2011.

<http://county.milwaukee.gov/MedicalExaminer/2011-Forensic-Science-Seminar.htm>

Year-round education. West Virginia University Online Continuing Education Forensic Courses. Contact:
Robin Bowen 304-293-6214 or <http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/continuing/index.htm>



Medicolegal Death Investigator Training Course– MLDIC
Saint Louis University School of Medicine
January 9-13, 2012

Julie Howe 314-977-5970 or <http://medschool.slu.edu/mldic>

AAFS 64th Annual Scientific Meeting
February 20-25, 2012

Atlanta Marriott Marquis; Atlanta Georgia
<http://www.aafs.org/aafs-2012-annual-meeting>

RTI International Free Web-based Professional Development and Continuing Education for Forensic Scientists
<http://www.rti.org/page>

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DO NOT FALL BEHIND!

The Examiner is looking for interesting case investigations, as well as special WCMEA members to highlight in the winter publication.

To make the next issue, please forward any case reports or personal entries to editors Patrice Hall or Jennifer Schroeter via e-mail or USPS by

November 30, 2011:

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