



The Examiner

<http://www.wcmea.com>

Winter 2014



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Message	1 & 2
Conference Updates	2
WCMEA Board of Directors	3
Dane County	4 & 5
Training Opportunities	5
TIME Coalition	6
Interesting Deaths	3 & 7
Election Results	8



I am hopeful that this newsletter finds everyone well, having enjoyed time with their families over the Thanksgiving holiday and that each of you finds the time to enjoy the upcoming holiday with family and friends! November was a bit of an early winter here, with snow and some very cold weather for November. Some of the folks up north have seen record setting snowfalls and it's barely December.

The fall conference in La Crosse was great! There were many good speakers and I think that the members that attended were provided an excellent educational opportunity and plenty of time to network and share information. A big thank you to several folks for making the conference a success. Tim Candahl, the La Crosse County Medical Examiner did a great job making folks feel welcome and hosting the Packer Party with the support of some of his local partners, THANKS TIM!

Jennifer Schroeter also deserves significant credit for putting the conference together, organizing the speakers and the venue, and for making sure that things came off smoothly! Your WCMEA Board members all put forth an extra effort to make sure that the conferences are a success. It takes work on everyone's part to make these events a success.

One more item regarding training opportunities; a basic death investigation

training course is available, **FREE OF CHARGE, until September, 2016**. This is entirely ON-LINE and may be taken in modular fashion. Three modules are currently available for ABMDI credit, CME credit and a variety of POST, EMS credits. The offering is from the University of North Dakota. Most ABMDI folks have seen this posting but for those that have not, this could be an opportunity to sharpen your skills, and get continuing education credits for free. There are three modules for the taking and this may be a good opportunity for some. The link is: www.und.edu/death-investigation-training.

As an end to the President's Message, the elections are over and we are back on track to make one last effort to update 979, and to address the absence of mandatory training for Coroners and Medical Examiners in Wisconsin. As most of you know, there have been some changes to the proposed legislation regarding an exemption to the training mandate for the elected Coroner. Although disappointing that this exemption has to be considered, a portion of the constitutional office holders in the state felt that this was a slippery slope. This would have potentially had far reaching effects on other constitutional office holders and it seemed to be the biggest hurdle.

Continued . . . Page 2

President's Message . . . *Continued*

There are meetings scheduled the week of November 30th with other partners to garner support and address concerns. Not to sound like a broken record but as an Association we need to be proactive. Most recently on the Department of Justice website under the National Commission for Forensic Science there was a draft posted that we all need to read: <http://www.justice.gov/ncfs/work-products>. This document lays out the draft recommendations on accreditation and certification for Medical Legal Death Investigators. The draft is a short read but provides much insight into what we are likely to see moving forward. The link for that document is here: http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/pages/attachments/2014/10/15/draft_on_accreditation_and_certification_me-c.pdf. I would encourage you all to monitor this site as it changes from time to time.

We will keep the membership up to date as things progress with our attempts to update 979 during this session. Hopefully we will have success and this can be a large step forward statewide. Feel free to reach out to any of the Board Members or the members of the Legislative Committee moving forward. I am always happy to help answer questions and to hear what members are thinking. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

I hope that everyone has a happy and safe holiday season. Take good care of yourselves and enjoy the Wisconsin winter.

Barry E. Irmén

WCMEA President

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Conference Highlights

The 2014 Fall Conference & Annual Meeting was held at the Radisson La Crosse along the beautiful Mississippi River, from October 27, 2014 through October 29, 2014. There were 66 attendees who enjoyed presentations from local and national names on topics ranging from infant death investigations and pediatric toxicology to sleep apnea and railway death investigations.



The WCMEA Board of Directors has changed the selection process for future conference venues. It was announced that the 2015 Spring Conference will be held in Fond du Lac, and the 2015 Fall Conference & Annual Meeting will be held in Stevens Point.

The WCMEA would like to thank our host La Crosse County, the Radisson Hotel, as well as the many presenters and exhibitors for their time, hospitality and expertise. The association would also like to acknowledge the following sponsors who generously supported the conference, making it a huge success: American Tissue Services Foundation, Blood Center of WI, Lenzendorf Winters & Associates, Lions Eye Bank, NMS Labs, and RTI Donor Services.

The 2014-2015 WCMEA Board of Directors

The annual meeting held on October 28, 2014 and was well-attended. WCMEA President, Barry Irmen, and the 2013-2014 Board of Directors (BOD) addressed the membership and presented their respective reports. In review, WCMEA membership remains strong, the association continues to be fiscally sound, and the much anticipated legislation changes are coming to fruition.

Elections went smoothly with increased absentee ballot participation. Congratulations are in order for the following members on their positions:

President: Barry Irmen, Dane County
1st Vice President: Jennifer Schroeter, Kenosha County
2nd Vice President: Mary Ricci, Barron County
Sergeant-at-Arms: Amy DeMeter, Fond du Lac County
Treasurer: Position to be Appointed by WCMEA President
Secretary: Laurie Parisey, Oconto County
3-year Trustee: Jay Deppe, Jefferson County
2-year Trustee: Al Klimek, Brown, Door, Oconto Counties
1-year Trustee: John Larson, Marathon County
Past President: PJ Schoebel, Dodge County

Interesting Deaths in Wisconsin.....

- In **Racine County**- A 15-year old boy was arrested for shooting a 19-year old man on July 29th. The 15-year old boy is being charged as an adult with first-degree intentional homicide and robbery. Before the shooting they were both talking about trading or selling each other guns that they both had. After the shooting the boy had posted a rap video online bragging about shooting the 19-year old. He had stated in his song: "I'll kill a (racial slur) real quick and snatch his gold."
- In **La Crosse County**- A 25-year old man who was high on PCP was convicted for killing a 79-year old man that was found in his trunk after a high speed chase. Before ending up in La Crosse County, the man was near the University of Platteville where he called a cab. The man had stabbed the 79-year old cab driver multiple times in the head and chest. He put him in the backseat and then into the trunk, stopping 3 times to give the 79-year old dying man fresh air. The chase ended when the man hit a SUV and the trunk popped open.
- In **Oconto County**- A 31-year old man and a 27-year man old both were working on building a children's tree house in a white pine tree. Both the men died after they were struck by lightning. The 27-year old died was pronounced dead at the scene. The 31-year old was hospitalized for injuries, and died shortly after.
- In **Jefferson County**- A 29-year old man was charged with first degree intentional homicide and first degree reckless injury. He was charged when he was seen stabbing a 27-year old man with a sword who ended up later dying. He also attacked a 24-year old man with the same sword but only causing injury to him.
- In **Marquette County**- A 60-year old man was driving a motorcycle when a deer had jumped in front of him. He lost control of the motorcycle and collided with the deer. The man was transported to a hospital where he died days later. He was not wearing a helmet.

Interesting Deaths Continued on Page 7.....

Transition in Dane County

In 2013, Dane County hired Dr. Kristin Roman as Deputy Medical Examiner to assist in meeting the growing demands of the Dane County Medical Examiner's Office. Since that time, Dr. Roman has transitioned back to New York City, and Dane County has found its perfect fit.



Dr. Agnieszka Rogalska has accepted the position of Deputy Medical Examiner and began her post this fall. Dr. Rogalska brings to Dane County incredible expertise and knowledge which will beautifully compliment that of Dr. Tranchida's. Rogalska had been working at the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office prior to accepting her new position.

Though I usually like to share with the WCMEA a brief introduction, Dr. Rogalska graciously agreed to share with me her amazing story, which I could not do justice in summarizing. Please take a moment to get acquainted with Dr. Agnieszka Rogalska by reading her own words below:

"I was born in the city of Konin, in the region known as Greater Poland. But most of my childhood memories of Poland are from the city of Augustow, in the beautifully wooded, northeastern Podlaskie lake region bordering Lithuania. My family –consisting of my parents, my older brother, and myself, left Poland in the spring of 1981, shortly before the declaration of martial law in Poland and the ensuing period most people remember through the phrase "Solidarnosc" -Solidarity. After spending one year in Austria, we emigrated to the Unites States on June 6, 1982. Our immigration sponsor was in Milwaukee, WI, and that is where we planted our roots.

I left Milwaukee in 1993, setting out to the University of Wisconsin -Madison for my bachelor's degrees (English Literature, Zoology), where my childhood interests in law enforcement and medicine materialized into an interest in forensics. Realizing that I did not have the character for bench work while working on a minor in Criminalistic Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin –Platteville, I took the opportunity to return to Poland, and study medicine at the prestigious Akademia Medyczna w imieniu Karola Marcinkowskiego (which is known in English as Poznan University of Medical Sciences). My time in Poland was one of the most enriching and educational periods of my life. In addition to an outstanding education, I was I able to make a life-long bond with the family I had only known through letters and phone calls.

I enjoyed life in Poland to such an extent, in fact, that I did not intend to come back to the United States. I had the opportunity to work in the Forensic Pathology Department of the University, and struggled to decide my fate weeks before graduation. In the end, the benefits of four years of residency training at the University of Illinois at Chicago in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology, and exceptional experience during fellowship in Forensic Pathology at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office in Minneapolis, MN, greatly outweighed the challenges of returning to the US.

Leaving for college in 1993 I had no intention of returning to Wisconsin, let alone Milwaukee. But life has a strange way of brining one back around and sometimes many

Dane County Continued on Page 5

Dane County Continued from Page 4.....

times over. It was a cold-call on the telephone to the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office in February of 2009 which resulted in five years of experience Jeffrey Jentzen My experience in Milwaukee was invaluable; the variety and complexity of the cases, as well as interactions with all our law enforcement partners and associate coroners and medical examiners, provided me with the opportunity to hone my newly acquired skills and test the mettle of my practice against the opinion of my peers, my betters, and the public need.

I accepted the position of Deputy Medical Examiner in Dane County because I believe the greatest value of one's education is in what you can accomplish with it. Although I look forward to a lifetime of experience in the autopsy suite, it is equally important to me to participate in the development and execution of forensic practice to ensure longevity and continued performance quality. I knew I wanted to develop my career by taking on additional administrative responsibilities, and was looking for an office in which to do that. The decision to transition to the Dane County Medical Examiner's Office was not difficult to make given Dr. Tranchida's reputation, and the impressive development of the office under his direction. I am excited to be a part of a growing office dedicated to providing quality forensic autopsy service to the citizens of Dane county, and the state as a whole. It is a pleasure, and an honor, to be a member of a community motivated to work together toward establishing the highest standard of practice that the forensic community can provide.

A substantial challenge will be in the hands-on work required to accomplish that. The greatest challenge, however, will be in maintaining the conviction of the mission when the work is difficult, when the questions are many, and when the friends are few. For that reason, I was very happy to attend my first WCMEA meeting in October! It was a pleasure to meet all our C/ME partners throughout the state and to see the great potential we have as a united community of dedicated Medicolegal Investigators, Coroners and Medical Examiners.

In my "copious free time" I enjoy taking my dog to daycare, lodging and feeding a horse I don't have time to ride, seriously considering knitting that pair of mittens, buying books to put on my shelf, imprisoning perishable items in my refrigerator under threat of cooking, and adding "must see" movies to my list on Netflix. But doing work is just as much fun!" - AR

On behalf of the WCMEA, I extend sincerest congratulations to Dr. Rogalska on her new position and look forward to the years ahead.

Training Opportunities

Spring WCMEA Conference
 Holiday Inn, Fond du Lac
 April 20-22, 2015

Medicolegal Death Investigator Training Course
 April 20–April 24, 2015 at St. Louis, Missouri
www.medschool.slu.edu/mldi

Annual WAHI Training Seminar
 April 25– May 1, 2015
 Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells

Free Online Forensic Training
 National Institute of Justice
www.nij.gov/training

The WCMEA Joins WisDOT's TIME Coalition

WisDOT is proud to announce a new partnership with the WCMEA in order to help promote the safety of its members when responding to crashes on Wisconsin roads. The WCMEA became a member of the state's Traffic Incident Management Enhancement (TIME) Coalition on August 26, at a meeting during the 40th Annual Governor's Conference on Highway Safety. The partnership was formally established during a signing ceremony with Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Deputy Secretary Michael Berg and other coalition members.



From 2009 to 2010, transportation-involved accidents made up 41% of all deadly occupational incidents. During that same time period 6% of all deadly work incidents were pedestrian workers hit by a moving vehicle. Many of those deaths involved emergency responders. Dozens more incidents result in injuries and property damage.

The TIME Coalition consists of 17 partner agencies representing over 37,000+ members united in an effort to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on state roads. Through its TIME Program, the coalition provides a uniform approach to traffic incident management to all disciplines that may work in or around a traffic crash scene, including coroners and medical examiners.

This approach is promoted statewide with regular meetings, reviews of incidents, and training opportunities. The TIME Program also offers access to affordable traffic control equipment and free safety messaging materials.

If you follow these simple guidelines, you can improve your personal safety at traffic incidents as well as assist in the clearing of a scene as quickly and safely as possible.

- When responding to a scene, please make sure you wear a reflective vest.
- Upon arrival at the scene, please make sure you contact the officer in charge (OIC) of the scene and let them know what you need to do.
- Ask them if the placement of your vehicle is acceptable (this will avoid you having to possibly move it later on).
- If other personnel are requested to respond to assist you, i.e. Funeral Home or other conveyance personnel, let them know where they should park in advance and ask them to put on a reflective vest upon their arrival. If they do not have one, ask law enforcement or fire department personnel if they have an extra vest to use.

TIME Coalition *Continued on Page 7*

TIME Coalition Continued from Page 6

- Check in with the OIC on occasion and let them know your status, i.e. how long it may be before completion, if you need additional resources, or if they (law enforcement or fire) need anything from you.
- Just prior to clearing the scene, let the OIC know that you have completed your investigation and will be clearing the scene.
- Always remain vigilant and be aware of your surroundings whenever you are in an incident scene. An intoxicated, distracted or just plain dumb driver may not be paying attention and may drive right into your incident. You do not want to be the next victim.

The current members of the Wisconsin TIME Coalition are: the Wisconsin Department of Transportation; the Wisconsin County Highway Association; the Wisconsin Towing Association; the Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association; the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Law Enforcement Services, Training and Standards Bureau; the Wisconsin State Firefighters Association; the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association; the Law Enforcement Training Officers Association of Wisconsin; the Wisconsin State Patrol; the Federal Highway Administration; the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association; the Wisconsin EMS Association; the Wisconsin Professional Police Association; the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association; the Wisconsin Insurance Alliance, the Wisconsin Coroner's and Medical Examiner's Association; and the Wisconsin Air Medical Alliance.

If you have any questions about the TIME Coalition, or if your agency would like TIM training, please contact the TIME Program at timeprogram@dot.wi.gov. Please stay safe.

David L. Spakowicz, TIME Program Manger

Interesting Deaths Continued from Page 3

- In **Eau Claire County**- A 58-year old woman was found dead inside her home following the early morning arrest of her husband. The man led authorities on a two-county chase that began in Chippewa County. He ended up back at his home where he was arrested for endangering safety by use of a dangerous weapon while intoxicated and drunken driving. When officers began interviewing neighbors, they were told that what sounded like a gunshot had been heard around 11 pm the evening prior. Officers then discovered the woman's body in the house.
- In **Winnebago County**- A 6-year old boy drowned in the Fox River. Moments before his family realized he was missing, a girl's cross country team saw the boy sitting on the dock, dangling his feet in the water. When police learned the boy had been seen by the river, the Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue's dive team was called to the scene. Divers began searching the shoreline. An hour after the boy had been reported missing; he was pulled from the water. The boy was rushed to the hospital where he died.
- In **Dodge County**- A 43-year old man was found dead in his apartment. The man's body was discovered by a landlord after not seeing him for several days. The man lived alone, and according to authorities, died from blood loss stemming from injuries inflicted by an unknown assailant. Police released a sketch and a video surveillance photo of a woman who may have been the last person to see the man alive.

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With high voter turnout across the state and nationwide, the November 4, 2014 election proved to be historic. The shift in political dominance grabbed the headlines throughout the nation. Highlighted below are results from some of the coroner races throughout Wisconsin that grabbed local headlines and the attention of the WCMEA. Congratulations to all!

- Ashland County Coroner: Barbara Beeksmma
- Bayfield County Coroner: Gary Victorson
- Buffalo County Coroner: Peter Samb
- Chippewa County Coroner: Ronald Patten
- Clark County Coroner: Richard Schleifer
- Crawford County Coroner: Joe Morovits
- Florence County Coroner: Mary Johnson
- Grant County Coroner: Ronald Sturmer
- Green County Coroner: Kristen Hasse
- Green Lake County Coroner: Amanda Thoma
- Iowa County Coroner: Wendell Hamlin
- Iron County Coroner: Diane Simonich
- Jackson County Coroner: Karla Wood
- Juneau County Coroner: Kathy Kohutko
- Kewaunee County Coroner: Rory Groessl
- Langlade County Coroner: Larry Shadick
- Marquette County Coroner: Thomas Wastart II
- Outagamie County Coroner: Ruth Wulgaert
- Ozaukee County Coroner: Timothy Deppisch
- Pepin County Coroner: Christy Rundquist
- Portage County Coroner: Scott Rifleman
- Price County Coroner: James Dalbesio III
- Richland County Coroner: Jim Rossing
- Sauk County Coroner: Greg Hahn
- Sawyer County Coroner: David Dokkestul
- Shawano County Coroner: Marcus "Mike" Jesse
- Trempealeau County Coroner: Bonnie Kindschy
- Vernon County Coroner: Janet Reed
- Vilas County Coroner: Paul Tirpe
- Washburn County Coroner: Jason Sebens
- Waupaca County Coroner: Barry Tomaras
- Waushara County Coroner: Roland Handel
- Winnebago County Coroner: Barry Busby
- Wood County Coroner: Dara Borre Hamm



The following counties are either in the process of transitioning, or have transitioned from a coroner system to medical examiner system since the 2010 elections: Jefferson County, Menominee County, Rock County, Rusk County, Sheboygan County, and Walworth County.