



The Examiner

<http://www.wcmea.com>

Summer 2024 Issue



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings WCMEA Members,

I would like to first thank the membership for their continued support of the WCMEA. The Board of Directors (BOD) is working very hard to create improvements and bring new things to the membership. As always, suggestions are welcome.

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At the June conference, elections were held for the BOD, and I am excited to welcome some new faces to the board. We are all excited to get to work.

One of the goals moving forward is to give our website a makeover. Many of you have reached out in the past with specific issues. These have not gone unnoticed. The website committee will be working to make changes and enhancements. Some of the changes coming forth include updating of the C/ME map and contacts for each county. Also, any new legislation that is coming down will be posted, as well as specific statutes that apply to C/MEs.

During the next couple of weeks/months, new committee appointments will be made. If any of the membership is interested in being involved on the website or any other committee, please feel free to reach out to a BOD member for more information.

I'm hoping to see you all at the January conference!

We thank you all for what you do. Be safe out there!



Crystal Schaub, WCMEA President

Goodbye summer

WCMEA Membership

I hope everyone is having a great summer so far. With this time of year comes the renewal of WCMEA memberships. This is a reminder that WCMEA membership dues are due for the 2024-2025 year.

Dues for the year are \$30 per membership. If you need an invoice please send me an updated list of your staff/membership list and I will send you an invoice. My email is bkaat@co.dodge.wi.us.

Membership applications and payment can be completed online using PayPal for payment or mailed to Rory Groessl, Treasurer. Below is a mailing address for Rory:

WCMEA
c/o Rory Groessl, Treasurer
E6478 Wolf River Ct
Algoma, WI 54201

Please complete a membership application/form for all members. I am working on updating email addresses and membership types for all members. Please complete the membership application online at the WCMEA website: <https://wcmea.com/online-membership-form/>

Brooke Kaat

Chief Deputy Medical Examiner

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Dodge County, Wisconsin

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Did you Know?

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

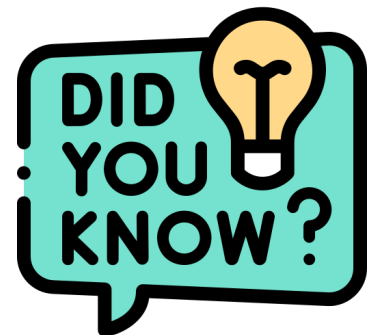
September is a time to remember the lives lost to suicide, and acknowledge people who are living with depression. Nationally, suicide is a leading cause of death. Take time to raise awareness about mental health by sharing resources with loved ones or colleagues this month. Find community events near you!

Domestic Awareness Month

This October we can take time to honor the lives lost to domestic violence, celebrate progress that has been made to end this epidemic, and work with community partners to create change.

Crash Responder Safety Week

November 18-22, 2024 is a week designed to remind Wisconsinites to help protect the people out working to help motorists after a crash. Watch for events and resources to help raise awareness!



Wisconsin American Legion: Unclaimed Veteran Cremated Remains Task Force

Our Task Force was created in the spring of 2016 to represent the Wisconsin American Legion in response to Act 382. This act requires funeral directors, cemetery authority, or a public officer having custody of an unclaimed veteran's remains to contact the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), a county veterans service office (CVSO) or a local veteran service organization within 90 days after their death to determine whether the remains are of a veteran or other person eligible for internment or burial at one of the state's veteran cemeteries. The act provides exemption from civil liability for persons transferring said cremated remains to the cemetery.

If your office takes possession of an unclaimed veteran's remains or a family gives up custody, or their cremated remains are found abandoned, our Task Force, being a local veteran service organization, can assist with cremation cost if necessary and with the eligibility screening process for internment/burial at one of our state's veteran cemeteries. We also can assist spouses with their screening, cremation, and burial costs.



Once eligible and the 90-day waiting period is over, we coordinate a date and time for their internment/burial at the assigned cemetery by the DVA. On the day of, we provide transportation to the cemetery, attend the ceremony, record the niche/burial location, and forward it to the medical examiner's office in charge. We provide this service at no cost.

If the veteran is found not to be eligible, they are buried at one of the American Legion plots in the Riverside Cemetery in Ladysmith, Wisconsin at no cost as well. Our mission is to provide honor and closure to those who have served our country in the Armed Services.

Finally, our Task Force oversees the Terrence Sund Memorial Fund that pays for cremations, spouse burials and misc. administration costs. This is not an American Legion Dept. budgeted account, so it is solely funded by donations.

*****If have any questions or wish to contact us for assist here is our contact information:*****

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June 2024 Conference Highlights

The 2024 Summer WCMEA Conference was held in Appleton at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley June 24th through June 26th. There were approximately 65 registered attendees who enjoyed presentations on topics ranging from farming deaths and Investigative DNA and Genetic Genealogy to drowning death investigations and culturally sensitive death investigations. There were a total of 17.6 ABMDI credits available!



The WCMEA Election and Annual Meeting were held on Tuesday, June 25th. The Board of Directors had the opportunity to report out to the membership at the meeting, and the Bylaw changes were formally approved. These changes will help modernize and improve operations for the association moving forward. The election results were shared with the membership at the meeting, and are as follows:

President: Crystal Schaub (Oneida/Forest/Vilas County)
2nd Vice President: Brooke Kaat (Dodge County)
Treasurer: Rory Groessl (Kewaunee County)
3-Year Trustee: Jessica Blahnik (Marathon County)

Congratulations to the newly elected Board of Directors officers!!

The WCMEA would like to thank the members of the Education Committee: Crystal Schaub, Oneida/Forest/Vilas County, Jen Schroeter, Kenosha County, Tina Forrest, St. Croix County, Patricia Forsberg, St. Croix County, Tom Renz, Bayfield County, Marcie Rosas, Dunn/Eau Claire County, and Taylor Strunsee, Dane County, for all of their hard work and commitment in putting together an amazing seminar. Additional thanks to the staff at the Hilton Appleton Paper Valley, as well as the many presenters and exhibitors for their time, knowledge, and generosity.

The association would also like to acknowledge our generous sponsors: American Tissue Services Foundation, Radox Technology, and Versiti Organ and Tissue. Without their continued support, the WCMEA would not be able to continue providing training opportunities for its members.



The next WCMEA Conference will be held in January 2025. Please stay tuned for more information!! If you have an interesting case that you would like to present, contact Jennifer Schroeter at 262-653-3867 or by email, Jennifer.schroeter@kenoshacountywi.gov.

The John Stanley Award

For the first time in over a decade, the John Stanley Award was presented at the 2024 June WCMEA Conference. This award was created in memoriam of the late John Stanley and is the highest honor bestowed by the WCMEA. It is meant to recognize an individual or organization for their extraordinary contributions to the field of medicolegal death investigation.

Dr. Donald Simley was honored for his dedicated service and career in forensic odontology. Dr. Simley has worked tirelessly over his long career to assist Wisconsin law enforcement, coroners and medical examiners with his expertise. His efforts went far beyond the beautiful state of Wisconsin through his work with Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams (DMORT).

The presentation of the award was made a bit sweeter, thanks to a special audience member. Dr. Simley's son, Michael Simley, was able to attend the conference and celebrate this occasion. Michael Simley is a Medicolegal Death Investigator Manager at the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office.

Congratulations Dr. Simley, well deserved!



It Is Time to Shine WCMEA!

The Examiner is in search of interesting case investigations, as well as WCMEA members to highlight in future publications.

Please submit your case reports or personal entries to any of the newsletter committee members below:



Lynn Johnson: ljohnson@co.dunn.wi.us
Jen Schroeter: Jennifer.schroeter@kenoshacountywi.gov



Interesting Deaths in Wisconsin.....



- **In Adams County-** A body was found buried on an Adams County property. The Body was later identified as a 62-year-old female. Her last known location was that she was going to visit her son and she was then missing for 3 days when authorities were notified. The deputies arrived and checked the property and couldn't locate them, but they identified recent evidence that was consistent of digging or burying something on the property. A search warrant was obtained for the property and an adult body was recovered.
- **In Brown County-** A 49-year-old man was killed when the car he was driving was struck by an SUV. The decedent was driving south and turning left on to a road when his car was hit by the SUV that was traveling north. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The passenger that was in the SUV was taken to the hospital nearby for medical treatment.
- **In Chippewa County-** A 29-year-old was killed in a fatal crash while operating a semi-truck. According to Chippewa County Sheriff's office, the semi was traveling westbound and was hauling approximately 5,500 pounds of liquid manure when he lost control of the semi while on a curve on the road. The semitruck and the trailer were overturned.
- **In Dane County-** Police shot and killed a 14-year-old student that was armed with a pellet gun outside of a middle school. A lockdown was prompted and no one else was injured. The shooting was investigated and the individual appeared to have a backpack and a loaded gun. Mount Horeb officers located the student to the east of the main entrance and ordered him to drop the weapon and the individual pointed the gun at the officers. The officer then shot him and the individual died at the scene. The school was on lockdown for 5 hours after the incident and the school was shut down for 2 days after the shooting.
- **In Dodge County-** There was an investigation into the deaths of 4 inmates during the past year in a maximum security prison. There were 8 members of the staff that were charged with misconduct in public office and inmate abuse. One inmate hadn't been discovered that he had passed until 12 hours later; one inmate whose death was ruled a homicide had his water turned off for a significant amount of time and wasn't being monitored despite refusing to eat and had no contact with a doctor. And then another inmate that died due to a stroke and wasn't discovered until 12 hours after he had passed as well.
- **In Jackson County-** A Train vs. Car crash resulted in the 18-year-old driver of the car being killed. The driver of the car failed to yield to an oncoming train before being hit. He was pronounced dead on scene.
- **In Juneau County-** 6 family members died in a house fire with early indication that it was accidental. When emergency responders arrived, the house was engulfed in flames. The state fire marshal is assisting and the investigation is ongoing.

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Interesting Deaths Continued

- **In Lincoln County-** 49-year-old youth counselor had died from injuries that were sustained in an attack at a school. The Lincoln County Sheriff's office received a call that a student had assaulted 2 staff members and one of the staff members collapsed. Emergency response teams performed life saving measures and he was airlifted to a hospital due to critical injuries. He never regained consciousness and was later pronounced brain dead. At the attack, the student had assaulted the first staff member and fled outside and then the 49-year-old counselor followed the student and was struck in the upper body/face area multiple times and then he had collapsed and struck his head on the pavement. All of this was caught on their surveillance cameras.
- **In Marathon County-** A 63-year-old man and 53-year-old women were found dead due to apparent gunshot wounds. Marathon County Sheriff Office had received a call in the morning that there was someone sitting in a vehicle with the door open and had been seen sitting like that in the vehicle the night prior. When the deputies arrived, they saw the two individuals and believed that the shooting was an isolated act of domestic violence.
- **In Milwaukee County-** A 19-year-old female was killed and dismembered after going out on a date. A severed right leg was found near a 100-foot bluff by the water's edge in Cudahy. Her torso and an arm was found on a remote stretch of tree-line beach of Lake Michigan. These remains were believed to have been washed ashore. A human foot was found adjacent to train tracks. Her arm was found by a person walking on Waukegan Municipal Beach that was 50 miles away and over a month later after she went missing. Through DNA testing they were able to confirm that these remains belonged to the 19-year-old female.
- **In Milwaukee County-** A 10-year-old girl was killed inside her home. She was downstairs asleep in her bed when a relative upstairs had accidentally fired a gun. The bullet had travel through the floor and hit the girl.
- **In Racine County-** A 64-year old woman was found deceased in a house fire. Two days after the fire, the decedent was undergoing autopsy when it was discovered that the woman had been shot multiple times prior to the fire. As the homicide investigation was unfolding, Caledonia Police and the Racine County Sherriff's Office responded to a call for a man down at a park. The incident at the park quickly turned into a tactical response which led to the death of a 37-year old male with ties to the address where the house fire occurred.
- **In Sheboygan County-** A 33-year old man was killed by his roommate. Officers responded to a report of a man who was stabbed. Upon arrival, officers found the victim lying in a driveway across from his residence with someone holding towels to his body because he had several cuts and stab wounds. The man was transported to a local hospital where he later died.
- **In St. Croix County-** 34-year-old male was found in the St. Croix River. Authorities were dispatched to a park to receive a report on the body that was in the water. Hudson Police made a statement saying that there is no indication of foul play and that they believe the death was accidental and resulted from a freshwater drowning. The Washington County Sheriff's office water recovery team, the St. Croix County Sheriff's Office, St. Croix County Medical Examiner, Hudson Fire Department and the Wisconsin DNR assisted Hudson police.

Jennifer Schroeter
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Training Opportunities

NAME 2024 Annual Meeting
Denver, Colorado
September 19-23, 2024
<https://www.thename.org/2024-registration>

Annual IAI International Forensic Educational
Conference
Reno, Nevada
August 11-17, 2024
<https://www.theiai.org/conference.php>

36th Annual National Homicide Investigators
Association Training Conference
November 18-22, 2024
Lake Mary, Florida
<https://nationalhomicideinvestigatorsassociation.org/event/36th-annual-national-homicide-investigators-association-training-conference/>

Death Investigation Academy
Online Training
[Death Investigation Academy
\(ditacademyonline.org\)](https://ditacademyonline.org)

Fire Fatality Investigation Conference
December 9-11, 2024
Las Vegas, Nevada
<https://www.llrmi.com/vegas/>

2024 Forensic Science Seminar
October 3-4, 2024
St. Louis Park, Minnesota
https://mncmea.org/?page_id=19
