



# Wings

A Publication of the  
City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers Association of Kansas

Volume 3, No. 1

April, 1990

"Lend me the stone solid strength of the past and I will lend you wings to the future"

Robert Jeffers

### Past Editors Comments:

Those of you with children will understand what I am about to say, and hopefully, those of you who don't will bear with me for a minute.

Giving up "Wings" is like sending your child to kindergarten for the first time. You still see it, you may still affect it, but it is never truly "all yours" again. It hurts a little, but it also makes you proud that others will now share the parenthood.

For those of you who are not aware of it, my sixteen year old son fell and, as a result, is home in a full body cast for seven weeks with three pins in his hip. Once the cast comes off, he will have at least six months of crutches and extensive physical therapy to look forward to. Needless to say, mom and dad have found it necessary to adjust our lifestyles to care for him. A hospital bed in the living room, home tutoring and around the clock "baby-sitting" are all a part of our regular routine now. It's been a real fun experience for all of us, most of all my son.

Two of the first decisions I had to make following the accident was whether to give up my nomination as Treasurer for the CCMFO and whether to give up "Wings" editorship. They were also the hardest decisions for me. The association

and the friends I have made have become a very important part of my life, and a very fulfilling one. My family, however, must come first, and the association will still be there when the cast is gone, and life is once more, back to normal. Thus, my decision.

"Wings" is now in the capable hands of Pat Kasper, City Clerk of Potwin. I know that she and her committee will do an excellent job with my "baby" and that it will continue to grow. She will, however, need the help of each of you in the form of articles, committee reports and pictures. Please give her all of the assistance that you can while she makes the transition.

Thanks to all of you who have assisted me in making "Wings" a success. May it always continue to be our vital link to each other.

Debbie Durler  
Past Editor

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1989 Graduates of CCMFO School in Lawrence

# Wings

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# President's News and Notes

## PRESIDENTS REPORT

I am looking forward to the next year as President of City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers with high expectations and some awe. This is the greatest organization I have ever belonged to. The assistance that City Clerks and Finance Officers are willing to give to their fellow members is marvelous. That is apparent by the growth we have had, and the participation that our members put into our organizations. The number of clerks willing to take an active role is increasing.

I encourage everyone to let their ideas be known. It is member input that makes us change and keep up with the future. I believe the 90's will be a decade that City Clerk/Finance Officer will face some challenges with changes in job descriptions and duties. Legislative action in regards to Tax levy limits, etc may make the next couple of years budgets and financing a real test of our abilities. These changes and challenges can be met through education and communication. As professionals we will handle the challenge and make the transitions. I can only hope that I will serve you well. I can tell you I will give it my best effort.

Mary Reed  
President

## PAST PRESIDENTS REPORT

My year as President went fast! I have enjoyed every minute of it. I have learned to know a lot of you and formed some close friendships.

I especially want to thank the officers for their support and each of you who served on committees. The committee chairpeople took on a challenge this year and met alot of the goals.

Membership is at an all time high, EDUCATION has a quarterly meeting with informative speakers going at WSU. Other areas will be opening up soon. The regions are still going strong. Those that aren't, the clerks/finance directors need to speak loud and clear and make their wishes known. The

beautiful newsletter *Wings* still makes its way into our offices.

The Highlight of my year was the IIMC convention in Nova Scotia, Canada that the association sent me to.

We now have the clerk/finance director scholarship in place so another of you will be able to go to the International conventions.

Going back over my year are many happy memories and the support you all gave me was tremendous.

As we begin a new year with President Mary Reed giving us her direction lets continue the support and go for bigger and better things.

Thanks to so many of you who gave our City so much support, many of your cities sent men on their days off to help with the tornado clean-up. Some sent money for our disaster fund. It was overwhelming to see the love and concern for us.

It was a devastation that cannot be described. When I got back this office was so busy and still is. Most of the people will be rebuilding for some time to come.

Jean Krehbiel  
Past President

## CALENDAR

### May 20-24

44th Annual IIMC International Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas

### May 27-June 2

Whitewater Centennial

### June 15

Program Planning Committee, Wichita, Kansas

Details will be worked out and you will get the information as soon as it is available.

### Sept. 13-14

Academy for Advanced Education, Wichita, Kansas

### Sept. 30, Oct. 1-2

League of Kansas Municipalities Conference, Overland Park, Kansas DoubleTree & Marriott Hotels

### Nov. 11-16

City Clerks Certification Institute, Lawrence Holidome

# GETTING TO KNOW YOU

A "Wings" look at CCMFO members from around the State.



**Ron Gabriel** has held the position of City Clerk at Wathena for the past 4½ years. Prior to that, he served as Accounting Supervisor at Farmland Industries in Kansas City, Mo. for five years, Accounting Supervisor for the Atchinson County Co-op for two years, and worked as an accountant for Far-Mar-Co in St. Joseph, Mo. for seven years. Ron attended Platt College, St. Joseph, Mo. He graduated from the IIMC Certification Institute in November of 1988 and attended the 1988 and 1989 AAE schools. He has a Class I and II Kansas Water Certification, a Class I and II Wastewater Certification, and Backflow Prevention Certification for Kansas and Missouri. He has also taken numerous courses offered by Ft. Scott College and Highland College. Ron is a native of Wathena, and has one son, Ron Jr., 16. He is a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Doniphan County Chamber of Commerce, Kansas Rural Water Association, American Waterworks Association, American Backflow Prevention Association, IIMC, GFOA, and CCMFO. Ron has been on the City Clerks Hospitality Committee for the past two years, and has served as chairman for the past year. He enjoys helping his son restore his 1973 Dodge.

**Ron Thornburg** has been employed by the City of Dodge City since 1971. He was the Assistant City Clerk/Computer Programmer from 1971-77 and has been City Clerk/Director of Finance for the past 13 years. He also served as City Manager in 1972, 1980, and 1986. Ron majored in Business Administration at Fort Hays State, he has a diploma in Accounting from Barnes

Business College, and from IBM Education Centers, he studied Design Fundamentals, System Design, RPG Programming, and Disk System Implementation. He is a member of IIMC and attained his CMC designation in 1978. Ron was born and raised in Osborne, Kansas and lived there 18 years. He then moved to the Denver, Colorado area to attend school and work as an assistant office manager/buyer until 1971, when he moved to Dodge City. Ron's wife Lori is a court reporter, and the Thornburg's have two children--Belinda, 18; and Alan, 15. He is a member of Ducks Unlimited & the Masonic Lodge, was listed in Who's Who in Finance & Industry in 1989-90, is a member of the League of Municipalities Taxation & Finance Committee, and is the GFOA State Representative. He is currently serving as Secretary of CCMFO and has been nominated for vice-president for 1990-91. Ron enjoys fishing, hunting, trap shooting, woodworking, all outdoor activities, and being with people. He said that he is looking forward to a new addition to his family in February.

**Cheryl McMullen** has served as City Clerk of Courtland since May of 1983. She is a graduate of Esbon High School and the NCK Vo-Tech School in Beloit where she majored in business. Cheryl was born in Red Cloud, Nebraska and spent her first 20 years in Kansas, all in Jewell County. She moved to Ft. Collins, Colorado in 1971, then to Courtland in August of 1980 where she has lived ever since. Cheryl's husband David is the Executive Director for the Republic County ASCS in Belleville and they have four children--JoAnne, 20; Richard, 18; Elizabeth, 5; and James, 4. Since 1981 she has been an active member of the Courtland Community Club and currently serves as vice-president. Cheryl is a member of the St. Edward's Catholic Church in Belleville, served as a committee chairman for the Courtland Centennial, and has been a committee head, chairman, and co-chairman for the Pike Valley High School after-prom party. She takes great pride in her

children and their achievements. She says that "as my husband and children would tell you, I do not possess the ability to tell anyone no when a volunteer is needed to chair or work for a worthwhile cause in our school or community."

**Connie West** became the City Clerk of Deerfield 8½ years ago. She is a member of IIMC and attained her CMC on 10-13-89. Connie was born in Tennessee, raised in Arkansas, and moved to Kansas in 1981. She is a graduate of Delta Vocational Technical School as a Clerk/Typist. Connie's husband Wayne is employed as City Superintendent for the City of Deerfield. They have been married for 2½ years and together they have five children--4 sons and 1 daughter. Two sons are in the US Navy--Todd is stationed at Great Lakes Naval Station in Illinois and Rick is stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. One son is in the US Army and stationed in Korea. Their daughter Cindy is married and attending K-State, and their youngest son Hank is a sophomore in high school. Connie is a member of the Deerfield Baptist Church, Deerfield Booster Club, Deerfield Summer Celebration Committee, and the CCMFO. Connie says that "Wayne and I enjoy quiet times together, remodeling our home, and traveling whenever possible. With both of us being employed by the City we take great pride in our community and commitment to our professions."

**Mary Reed** has been the City Clerk/Director of Finance for the city of Parsons for the past 2 years. She is a CMC and a member of IIMC. She has been the City Clerk for the city of Altamont for six and one half years, was with Labette County Farm Bureau and Farm Bureau Insurance Services for 9 years, and Labette County State Bank for 7 years. She is married to Jerald, a Farm and Ranch Manager and has two grown children, Kristine and Delvin and three lovely grandchildren. (Grandmothers can be prejudice.) She is a native of Parsons, living there until she married and then lived in Labette County until she returned to Parsons 2 years ago. She is currently President of City Clerks and

## Getting to Know You (cont.)

Municipal Finance Officers of Kansas, and Past Chairman of the Program Committee; a member of Soroptimist International of Parsons, Chairman of the Growth and Development Committee of Soroptimist, and past recording secretary. She is a member of Parsons Chamber of Commerce and serves on the Crazy Days Committee, The Image and Appearance Committee and Parsons Industrial Development Council. She participated in Southeast Kansas Day on the Hill and serves on the League of Kansas Municipalities Legislative committee. She was a past 4-H Community Leader and 4-H Horse Club Leader. Her hobbies include decorating and remodeling houses, reading, walking and spoiling the grandchildren.

## REPORT ON MARCH CLERK SCHOOL

The 40th Annual City Clerks and Municipal Finance Officers School was held March 13-16 at the Lawrence Holidome. There were 213 advance registrations, and with the capable guidance of Conference Program Manager Loretta Carraher, the school was a big success.

A new addition to the program Tuesday evening was a "Poolside Forum" (which was moved to a hallway to accommodate the large number of clerks participating). Some serious (and not so serious) questions were open for discussion and comment, with Vice President Mary Reed, Parsons, and Dr. Bill Goering, McPherson, acting as hosts. Several concurrent sessions were scheduled Wednesday through Friday that offered a wide range of interesting topics, with favorite speakers such as Bernie Hayen and Lequetta Diggs, along with city clerks who presided at some sessions.

The banquet was once again held at the Holidome with a large attendance and a presentation for outgoing President Jean Krehbiel, Hesston. Many favorable comments were heard from the clerks about this year's school. If you have topic ideas for the 1991 school, contact President Mary Reed at Parsons. The Program Planning Committee will discuss ideas at their summer meeting.

## — Just For Today —

Just for today I will live through this day only, and not set far reaching goals to try to overcome all my problems at once. I know I can do something for 12 hours that would appall me if I felt that I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

Just for today I will be happy. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most folks are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." He was right. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. I will chase them out of my mind and replace them with happy thoughts.

Just for today I will adjust myself to what is. I will correct those things that I can correct and accept those things I cannot correct.

Just for today I will do something positive to improve my health. If I'm a smoker, I'll cut down. If I'm overweight, I'll eat nothing I know is fattening. And I will force myself to exercise--even if it's only walking around the block or using the stairs instead of the elevator.

Just for today I will be totally honest. If someone asks me something I don't know, I will not bluff, I'll simply say, "I don't know."

Just for today I'll do something I've been putting off for a long time. I'll finally write that letter, make that phone call, clean that closet, or straighten out those dresser drawers.

Just for today, before I speak I will ask myself, "Is it true? Is it kind?" and if the answer to either of those questions is negative, I won't say it.

Just for today I will make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I

will look as good as I can, dress becomingly, talk softly, act courteously and not interrupt when someone else is talking.

Just for today, I'll not improve anybody except myself.

Just for today, I will have a program. I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it, thereby saving myself from two pests: Hurry and Indecision.

Just for today I will be unafraid. I will gather the courage to do what is right and take responsibility for my own actions. I will expect nothing from the world, but I will realize that as I give to the world, the world will give to me.

This article is from the May, 1987, issue of RSVP News.

## WHAT'S GOING ON?

Durward G. Nice, Jr. former City Clerk of Colby has accepted the position as County Administrator of Dickinson County.

## New CMC's

Mary Alice Carlile, Colwich  
Jackilyn A. Rundell, Goddard  
Mary Sue Fry, Lenexa

When you *ALMOST*  
obey a commandment  
You *ALMOST*  
RECEIVE a blessing.

Author Unknown

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 Janie Massoth--Yates Center  
 Susie Albert--Towanda  
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 Carolea Wellen--Elkhart

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## REGIONAL NEWS

Eight City Clerks from the Dickinson, Marion, Morris, and Chase County areas met Friday, February 23rd at 1:00 p.m. in Enterprise's newly remodeled City hall. Everyone brought their favorite salad for lunch and many items were discussed. Everyone also brought copies of their favorite forms and copies were exchanged. The next meeting will be held in May at the Kingfisher's Inn, Marion. Any new clerks wishing to participate should contact Jan Meisinger (316) 947-3162.



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## CITY MANAGERS-CITY CLERKS RELATIONSHIP IN FLORIDA.

By Lyla P. Riley, City Clerk, West Palm Beach, Fla

"Conflicts often exist between City Managers and City Clerks." That is a statement I've heard many times. Is it a valid statement? If so, what are the problem areas and how can managers and clerks solve these questions?

...With assistance, I undertook a survey to determine the problem areas and how managers and clerks can resolve these differences.

A questionnaire was prepared that permitted both city managers and city clerks to respond without identifying themselves or their municipalities. These were mailed to 74 municipalities in Florida. I received an 80 percent response nearly equally divided between clerks and managers....

What did we learn from these questionnaires?

### BETTER UNDERSTANDING

...It appears both city managers and city clerks need to have a better understanding of both positions. As we know, much has been written about the "roles" of city managers-but very little can be found on the "role" of the city clerk. True, it is hard to define the role of the city clerk-it varies greatly from one municipality to another. In a survey conducted by

the Institute of Public Affairs and Community Development, University of Kansas, via a "clerk watch" in six Kansas municipalities, it was found that clerks demonstrated expertise in 25 to 35 different functional areas. In no other department will you find the diversity that symbolizes the routine of the city clerk. Most citizens, other employees, department heads, and even top management, seem totally unaware of this and wonder "What do city clerks do?"

The role of the city manager, on the other hand, is well defined. The manager is expected to be the decision maker; to prepare programs and see that they are carried out; to be a consultant and advisor to the policy making body; to resolve community problems including those "insolvable" problems. In short, to be a true leader. The position confers and infers authority. Managers must be less concerned with day-to-day administration and more involved in representing the total interests of their cities.

City Clerks need to take time to understand the manager and be aware of his/her philosophy of management....

### IMPROVE IMAGE

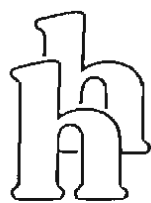
City Clerks, both individually and collectively, need to improve and ultimately upgrade their image, not only in the eyes of the city manager, but in those of the general public as well. They need to increase their knowledge; expand their skills, and demonstrate that theirs is indeed a very real profession.

City managers need to recognize that clerks are a valuable asset to management and local government. Theirs is the one office that essentially represents continuity in government. They usually have the longest tenure of any local official. It is the city clerk who is most often named as "acting manager" in the absence of the manager, or during vacancies in that office. It is not at all unusual for city clerks to become assistants to the city manager or to become managers themselves. If they did not possess information, experience and knowledge vital to their respective governments, they could not fill these positions, even on a temporary basis.

The offices of city clerk and city manager should not be in conflict. In the end, we work to serve the public whether as top administrator or lower rung official, whether city manager or clerk. Citizens look to us to provide leadership, information, assistance and good government. We help to shape the destinies of our municipalities. We serve where needed. Citizens, now more than ever, expect full service for their tax dollars. We must work together to see that they are given the very best for those dollars. We need to combine and utilize our talents and skills to make our communities a better place in which to live.

### COMMUNICATION

As would be expected where "personalities" are in conflict or where an individual feels "threatened," problems do exist. We all have a need to be understood, to know our



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function and place in the organization. As in all relationships, we need to keep open the lines of communication, not only for personal benefit but far more importantly, to better serve their communities. Often, both managers and clerks feel theirs is a "thankless" job. Both live with many areas of stress. Frustration seems to be an "occupational disease." There are city clerks who feel their frustrations are a direct result of top management. We noted there were city managers who felt the office of city clerk was archaic and therefore unnecessary, "merely a technician," "a position that should be eliminated," "merely routine record keeping, well defined by the word 'clerk,' etc."

In all probability, these were the city clerks who felt more than the usual frustrations and perhaps these were the managers who felt "threatened." Threatened? Yes. City clerks fill a very old and respected position. By the very nature of their "traditional" role, they usually have a wide range of vital information pertaining to both past and present governmental operations. This usually equates with power and often that spells "danger"-especially to the new manager. Managers often have to struggle to attain acceptance by their community-to gain a sense of belonging. Most city clerks are immediately accepted into the community they serve-which speaks well for the position.

## FEEL THREATENED

There are also those city clerks who feel threatened by the unknown when a new manager appears on the scene. Will their role change? Will they have to assume new responsibilities? Will the new manager demand new techniques? Will he recognize their position? It seems evident these are the clerks and managers who let personalities interfere with their basic responsibilities.

The questionnaire also gave us a view from the other side. Many city managers felt the position of city clerk was an integral and vital part of city government; "a viable part of the management team;" "an administrative position becoming more important and demanding with our changing times;" "vital to efficient and effective government." Quite naturally, many city clerks made

similar statements. Many stated they were "information centers;" "service department of the city;" "an impartial office separate from both the policy makers and the city manager;" "liaison between the past and present;" "an advisor rather than an innovator;" "liaison between the public and various city departments."

Clerks were asked what they expected from their city managers and city managers were asked what they expected from their city clerks. The answers were surprisingly similar from both city managers and city clerks. Those answers most often given were "cooperation," "support," "recognition," "understanding," "respect," "professionalism" and "efficiency." Comments indicated a very real lack of communication even in those municipalities where both felt there were "no real conflicts." This was evidenced by one city clerk's comment, "No conflicts-the manager doesn't seem to know I'm here." One manager stated, "No conflicts, however, the relationship of city manager and city clerk is complex."

While the relationship between the city manager and the city clerk can be complex, it certainly should not be one of conflict. Both positions are vital to sound, progressive government. In either position, we must continue to demonstrate we are professionals, dedicated to the philosophy of providing quality public service.

## May 6-12 Honors Municipal Clerk's Office

The week of May 6-12 has been proclaimed MUNICIPAL CLERK'S WEEK by the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC), the professional association of 9,600 county, city, village and town clerks, located in every state, Canadian province, and 15 other countries.

This will be the 20th annual observance which calls to the attention of the general public the key role that municipal clerks have in the operation of local government.

IIMC President Terry S. Tripp, CMC/AAE, City Clerk of Gonzales, Louisiana, in announcing the observance of Municipal Clerk's Week, urged every community to recognize the work carried out by the Office of Municipal Clerk.

"There are many activities that are the responsibility of the Municipal Clerk that too often the public takes for granted," stated Tripp. "Yet, if these are not done properly and as required by law--for example, the recording of the official minutes of the council--the smooth operation of government will be greatly affected."

"I truly think that the office of the Municipal Clerk is the hub of government, recording the actions of its legislative body, serving as information center on municipal programs useful to the municipal administration and the general public, and preserving the history of local government for future generations," said Tripp.

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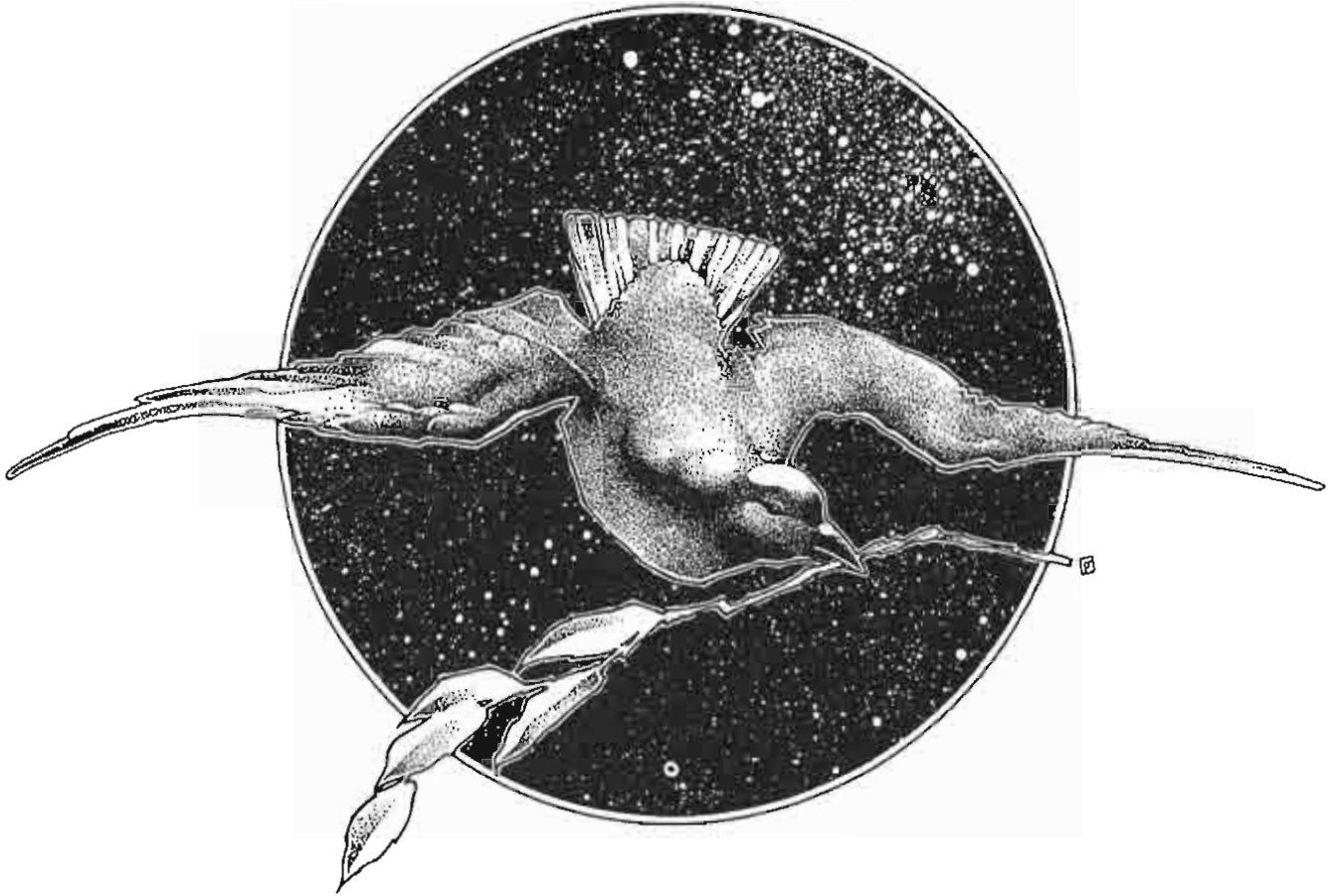
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