



Nancy's Doty-ings

April was a special time for our office and for me. It included an event with our younger generation and another with our senior citizens. Let me explain.

The Clerk and Recorder's office participated in the annual "Take your Child to Work Day." Thanks to Terri Salmon, our office participated in planning the many events at the Administration Building. The Recording Department held a mock wedding organized by our very own wedding planner, Peggy Fretz. Arnold Alexander stepped in and served as the "Temporary Reverend for the Day" (black collar and all!). It appeared the grooms were relieved when the "Reverend" announced that the bride and groom were only temporarily united in matrimony! Scott Clark explained to our young citizens the ins and outs of the voting process. Each child had the opportunity to vote on several issues including his or her favorite pet. The results were 32 votes for a dog; 10 votes for a cat; 9 votes for a reptile; 2 votes for a fish; and 0 votes for a bird. Fifty-three children voted, with a dog winning the election for the most favorite pet.

Everyone enjoyed the excitement the kids brought to our office.

On April 23rd, Mary Whitley and I had the pleasure of having lunch with 11 senior citizens at the Meridian Living Center on South Corona Street. These energetic people were in their 80's and 90's and continue to play an active role in their community. Their health is generally good and I discovered that most of them still enjoy traveling. They shared their life stories, and I learned so much. One lady is working with the Girl Scouts and is planning to give a speech for a young troop about what it was like to be a girl scout in the 1930's. This 80+ lady still sports her Girl Scout uniform on special occasions. Another 93 years young lady amazed me when she said she had earned her law degree many years ago. Another delightful citizen's eyes lit up when she told us about her career with the Denver Public Schools where she had worked for over 50 years.

All had wonderful and memorable stories to share. The group was surprised, but pleased, that we had taken the time to deliver their absentee ballot request forms and visit them. They requested that my next visit include a presentation about what the C & R's Office does. It would be an honor and privilege for me to share that information with our treasured elders.

I also had the pleasure of having lunch in my office with seven MV employees. This was the first "employee luncheon." We munched on our salads while sharing stories about the significant events and people in our lives. It was a special opportunity for me to learn about the people who work here while we shared humorous as well as more serious experiences.

I continue to be impressed by the dedication of the C & R's staff. The Aurora Office deserves a big "Thank You" for altering flex schedules because of staff shortages. And a special "Thank You" to the MV employees here and at the S.E. Office who volunteered to help in the Aurora Office because of staffing issues. Donna and I both appreciate your cooperation. Thank you to everyone. It is only by working together that we'll be successful and continue to make this a great place to work.

-Nancy Doty



Contest Winner!

Peggy Fretz won the "Name the Newsletter" contest. Her suggestion appears at the top of this month's issue. Barb Van Dyke's suggestion will be used as a heading for Nancy's commentary section. As a reward these two witty women will each receive a gift certificate to Dairy Queen. Thanks to everyone who submitted ideas!

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

We are pleased to announce that Priscilla Brown was selected as the first Employee of the Month! Priscilla is being recognized for her professionalism, positive attitude, and her willingness to go the extra step to get things done. Her objectivity and fairness make the Clerk and Recorder's office a pleasant place to work. Priscilla is well respected by all of her co-workers and she is the personification of teamwork. Priscilla will receive a gift certificate to Dairy Queen and her name will be placed on the "Employee of the Month" plaque that will be on display very soon. Congratulations!

"Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing." (Theodore Roosevelt)

RECORDING



It's a good feeling to know you are doing a wonderful job, but it's even better when someone from outside the office thanks you for a job well done. Recording recently received kudos from two clients.

Regarding the timely recording of a deed that was executed on April 22, Sue Gillen, Deputy Public Trustee wrote, "...I am really impressed with the improvement...(the deed) shows up as being recorded April 26, 2004. Congratulations." Karen Hines from America's Mortgage wrote, "...Thank you for the wonderful job...we greatly appreciate not having to wait three months to get (documents) back."

When exploring the history in the County Clerk's office you may find things you didn't know existed. Our records date back to 1902, the time when what was known as Arapahoe County is now known as Denver, Adams and Arapahoe Counties. There are marriage records that date

back to the turn of the century indexed by the bride & groom's name. However, the name of the bride only began to appear in the indexes in 1930.

Records of legal documents related to real estate are kept in this office as well. They are still indexed today in much the same way they were over 100 years ago, although, back then, each document was entered into an index book, assigned a number and photographed all by hand. Today we have computers to make this process fast & efficient. Thank goodness, since we handle upwards of 800 to one thousand documents every day!

The index books make it possible to research your own property back to the turn of the century. A chain of title is done starting with the present owner of the property and researching back by the name of the previous owner and the owner before that and so on until the land patent is found. A land patent was issued from the Federal Government for a fee, after a homesteader "worked" the land (usually around 160 acres) for five years and had two friends or neighbors vouch for the land's improvement and occupation.

Also available in the Recording Division are maps of every subdivision in Arapahoe County, indexed by the name of the subdivision. Some maps date back to the late 1890's. Copies of maps are \$5.00 per page.

Copies of recorded documents are available for \$1.25 and our staff is happy to assist you with your search.

-Joanne DiLeo, Recording

RECORDING ACTIVITY FOR MARCH & APRIL

- March
- 21,080 Real Estate Documents were recorded
 - 248 Marriage Licenses were issued
- April
- 21,092 Real Estate Documents were recorded
 - 320 Marriage Licenses were issued

REMINDER...

The next employee's luncheon will be on Tuesday May 25th.

There is a sign-up sheet on the counter by Priscilla's desk. The first seven people who sign the sheet will be included in this month's luncheon in Nancy's office. If more than seven people sign up, they will be included in June's luncheon.



Bookkeeping

Did you know that Fra Luca Pacioli was the founder of the bookkeeping concept in the 14th Century? Even then it was very important for citizens to keep track of their statements and liabilities. These were used for taxation and even for determination of civil rights. Now in the 21st century, the concept of bookkeeping is the same even though processes have changed throughout the years.

Bookkeeping has many responsibilities such as coordinating the daily balancing of the various departments in the Clerk and Recorder's office. This includes all four branch offices, Elections, Recording and Drivers' Licensing. We have a daily deadline to meet, which, at times, makes for some interesting and fast paced days.

We are involved in working with budget and processing invoices for payment. That's not all!! We also handle the maintenance of records for all motor vehicle and recording prepaid accounts, 2% daily rentals, and Special Mobile Machinery equipment. We communicate with customers regarding returned checks and cancelled plates due to insufficient funds. Everyone in the department works very hard and well as a team to "get the job done"! We now have a new supervisor, Jennifer Gayer, whom we are very happy to have as a part of our team. Please join us in welcoming her to our team.

-The Bookkeeping Team

"There is importance in today—not so much in what happens to us, but in how we respond." (Melody Beattie)

MOTOR VEHICLE



Driver's License Division

On March 1, 2004, the Driver's License Division won the "Greatest Improvement" award for the 4th quarter of 2003. This is the 5th award this division has won...WOW!!

The award is given by the Donor Awareness Council, which promotes organ and tissue donation throughout the United States. There are three categories in Colorado: County, Front Range and Rural. The DL Division won its first award in the 4th quarter of 2000 for Outstanding Performance. In 2001, the DL Division won two more awards, one of which was the Overall Achievement for the entire Front Range! The 4th award was received in 2002.

From October to December 2004, the DL Division processed 3,469 documents, of which 2,371 citizens became donors—that's 68.3% of all documents processed. Additionally, 45.3% people donated \$2,483.30 to the Donor Awareness Council.

What makes these awards so special is that there are only three full-time employees in this division: Bridget Gurule, Jeni Whitley and Rhonda Gilliam. Way to go!!!

-Joleen Sanchez

Aurora Branch Office

The Aurora Office opened prior to 1959 with two employees, Evelyn Remes and Verna (don't know last name). The office was managed by a private owner in a small house that was previously used by a bank located on 14th and Geneva.

In 1960 the Aurora Office and the Driver's License Office moved to 14th and Kenton and became the branch Motor Vehicle Office of the Arapahoe County Clerk and Recorder's Office. At this time the Motor Vehicle Office had six employees, which included branch administrator, Marguerite Thompson. Because Motor Vehicle and Driver's License needed more space, they moved again to 14th and Oswego. Once Driver's License became part of the Department of Revenue, they moved their office, which allowed for Motor Vehicle to expand.

In the 1960's the Aurora Office was considered busy if they had fifty customers compared to the hundreds of over the counter customers they have today. When the office wasn't busy, the clerks could work on their knitting, crossword puzzles or Christmas cards, but the customers always came first.

In the 1970's, the City of Aurora began to grow and so did the demands of the Aurora Office, which forced the office to move once again. The office moved into the Altura Plaza Building on 14th and Chambers Rd., and the number of employees grew to 22. In the early 1970's, Chambers

Rd. was still a dirt road. Not only was the office issuing titles and registrations, but also they began taking on the responsibility of voter registration and marriage licenses.

In the 1960's and early 1970's two additional "holidays", the employee's birthday and a shopping day in December, were included in the paid holiday schedule. These two holidays were later converted to a floating holiday.

In the fall of 1997, the Aurora Office moved to its current location on Iliff and Chambers. The volume of walk-in customers makes the Aurora Office the busiest Motor Vehicle Office in Arapahoe County. A new office is being planned for yet another move sometime in early fall.

-Donna Larson

***What is the fruitiest lesson?
History, because it's full of
dates!***

CLERK TO THE BOARD

April was a very busy and exciting month for the Clerk to the Board. We have assumed some additional responsibilities in the department including ordering office supplies through Boise, computer inventory, and clerking the meeting for the Open Space and Trails Advisory Board. Additionally we welcomed Bookkeeping to be under the supervision of Jennifer as well. We compiled and finalized a "Book for Procedures" for every process within the Division. So, anyone should be able to follow the steps outlined in this procedures book to do any job in the Division.

We are very excited that the OCR (optical character recognition) feature is finally working within the EDMS (Electronic Document Management System), where we store the historical records of the County. This capability will allow us to electronically store the words of scanned documents so that one is able to word search on ALL of the historical documents of the County. The benefit is that anyone can locate any historical record in the County by searching on one word. For example, if a citizen knows there

was an action taken sometime in the past regarding a certain street, but does not know the name of the case, case number, date or resolution number, the item could still be located by searching on only the name of the street. Before citizens are able to word search on all of the documents in the system, the Clerk to the Board must run a program to recognize the words of the scanned documents and build a word bank. This will be a time consuming effort, but once all of the documents are "OCR'd," the benefit to the citizens will be enormous. Rather than having to scroll through thousands of pages of documents to find a certain action taken by the Board of County Commissioners or some other Board or Commission, a citizen will be able to do a simple word search on a word key to any particular action. This month we have "OCR'd" 219 documents from the present time back to 1992. We hope to have ALL documents "OCR'd" in six months.

We also scanned 175,249 pages into EDMS and clerked 13 hours of Board and Commission meetings, which took approximately 39 hours to transcribe and finalize. Whew!! We were busy this month!

-Jennifer Gayer

Department Safety Committee



The first Department Safety Committee meeting was held on April 27th with representatives from all divisions. Pat Skahill and George Shipley from the County's Risk Management Office attended the meeting and provided a brief overview of the concept of the safety meetings. We will meet monthly and would like any input or suggestions on how to make the Department a safer place to work. This month we discussed upcoming training opportunities offered by the County Risk Management and Human Resources regarding safety and wellness.

We encourage employees to take advantage of these classes. Of course not everyone would be able to attend every training, but by working with our supervisors for scheduling and with our co-workers as a team, we can hopefully allow employees on a rotating basis to participate in the classes that are of particular interest.

We also discussed inviting George to attend a weekly division meeting to provide a five-minute training on keyboard use or adjusting chairs. These are small ergonomic adjustments that could make a big difference in our overall wellness. Lifting and transporting heavy boxes of documents was identified as a safety concern. Pat Skahill and George Shipley said they would like to review that process and provide alternative solutions.

First Aid and CPR classes were discussed and the department will be looking for volunteers to be trained. The Safety Committee welcomes any input from any employees to make our environment healthier or safer.

We will be meeting again on May 27th from 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM. Please let your supervisor know if you would like to participate.

-Jennifer Gayer

"Dust yourself off after a mistake, and then move on to the success." (Melody Beattie)

