



# News from the Administrator

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*“In government, we don’t do easy. We make easy happen through hard work and learning.”*

*~Author Unknown~*



## Administrator’s Message

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Hello Everyone,

I hope you’re enjoying the unusually mild Michigan winter as much as I am. I know our facilities/maintenance and road commission employees have appreciated not having to deal with snow and ice as often as in years past. Now, with Groundhog Day right around the corner, I’m hopeful that our weather jackpot continues for another six weeks and we can all enjoy an early, beautiful spring!

As predicted, January was a busy month for us here in Administration. Our Board of Commissioners jumped into 2016 by continuing their work on the Platt Road property, Community Mental Health budgetary challenges and, of course, they conducted interviews with 5 highly qualified candidates for your next County Administrator, based upon recommendations from our search firm, the Michigan Municipal League.

The interviews were held at a special public meeting on Saturday, January 23, and I was impressed with the range of qualifications demonstrated by the candidates. The Michigan Municipal League has been with us every step of the way and has done a fantastic job with helping to identify the candidates and facilitate the interview process. Immediately following the last interview, the Board of Commissioners narrowed the field and asked two candidates to return for a meet & greet reception and second interviews. Those candidates are: our current Director of Parks and Recreation Bob Tetens and an external candidate, Muddasar Tawakkul. The meet & greet will be held before a special meeting of the Board on Thursday, February 4 beginning at 5:30 pm. The meeting and interview process will begin promptly at 6:30 pm in the Board’s meeting room. I am confident that our Commissioners will ultimately choose the candidate that exemplifies the

world class service we’ve grown to expect in all of our employees. Let’s hope for the best.

Moving on to other things going on here in Washtenaw County, I hope you took a few moments to participate in our Employee Survey last month. The results of this long overdue poll of our most important asset, our employees will be used to help us get a better understanding of your morale, satisfaction and engagement. County leadership will then begin to review and discuss ways we can improve your work life as well as the service we provide to our citizens. Be sure to watch this newsletter and eCentral for updates.

Thank you, everyone, for your dedication and commitment to this fine organization, and for the work that you do. I wish you a very happy, healthy and warm February!

*~ Verna*

# United Way Update



## United Way Annual Campaign

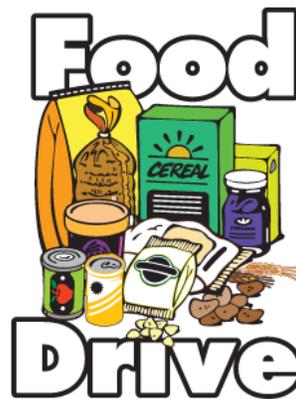
Your United Way Committee is continuously hard at work brainstorming new ideas for events for fundraising and participation. Do you have an idea? If you do please let us know! Email your suggestion to [l-uwcommittee@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:l-uwcommittee@ewashtenaw.org). We would love to hear from you!



### Volunteer Center goes Mobile!



United Way of Washtenaw County's online Volunteer Center can help match your interests with local agencies in need, plus, it has just been upgraded to be mobile-friendly, check it out:  
[www.VolunteerWashtenaw.org](http://www.VolunteerWashtenaw.org)



Our first event of 2016 is fast approaching. It is our annual United Way Food Drive. The food drive will begin on March 1st and run through April 1st this year. Food Gatherers will place bins at most County locations. During this time you will be able to bring in any items you would like to donate. Some suggestions of items in high demand are:

There are several items that are of particular need: Most canned items, baby food or formula, diapers, Ensure, dry goods, pasta noodles, powdered milk, peanut butter, toothpaste/toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, and disposable razors.

## 2016 United Way Campaign Calendar: Overall Goal \$65,000

2016 Events:			
EVENT	DATE	GOAL	OUTCOME
Food Drive	March 1-April 1	\$4,000	
Day of Action	June	20 Volunteers	
Stuff the Bus	August	\$12,500	
Family Kickball	September 15	\$250	
Annual Campaign	September—November	\$40,000	
Annual Online Auction	September—November	\$4,000	
Washtenaw Cares	November—December	\$4,000	

Click [HERE](#) to Like Your United Way Committee on Facebook!

# Win by Losing

Is your New Year resolution starting to lose it's luster? We may have the perfect pick me up. The Win by Losing Challenge can help to breathe new life into those New Years resolutions. It is more than just a challenge, it offers you tools to be successful in your goals. There are exercise and diets tips, healthy recipe idea, meal plans and much, much more.

Our last challenge was a very big success. We had 66 employees participate, we lost over 344.6 lbs. as a team, and we WON our division. Let's defend our title!

The Win by Losing Challenge will begin on February 29th and run through April 29th. Watch eCentral for details and how to participate!



## Trial Court Survey — OUTSTANDING!!

MLive recently featured a fantastic [article](#) about how our own Trial Court polled their customers to ensure satisfaction and complete understanding with their experiences — and I hope you take a moment to read it!

Through a coordinated effort that actually begins with the clerks and works its way to the judges and administration, our Trial Court staff are shining examples of excellence in customer service, making all of us proud and helping us to aspire to a higher level of service.

If you'd like to see the results of the survey, you can find it on the Trial Court's webpage, [here](#).

A big thank you to the entire Trial Court team — you are all amazing!

Keep up the good work!



To provide opportunities for people and organizations to obtain the peaceful resolution of public and private disputes in a fair, efficient, and timely manner.

~Mission, Washtenaw County Trial Court



## Washtenaw County Dental Clinic Celebrates a Full Year of Smiles!

This month, our **Washtenaw County Dental Clinic** celebrates its first full year of operation. From February through December of 2015, the clinic served over 1,500 patients with nearly 3,800 visits.

“We’re thrilled to see residents getting much-needed dental care, and we look forward to watching the clinic grow over the next few years,” says Health Officer Ellen Rabinowitz.

With the support of the Board of Commissioners, Washtenaw County Public Health joined together with Saint Joseph Mercy Health System, the Washtenaw Health Plan and My Community Dental Clinics to provide low-cost dental care to the community. The clinic serves adults and children covered by Medicaid, MICHild or Healthy Kids or who are without insurance and low income. The Washtenaw County Dental Clinic is located in the St. Joseph Mercy Haab Building, 111 North Huron Street in downtown Ypsilanti.

Knowing that services are reduced cost, not free, the Board of Commissioners designated money for a **Washtenaw County Dental Assistance Fund**. Nearly 100 people applied for assistance in the second half of 2015. The Fund helps low-income residents without dental insurance pay for treatment at the clinic and enrollment is available through the Washtenaw Health Plan, 734-544-3030.

The 11-chair clinic is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Since opening, the clinic has added a second dentist and will continue to add staff.

In keeping with the clinic’s love of partnerships, Washtenaw County Public Health is also working with area schools to display student art work. Ann Arbor Public Schools recently featured the partnership in their district newsletter.

All new patients must register by calling 877-313-6232. The clinic accepts most, but not all, Medicaid plans. For patients without insurance, there is a \$50 registration fee. Registration includes an initial exam, x-rays and a treatment plan. New patients in need of immediate treatment should tell the staff when registering.

Visit [www.ewashtenaw.org/smile](http://www.ewashtenaw.org/smile) for more, or stop by the clinic.

*“...we look forward to watching the clinic grow over the next few years.”*

*~ Ellen Rabinowitz,  
Washtenaw County  
Public Health Director*

# Getting to Know: Register of Deeds and Vital Records Staff



The Register of Deeds and Vital Records Divisions have a staff of 14 that have a collective total of over 200 years of service!

## What services do your offices provide to your customers?

The Register of Deeds is the repository for all land records and the Vital Records Division is the repository for marriage, death and birth records and operates the Washtenaw County ID Card Program.

## You are highly regarded by your co-workers and those you serve, what would you say is the secret of your success?

Elizabeth Schultz - I think that we take customer service seriously in our office. It is really important to us to make sure the public receives efficient and friendly service. Sometimes people are not able to receive exactly what they came in for, but we try and provide them with the tools/information needed to be able to achieve those goals.

Susan Case - I'm known for saying, "Take the high road". I'd like to think it's my outgoing personality, with a positive attitude, along with my experience/knowledge within the office, and County.

Luanne Gale - Success for me is helping customer find information they need from our office and/or providing assistance to where they may be able to get it if it isn't in our

As I continue to introduce you to our 2015 Employee Recognition winners, I am frequently reminded that we have the absolute best employees in the world. This month, I had an opportunity to learn more about our Service Improvement winners, our Register of Deeds and Vital Records staff. These 14 individuals work for our County Clerk and do an amazing job of customer service. They are on the front lines, have daily interactions with our citizens and their services often capture peoples happiest (birth, marriage certificates) and darkest moments of life (death certificates). These folks begin each day anew with a contagious, positive enthusiasm— wanting nothing more than to be a single ray of light in each customers day.

As you can see from my interview, we did our best to speak with everyone, but as you can imagine, these folks rarely sit still —

**Congratulations on being nominated for and winning the 2015 Service Improvement Award! That's quite a testament to each of you and the work that you do. For those who weren't able to attend the Group of 180, can you share a little about your-**

## selfes?

Susan Case - I came to the County in June 1977, starting in Central Services, and then transferring to the Register of Deeds in February 1978 to present. My parents were both long term County employees, my mother with the Treasurer's office for 42 years, and my father was with the Sheriff's Dept. for 20 years.

Nicole Turfe - In 2010 when the County was going through financial difficulties I lost my position at the Public Defender and was bumped over to the Register of Deeds office for a quick minute and then landed in the Vital Records Department where I have been ever since. A variety of services are provided in our office, such as Marriage Licenses, Birth Certificates, Filing of DD214's, Business Names, Veteran Identification Cards, Washtenaw County Identification Cards, Death Certificates and Notaries. I am lucky to have such a great boss and coworkers to share my days with. My favorite part of my job is Certifying the baby's birth certificates, there is nothing happier than a seeing all the babies born every week.

**How long have you been with Washtenaw County – maybe a collective 'years of service' from the group?**

14 employees  
with over 200  
combined years  
of service!  
Wow!



# Getting to Know: Register of Deeds and Vital Records Staff



important. Shorter version: Everyone is a chain in the link of my good.

Nicole Turfe - The best advice I can give out to help others within the County and in life is attitude, having a positive attitude will help determine how your days go, your customer service is provided and how others react to you.

Elizabeth Schultz - I think it is important to think of each interaction with a patron as unique and not lump every interaction together. If you lump them all together one interaction can ruin your day and your attitude can suffer when you are dealing with new patrons.

Michelle Cook - My advice for working with the public: "remember everyone is fighting a battle, be kind. It goes a long way."

Thank you, everyone, for taking the time to share your success with us! I know I can confidently speak for the entire organization when I tell you how much you and your work are appreciated! Keep up the good work!

~Verna

office. You never know what the customer has been through to bring them to call or come into our office for service. Being able to turn a negative experience into a good experience and having compassion for others can make all the difference.

Dianne Defever - Being friendly and helpful to people goes a long way.

Debbie Sturgill - I think it really helps to like your job, and to be a people person. Of course I love my job. You have to have a positive attitude (which I do have, ok... most of the time).

**As with any job, I'm sure there are challenges and rewards. What would you say is the most difficult and the most satisfying about what you do?**

Melody Cox - Most difficult: Not being able to provide the service that a customer requests (due to statute, or customer not being able to provide required id, etc.) Most satisfying: being able to provide exactly what customer is requesting or finding a solution to enable them to complete their goal (i.e. obtaining ID or having request fulfilled my MI Dept. of Comm Health, or parent etc.)

**What's your favorite part of your job?**

Luanne Gale - My favorite part of this job is helping customers find information or documents they need. Sometimes I even get surprised on how the old books were done and have to be creative on how to search for what the customer is looking for.

Linda Clark - Working with customers and filing records. I enjoy working with customers because not everyone has the computer knowledge of what they are looking for or how to look for these items. When the customer walks out the door with what they needed and a smile that it wasn't as difficult as they thought it would be because they got someone that was helpful and friendly, it makes me proud I'm a county employee. I have done my job well. :)

**If you could share just one bit of advice to help others be successful in their role within Washtenaw County, what would that be?**

Dawn Fyrclak - Treat each person with respect because they are the reason we are here. That person may be a citizen, co-worker, supervisor, friend, department head, a County Commissioner or family they all deserve being treated well, because everyone is

".....having a positive attitude will help determine how your days go....."

~Nicole Turfe

