Dear Fellow Clerks:

I have to say that this year’s City and County Clerks Academy and Institute was one of the best I have attended. The sessions contained such useful information and it was wonderful to see so many clerk friends there. Thank you to Carolyn Athey Barger who chairs the Program Committee this year. She worked alongside Professor Bell and Carla Stowe with the School of Government, and with Kim Worley and Dora Moore of the North Carolina Municipal Clerks’ Association to put together an outstanding Academy.

Let me recap several important announcements made at the Clerks’ Business Meeting held on January 31st during the Academy. Conchita Atkins provided an update from the Membership Committee and reminded everyone to submit their membership dues to Treasurer Effie Varitimidis no later than March 31, 2013. Crystal Maurer, who chairs the NCCCC Committee, provided an update on the program and will be sending an email out shortly with important information. The Executive Committee also met and discussed various ideas for a new fundraiser since our Cookbook fundraiser has come to a close. Paula Woodard came up with a great idea to hold a Raffle and Silent Auction at the April Conference in Brunswick County. To quote Paula, “The Fundraising Committee is hoping that a Raffle and Silent Auction at the April Conference will be a fun way to raise money for our Association. These two fundraisers are something that everyone can take part in and enjoy. Who knows, maybe the Silent Auction will start up some friendly bidding wars!”

Debby Gore and Marjorie Stephenson have been diligently working as hosts for our annual conference. It will be held April 25 – 27th in Brunswick County at Sea Trail Golf and Convention Center. If your county does not have funding available for you to attend the conference, take a look in our Handbook on pages 40 and 41 to see if you could be eligible for a scholarship.

As you can see from my letter, there are many dedicated clerks throughout North Carolina working for our Association. There are so many others not mentioned in this letter that are working and contributing to make our Association the best it can be. Thanks go out to each one of you.

I hope to see you in Brunswick County in April!

Ann Clark, President
North Carolina Association of County Clerks
Movie Filmed At Linbrook Hall In Randolph County

The premiere of “The Confession,” a movie filmed at Linbrook Hall in Randolph County, is scheduled to air on Saturday, May 11, 2013 at 8:00 pm (EST) on the Hallmark Movie Channel.

“The Confession” is the next made-for-TV movie adaptation of the popular trilogy, “The Heritage of Lancaster County” by Beverly Lewis. The first installment of the trilogy was shot in Winston-Salem in Old Salem and aired on the Hallmark Channel in 2011. Please click the link (http://courier-tribune.com/sections/news/local/linbrook-hall-be-setting-new-movie.html) to read an article published March 2012 in the “Courier-Tribune” about the filming of the movie.

~ Amanda Varner
Randolph County Deputy Clerk
Tonight I watched one of the most touching and meaningful moments that I have ever observed.

I attended the 36th annual Franklin County Chamber of Commerce Banquet. As with many other banquets, it had its structured agenda, the changing of the guard and recognition of companies and individuals. This is when it happened; the Chamber selected its Citizen of the Year. The introduction included a list of accomplishments, services rendered to his community and his fellow citizens. The introduction was a list of selfless acts. As the description of the recipient became more descriptive, anyone who had been around Franklin County for any length of time knew that Robert Lee Swanson was about to be recognized for his life of work for his community and his fellow citizens. At the same time this realization came over everyone else in the room, I glanced over at Robert Lee and realized it was now becoming apparent to him.

This is when the touching and meaning moment began. I watched a 78 years young gentleman, 32-year County Commissioner, long time Deacon of the Church fill with anxiousness as he awaited confirmation that he would actually be named the county's Citizen of the Year. The expression upon Robert Lee's face was one of humbling appreciation and the realization came over him that his community was confirming that all of his years of effort and hard work had been received and had made a difference. It was his confirmation that he had gotten it right.

The humbleness continued into his acceptance comments. Robert Lee said he was simply honored to be placed in the same company of those great men and women who had previously been honored with this award.

It was as if he had won the lottery but the sheer emotion and appreciation that was evident on his face told me he would have forgone any amount of money in order to bask in the vote of support he had just received from his community.

For years Robert Lee Swanson has worked to make his community a friendlier, safer and better place to call home. Tonight, the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce confirmed his heartfelt works did not go unnoticed and were greatly appreciated.

The Chamber did a great service in recognizing a Great Man.  

~ Keith E. King
Draft County Management Retention and Disposition Schedule Available for Review

I am pleased to announce that the 2013 draft of the County Management Retention and Disposition Schedule is posted on the Government Records Center website and open for comment. We invite you to look through the portions of the draft that are relevant to you and the records you create and keep, and to contact us with any questions, comments, and/or recommendations.

The retention schedule has been changed in a lot of areas, but there are a few really important ones I’d like to draw your attention to:

- **Destroy in office when administrative value ends.** We now ask that your agency develop a specific retention period for all items with these disposition instructions. You can see more information on these changes in the executive summary, on the signature page, and for every item in the schedule with this disposition.

- **Personnel Files.** We have reworked this section to reflect changes in the privacy statutes, and to clarify which records are most vital over the long term.

- **IT Files.** This section has been completely updated, to reflect the ways in which information technology records are now thoroughly integrated in a county’s functioning.

- **Code Enforcement and Inspection Records** was formerly called Building Inspection Records.

Revisions to the schedule are highlighted in yellow to help you look over the changes.

If you have any questions or comments on the schedule draft, please contact Local Records Analyst Carie Chesarino at Carolyn.Chesarino@ncdcr.gov. We will accept comments until March 15, 2013.

Thanks in advance for taking the time to read through the schedule draft. We reflect your needs most accurately when we receive a lot of feedback.

~ Carolyn (Carie) Chesarino
Local Records Management Analyst

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Heritage Festival

May 18, 2013
9:00 - 2:00
on the Square, Yanceyville, NC

Meet some of the historical figures of Caswell County!

Take a tour of the Courthouse from someone who witnessed it in the 1800s!

Talk to “Chicken” Stephens, Henrietta Jeffries, Calvin Graves, Thomas Day, Bedford Brown, Bartlett Yancey and more...

Listen to stories, take a horse ride, and see how tobacco was strung by hand!

Free and Fun for all!

(For directions or more information please contact Paula Seamster, Clerk to the Board, at (336) 694-4193 Ext. 106)
The new Chatham County Justice center opened on January 2, 2013, to the public. It houses nearly all of the court-related functions, including the District Attorney’s Office, Public Defender, Probation, Parole, and Pre-Trial Services. At 88,000 square feet, it increases the County Government square footage by an additional 50%. There are a number of courtrooms, attorney’s workspace, and probate hearing rooms.

Security is high, staffed by the Chatham County Sheriff’s Office. The metal detectors were obtained from a vendor in Wake County, and were previously used at the 2012 London Olympics. The front façade was designed to mirror the look of the Historic Courthouse in the middle of the traffic circle in Pittsboro. Renovations will soon begin on the old court facilities in the Courthouse Annex building, and will house County offices.

~ Sandra Sublett
Chatham County Clerk

Interior view of one of the courtrooms in the new Chatham County Justice Center.
Local government scholarships: Helping you out in 2013

Do your kids need help with college expenses, or would you like help advancing your career in local government? Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) can help with both. If you work for North Carolina local government, you and your family are eligible to join LGFCU and apply for two great scholarship programs.

LGFCU Scholarship Award

Each year, LGFCU awards 120 $1,000 scholarships to graduating high school students, as well as to those currently attending colleges, universities and graduate schools. The scholarships are payable in one installment to the school, and may be applied to tuition, textbooks, computers or other fees.

Those interested in applying should not only make good grades (a minimum grade point average of 3.0 is required), but also be involved in extracurricular activities. Financial need is also a consideration. Applicants must be members of LGFCU, and have an individual account or hold a joint account with a parent.

Winners are selected by a committee of the Carolinas Credit Union Foundation, and are announced each year in May. The next application deadline is February 28.

School of Government Scholarship Award

Three times a year, LGFCU awards scholarships to local government employees who want to strengthen their skills and enhance their job performance by participating in a conference, class or seminar offered by the School of Government (SOG), the largest university-based local government training, advisory and research organization in the United States.

The next application deadline is April 1, with subsequent deadlines of August 1 and December 1. Learn more about the SOG and how it may be of benefit to you by visiting www.sog.unc.edu.

When you’re ready to apply for either scholarship, just visit www.lgfcu.org/scholarships to download applications.

Good Luck!
I got married December 22, 2012 to the man of my dreams. He proposed to me the day after Thanksgiving at Moses Cone Manor off the Blue Ridge Parkway and we got married just a few weeks later. We are both happier than we have ever been in our lives!! People are always looking for that perfect person to call their soul mate and we have been so blessed to have found true love in one another!

We got married in a beautiful log chapel at a place called Cody Creek in Surry County and it was truly a fairytale day. We spent our wedding night in one of the log cabins there at Cody Creek. Then we came home to have Christmas with our children and families. We left for a weeklong honeymoon in Vermont the day after Christmas. We arrived at our inn to almost a foot of snow. During our stay we took a sleigh ride and it snowed that day from breakfast until bedtime. Absolutely beautiful! Everywhere we went was like a postcard.

Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Barger
My husband’s name is Jeff Barger and he is in his fourth term as Rowan County’s Clerk of Court. Jeff has attended our Association’s conferences with me for the past two and a half years so most of the Clerks have met him.

~ Carolyn Barger
Study Abroad Trip to Namibia, Africa

Clerk to the Board in Caswell County, Paula Seamster’s daughter, Mikayla Seamster is a sophomore at N.C. State University majoring in Wildlife Biology. Mikayla was chosen with 10 other State students to study abroad in Namibia, Africa this summer from May 19th through June 8th. Mikayla’s first adventure in Africa will be to visit Naankuse Wildlife Refuge in Windhoek where she and the other students will study wildlife management and conservation. They will learn about oryx, springbok, ostrich, baboons, mountain zebra and klipspringer. After 3 days there they will conduct field work in the Namib Desert collecting inspects, conducting vegetation surveys and monitoring daily climatic changes. They will then proceed on to Kwakopmund where they will have a couple of days of pleasure riding ATVs, dolphin cruise, sea kayak and sea fishing. Following that day of leisure they will travel to Damaraland where they will search for desert elephants. The last couple of days that they will be in Africa they will go to Etosha National Park which is the largest national park in the world. While there they will study the wildlife populations, elephants, predators, diseases, vegetation, fire management and hydrology. Paula and her husband, Sam, are very proud of Mikayla’s accomplishments at N.C. State and wish her the very best on her study abroad trip.
Leprechaun Hat Cookies

**Ingredients**
- 1 pouch Betty Crocker® sugar cookie mix
- ½ cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 egg
- 1 container (1 lb) Betty Crocker® Rich & Creamy vanilla frosting
- ¼ teaspoon Betty Crocker® green gel food color
- 24 large marshmallows
- 24 small (1-inch) chewy chocolate candies
- 12 small green gumdrops

**Instructions**
- Heat oven to 375°F. In medium bowl, stir cookie mix, butter and egg until soft dough forms. Roll dough in 24 (1-inch) balls. On ungreased cookie sheets, place 2 inches apart.
- Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are light golden brown. Immediately place marshmallow on each cookie. Remove from cookie sheets to cooling racks. Cool completely, about 15 minutes.
- In microwavable bowl, microwave frosting on High 30 seconds. Stir; frosting should be a thick spoonable glaze. Stir food color into frosting, adding more if needed to achieve desired color. Spoon warm frosting over each cookie, coating completely and allowing excess to drip off. Let stand 20 minutes to set.
- Roll chocolate candies into ropes. Flatten with rolling pin into 1/8-inch-thick ribbons. Cut into strips with scissors to resemble hat bands; arrange around base of marshmallow on each cookie. Cut gumdrops crosswise in half (reshaping as needed). Press cut side onto hat band. Lift cookies onto serving platter with pancake turner, leaving excess frosting behind. Store in airtight container.

Easter Basket Cookies

**Ingredients**
- 1 pouch (1 lb. 1.5 oz) Betty Crocker® sugar cookie mix
- 1 tablespoon Gold Medal® all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 egg
- 1 bottle (2.25 oz) Betty Crocker® pink or blue colored sugar
- 1 container (12 oz) Betty Crocker® Whipped fluffy white frosting
- 2 cups flaked coconut
- Food colors; Assorted jelly beans
- Pipe cleaners; 1/4-inch pastel ribbon

**Instructions**
- Heat oven to 375° F. In medium bowl, stir cookie mix, flour, butter and egg until dough forms.
- Roll dough into 32 (1 1/4-inch) balls; roll in colored sugar. Press 1 ball into bottom and up side of each muffin cup.
- Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until set and edges are light golden brown. Cool in pan 10 minutes; remove to cooling racks.
- Add coconut to a 1-gallon resealable food-storage plastic bag. Add 3 to 4 drops food color and shake until well blended. It may be necessary to add 1 to 2 teaspoons water to help disperse the color evenly or additional food color until desired color is reached.
- Frost top of each cookie. Decorate with colored coconut and jelly beans. Tie a small ribbon bow on 5-inch piece of pipe cleaner; insert into each basket for handle.

Recipes & pictures compliments of: www.BettyCrocker.com
Tax Refund Anticipation Loans: Are they right for you?

Expecting a tax refund this year? Most Americans are; however, many don’t want to wait to receive their money. Enter the tax refund anticipation loan, a short-term loan taken by taxpayers expecting to receive an income tax refund. While many view this loan as an option to receive immediate access to refund dollars, it’s also known for high fees and interest rates. So, is a tax refund anticipation loan right for you? Let’s explore them more closely...

Why do people get these loans?

Several reasons may contribute to the high number of people who get a tax refund anticipation loan (approximately one-half million in North Carolina):

• Encouragement from their tax preparer to get the loan
• Lack of understanding on the costs to obtain the loan
• Financial stress from unexpected expenses or ongoing obligations
• The desire to make a purchase
• The convenience of completing the tax filing process immediately

Who makes up the refund loan market?

A small group of lenders make up the tax refund loan market, and the fee that is charged depends on when the loan is made, the mechanism used to disburse the loan proceeds, and how soon the proceeds are disbursed. Given a $2,000 refund loan, a taxpayer can expect to pay approximately $75-$175 in fees, which doesn't even include the cost of the initial tax preparation.

Weigh your alternatives.

While tax refund loans seem convenient, you may want to consider other alternatives: File your tax return electronically, and have the refund direct deposited into your account—typically, within seven to 10 days.

Apply for a short-term loan from Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU); then repay it with your tax refund.

Consider options that offer free income tax assistance, like the one that's available at LGFCU. Whether you're a member or not, you can have your basic income taxes filed free from January 30 – April 15 if you have a household income of $49,000 or less. If it's more than that, have your taxes filed at the branch for just $75. Then, if you're a member and you want your money quickly, get a low-fee tax anticipation loan from LGFCU. It's called Tax Refund Express, and at a rate of 12 percent, a typical 15-day loan would only cost approximately $12 based on a loan amount of $2,500.

Tax refunds are the result of your hard-earned dollars. Make every effort to keep as much of it as possible for you and your family. If LGFCU can assist you in any way, feel free to contact one of our financial counselors at 877.367.5428.

~ Article provided by Local Government Federal Credit Union
Spring is a time when many of us take the opportunity to clean out the old and bring in the new. This year, while Spring cleaning, think of ways to “bring-the-new” to “old stuff.”

Here are a few ideas of ways to repurpose items from and/or for your office and home!

Ah, good ‘ole envelope and paper boxes. Because of their sizes and sturdiness, they have been being repurposed at home and in the work place for many years. Spice them up by covering with decorative paper or use them the way they are!

Ready to trade in that stand up paper towel holder. Bring it to work and, with the help of 3 round metal rings and several sheet protectors, you can have those frequently used forms and documents always ready for quick access!

Reuse file holders for storing cookie sheets at home or meeting refreshment platters at work.

Use that empty decorative tissue box to store plastic grocery bags. This is a nice way to keep them handy at work and home.

Empty breath mint boxes can be used to carry spices when traveling.
Upcoming Events

2013 Annual Conference
Brunswick County
April 25-27, 2013

2012-13 Officers and Directors

Officers
President: Ann Clark, Ashe County
Vice President: Carolyn Athey, Rowan County
Secretary: Kristen King, Franklin County
Treasurer: Effie Varitimidis, Guilford County
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