



*"Connecting Elected Officials  
throughout the state."*

# The KCOA

# Connection

Spring 2009

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## **Kansas County Officials Association**

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*The Kansas County  
Officials Association is  
committed to upholding  
democratic principles  
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including the election of  
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## President's Message

*By Shane Shields, KCOA President*



In writing this message today for our newsletter, I have had to make some revisions. These opening paragraphs have been added after receiving the legislative alert from Kearney & Associates. **We have learned that a Consolidation bill has been introduced in the Senate.** It is SB75. The bill, with little doubt, originates from the recommendation of the Kansas Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations or KACIR. KACIR's 2008 annual report made a policy recommendation that KACIR should request introduction in the Senate of legislation to remove the remaining barriers to consolidation, particularly city-county consolidation and provide incentives to consolidate.

The recommendation stated the decision to require a dual majority should be left to the consolidation commission. SB75 does just that. It provides that a preliminary plan shall address the issue of whether a vote of the electorate shall be required county-wide or whether separate votes of the electorate will be required in the unincorporated area of the county and within each city proposed to be consolidated. The plan is prepared by a consolidation study commission established by a joint resolution of the county and city.

SB75 states that at least 1/3 of the membership of a consolidation study commission shall be residents of the unincorporated area of the county. It would appear that the possibility is certainly present where county residents in the unincorporated areas

may be overruled from the beginning of the process. We will be reviewing the bill in its entirety and determining what steps KCOA can take to shape it to meet our stated goal of protecting the rights of Kansans to vote for their elected officials. A hearing has not been set for the bill at the time of writing this article and action may have occurred by the time the newsletter is prepared. I encourage all members to be watchful of this bill and prepared to make your opinions known to your legislators.

KCOA is now in its fifth year of existence. We had a very good turnout for our first-ever KCOA Day at the Capitol. There were around 40 members in attendance. During the afternoon Secretary of State Ron Thornburgh, State Treasurer Dennis McKinney, Senator Vickie Schmidt, and Senator Derek Schmidt spoke to our group. The state's financial crisis was certainly the dominate topic for the day. The views and thoughts of our state officials were very informative and interesting. Mid-afternoon we were present for the Senate session and KCOA was recognized as in attendance. Our group filled the east gallery of the Senate chambers.

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**Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association  
Kansas County Treasurer's Association  
Kansas Register of Deeds Association**

## President's Message

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Immediately after the session, we had a short presentation from Michael White, formerly of Kearney & Associates. Michael was recently selected Chief of Staff to Senate President Steve Morris. He previously served as Legislative Director for the Senate President. Michael discussed some of his responsibilities as Chief of Staff and also talked about what might be expected this legislative session.

The KCOA Board will be fully evaluating our first Day at the Capitol and determining how it can be improved and enhanced. The renovations under way in the Capitol Building, specifically the rotunda area, impacted what we could do this year. The possibility of moving Capitol Day later in the legislative session will also be looked at. All in all, the Board believes it was a success and we thank those members who were able to attend.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our newly elected officials to KCOA. I know we have a number of new Clerks, Register of Deeds, and Treasurers across the state. For our new members and old ones alike, I would like to offer reminders of KCOA educational and informational materials that are available. Last year the creation of two informational brochures and a PowerPoint presentation was accomplished. Thanks again to the Outreach committee and the Task Force for their work. The brochures are County

Government: Working Together to Build a Stronger Community and Kansans for Elected Government. The PowerPoint is a presentation of Kansans for Elected Government.

All three items are available on the KCOA website: [www.kscountyofficials.com](http://www.kscountyofficials.com). You may reach them via the Members only section. The section is password protected. If you need the password, contact Kari at the KCOA office, [kpresley@kearneyandassociates.com](mailto:kpresley@kearneyandassociates.com). The brochures may be downloaded and printed or, if you wish, you may have them printed by your local printer. We encourage you to use these tools to help educate and inform the public on how county government works and the importance of elected officials. Educating and informing the public is vitally important for us all. Other features of our website can also be helpful to old and new members alike.

The KCOA website provides an events page that lists and provides information on upcoming events. The agenda with details for our Day at the Capitol was available on the site. Information on our annual conference is available and additional details will be posted as they are finalized. E-mails are sent regarding events, but please remember you may visit the website anytime for the latest information. Our association's newsletter "The KCOA Connection" is also posted on the site. All past newslet-

ters remain available also. For our new members, reading the past newsletters can provide some history on our association. The County Officials page on our site provides the capability of searching for a member elected official by either name or county. Also, the by-laws of our association are available on the site. I encourage everyone to use our website as a resource.

The 2009 legislative session has begun amid a financial crisis for our state and our country. At the time of writing this article, no budget rescission bill has yet been adopted nor even agreed upon. Whatever is finalized and adopted will, very likely, impact us at the county level by rescinding 2009 state appropriations to some degree, if not entirely. It also appears, with little if any doubt, that we will certainly be impacted in 2010. There is also new legislative leadership, which may affect the direction of legislation compared to the past. The financial crisis will also have its own impact.

I hope this newsletter finds everyone doing well, and I wish everyone a great new year. Perhaps, an interesting footnote: 2009 is the Year of the Ox in the Chinese Zodiac. The Ox is the sign of prosperity through fortitude and hard work. That certainly seems appropriate for this year. It is most definitely going to take fortitude and hard work on everyone's part to reach prosperity.

**Mark your calendars for the Annual KCOA Conference**

**September 16-18, 2009**  
**Hyatt Regency Hotel - Wichita, KS**

Make your room reservations at the Hyatt Regency Hotel today! Call 316-293-1234 or 800-233-1234.

*The cut-off day for reservations is August 15, 2009.*

## Affiliate News

### Kansas County Treasurer's Association

KCTA elected new officers at the KCOA Conference held last September in Wichita. The new officers are: Cheryl Remington, Gove County- President; Mark Schemm, Smith County- Vice President; Ron Estes, Sedgwick County- Treasurer; Joe Grisolano, Crawford County- Secretary. District Representatives are as follows: Rita Gee, Grant County- SW District; Dena McDaniel, Anderson County-SE District; and Kathy Tremont, Geary County-NC District.

KCTA has a very active Legislative Board, which meets once a month. At the October 24, 2008 meeting held in Pittsburg, Kansas, Nancy Weeks, Haskell County, was elected as chairperson with Cynthia Linner, Norton County, being elected as Secretary. This committee moves the meeting locations around the state, and I have personally enjoyed seeing many of the county seats in Kansas. In February, KCTA held a Legislative Seminar and Reception. At this seminar, we host a reception one evening for the legislators of Kansas. This reception is funded with personal money from Kansas County Treasurers, not KCTA funds. At the 2008, reception we had 60 legislators attend.

KCTA will hold its June Seminar at the Courtyard by Marriott in Junction City. At this conference, we will be presenting the "Betty J McBride Outstanding County Treasurer Award" along with hosting a reception for the outgoing and retiring treasurers.

We have had a very busy year with many treasurers and staff dedicating their time in Topeka working on the VIPS Modernization Project. New license plates you may have seen on the road are EMT, Firefighter, and Breast Cancer. We will be issuing the following new plates this year: Gold Star Mother and In God We Trust.

The KCTA Certification Committee along with Fort Hays State Docking Institute is looking to the future with providing online training and testing for the association.

We are looking forward to a very busy and productive year.

-- Cheryl Remington, *KCTA President*

### *Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association*

Kansas County Clerk's & Election Officials Association

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new County Clerks and Election Officials in Kansas. We've all been where you are as new officials and know how daunting the job can be. Please don't be afraid to use your colleagues to help answer any and all questions you most certainly have. We're only a phone call or an e-mail away.

The 2008 General Election certainly lived up to its expectations as one of the largest in history with increased voter registration and voter turnout throughout the state and the nation. Now that that historical election is behind us, we are preparing for Spring Elections. These elections have generally had low turnout, when compared to state and national elections. That doesn't lessen the load we, as election officers carry, because as past KCC&EOA President, Shane Shields, said "...the (election) process is the same whether there is one voter or 10,000 voters."

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- New Clerks will participate in the **New Clerk's School** February 19-20 in Topeka. Many thanks to Leavenworth County Clerk, Janet Klasinski, for all her hard work organizing this helpful and informative training. I encourage all newly elected clerks and those who have been in office for less than a full term to attend this two-day conference.
- **The Sanborn Institute** June 8-12, 2009 **and Master Academy** June 11-12, 2009, will be held in Wichita at the Wichita Best Western Airport. I encourage all new and experienced clerks, as well as deputies, to take advantage of this useful certification program.
- **KCC&EOA Annual Conference** May 6-9 in Hutchinson at the Grand Prairie Hotel and Convention Center. Once again, I encourage all County Clerks and Election Officials to attend. I would personally like to thank all who served on the Conference Committee. Without participation from people like you, this year's conference would not be possible.
- **5<sup>th</sup> Annual KCOA Conference** September 16-18, 2009 in Wichita at the Hyatt Regency. *The Kansas County Officials Association is committed to upholding democratic principles which allow Kansans to determine their constitutional right of self-governance including the election of all local officials.*
- **MEOC (Midwest Election Officials Conference)** will be held this December in Kansas City. The Election Officials of Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Iowa meet in December every four years to discuss election issues. The conference will be in Kansas City again, and we will receive more information from the Secretary of State's Office later this year.

-- Stacia Long, *KCC&EOA President*

Calendar of Events

**ANNUAL KCOA  
CONFERENCE  
SEPT. 16-18, 2009  
HYATT REGENCY  
WICHITA, KANSAS**

*Visit the website for a schedule and  
registration information when it is  
available.  
[www.kscountyofficials.org](http://www.kscountyofficials.org).*

KCOA Board of Directors

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Eileen King  
Riley County, Manhattan

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Missie Gerritzen, *Past President*  
Kearny County, Larkin

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