

## STATEWIDE MEETING ORLANDO 2002

As the saying goes, another successful statewide meeting has come and gone!! The State Office of Vital Statistics held a meeting of local registrars, chief deputy registrars and deputy registrars and state office staff at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, September 18-20, 2002. 102 attendees from 62 of the 67 counties and 24 members of the state office staff met for two and one half days to discuss the implementation of the new Chief Deputy Registrar Operations Manual (COM).

Over the years, a need for more precise instructions and guidelines resulted in the extraction of Chapter 8 from the Vital Records Registration Handbook. This chapter was expanded and christened the COM. The development of the COM has been the subject of many conference calls over this past year and, with implementation, will assist CDRs and staff with the successful operation of the local VS office.

Evaluations from participants have rated this meeting "the best ever!!" A successful meeting of this magnitude can only come about as a result of much hard work from many corners. QA staff coordinated the meeting, but input came from a variety of folks resulting in a cohesive, workable agenda that related directly to the operations of the vital records registration system. Questions from participants helped clarify many important points, making the subject matter more easily understood.

We would like to thank everyone involved in this meeting and look forward to working with them as several of the new procedures are implemented in the coming months.

## CHIEF DEPUTY REGISTRAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

We begin our update this quarter with the announcement that Kaki Burmester, CDR of Pinellas County for the last 35 years and chairperson of the CDRAC, has recently retired. Kaki made many important contributions to Vital Statistics through the years and not only anchored, but united the CDRAC as a team. Her knowledge and expertise have been invaluable to us all and she will be missed greatly by the CDRAC. We congratulate and wish her well in her retirement.

The consensus of the CDRAC is that the statewide meeting in Orlando was a big success. It was a great opportunity to mingle and share ideas, while reviewing, discussing and planning to implement the new CDR Operations Manual (COM). We all know by now that the COM was developed to establish uniform procedures and guidelines for county VS offices. Ensuring security and accountability are crucial and although the tracking logs recently implemented take some extra time, they accom-

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## OUR "GUEST" TO YOU



Donna Hodges  
FDLE

In 1982, the Florida Legislature mandated that the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) create a central repository for missing children, to collect, store and disseminate information. Actual operations of the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse began in January 1983. The

Clearinghouse continues to search for innovative ways to serve the law enforcement community and parents of missing kids.

One innovative program implemented by FDLE is the Child Identification Program (ChIP), a program that enables hospitals throughout the State of Florida to collect blood samples of children shortly after birth. The samples are kept by the parent and would be used for identification purposes. There are 111 hospitals in Florida and 44 of them offer this service to parents. Some Florida health departments have expressed an interest in this program so that it can be made available to parents of school aged children. There are currently 7 health departments that offer this service.

The Florida Amber Plan is another program that requires the cooperation of law enforcement and broadcasters to alert the public using the emergency activation system, to critical information of a child abduction. The alert is broadcast through radio, television, highway message signs and lottery machines. The purpose is to notify the public, when a child goes missing, in a timely manner with the hopes of increasing the chances of the safe return of the child.

For further information about the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse and these programs, please call 1-888-356-4774 (1-888-FLMISSING).

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## APOSTILE/EXEMPLIFIED COPIES OF VITAL RECORDS

Some foreign governments require individuals or businesses conducting international transactions with them to provide documents accompanied by a notarial certificate, exemplified or apostile. These documents are issued exclusively by the Department of State (DOS).

The DOS will only accept documents from the official custodian of those documents. The official custodian of Florida's birth, death, and fetal death records is the State Registrar. The Clerk of Courts and the State Registrar are recognized as custodians of the marriage and dissolution of marriage records for Florida. For births and deaths, only those certifications issued by the state office will be accepted by the DOS. They will not accept a certification issued by any county vital statistics office. When a client presents to the county office and the registrar determines that an apostile or exemplified copy is what is needed, the registrar must refer the client to the state office.

In previous articles on this subject, we mentioned that the state issued certified copy could be taken to a regional DOS office for processing. DOS no longer offers this as an option. All certifications of birth and death records must be processed through the State Office of Vital Statistics in Jacksonville, whose address is listed below:

Office of Vital Statistics  
Certification Unit  
P.O. Box 210  
Jacksonville, Florida 32202-0042

Inquiries regarding notarial certificate (exemplified) or an apostile should be directed to:  
Patricia Hasan (904) 359-6900, ext. 1024.

## QUALITY OF COMPUTER GENERATED DEATH CERTIFICATE FORMS

Funeral homes that utilize an approved computer software program to generate death certificates must maintain the quality standards set by the state office. Noncompliance with our standards may result in death certificates being unacceptable for filing, causing an unnecessary hardship on the families you serve. Remember the following items when generating death certificates on approved software programs:

- Paper must be a minimum of 24 lb., 25% rag
- Instructions on reverse of death certificate must be printed
- Instructions from reverse of death certificate must not bleed through to front
- Ink must be permanent black ink
- Three 1/4 inch diameter holes must be punched — 1/4 inch from left edge of paper and 4 1/4 inches center to center measure between holes

If you have any questions, contact your approved software vendor. Those vendors are: LastWrites by Florida GraphTech, The Director's Assistant by Continental Computers, FM Solutions, Mortware by Belmar & Associates and Stewart Enterprises, Inc.

## CHIEF DEPUTY REGISTRAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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plish the intended purpose. They are great tools for tracking each sheet of security paper, making it evident immediately if any sheets are missing.

Several times during the Orlando meeting, folks from the state office thanked the CDRAC members for assisting with the review of the COM and piloting the new transmittal procedure. We didn't get a chance to say how much we appreciate the opportunity to be able to participate and how important and beneficial we think it is to have input from the local level. CDRAC members represent all registrars statewide and rest assured that we speak on your behalf. If we think it won't work, we say it won't work. It may not change anything, but we say it and they actually listen. Our opinions are not only solicited, but taken into consideration when major changes are made. We want to thank Meade, Ken, Jim, our QA Reps, and all the rest of the state office staff for giving us the chance to be heard.



## LISTING FATHER WHEN MOTHER IS WIDOWED

As a reminder to those preparing birth records, when a mother delivers a child and states her marital status is "widowed," her deceased husband may be listed on the birth record as the father of the child. The person interviewing the mother should ask the husband's date of death and if it was after conception, the information on the deceased husband can be listed.

Item 31, "Is mother married?" should indicate "No" and a notation made on the back of the record stating the mother is widowed.

Questions regarding the completion of the items on the birth record should be directed to the chief deputy registrar or to Paula Mundy, Birth Registration; (904) 359-6900 ext. 1005 or SC 826-6900 ext. 1005.



## WELCOME ABOARD

The following appointments have been made to the position of Registrar:

### Local Registrar:

Laurey S. Gauch.....Putnam County  
Alfred E. Adams, MD, MPH .....Volusia County

### Chief Deputy Registrar:

Ernesto G. Rubio .....Indian River County



**GREETINGS FROM THE STATE REGISTRAR**

It seems that every year I begin this message with the fact that the year has been a busy one for vital statistics. In order not to break with that tradition, I reiterate, it certainly has been a busy year!

We have seen the development and implementation of the Chief Deputy Registrar Operations Manual (COM), a major accomplishment! This procedural manual is a vital tool for local vital statistics offices and the state office in providing guidance in vital records registration and affords a standard of uniformity throughout Florida. It has already been tagged with the label, "the CDRs bible." In September, Vital Statistics held the first statewide meeting of all chief deputy registrars since 1999. The state office moved into renovated quarters early in 2002, providing much improved environs for an appreciative staff. Monthly conference calls with the counties continue to offer a forum for discussion and information between the counties and the state office. The Chief Deputy Registrar Advisory Committee also provided its insight and expertise in advising the state office in many areas over the past year. We appreciate their time and their talents. The office continues to pursue an electronic registration system through its partnership with National Association for Public Health Statistics & Information Systems (NAPHSIS) as well as looking at upgrades to the existing system.

None of the above named activities could have been accomplished without the efforts of staff at the state office and also the efforts of all the hardworking folks in the county offices and their partners in the field, such as hospital staff, midwives, funeral directors, physicians, and medical examiners. Vital statistics offices at the county and state level are oftentimes the only contact people have with the Department of Health. It is through your dedication and steadfastness that Florida continues to offer its citizens the highest level of service possible.

So you can see it truly has been a jam-packed year! As State Registrar, I thank all of you for your contributions in making Florida's vital records registration system a success. We wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Prosperous New Year!

*C. Meade Grigg,*  
State Registrar



**CDRAC AT WORK**

Seated: Luz Perez, Hillsborough; Janie Carpenter, Escambia; Sherri McDonald, Sarasota; standing: Kaki Burmester, Pinellas; Maurice Darden, Miami-Dade; Willie Dean Mayo, Columbia; Pat Cellini, Flagler; Doris Owens, Broward

**BROCHURES AVAILABLE IN SPANISH**

In an effort to assist Spanish speaking families in Florida, the three informational vital statistics brochures are now available in Spanish. The names, form numbers and stock numbers are the same as the English version and are listed below:

- What You Need to Know... — DH 150-698, #5730-698-0150-7
- Commemorative Birth — DH 150-699, #5730-699-0150-1
- Commemorative Marriage — DH 150-700, #5730-700-0150-1

These brochures may be ordered from the warehouse, as usual. For questions regarding ordering of forms, contact Dave Sanford at (904)359-6900 ext. 1060 or SC 826-6900 ext. 1060.

**STATISTICAL TABLES HAVE MOVED**

The Vital News no longer publishes statistical tables. The tables can now be found on the department's website at the following address:

[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning\\_eval/Vital\\_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning_eval/Vital_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm)

**BITS 'N PIECES**

- As outlined in the COM and reviewed at the Orlando meeting, the standardized **Audit Control Number Logs** should be implemented at all CHD vital statistics offices. All other logs (Shipment Receipt Log and Transfer of Paper Log) should be fully implemented by January 1, 2003.
- When attaching the **Transmittal, DH 758**, to your shipment of records, please remember to use *plain white paper*. Do **not** copy the form onto colored paper. Reserve the colored paper for the cover sheet for permanent records replacing temporary ones.
- CDRs using **certified mail** to send records to the state office should attach the green card to the envelope properly. The green card cannot be used as a mailing label since it is removed and sent back to you for confirmation. Use a separate mailing label for your shipment and attach the green certified mail card to the *back* of the envelope.

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32231-0042  
P. O. BOX 210  
OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS, QUALITY ASSURANCE UNIT  
PLEASE MAIL CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO:

New Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address as shown on current newsletter: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE ALL INFORMATION

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM



Department of Health  
Office of Vital Statistics  
Quality Assurance Unit (HPEVSRR)  
P.O. Box 210  
Jacksonville, FL 32231-0042

PRESORT STANDARD  
AUTO  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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PERMIT NO. 4611