



# MLGMA

<http://www.mlgma.org>

## **MICHIGAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 1487, Ann Arbor, MI 48106  
Phone 734/662-3246 • Fax 734/662-8083

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# The Manager

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Affiliated with the Michigan Municipal League

September 2003

## Whet Your Appetite: Winter Institute Offers Great Programs, Chicken Dinner

*by Brian Murphy, Beverly Hills City Manager; Chair, 2004 Winter Institute Planning Committee*

**K**nowing we needed to find a better chicken dinner, the City of Frankenmuth has agreed to host the 2004 Winter Institute. The conference runs from January 28, 2004 through January 30, 2004, with an ICMA pre-conference workshop on January 27th.

Besides a better meal, you will be well impressed with the knowledge, skills and ideas that have come together for this year's event. The committee has assembled a wide palate of topics and issues that address a wide range of Core Competencies.

Whether you serve a large county or are from a small village, are a seasoned veteran or a rookie, or find yourself somewhere in between, you will find a tract and a session that works for you.

To whet your appetite with some program highlights:

- Lew Bender will kick off the conference with a General Session titled *Managing Generational Differences*. Lew highlights attitude and behavioral differences between generations in a surprising way, and gives us some suggestions on how to handle those differences.

- Thursday's General Session addresses what local communities are doing in addressing Headlee and Proposal A limitations.
- Martha Perego, from ICMA, returns on Friday for what will be an engaging ethics session.

The Committee has done a fine job to maintain the formula that has worked well for so many years, and injected some new ideas and thoughts that add value to what is the state's premiere educational opportunity for local managers and assistants. You'll have to show up in January to see what else they have in store....

The Committee members include: **Fred Geuder**, Harbor Springs; **Charlie Graham**, Frankenmuth; **Tori Kelly**, Standish; **Ed Koryzno**, Ypsilanti; **Pauline Luben**, Hudsonville; **Pat McGinnis**, Grand Haven; **David Murphy**, Caro; **Clay Pearson**, Novi; **Jakkie Sidje**, Goodrich; and **Bill Stewart**, Coldwater. I can't thank them enough for their hard work and attention, and I think you will be delighted with their efforts.

So, please, write the dates into your calendar with a big, black Sharpie (apologies to Terrell Owens). In the meantime, we'll put the finishing touches on this year's event, and tell you more about it this fall.

# President's Message

by Kathie Grinzinger, Mount Pleasant  
Assistant City Manager

We're a bit too late for the regular six-month performance review and a little too early for closing remarks, but your Executive Board has much of which to be proud.

We shared with you the critical concerns that drove our goals and the budget for 2003 at Ypsilanti's Winter Institute and in previous editions of *The Manager*. It is important to keep you updated on our progress, but it is impossible in the space available to list all that has been accomplished. We will continue to report back to you and welcome your comments and concerns.

## Goals Report

### 1. Public Education

MLGMA has taken a "point position" in the effort to educate the greater community on the value of professionally-run local governments. Many of you received a letter from the Community Education Committee announcing the release of the new Michigan Civics Institute curriculum on local government. Now is time for each of us to make good on our promises, and become involved in delivering the message in our own communities.

Several communities looking to move to professional management have used MLGMA members to assist in educating their residents. A task force has been formed to help prepare a "talking points" agenda and collect the resources available (including our redesigned Website) for those campaigns.

### 2. Promote the Profession

The Awards Committee is rewriting its mission to provide new methods of publicly applauding the successes of managers. Some of their new programs will be rolled out soon.

The Executive Board is working with the Grand Rapids Area Convention and Visitors Bureau to investigate bringing an ICMA Regional Best Practices Conference to Michigan.

The institute planning committees are working with Professional Develop-

# MLGMA News

## Community Education Committee—What's Next?

by Mike Young, Rockford City Manager,  
Community Education Committee Chair

As everyone knows, the local government curriculum was completed this spring and is available at <http://www.civicsinstitute.com>. By now, you should have received a letter encouraging you to work cooperatively with your local school district to pilot this program.

Representatives from the Civics Institute are available to provide a half-day in-service for your local school district at a cost of \$300. In tight budget times, some of our members have offered to split the cost of this in-service with the schools to facilitate its adoption. It will be critical to work as an association with our local school districts to implement this curriculum. We have set a goal of 100 school districts to pilot this program during the 2003-04 school year. Currently, nearly 40 districts are on board.

With this important project essentially completed, the Committee is focusing on other goals established by the Board of Directors. We currently are partnering with Michigan universities that have a strong MPA program to enhance internship opportunities.

In order for this to be successful, we will need to encourage our members

ment to make credentialing easy and accessible to as many members as possible. Marketing and target training have been intensified at the summer and winter training venues to tie both opportunities to our stated goals.

### 3. Increase and Retain Membership

We continue to aggressively recruit and retain members. A number of committees and regional groups are joining forces to bring new recruits to our institutes. Membership Services has joined with Community Education to target public administration students, and Small Communities is recruiting

to provide internship opportunities so university students can be placed within our communities.

We are developing a "quick reference guide to internships" in order to assist our members in structuring a meaningful internship for both the student and the community. In addition, we will hold a session at the Winter Institute with MPA directors and/or internship coordinators to explore opportunities for our partnership. The managers of the future are currently learning about public administration/local government and all of its intricacies; we must be part of this process.

The committee has also been given the task of assembling a library of all the local government material available, particularly on the council-manager plan. There are a growing number of communities interested in pursuing this form of government and, unfortunately, a number of communities considering a change from the council-manager plan.

Look for exciting things to come from the Community Education Committee next year. We welcome any input members might have about our mission and the overall goal of educating our residents on the important role that government plays in their daily lives.

managers in rural areas. Finally, the Executive Board is reviewing the expenditure currently granted to U of M's Bromage Fellowship to determine whether those funds should be tied more directly to future local government managers. We hope for a final recommendation near year-end.

### Other Board Activities

The Board has taken on added responsibilities of its own. They agreed to meet twice as often as in past years; each member serves as a liaison to a committee and a regional group to assure communication

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## Ethics Committee News

by Kurt Kimball, Grand Rapids City Manager;  
Ethics Committee Chair

Your Ethics Committee (**Roger Fraser**, Ann Arbor CM; **Richard Lewis**, Traverse City CM; **Tom Markus**, Birmingham CM; **Spencer Nebel**, Sault Ste. Marie CM; **John Szerlag**, Troy CM; and Chair **Kurt Kimball**, Grand Rapids CM) has had no need to meet so far this year. No such activity is *good news!*

However, that is not to say that no ethics questions are being raised by the membership. This would be *bad news!* In fact, six ethics questions were forwarded to the Chair for closer scrutiny.

In some of those cases, it was a member seeking counsel on a particular matter involving themselves. The fact that our members think to seek counsel on ethics issues is also *good news!*

Three of the questions involved appropriate activity in assisting with city manager executive searches. One involved accepting an appointed office in one community while continuing to serve as a local government professional in another community. In one case, general ethics perspective was sought. In the final case (review still underway), alleged disparagement by one member of another member was brought to the Chair's attention for a check on how this activity squares with the Code of Ethics.

In all cases, there was follow-up. In most cases, the Chair conferred with Martha Perego, Ethics Advisor for ICMA. Members should be aware that if a MLGMA member who is accused of an ethics violation is also a member of ICMA, it is ICMA that is obliged to follow up with the investigation, not our MLGMA Ethics Committee.

Please feel free to contact me with any ethics questions you may have. Better to ask for counsel if in doubt than to suffer the consequences of a poor decision later. As the lyrics of a James Taylor tune go "That's why I'm (we're) here!"

## Professional Development Committee Update

by Randy Altimus, Eastpointe Assistant City Manager; Professional Development Committee Chair

The PDC's focus this year is on investigating the general consensus of the membership to see if the scholarship program needs to evolve in a different direction. The interest in this program has been minimal and the PDC has determined it is time to find out why.

Is it because we do a poor marketing job? Is the time commitment a problem? Is it cost? Or is it all the above? The PDC needs your input, so we are mailing a simple survey to get feedback from all of you. Please watch for the survey, fill it out and return it.

The PDC would also like to announce that they approved funding for **Daryl Delabbio**, Kent County Administrator, to attend the Virginia Senior Executive Institute (SEI). Along that line, the PDC hopes to work with the Summer and Winter Conference Committees to set aside a session for those managers and assistants who have attended these Institutes to tell us first-hand how the Institutes can benefit us.

Last, the PDC has been monitoring and assisting members going through the ICMA Credentialing Program. The ICMA provides the PDC with information on how Michigan Managers who have been going through the program compare to the rest of the country. We hope this information can be used by the conference committees to tailor programs toward the core competencies where Michigan managers need improvement.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel to contact me at (586) 445-5018, or email me at [raltimus@eastpointecity.org](mailto:raltimus@eastpointecity.org).

## Public Policy Committee Submits Report

by Eric Delong, Grand Rapids Deputy City Manager; Public Policy Committee Chair

The Public Policy Committee of the MLGMA has been monitoring the work of the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council with interest.

Our Association has been at work in this area for a decade and was a key part of the funding and oversight group that enabled the "Michigan MetroPatterns" study to be completed and released early this spring.

Members of the Public Policy Committee appeared before the Michigan Land Use Leadership Council and submitted written recommendations in the areas of Partnerships, Schools, Septage and Commerce Centers. The complete text of the written recommendations can be accessed on the MLGMA website. A link to the Michigan MetroPatterns study is provided as well.

The Michigan Land Use Leadership Council issued its final report on August 15. The Public Policy Committee will now focus on our role in prioritizing and moving implementation of their recommendations.

## 2004 Summer Workshop

by Jeff Mueller, Lathrup Village Assistant Administrator; 2004 Summer Workshop Chair

The 2004 Summer Workshop Planning Committee is in the preliminary planning stage. Thus far, all that is known is that the workshop will be held at the Double JJ Ranch in Rothbury. Watch for more information in the Fall!

### DEADLINE

MLGMA members are encouraged to submit articles for publication in *The Manager*. Please submit all copy for the December 2003 issue to the editor, Sue Lee, [[leeford598@aol.com](mailto:leeford598@aol.com)] by Monday, November 3, 2003.

