

# MLGMA

www.mlgma.org

## MICHIGAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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# The Manager

The official newsletter of the Michigan Local Government Management Association

Affiliated with the Michigan Municipal League

Summer 2011

## Note from the President

Steve Brock, City Manager, Farmington Hills, MI

**T**he more I see, the less I know--the more you find out as you go (U2, who just rocked East Lansing a few weeks ago), and ain't it the truth.

Just when you think you've got it all figured out, a big curve ball comes your way. So it is in our profession. That's probably why we like it so much. Never a dull moment! Leadership is dealing with all that comes along while still keeping on track.

Speaking of leadership, three former presidents of our association are departing at varying degrees. Randy Byrne has retired after 35 years in the profession, most of it with Grand Blanc. Well done, Sir! Ted Staton is going "back to Ohio" (Pretenders) after a nice run in E.L. And Mark Wollenweber (retired) is about done with fill-in duties for fashionable Ferndale and will become a Range Rider. "Happy trails to you...until we meet again" (Roy Rodgers).

The Summer Workshop in St. Joseph (7/2—7/29) is shaping up to be "Simply the BEST" (Tina Turner), so please try to work it into your schedule and budget. It is a great program, and fun too.

And, drumroll please, Governor Snyder will join us at the Summer Workshop. That is no small feat, and many thanks to those involved in securing this opportunity.

On a national level, ICMA is full out on the "Life, Well Run" campaign. Your MLGMA Board has voted to match your contribution to the campaign dollar-for-dollar up to \$100. If we all do it, then we will meet our goal and be able to hold our heads high at the Conference in Milwaukee (9/18—9/21) where the campaign will be a focus. I already have online through the ICMA. There will be pledge forms available soon, or you can go directly to ICMA's website. If you pledge online, please let Colleen Layton know so that we can make the match. I encourage you to "give a little bit" (Super-tramp) to help ICMA help all of us in running our communities.

I look forward to seeing you in short order in lovely St. Joe on beautiful Lake Michigan. I'll be the one with "my toes in the water, ass in the sand, not a worry in the world, a cold beer in my hand..." (Zac Brown Band) God bless and keep the faith.

# ICMA Campaigns for a “Life, Well Run”

*Your support will help raise awareness of the importance of good city managers*

Would you be surprised to learn that the vast majority of people don't know what city manager's do?

Enter the ICMA's "Life, Well Run" Campaign, "an integrated, national effort to define the role of professional local government managers, raise awareness about how professional managers improve the quality of life in our communities, and attract talented young people to careers in professional local government management," according to the newly launched campaign's website;

[http://icma.org/en/icma/priorities/life\\_well\\_run](http://icma.org/en/icma/priorities/life_well_run)



Watch a video promoting the value of good city managers on Youtube. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=7CkgvIAaNR4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=7CkgvIAaNR4)



Watch an interview on ICMA tv filmed at the ICMA Conference in 2010. President David Childs, past president Darnell Earley, and Executive Director Bob O'Neill speak about the campaign. [http://icmatv.com/news/icma\\_leadership\\_fund\\_for\\_professional\\_management/](http://icmatv.com/news/icma_leadership_fund_for_professional_management/)

The campaign includes the formation of a speakers bureau, events, a viral video and the website, media sponsorships and advertising, and it is forming partnerships with entities like corporations, chambers of commerce, and civil groups.

"Life, Well Run" is projected to cost \$5 million, and ICMA is working to raise \$1 million of that from members and affiliates. Its success relies on support from the people who understand the importance of the campaign's message and who will in turn benefit from the effort.

Your own association, MLGMA's board, has committed to matching your donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$100. Pledge forms will be available soon, or pledge online. Let Colleen Layton know how much you pledged and MLGMA will make the match. Email her at [clayton@mml.org](mailto:clayton@mml.org)

Saginaw City Manager Darnell Earley is the previous past president of the ICMA, and he thinks "Life, Well Run" is "one of the most significant efforts that ICMA has made regarding supporting local government management."

"The value of having a professional manager run our city is like the value of having a professional dentist do dental work for you or a professional accountant do your tax form. City governments are multi-million dollar public corporations, and you need trained and capable CEOs to run those corporations. The need for people to understand that value is greater than ever before," he says. "People need to understand just how vital the services of a professional city manager, county manager, village manager, township manager are in these very difficult economic and organizational times for city management."

Find out more about the "Life, Well Run" campaign on the ICMA's website at;

[http://icma.org/en/icma/priorities/life\\_well\\_run](http://icma.org/en/icma/priorities/life_well_run)

## A Case for Outing PA 78

*Are local governments “pitted against themselves” when it comes to police and fire services? Saginaw City Manager **Darnell Earley** thinks so.*

Public Act 78, which called for statewide creation of civil service commissions to oversee the recruitment, hiring, discipline, and firing of police officers and police chiefs and firefighters and fire chiefs in Michigan, “is no longer needed,” Darnell Earley says in an interview with *The Manager* about his position paper calling for its rescission and repeal.

In his professional experience, the “arcane” public act creates more “bureaucratic entanglements” and “conflicts with the labor unions” than solutions. Such entanglements “hinder the possibility of discovery,” especially when municipalities are trying to push “innovative initiatives while also implementing cost savings measures in a challenging economy,” he says.

“The reason why the act was enacted in 1935,” Earley explains, “was that things like a strong city charter, strong city councils, and city manager leadership didn’t really exist uniformly back then, but they do now.”

Civil service commissions consist of three positions of leadership. “The individual selected by the police and/or fire is either a retired or a current police officer or firefighter. Management selects its person, an employee who is generally a member of the community. And then those two people select the third,” he explains.

“What repealing it will do is allow us to decide our issues on a local level without having to involve the electorate, who don’t understand the issues, for the most part, and who become pawns in a game of political chess between the city administration and the police and fire unions,” Earley says.

Earley says PA 78 hinders progress towards implementing innovative initiatives. For example, he does not see enough room for a good regionalized approach to service delivery systems, whether it be consolidation, shared services, or other issues related to promotion, hiring, and firing. He asks, “How would all of that work in a regimented system given the innovation that we would need to construct a combined or regionalized service delivery system. At the very least, it would be problematic because of the problems of Public Act 78.”

Earley begins his paper explaining; “The Governor has mandated that the continuation of shared revenue resources made available to cities and other local units of government will be predicated upon measures implemented by the local units to restructure their operations for greater cost savings.”

“The governor’s mandates on more efficient and effective organizations will run into difficulty for those cities that operate traditional police and fire services and are under the auspices of the Act,” he adds.

According to Earley, in his experience being a professional manager, the act gives an unfair advantage to labor unions, partly because members of the electorate who are also members of these unions have an “incentive to maintain the status quo,” he says. “It just depends on the political nature of the selection as to whether or not you’re going to get someone on there who has an objective to preserve the rights and privileges of employees, and at the same time give management the leeway to make good decisions based on what is in the best interest of the city and its particular police and fire units,” he explains.

“The result of PA 78,” according to Earley, “is that extra layer of involvement for local government employees. If we can manage our own situations, we can handle our own recruitment and selection of promotions. We don’t need the State to be involved in that or tell us how to do it.” If repealed, “local governments are free to adopt whatever ordinances they want. Some may adopt exactly what PA 78 says, but it won’t be by the force of State law. It will be decided locally through a city ordinance,” he says.

Earley’s paper calling for the repeal also includes examples of times when, in his opinion, PA 78 caused problems in Saginaw. He concludes; “In each of these cases, PA 78 has pitted the City of Saginaw against itself as it strives to become more effective and efficient in its ability to manage its financial and human resources toward a better public safety service delivery system.”

Read the paper at [www.MLGMA.org](http://www.MLGMA.org)

# Calendar of Upcoming Events

## SPOTLIGHT:

### Summer Workshop 2011

St. Joseph, MI

July 26–29, 2011

[www.mlgma.org/events/summer11](http://www.mlgma.org/events/summer11)

“This Isn’t Your Father’s Michigan” at this summer’s MLGMA workshop and family-friendly excursion in St. Joseph on beautiful Lake Michigan. What is fun about this conference; on top of informative educational sessions on important issues and topics, participants and their families are invited to join in entertaining activities around town.

This year, educational sessions will cover emergency management, shared services, Michigan’s business climate, economic development, PA 20, PA 4, an update on legislation, and more. You can link to a copy of the “Educational Agenda” online to preview all of the details (subject to change). [www.mlgma.org/events/summer11/educational\\_agenda\\_2011.pdf](http://www.mlgma.org/events/summer11/educational_agenda_2011.pdf)

Family involvement in sessions and workshops is encouraged, so feel free to bring everyone along to learn about pivotal issues of the day.

On top of informative sessions, participants and their families are invited to explore the sights and sounds of the lakeside Michigan community. Take the Southwest Michigan Winery Tour by bus, head to Hidden Pointe to play mini-golf and race go-karts, explore the beach, go fishing, visit the Curious Kids Museum and the Krasl Art Center, go shopping, or do whatever you feel like. Some activities are group excursions that require pre-registration, and others you can do on your own. Preview a copy of the “Activities Agenda” (subject to change) at; [www.mlgma.org/events/summer11/activities\\_agenda\\_2011.pdf](http://www.mlgma.org/events/summer11/activities_agenda_2011.pdf)

### ICMA Annual Conference

Milwaukee, WI

September 18–21, 2011

ICMA’s 2011 Annual Conference will convene thousands of local government managers and their staffs from around the world. Over three days, members and guests will learn about key local government management issues and leading practices, exchange ideas, and network. Find out more online; <http://icma.org/conference2011>

### Michigan Municipal League Annual Convention

Grand Rapids, MI

October 4–7, 2011

The Annual Convention is a premier opportunity to participate in vital discourse and network with government leaders from across Michigan. The nonpartisan organization is invested in discussions about policies and strategies that create a stronger sense of ‘place’ in Michigan communities—a theme that runs through much of what the League sets out to accomplish. Find out more online; [www.mml.org/events/annual\\_convention](http://www.mml.org/events/annual_convention)

#### “Managing the Unthinkable Disaster: 11 Critical Keys to Responding to Your Worst Case Scenario”

July 28, 1 p.m. – 2:30 pm.

#### “Build Great Council Member Relationship”

August 4, 1 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Visit <http://icma.org/en/icma/newsroom/events> for all ICMA events.

### Alliance for Innovation Events

The Alliance for Innovation, a partner of the ICMA, is hosting many workshops around the country and webinars online. “The Alliance for Innovation is an international network of progressive governments and partners committed to transforming local government by accelerating the development and dissemination of innovations,” according to <http://transformgov.org>

### ICMA Webinars

July 21, July 28, and August 4 Online

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has a number of webinars and web conferences scheduled for this summer.

#### “Health Care Reform: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and Regulatory Update”

July 21, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

## April McGrath fills city manager position in Ferndale, leaves spot open in Ypsi

After serving the Ypsilanti community as Assistant City Manager, April McGrath takes over managing Ferndale. The decision to approve her hiring was unanimous when Ferndale City Council voted her in this June. She fills the spot left by former Ferndale City Manager Bob Bruner, who left the post in February to become Birmingham's city manager. In the interim, retired City Manager Mark Wollenweber (Huntington Woods, St. Clair Shores, and Grosse Pointe Woods) held down the fort. She is the first woman ever to serve as Ferndale City Manager. Congratulations on your achievement, April!

## Jeff Lawson becomes County Administrator for Cheboygan as Mike Overton takes over duties in Jackson County

Jeff Lawson brings his experience managing Mackinaw City to his new post as County Administrator for Cheboygan. He fills the spot of Mike Overton, the county's previous administrator. Overton moves his duties over to Jackson County. May the switch be fruitful.

## Welcome New Members!

Robert Anderson, East Jordan  
Chris Crary, Capac  
John Espinoza, Croswell  
David Faber, Sandusky  
Ryan Fellows, New Buffalo  
Mark Heydlauff, Bronson  
Jaynmarie Hubanks, Ferndale  
Richard Huff, Niles  
Thesesa Kolly, Berkley  
Marshall Labadie, West Bloomfield Charter Twsp.  
William Marx, Buchanan  
Dorothea Olson, Crystal Falls  
Matthew Rizzo, Decatur

Christopher Roosen, SEMCOG  
Rebecca Rynbrandt, Wyoming  
Timothy Sadowski, Roscommon  
Robert Sarro, Allegan County  
Amy Sullivan, Franklin  
Kyle Tertzag, Woodhaven  
Jeff Thornton, Negaunee  
Oliver Turner, Almont  
Dale Vandevusse, Bad Axe  
Joseph Valentine, Birmingham  
Christian Wuerth, Birmingham  
Patrick J. Yoder, Three Oaks  
Jeff Zittel, Zilwaukee

*Not yet a member?* Take a gander at MLGMA's membership registration form online; [www.mlgma.org/pdf/2011-application-form.pdf](http://www.mlgma.org/pdf/2011-application-form.pdf) or email [membership@mlgma.org](mailto:membership@mlgma.org)

## Any Suggestions?

*Do you have an idea for an article you would like to see in The Manager newsletter?*

*Do you know of an upcoming event?*

*Would you like to comment on something you read?*

Email ideas to MLGMA President Steve Brock at [SBrock@fhgov.com](mailto:SBrock@fhgov.com)

**The Michigan Local Government Management Association** is the professional association for local government managers from municipalities, counties, and townships throughout the state of Michigan. The non-profit organization is the Michigan section of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and members follow ICMA's code of ethics. MLGMA is affiliated with the Michigan Municipal League. *The Manager* newsletter is edited for MLGMA by **Jennifer Eberbach**, a contract writer and journalist in Ann Arbor, MI. [jennifereberbach@gmail.com](mailto:jennifereberbach@gmail.com)