

GRA Newsletter

A Quarterly Publication of the Georgia Records Association



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GRA Fall Conference

David Singley

Make plans now to attend the Georgia Records Association fall conference scheduled for November 29th through December 2nd, 2005 at beautiful Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Georgia. This is another opportunity to participate in the *Records Management Professional Certificate Program* sponsored by GRA, the University of Georgia, and in cooperation with the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association.

The fall conference will feature Don Schewe, CRM, FAI, leading the instruction for *Active Records Management and Imaging and Electronic Records*

Management. Both required courses of the certificate program. Don, recently elected president of the Atlanta chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA), is a popular speaker throughout the country and GRA is honored to have him serve as an instructor at each conference.

Participants of the fall conference will also have an opportunity to attend a session entitled *Disaster Planning and Preparedness* presented by Christine Wiseman of the Georgia Archives. This session is designed to help records custodians develop an emergency preparedness plan to minimize damage



The holiday lights at Callaway Gardens, site of the GRA Fall Conference, November 29th through December 2nd

in the event of a disaster. These courses are but a few of the highly informative and practical sessions offered at this conference.

For more information regarding the fall conference or the certificate program, contact Judy Wilson at 706-542-9525 or Wilson@cviog.uga.edu.

From the President

Debbie Harrington

First, let me introduce myself. My name is Debbie Harrington and I'll be serving as GRA President until May 2006. I have been the Records Manager for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for five years. DCA is a state agency that administers community development grants, home loans, rental assistance, community planning, and environmental management programs. Needless to say, we generate a ton of records!

It is such an honor to be asked to serve as President for this organization. I can honestly say that for everything you put

into GRA, you get much more back. The workshops, conferences, and, most especially, the people really helped me to learn and grow when I first started at DCA (and that learning continues to this day). My fellow officers, board members and committee members are hard working, dedicated and a lot of fun! And I only hope that I can live up to the high standards set by former GRA President, Marilyn Ellison.

The next big event on the GRA calendar is the Fall Conference. The Conference will be held at Callaway Gardens November 29th through December

2nd. That means that the holiday lights will be up! Of course, some required Certificate Program courses will be offered, along with electives that will include disaster preparedness and budgeting. More details will be forthcoming as we get closer to the date. This is a conference you won't want to miss!

I look forward to meeting you all at the Conferences this year. If you have suggestions or questions about GRA, the conferences, or records management in general, feel free to call me (my contact information is on the front page of this newsletter). I'd love to hear from you.

Inside this issue:

Events Calendar	2
Membership	2
Spring Conference Photos	3
The More Things Change: Records Management in the 21st Century	4
The Cheese Experience	5

Go to www.sos.state.ga.us/archives to check out the latest Georgia Archives updates to the state agency, county and municipal common retention schedules

Records Management Events Calendar

To add records management events to the calendar, submit them to the editors at dharring@dca.state.ga.us

September

1	Deadline for CRM Exam Supplemental Application	www.icrm.org
1	Application Deadline for HRP Grant	www.sos.state.ga.us/archives
18-21	ARMA International Annual Conference and Expo Chicago, IL	www.arma.org

October

1-9	Georgia Archives Week	www.soga.org/aw/gaw.html
3-7	GHRAB Award Winners Announced	www.sos.state.ga.us/archives

November

2	SGA Pre-Conference Workshop Augusta, GA	www.soga.org
2-5	SGA Annual Conference Augusta, GA	www.soga.org
3-4	CRM Exam	www.icrm.org
29-12/2	GRA Fall Conference Callaway Gardens Resort, Pine Mountain, GA	www.georgiarecords.org

April 2006

25-28	GRA Spring Conference St. Simons Island, GA	www.georgiarecords.org
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June 2006

1	2006 Outstanding Archives Award Program Deadline for Submission	www.sos.state.ga.us/archives
11-14	SLA Annual Conference Baltimore, MD	www.sla.org

Celebrate Georgia Archives Week, October 1st–9th
go to www.soga.org/aw/gaw.html for more information

Membership

David Singley

Membership in the Georgia Records Association entitles you to access to the Association website for up-to-date information on conferences and workshops throughout the state, regularly published newsletters and bulletins, and other pertinent information.

As a member of the Georgia Records Association, you also will be eligible to participate in the newly developed certificate program for Records and Information Managers sponsored by GRA and the University of Georgia and in cooperation with the Association County Commis-

sioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association.

Membership in the Association is only \$20 per year on an annual basis from January 1 through December 31st. To become a member, simply visit the *Membership Info* page on the GRA website at www.

GeorgiaRecords.org.

For more information or questions regarding membership contact Judy Weaver, Records Manager for the City of Gainesville Police Department, at JWeaver@Gainesville.org or 770-297-5406.

Photos from the GRA Spring Conference in May



Judy Wilson mans the registration desk



Andy Taylor from the Georgia Archives lectures on Open Records



A Full House



Don Schewe teaches Electronic Records Management



Fun at the Banquet



Outgoing GRA President Marilyn Ellison

The More Things Change: Records Management in the 21st Century

Frank English

Reprinted from *Commonwealth Records Manager*, Summer 2004, vol. 8, no. 2

As this writer gets ready to retire, he looks back at the last twenty years of records management with nostalgia. One fond memory is of the claim in the mid 80's that "In ten years, there will no longer be any paper records". Those ten years have long since passed and we still have paper records. One very progressive state agency even went to a paperless system for its prime function, but after a few years, they started keeping paper again. Although their system was set up to never create paper, human nature took over and human beings wanted and did create paper for their own use.

Paper records give us something that no electronic record can ever give, a tactile response; you can touch and feel paper records. Physical items have a feel to them, are more "real" than any electronic record. I've met some researchers who are much too fond of paper; they seem to caress and fondle each and every page. The same applies to other forms of electronic communication. MP3 may be great right now, but I can't imagine anyone cherishing an MP3 file like my wife cherishes her Elvis Solid Gold album with the gold colored platter. Sure we never play it, but it means something more to her than just the information (music) stored on it.

Twenty years ago, every records manager had to deal with six basic problems: 1. Most managers were reluctant to ever destroy any record; they were seen as too valuable to ever be destroyed; 2. In the quest for "efficiency", other managers destroyed records much too soon; 3. It was difficult to find and retrieve some records; 4. Many valuable and historical records disappeared forever through neglect, omission or commission; 5. We continually ran out of room to store records; 6. Higher management didn't have the time or the will

to deal with records management problems.

Twenty years ago, the federal government (EPA, OSHA, EEOC, etc) had regulations that had minor effects on records keeping and records retention. Newer regulations are more comprehensive and more intrusive on everyday practices. Federal reporting requirements have become burdensome to some agencies. Count yourself among the lucky if you don't have to know what FERPA or HIPAA stand for (student and medical records). New federal and state mandates have created or complicated record-keeping problems.

Twenty years ago, control of anything of a technological nature was highly centralized (data processing and microfilming, for example). These processes were too intricate for most employees to understand. Manufacturers and vendors have done a good job of making technology user friendly. Twenty years ago, the only computer in a large office was probably a dedicated accounting application or a dedicated word processor, available for senior management's tasks. Now most employees have a computer on their desk or at least available and you can use the computer without knowledge of Basic, Fortran or Cobol. We have decentralized computer operations, although that trend may be reversing. Now we have a whole new batch of electronic recordkeeping problems.

Twenty years ago, we only had a paper in-box. Daily, we would go through our incoming paper mail and make choices on what to do with each item. Is it a public record? Do I have to respond? Should I save it? Should I file it? Can I throw it away? We have a new type of in-box now; an e-mail in-box. We still have to make the same choices for each incoming item but we are reluctant to do it. That's a new recordkeeping

problem.

Twenty years ago, lectures and presentations were presented with flip charts, posters, slides, chalkboards and sundry other tools. Everyone did it differently, some better than others, but that made it interesting. Sometimes the highlight of a lecture was the collapse of an easel. When PowerPoint and its competitors came out, it was new and different. But now everyone uses PowerPoint and it's becoming stale. Are PowerPoint presentations public records? It's another new record-keeping problem.

Computers, automation and technology are great timesavers, and they do simplify the problems of records managers, or do they? Let's look at that and itemize the problems: 1. Computers make it easy to store a large volume of material. Many electronic records don't get destroyed when they should and unaccounted for copies of records may exist in cyberspace; 2. It is very easy to accidentally or deliberately delete and destroy electronic records, so some records are destroyed well before their time. Current database and spreadsheet practices continually remove old, possibly important information; 3. It is extremely difficult to locate someone else's files on a computer or even your own electronic files, over time; 4. Many valuable records stored on tapes or disks have been lost through maintenance failures, failures to migrate, accidental deletions or malicious destructions; 5. We continually must budget for more and more on-line and/or off-line storage. No storage device will ever be big enough because programs and files will continually expand to fill the void; 6. Higher management will always have more important problems than records management.

The more things change, the more they stay the same!

"MP3 may be great right now, but I can't imagine anyone cherishing an MP3 file like my wife cherishes her Elvis Solid Gold album with the gold colored platter. Sure we never play it, but it means something more to her than just the information (music) stored on it."



The Georgia Records Association (GRA) is a professional organization dedicated to establishing responsible Records Management practices throughout local and state government in Georgia. The Association is committed to providing professional development through continued education and networking, while serving as a source of information and support to all local and state government organizations.

The Cheese Experience

Penny Cliff

"The Cheese Experience" presented by Jerry Kelly from Gwinnett County's Human Resources Training Center was a huge hit at the GRA Spring Conference. Taken from Dr. Spencer Johnson's book, *Who Moved my Cheese?*, the big cheese Kelly, through questions, examples, and activities focused on a mice-sized view of change.

In Dr. Johnson's book, characters represent the people that we all work with and live with everyday, including ourselves. *Who Moved My Cheese?* is a parable that takes place in a maze.

In his book, Dr. Johnson's explains the parable: The four imaginary characters depicted in this story – the mice "Sniff" and "Scurry," and the little people "Hem" and "Haw" – are intended to represent the simple and the complex parts of ourselves regardless of our age, gender, race or nationality. Sometimes we may act like "Sniff" who sniffs out change early, or Scurry who scurries into action, or Hem who denies and resists change as he fears it will lead to something worse, or Haw who learns to adapt in time when he sees change leading to something better! Whatever parts of us we choose

to use, we all share something in common: a need to find our way in the maze and succeed in changing times.

Kelly uses *Who Moved my Cheese?* as the backdrop for his presentation on "The Cheese Experience." It is the tendency to allow "fear" and "change" to travel hand in hand. The speaker led the class through a series of maze exercises to help the group look at change with a new "belief system" to destroy these travel companions with attitudes such as the belief that "I can gain from the change."

In the PowerPoint presentation, "Cheese" was defined at a symbol for whatever is important to you—the way you do your job, relationships with other people, health, peace of mind, etc. "The Maze" is where you look for Cheese in these areas. One of the activities the class participated in after watching a video was considering just which character we felt like we most identified with and going to our corner of the room and discussing with the rest of the class why we felt the way we did. However, our presenter stated that although we may feel that we are predominantly one character, there are parts to all of us relating to Sniff,

Scurry, Hem and Haw.

Some of the most poignant statements in the presentation were "What would you do differently in the way you do your job or live your life if you were completely unafraid?" Then, if this were the case, the consequence being "When you move beyond your fear, you feel free." A review of the presentation makes the following statements: 1) Change happens: They keep moving the cheese; 2) Anticipate change: Get ready for the cheese to move; 3) Monitor change: Smell the cheese so often so you know when it is getting old; 4) Adapt to change quickly: The quicker you let go of old cheese, the sooner you can enjoy new cheese; 5) Change: Move with the cheese; and 6) Be ready to quickly change and enjoy it again and again!: They keep moving the cheese. Jerry Kelly led the class through the maze as one who travels this path, and does it well. For those of us who want to become as adept as this speaker, there are places to investigate online. For more information on this popular topic, videos, books, and training opportunities on this concept can be found online at www.WhoMovedMyCheese.com.

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We're on the Web!
www.georgiarecords.org

Members are encouraged to submit articles, photographs, and other materials of interest by sending them to David Singley at David.Singley@gwinnettcountry.com or to Debbie Harrington at dharrington@dca.state.ga.us

The deadline for submission of items to the Fall edition of the newsletter is September 15, 2005.

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