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# Live Wire

## *A note from the President's pen....*

Dear GRA Members,

I hope this letter finds you really enjoying the cool weather. I don't know about you, but I think it certainly is refreshing after all of the hot days we had this summer. There is nothing like a good fall day to get your heart beating and open your eyes as the crisp air blows a gentle breeze across your face. As I look around, I see some of the leaves starting to turn. The flower beds of my neighborhood are changing from summer flowers like salvia and marigolds to various colors of pansies, winter cabbage and lavender.

With another year just around the corner, I would like to take this time to talk to you about your plans for records and information management training. As always, Georgia Records Association will offer RIM training at our spring conference in May 2012. Our certificate program will also be in full swing at that conference. Additionally, we plan to offer two workshops in FY 2012.

Have you seen the bulletin announcing our workshop to be held on November 2, 2011 at the Mansour Center in Marietta? The price is only \$45 for members and \$75 for non-members. This price includes your breakfast and lunch. The speaker is Randy Kahn, ESQ and if you have never heard him speak you certainly need to plan on being there. I have had the privilege to hear him speak and he is awesome. He is a wealth of knowledge on RIM and the laws that govern it. I have never been disappointed when I attended a presentation done by him.

I also wanted to let you know that we have selected a completely different venue this year for our conference. We are going to the Lanier Charter Career Academy in Gainesville. The GRA board was invited to hold our board meeting there and tour the facility. We accepted the invitation and were very impressed. LCCA trains students studying to become chefs by allowing them to work with professional chefs to learn the trade. There are also students working with teachers in the design and embroidery/printing businesses, some in retail operations and other who are into hotel and conference management. They have a high tech facility that includes video conferencing and a computer lab. Some of the big businesses of Georgia, including Dell, regularly schedule their meetings and conferences there.

LCCA students prepared and served our lunch and it was as professional as you would expect in a fine restaurant. The food was very good. We were so impressed that we decided to have our next GRA conference there. Not only will we have a great conference but we will be giving back to the community as well. We are also planning a dinner cruise on Lake Lanier on a chartered boat that will be reserved exclusively for GRA conference attendees and their guests.

We know that this conference will be one that the membership will be talking about for years to come. We are looking forward to spending time with each of you again and enjoying a new way to bring in the Spring of 2012.

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend both events. It just won't be the same without you.

All the best,  
Linda Johnson, President

### *"Staying Afloat in Turbulent Waters"* **GRA Spring Conference**

May 1 -3, 2012  
Lanier Charter Career Academy



## GRA's purpose is to:

- Provide a forum for the discussion of matters of common concern to records and information professionals in the state;
- Foster and promote a better public, corporate, and governmental understanding of the functions, purposes, and values of effective information management and recordkeeping;
- Offer continuing education of records professions in the state;
- Provide training for those persons in the state who wish to begin or further a records management program with which they are associated;
- Foster better understanding of Georgia statutes and regulations concerning information and records requirements; and
- Promote the cost-effective and efficient use of appropriate information technologies.



## Committees

Want to get involved in your organization? GRA has standing committees and we encourage you to contact the Chairperson for more information on serving on the committee that best fits you.

### Education

Debra Harrington – Chair

### Membership

Donna Kopp—Co-Chair

Rick Parson—Co-Chair

### Nominating

Janet Tarleton– Chair

### Conference

Judy Weaver – Chair

## In the News . . . . .

### *Information Retention Includes More Than Just Email, Symantec Survey Finds*

A new report from Symantec shows that retention policies are still not fully developed within companies, leaving many unprepared to handle increased requests for information.



The report conducted in May and June of this year, surveyed legal representatives and IT professionals within 2,000 companies and sought to uncover information retention's critical issues and the best practices used to address them. What it found wasn't too surprising, but serves to highlight the need for better oversight and process management.

### *Email Requests Decline*

According to the report, email is no longer the most commonly requested records companies must produce. Once first, email now ranks third. Both structured and unstructured information sources outranked email. 67% of respondents said that files and documents were most often requested, while 61% cited database or application data. 58% said email is their most common information request. Requests for access to social media and mobile phone text messages also increased.

### *Retention Policies Save Time, Money*

We can't say it enough: **Companies with the best information retention and e-Discovery practices can respond much faster and with greater success to e-Discovery requests.** Among those surveyed, nearly half of respondents don't have any information retention programs at all. As a result, productivity costs can be huge. On average, respondents said they had to respond to legal, compliance or regulatory requests for electronically stored information 63 times in the past year. To find this information, IT staff needed 66 hours on average, which adds up to be more than 4,000 hours per year or the equivalent of two person-years.

But it's not just about speed, it's about accuracy, which can significantly decrease litigation and instances of sanctions and fines. The report showed that companies were 78% less likely to be sanctioned by the courts and 47% less likely to find themselves in a compromised legal position. They were also 20% less likely to have fines levied against them. In addition, they were 45% less likely to disclose too much information, which could compromise their litigation positions.

Having a plan is just the first step. Implementing it, adhering to it and updating it as rules, regulations and standards evolve ensure that your retention policy can solve the most common information governance problems.

Article Courtesy of Marisa Peacock/CMSWiRE.com

Search for Georgia Records Association on Facebook and become a fan. Post your comments and pictures. This is yet another way to stay informed!



## GRA Members Ask/Answer Retention Questions

Valencia Sanders/City of College Park—What is the retention period for audio recordings of Council meetings? How long should local governments retain audio of Council meetings?

- Patricia White/Clay County Commissioners Office—Recordings are permanent. Also, the tapes should be re-recorded or transferred to another data storage media every 15 years so that the format is current and useable.
- Howard Siggelko/Cobb County School District—If the audio tapes are being used as minutes of the meetings use Minutes and Agendas Official record of agency meetings and the decisions made Permanent O.C.G.A. 36-1-25 Permanent Vital Record—duplicate and store offsite.
- Mark Massey/Fulton County Commissioners Office—In Fulton County, we treat all records, documents, and recordings of the Board of commissioners acts/proceedings as “permanent” records to be maintained in perpetuity.

Terrie Lawrence/Forsyth County 911 Center—If you received an open records request and didn't find anything, would you charge for the record certification stating you found absolutely nothing?

- Rayetta Floyd/Sumter County Board of Commissioners—I would not charge; I would only charge if information was given to the requestor.
- Sheila Corbin/Cherokee County Board of Commissioners—I personally would not charge anything to tell them there are no records found, certifying or not.
- Michael Casey/City of Sandy Springs—As a practice we do not charge for certifying copies of records.
- Lea Elam/Duluth Police Department—We charge the fee up front before the search. The customer is paying for the search, not the results. That way, we are not penalizing those who do have records and rewarding those who don't; we stay neutral.



## GRA Needs a New Logo!

The Georgia Records Association (GRA) is having a “Design the GRA Logo” contest through November 2011. Enter your logo design in the “Design the GRA Logo” before 12:00 p.m. on Monday, November 21, 2011, and you may have a chance to win the grand prize of a \$50 gift certificate. Complete details are on our website <http://www.georgiarecords.org/logocontest.php>.

The information contained in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, the association membership, or Georgia Records Association, and is offered solely as a source of information. Please direct any inquiries or comments to:

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