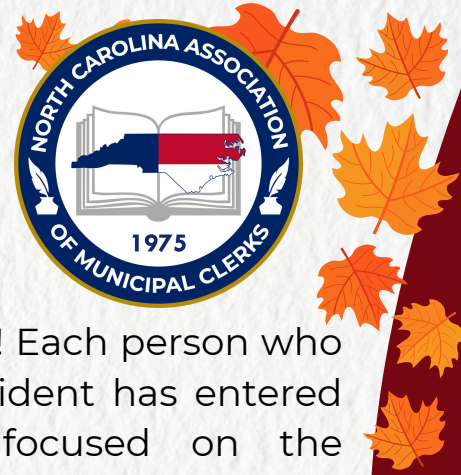




Message from the President



Brenda Blanco
MMC, NCCMC
City of New Bern
NCAMC President



And just like that, the new year is off! Each person who has had the honor to serve as President has entered their term with various goals focused on the betterment of our association. My key objective is to make each of you feel that you have a voice in the direction of the association and for you to know that your input not only matters but is truly desired.

For those who were unable to attend the conference banquet, I share my message from that evening:

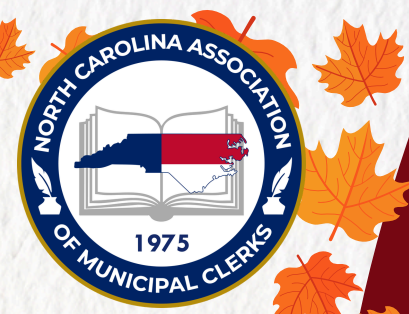
I want to start with an image that guided my thinking as I prepared for this moment: the oyster. Oysters are unassuming. They sit quietly beneath the surface, often overlooked, sometimes underestimated. But inside, through pressure, time, and persistence, they create something extraordinary – a pearl. Not by accident, but through resilience. Through transformation. Through turning challenge into beauty. That is the story of our association. And it is the story of each of us.

There is a Chinese proverb that says, “Pearls don't lie on the seashore; if you want one, you must dive for it.” It reminds us that nothing truly valuable is ever handed to us. Progress requires intention. Growth requires courage. And leadership requires the willingness to dive – into the unknown, into the difficult, into the work that matters.

As we look ahead, our dives may take different forms:

- Diving into new partnerships that strengthen our communities,
- Diving into innovation that keeps our work relevant and impactful,
- Diving into conversations that challenge us to grow, and
- Diving into service that uplifts those who rely on us.

Every dive is an act of commitment. Every dive brings us closer to the pearls we seek.



Message from the President (Continued)

Al-Ghazali wrote, “Those who look for seashells will find seashells; those who open them will find pearls.” This speaks to perspective – how we choose to see our work, our colleagues, our elected officials, and our opportunities. Anyone can skim the surface. Anyone can collect what is easy to reach. But we are called to something deeper.

In our roles, we don’t just gather information – we interpret it. We don’t just follow processes – we improve them. We don’t just serve – we elevate. We open the shells others might overlook, and we find the pearls inside: the potential in our teams, the solutions in our challenges, the possibilities in our future.

But perhaps the most powerful part of the oyster story is this: pearls are created through irritation. Through friction. Through something unexpected entering the shell. And yet, the oyster responds not with retreat, but with creation.

We, too, can turn pressure into purpose. We can turn obstacles into opportunities. We can turn challenges into catalysts. That is what makes us pearls – not perfection, but transformation.

As your president, my commitment is to help create the conditions where each of you can shine:

- A culture where your voice matters,
- A network where your work is valued,
- A community where your growth is supported, and
- A shared mission where your contributions make a difference.

Together, we will continue to build an association that reflects the brilliance of its members, an organization that doesn’t just find pearls but becomes one.

I accept this role with gratitude for the leaders who came before me, respect for the colleagues who stand beside me, and excitement for the future we will shape together.

Let us dive boldly. Let us open shells others might ignore. Let us transform challenges into something extraordinary. And let us remember that within each of us – and within this association – there is a pearl waiting to shine. Don’t take your dreams with you when you leave this world. Take memories instead. The world is your oyster. Dive for the pearls!



2026-2027 Officers & District Directors

Executive Committee

- President Brenda Blanco, MMC, NCCMC, New Bern
- 1st Vice President Betsy Shores, MMC, NCCMC, Davidson
- 2nd Vice President Angie Lord, MMC, NCCMC, Lewisville
- Recording Secretary Barb Rote, MMC, NCCMC, Butner
- Immediate Past President Linda Christopher, MMC, NCCMC, Whispering Pines
- At-Large Member Wesley Barker, CMC, NCCMC, Black Mountain
- At-Large Member Lou Bennett, Nashville
- Secretary/Treasurer Baxter Wells, NCLM

District Directors

Region 1 (Districts 1-3)

- District 1 - Michael O'Dell, NCCMC, Kill Devil Hills
- District 2 - Jayne Beyer, NCCMC, Cedar Point
- District 3 - Beth Usery, MMC, NCCMC, Caswell Beach

Region 2 (Districts 4-6)

- District 4 - Laura Getz, MMC, NCCMC, Goldsboro
- District 5 - Lou Bennett, Nashville
- District 6 - Stella Gibson, MMC, NCCMC, Garner

Region 3 (Districts 7-9)

- District 7 - Jennifer Ayre, MPA, MMC, NCCMC, Fayetteville
- District 8 - Austin W. Yow, MPA, MMC, NCCMC, Marvin
- District 9 - Donna Alwine, MMC, NCCMC, Wallburg

Region 4 (Districts 10-12)

- District 10 - Nicole Harmon, MMC, NCCMC, Boone
- District 11 - Karen Tucker, CMC, NCCMC, Kings Mountain
- District 12 - Wesley Barker, CMC, NCCMC, Black Mountain



New IIMC Certifications*

Certified Municipal Clerks (CMC)

- Jeremy Crawford, Zebulon
- Jessica Green, Washington
- Lauren Hartley, Lenoir
- Rhonda Lee, Four Oaks
- Meredith Mumford, Clayton
- Donna Rhodes, Wilkesboro



Master Municipal Clerks (MMC)

- Daphne A. Ingram, Lincolnton
- Rebecca Murray, Garner

All certifications since the previous newsletter should be included. We apologize if we have missed anyone.

2026-2027 Calendar of Events

2026

- October 12-16 26-27 Clerks' Certification Institute, Session #2
- November 18-20 Master Clerks Academies, Chapel Hill
- December 4 Committee Meetings as scheduled by Chairs
- December 11 Board of Directors Meeting, 11am, Virtual

2027

- February 8-12 26-27 Clerks' Certification Institute, Session #3
- February 10-12 IIMC Region III Conference, Fairhope, AL
- March 5 Committee Meetings as scheduled by Chairs
- March 12 Board of Directors Meeting, 11am, at NCLM, Raleigh
- March/April One-Day Regional Academies, Dates/Locations TBD
- May 4-6 NCLM City Vision Conference, Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem
- May 9-12 IIMC Annual Conference, Fort Worth, TX
- May 10-14 26-27 Clerks' Certification Institute, Session #4
- June 4 Committee Meetings as scheduled by Chairs
- June 11 Board of Directors Meeting, 11am, Virtual
- August TBD 27- 28 Clerks' Certification Institute, Session # 1
- August 15-18 NCAMC Summer Conference, Washington-Duke Inn, Durham

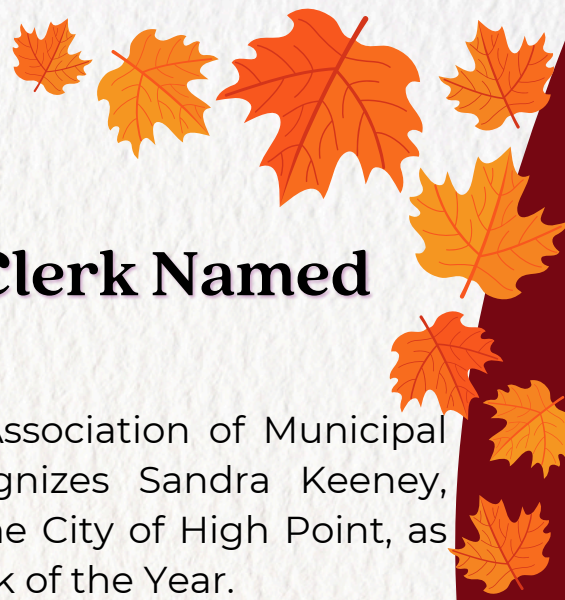
We Need Your Photos!

Do you have any photos from clerk workshops, meetings, or conferences? If you do, we need them! We would like to include more photos to show 'who we are' and 'what we do' in our publications, especially the annual video scrapbook!

Send your pictures to:

ncamcscrapbook@gmail.com





Sandra Keeney, High Point City Clerk Named 2026 NCAMC Clerk of the Year



The North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks proudly recognizes Sandra Keeney, CMC, City Clerk for the City of High Point, as the 2026 NCAMC Clerk of the Year.

Sandra's career in public service spans key roles in both Winston-Salem and High Point, where she served as Deputy City Clerk and City Clerk in both communities. These experiences shaped her deep commitment to the core values of the profession: accuracy, transparency, professionalism, integrity, and preserving local history.

For Sandra, the role of City Clerk extends far beyond managing official records. She considers it a privilege to support the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and municipal staff while helping citizens navigate local government. Her favorite career moments range from seeing Council discussions transform into impactful community projects to simply helping a resident who walks into City Hall unsure where to turn.

Beyond her local work, Sandra has been an active member of NCAMC, benefiting from Athenian Dialogues, professional development, and strong statewide networks. She views the mutual support, mentorship, and lifelong friendships among clerks as the true hallmark of the profession.

In Sandra's Words:

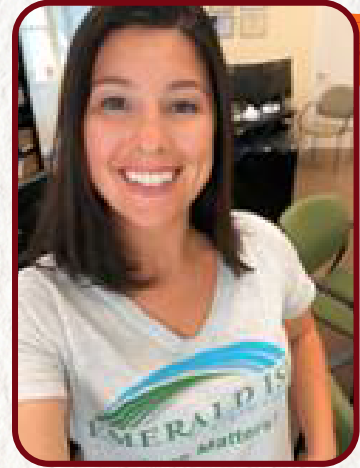
"Receiving this award is incredibly meaningful because it represents a profession and a community of clerks that I truly love. To be recognized by my peers, who understand the responsibilities and heart that go into this work, is both humbling and special. This profession has given me so much more than a career. It has given me the opportunity to serve my community while building relationships and friendships that I will treasure long after my clerk days are over."



2026 NCAMC Scholarship Recipients

Thanks to the 2026 Silent Auction the NCAMC is able to award a scholarships to Clerks or their family member. This years recipients of the College Scholarship and the Clerk Certification Scholarships are both NCAMC members.

Jennifer Welborn, Town Clerk of Beaufort, North Carolina, has been awarded the NCAMC IIMC Certification Course Scholarship. \$700. Jennifer serves as the Community Engagement Director and Deputy Town Clerk for the Town of Beaufort, North Carolina. In her role, she supports community engagement initiatives, special events, communications, parks and recreation efforts, and the Town's boards and committees, while also assisting with municipal clerk responsibilities. Previously, she served as Town Clerk and Human Resources Specialist for the Town of Emerald Isle, North Carolina.



Welborn is a Certified Municipal Clerk through both IIMC and NCAMC, and a SHRM Certified Professional. She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration at the University of North Carolina Wilmington, with a focus on strengthening her leadership and management skills for a continued career in local government.



Michelle Stewart, City Clerk of Mount Holly, North Carolina, has been awarded the NCAMC IIMC Certification Course Scholarship. \$1500. Shelly has been with the City of Mount Holly for about 2 ½ years. Local government has given me a new perspective in my career that I am channeling towards giving back to the community and educating myself to make a beneficial impact. I am working towards my CMC/NCCMC and enjoy any continuing education I can attend. In my spare time I enjoy playing with my 15-month-old daughter and my two german shepherds, getting outdoors, and reading!

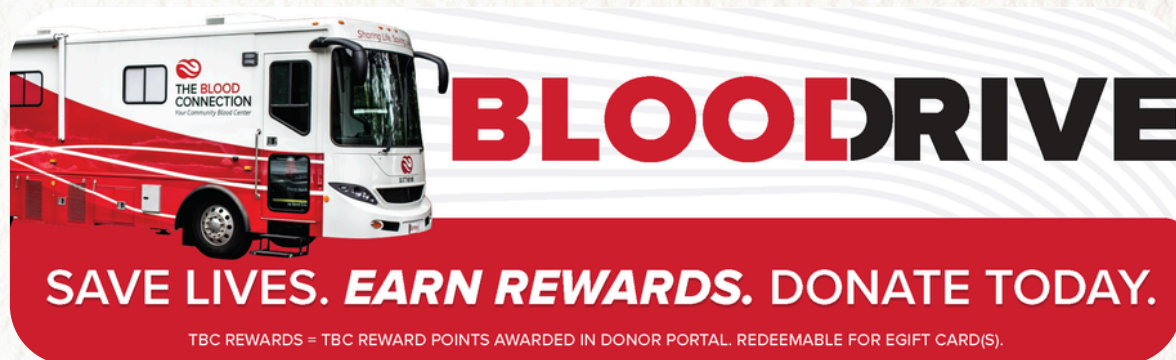


Blood Drive at the November Master Clerk Academies!

NCAMC is partnering with The Blood Connection to host a blood drive during the Master Clerk Academies in Chapel Hill on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, from 9 AM – 2 PM. Each donor will receive \$40 in Donor Rewards. Each donation can save up to 3 lives! **Use Sponsor Code: 12633**

Donors must be at least 16 years old, weigh at least 110lbs, have an ID, and be in general good health. Walk-ins welcome, but appointments are recommended!

- **[Click Here to Book an Appointment or Scan the QR Code!](#)**



NCAMC Summer Conference Blood Drive Results

NCAMC held its 4th blood drive during the 2026 Summer Conference in Wilmington. Thanks to YOU, our goal was met! 41 donors participated, resulting in the collection of 29 pints of blood. This will save 87 lives!



District 4 News

I hope you are all doing well and have had a chance to catch your breath after wrapping up budget season. Hopefully, this time of year brings a slight reprieve for everyone across our cities and towns before the next budget season begins!

As many of you know, I recently experienced the loss of my father. Due to his passing, I haven't had the opportunity to plan our district's next event. However, I am still staying connected and keeping our district members informed of key updates, events, and news as they arise.

As we move into autumn, I want to wish everyone across the association a wonderful fall season filled with quality time with family and friends. Life can change in an instant, so please take every opportunity to tell your loved ones how much they mean to you.

Thank you all for your continued support, understanding, and dedication to our profession.

Laura Getz, MMC, NCCMC
District 4 Director
Goldsboro City Clerk
LGetz@goldsboronc.gov



Collaborating for Success: Cape Fear Region Clerks Gather in Southport

On Thursday, July 23, 2026, Southport City Clerk Tori Deviney and Deputy Clerk Scott Baillargeon hosted 28 Cape Fear region clerks at the Southport Community Center for their quarterly seminar.

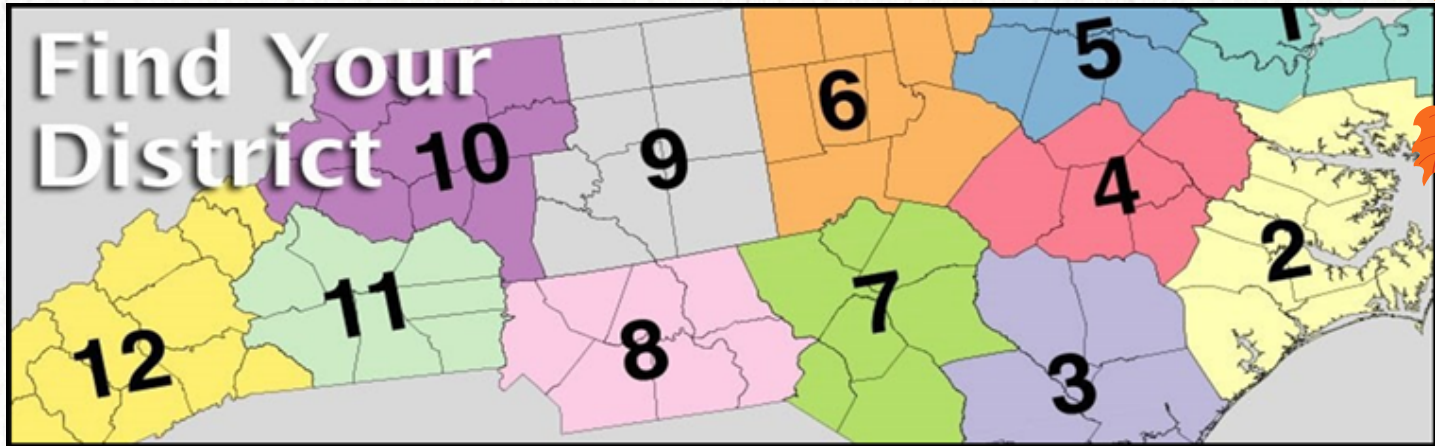
Mayor Joseph P. Hatem and City Manager Noah Saldo kicked off the event with a warm welcome to Southport. Leland Town Clerk Sabrena Reinhardt and Wilmington City Clerk Penny Spicer-Sidbury then led an engaging session on 'How to Best Prepare for Your Board Meetings.'

The meeting featured insightful discussion and active participation, highlighting the strength of regional collaboration among local clerks.



Pictured from left to right: (Photographer) Tori Deviney (Southport), Sabrena Reinhardt (Leland), Alexis Stanfield (North Topsail Beach), Makeba Robinson (CFPUA), RaMonda Crosby (Chadbourn), Sara Eskew (CFPUA), Anita Blizzard (Sandyfield), Kristin Wells (Burgaw), Scott Baillargeon (Southport), April Radford (CFCOG), Judy Lawton (CFPUA), Beth Usery (Caswell Beach), Tracy Sholder (Pender County), Jamie Burns (St. James), Deana Greiner (H2GO), Adam Golonka (Leland), Mary Etta Hewett (Bolivia), Lance Heater (Wrightsville Beach), Jackie Nicholson (Wallace), Casey Hayes (Oak Island), Carla Citarelli (Surf City), Sabra Child (Sandy Creek), Kimberly Riggsbee (Sunset Beach), Donna Pope (CFPUA), Donna Strickland (Northwest), Nancy Livingston (Brunswick), and Doris Ballard (Northwest).





NCAMC is Divided into 12 Districts by County

Region 1 (Districts 1-3)

- **District 1:** Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Martin, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington
- **District 2:** Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Hyde, Jones, Onslow and Pamlico
- **District 3:** Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Duplin, New Hanover, Pender, and Sampson

Region 2 (Districts 4-6)

- **District 4:** Green, Johnston, Lenoir, Pitt, Wayne, and Wilson
- **District 5:** Edgecombe, Franklin, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Warren
- **District 6:** Alamance, Caswell, Chatham, Durham, Granville, Orange, Person, Vance, and Wake

Region 3 (Districts 7-9)

- **District 7:** Cumberland, Harnett, Hoke, Lee, Moore, Robeson, and Scotland
- **District 8:** Anson, Cabarrus, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Richmond, Stanly, and Union
- **District 9:** Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Rowan, and Stokes

Region 4 (Districts 10-12)

- **District 10:** Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Caldwell, Iredell, Surry, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yadkin
- **District 11:** Burke, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, McDowell, and Rutherford
- **District 12:** Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Swain, Transylvania, and Yancey