



54TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE - ANOTHER SUCCESS

On December 10 - 12, 2008, Texas Vital Statistics, with co-sponsor Texas Public Health Association, hosted the 54th Annual Texas Vital Statistics Conference in Austin at the Renaissance Hotel. This professional conference was attended by 466 individuals from across Texas with an additional 133 staff members, speakers, and volunteers. Attendees included local registrars, county and district clerks, justices of the peace, hospital and birthing center staff, midwives, funeral home directors and their staff, and Medical Examiner staff. The theme, *Crossroads: Creative Collaboration in Transitional Times* reflected Vital Statistics' goals of both bringing more partners together in working toward improved vital registration across the state and moving all vital registration partners to electronic submission of records. There were 14 vendors, who were busy sharing, educating, and marketing to attendees the entire conference.

This year the conference moved from a Sunday through Tuesday format to a Wednesday through Friday format. The greatly improved first-day attendance and the comments received indicate appreciation for the change.

The keynote speaker Dr. Donald Patrick, former executive director of the Texas Medical Board, presented an informative, humorous, and inspirational speech. Dr. Yvonne Howze, Section Director of Health Information and Vital Statistics, provided our Awards Luncheon Address and entertained and motivated everyone. The State Registrar Geraldine Harris, the Office of Attorney General, and ImmTrac presented Five Star and numerous special awards. Award winners are listed within this newsletter.

The Conference held 48 breakout sessions, with topics focusing on such issues as: TER, passports and fraud, registration and issuance, delayed records, statutes and rules, document fraud and identity theft, paternity issues and certification sessions, ImmTrac, Together in Texas, Medicaid and perinatal issues, Disaster Planning, news from the Mexican Consulate, HIPAA, Medical Examiner's death certificate dilemmas, funeral home ethics and law, remote access to birth certificates, enrolling in TER, overview of the Master Registrar Certification Course, and a review of the VSU website. Speakers included staff from Field Services and other areas of VSU, as well as presenters from DSHS, other state and federal agencies, funeral home staff, county clerks, medical examiner, the Mexican Consulate, and other vital registration partners.

VSU wishes to thank the Texas Public Health Association for their help making the conference a success. Our speakers are appreciated for their valuable information and education for our attendees. And, many thanks to the numerous volunteers from VSU, without whose help, this conference would not have been possible.

2009 Regional Conferences Are Confirmed!!

June 16th - Lubbock
June 18th - Tyler
June 23rd - Kerrville
July 14th - Corpus Christi

Be watching for the registration form on our website and in the next VS Today newsletter. For additional information, go to www.texasvsu.org. We hope to see you this summer for lots more learning!

2008 TEXAS VITAL STATISTICS FIVE-STAR AWARD WINNERS

EXEMPLARY FIVE-STAR LOCAL REGISTRARS

Abilene-Taylor Co
Public Health District
City of Austin
City of Lewisville
City of San Marcos
City of Victoria

Comal County Clerk
Dawson County Clerk
Donley County Clerk
Grayson County Clerk
Guadalupe County Clerk
Hood County Clerk

Jackson County Clerk
Kerr County Clerk
Van Zandt County Clerk
Waco-McLennan Co
Public Health District
Williamson County Clerk

RECOGNIZED FIVE-STAR LOCAL REGISTRARS

Austin County Clerk
Bell County Clerk
Brazoria County Clerk
Brown County Clerk
City of Amarillo
City of Arlington
City of Baytown
City of Beaumont
City of Bedford
City of Brownsville
City of Carthage
City of Denison
City of Edinburg
City of Fort Worth
City of Harlingen
City of Houston
City of Lubbock
City of McAllen

City of Mission
City of Pasadena
City of North Richland Hills
City of Temple
City of Weslaco
Collin County Clerk
Comanche County Clerk
Cooke County Clerk
Deaf Smith County Clerk
Fort Bend County Clerk
Frio County Clerk
Galveston Co Health District
Gregg County Clerk
Hamilton County Clerk
Hunt County Clerk
Kaufman County Clerk
Llano County Clerk
Madison County Clerk
Midland County Clerk

Mitchell County Clerk
NE Texas Public Health District
Parker County Clerk
Polk County Clerk
Rockwall County Clerk
Rusk County Clerk
Scurry County Clerk
San Antonio Metro Health
District
Smith County Clerk
Tarrant County Clerk
Taylor County Clerk
Tom Green County Clerk
Waller County Clerk
Ward County Clerk
Washington County Clerk
Wise County Clerk
Wichita Falls Public Health
District

FIVE-STAR HOSPITALS/BIRTHING CENTERS/MIDWIVES

Baptist St. Anthony's Health Systems
– Amarillo
Baylor Medical Center at Frisco
Baylor Medical Center at
Waxahachie
Baylor Regional Medical Center at
Grapevine
Brownsville Doctors Hospital
Brownwood Regional Medical Center
Cedar Park Regional Medical Center
Christus Santa Rosa Hospital
– New Braunfels
Columbus Community Hospital
Corpus Christi Medical Center
– Bay Area
Daughters of Charity Health Services
of Austin – Brackenridge
Daughters of Charity Health Services
of Austin – Seton Northwest
Daughters of Charity Health Services
of Austin – Seton Southwest
Denton Regional Medical Center
Goodall-Witcher Healthcare
Foundation
Graham Regional Medical Center

Harlingen Medical Center
Harris Methodist HEB
Harris Methodist – Erath County
Harris Methodist Southwest
Henderson Memorial Hospital
Hill Country Memorial Hospital
Houston Northwest Medical
Center
Knapp Medical Center
Lake Pointe Medical Center
Lamb Health Care Center
Las Colinas Medical Center
Las Palmas Medical Center
Medical Arts Hospital
Medical Center of Lewisville
Medical Center of McKinney
Medical Center of Plano
Medical City Dallas Hospital
Memorial Hermann
– Katy Hospital
Memorial Hermann
– Southeast Hospital
Memorial Hermann – Sugar Land
Memorial Hermann
–The Woodlands

Methodist Mansfield Medical
Center
Methodist Willowbrook Hospital
Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital
North Central Baptist
Ochiltree General Hospital
Palestine Regional Medical Center
Permian Regional Medical Center
Presbyterian Hospital Greenville
Providence Memorial Hospital
San Jacinto Methodist Hospital
Scott & White University Medical
Center
Sierra Medical Center
Southwest General Hospital
St. David's Medical Center
St. Luke's Baptist Hospital
Texoma Medical Center
Tomball Regional Hospital
University Health System
Uvalde Memorial Hospital
Valley Baptist Medical Center
– Brownsville
W.J. Mangold Memorial Hospital

2008 TEXAS VITAL STATISTICS FIVE-STAR AWARD WINNERS

FUNERAL HOME AND MORTUARY SERVICE

All Faiths Funeral Services – South
Brookehill Funeral Home
Broussard's Mortuary – Beaumont
Broussard's Mortuary – Nederland
Callaway-Jones Funeral Home
Claybar Funeral Home, Inc. – Orange
Cook-Walden Davis Funeral Home
Davis-Greenlawn Funeral Chapel
Davis-Morris Funeral Home
Ellis Funeral Home – Midland
Garza Memorial Funeral Home
Grimes Funeral Chapels – Kerrville
James Crowder Funeral Home – La Marque
Joe Jackson Heights Funeral Chapels
Joe Jackson North Funeral Home

Kerrville Funeral Home, Inc.
Mission Park Funeral Chapel – South
Nieto-Dickey Funeral Home
Porter Loring Mortuary – San Antonio
Providence Funeral Home
Restland Funeral Home
Schmidt Funeral Home – Katy
The Gabriels Funeral Chapel
The Settegast-Kopf Co. at Sugar Creek
Trevino Funeral Home – Brownsville
Victoria Mortuary Services
Weed-Corley-Fish Funeral Home, LTD.
Winscott Road Funeral Home
Wright's Funeral Parlor

SPECIAL VITAL REGISTRATION AWARDS

Texas Vital Statistics offices saw many changes in 2008. With two pieces of legislation from the 2007 session taking effect, a large part of our state being hit by a major hurricane, and all areas of the state impacted by financial downturns, VSU needed help and support in many areas. The following people and their businesses made major contributions to their community and the business of vital registration in a variety of ways. Geraldine Harris, State Registrar, expressed our appreciation for their extra effort and honored the following in front of their peers at the annual conference.

Nellie Hymel, Broussard's Mortuary, Beaumont

Jamie Jewell, Dignity Memorial Funeral Providers, Grand Prairie

Sandy Castillo, Wellmed, San Antonio

William E. Piet, Porter Loring Mortuary, San Antonio



2008 CERTIFIED MASTER REGISTRARS

The Master Registrar Certification Course allows local registrars to both expand their knowledge of the statutes, rules, and regulations that guide registration practices and to become more familiar with the processes and with the people who work at the State Vital Statistics Office. The following individuals have completed the Master Registrar Certification Course curriculum and assignments, and have demonstrated mastery in Texas vital registration.

Geoffrey Agueze, VSU
Cynthia Brown, VSU
Gloria Caraway,
Gregg Dep. Co. Clerk
Laura Castillo,
City of Victoria
Gena Jiral,
City of Yoakum
Janie Madero,
City of McAllen

Sally Oubre,
Hood County Clerk
Teresa Price,
Titus County Clerk
Anedrya Price,
City of Dallas
Eli Puentes, VSU
Joan Strawn, VSU



See the latest on the 2009 Master Registrar Certification course on page 5 of this newsletter.

Correct Process for Filing a Complaint with the Texas Medical Board

VSU staff and many of its partners are engaged in efforts to encourage and assist Texas' 15,000 medical certifiers to enroll and utilize the TER system to certify death certificates. In some situations, funeral directors have filed complaints about medical certifiers with the Texas Medical Board (TMB) either for delays in certifying death certificates or for not filing the certificate electronically. Joan Donley at TMB has been helpful in providing the best process for filing these complaints.

When filing a complaint, refer to a *specific* death certificate and provide the EDR number in the complaint. If the doctor does not use TER for *any* death certificates, then only provide information about one specific death certificate. Using the complaint form on the TMB website ensures the correct processing of your complaint. Keep in mind that due to jurisdictional restrictions TMB investigates a complaint when a doctor does not use TER to file a death certificate; it cannot be concerned with whether or not a

doctor is enrolled in TER. TMB has investigated *many* doctors for not completing death certificates in a timely manner and can investigate doctors for not utilizing TER to certify deaths. These investigations ensure that TMB meets its primary responsibility to its clients – the families of the deceased, in this situation – in as fully a manner as possible.

VSU congratulates Mari Robinson, J.D., who became the Executive Director of the Texas Medical Board on March 1, 2009. Ms. Robinson has served as the Interim Director since October, and prior to that was the Director of Enforcement with TMB. She spoke at our annual conference in December regarding the Fast Track Complaint Process and her continued partnership is greatly appreciated by Field Services and the Vital Statistics Unit.

To see more information on the complaint process, visit the TMB website at www.tmb.state.tx.us.

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ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION

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www.texasvsu.org

TRAINING

To request training in your area go to
www.requestTERtraining.texasvsu.org

MAILED REQUESTS

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