



CHECKS & BALANCES



Clay County Clerk of Court and Comptroller's Office Newsletter

June 2024

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Summer — A Time for Budgets and Strategic Planning

A Message from Clerk/Comptroller Green

While all of us can benefit from a relaxing summer vacation — *and I hope you are able to take time off with family and friends to rest and recharge* — summer months are also the lead up to the end of our fiscal year (9/30/24) and a time for budget talks that secure funds for the year ahead, for the ongoing needs of our office, and for all personnel. I commend

our Clerk's Office Finance Department personnel and the staff of our Comptroller's Office (County Finance) for again executing their fiscal duties with efficiency and accuracy in Fiscal Year 23/24.

I'm proud of the clean audit we recently received from the independent auditors which is proof positive of the expert-level input we receive from these finance-oriented personnel. A special word of thanks to Finance Officer Amy Bramlitt and to Finance Director David Caudill for their tireless work to complete the auditing process in record time this year. Their efforts put us in excellent position for state recognition next year, which is our goal.

Speaking of goals, I want to make all employees aware of strategic planning sessions recently held to map out objectives for our entire office for the next 1-to-5 years. *Yes — we try to plan that far ahead.* While we can't foresee every operational issue, financial need, or legal change, we do our best to position our office and personnel in line with opportunities for success. Objectives recently discussed included data integrity, training programs, use of surveys and evaluations, invoice processing, cybersecurity, expansion of external partnerships, succession planning, recruitment and retention, and employee engagement. Like all strategic planning efforts, whether corporate or governmental, ours is a process that takes time and the energy of our entire executive and administrative team. I am deeply grateful for Senior Executive Assistant Victoria Marquart's organizing of the proposed strategic plan content and for her spearheading recent discussions. Our entire team looks forward to presenting the finalized strategic plan to you soon.



Thank you for all you do — have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Tara S. Green

June 27th was National Sunglasses Day so let's mark the occasion and the summer season with some fun facts!

- The first "eyewear" was reportedly crafted 2,000 years ago by the Inuit people who carved slits in bone disks or wood to shield their eyes from glare while hunting.
- Hollywood made sunglasses truly popular in the 1930's as movie stars were seen shielding their eyes from the California sunshine in between scenes on outdoor movie sets.
- Polarized lenses were invented in 1936 (chemical layer added onto lenses that filters the UV rays) - a big improvement!
- Famous singer-songwriter Elton John has 1,000+ pair of sunglasses, collected since his iconic career began in the 1970's.



**Congrats to All-Star
Michelle Thrasher
Recording Dept.**



Remember, you can nominate a coworker for the All-Star Award any time! Go to our office's intranet site (internal.clayclerk.com) and click on the All-Star logo to access a brief form that helps you submit the information online. It is easy!

Our All-Stars Shine Bright

Recording Department Supervisor Michelle Thrasher embodies the mission, vision, and core values of the Clay County Clerk of Court and Comptroller's Office. Described by a customer as "...beyond amazing and patient – staying late to make sure my issues were resolved." On behalf of citizens, she uses her keen eye for detail to identify potential errors and suspicious activity that can unearth scams or other illegal activity. For example, she recently caught the filing of a fraudulent warranty deed which resulted in the homeowners filing a police report to stop the fraud. Inside the Recording Department, she is viewed as a pillar of trustworthiness and is respected by all her peers. Her natural aptitude for genuine customer service and her ability to maintain operational stability, even when short-staffed, highlight her commitment to efficiency and helpfulness. Michelle is quick-thinking in any situation and has outstanding public interactions which further underscore her dedication to excellence and love for her coworkers.

For excellent service during this quarter and for a long track record of dedication to our office, Supervisor Thrasher was awarded this quarter's All-Star Award. Congratulations!

A Win for Human Resources

We'd like to acknowledge Cara McCoy for recently earning, through the University of Central Florida, her Human Resources (HR) Generalist Certificate. This professional development achievement means Cara is now officially a HR Generalist and can be an even bigger help to our whole office and to Chief Human Resources Officer Deena Faulkner.



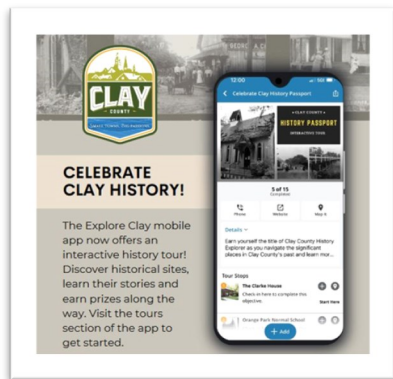
Congratulations, Clerk/Comptroller Green on securing your re-election! We look forward to another great 4 years!



On Friday, July 5th, all offices will close early (3pm).

Out and About in the Community

Clerk Green regularly attends events where she raises awareness about the services you provide our citizens, while also supporting our key partners. Our clerks also play a key role in special events for citizens. Most recently, this included the Empty Bowls Luncheon for Salvation Army, Passport Day at the OP Branch, Quigley House's Annual Gala, and Green's attendance at the opening of the new local congressional office on Fleming Island.



Kids bored this summer? Need an easy way to entertain visiting family members? The county's **History Passport** may help! This game-like presentation of the stories behind 25 different historic sites in Clay County is not only educational (thanks to our Archives staff), but fun, too. Check it out by downloading the **Explore Clay app** on your smart phone today! (click on *Tours*)

A Fond Farewell to Finance Clerk Cheryl Bradley

Accounting Specialist Cheryl Bradley retired from the Clerk's Office in May after 25 years of service. Clerk Green and the Executive Team gathered to present her with a gift of flowers plus a card and certificate presented on behalf of the whole office. Cheryl will be remembered as a kind and caring colleague who dedicated a quarter century of her life to public service here in Clay County.



Teen Court Celebrates A Great Year

Teen Court held their last training session of the year for teen attorney volunteers in May. These sessions were held monthly since January and were led by retired attorney Jim Thies. He shared his expertise with the teens and helped them understand all aspects of court processes, including opening and closing statements, direct and cross examinations, and more. For the last session, Thies arranged for Judge Steven Whittington, Beth Sammons (local criminal defense attorney), and Cara Devlin (assistant state attorney with the SAO), to join the session as our guest speakers. The teens were enthralled and enjoyed every minute! What a way to close out another successful year of the Clerk’s Office Teen Court program. Great job by all involved!



In addition to the use of the 1890 Historic Courthouse for Teen Court program events, the space is also used often to host mock trial events for local schools which Clerk Green and executive staff are happy to attend and support.

Employment Anniversaries

| Name | Workiversary | YOS |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|
| Amy Bramlitt | April 8 th | 5 |
| Kim Kemp | April 10 th | 1 |
| Nicole Barrie | April 10 th | 1 |
| Faith Hawkins | April 17 th | 1 |
| Amber Leininger | April 20 th | 4 |
| Robert Mikeska | April 23 rd | 11 |
| Aundrea Gelsey | April 24th | 23 |
| Cara McCoy | April 25 th | 2 |
| Jennifer Brosky | April 25 th | 2 |
| Frances Gray | May 1 st | 7 |
| Holly Ricks | May 5th | 21 |
| Kayla Dulke | May 8 th | 1 |
| LaShonda Hampshire-Baskin | May 10th | 25 |
| Beth-Ann Werre | May 15 th | 1 |
| Brian Byrd | May 16 th | 1 |
| Stacie Towns | May 19th | 21 |
| Wendy Rodriguez | May 31 st | 19 |
| Eddy Richard | June 1 st | 18 |
| Victoria-Ann Marquart | June 7 th | 14 |
| Michelle Thrasher | June 21st | 25 |
| Donna Perryman | June 25 th | 6 |
| Leah McDonald | June 26 th | 1 |
| Justin Horan | June 30 th | 10 |

