

THE INFORMER

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Check out the Conference Special on page 6!

Special points of interest:

- www.cwfc.us is Colorado Welfare Fraud Council's web page
- www.ucowf.org is the website for the United Council on Welfare Fraud
- www.cconline.org is the website for CCI-Colorado Counties, Inc.
- www.sstabsinc.org is the website for SSTABS-Social Services & Technical Business Staffs

Message From The President - Jeff Bonadies

Members,

The past few months have been both busy, and immensely rewarding for the CWFC Board. The level of commitment to this fine organization continues to rise, in all areas.

As you are aware, this year's Annual Training Conference will be joint with the United Council on Welfare Fraud. I anticipate record attendance, and a fantastic agenda of presentations. CWFC and UCOWF are working together quite closely to make this a successful joint event. CWFC members are co-chairing several committees and anticipation is great! Conference registration can be done online at www.ucowf.org. Lodging contact information is available at www.silvertreehotel.com. I strongly recommend mak-

ing reservations early! Also, stay tuned for information on scholarships that will be available. CWFC is dedicated to providing fraud related training to the "front lines" – eligibility staff, and is procuring registration funding for some of those workers.

One of the other major accomplishments you will see from your Board, is in the CWFC By Laws. What started out as a few needed changes is gradually turning into a major project. The By Laws Committee, chaired by Doreen Smith, is in the process of making the By Laws much more readable, and logically laid out. It has been a daunting task, and Doreen has certainly been up to the challenge. You'll find more information in another article in this edition of *The Informer*.

I'd like to extend a wel-

come and thanks to a couple of people. CWFC member Dan Rhoden is the investigator in Douglas County. Dan has appeared at several Board meetings, and made valuable contributions. We appreciate his interest and input. Likewise, the new CDHS Chief of Program Integrity, Paula Lujan has been in attendance. Paula has valuable insights, to and from the State Department perspectives. It's good to have additional State Department personnel taking interest in CWFC. Thank you, Paula and Dan! And of course, any member of CWFC is welcome and encouraged to attend Board meetings.

Be sure to keep an eye on the CWFC website, and all-member emails for updates on the conference agenda. And, as always, contact any CWFC Board member for questions. See you in September!

Award Nominations - Radonna Vinger

Just two more weeks left to nominate someone deserving of an award. The deadline is April 14, 2008. The awards are as follows:

- ***Ted Cole Memorial Award**
- ***Investigator of the Year**
- ***Prosecutor of the Year**

***Outstanding Group / Individual of the Year**

***Income Maintenance Tech, Eligibility Worker or Case Manager of the Year** and

***Recovery, Legal or Investigative Tech of the Year.**

Next CWFC Board Meeting will be hosted by State Audit Division on 4/18/08 at Ft. Logan. Contact a Board Member for information.

The Bylaws Get a New Look! - Doreen Smith

This year the Board is recommending the Bylaws be amended. Over the years there have been numerous additions to the existing bylaws making them cumbersome and difficult to reference. So a new format is being suggested. There are twelve articles of broad theme subdivided into sections of specific topics within that theme. It looks somewhat like our Volume 3, only a lot shorter.

The current bylaws have ten articles. Two additional articles would be added: (1) Contracts and Finances and (2) Dissolution. All the articles were broadened in scope and content; for example:

- How officers assume their position and the duties of those officers
- How the Board is formed and the

duties of the Board

- What general membership entails
- How board meetings are conducted
- How committees are formed and the responsibilities of those committees
- How the organization's finances and money are accounted for and allocated
- What happens if CWFC dissolves as an organization

The proposed amended Bylaws will be distributed to all members in the annual election process taking place in April 2008. You will receive a copy of the entire Bylaws with the proposed changes highlighted. If you would like to compare this to the existing Bylaws,

they can be found on the CWFC website <http://cwfc.us/> within the Membership Directory. Each member has been advised of the User ID and password or you may contact Cindy Rice for this information cindy.rice@state.co.us.

On 3/14/08 the CWFC Executive Board unanimously voted to recommend adoption of these Bylaws by the membership.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the proposed bylaw changes please contact Doreen Smith dsmith@aspfamilyservices.com (303) 604-1043 ext. 2840 or Gerald Garcia Gerald.Garcia@dss.co.adams.co.us (303) 227-2121.

From Your Membership Committee - Jim Steadman

As of March 1 2008 we have signed up approximately 100 returning members and 14 new members.

THANKS to those who have sent in their renewal and/or became new members. Your membership certificate will be in the mail shortly after the March 14th Board Meeting. You will also receive an e-mail with the 2008-2009 passwords so you can gain access to the current Membership Roster and Resource Guide.

[This is a start but we need all 2008 members from last year and as many as possible new member to join prior to April 15, 2008 to insure you have a vote on the new Bylaws changes and elections of the 2008-2009 Officers.](#)

The ballots will be mailed out on April 15, 2008 and must be returned no later than June 1, 2008 when they will be counted by the election committee. The election results will be provided

to all 2008 members shortly thereafter.

Everyone is looking forward to the joint CWFC, United Council of Welfare Fraud (UCOWF) conference in Snowmass Colorado in September 2008. As we mentioned in the last newsletter [one of the training tracks will specifically address the training needs of eligibility staff.](#)

Thanks to Pauline Burton and her staff some additional funding may be available to assist in sponsoring eligibility staff to the conference. We would appreciate if these individuals also became CWFC members.

Remember the membership year is January 1 through December 31, inclusive and dues remain at \$20.00 a year. Please consider renewing or re-establishing your membership. Also talk to your co-workers and stress the importance of them becoming a mem-

ber of CWFC. The Membership form is included with this newsletter

The committee's goal is not only to retain the current members but also increase the CWFC membership by at least 20%. We realize this is a lofty goal and also realize it will take the **entire current membership's** help to reach this goal. Therefore, we are asking everyone for ideas and ask that you **actively sign up** as many new members as possible

If you have any questions please feel free to contact any current member or the membership committee at james.steadman@denvergov.org 720.944.1222, gerald-ine.romero@denvergov.org 720.944.2012 or shelly.poole@state.co.us 719.275.2318

Thanks again for everyone's help in making this organization what it is today.

***Success Story* - Woman Charged with Welfare Fraud - by Katharhynn Heidelberg, Daily Press Senior Writer (Article posted in the Montrose Daily Press 2/23/08)**

MONTROSE - A Grand Junction woman is accused of taking state taxpayers for a ride by committing welfare fraud.

Nichole Muth, 35, also identified as Nichole Morris, is already in jail in Mesa County, where according to police reports, she is accused of repeatedly ramming her husband's vehicle last September, chasing after a passenger, and later attacking her husband. She was charged in Montrose last week with six counts of theft in a series, five counts of offering a false instrument/recording and a single count of second-degree perjury.

Montrose County Health and Human Services alleges Muth unlawfully obtained welfare benefits between June 2004 and March 2007. The total estimated value of the services was close to \$33,000. According to HHS Investigator Norman Prewitt, the alleged fraud came to light after an eligibility worker discovered Muth had income.

"She falsified her applications for benefits, saying she didn't have a job," District Attorney Myrl Serra alleged Friday. According to Serra, Muth was actually employed as a home healthcare nurse in Mesa County, making around \$20 per hour. He also alleged she falsified welfare forms, including daycare log records, even though her child was not enrolled in daycare in the local jurisdiction. "She came in and reported a zero income and in several instances, was

working a decent-paying job," Prewitt alleged.

He said Muth was employed in Mesa and Montrose counties and, while claiming benefits here, purchased a home valued at \$188,000 in Mesa County. He could not comment on Muth's daycare situation.

In one of the false instrument/recording charges contained in her criminal complaint, it is alleged Muth unlawfully agreed with another woman that one or both of them would engage in conduct constituting false recording, or aid in its commission. Serra said that woman is considered a witness.

The theft in series counts each allege Muth obtained Medicaid, child care and food benefits twice or more within a six month period. The amount of benefits each time was more than \$500 but less than \$15,000. Each count has been charged as a class-4 felony.

The remaining four false instrument charges, all class-5 felonies, allege Muth turned in forms to a public office or employee that contained materially false statements. The information on the forms was directly related to the benefits and Muth allegedly knew the forms would be registered or recorded as part of the public record.

The complaint additionally alleges Muth perjured herself by making a materially

false statement under oath concerning a food stamp assistance form. This charge is a class-1 misdemeanor.

Prewitt said HHS expects that applicants for benefits will tell the truth and when they do not, they will be investigated. He said taxpayers were the ultimate victims of welfare fraud. "The main thing we want to get across is, we're looking out for their dollars. We want to help those that qualify, but we also want to pursue those that commit fraud," he said.

Prewitt praised the district attorney's office for its help and cooperation. "I've been in this job five years and this is the first one we've been able to file with the DA," he said. It's nice to have those doors open." Prewitt added in a news release that Serra's stance was "a huge asset in maintaining the integrity of the human services programs." Serra gave credit to the Montrose County HHS. "It was a very thorough investigation by Norm (Prewitt)," he said.

Muth is due for advisement March 10 at 8:30. Bond has not been set in her Montrose case. She remained in custody at the Mesa County Jail Friday, in lieu of a \$100,000 bond imposed on Grand Junction charges of attempted first-degree assault-deadly weapon, felony menacing, criminal mischief, third-degree assault, resisting arrest, reckless endangerment and reckless driving. She's set to appear in court there March 18.

Election of Officers - Rogelio Segura

The time is approaching for our annual Colorado Welfare Fraud Council Conference at Snowmass. At this conference we will be electing a new slate of officers: President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President. Nominations for these officers are now open. Board

Members will also be chosen at the Conference. If you would like to nominate an individual for an Officer position or if you are interested in any of the Officer positions or would like to serve on the Board as a Board Member, please contact: Rogelio Segura, P.O. Box 220, Fort

Morgan, CO 80701 or email at Rogelio.Segura@state.co.us or James Steadman at James.Steadman@denvergov.org

Success Story - La Jara Couple Charged with Felony Welfare Theft

By Larry Winget (Article posted in the Valley Courier 2/29/08)

ALAMOSA — Conejos County District Attorney Peter Comar has charged a La Jara couple with multiple felonies related to obtaining food assistance benefits to which they were not entitled.

At the request of the Conejos County Department of Social Services Theresa Medina, 49, and Robert Medina, 44, were each charged with four offenses in connection with receiving \$3,536 worth of food assistance benefits.

Each was charged with one count of theft between \$1,000 and \$20,000; and three counts of offering a false instrument for recording in the first degree. The theft charge is a Class 4 felony and the three counts of false recording are Class 5 felonies.

The charges were filed on Feb. 15, 2008 and a preliminary hearing on the case is set for March 10. Conejos County Social Services Investigator Stephanie Marquez was the investigator in the Medina case

In a separate case brought by the Conejos County Social Services Department, Anthony Garcia, 57, and Cynthia Garcia, 48, of Capulin pleaded guilty in County Court on Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2008 to charges related to welfare fraud.

In a plea agreement made in front of Conejos County Judge Elizabeth Garcia, Anthony and Cynthia Garcia pleaded guilty to a Class 1 misdemeanor theft charge. The two were originally charged with Class 4 felony theft in connection with receiving more than \$9,000 worth

of food assistance to which they were not entitled. The Department of Social Services will request the Garcia couple pay \$9,388 in restitution to the Department and agree to a lifetime disqualification of food assistance. According to Marquez the Garcia's received that amount of excess food assistance benefits from the department between August 2004 and August 2007 by failing to report self-employment earnings.

Sentencing in the Garcia's case is set for March 25. According to Marquez the judge could impose jail time in addition to the restitution and lifetime disqualification of food assistance benefits, but the Social Services Department is not requesting jail time be imposed.

Radonna's Kitchen

Quick Chocolate Sandwich Cookies

These cookies freeze well.

2 packages (18-1/4 ounces each) devil's food cake mix

1 cup vegetable oil

4 eggs

Filling:

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened

2-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar (powdered)

1 tsp vanilla extract

In a mixing bowl, combine the cake mixes, oil and eggs; mix well. Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 2 inches apart on un-greased baking sheets. Do not flatten. Bake at 350 for 8-10 minutes or until set.

Cool for 5 minutes before removing to wire racks (cookies will flatten as they cool). In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter. Add sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth. Spread on the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies. Store in the refrigerator.

YIELD: about 6 dozen.

During past CWFC Conferences, counties have provided wonderful gift baskets that were given as prizes. At the CWFC/UCOWF joint conference in September there will be many out-of-state attendees along with Colorado attendees. A gift basket representative of each county would be a great gift for Colorado attendees and out-of-state attendees to take back home. So, start thinking about a gift basket that you would like to donate from your county. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Rice at cindy.rice@state.co.us.

Award Nomination Form

*****Nominees need not be CWFC members*****

(Check only one)

_____ *Ted Cole Memorial Award*

This award recognizes an individual or group who demonstrated excellence in performance that enhances the general principles and goals of the CWFC, public relations, positive contribution to newsletter, legislation, or other printed forums that relate to preventing public assistance fraud and the promotion of the CWFC.

_____ *Outstanding Group or Individual of the Year*

This award recognizes an individual or group of individuals who have made an important contribution and/or a major impact in the prevention, detection, prosecution, and recovery of fraudulent obtained public assistance within the last year

_____ *Prosecutor of the Year*

This award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution and/or shown excellence in the prosecution of fraud.

_____ *Income Maintenance Tech, Eligibility Worker, or Case Manager of the Year*

This award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution and/or demonstrates excellence in the prevention of public assistance or food stamp fraud.

_____ *Recovery, Legal, Investigative Tech of the Year*

This award recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution and/or demonstrates excellence in the recovery of public assistance or food stamp fraud.

_____ *Investigator of the Year*

This award includes all Investigators from local, state, and federal levels. It recognizes an individual who has made an outstanding contribution and/or exhibited excellence in the investigation of fraud and program abuse.

Nominee: _____

Reason for Nomination-(please give details or attach nomination letter)

Your Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Fax nomination to Radonna Vinger by April 14, 2008

Phone: 970-564-4136 Fax:970-565-8524

Colorado Welfare Fraud Council

P. O. Box 2473

Englewood, CO 80150

We're on the Web:

Cwfc.us

CWFC Board Members

2007 - 2008 Officers

Jeff Bonadies	President
Gerald Garcia	President Elect
James Steadman	Vice President
Donna Ashlock	Treasurer
Tammy Frey	Secretary

2007 - 2008 Board Members

Lori Duffy	Board Member
Brandi Gallegos	Board Member
Charissa Hammer	Board Member
Shelley Poole	Board Member
Cindy Rice	Board Member
Geri Romero	Board Member
Rogelio Segura	Board Member
Doreen Smith	Board Member
Angela Juarez	Alternate Board Member
Mark Magnuson	Alternate Board Member

CWFC Membership Form

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY

Name: _____ Date: _____

Agency: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ (Ext) _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

New member ___ Renewal ___ Returning Member ___ (Missed Last Year) ___ Change of Information ___

2008 Annual Membership is \$20.00. Membership is from January 1, through December 31. If you are joining or renewing your membership, please make check payable to CWFC and mail to CWFC, P.O. Box 2473, Englewood, CO 80150.

If you are reporting a change of information, enter the former information here:

2008 Conference SPECIAL

Half day trip \$79/adult & \$69/youth

Includes pick up service from the conference center in Snowmass, 3 hours of rafting through the thrilling Shoshone Rapids of Glenwood Canyon on the Colorado River, a full deli-style picnic lunch on the river's edge and return shuttle to Snowmass!

Rates include all taxes and fees. Tickets must be purchased at least 48 hours in advance. These tickets are fully refundable until 24 hours prior to trip departure time. Tickets purchased less than 48 hours prior to trip departure will be \$10/person additional.



(970) 945-8477