

## **2007 CAMA Calgary Conference**

The CAMA Conference will be taking place in Calgary, Alberta, May 28-30, 2007.

For information on the Conference, visit our website: [http://www.camacam.ca/conference\\_2007.asp](http://www.camacam.ca/conference_2007.asp)

The host hotel for the 2007 Conference is the Fairmont Palliser in downtown Calgary. To book your room now, visit their website at: <http://www.fairmont.com/palliser/>

## **Board News**

- The next Board meetings will be held in Waterloo, ON, from September 21-23, 2006, in Ottawa, from November 23-25, 2006, and then in London, ON, from March 1-3, 2007.

## **Member Profile**



**Phil Richards**  
City Manager, City of Saskatoon

Phil grew up in Turtleford, Saskatchewan, and then attended the University of Saskatchewan, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts, his Bachelor of Commerce, and Masters of Business Administration.

Phil was originally employed with the City of Saskatoon, in a Human Resources capacity. He eventually went on to become the City's Chief Labour Relations negotiator for seven years.

Looking for a change of pace, he joined the Saskatchewan Provincial Government as Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour, where in time, he took the post as Deputy Minister of Labour.

After his time in the Provincial government, he returned to the City of Saskatoon as Director of Finance, until he was appointed as City Manager.

Phil was a volunteer with the 1989 Jeux Canada Games; Vice-President of Facilities for Canadian Special Olympics, and Vice-President of the World University Games Bid. Phil also sits on the boards of the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority (SREDA), and TCU Centre, Saskatoon's Arts and Convention Centre.

Phil and his wife have three children.

*\*If you would like to be profiled in this section, or would like to recommend someone to be profiled, please contact Alycia Morehouse at [alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca](mailto:alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca), or CAMA Administration at the contact information below.*

## **Community Leadership/ Literacy Project**

### **Clear Language, The Way of Municipal Communications**

Organizations, including governments, are turning to the use of clear language for internal and external written communications. Clear language is a way of writing that puts readers first. The focus is writing in a way that people will understand, so they can act on what they read.

**How can clear language help municipalities do a better job?** In towns and cities computers have changed the way we work. Many of us have to write e-mails, reports, and letters to do our jobs. For some people, new and complex equipment creates new health and safety risks.

Clear language can help everyone communicate better, be clear about what needs to be done, and do it safely. The benefits extend even further. Clear language supports an inclusive workplace and allows municipalities to provide better customer service.

Here are two examples of how clear language has been used by governments:

- X The **Department of Veterans Affairs**, USA, revised one letter that is routinely sent to its customers. In one year—and in one regional office, the number of calls dropped from 1100 to 200 on the topic of the letter.
- X The London Borough of Camden, UK, did a review of its corporate publications to assess whether the approximate \$1,000,000. spent annually was being used effectively. The Borough wanted to improve the number of people who felt well-informed; increase access to relevant services; encourage engagement and participation; demonstrate accountability; help people understand the role of Council; and develop a sense of Camden's distinct identity.

The changes included simplifying its best value performance plan; re-designing its citizen's magazine; producing a 'welcome to Camden' package for new residents; and doing a publication to solicit opinions from stakeholders twice a year.

Using clear language can save both money and time. The cost of poor communication can be multiplied by every form, letter, notice, flyer, bulletin, booklet, manual and other public documents that are sent out in large numbers by municipal governments.

In the United Kingdom, there is a Crystal Mark campaign that gives accreditation for documents written in clear language. To-date, approximately 250 local councils/governments have received the Crystal Mark designation.

For more information on CAMA's clear language initiative, please contact Patricia Nutter at 613-264-0111; pnutter@linccsat.com.

## **CAMA Awards Program**

### **2006 CAMA Awards**

Congratulations to the City of Edmonton, Alberta, for winning the 2006 Willis Award for Innovation, for municipalities with a population over 20,000 for their Communication Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Pilot Project.

The *Communications Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Pilot Project* was created in consultation, and upon the request of, Edmonton's Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The project's timeframe is October 2005 to October 2006, and its objectives were to:

1. Ensure greater access to city events, public meetings and open houses to Edmonton's Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH) citizens by providing and promoting the availability of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and Real-time Captioning Services (RTC) – words typed on a projected screen or monitor as they are spoken.
2. Quantify the number and nature of requests for (D/HH) services over a one-year period so as to provide visibility to the City Administration of the actual annual demand and costs of providing the services.
3. Create a City Policy, and practice, on providing communications services to the D/HH population that is clearly understood by the D/HH community and City of Edmonton Administration.

Hearing loss is the disability that affects the most Canadians. Current estimates are that as many as 15 percent of Canadians live with some sort of hearing loss, though many do not readily identify themselves as hard of hearing.

Aging baby boomers are expected to drive the numbers of people living with hearing loss – acknowledged or not – to even higher levels over the next few years. Real Time Captioning Services (RTC) is the preferred method of communication for those who once had hearing, learned language and are living with decreased hearing abilities due to accident, age, disease or genetics.

The Deaf are those who have never heard and who have not learned a language other than, perhaps, American Sign Language (ASL). The Deaf are considered as much a distinct culture as the British, the French, the Chinese, and the Canadians. ASL is a recognized language and is, for many Deaf, the preferred method of communication.

City of Edmonton Administration worked with representatives of the Edmonton Branch of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, Edmonton's Association for the Deaf, and Edmonton's Advisory Board on Services for Persons with Disabilities to provide, promote and track the nature and number of requests the Administration received to provide D/HH services at City events, open houses and public meetings. Problems we identified and solutions proposed.

The results of this program are positive and a great many in number:

- Edmonton's D/HH community enthusiastically supports the project saying they now enjoy greater access and a deeper sense of connection with all Edmontonians in community celebrations and meetings. They report that knowing that ASL and RTC services are automatically provided at major civic events has vastly improved their quality of life. Feedback from the D/HH community is that providing the one-stop contact of the Citizen Action Centre and dealing with knowledgeable staff when requesting D/HH services for events has removed previous barriers to service.
- ASL interpreters and RTC are being provided *automatically* on average of twice a month for major civic events at City Hall and Sir Winston Churchill Square, and *by request* on average of twice a month. The average cost for providing both RTC services at a two-hour meeting is approximately \$400.
- Administration is meeting with the D/HH community on a regular basis and will begin developing a City policy to further define and refine the delivering of communications services to citizens with hearing loss.
- Enquiries about Edmonton's innovative program have come from Administrators in the Yukon Territories and the City of Calgary.
- Meeting organizers are more frequently choosing to automatically provide ASL and RTC services at their meetings and to advertise their availability in order to extend the involvement of all Edmontonians. (In five public meetings with Edmonton's new Police Chief, ASL and RTC services were automatically provided.)
- Edmontonians have come to expect ASL and RTC services and have questioned meeting organizers regarding the absence of the services at some meetings. (Services are provided upon request at many meetings and when no request is forthcoming the services are not provided.)
- It has been noted, that, on several occasions at least a third of the audience reads the words on the captioning screen. Audience members have commented that the services help them catch the words they sometimes miss in the meeting. Quantifying the number of hard of hearing people in the audience remains a challenge, however, as many with hearing loss do not identify themselves.

For more information on Edmonton's *Communications Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Pilot Project*, contact Joyce Tusitan, General Manager or Corporate Services to the City of Edmonton, at (780) 496-8200 or visit their website at <http://www.edmonton.ca/> under *City Government*, then *Accessibility Services*.

### **Membership Notes**

- To have a job posting appear in CAMA's job broadcast, and on our website, the cost is \$100 for members, and \$200 for non-members. For more information, or to have your job listed, please email [admin@camacam.ca](mailto:admin@camacam.ca).
- On behalf of the CAMA Board of Directors, we would like to welcome the following new members:
  - Ms. Catherine Dallaire, Assistant City Manager, City of Moncton
  - Mr. J. P. (Paul) Graham, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of The Blue Mountains, Thornbury, Ontario
  - Ms. J. Denise Exton, Associate Commissioner - Infrastructure & Planning Services, Strathcona County, Alberta
  - Dan Dionne, Chief Administrative Officer, Perth-Andover, New Brunswick

**The next CAMA e-Brief will be issued on Monday, August 14<sup>th</sup>.**

**Look for the next Job Broadcast on Monday, August 7<sup>th</sup>.**

To have an item included in e-Brief, please contact Alycia Morehouse, at [alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca](mailto:alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca).

To unsubscribe from this list, please reply to this email, or send an email to [alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca](mailto:alycia.morehouse@fredericton.ca), subject: UNSUBSCRIBE.