



INDIANA RECORDERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

THIS ISSUE:

- District Meeting recap, photos
- Legislative updates
- Deed Fraud, Notary Fraud
- Real Estate Trends
- Records & Information Mgmt.

INDIANARECORDERS.ORG

Winter 2025



District Meeting topics included Veterans Affairs, Screen Scraping, Fraudulent Deeds (pictured here), a legislative update and answers to our legal questions.

Because of the venue, IRA held a combined District Meeting on Wednesday, October 22, in Franklin.

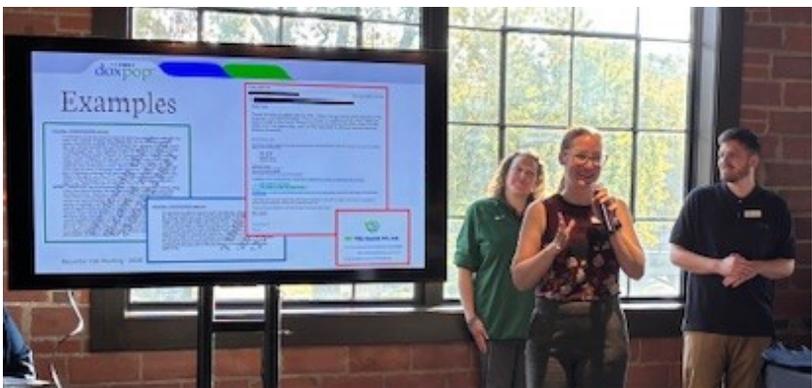


Joe DeVito from the Indiana Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) talked about the DD-214 process..



**iGO Hot Topics, Albuquerque
See Page 6-9.**

District Meeting Oct. 22



Screen scraping was discussed by LRMS partners, with Julie from Doxpop for CSI Users, giving some examples and explaining their responsibilities to monitor.



Alex , Fidar Technologies, gave some Best Practices for awareness and managing screen scraping on their end.

Two local county attorneys were recruited to give insight into our legal questions. Always consult with your county attorney, if needed. Teresa Petro in middle.



Andrea Carlile from HVAF (Helping Veterans and Families) spoke about their mission to end veteran homelessness. Donations filled a table, and more than \$800 was collected in cash donations.

IRA District Meeting Oct. 22, 2025



Our IRA Lobbyist, Randy Head, spoke about developments in the legislature and a probable scenario for 2026 session. (Pg. 4)



(l-r) District VP Christy Knotts, IRA Vice President Marcia Moore, IRA President Tami Hines, District VP Beth Liming & District VP Teresa Petro. Great meeting, beautiful venue.

Key takeaways from the District Meeting

Veterans

National Personal Records Center (NPRC) lost many records from a fire in the 1970s. About 80% of those records have been restored. NPRC will also issue a certificate.

Work with your county VSO to help veterans get service-connected disability benefits. Enrolling in VA benefits helps fund VA hospital.

DVA can create a QR code branded to Recorder's Office. Think promo piece with "Did you serve? Are you still serving? Are you a family member of a veteran?"

Approval/File bond

We have County Executive (Commissioners) approve our bond, then file with the Clerk before recording per IC 5-4-1-5.1(b). See Recording Manual for other bonds.

Notary/Property fraud

Possible safeguards include tracking document submitters and payments made, maintaining public sign-in logs for a minimum of five years (statute on felonies), installing surveillance systems with posted notice to further deter misconduct, and bringing notaries into discussion of how to prevent fraud.

Legal Resources:

- AG's Office civil remedies for fraud - No charge
- Consumer Protection Office can offer resources
- Indiana State Police Special Investigation Unit
- Local Bar Association has a list of those who might be able to assist with questions.
- State Bar Association has a "Find a lawyer" service on their website.
- County Attorney, Prosecutor, Law Enforcement

Certain notarial violations constitute a Level 6 felony under Indiana Law.

District Meeting photos

Legislative Committee goal for 2026



To help ensure Recorders are made aware that a submission for recording is related to an address confidentiality participant, the Legislative Committee is working to add a requirement for the Address Confidentiality Program (ACP) participants to personally submit their own recorded documents.

They will need to first come to the Recorder's office, identify themselves and present their ACP I.D. The participant will then need to take their document to the Assessor and Auditor's offices, again identifying themselves and present their ACP I.D. to each office.

Therefore IC 32-21-2.5-8 will need to be amended to exempt e-recordings related to ACP participants as follows: (Please refer to the exemption added as (4) below.)

IC 32-21-2.5-8(c) This section does not apply to the following documents:

- (1) A military discharge under IC 10-17-2.
- (2) A survey of real property.
- (3) A plat of real property.
- (4) A document containing the identifying information of a participant in the address confidentiality program as outlined in IC 5-26.5.

A big thanks to the six District Vice Presidents for putting together an informative district meeting.

04/16

District Meeting photos





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iGO Hot Topics

Deed Fraud – Title Pirates

Pilot Program in Florida

The Good DEED Act 2024

Deed Fraud - Title Pirates

They find vacant properties (often land) with no mortgages, impersonate owners using fake IDs, list the property with an agent, and sell it, stealing the proceeds.

Pilot Program in Florida

Lee County - established by state law (Florida Statute 28.2225) and effective August 1, 2023, requires all parties listed as grantors or grantees to provide a government-issued photo ID when recording a deed, whether in person, by mail or electronically.

It proved to be a cumbersome process. That's why we do pilots.

The Good DEED Act

Good Documentation and Enforcement of Estate Deeds Act

U.S. Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, II (D-MO) proposed the bill (H.R. 10475) in the 118th Congress in December 2024, but it did not make it out of committee. The proposed Act aimed to:

- Establish the first federal definition of “deed fraud.”
- Create a grant program administered by HUD to fund state and local anti-deed fraud initiatives.
- Require states receiving grants to mandate stronger notary standards.
- Direct the U.S. Sentencing Commission to enhance penalties for deed fraud convictions.
- Require the FBI to track deed fraud in its crime reporting.
- Allocate a portion of grant funds to provide legal aid to low-income families and those with “tangled title” issues.



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More iGO items

**Legislative Updates from
across the country -
pertaining to deed fraud**

**Key Takeaways to be
aware of**

Deed Fraud - State Laws

In most states, deed fraud, a.k.a. real estate fraud or title fraud, is addressed by a combination of civil and criminal laws to combat ongoing problems.

Illinois - HB 1226 passed in 2025

New York - proposed
S7721 Lender Accountability Act
S7647 Proof of Sale Price Act
A09228 Homeowner Defense and Anti-Deed Theft Act

Georgia - SB100 2005, added residential mortgage fraud to the RICO Act, FANS

Virginia - proposed SB 1270 directs VHDA to study prevalence of deed fraud and develop recommendations to prevent it

North Carolina - HB535, HB431, HB524

Oklahoma - SB961, SB925, SB1028, SB556

Tennessee - SB2448 (enacted 2024); proposed HB0196/SB0216 penalties

Texas - SB16, SB15, SB1734...all passed

California - enacted SB255 alert mandate

Louisiana - HB259, HB380 passed

Michigan - HB5598, HB5599 Penalties

Arizona - SB1110 Property Alert Mandate

Arkansas - Act 752 of 2025 grantor, I.D.

Colorado - CRS 38-36-194; SoS process

TAKEAWAYS

State legislation tackling deed fraud focuses on proactive alerts, tougher penalties, longer reporting windows and better legal tools for victims. Key themes are empowering county recorders, enabling stronger prosecution, extending statutes of limitations, and providing victim support.



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More iGO items

**What is currently being
expected of Recorders?**

**Best Practices regarding
challenges and
innovations**

Expected of Recorders

Increased demand for digital modernization: e-recording, automated fee calculation, validation, secure digital signatures

Data-driven decision making: Deeds data is now a critical tool for understanding ownership trends, investor behavior and property demand.

Compliance and legal responsibilities: Data protection (encryption, redaction), regular cybersecurity audits, train staff on digital security and fraud detection.

Rising transaction volumes and complexities: requires more robust system and staff capacity

Integration with emerging technology: digitizing archives (backfiles) using OCR, AI and machine learning help auto-index and validate to accelerate public access.

Basic Questions for Recorders

Recording and Filing Process

How do you handle high volume days?
What is your turnaround time?
Do you offer e-recording?

Technology & Modernization

What have you used to improve workflow?
Are you using OCR and/or AI to index?
How do you ensure cybersecurity?

Customer Service

How do you handle inquiries, disputes?
What have you done to improve access?

Compliance & Legal Requirements

How do you stay updated?
How do you handle rejected documents and communication with submitters?

Staffing & Training

What's your onboarding process?
What strategies do you use to retain staff?
Do you cross train for multiple roles?



- **Jan. 19–23 iGO Mid Winter Conference**
Albuquerque, NM iaogo.org
- **Feb. 24–26 PRIA Winter Symposium**
Virginia Beach, VA pria.us
Attend virtually or in person.
- **April 21–23 IRA Annual Conference**
Sheraton at Keystone Crossing, Indy
Watch email for details and reservations.
- **July 25–28 iGO Annual Conference**
Reston, VA iaogo.org
Certificate in Public Leadership (CPL)
course offered
- **Aug. 25–27 PRIA Annual Conference**
Buffalo, NY pria.us
Attend virtually or in person.
- **September 21–24 AIC Annual Conference**
Grand Wayne Convention Ctr., Ft Wayne
indianacounties.org
- **December 8–10 AIC Newly Elected Officials Training** indianacounties.org



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In between sessions, we got a taste of what Albuquerque has to offer visitors.

The International Hot Air Balloon Festival takes place there. We had a miniature, remote-controlled demo. (right) Also, Pueblo Indians performed traditional dances, and a narrator spoke about their heritage. (below)



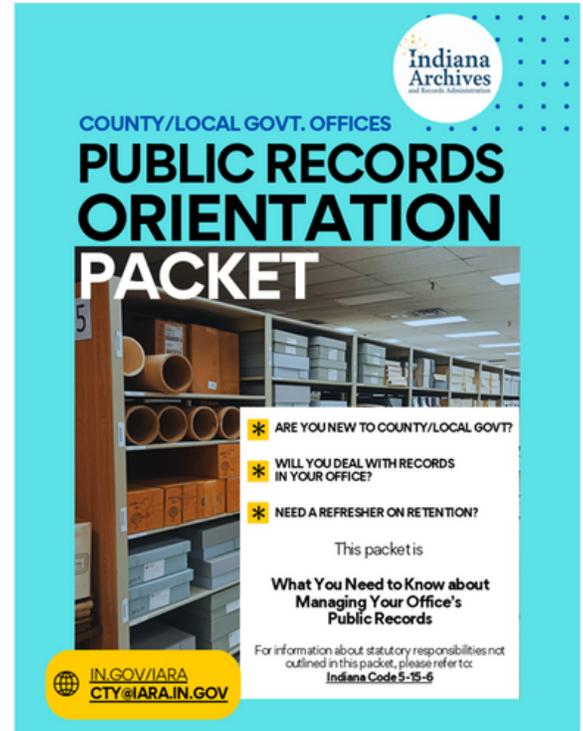
WORD SCRAMBLE

2026 Conference City items – see pg. 09

Answers at bottom of pg. 15

1. NAISAD EAKP WYTRMAA
2. EHALW ITHWNACG
3. FUOLBFA
4. ADYXWAPD LCNAED ARB
5. EEEAIYRWVVRG NR
6. DNNIIA OEBPLU URUCATLL EERNCT
7. HET GGRAAE TA OOIMRFCTS
8. EUERD ENILT
9. VNLAA KAPR
10. ROTF YNAEW
11. IGB WOBL EAURSATNTR
12. EHT EIC TA ICNALDEAS
13. BQQAEUREULU
14. ECCINSE AELTCNR
15. PCEA RYHNE IHLSTUGOE H
16. OESRTN
17. EHT PYHOP MNEOG
18. YGPPOEHRLT AIOATLNN UENNOTMM
19. NEAIKSHLN ISUMC LAHL
20. IIAIVGNR ABHCE
21. GEEAL RHMAS
22. EAEGCRVSN NHUT
23. OTH IRA AONBLL VFTASLEI
24. EAEAEPHCSK ABY
25. KWOINLES TIOENP

Indiana Archives and Records Administration



RIM Orientation Packet

The Records & Information Management Orientation Packet is designed for:

- new employees
- those who deal with records in their office
- those needing a refresher on records and information management

This packet is a condensed version of the County/Local Records Custodian Handbook. Email cty@iara.in.gov with questions and feedback.

Get to know your fellow Indiana Recordors



Deputy in July 2024; elected for 2025. Family? My oldest is Chandler (34), an associate pastor in MO. Bailey (30) and wife Kayla, is an art teacher at Noblesville H.S. Aubrey (23) and husband Jacob Wilson, is a 4th grade teacher at Mt. Vernon School Corp. Caden is a junior at Grace College, studying ministry. My mother and stepfather, Cheri and Bob Nottingham, live here in Hartford City as does my sister, Jessica Blakely who teaches in the Delcom School System.

I play the piano, like to golf, and collect vintage sports cards. I coach baseball at Blackford H.S. and have my own travel team...the Indiana Longhorns. I'm the GOP Chair here. I run C&C Media where I've done podcasts. I run 7 Facebook pages including the one for Blackford County Courthouse. I have also started walking this past fall, and average about 1.5 miles a day. Since I'm diabetic, salads and proteins have become my favorite foods. I started working at a newspaper when I was 16, and became publisher eventually. I enjoy writing and photography. I served as an athletic director for four years. It was always my passion. Still involved with the school where I'm a Hall of Famer. I served as Indiana All-Star coach twice, and was named District Coach of the Year multiple times.

Chris Landis, Blackford County Recorder, NE

In county government since Nov. 1999; beginning with Superior Court Probation. Then a child support investigator with Prosecutor's Office. I then made a decision, with my family, to run for Recorder. First time as an elected official, and felt so honored. I wanted to be in a position of more customer service, helping people, and the public sector. I love helping people, and I believe that kindness is so important to others. I truly have the best staff, and I also swore if I became a leader/boss/whatever you want to call it, I would take care of my staff! I have been married to Steve for 44 years. We have 3 grown children and 11 grandchildren, losing my step-son in 2015. I've lived in Harrison County all my life. We attend New Hope Wesleyan Church. I have been an avid crossfitter for over 10 years. I golf, when I can, and I absolutely love spending time with my family and friends. My husband & I cared for my 92-year-old mother. She wanted to live independently, and I was able to make it happen. She passed recently, 1/26/2026.



Sandy Stepro, Harrison County Recorder, SE



I began working in the Spencer County Recorder's Office in January 2019 under previous Recorder Vicki Brauns. After she served two terms, I chose to run for office and began my first term as Spencer County Recorder in January 2025. I'm grateful to serve alongside so many knowledgeable Recordors across Indiana and truly appreciate the guidance and support I've received so far.

I graduated high school in 2013 and attended cosmetology school. I was a hairstylist for 4 years before coming to the Recorder's Office. I live in Rockport with my 8-year-old daughter, Hadley, and our dog, Willow. In my free time, I enjoy traveling, reading, especially a good "whodunit" mystery, sports, and spending time with my family.

Kensie Coultas, Spencer County Recorder, SW

Get to know your fellow Indiana Recorders



I have worked for Hamilton County for 24 years between the Auditor's Office, IT Department and Recorder's Office. Working with the public is one of my favorite things about working in the Recorder's Office. I have an excellent staff that supports me and I enjoy the fact that I receive so many positive comments about the service they obtain in Hamilton County! I have been married to my husband, Brad, for 36 years and he serves on the Hamilton County Council. We have two adult children and 2 of the prettiest granddaughters in the world! 😊

I enjoy my early morning exercise classes (5 am), baking (mostly sweets), reading (a good love story) and spending time with my family. I love vacationing with my husband and girl gang! Our destinations are always to a warm environment where we can relax in the sunshine.

Trini Beaver, Hamilton County, EC

With the Whitley County Recorder's office for 26 years, first as Chief Deputy Recorder on Jan 2, 2000 for a newly elected Recorder. She decided to run for Auditor after two years in office and I was caucused in as Recorder for her remaining years. I am in my last year as Recorder in my 4th term. After my first two terms, I stepped back and became Chief Deputy for 8 years before running for two more terms. I changed the office from everything written by hand in books to the first computer system for the County Recorder's office. I was chosen as the "Republican of the Year" for Whitley County in 2024.



My husband and I have two grown daughters and three grandchildren. We have enjoyed the last several years following our granddaughter as she played softball and golf through high school and college. We now are following our grandson as he plays baseball in high school and travel baseball. I have 4 grand-dogs we help watch as busy lives keep our children on the go. My favorite day would be eating Mexican food (without spice) and watching Purdue basketball. Go Boilers!!

Rosemary Brown, Whitley County, NE



I began in the Recorder's office as a deputy in January of 2009, became Recorder in 2021. Back in 2004-2006 I was the Child Support Administrator for Benton County. Our County was the 3rd highest in collections for the state of Indiana.

My husband and I have been married for 36 years and have three adult children; Melissa (Tyler), Chase (Alexis) and Koby (Kailan) and six grandchildren. We are fortunate to have them all living within 11 miles of our farm. My husband and our two sons work together in our family-owned tire retail and service center. I am blessed to still have my mother in which I am one of her main caretakers. When I am not in my office, you can find me enjoying my grandchildren, gardening, or working in my flower beds. In winter months I enjoy volunteering at our local theater, crocheting, reading and our regular vacations to Cancun. I enjoy home cooking, especially when someone else is cooking rather than going out. I make really yummy sausage gravy and biscuits, but I'd have to say my favorite is fried potatoes, peppers and smoked sausage with side salad, garlic bread and sugar cream pie for dessert.

Glenda Walpe, Benton County, NW

12/16

AIC Annual Conference Ft. Wayne
Watch for info at indianacounties.org

Fun Facts

Carroll County

- Carroll County was established in 1828 and named for Charles Carroll, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence.
- Indiana's oldest continually used bridge, the 1837 Burnett's Creek Stone Arch—a cut stone structure —is near Lockport.

Steuben County

- Known as Indiana's Lake Country due to its more than 100 natural lakes.
- Pokagon State Park is here, well known for its toboggan run.

Clay County

- The present building is the fifth Clay Co courthouse that has been built.
- Home to Orville Redenbacher, the founder of the popular popcorn brand, known for his signature bow tie.



Brown County

- Known for natural beauty like: Brown Co. State Park, Yellowwood State Forest and parts of Hoosier National Forest.
- The Brown Co Art Gallery is the oldest continuously operating art gallery in Indiana, EST 1926.
- The Bean Blossom Covered Bridge was built in 1880, and is one of several historic covered bridges in the county.



Posey County

- Did you know that Posey County is the southernmost, southwesternmost and westernmost county in Indiana?
- Posey County is still the seventh-largest internal port in the United States, based on tons of materials handled. Grain from the Midwest is among the products shipped.

Union County

- The county was named "Union" because it brought together parts of three different counties: Fayette, Franklin and Wayne.
- Mary Alice Smith (born 1850) was the real person who inspired the famous poem "Little Orphan Annie."



Artificial Intelligence – What impact on Recorders?

by Nikki Allen

Artificial intelligence, by definition, is the capability of computer systems or algorithms to imitate intelligent human behavior. Like it or not, AI is becoming a part of our every day lives, but what impact is it having on Recorders and our ability to serve the public?

Helpful Benefits

In the County Recorder world, artificial intelligence has begun to make an appearance. Some counties across the United States have started to implement AI to help automate many of the routine and repetitive tasks that we face every day as Recorders. AI can help with a variety of tasks, but, in my opinion, one of the most helpful and useful features is **auto indexing**. Not only will AI index from typewritten documents, but also from old, handwritten documents. Some of the most challenging documents for many of us to decipher are those old handwritten documents, but AI can help pull information from the documents, helping to eliminate errors and speed up the indexing process.

AI also makes the **searching** process more efficient and faster. This helps not only the Recorder's staff, but will help improve public access by making searching easier to navigate for the general public and for title searchers, as well. One last beneficial task that AI can perform is **redacting** personal and sensitive information from documents that Recorders are statutorily obligated to remove. The goal when using AI in Recorders' offices, in most cases, is not to eliminate humans and the human aspect of our jobs, but

to make our jobs more efficient and accurate. Human oversight will always be a very important step when using AI, it will be important for Recorders to validate the AI decisions, especially regarding statutory compliance.

Property Fraud

Property fraud, as we all know, is on the rise and has become a hot topic with Recorders. Artificial intelligence can help in the fight against property fraud. Banks, title companies, realtors, and Recorders throughout the country are all beginning to use AI powered verification systems that will help in spotting possible fraud. These systems have the capability of analyzing documents to identify suspicious behavior patterns and to recognize fake documents and IDs. AI can also be used to help verify that the parties in a real estate transaction are who they say they are.



Downside to AI with Property Fraud

However, there is a downside to AI when it comes to property fraud. Many fraudsters are using artificial intelligence to generate fraudulent deeds, pay stubs, IDs and property listings. They are even going so far as to create AI-generated audio and video clones of property owners, real estate agents and loan officers. Essentially, it has become necessary to combat AI-generated property fraud with AI-powered verification systems.

In Summary

Artificial intelligence, in the grand scheme of things, can add many perks to our offices. Recorders that begin using AI should see work being completed more efficiently and accurately. We should be able to serve our constituents quickly, and they should have easier access to our records. As with anything, there can be setbacks when it comes to AI. We will likely see an increase in property fraud attempts with the use of AI, but hopefully AI will also help us to detect fraudulent activity, keeping property owners safe. As technology advances, we will all need to keep open minds to allow our offices to advance as well.

ANSWERS FOR CONFERENCE SEASON 2026 WORD SCRAMBLE: 1. Sandia Peak Tramway, 2. Whale Watching, 3. Buffalo, 4. Paddywax Candle Bar, 5. Rivergreenway, 6. Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, 7. The Garage at Microsoft, 8. Rudee Inlet, 9. Naval Park, 10. Fort Wayne, 11. Big Bowl Restaurant, 12. The Ice at CanalSide, 13. Albuquerque, 14. Science Central, 15. Cape Henry Lighthouse, 16. Reston, 17. The Hoppy Gnome, 18. Petroglyph National Monument, 19. Kleinhans Music Hall, 20. Virginia Beach, 21. Eagle Marsh, 22. Scavenger Hunt, 23. Hot Air Balloon Festival, 24. Chesapeake Bay, 25. Wilkeson Pointe

Community Outreach

Connecting with Veterans at Nursing Facilities and the Legion



(l-r) PT assistant: Rachel Duncan, Recorder: Rina Stuck, Deputy Recorder: Ann Frank

Rina Stuck, Wells County Recorder, attended a Veterans Day event at her parents' Nursing Facility in 2024 and found inspiration.

She was saddened by the number of veterans at the ceremony that day who did not have a family member with them. No one is celebrating their commitment to our country.

"This history in this room", she thought, "is remarkable." Rina immediately started thinking of ways to show appreciation to those veterans.

Rina decided to reach out to all the local nursing facilities and received permission to recognize all the veterans in residence. All four facilities in her area were ecstatic that someone wanted to recognize their veterans.

Rina and the Wells County Recorder's Office staff decided they would recognize each veteran with a thank-you note and a challenge coin. The Wells County Recorder's Office created a flyer and sent 94 flyers and challenge coins to the local nursing home to honor retired veteran residents. This endeavor was well-received, and the Wells County Recorder's Office plans to continue recognizing these veterans annually.

Rina and the Recorder's Office delivered flyers and coins to the American Legion and looks forward to visiting these veterans annually. "I am proud to be raised by a veteran with patriotism, love for our country, and respect for those who served." Her work to help veterans feel remembered and valued, will leave a lasting impact on her community.

*If you have an example of Community Outreach, please contact
Lisa Loveless, Henry County, and/or Jessica Pile, Shelby County.*

2025-2026 Newsletter committee

Nikki Allen (Fountain)

Torie Kelley (Howard)

Lisa Loveless (Henry)

Jessica Pile (Shelby)

Gina Pimentel (Lake)

Vicki Pearson (Huntington)

Mary Smith (Brown)

Amy Swain (Monroe)