

# Plate Talk

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Official Publication of the Minnesota Deputy Registrar's Association

## From the President's desk...

Greetings Deputies!

The MDRA Board and Advisory Committee would like to express gratitude for the successful Annual MDRA Conference held in St. Cloud. The ability to gather in person for the monthly MDRA Board Meeting and Annual Conference allows MDRA Members to reconnect with our friends and colleagues within the Deputy Registrar Community.

Special thanks to the MDRA individuals who assisted with the annual conference. Ken Mohr assisted by Sue Jensen, Meagan Weber, and Paula Anderson have coordinated the annual conference for the past several years.

While representatives from DNR were unable to attend the 2022 MDRA Conference, the DPS representatives attending included: Commissioner Harrington, Assistant Commissioner Lynaugh, Director of Operations Tony Anderson, Director of Legal Affairs Kerstin Forsythe, and Training Specialist Todd Oseby. We greatly appreciate the fact that the leaders of DPS attended the conference.

A copy of the DPS presentation at the MDRA Conference is available by email from MDRA Communications Director Joseph Heider.

The speaker for the 2022 Conference was Mike Max. Mike has had a 27 year career in Broadcast Journalism. Mike is an anchor and reporter for the CBS Affiliate in the twin cities and also hosts a nightly radio show "Sports to the Max". Mike rose to national prominence during the George Floyd aftermath as he was one of the few reporters covering the protests live. Mike gave an inspirational speech linking sports to business and how to persevere against challenges and ultimately reach success. His perspectives regarding perseverance seemed particularly appropriate as Minnesota Deputy Registrars strive to achieve Motor Vehicle and Drivers License fee increases.

MDRA Secretary Michael Hintz also provided an overview of the proposed Minnesota DPS Kiosk Program. Kiosks that individuals can use to obtain their motor vehicle registration stickers are popular in other states. Mike Hintz has had many meetings with DPS Staff, representatives of the Kiosk Company ITI, and representatives of DRBOA (the Deputy Registrar's Business Owners Association).

Thanks again to the MDRA Board, MDRA Advisory Committee, and MDRA Lobbyist James Hirst in working to make the 2022 Annual Conference a success. Most importantly, we are grateful to the MDRA Membership for attending the conference.

The MDRA Board and Advisory Committee held its October meeting in Waseca, Minnesota. The MDRA Legislator of the Year event was held to honor Waseca native Representative John Petersburg. Representative Petersburg currently serves on the House Transportation Committee as the minority party lead.

MNDRIVE has experienced several "slow days" during the past month. MDRA leadership has expressed concerns regarding the inability to serve Minnesota Citizens and Dealerships when the system is slow or non operational. DPS Director of Operations Tony Anderson will be on site at several Metro Deputy locations to view system functioning.

Thank you, Minnesota Deputy Registrars, for your ongoing participation in the MDRA. Enjoy the fall of 2022 and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Orth*

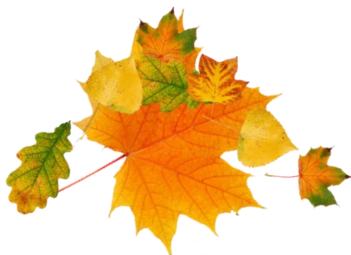
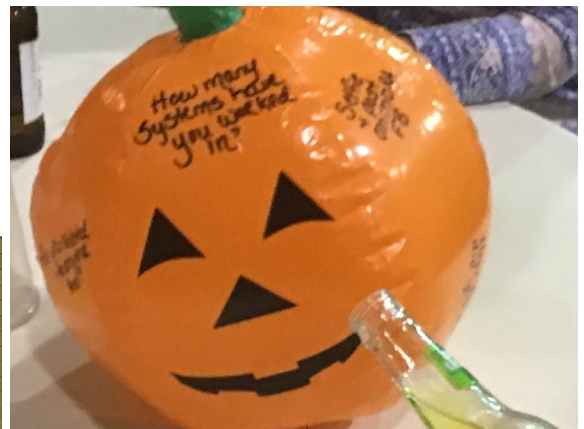
MDRA President



President- Jeff Orth  
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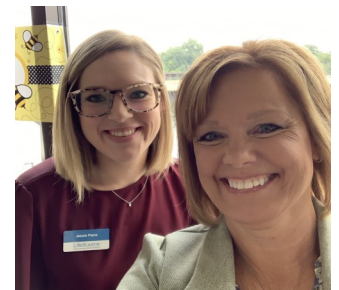
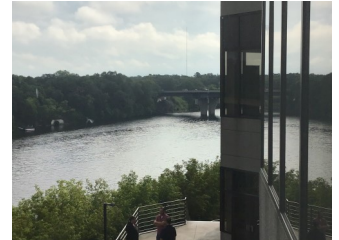
# Hospitality Night Highlights





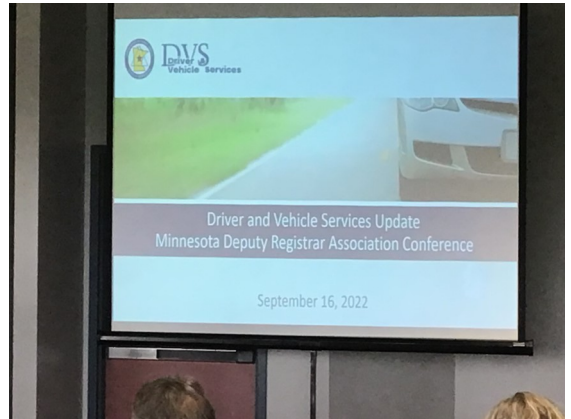


# Annual Membership Meeting Highlights





# Annual Membership Meeting Highlights (cont'd)



# Legislative Update

Jim Hirst - Lobbyist

It was great to see so many deputies from around the state at the MDRA annual conference in Saint Cloud in September! The chance to reconnect in-person with members and share experiences and knowledge is always valuable and worthwhile for attendees. Personally, your discussions with me greatly helps my sharing of anecdotes that helps underscore the urgency of our relief lawmakers too! While legislators do remain largely supportive of our goals, their failure to enact meaningful legislation for us cannot be tolerated any longer!

Recently, MDRA conducted our annual legislative survey to provide direction to the MDRA legislative committee going into next session (results of which are posted separately in this edition of Plate Talk). Not surprisingly, most respondents validated the dire economic situation facing the vast majority of all offices. Alarming in the last two years alone, six offices have now permanently closed, and this trend will only continue should the legislature fail to act next year.

As you may recall however, we did succeed last year in achieving DL filing fee increases and DVS online fee sharing for all offices along with some other reforms (such as a permanent revocation appeal process) in last session's conference committee. However, then the clock expired before the legislature could send it to the governor. We return in 2023 with that agreement as the base to work off, and will seek to further expand upon that. Because next year is a new session, new legislation will need to be introduced reflecting that previous agreement (unfortunately, lawmakers cannot simply "pick up" where they left off last year).

Identifying our bill authors is contingent on the outcome of the November election, which has not yet occurred as of this writing! This fall's election features all state legislative seats (House and Senate) and our constitutional officers. The degree to which we may deviate and expand from the "base agreement" next year is also dependent on that election outcome. In general, if the legislature reverts to one-party control it enhances that possibility. If it remains with divided control, it may limit those options.

MDRA will be issuing a post-election update to members once the results are known after November 8. Later in December, legislative leadership will announce any new committee chairs and membership which will also be shared with you. The senate will regardless need to name a new transportation chair and DNR chair, as those individuals did not seek reelection. Should the house revert to republican control, there will be wholesale changes to their committee structure (and same with the senate should it revert to democrat control).



On October 20, MDRA hosted Representative John Petersburg (R-Waseca) as our featured MDRA Legislator of the Year! Rep. Petersburg has been a staunch ally of deputies and serves as the minority lead on the House Transportation Committee. Should the November election usher in republican control of the house, he will most likely become chair of that committee. Thank you, deputies for your participation at the event, which also raised nearly \$1000 for his reelection campaign!

The 2023 legislative session will start on January 3, and this will be a "budget" session that establishes the next two-year state budget. Minnesota still retains a sizable budget surplus (nearly \$10 billion) that will carry over for consideration with that. MDRA will also be conducting our annual "Day on the Hill" event next year, likely to be held in March (date TBD). Details will be forthcoming, and we encourage your participation!

As always, member engagement with your state lawmakers is critical in pressing our issues! Please be proactive after the election to familiarize yourself with any newly elected lawmakers from your area and reengage with returning legislators. MDRA will be creating a new directory of all deputy offices matched to your specific legislators in the future as well.

Thank you, deputies, for your perseverance and participation in our legislative efforts!

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Hirst, MDRA lobbyist





# Legislative Survey Summary

## **SUMMARY OF 2023 MDRA LEGISLATIVE SURVEY RESULTS**

Each year MDRA surveys our membership to help provide us guidance on issues of importance with our lawmakers heading into the next legislative session at the capitol. This year's confidential survey was conducted over two weeks between August 30 and September 13, with 64% of all member offices responding (67 public and 31 private; and this reflected 23 metro and 75 out-state offices). Thank you, respondents for your participation!

### **Highlights of the survey results are as follows:**

#### **Pertaining to DL filing fees and DL cycle terms:**

81% prefer pursuing DL fee increases as recommended by last year's conference committee

*This would be an \$8 increase for all renewals, \$16 increase for initial Real/EDL only*

Half of all respondents prefer all DL remain on a 4-year cycle; half would accept last year's Senate only proposal of 8-years, provided the filing fee is then increased proportionally

#### **Pertaining to MV filing fees and DVS sharing of online fees with deputy offices:**

44% wish to see MV fee increases added plus online sharing that is more than the proposed two-year \$7 million annual amount that was approved by last year's conference committee

27% wish to see some MV fee increases added to that proposed \$7 million annual fund

14% would accept the conference committee recommendation as is

6% wish to see just that proposed fund increased without any MV fee increase consideration

*FYI, the conference committee had recommended a \$7 million annual fund (for two years) and without any MV increases (but with proposed DL filing fee increases)*

Separately, 80% of all respondents also stated that any online derived DVS fund for deputy offices must be shared with all offices, regardless of their "full-service" or "limited" status

#### **Pertaining to DNR:**

82% support filing fee increases for both tier I and tier II transactions

45% oppose pursuing snowmobile titling (with 31% supporting and 24% unsure)

66% oppose registering watercraft motor serial numbers (8% support and 26% unsure)

#### **Miscellaneous/other legislative issues:**

90% support legislation that provides an appeals process regarding permanent revocation of access (*this matter was also approved in last year's conference committee recommendation*)

77% support advancing legislation to provide quicker alternatives to BCE background checks

70% support amending state law to allow offices to resume providing MV information over the phone with the confirmed owner

39% support legislation requiring DVS to provide an office with their (State) online portal for an office to pursue their own online service offerings to customers

21% oppose, and 40% are unsure

#### **Additional survey background information:**

Survey questions also sought some basic fiscal impact and sustainability queries that help provide an overall picture of the deputy landscape in general (which also assists our messaging to lawmakers). The confidential results of these questions in total revealed the following:

57% of all respondents are projecting a loss this year

33% of respondents project breaking even, only 9% project a profit

70% of all respondents have incurred increased labor costs

20% claim it is stable, 9% claim it has decreased

77% of all respondents have incurred increased office expenses (non-labor)

20% claim it is stable, 3% claim it has decreased

Primary reasons for increased costs/expenses for offices:

69% cite increased health insurance premiums

69% cite utilities (including IT)

68% cite plexiglass installation

67% invested in more scanners, 66% invested in more computers

57% cite office remodeling costs

54% cite credit card terminal replacement costs

52% cite increased employee benefits (apart from health insurance)

46% cite office furnishings

39% cite increased property/casualty insurance

38% invested in new photocopiers

30% invested in security systems

62% of all respondents have lost experienced staff in the past year

30% of all respondents are operating with reduced staffing levels

Other top issues also impacting office productivity/viability:

82% of respondents cite no-fee transactions

76% of respondents cite customer phone calls

63% of respondents cite reduced MV renewals

61% of respondents cite DSCO availability

59% of respondents cite angry/irate customers

56% of respondents cite DVS PIC availability







# AAMVA Conference

## AAMVA International Convention

**Overview:** The AAMVA International Convention took place in Baltimore Maryland at the Marriot Waterfront on the harbor. There were individuals from as North as Newfoundland and as far south as Puerto Rico. Many of the individuals who attended were from their home states Department of Motor Vehicles but there were also people from law enforcement, DOTs and many vendors who also attended. It was a wonderful experience to get to network and get insight into what the future holds for our work moving forward.



### Sessions attended:

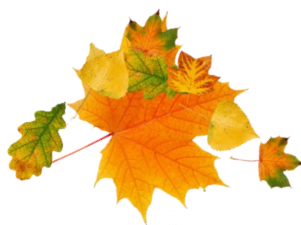
**mDL (mobile driver's licenses) from a law enforcement perspective** – mDL has been implemented already in some states around the country. mDL is considered to be more secure and more official than most hard copies of driver's licenses. Law enforcement in states with mDL do **NOT** ever take control of the individual's phone. They use a scanning device either on their own cell phone or in some cases a tablet. AAMVA as an organization is proposing federal legislation that mandates individuals to hold a physical copy of the driver's license even if the state is also participating in mDL services. This allows law enforcement to require residents to provide a hard copy of the DL/ ID at any time. This also helps deal with some of the issues of broken screens, phone batteries dying, etc.

**Automated Vehicle Driving Systems** – As many of you have probably seen, there are autonomous vehicles being deployed throughout the globe. AAMVA has multiple faculty members participating in studies on how to make them more effective. States are tasked with reporting each and every stop light, stop sign and traffic signal to help these vehicles perform. There have been many improvements but factors such as rural roads with no markings and weather make this feat much more difficult.

**Electronic Titling-** Some states already have electronic titling, where all aspects of the title process are electronic. AAMVA is working with jurisdictions to help with interoperable processes and functional requirements (so that there are standard practices in all jurisdictions).

**Fraud in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century-** How do you balance offering more services online while also remaining secure? States that have started offering more and more services online seem to be continuously trying to get ahead of potential fraud transactions. Most have had instances of fraudulent requests for records, reports, etc, in an effort to gain access to people's private information. As more transactions move online, it will be important to remain vigilant in IT security efforts to safeguard private information.

**Workforce Management-** Over the past several years and especially during the pandemic, the workforce has started trending towards work from home or hybrid models and we are seeing more and more employees willing to leave their current positions if it means they can work from home all or part of the time. How do we retain our staff in this changing environment? Looking at different business processes is one (is there a way to offer a hybrid model, especially if we keep trending towards more online transactions?); another is competitive pay/benefits that may outweigh the allure of work from home. Recruitment efforts such as offering internships or work study could provide opportunities to bring in new potential employees.



# AAMVA Conference con'td

## Round table discussions:

**Online Vehicle Sales** – Many states are having issues with companies such as Carvana who are posting their vehicles online and delivering the vehicles to the customer’s home address. The issue is that most of the time Carvana does not have a dealer license to sell vehicles in most states. Many times, the vehicle being sold never actually goes to a physical dealership and instead is kept in a state where Carvana does not have a dealer license. The paperwork also seems to be inaccurate many of the times and sometimes vehicles are being sold without a physical title. AAMVA is brainstorming ideas on how to solve some of these issues going forward.

**REAL ID** – There was an individual from DHS at the table talking about changes to REAL ID. The first thing he spoke on was the Social Security proof requirement. There is nothing in the federal law that requires individuals to provide proof of social, although some states have decided to require it. There are changes being proposed that should go into effect in the next year allowing states to except applications for REAL ID through a remote application process (RAP). RAP makes it easier for residents to apply without having to physically coming into an office. There was pause for concern regarding photos and photo requirements. This is something we will have to keep an eye out for in MN to ensure we are compensated or kept as part of the process as deputy registrars.

**Dealing with Upset Customers** – At this small table discussion we spoke about ways for staff to feel supported and appreciated during trying times. There were individuals from other states who offered up 1 wellness hour each week that staff can plan to take to go for a walk or attend a wellness class. Other people talked about salary increases, although each state operates differently which makes this option more complicated. I spoke about a policy that Hennepin County implemented called the NDRW policy (non-discrimination, respectful workplace policy). This gives the staff the ability to feel empowered to leave the counter if a customer is being rude or vulgar. The management team member will then take over and give the customer 1 opportunity to change their behavior. If they refuse, then they are asked to leave. We state the policy to the customer and state their behavior to ensure everyone is on the same page. This has made the staff feel safe and respected in the workplace. Due to the differences in how each state operates, some states have given the option for rotational remote work. One of our biggest competitors in the job market are those that offer hybrid work as most people will even take a pay cut so they can work from home.







# AAMVA Conference con'td



## Vendors Visited:

**LA Wallet –** LA wallet stands for Louisiana Wallet, and they are a company that provides many mobile services including mDL. They are currently live in the state of Louisiana. The individual logs into the app and they can pull up an exact replica of their DL. Their app communicates directly with the LA DMV and all data is updated in real time. When you click on the DL it shows a watermark which helps ensure its validity. They also provide services such as voter registration for residents and if someone applies for an absentee ballot in your name it will pop up on that person's phone to verify that it is in fact them attempting to acquire an absentee ballot.

**ITI –** Meagan and I met with ITI to get a demonstration of both a tab renewal as well as a driver's license renewal on the kiosk. For the tab renewal, the customer can scan their renewal notice or their driver's license. They select the vehicle they are hoping to renew and then payment is requested. Once payment has been approved the machine updates the record in real time and prints out a registration card with the stickers attached. It looks very similar to what customers get if they order their tabs online with DVS.

For the DL transaction the customer scans their DL. They select the type of ID they are looking to renew. We selected a REAL ID. The kiosk walks the customer through the required documentation. There is a little slot in the kiosk for customers to put in their documents and it will scan and upload it to their transaction. Once everything has been input it asks for payment. Once payment has been approved it prints up a temporary credential. The customer will receive their physical copy in the mail once it is reviewed by someone on the state side.

**Qmatic, No Wait Inside, other queuing systems. –** There were hundreds of vendors but a good chunk of them were queuing systems to help funnel people through our lobbies. Most had very similar products, but some were very customizable. They could send text messages to customers when their numbers were being called, and most provided an online appointment system to customers as well.



# Todd's Corner

Hello all!

First, I wanted to start by thanking you for inviting me to the MDRA conference. I had a great time and was deeply touched by the warm reception!

I was asked at the conference if I would be willing to start writing articles for Plate Talk, and of course agreed. I would be remiss if I didn't include a shameless plug for Time with Training. All of you have made it a very successful monthly event, so thank you for that! We continue to see increases in attendance every month, so don't miss us in November! The day two sessions landed on the 2 year anniversary of MNDRIIVE so we will be sure and celebrate a very successful two years with our new system.

My tip of the month is a pretty simple one!

Check your work before moving on to the next customer. I know this sounds overly simplistic and I also know that we are all busier than a farmer trying to load a passel of jack rabbits onto a flatbed truck, but I feel the tip is still a good one. Taking a moment to check our work before completing transactions and sessions will save us time in the long run. Trust me, I am guilty of it as well. I have gotten better at asking myself a few questions before clicking the dreaded *Complete* button.

Did I:

- Verify I worked with the correct record and owner?
- Complete all fields, required and optional, correctly?
- Include all the right documents and verify they scanned in nicely?
- Void the payment AND reverse the transaction when appropriate, rather than one and not the other?
- Put reversed inventory back on hand?

Thank you again for the opportunity to share tips. I look forward to the next Plate Talk!



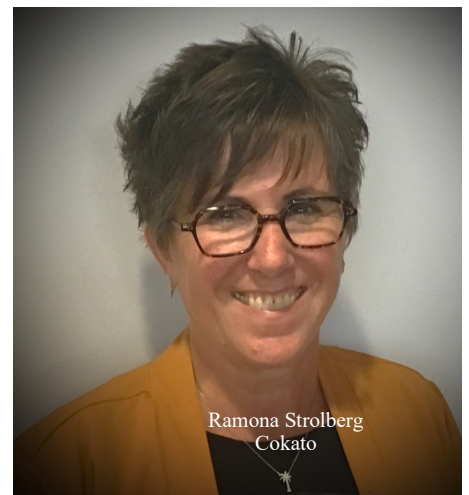
# New Board Members



Laura Laudenbach  
Stearns County



Ben O'Reilly  
Rochester



Ramona Strolberg  
Cokato





# EXPLORE Minnesota MDRA MISSION STATEMENT

The Minnesota Deputy Registrars Association (MDRA) is a statewide membership organization promoting common interests of deputy registrars in providing professional licensing service to the public and liaison to the state.

OCT

10,000 lakes

22

## Advisory Committee Members

Dave Konshok - Lifetime Honorary Member  
Ken Mohr - Lifetime Honorary Member  
Denise Vogl  
Suzanne Jensen  
Meagan Weber  
John Lenarz  
Neng Lor  
Kim Griffith

## Lobbyist

Jim Hirst

## Plate Talk Editors

Paula Anderson, Joe Heider

We're on Facebook



Check us out!

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