



127th Annual County and District Clerks' Association of Texas Conference

July 10-14, 2022 • Waco Convention Center



**Clerk of the Year
Award Nominee
Region VIII Nominee**



Anne Lorentzen

**County: Nueces
Position: District Clerk
Years in Office: 8 years**

List of Association Committees Served:

Board of Directors

2021-2022

List of Other "Association" Notable Services:

Treasurer for Region 8

List of Personal Information and Civic Service:

Sweet Adelines International

Belong to Sparkling City Chorus of Sweet Adelines International. An international group of women who sing barbershop harmony a cappella style. We perform several times throughout the year, including free performances to charitable organizations.

The Nueces County District Clerk's Office is unique amongst the 254 counties. Although the County has a fulltime County Clerk, it is the District Clerk that takes care of all court filing for our eight District Courts, five County Courts at Law (including Juvenile, CPS, and guardianship cases), IV-D cases and Probate. It is one of the largest departments in the County with a total of sixty employees.

Before I was sworn into office in 2016, the Judges of Nueces County unanimously voted to remove the responsibility of jury services from the Department of Court Administrator and place it under the District Clerk's Office.

After being sworn in, I walked into an office that had recently failed an audit, discovered that all files stored on the district clerk and chief deputy's computers had been deleted and all paper files and manuals had been shredded, and to top it off, the County and District Clerks Association of Texas had awarded their yearly summoner convention to Nueces County.

There were eleven fulltime positions needing to be filled. From the beginning, my Chief Deputy, Lilia Ann Gutierrez, and I came into the office daily and worked alongside our staff. We told the clerks that we would be in the office and any questions or issues they had, they could come to us for help. We made ourselves available 24/7 and continue to do so at present.

One of our first priorities was to address the egregious findings of the failed audit which had resulted in an audit of the entire workings of the District Clerk's Office by our county auditor and an outside auditor hired by our Commissioners Court. We hired the eleven fulltime positions which helped our office to begin to get rid of the backlog of cases, e-filings, and uncollected financials reported in the audit.

We were fortunate to have the support of the fantastic clerks in the surrounding counties who were always available for guidance and to lend a helping hand in the planning of the 2015 Summer Conference held in Nueces County.

Once the deficiencies in the office found in the audit were fixed, we were able to spend the rest of my first term getting the office up to speed on using the very expensive case management system in a way that integrated our office with the district attorney and sheriff's offices. This allowed us to "go live" with the criminal part of the Odyssey system - slowly bringing the office closer to a paperless system.

In 2017, we experienced the first hurricane while I was in office. And while Corpus Christi was not in the direct path of the storm, the wind and rain made its way to our records warehouse leaving us another project - preserving and protecting our records. With the help of a new records manager for the county and Kofile Technologies, we have been able to preserve historic records from the beginning of sovereignty to 1950, leaving a legacy of historical information for generations to come.

A majority of my second term has been hallmarked by leading the office through the COVID-19 pandemic. I am proud to say that through the pandemic, our office remained open to serve the public and the courts. A silver lining of the pandemic was the need to learn and adapt to new ways of doing business. Many of these new procedures, such as eSignature and eService, increased our efficiency and resilience. Should another hurricane or pandemic come our way - we will continue to serve.