

Dwight E. Brock: Clerk's office reaching out with services on Internet

By Dwight E. Brock Clerk of the Circuit Court, Collier County

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Guest commentary

As more and more electronic information and services are made available to the public using the Internet, public-service agencies are challenged to simplify, expand and promote online services so the public can learn to conduct its business effectively and efficiently with minimal assistance from staff.

The Clerk of the Circuit Court's office has been moving steadily ahead in its effort to have citizens serve themselves, whenever and wherever possible, using simple, proven, low cost technology.

The Clerk's Office now has self-service kiosks in all of its remaining satellite offices in Golden Gate City, the North Collier Government Services Center (at Orange Blossom) and the Immokalee Courthouse. The kiosks guide people through step-by-step processes of applying for a marriage license, searching recorded documents or ordering copies of documents.

We have installed kiosks in the tax collector's offices at Greentree Plaza and Wilson Boulevard which allow people to pay traffic citations online for a small fee using a debit or credit card.

People who do not have a home computer can access the Internet to reach the clerk's

website, free of charge, at any of the Collier County public libraries.

The clerk's website, www.CollierClerk.com continues to be the primary source for customer information and services. By using CollierClerk.com people can pay traffic citations online, check juror numbers, access foreclosure judgments, make passport applications and find marriage license requirements and collection agency information.

The site is organized by department and contains the telephone number, email address and office location for each department and provides people with the essential information they need to conduct their business with the clerk's office. There are also educational documents, PowerPoint presentations and links to local, state and federal agencies as well as other resources related to various court and county matters. A popular link features a centralized list of all court forms and fees which eliminates confusing and sometimes- time-consuming searches.

A complementary CollierClerk.com newsletter is published and distributed by email and copies are available at all of the clerk's counters. The newsletter is designed to educate and inform people about the clerk's online programs and service programs. Citizens can sign up to receive the online newsletter by sending an email to [collierclerk@ collierclerk.com](mailto:collierclerk@collierclerk.com).

Over the past three years, the Clerk's Office has instructed more than 1,000 Collier County residents on how to use www.CollierClerk.com. The next free public seminar — "Using CollierClerk.com" — is scheduled for Nov. 9 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Naples Regional Library on Central Avenue.

In preparation for more court documents being made available online, the Florida Supreme Court issued a Corrected Rules Opinion (SC08-2443) which outlines steps to protect a citizen's personal information. This rule went into effect on Oct. 1, 2010.

We urge Collier County citizens to search their own personal information on the clerk's website to make sure that Social Security numbers and bank account information do not appear on any of their public records. If you happen to find any personal

information that needs to be redacted, just send a simple request to the Clerk's Office and it will be removed from public view.

For more information, contact Robert D. St. Cyr, Director of Community Outreach, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Collier County, at 3315 U.S. 41 E., Suite 102, Naples 34112 or call 239-252-6879.



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