



**Upcoming Events:**

- Feb. 8-10, 2023— Basic Code Class
- March 30-31, 2023— Spring Conference
- April 12-14, 2023—Basic Code Class
- April 13-14, 2023— Prop. Maint. Class
- Aug. 23-25, 2023—Basic Code Class
- Nov. 1-3, 2023— Basic Code Class

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December 2022

## Inaugural Award for OCEA from Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation

OCEA was blessed to receive the Inaugural Award from the Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation for the Professional Organization of the Year!

This is from their statement “ The Professional Organization of the Year Award is given to an organization such as a state association or chapter that has partnered with the Foundation and taken extra steps to promote our partnership. This may include providing a free conference booth, training opportunities, sharing of Foundation social media, providing Foundation information on their website, and communicating to their membership about the Foundation. The Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association was the first state association to partner and support the Foundation in early 2021. Since then, OCEA has invited the Foundation to their 2022 conference to provide officer safety training. The OCEA Board of Directors has been very supportive of officer safety and our partnership. OCEA has shared by far, the most content from the Foundation on social media and to their members. CEOSF is grateful for our strong partnership! Congratulations to OCEA!”



## From your President—Maverick Fritsche, City of Okmulgee



Fellow Members and Colleagues,

I hope you are well and are as excited as I am that the grass is finally dead and we can enjoy the winter break from mowing. Our Officers have a lot of exciting news to pass on to you in this newsletter. I will spare you the details, but can confidently tell you that all of them have worked very hard and put in a lot of personal time to provide you all with many educational opportunities and events upcoming.

On a personal note, it may seem the world is getting grimmer every day and people are not as nice as they used to be. It may also seem that hate is expanding and overshadowing the kindness and love that we know is still out there. I know we all have bad days and sometimes it is hard to consistently maintain an attitude of positivity and kindness. Just try to remember a kind word, a simple smile, or sometimes just walking away to prevent a conflict does not cost us anything.

This time of year reminds me of a quote from Gary Zukhav. "We cannot stop the winter or the summer from coming. We cannot stop the spring or the fall or make them other than they are. They are gifts that we cannot refuse. But **we can choose** what we will contribute to life when each arrives."

I pray you all are safe and happy this Christmas season and that you are blessed in your homes and hearts.

Thank you for all you do to keep your communities safe and beautiful! It is an honor to serve this membership. Shawn "Maverick" Fritsche - OCEA President

## From your 1st VP—Travis Guess, City of Prague

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said into them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a Manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.

Book 42, Luke (002: 08-14) The Bible, King James Version

From our Family to your Yours



## From your 2nd VP—Ivan Smith, City of Edmond

Greetings Colleagues,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families well. As we are about to put the wrapping (and Bow) on another year, I would like to ask you all a question. Just how many Reindeers does it take to pull a sleigh? Now before you start singing Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer to yourself and counting the other deer on your hand let me stop you right there. Not that I'm trying to steal your Christmas Cheer, but what I am really talking about is Teamwork.

Take just a few minutes and ponder all of the teamwork that it takes for us to be successful through the course of a year. Now before you go off on a tangent about being the Lone Ranger (for those of you who are), remember it's not too late to make that naughty list. The amount is mind boggling though. You have the Mayor and Council or Trustees, which ever the case may be, that make up the governing body for your municipality. Then the City Manager, Attorney, City Clerk, and all the admin support staff. We certainly can't leave out Mrs. Kravitz who calls us weekly to advise us of all the violations in town. There are those contractors or city staff that do the Abatements. What about those county employees that record our filings. This list goes on and on if you ever really take the time to think about it, and we need be thankful for those teammates whatever their role, even Mrs. Kravitz.

As a member of your O.C.E.A. board I want you all to know that I, as well as all the other members of the board, are your teammates too. Please don't ever hesitate to reach out to me or any of us for anything. One of the most common definitions of a team would probably be that of a group of people working together to achieve a common goal. As Code Officers our common goal is the Health, Safety and Welfare for the citizens of not only our communities, but the entire state. We are all in this together, much like one of the other definitions of a team, "two or more horses, oxen, (Reindeer) etc.. harnessed to the same plow (sleigh) etc..".



## From your Treasurer—Andy Templeton, City of Sand Springs

Oh the weather outside is spiteful! It's hot one day and cold the next ... hard to choose the right coat.

As OCEA treasurer, I can tell you our back account is merry. The exact amount fluctuates with regular activity, but you can always request a copy of the organization's financials from me to see our revenues and expenses in a real time format. The bills are paid, and there's plenty remaining for good financial health and prosperity in 2023.

So why should we as code officers care about cold weather? There are folks out there living or squatting in homes or buildings without a heating source. We've had cases where transient folks have literally started fires inside vacant homes to keep themselves warm. In other cases, folks overloaded their electrical circuits with space heaters or overtaxed their gas appliances to keep warm.

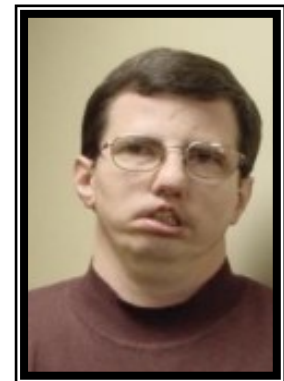
The results are usually tragic – both in terms of human life and property loss.

We've also found folks using alternative heating sources not designed for the indoors. The results can be tragically asphyxiating.

The moral of this story is we as code officers need to pay as much attention to the people affected by the cold as we do the properties they are living in. We're all in winter's icy grasp together. Take warmth in the knowledge that grass season is only four months away!

I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2023!

Andy Templeton, Treasurer





### From your 3rd VP—Wayne McCasland, City of Comanche

I wish you all Merry Christmas and a Happy New year. I am looking forward to what 2023 will bring. Over the last couple years we have experienced many obstacles, yet we continue to press forward. I look forward to working with OCEA as well as the many members. As we go forward into this year i would encourage the members to renew the membership. It would be a help out if it could be done early to make sure we get the proper count as well as give time to send what is needed to AACE. I look forward to meeting you and working with all of you.

### From your Past President—Felix Nance, City of Hominy

As I write this we are only a few days to Christmas. By now the cards have been sent, presents bought, home prepared for company, be it friends or family.

Maybe, just maybe, we can take a collective moment to catch our breath. Lets remember the reason for the Season, celebrate with our friends and family, enjoy our time together.

I can't stress this enough, having recently losing a family member, cherish your time together. Share family history and stories about loved ones past.

Life is short, live it to the fullest, enjoy family and friends, stay safe.

MAKE IT A MERRY CHRISTMAS FOR ALL



### From your Secretary—Janita Hatley, City of Norman

Greetings to all of you! We have some important info to share with everyone.

1. We are offering our OCEA Community Improvement Grant again in 2023. Be looking for an email from me soon after January 1st with the detailed info and the application. We will offer ten \$1,000 reimbursement grants to cities/towns that are members with OCEA.
2. Since our February Basic Code class has been full for quite some time, we decided to add an extra class to help alleviate the stress of waiting until August. So our extra 3-day class will be held on April 12-14, 2023 at MNTC—beginning at 8:30am each day. Contact Janita or Ivan for details/questions.
3. Our Spring Conference planning is in the works. Mark your calendars for March 30/31, 2023 in OKC at the Champion Convention Center. Registration packet will be sent out shortly after January 1st. Cost will be \$200 to attend. The hotel next door is Hilton Garden Inn and we are working on a room rate, but at this time it looks like \$119 per night. OCEA will offer one scholarship for the conference with hotel stay so be on the lookout for this info in the packet. OMAG will also offer a scholarship to cover the conference registration fee, and I will include that entry form in the packet as well.
4. If you would like to attend our Property Maintenance Class, sign up now before it is full. We only offer it one time per year. It is scheduled for April 13-14, 2023.

We've had many changes in my department this year, with my coworker Joe Schier passing away in January from Covid and my longtime office partner Barbara Burlingame retiring after 25 years back at the City. We are moving into a new building in a few weeks also. These changes have made me sit and look more closely at my life and my routines. I've been at the City for nearly 31 years now, and I think I needed this opportunity to re-evaluate things and see where I need to kick myself in the rear and step up my game. Just because I've been here this long, doesn't mean I have to be stagnant. We have hired 2 new inspectors and I think Michael and Tim complete our code team nicely. Life is precious and I want to appreciate each day and not waste it by being old and crusty. I encourage you to take a look at your daily life and see where you can make some changes/improvements. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you!



## From your Sgt-at-Arms—Brian Henry, City of Perry

This time of year can be crazy and often we grow anxious for what we're gonna do to celebrate the holidays. As much fun as it is daydreaming about aunt Rita's fruitcake again this year, remember we have to keep our minds focused while on duty.

As much joy as the season may bring you and I, there are those in our communities who this is a very tough time of year for. Like everyday, we do not know what anyone is going through when we approach someone's front door. A routine conversation with someone about open storage can go sideways in an instant. Keep your head on a swivel and stay vigilant. Merry Christmas from the board!



## Training Opportunities & Resources

- Code Official Safety Specialist—Online Course thru Code Enforcement Officer Safety Foundation—set at your own pace. Visit this link for more info. <https://www.codeofficersafety.org/training>
- Educode—February 27—March 3, 2023—in Las Vegas, NV at the Orleans Hotel Casino & Conference Center. In-Person and Virtual options available. They have a Code Enforcement Track that offers helpful and informative training. Visit their website for info— [www.educode.us](http://www.educode.us)
- OMAG is proud to offer Online Training to our members. This is a Value Added Service to help our members cope with limited training budgets. OMAG ONLINE courses are offered FREE to all OMAG members. OMAG has partnered with LocalGovU Online Training which provides self-paced online courses written specifically for local government. Courses are available anytime and from any computer with internet access 24/7. Courses cover eight major topics:
  - ⇒ Customer Service
  - ⇒ Dispatcher / 9-1-1 Tele-Communicator
  - ⇒ Firefighting
  - ⇒ Grant Writing Assistance
  - ⇒ Health & Wellness
  - ⇒ Law Enforcement, Jail and Corrections
  - ⇒ Management / HR
  - ⇒ Safety & Environmental

Visit <https://www.localgovu.com/omag/> or [www.omag.org](http://www.omag.org) for info.

# Training

# Learning

## OCEA December Board Meeting Photos

*Merry Christmas*



The Award that OCEA was presented from CEOSF



Your OCEA Board likes to have fun at our Board meetings and spread some holiday cheer.



Look at the size of these platters!!! These two put the hurt on a lot of BBQ at lunch. We do like to EAT at our events!



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**Founded in 1994, the Oklahoma Code Enforcement Association is dedicated to the study and advancement of Code Enforcement activities at the local, county and state levels. Its membership represents both large cities and small towns that have an interest in enhancing neighborhood and community health, safety, welfare and aesthetics.**

Like us on Facebook



## AACE—American Association of Code Enforcement

- ◆ AACE is doing several national check-ins to ensure we are providing our members the best possible service. We learn so much from these check-ins and have enjoyed networking during these video calls.

The dates are listed below and will be held on Tuesday's at 3pm CST:

January 17, 2023

April 18, 2023

July 18, 2023

October 17, 2023

- ◆ If you are not receiving periodic emails from AACE, please contact Janita so we can make sure your AACE pass thru membership is valid. Visit [www.aace1.org](http://www.aace1.org) for more info.

Don't forget that OMAG offers scholarships for all of OCEA's Basic Code Certification Classes and to our Conferences. Please contact Kevin McCullough to learn more at -

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Law Enforcement Specialist

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*Tidbits from Janita:*

*Please send me photos, funny or interesting stories from some case that you've worked, or a Before/After from a case that you've worked and I will add them to the newsletter. Our members would really enjoy seeing things from fellow OCEA members across the State.*

*You can email your newsletter submissions to me at [Janita.hatley@normanok.gov](mailto:Janita.hatley@normanok.gov) and you can call me at (405)623-8009 or in my office at (405) 366-5318.*

Thankful for our Partners/Friends



**OMAG**



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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CODE ENFORCEMENT



The Unified Voice of Oklahoma Cities and Towns