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**SPEEDY REGISTER OF DEEDS SETS RECORD
TWO MILLION PAGES IN 2003 - THE MOST EVER**

Macomb County Clerk – Register of Deeds Carmella Sabaugh announced today that the Register of Deeds office processed over 2 million pages in 2003, setting a record in 2003 for the number of documents recorded. Sabaugh's office recorded 389,631 documents that contained 2,111,401 pages. The volume of pages recorded by Sabaugh's office more than tripled since the year 2000. In 2000, the office recorded 210,867 documents and 653,869 pages.

“Not only did we process more real estate documents than ever before, but we improved our turn around time, and improved service by putting documents on the Internet,” said Sabaugh. “The register of deeds is a bright spot for Macomb County. My staff is a special group of people and I am proud of them all.”

“I think the Register of Deeds is on the right course,” said Denise Consiglio, a realtor at Real Estate One, serving Macomb County. “I had a client call me when he got his deed back from Sabaugh's register of deeds office shortly after recording it. Sabaugh's service was so fast I didn't believe it at first.”

“The title industry now has an on-going dialogue with Carmella Sabaugh and she has shown a willingness to listen to our concerns,” said Robert A. Meredith, Vice President, First American Title Insurance Company. “The register of deeds office is definitely processing documents faster now. Sabaugh's office is on the right track.”

“In comparison to other counties, Macomb County has a much shorter turn-around time. The Macomb County register of deeds is the speediest in the tri-county area,” said Paul Garvey, Chair of the Macomb County Bar Association Estate Planning Section who has a law practice in St. Clair Shores. “My secretary was able to pull a deed off Sabaugh's Internet site, which saved a trip to the office. Sabaugh's office is going in the right direction.”

“The Macomb County register of deeds office is definitely on the right path,” said Alan Polack, President-elect of the Macomb County Probate Bar Association who has a law practice in Shelby Township. “My clients are able to get real estate information quickly from the register of deeds.”

“The speed and service at the Macomb County register of deeds is good,” said Ed Schlager, Realtor with Re/Max Advantage. “Carmella Sabaugh has modernized the register of deeds office.”

The Register of Deeds office records real estate documents such as deeds and mortgages. The office has county property records dating back to 1818. Real estate records are public

information. The cost to get a copy of a deed is \$1 per page. The cost to record a new deed is \$14 for the first page and \$3 for each additional page.

The records are used to determine who owns a particular piece of property. One function of the office is to provide a way for a real estate buyer to verify that the property he or she is paying for hasn't already been sold to another person. Deeds are recorded in the order they are received. As a result of the Macomb County housing boom and large numbers of people refinancing their mortgages, pages recorded at the Register of Deeds surged more than 300% since 2000. Despite the large increase in demand, Sabaugh's smart use of technology dramatically shortened the recording process. Unlike some counties, Macomb County deeds are actually recorded the same day they are received by the Register of Deeds but other processing is done before they are mailed back.

In addition to processing a record number of documents, last year Sabaugh put real estate documents on the Internet. For documents recorded in 1992 or later you can view them on the Internet from home and even print yourself a copy. The cost of Internet access to records is about the same as the cost of accessing them in the office. Macomb County real estate records may be found at <http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>.

Sabaugh was the first Register of Deeds in Michigan to use a computerized indexing and imaging system for real estate records. She installed the system in 1995. In the last ten years Sabaugh's office recorded over 2.3 million documents, many of which have multiple pages.

"An efficient way to keep up with increased demand is to use technology in a smart way," said Sabaugh. "I'm pleased with the progress we made so far at the Register of Deeds. I'll be announcing another major improvement at the Register of Deeds soon..."

In addition to improving service at the register of deeds, Carmella Sabuagh:

- Last month became the first Michigan county clerk to offer evening hours. Sabaugh's office is open Wednesdays until 7pm letting people get personal service without having to miss work.
- In June will become the first Michigan clerk to offer free bus rides to and from the courthouse to people summoned for jury duty.
- Allows instant access to copies of real estate deeds and mortgages by putting all county public real estate records on the Internet. This reduces trips to the office.
- Was the first county clerk in Michigan to provide overnight delivery service for birth certificate requests and other vital records. You can now get your records in a hurry.
- Put Macomb County Circuit Court case names, numbers and judges on the Internet making it easy to look up whether or not cases were filed against someone and to find a case number.

- Was the first county clerk in Michigan to launch a toll-free 24-hour fax-on-demand system for forms and information. It even works on nights and weekends when the office is closed.
- Was the first county clerk in Michigan to provide assumed name business registrations and death records on the Internet.
- Enabled the public to initiate an automatic phone call from the clerk's web site.
- Enlisted local amateur radio operators as emergency backup to relay election results on election night.
- Ended potential favoritism by making sure all title companies pay the same fees as the public for real estate records.
- Was the first county clerk in Michigan to make paying easier by accepting credit cards.
- Ended potential "judge shopping" by computerizing random judge selection when lawsuits are filed.
- Stopped cash payments from being made in courtrooms by requiring all payments to be made and logged through the clerk's cashier window.
- Protected Macomb County residents' privacy by defending against a lawsuit that would have forced disclosure of citizens' complete birth dates.
- Started a Personal Protection Order Assistance Center to help victims of abuse.