

The Third Branch



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Courts Bid Farewell to Three Key Administrators

The court system lost three highly regarded longtime administrators this spring. John R. Hartman, director of the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS), District Court Administrator James E. Seidel, and Personnel Director Cheri A. Timpel stepped down to pursue new chapters in their lives.

Director of State Courts J. Denis Moran said the three departures leave a hole that will be difficult to fill. "John, Jim, and Cheri have very different areas of expertise but they share a work ethic and an extremely strong commitment to public service. The court system is far better for their efforts, and they will be missed."

Hartman Led Upgrades in Equipment, Customer Service

As director of OITS, John Hartman made it easier for court employees to use their computers. Hartman played a key role in planning and implementing a variety of upgrades to the server and

to individual computer workstations, and streamlined the OITS Help Line process to provide faster, better customer service. He also developed an Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan (see *The Third Branch*, winter 2001) that will guide the court system's IT development for the next several years. The plan lays out a direction for everything from e-filing to CourtNet (the court system's Intranet) to videoconferencing and electronic documents display in the newly restored Supreme Court Hearing Room.

Hartman joined the Director of State Courts Office in 1988 as a programmer/analyst and was made director of OITS in 1998. His last day was April 27.

OITS is one of two departments that meet the courts' information technology (IT) needs. The other is the Circuit Court Automation Program (CCAP), which develops custom case management software and manages hardware and computer training

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Courts' Budget Stalls in Joint Finance

The Legislature's budget writing committee on May 9 voted against every court request that was up for consideration except one—the creation of a court commissioner education program. Under this proposal, commissioners would be required to participate in a continuing education program created by the Supreme Court. A half-time position would be created within the Office of Judicial Education to coordinate this program, which would be funded by fees paid by either the commissioner or the county.

The Joint Finance Committee approved, 13-3, an increase from \$300 to \$500 in the fee charged for legal custody and physical placement studies. Senator Kim Plache, D-Racine, introduced the motion.

The committee approved a motion brought by Senator Robert Welch, R-Redgranite, and Representative Sheryl K. Albers, R-Reedsburg, which declined the courts' proposal for a training and certification program for interpreters. This motion, however, increased the state reimbursement rate to counties for interpreters from \$35 per half day to \$20 per hour, and provided \$105,600 in

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Unified Family Court Pilot a Success

by: Steven R. Steadman, district court administrator



Court Administrator
Steven R. Steadman

The La Crosse County Circuit Court has implemented a program that has greatly enhanced the administration of companion criminal and civil child abuse and neglect cases in the justice system.

The La Crosse County Unified Family Court Project, begun as a pilot in 1998 as judges searched for better ways to serve troubled families, now has been made permanent.

The project operates under the principle that better outcomes can be achieved for children and families when the court simultaneously processes all cases that involve a family.

The key components of this project are strong judicial leadership in the areas of collaboration, expedited review of case dispositions, and mediated child protection conferencing.

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Bills Await Legislative Action

by: Sheryl A. Gervasi, legislative liaison

The 2001-2002 legislative session commenced in January and is still underway. While the Joint Finance Committee is working on the budget, the rest of the Legislature is tackling a variety of bills. Bills of interest to the courts are being monitored and are listed below with pertinent court cases noted. ❖

Bill	Key Provision	Status
SB 9; AB 111	Revises Uniform Commercial Code-Secured Transactions (recommended by Wisconsin Commission on Uniform State Laws)	both bills are ready for floor action
SB 22	Extends time to bring civil action for sexual assault of a child	in Senate Judiciary Committee
SB 26	Exposing a child to harmful material (<i>State v. Weidner</i> , 2000 WI 52)	in Senate Judiciary Committee
SB 46	Increases the retirement multiplier for court commissioners from 1.6 percent to 2 percent	in Joint Survey Committee on Retirement Systems
SB 59	Restores courts' power to suspend for failure to pay in non-traffic related cases	in Senate Judiciary Committee
SB 80; AB 182	Eliminates sunset for fifth standard for involuntary civil commitment	in Senate Judiciary Committee in Assembly Health Committee
SB 95; AB 216	Limits right to discovery in operating while intoxicated cases where refusal occurs (<i>State v. Schoepp</i> , 204 Wis.2d 266 (1996))	in Senate Judiciary Committee and Assembly Highway Safety Committee
SB 115	Provides public financing for state Supreme Court elections	in Senate Judiciary Committee
AB 3	Truth in Sentencing trailer bill	adopted by Assembly; in Senate Judiciary Committee
AB 5; SB 60	Restores courts' power to suspend for failure to pay in juvenile non-traffic-related cases	AB 5 adopted by Assembly; both bills in Senate Judiciary Committee
AB 54 (Act 2)	Grants immunity and anonymity to mothers who relinquish custody of newborns rather than abandoning them	adopted by both houses; signed into law April 3, effective April 18
AB 60	Narrows statute prohibiting nude representations (<i>State v. Stevenson</i> , 2000 WI 71)	adopted by Assembly; in Senate Judiciary Committee
AB 116	Allows inpatient alcohol and drug treatment of minors 14 or older without their consent	adopted by Assembly; in Senate Judiciary Committee
AB 254	Allows attorneys to issue subpoenas in criminal cases	in Assembly Judiciary Committee
AJR 13; SJR 17	Increases terms for county elected officials, including clerks of circuit court, from two to four years	AJR adopted by Assembly; both bills in Senate Government Operations Committee
AJR 22	Permits county board/executive to appoint certain county elected officers if approved by referendum	in Assembly Campaign and Elections Committee
AJR 24	Increases clerk of circuit court term from two to four years	in Assembly Rules Committee
AJR 37	Requires Senate confirmation of Supreme Court justices appointed by governor; requires a constitutional amendment	in Assembly Judiciary Committee
AB 310	Creates seven judgeships (Chippewa, Clark, Douglas, Green, Juneau, Kenosha, and Rock counties)	in Assembly Judiciary Committee
AB 354	Codifies Supreme Court Rule 75 regarding court commissioners	in Assembly Judiciary Committee

AB = Assembly Bill; AJR = Assembly Joint Resolution; SB = Senate Bill; SJR = Senate Joint Resolution

Judicial-Legislative Meetings



Representative Mark Gundrum, R-New Berlin, chair of the Assembly Judiciary Committee, weighs in on training, reimbursement, and monitoring of GALs. To the left of Gundrum are Justice Jon P. Wilcox, Senator Gary George (chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee), and Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson.

The Supreme Court, along with Director of State Courts J. Denis Moran and Legislative Liaison Sheryl A. Gervasi, met with six legislative committees this spring for wide-ranging discussions on topics of mutual concern. They talked about the court system's budget, the public defender's budget, training for guardians *ad litem* (GALs), and transforming family court to make it less adversarial. The meetings, held March 6 and 13, and April 5, included the Senate Judiciary Committee and the following Assembly committees: Children and Family; Family Law; Corrections and the Courts; Criminal Justice; and Judiciary. ❖

Court's Budget Stalls

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fiscal year 2003 for this increase. The going rate for interpreters is about \$40 per hour.

In addition, the Finance Committee deleted the requirement that the Supreme Court establish policies and procedures for the recruitment and training of interpreters. The committee then recommended that the Legislative Council study a potential definition for "qualified interpreter" and report its conclusion to the Legislature. This had been studied and defined by the courts' Committee to Improve Interpreting and Translation in the Wisconsin Courts.

The Court of Appeals' request for two new staff attorneys was also rejected.

The budget that Governor Scott McCallum submitted to the state Legislature also called for a permanent five percent cut in the base funding of the circuit courts, Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Director of State Courts Office, and State Law Library. At press time, Joint Finance had not yet acted on that proposal.

Representative Shilling "Rides Along"



Representative Jennifer Shilling



Judge Dennis G. Montabon

Representative Jennifer Shilling, D-La Crosse, is the latest legislator to "ride along" in circuit court. She joined Judge Dennis G. Montabon for a day on the bench.

The visit was arranged as part of the Judicial Ride-Along Program, which matches legislators with judges for a day on the bench to improve communication and understanding.

Following the experience, Shilling noted that "alcohol is a major factor in many cases coming before the court," and said she was reminded how stiff the penalties are for drunk driving. Montabon and Shilling also discussed alternatives to incarceration.

"Representative Shilling was keenly interested in my views of problems confronting our courts," Montabon said. "This program gives us a chance to show, firsthand, the day to day issues that come before judges. Representative Shilling saw a great variety of court actions."

Montabon said Shilling was especially interested in cases in which an interpreter was required. "These cases raise unique issues," he said, "and they remind us that we must improve the manner in which interpreters are trained and provided by the court system." ❖

In an effort to stop the five percent cut and to restore some of the court system's budget initiatives, judges, clerks of court, court staff, and members of court committees spent substantial time this spring communicating the courts' needs directly to the members of Joint Finance at public hearings across the state and through meetings with individual legislators. Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson met personally with every member of Joint Finance.

In her budget address to Joint Finance, Abrahamson said that the courts cannot absorb the substantial proposed cut to their base funding. "If this five percent reduction is approved, we will not be able to pay for reserve judges or freelance court reporters," she said. "Circuit court judges and court reporters will not be able to assist in neighboring counties as the system depends on them to do and as they routinely do now to cover for sickness, recusals, heavy workloads, and the like. We will not be able to pay non-discretionary obligations such as insurance or other DOA [Department of Administration] chargebacks. Even if we were able to take these ill-advised measures to reduce circuit court expenditures, we still might not have enough money to pay our elected circuit court judges and official court reporters."

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Supreme Court Appoints New Chief Judges



Judge L. Edward Stengel

The Wisconsin Supreme Court on April 9 appointed three new chief judges.

Wisconsin is divided into ten districts for purposes of court administration. Each district is headed by a management team that consists of a chief judge, a deputy chief judge, and a court administrator. Each chief judge serves a maximum of three two-year terms.

Judge L. Edward Stengel, Sheboygan County Circuit Court, will take over as chief judge of the Fourth Judicial Administrative District on Aug. 1. Stengel has served on the bench in Sheboygan County since 1985 and is currently deputy chief judge. He replaces Chief Judge Robert A. Haase, Winnebago County Circuit Court, who has served since 1995 and has exhausted the maximum number of terms allowed.

The Fourth District encompasses Calumet, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Winnebago counties



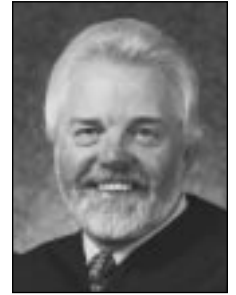
Judge Michael N. Nowakowski

Judge Michael N. Nowakowski, Dane County Circuit Court, will take over as chief judge of the Fifth Judicial Administrative District on Aug. 1. Nowakowski has served on the bench in Dane County since 1985 and is currently deputy chief judge. He replaces Chief Judge Daniel R. Moeser, who has

served since 1994 and was reappointed to an unprecedented extended term last year so that he could continue to lead negotiations on the construction of a new Dane County Courthouse.

The Fifth District encompasses Dane, Green, Lafayette, and Rock counties.

Judge Michael J. Rosborough, Vernon County Circuit Court, will take over as chief judge of the Seventh Judicial Administrative District on Aug. 1. Rosborough has served on the bench in Vernon County since 1986 and is currently deputy chief judge. He replaces Chief Judge Robert W. Radcliffe, Jackson County Circuit Court, who has served since 1995 and has completed the maximum number of terms allowed.



Judge Michael J. Rosborough

The Seventh District encompasses Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Richland, Trempealeau, and Vernon counties.

The other chief judges are: District One, Michael J. Skwierawski (Milwaukee County Circuit Court); District Two, Barbara A. Kluka (Kenosha County Circuit Court); District Three, Kathryn W. Foster (Waukesha County Circuit Court); District Six, James Evenson (Sauk County Circuit Court); District Seven, Joseph M. Troy (Outagamie County Circuit Court); District Nine, James B. Mohr (Vilas County Circuit Court); and District Ten, Edward R. Brunner (Barron County Circuit Court). ❖

Election Results

Voters Place New Judges on the Bench

Judge Paul Lundsten Court of Appeals



Judge Paul Lundsten

Judge Paul Lundsten, who joined the bench in the Court of Appeals, District IV, on Nov. 6, 2000, as a gubernatorial appointee, won election to the seat in April.

Atty. Charles Schutze, Sun Prairie, had challenged Lundsten. In a Dane County Bar Association poll, Lundsten was rated highly qualified by 89 members, qualified by 45, unqualified by five, and 42 had no opinion. By contrast, Schutze was rated highly qualified by seven members, qualified by 28, unqualified by 93, and 54 had no opinion.

Lundsten is a former prosecutor in the state Department of Justice. He replaced Judge William Eich, who retired from the Court of Appeals effective October 2000 after serving 26 years on the bench.

Judge-Elect Thomas T. Lindsey Bayfield County Circuit Court



Judge-Elect Thomas T. Lindsey

Judge-Elect Thomas T. Lindsey, 47, a fourth-generation Bayfield County resident, won a race against Atty. Ruth A. Bachman, a Barron County prosecutor and wife of Judge Thomas Gallagher, who is retiring from the seat (see *The Third Branch*, winter 2001).

Lindsey is a partner with Spears, Carlson, Lindsey & Anderson, where he has practiced for more than 20 years. He specializes in real estate, probate, estate planning, elder law, municipal law, and business law. Lindsey has also served as Washburn city attorney for 18 years and has been a Bayfield County court commissioner since 1991.

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Election Results

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Lindsey has also been very active in community affairs. He was a charter board member and president of Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, a member of the Clear Signal Campaign (a group organized to bring better public radio to the Chequamegon Bay Area), and a middle-school basketball coach.

Lindsey received his bachelor's degree from Indiana State University in 1976 and his law degree from Drake University.

He lives just north of Washburn in the Town of Bayview with his wife, Christine, and children, Rob, Anna, and Max.

Judge Joseph A. McDonald Douglas County Circuit Court



Judge
Joseph A. McDonald

Judge Joseph A. McDonald fought off a challenge from Atty. James L. Cirilli, who works in private practice in Superior. This was the first challenge McDonald has faced since winning election to the bench in 1983.

McDonald was elected to the judgeship in 1983 when Judge Douglas Moody retired. He ran against Michael Lucci (who is now a judge in Douglas County) and Atty. William Hammond.

Judge-Elect Joseph R. Wall Milwaukee County Circuit Court

Judge-Elect Joseph R. Wall, a federal prosecutor and certified public accountant, handily won election to Branch 40 of Milwaukee County Circuit Court. He will replace Judge Louise M. Tesmer, who is retiring (see *The Third Branch*, fall 2000).

Wall's opponent was Atty. Thomas D. Mellencamp, a real estate attorney. Wall won by a margin of 61 to 39 percent.



Judge-Elect
Joseph R. Wall

Wall has been lead trial counsel in more than 40 federal court jury trials and 30 state court jury trials. In addition, he has argued approximately 30 cases in front of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

He is a volunteer attorney at St. Benedict the Moor and has served on the board of directors of Legal Action of Wisconsin and on the Milwaukee Bar Association's Legal Services to the Indigent Committee.

Wall received his undergraduate and law degrees from Marquette University, where he was editor-in-chief of the Marquette Law Review.

He has one son, a student at Columbia University in New York.

Judge-Elect Edward F. Vlack St. Croix County Circuit Court



Judge-Elect
Edward F. Vlack

Judge-Elect Edward F. Vlack, who has worked as a family court commissioner and a mediator in medical malpractice disputes, was elected to the bench in St. Croix County. He will replace Judge Conrad A. Richards, who is retiring after 12 years on the bench (see *The Third Branch*, winter 2001).

Vlack defeated Atty. Susan Schleif Gherty of Hudson. He won by a margin of 55 to 45 percent.

Vlack has been a family court commissioner in St. Croix County for the past 11 years and has served in a similar capacity in Pierce County.

He has coached a high school mock trial team for 15 years and volunteers for the River Falls Fire Department.

Vlack received his undergraduate and law degrees from Marquette University.

He is married and has three daughters. ❖

The Rest of the Story...

The following judges ran unopposed for election or re-election: David Prosser Jr., Supreme Court; Daniel P. Anderson, Court of Appeals, District II; Thomas Cane, Court of Appeals, District III; Richard J. Dietz, Brown County; Thomas J. Sazama, Chippewa County; Michael Kirchman, Crawford County; Diane M. Nicks, Dane County; John R. Storck and Andrew P. Bissonnette, Dodge County; William F. Hue, Jefferson County; Barbara A. Kluka, Kenosha County; Ramona A. Gonzalez and Michael J. Mulroy, La Crosse County; Darryl W. Deets, Manitowoc County; Gregory E. Grau and Raymond F. Thums,

Marathon County; Richard O. Wright, Marquette County; Thomas G. Grover, Menominee-Shawano counties; Dominic S. Amato and Michael B. Brennan, Milwaukee County; Steven L. Abbott, Monroe County; Thomas R. Wolfram, Ozaukee County; John V. Finn, Portage County; Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County; Daniel T. Dillon, Rock County; Timothy M. Van Akkeren, Sheboygan County; John A. Damon, Trempealeau County; Patrick J. Faragher, Washington County; Michael O. Bohren and Donald J. Hassin Jr., Waukesha County.

New Faces in the Wisconsin Courts

Lee Isaacson

Human Resources Director

Lee Isaacson has been named human resources director for the state court system. He began his position Feb. 26. He replaces Cheri Timpel, who retired in April after serving 11 years with the court system (*see separate story*).

Isaacson comes to the courts from the executive branch, where he most recently served as human resources director at the Department of Financial Institutions. He has worked in state government since graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire in 1974 where he studied economics and business administration.

As human resources director, Isaacson is responsible for employee recruitment, workplace complaints, and many personnel issues that arise in the 900-person, statewide system. Although he said there is no such thing as a typical day, he fields calls from employees, supervisors, and potential employees on a daily basis. He also spends a good amount of time conducting what he called “meet and greet” sessions—time in the field getting to know the people with whom he works.

Isaacson said he is pleased with the flexibility that judicial branch human resources provides. “After 26 years of working in the executive branch and the civil service system, I got worn out by how rigid the civil service system is,” he said. “The judicial branch gives greater opportunity to manage human resources.”

Tera Nehring

Waukesha County

Court Assistance Program Coordinator

Tera Nehring has been hired as a contract employee for the non-profit Wisconsin Correctional Service (WCS) to coordinate the planning and implementation of a self-help center for self-represented litigants in the Waukesha County Courthouse. The center is expected to open in the fall.

With help from a 13-member steering committee, Nehring is developing a strategic plan, a detailed work plan, and an evaluation process for the center. The steering committee includes: Chief Judge Kathryn W. Foster; Clerk of Circuit Court Carolyn Evenson and three deputy clerks; Family Court Commissioner David Pike; mediators; child support professionals; county finance personnel; and others involved in the delivery of legal services in the community.

To augment the \$25,000 grant from the Milwaukee Foundation that created her position, Nehring is also seeking additional funding for the center. The Clerk of Circuit Court Office is already providing almost \$15,000 of in-kind support—including staff time, a computer, desk, telephone, postage, and office supplies—and Waukesha County has committed to remodeling space for the center.

“We hope to have easy-to-read forms and instructions; information on court policies, rules, and procedures; computers and printers; and various community resources,” Nehring said. “We also hope to offer some form of an attorney roster and volunteer

network of attorneys.” Nehring said interactive technology will also be an important part of the program.

Nehring holds a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. She is currently enrolled in graduate school at Marquette University, where she will earn a master’s degree in public service at the end of the summer.

While a college student, Nehring worked at a shelter for battered women in Platteville. She also was an advocate and counselor to students on housing issues.

Atty. Julie Rich

Supreme Court Commissioner

Atty. Julie Rich, a former geology and paleontology student who clerked for Justice Edward C. Stringer on the Minnesota Supreme Court, recently joined Attys. Nancy A. Kopp, Gregory S. Pokrass, and Joseph M. Wilson as a Supreme Court commissioner. Rich replaces William Mann, who served as a commissioner for nearly 23 years.

Supreme Court commissioners are lawyers who perform research, prepare memoranda, and make recommendations to the Court on various matters brought within its appellate jurisdiction. “I was attracted to the position because I enjoy working on a wide spectrum of issues,” she said. “I enjoy the challenge of addressing the diverse and frequently novel issues presented to the Court.”

Rich received her undergraduate degree in geology and geophysics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison before attending the University of Minnesota Law School (*magna cum laude*, 1994). She then worked in private practice in Minnesota for almost five years, concentrating in employment law and commercial litigation. Rich returned to Madison last year to accept a position as a staff attorney for the Wisconsin Court of Appeals.

Rich and her husband, Sean, a medical physicist at the University of Wisconsin, have two young sons.

Atty. Ernesto Romero

Litigation Services Director

and

Anna Hodges

Litigation Services Deputy Director

Atty. Ernesto Romero recently joined the Milwaukee County courts as director of litigation services. In his new role, Romero is responsible for coordinating services in the Milwaukee County court system for self-represented litigants and for those who need interpreters.

Romero is one of the founders of the Wisconsin Family Law Clinic located in the Milwaukee County Courthouse. In a county where more than 70 percent of the family cases proceed with at least one self-represented litigant, the Family Law Clinic has established itself as an important part of the justice system. Started in 1997, the clinic is a nationally recognized self-help model serving more than 2,800 self-represented litigants each year. It is staffed by 56

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Retirements

Oconto RIP Gathered Material for a Book

Oconto County Register in Probate Mona M. Kieliszewski believes her 25 years in the court system could easily fill a book. “[The book] will include my helping to ‘capture’ an escapee from a mental facility who insisted on speaking to Judge [Edward P.] Herald, even though the judge had been deceased for three years,” she said, “and it will include my being caught (literally) in the middle of a knock-down brawl in small claims court over a \$50 toilet seat extender.”

Kieliszewski acknowledged that her work on the book—which will also include her brushes with greatness in the forms of then-Sen. John F. Kennedy and golfing legend Greg Norman—will wait until she has had her fill of traveling, golfing, fishing, hiking, and biking. She also plans to continue her work as a volunteer probation officer.

Kieliszewski’s job has changed substantially since Herald appointed her in 1976. At that time, she was also secretary for the lone juvenile court worker and family court commissioner, an indigency evaluator for the State Public Defender’s Office, and a transcriptionist for the sheriff’s department. Over the years, she has also worked for Judge John M. Wiebusch and currently works for Judges Richard D. Delforge and Larry L. Jeske.

Her deputy, Patricia Pawlak, who has worked in the office since 1995, will replace Kieliszewski.

Vilas Court Reporter Has Advice for Lawyers

Vilas County Court Reporter Mary L. Kunau has seen a lot—and learned a lot—in her 35 years in the courtroom. Some of it she would like to share. “I love to see great presentations by great lawyers and judges,” she said. “I would love to go down to that law school in Madison for a few weeks and teach those law students how to speak in court.”

Kunau regularly gives advice in court. “I teach them how to speak,” she said. “It’s my responsibility to make a record, and I cannot do that if the lawyers speak too fast, rustle their papers, mumble, or turn away.”

Unified Family Court

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As a result of the project, the number of child abuse and neglect jury trials and the number and duration of out-of-home placements have been reduced. There is also improved coordination of service delivery, and expedited movement to permanency for children. Time to disposition for companion civil and criminal abuse cases was reduced from 179 days to 53 days. Over the past two years, 55 cases have been sent to the program.

The project helps give judges the whole picture by assigning one family’s cases to one judge. Cases completed by the project have involved:

- parties who are required to participate in potentially numerous service and treatment programs;

Judge Frank W. Carter Jr. hired Kunau in 1965 and she set up her brand-new Royal manual typewriter in the only available office—a vault with chicken wire laced through the window-panes—and went to work. The job description has changed over the years (when she started, she was also a deputy clerk of court) but it has always been interesting. “I’ve loved every day of coming to work,” Kunau said.

Over the years, she also worked for Judge Timothy L. Vocke (now a reserve judge) and Chief Judge James B. Mohr, the current Vilas County judge. She said she would miss her “work family” and watching talented lawyers make arguments in the occasional big civil case that finds its way to the North Woods.

In retirement, Kunau plans to be a snowbird, visiting her son in Arizona during the winter. She also intends to do volunteer work in the community and through her church, and will spend more time in her garden.

Rapids Judge to Step Down after 24 Years

Judge Dennis D. Conway, who has been on the bench in Wood County since 1977, told the governor in a letter that he will retire effective Sept. 1. His current term expires in 2003.

Conway is a former chief judge and chair of the Committee of Chief Judges. He also served as chair of the Board of Bar Examiners. His solemn demeanor and no-nonsense attitude earned him the affectionate nickname “Nails” among some colleagues.

Conway was named “Trial Judge of the Year” by the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) in 2000. ABOTA is a national organization of civil trial attorneys including lawyers who represent plaintiffs and lawyers who represent defendants. The award recognized Conway’s “thorough preparation, breadth of knowledge of the law, decisive rulings, and courtesy to litigants, jurors, and members of the bar.”

In retirement, Conway intends to continue his extensive world travels. He has been to China three times, to South Africa, through most of South America, and elsewhere. He also plans to work on his golf game and indulge his passion for reading and birdwatching.

Conway is married with one son, a high school junior. He also has five step-grandchildren. ❖

- agencies that have recognized the need to coordinate more closely on services to individuals, as well as on policies and procedures among staff within and across agencies; and
- families that have challenged agency skills and resources in the past.

The speed with which these cases are resolved, the collaboration among justice system agencies to work for the best interests of children, the participation of families in designing service plans, and the coordination of services to families have yielded great benefits. The project has been nominated for a National Association for Court Management (NACM) Justice Achievement Award and has been duplicated in neighboring Monroe County. ❖

For more information on the La Crosse County Unified Family Court Project, call Steadman at (608) 785-9546.

Courts Bid Farewell

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for most of the state's circuit courts. OITS provides technology support for the appellate courts and the Director of State Courts Office.

Hartman, who lives in Portage, accepted the newly created position of MIS (Management Information Systems) director for Columbia County. There, he will oversee a staff of eight (the OITS staff is 15) and work on bringing various computer systems under one roof. Hartman said the best part of the new job is what's missing. "I'll cut a 50-minute commute down to five minutes," he said. "My new office will be walking distance from my home."

Hartman said he would miss working in the Director of State Courts Office and looked forward to working closely with the circuit courts in his new position.

Seidel Spent 19 Years Managing Courts in North Woods



GREGG MOORE

Jim Seidel (second from left) celebrates his retirement with his fellow district court administrators.

Jim Seidel took over as district court administrator for the Ninth Judicial District, which encompasses Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Menominee, Oneida, Price, Shawano, Taylor, and Vilas counties, when court administration was still suspect. "In 1982, court administration was a new concept in Wisconsin," Seidel said. "In my first years I spent a lot of time consensus building so we could make progress as a system."

After court reorganization in 1978, the state was divided into ten districts for purposes of court administration. Each district is run by a chief judge (appointed by the Supreme Court), a deputy chief judge (appointed by the chief judge), and a district court administrator (hired by the director of state courts).

Seidel said his first chief judge, Ronald D. Keberle, who retired from reserve judging in 1999, set a tone in the district that made Seidel's job much easier. He said Keberle taught him some lessons that have served him well throughout his tenure with the courts. "I have learned that you need to respect the opinions of the people you deal with; they often have many of the answers," Seidel said. "There are a lot of good people out there with a lot of good ideas and [the court administrator's role is to] facilitate and mediate in order to get the best result. We also always need to constantly keep in mind that we are here for the people who use the system. 'Who are we making this decision for?' is the question we need to keep asking ourselves."

Seidel stepped down April 27. His immediate plan was to help out with some administrative work at his church and to re-landscape the church grounds. He also will work with Habitat for Humanity and will maintain a tie to the courts by participating in panels that review the placement of children in abuse/neglect and delinquency cases. Seidel also plans to travel, work on his house, and eventually return to work part time. "Maybe consulting, maybe Wal-Mart greeter," he said. "It's wide open."

Seidel said he would miss the people with whom he worked over the years. "In a world where we see people jumping to different jobs, we enjoy longevity," he said. "That says something about the commitment and dedication of the court staff and also about the leadership of the chief judges and the leadership of J. Denis [Moran]. When I look back, those are the things that stay with me."

Timpel's 11 Years Changed the Face of HR

There are about 900 employees in the Wisconsin court system, and Cheri Timpel worked with many of them. Given her work ethic and high energy, it was a pretty fair match. Although she was commuting from Marshall, Timpel regularly arrived at the office well before 6 a.m. and signed up with a ride share program to force herself to leave by 5 p.m.

Timpel's work hours placed her in stride with much of the Office of Management Services, the division of the Director of State Courts Office that is responsible for internal functions of the state court system such as personnel, budgeting, payroll, benefits, leave accounting, fiscal and vouchering, purchasing, printing, forms design, records management, and facilities management. "I've come in at 5:45 and there are already four people working," she said. Although some do have flexible shifts, Timpel said, "There is an *esprit d'corps* here that is quite special and unique. The people in payroll, budgeting, and purchasing, and the others...I'm just amazed at the dedication, integrity, and strong work ethic," she said.

As personnel director for 11 years, Timpel hired and fired, helped critically ill staff to make appropriate plans, and investigated complaints of inappropriate workplace behavior. Dealing with workplace complaints was one of the smaller parts of her job, but also one of the most difficult. "It's a very sensitive area," she said. "It takes a lot of diplomacy, objectivity, fairness, and directness." Timpel's reputation for discretion and trustworthiness enabled her to get involved in most workplace issues early, which helped to keep problems manageable.

She stressed that she believes the most important human resource work is related to selecting the right employees, providing a safe and enjoyable work environment, and supporting and equipping them to do their jobs or move on to jobs that they are better suited for.



Retired Personnel Director
Cheri Timpel

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Milwaukee Media Seminar Brings Judges, Reporters Together

Question: What is wrong with this news brief from a recent edition of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*?

Judge upholds award to man hurt at home

A judge Monday upheld a \$1.6 million award to a Milwaukee man who suffered a knee injury after tripping over construction debris in his backyard.

Milwaukee County Circuit Judge Michael Malmstadt ruled that a jury on Jan. 19 properly awarded the money to [name deleted], 55, of the 3400 block of S. Illinois Ave.

[The man's] lawyer, Don Prachthausser of Milwaukee, filed the suit against J.D. Griffiths Co. [The man], who had hired the Milwaukee company to replace his garage, suffered a puncture wound to the back of his left knee when he fell Aug. 29, 1997.

Answer: Depends on whom you ask. The judge in the case, Michael Malmstadt, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, used the article as the basis for a discussion of media responsibility during a *Court Seminar for the News Media* held March 9 at the Midwest Express Center in Milwaukee. The seminar brought together an estimated 75 judges, justices, and news reporters from Jefferson, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha counties. It was the third in a series of regional judge/media events; the first two were held in Green Bay and Madison, respectively.

Malmstadt maintained that the article made him look as though he lacked judgment and was backing an award from a runaway jury. The facts that did not appear in the news brief were that the man developed an infection and a type of arthritis that may eventually mean the loss of his leg. Further, the victim had a fourth-grade education and a job stocking vending machines—a job that he can no longer perform due to the injury. Malmstadt

Courts Bid Farewell

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Timpel's uncommon care and concern for people, and her ability to know—and do—the right thing, won her more than the admiration of her colleagues and the satisfaction of a job well done. She caught the eye of a co-worker, Ken Timpel, who later became her husband. "We did not get along at all," she recalled with a laugh. But after Ken retired from Management Services (he was the fiscal officer) nine years ago, he asked her for a date and they soon decided to marry. They planned to celebrate her retirement (her last day was April 30) with an Alaskan cruise—which may be all the relaxation Timpel can take.

Raised on a dairy farm as the oldest of eight children, Timpel learned the value of hard work very young in life. She raised two daughters while working full time. In her retirement, she recognizes that she needs to keep busy. She intends to volunteer for Habitat for Humanity (doing administrative work, although she has dug footings at their job sites in the past), the American Red Cross, United Way, and the Colonial Club, which needs volunteers to deliver meals to the elderly. She also plans to spend more time with her mother and her grandchildren. "I have always had a rich life outside work and I intend to enjoy it to the fullest," she said.

Predictably, as her tenure came to a close, Timpel focused not on her accomplishments but on a goal she did not completely



TRINA E. GRAY, STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN

Mark Hertzberg, director of photography at The Journal Times (Racine) and longtime media coordinator, makes a point as judges, justices, and fellow journalists listen.

also was concerned that the *Journal Sentinel* printed the man's name and address.

The reporters who participated in the discussion—part of a half day of activities designed to improve communication between the third branch and the fourth estate—were split in their analysis of this reporting. Michael Zahn, editor of the *Wisconsin Law Journal*, called it "unconscionable," while others argued that nothing in the story was factually inaccurate.

The media seminar also featured a role-reversal exercise where reporters handled a mock criminal sentencing and judges wrote headlines based upon the journalists' sentences. Chief Judge Joseph M. Troy, Outagamie County Circuit Court, presided over the exercise. In addition, Judge Patrick J. Fiedler, Dane County Circuit Court, provided a primer on Truth in Sentencing.

The State Bar of Wisconsin's Media-Law Relations Committee sponsors the media seminars and the Director of State Courts Office organizes them. ❖

achieve. "I wish the system would do a better job of letting people know they're valued," she said. "There are so many deserving people who have been here a long, long time and I feel pretty privileged to have worked with some of them. I wish something could be done to thank them." ❖

Budget Officer Leaves for Milwaukee

David Suchman, the court system's budget officer, has resigned his position to move to Milwaukee, where his wife has taken a new job.

Suchman has worked in the Office of Management Services for six years and has lived in Madison for 33 years. "It will be a big change," he said, "but our youngest [daughter Lisa] is leaving for college so the timing is right." Suchman also has two grown sons.

Suchman's wife, Judy, has taken a job as director of transplant services for Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, where she will also head the organ procurement program. David plans to take a few months off before seeking a new job in Milwaukee. ❖

“You Are the Lifeguard”

by: Judge Sarah B. O'Brien
Dane County Circuit Court

Dane County judges and family court counselors and commissioners participated in a one-day training on domestic violence issues in March. The training was funded by a Violence Against Women Act grant received by the Dane County District Attorney's Office, which included funds for judicial education.

Atty. Tess Meuer, the lead speaker, talked about focusing on domestic abuse as homicide prevention, noting that almost all homicides in Dane County in the last year were committed by domestic partners. This perspective brought home the seriousness of the issue.

In this atmosphere, the judges were free to explore the frustration they often feel when victims refuse to leave, or when they return to their abusers. One article listed 50 reasons why abuse victims stay, including fear that s/he or the children will be killed (death is 75 percent more likely at the time of leaving), fear of losing child custody, financial uncertainty and homelessness, religious beliefs, and shame. At the time the victim calls the police and files a complaint, s/he believes outside help is necessary to protect her/himself. But by the time of the hearing, the victim may feel safer cooperating with the abuser.

The highlight of the day was a presentation by Billie Lee Dunford-Jackson, assistant director in the family violence department of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. Dunford-Jackson said that judges must become diagnosticians to distinguish between those cases where mutual conflict between the parties occasionally leads to a fight, and cases of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is defined by issues of power and control rather than simply the level of physical violence. Tactics of the abuser

include imposition of extensive rules, coercion, intimidation, degradation, exploitation, and violence. The abuser may prevent the partner from getting a job or spending his/her own money and from having access to friends or family. The abuser may treat the partner like a servant, threaten to take the children away, shift responsibility for abuse to the victim, call the victim and the children names, make the victim feel insane, and intimidate him/her with looks or actions such as abusing pets or destroying property.

In domestic abuse cases, ongoing contact with the children may be harmful or even dangerous and visitation that is permitted should not allow the abuser to continue to harass the victim. Dunford-Jackson also stressed that anger-management treatment is not an appropriate response to domestic violence. The problem is not anger; it is inappropriate dynamics of power and control. Domestic abuse treatment is long-term and follows a different protocol than anger management.

The final presenter of the day was “A.J.” She recounted her own experiences in Dane County courts as she tried to extricate herself from a very abusive relationship. She praised local judges for speaking plainly to both her and her former partner, and for taking decisive action when it was necessary to protect the children. A.J. sympathized with the frustration public officials feel when victims are ambivalent about leaving the abuser and told court officials not to give up on domestic violence victims if they fail to meet expectations. “Look at yourself as a lifeguard,” A.J. said. “When the drowning victim scratches and kicks to get away from the lifeguard, you don't just let them drown. You save them anyway.” ❖

The presentations are available on videotape for the use of judges statewide. To borrow the videotape, contact Libbey Meister of Domestic Abuse Intervention Services at (608) 251-1237, extension 117.

Criminal Justice Council Develops ‘Corrections Philosophy’ for La Crosse

by: Sarah Maguire, intern
Director of State Courts Office

In 1997, La Crosse County built a new justice center. Like many public works projects, it was the product of a compromise. Part of the community—dubbed the “justice conservatives” by a consulting group—wanted a larger jail, and part—the “fiscal conservatives”—wanted to save money by building a smaller jail. The jail was scaled back to control costs, and, by 1999, there was already talk of constructing another facility.

But La Crosse County residents and civic leaders were growing tired of building new

jails. In search of other solutions, the county contacted the National Institute of Corrections, which studied the situation in La Crosse County. In May 2000, the National Institute sent the county 11 recommendations. Among them was establishing a Criminal Justice Management Council. In September, the county board passed a resolution creating the council, and the group held its first meeting in November.

The council is studying the criminal justice system and will develop a county corrections philosophy and long-range plan for submission to the county board. The philosophy is expected to guide the county board as it examines future proposals for

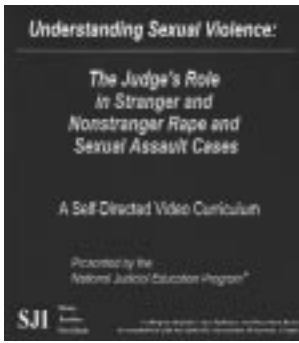
buildings and programs.

The council consists of 17 people, including seven community members. Richard Swantz, a retired La Crosse schools superintendent, is the chair. Aside from two paid consultants, council members volunteer their time. The estimated total cost of the council's study is \$50,000.

Council member Jane Klekamp, justice sanctions coordinator for La Crosse County, said the problem of jail overcrowding is a pressing and readily apparent concern for the community, but it is just part of a larger issue. “Jails fill up, and that becomes the crisis point,” said Klekamp, who works on a

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New Video Featuring Milwaukee Judge Wins Rave Reviews



A recently released video and self-study guide, *Understanding Sexual Violence: The Judge's Role in Stranger and Nonstranger Rape and Sexual Assault Cases*, is being requested by courts and others around the country.

Judge Mel Flanagan, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, worked with the National Judicial Education Program (NJEP) to produce the piece. Flanagan is also one of the instructors featured in the video.

Within one month of release, Flanagan said, every copy was sold and plans were in place to produce more. "On top of this success, it pleases us to report on the diversity of the viewers: victim advocates (shelters and state coalitions), probation groups, academics, a lawyer's association, and courts," she said. "Two parties have been so excited to have the material that they requested it be sent overnight so they could put it to use immediately."

The video is a self-guided version of NJEP's well-received judicial education program that was presented in Wisconsin and several other states in 1999. It will give judges and others a cost-effective way to access the same information on their own timelines.

The video focuses on learning to deal fairly with sexual assault cases, especially non-stranger rapes, without undermining defendants' constitutional rights. Judges who viewed the tape as part of a pilot project commented that it will help them to conduct more effective *voir dire* and that it will change how they weigh a failure to report and seek medical attention promptly.

A copy of the program, along with the *Self-Study Guide* and the *Instructor's Guide*, was sent to every judicial education office in the nation. ❖

The set includes the video curriculum (on four tapes) and the Self-Study Guide and costs \$60. The Instructor's Guide, which details how the videos can be used, costs \$45. To borrow these materials, contact the Wisconsin State Law Library at (608) 266-1600 or (800) 322-9755. To purchase a copy, contact NJEP at NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund at (212) 925-6635 or e-mail njep@nowldef.org.

Judges Share Ideas, Concerns at Domestic Violence Conference

by: Judge Jeffrey Kremers
Milwaukee County Circuit Court

How can judges assess the risk posed by a specific batterer? How might we evaluate the impact of violence on adult victims and on the children who are exposed to it? Is it ethical for a judge to participate in, or lead, efforts in the community to deal with domestic violence?

These questions, and many more, were addressed at *Enhancing Judicial Skills in Domestic Violence Cases*, developed by the National Judicial Institute on Domestic Violence and presented in Miami in March. The goal was to help enhance skills in civil and criminal domestic violence cases. Participants also had an opportunity to network with other judges from specialized courts that are handling domestic violence cases.

Forty-five judges from three Judicial Oversight Demonstration Initiatives—Milwaukee County, Dorchester District, Mass., and Washtenaw County, Mich.—along with judges, magistrates, and court commissioners from around the country attended the workshop. Nine judges and commissioners from Milwaukee County attended. They included: Judges Carl Ashley, Michael B. Brennan,

Michael J. Skwierawski (chief judge), Lee Wells, and myself, and Court Commissioners Audrey Brooks, Sandra Grady, Nancy Sturm, and Glen Yamahiro.

Faculty members included judges, attorneys, and domestic violence experts from around the country, and a clinical psychologist from the London Family Court Clinic in Ontario.

On the first day of the workshop, participants role-played various stages of a domestic violence case. When assessing how to treat offenders, judges accounted for such issues as the history of family violence, the possible threat to children, and the presence of drugs or alcohol. They then issued decisions on protection orders, visitation rights, jail terms, batterer intervention programs, and substance abuse treatment.

Day two included presentations on victim and offender behavior that impacts judicial decisions. Atty. Barbara Hart, of the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and Peter Jaffe, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist with expertise in working with violent families, facilitated the discussions. Jaffe showed videotaped interviews with children who grew up in violent households. Judge Loren McMaster, a participant from
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Tri-State Appellate Judges Learn from One Another

by: Sarah Maguire, intern
Director of State Courts Office



Chief Judge Thomas Cane, Wisconsin Court of Appeals; Chief Judge Edward Toussaint, Minnesota Court of Appeals; and Chief Judge Rosemary Shaw Sackett, Iowa Court of Appeals, at the recent Appellate Court Conference.

More than 30 attorneys and appellate judges from three states met in Iowa in early April to share their experiences in the legal system. During the two-day conference, the participants discussed everything from termination of parental rights to legal writing to what lawyers think of appellate judges.

The chief judges of the courts of appeal in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota hosted the Tri-State Appellate Court Conference. Chief Judge Thomas Cane, Wisconsin Court of Appeals, District III, helped to organize the meeting. He said this was the third inter-state appellate court conference in about 15 years.

Cane said learning the way other courts operate was the most useful part of the conference.

"This is an opportunity for us to take a look at our system in light of what other states are doing and hopefully get some new

ideas," he said. "We are trying to avoid saying the Wisconsin system is the only way to do things."

Judge Patience D. Roggensack, Court of Appeals, District IV, said the opportunity to talk with other appellate judges about how they run their courts motivated her to attend.

"We get to share information with other judges and see how other courts fit their appellate courts between the Supreme Courts and the trial courts, [to] better serve the public interest," she said.

The judges also discussed the different procedures for publishing decisions, which Roggensack said she found very helpful. "The Iowa court was helpful to us because they told us how they arrive at the decision to publish," she said.

"If there is not a significant change in the law, the selectivity is helpful. It is a burden on the practicing bar and the trial courts to read so many cases when there aren't significant changes in the law."

The Wisconsin Court of Appeals adheres to statutory guidelines when deciding whether to publish an opinion.

In Minnesota, 75 to 80 percent of cases in the Court of Appeals have oral arguments. Because so many cases are argued orally, Minnesota conducts a large number of these proceedings by video-conference. This is something the Wisconsin courts have been considering to reduce travel time and make the courts more accessible to the community, according to Cane. Currently, between one and four percent of Wisconsin Court of Appeals cases (depending upon the district) are argued orally. The Minnesota judges offered their opinions on how videoconferencing affects the courts. Cane said some Minnesota judges were looking to scale back the use of this technology because they believe they videoconference too much and do not interact with the community enough.

Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota plan to hold conferences every two to three years. The next is planned for sometime in spring 2003 in La Crosse. "I think this tradition is one we should continue," Cane said. "Our dialogue with other states for new ideas and how to operate the courts more efficiently is important." ❖

Judge of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award

The State Bar of Wisconsin at its Annual Convention in May honored Taylor County Circuit Court Judge **Gary L. Carlson** with the 2000 Judge of the Year Award, and retired Dane County Circuit Court Judge **P. Charles Jones** with the Jurist Lifetime Achievement Award.

The Judge of the Year Award recognizes judges who have exceeded the call of judicial office and improved the judicial system during the year. "[Judge Carlson] is a wonderful example of judicial excellence and he is highly respected by his peers, members of the Bar, and state court staff. Judge Carlson is committed to court improvement," said Bench/Bar Committee Chair Nicholas Casper.

Carlson received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin. He began his professional career in 1973 as an assistant attorney general for the Wisconsin Department of Justice. In 1976 he joined the law firm of Nikolay, Jensen & Scott in Medford. Carlson became a Taylor County Circuit Court judge in 1980 and three years later was appointed deputy chief judge

for the Ninth Judicial District. He then served as the district's chief judge.

Carlson has served on the Records Management Committee and chaired its Forms Subcommittee, which develops and updates hundreds of forms for judges, court staff, attorneys, and the public. He was also assistant dean of the Wisconsin Judicial College. Carlson currently serves on the Circuit Court Automation Program Steering Committee, the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Oversight Committee, the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee's Planning Subcommittee, and the Electronic Filing Committee.

The Jurist Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an individual who has made a difference during his/her tenure on the bench. "It is an honor to recognize Judge Jones," Casper said. "He is known as a bright, fair, and decisive man. As a judge he treated everyone with respect. He is conscientious. He is an excellent example of someone who made a difference."

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Justice on Wheels Rides Again...and Again



The Supreme Court always conducts a press conference when it travels. Here, the Court is assembled at its makeshift bench in Branch 1 of the Oneida County Courthouse to take questions from a group of radio and print reporters from the region.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court took to the road twice this spring, visiting Rhinelander in April and Juneau in May. These were the Court's 10th and 11th road trips since 1993.

New Faces

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volunteer attorneys and law students from Marquette Law School and the University of Wisconsin Law School and provides bilingual services such as community service referrals, forms assistance, and help with procedural matters.

Romero has also worked in private practice and as a mediator for the U.S. Postal Service. He was the first attorney in the state to digitize the complete set of legal forms for divorce and paternity actions and make them available at no charge. These legal forms can be modified and completed online and are valid in all Wisconsin counties.

"Ernesto brings a sincere appreciation for the *pro se* experience to his position as director of litigation services," said Chief Judge Michael J. Skwierawski. "In just a short time he has made several significant contributions to our efforts to make the courthouse more accessible and user-friendly for all people."

Anna Hodges has been appointed as Romero's deputy. She will assist with coordination of *pro se* and interpreter services, and will also make recommendations for the improvement of these services.

"Anna brings a wealth of experience to the courts in community outreach and needs assessment," Skwierawski said. "She is making the courthouse less difficult to navigate for the increasing population of *pro se* litigants and individuals who require the services of an interpreter."

At the time of her appointment, Hodges was deputy director of former Governor Tommy Thompson's Milwaukee office. Prior to joining that office, she was responsible for constituent services in the office of Milwaukee County Executive F. Thomas Ament.

In Rhinelander, an estimated total crowd of 550 people turned out to watch six oral arguments over two days.

As is tradition, the Court recruited six Rhinelander-area attorneys to study the briefs in each case and be its "local experts" to prepare groups planning to attend an oral argument and to speak to the gallery immediately before the Court takes the bench.

During their stay, the justices lunched with judges, clerks of court, registers in probate, judicial assistants, and other court staff from the Ninth Judicial Administrative District. A separate luncheon was held with approximately 150 members of local service organizations including Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Optimists, Rhinelander Women's Club, and the American Association of University Women.

Evening activities included a reception with attorneys from the Tri-County Bar (covering Forest, Oneida, and Vilas counties) and a dinner at Justice William A. Bablitch's log home in the North Woods.

Judge Robert E. Kinney loaned his courtroom to the Court, and Judge Mark A. Mangerson and Reserve Judge Timothy L. Vocke helped to plan the event.

In Juneau, the justices heard two oral arguments before an estimated 300 people. Between cases, the Court participated in the dedication of the new Dodge County Justice Facility. ❖

Holly Szablewski

Milwaukee County Pretrial Services Coordinator

Holly Szablewski has been hired as pretrial services coordinator for Milwaukee County. Prior to taking this position, she was director of quality assurance for the Wisconsin Correctional Service (WCS) Pretrial Service Programs, where she coordinated staff training and development and provided ongoing reviews of five programs.

"I am extremely pleased to have Holly on board," said Chief Judge Michael J. Skwierawski. "I look forward to working with her to address the many challenges we face by developing and modeling creative and innovative pretrial service programs that will meet the needs of Milwaukee County's criminal justice system."

Szablewski graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1986 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. During her 13 years with WCS, Szablewski held several positions in the Bail Evaluation and Pretrial Monitoring Units. Her responsibilities included oversight of daily program activity, program development and implementation, and hiring, training, supervision, and evaluation of program staff.

Szablewski represented WCS and Milwaukee County at a regional forum on developing integrated services for people with co-occurring disorders in the criminal justice system. She also worked as an independent contractor with the Pretrial Service Resource Center in Washington, D.C., collecting and compiling data for the State Court Processing Statistics Project. ❖

First District Deputy Court Administrator Beth Bishop Perrigo and Court Information Intern Sarah Maguire, Director of State Courts Office, contributed to this story.

Children's Activity Book is Available



The Wisconsin Supreme Court, Director of State Courts Office, and Milwaukee Bar Association have produced a new coloring and activity booklet about the Wisconsin courts for children ages six to nine.

The booklet is called *What's Happening in Court?* It is a teaching tool to introduce children to court processes in which they are, or could be, involved and is intended for use with children

who are going to court either as visitors or as participants in a case. The booklet includes information on the roles of the people the child might see in court, courtroom decorum, proceedings in child in need of protection and/or services (CHIPS) cases, mental health hearings, family court, guardianships, adoptions, and more.

The California Office of the General Counsel originally produced the booklet in 1999 and gave their permission to adapt it. It was tailored for Wisconsin by: Circuit Court Judges Daniel T. Dillon, Rock County; Benjamin D. Proctor, Eau Claire County; and Stuart A. Schwartz, Dane County. Other editors were Brita Rekve, Eau Claire County Department of Human Services; Assistant Corporation Counsel Timothy J. Sullivan, Eau Claire County; Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd, Director of State Courts Office; and Supreme Court Program Assistant Karen Leone de Nie. ❖

To order a sample of the booklet, contact Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd at (608) 264-6256 or amanda.todd@courts.state.wi.us. Those wishing to keep a supply on hand may direct a local printing company to the QuarkXpress files and printing instructions at www.courts.state.wi.us/media/activity_book.htm.

Teaching the Teachers About the Courts

DEE RUNAAS, STATE BAR OF WISCONSIN



Judicial Commission Director James C. Alexander helps teachers prepare for a mock Supreme Court election at the teaching institute.

In February, 23 high school teachers from around the state came to Madison to participate in the Wisconsin justice teaching institute, *From the Courtroom to the Classroom*.

The two-and-a-half-day institute was composed of several hands-on workshops that teachers could replicate in their classrooms. The workshops included a moot court of *State v. Stevens*, a 1985 case that questioned the constitutionality of a police search of a person's garbage without a warrant. To bring the issue and the court process to life, the

attorneys who argued the case before the state Supreme Court—Thomas J. Balistreri of the Department of Justice and Margaret A. Maroney of the Public Defender's Appellate Office—worked with the teachers. Justice N. Patrick Crooks also served as faculty for the moot court workshop, as did Steven Walters of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. In a 6-1 vote, the "justices" found the search constitutional. The Wisconsin Supreme Court reached the same result in the actual case, although the vote was 4-3.

Teachers also participated in a mock trial and sentencing exercise led by Chief Judge Joseph M. Troy, Outagamie County Circuit Court; a session led by Supreme Court Commissioner Joseph Wilson and Atty. Ellen Henak that focused on applying the Supreme Court's criteria for granting review using summaries of actual petitions for review; a mock judicial election; a teaching and technology session; and a "Federal Courts 101" course.

The Institute also debuted the working draft of *Connecting to the Courts: A Teacher's Guide to Wisconsin Courts* and the Teacher's Institute Web site (www.legalexplorer.com/education/education

[teacherinst.asp](http://www.legalexplorer.com/education/education/teacherinst.asp)). The book includes plain-English explanations of how the federal and state courts operate, diagrams of court processes, and several lesson plans.

The Institute was made possible by a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council and funding and staff support from the Director of State Courts Office, the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Law Foundation, and the Wisconsin Supreme Court. It was programmed by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, the State Bar of Wisconsin, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court is working with StreetLaw, Inc.—the organization that operates the U.S. Supreme Court Teaching Institute—to secure a grant to create a national network of state justice teaching institutes to share information and develop a national model. The other states involved in this effort are Delaware, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, and Texas. ❖

For more information on the justice teaching institute or on Connecting to the Courts, contact Supreme Court Program Assistant Karen Leone de Nie at (608) 266-1298 or karen.leonedenie@courts.state.wi.us.

Teaching Institute Faculty

In addition to those mentioned above, the Teaching Institute faculty included: Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Ann Walsh Bradley; Atty. James C. Alexander, Wisconsin Judicial Commission; Prof. Lee Arbetman, Street Law, Inc.; Judge Ramona A. Gonzalez, La Crosse County Circuit Court; Prof. Diana Hess, University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Curriculum and Instruction; and Connie Von Der Heide, Wisconsin State Law Library. ❖

VOLUNTEERS IN THE COURTS: _____

A Partnership for Justice

Appellate Mediation Gives Litigants a ‘Fresh Look’

The court system is well acquainted with probate disputes. When a family member dies, questions often arise about the division of the estate. A suit may be filed in the circuit court, and the party who loses may take the case to the Court of Appeals. But sometimes litigation is not the only—or the best—solution to these issues.

The Appellate Mediation Program, started in 1991 by the court and the Milwaukee Bar Association’s Bench/Bar Committee, offers the services of an experienced practitioner who volunteers his/her time to meet with parties in a case to try to reach a settlement.

Appellate mediation can benefit both the parties in a case and the court. For the parties, mediation may offer a faster and less expensive resolution than the court process. In addition, mediation allows for creative solutions that could not be achieved through the traditional appellate process—solutions that result in a mutually agreeable outcome. By working with a mediator, parties may find ways to expand settlement discussions beyond the legal issues. All of these factors can make successful mediation a positive experience for the people involved.

Appellate mediation can also conserve finite judicial resources by reducing the number of cases that come before the Court of Appeals. And even if a mediated case does not settle, the process may help simplify and clarify the issues and result in higher quality briefs and oral arguments, which may ultimately expedite decisions.

“Mediation can avoid a lengthy and bitter family matter that could go public,” said District I Court of Appeals Staff Atty. Ann Muchin. Probate is just one type of case in which mediation may be a useful alternative. Other family issues, business litigation, insurance and contract disputes, and personal injury and tort cases are often good candidates for appellate mediation.

In Milwaukee County all non-felony cases, except those involving a self-represented litigant or the termination of parental rights, are eligible for mediation. If a case appears suitable, a letter is sent to both parties explaining how mediation works and informing them that the decision to try mediation is voluntary.

“The court neither encourages nor discourages mediation,” Muchin said. The program is simply an alternative that is available at no cost to either party. Other than sending the informational letter and appointing a mediator, the court is not involved.

If the parties agree to mediation, an order staying preparation of the transcript and record for 30 days is released and a volunteer attorney is appointed. The attorney is selected based on the area of law and is screened to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

The program provides one session with a mediator, but the parties occasionally request an additional session, which is at the

attorney’s discretion. People with the authority to enter into a settlement agreement must be present. Before the session begins, everyone must sign a confidentiality agreement stipulating that nothing discussed during mediation can be used if the case goes to court.

“The parties get a seasoned practitioner’s view of the case and what kinds of solutions can be proposed,” Muchin said. “Sometimes this is the first time the parties have sat down face to face with a third party who has a fresh look and no stake in the issue.”

About one-third of all mediated cases reach settlement and the appellant voluntarily dismisses the appeal. In post-mediation evaluations, participants speak very highly of the program and the mediators, Muchin said.

There are more than 40 Milwaukee attorneys volunteering their time in the program. They were recruited and trained when the program started. ❖

For more information about the District I Court of Appeals Mediation Program contact Muchin at (414) 227-4971.

Appellate ADR Pilot Project in District II

Headquartered in Waukesha, the Court of Appeals, District II, will start an appellate mediation program in July.

Like the Milwaukee program, the District II project will use trained volunteer mediators to help parties reach a resolution before the Court of Appeals hears the case. The program aims to reduce the costs and amount of time for the appeal process, allow for creative settlement options, and improve communication among parties and attorneys.

Local attorneys are being recruited to volunteer as mediators. A training program, which will qualify participants for continuing legal education credits, will include sessions on Court of Appeals practice and procedure, methods of alternative dispute resolution (ADR), listening skills, and ethical considerations. ❖

For more information, contact Court of Appeals Judge Daniel P. Anderson at (262) 521-5230.

Jackson County Teen Court Receives \$38,800



Judge
Robert W. Radcliffe

The Jackson County Circuit Court, under the direction of Chief Judge Robert W. Radcliffe, has received a \$38,808 grant from the Office of Justice Assistance for its teen court program. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 made the funds available. The grant will be used for the coordinator's salary, office equipment, postage, printing, and training for the youth volunteers.

"Judge Radcliffe has been the power behind the whole program. He has been... very hands-on," said Atty. Daniel S. Diehn, who was recently hired as the program coordinator.

The Jackson County Teen Court allows first-time youth offenders ages 12 to 18, who commit certain ordinance violations and admit their guilt, the option of participating in teen court rather than appearing in circuit court for sentencing. In the teen court, trained teens serve as defense and prosecuting attorneys and a jury of peers from throughout Jackson County determines the sentence. If the offender successfully completes the sentence, the citation is dismissed. If the sentence is not completed, the case is transferred to the circuit court.

The goal of the Jackson County Teen Court is to reduce the number of juvenile repeat offenders and to give teens a positive experience with the legal system. "Some offenders have become volunteers at the teen court," Diehn said.

The Jackson County Teen Court has been operating since September 2000. So far, approximately 12 teens have opted to go through the program. There are about 55 youth volunteers from around the county who serve as attorneys, jurors, bailiffs, and clerks during the teen court hearings.

There are now more than 20 teen or youth courts operating in Wisconsin, and three counties—Douglas, Fond du Lac, and Price—are considering developing programs. ❖

For information about the Jackson County Teen Court, contact Diehn at (715) 284-0284. For more information about teen courts in Wisconsin, with links to resources and information on how to start a program, visit www.courts.state.wi.us/media/Vol_Nwsltrs/Teen_Courts_9-00.htm.

Judge of the Year

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Jones received his bachelor's and law degrees from the University of Wisconsin. He also has a master's degree in business administration from Harvard Business School. Before his election to the bench, Jones helped start the Dane County Legal Services Center, the predecessor of the Public Defender's Office. Jones was a Dane County probate judge from 1972 until 1976, when he was elected

Teen Court Resources

Teen Courts & Restorative Justice: While teen courts offer an alternative to traditional juvenile sentencing, restorative justice takes an even broader view—it's an alternative philosophy for addressing crime. Restorative justice sees crime as a violation of people and relationships, instead of an act against the state. Therefore, instead of answering crime with punishment, it aims to repair the damage to people and relationships by involving victims and stakeholders (the community) in the process.

A recent publication by the National Youth Court Center entitled *The Role of Restorative Justice in Teen Courts: A Preliminary Look* shows how teen courts can be shaped by restorative justice principles. It recommends ways to focus teen court procedures and policies on harm instead of law breaking and repair instead of punishment.

The report also emphasizes the importance of community building—for offenders this might mean peer or adult mentoring and meaningful community service projects as components of their sentences, and for volunteers it might include training related to local community issues and involvement.

The publication is the work of a national focus group that was convened by the National Youth Court Center in 2000 to look at the issue, and included Dane County Juvenile Court Administrator James Moeser. ❖

The *Role of Restorative Justice in Teen Courts* is available online at www.youthcourt.net/article1.pdf or by calling (859) 244-8215.

Teen Court Conference in Stevens Point: People of all ages who are interested or involved in teen courts are invited to attend the Wisconsin Teen Court Association's (WTCA) First Annual Conference on Nov. 1.

Sessions will cover topics such as funding, starting a program, issues faced by established programs, how restorative justice practices can be applied to teen courts, and more. For youth, workshops will focus on developing leadership skills and teamwork.

The conference will be held at the Holiday Inn Convention and Expo Center in Stevens Point. Registration materials will be mailed in June. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for students. ❖

For more information, contact WTCA President Nancy Livingston at (715) 479-3749 or by e-mail at nancy.livingston@ces.uwex.edu.

Dane County Circuit Court judge.

He has served on the Judicial Education Committee and the Civil Jury Instructions Committee and chaired the Civil Benchbook Committee. Jones acted as the first secretary of the Judicial Conference in 1978, was a member of the Wisconsin Judicial College faculty, and served for six years as deputy chief judge for the Fifth Judicial District. He was recognized as the 1997 Trial Judge of the Year by the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates. Jones is currently a reserve judge. ❖

Wisconsin Court Resources Available in Print and Online

How can the courts meet the challenges presented by self-represented litigants? How can court personnel help young people to understand how the judicial system works? How should judges be selected? What can courts do to better serve people who cannot hear, or cannot speak English? Several new court resources are available to answer these questions.



Case of the Month is an Internet-based project that brings together several resources to learn and teach about Wisconsin Supreme Court cases. Each month during the Court's session (September through June) a case, selected for its potential to improve civic literacy, is profiled.

The project includes a plain-English summary of the case, the briefs, a link to Court of Appeals decision (if one exists), the audio recording of the Court's oral argument, and an option for e-mail notification when the Court releases its opinion in the case.

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/media/CaseMonth/Case_of_the_Month.htm

Connecting to the Courts: A Teacher's Guide to the Wisconsin Courts contains court history, lesson plans, and handouts that high school teachers can use in the classroom to help their students better understand the state court system. The book was developed with a grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council for *From the Courtroom to the Classroom*, a professional development institute for teachers hosted by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, Director of State Courts Office, State Bar of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Curriculum and Instruction, and Wisconsin Law Foundation.

In Print: Program Assistant Karen Leone de Nie, Wisconsin Supreme Court, (608) 266-1298 or karen.leonedenie@courts.state.wi.us

Final Report of the Committee on Judicial Selection presents the findings of a committee created by the Wisconsin Legislature to find ways to increase the number of qualified minority candidates for judgeships. The committee studied various methods of judicial selection and reported its findings and recommendations to the governor, the Supreme Court, and several legislative committees in January 2001.

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/media/reports/Judicial_Selection_Rpt_2001.htm

Improving Interpretation in Wisconsin's Courts includes the findings and recommendations of a committee created by the Director of State Courts Office to look at how court-related interpreting and translation might be improved. The report includes a systematic approach to managing interpretation and translation in court and recommends providing state funding for counties that use interpreters and developing an interpreter training and certification program.

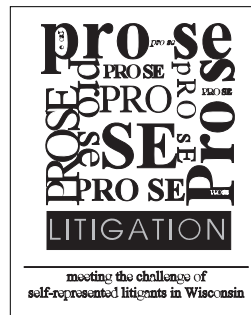
In Print: Atty. Marcia Vandercook, Office of Court Operations, (608) 267-7335 or marcia.vandercook@courts.state.wi.us

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/circuit/pdf/Interpreter_Report.pdf



Law Day Kit 2001: In the Best Interests of Our Children includes information and resources for planning Law Day celebrations in courthouses throughout Wisconsin. Suggested activities include events to honor the efforts of foster and adoptive parents and jurors, essay and poster contests for students, and mock trials. The Kit also provides information on how to set up a CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate) program, and talking points/speeches on topics related to children.

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/media/pdf/LawDayKit.pdf



Pro Se Litigation: Meeting the Challenge of Self-Represented Litigants in Wisconsin is the product of a committee appointed by Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson to recommend ways that courts, both statewide and locally, can better respond to *pro se* litigants.

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/misc/reports/Pro_Se_Report_12-00.htm

Public Trust and Confidence in the Justice System: The Wisconsin Initiative Action Plan is a plan to address issues such as equal treatment in the justice system, judicial involvement in the community, satisfaction with the juvenile justice system, and more. The action plan is the product of a committee appointed by Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, Director of State Courts J. Denis Moran, the State Bar of Wisconsin, and the Wisconsin League of Women Voters.

In Print: Executive Assistant to the Chief Justice John Voelker, (608) 261-8297 or john.voelker@courts.state.wi.us

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/media/reports/Public_Trust&Confidence_2000.htm

What's Happening in Court? (an activity book for children ages six to nine)

See page 14 for a description of this publication.

In Print: Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd, Director of State Courts Office, (608) 264-6256 or amanda.todd@courts.state.wi.us

Online: www.courts.state.wi.us/media/activity_book.htm

There are many other resources available from the Wisconsin court system, including *Supreme Court Case Synopses*, the *Wisconsin Court System Directory*, various reports on the courts, and more. To access these publications, visit the court's Web site at www.courts.state.wi.us or call the Court Information Office at (608) 264-6256. ❖

Navigating the Internet: Useful Web Resources

Center for Sex Offender Management

www.csom.org

Courts, corrections agencies, and treatment providers around the country are struggling with how best to manage the nation's more than 265,000 convicted sex offenders. The Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM) site shares studies and findings related to this issue. Users can find out what has worked for other communities, and then use the site resources to tailor programs and policies to their localities. The site includes an online library, information on technical assistance and training opportunities, and an e-mail link where users can ask CSOM staff questions.

Created by the U.S. Department of Justice, the State Justice Institute, and the National Institute of Corrections, CSOM is charged with improving the management of adult and juvenile sex offenders in the community to enhance public safety.

Crimes Against Children Research Center

www.unh.edu/ccrc

Choosing and Using Child Victimization Questionnaires

www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/ojdp/186027.pdf

The Crimes Against Children Research Center (CCRC) Web site includes updates on current projects, access to the full text of numerous publications, and a fact sheet that provides current statistics on child maltreatment.

Due to increasing concerns about the victimization of children and adolescents, youth services professionals are often expected to monitor local trends and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and treatment programs. The use of questionnaires to measure victimization can elicit considerable information, but choosing the right questionnaire is an inexact science. A publication in the "New Releases" section of this site can help. *Choosing and Using Child*

Victimization Questionnaires is a 15-page bulletin that helps individuals choose the right questionnaire for a specific situation.

CCRC works to increase recognition of child victimization; improve protection of child victims from further victimization and unnecessary trauma from the justice system; promote rehabilitation of child victims; and encourage evaluation of the impact of the justice system's policies on children.

Justice Research and Statistics Association

www.jrsa.org

The Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) is a national non-profit organization of state Statistical Analysis Centers. These centers, in 50 states and two territories, analyze justice system policy issues such as domestic violence or community policing. In Wisconsin, the center is operated through the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance.

JRSA is a clearinghouse of current state criminal justice information that also provides training in computerized records management, data analysis, Internet applications, and forecasting.

The JRSA site has a map with links to all center sites; a section on current programs and research; a list of upcoming criminal justice events and conferences; a database of state justice research and publications; and links to funding for justice-related programs.

Violence Against Women Office

www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo/

The Violence Against Women Office (VAWO) Web site provides information on VAWO grants and grant activities in each state, contact information for state hotlines and local advocacy groups, and numerous full-text publications.

VAWO grants support a wide range of services for women, including: advocacy, emergency shelter, law enforcement protection, and legal aid. ❖

Registers in Probate Hold Spring Conference

by: *Kay Morlen, register in probate
Washington County Circuit Court*

The spring conference for registers featured many sessions that encouraged registers to compare notes on handling "one-of-a-kind" cases. Manitowoc County Circuit Court Judge Fred H. Hazlewood presented the opening remarks.

Manitowoc County Register Patricia Koppa hosted the conference, which included such presentations as: "View from the Streets—A Look at First Contact in the Mental Health System," "Private and Foreign Adoptions—The Not So Ordinary Cases," and "What Every Register Should Know about Trusts."

Association officers for 2001 are: President Sherry Masephol, Wood County; Vice President Kay Morlen, Washington County; Secretary Kay Vold, Trempealeau County; and Treasurer Judith Schneider, Door County.

The fall conference will be Sept. 19-21 in St. Croix County. ❖

Director's Office Wins Minority Business Award

The Supreme Court, through the Director of State Courts Office, did 24 percent of its purchasing through minority-owned businesses last year, far exceeding the state's goal of five percent.

For this effort, the Court was presented with the Governor's Special Minority Business Award in April. Purchasing Officer David Korenic accepted the award.

Although the Court has won the award in the past, the percentage of purchases from minority businesses last year is far above previous years' figures. ❖

'A Judge for All the People' Honored in Milwaukee

Judge Clarence R. Parrish was the first African-American judge in Milwaukee County history to win a contested judicial election. Parrish was posthumously honored for that and many other accomplishments at a portrait-hanging ceremony at the Milwaukee County Courthouse in February, Black History Month. The ceremony attracted a standing-room-only crowd and was featured on a special Channel 4 news segment called *Positively Milwaukee*.

Parrish's daughter, Atty. Sheila Parrish-Spence, and son-in-law, Atty. Joseph S. Spence (a court commissioner to Judge Kitty Brennan, Milwaukee County Circuit Court), presented the First Judicial District with the framed portrait.

Judge Maxine Aldridge White presided over the ceremony. "We are grateful beyond words for the shoulders of all of our leaders

who came before us," she told the crowd. "All of those who have been lanterns for the rest of us, and all of those who shared their lives and their dreams with us. We are grateful for those whose legacy will continue to illuminate our paths and the paths of those coming behind us."

Governor Lee Sherman Dreyfus appointed Parrish to Milwaukee County's Branch 21 in February 1980. Parrish then won a contested election in spring 1981 and served on the bench in Milwaukee County until March 1992. Parrish died three months after leaving the bench.

At Parrish's investiture, Reverend Lovell Johnson of St. Mark AME Church said, "Judge Parrish is not a judge for the black people, he is not a judge for the white people, he is not a judge for any particular people, but a judge for all the people." ❖



Judge Clarence R. Parrish

Obituaries

Judge John C. Ahlgrimm Racine County Circuit Court

Judge John "Jack" Ahlgrimm, a Racine County judge from 1962 to 1995, died March 17 on a visit to his native Racine. He was 75.

Ahlgrimm was known while he was on the bench for his kindness and compassion in working with juveniles. "Instead of just punishing kids, he worked at salvaging their lives," his brother, James Ahlgrimm, told *The Journal Times* in Racine.

Ahlgrimm, who never married, was an avid world traveler. He had lived in Bangkok, Thailand, for the past seven years. On a trip to China, he forged a close friendship with his guide, and he made arrangements to bring the guide and the guide's soon-to-be wife to the United States to study. Ahlgrimm eventually adopted the adult couple and moved to Bangkok with them, where he had been a grandfather to their young daughter.

Ahlgrimm's adopted children, Kuan and Liang; his granddaughter, Galina, seven; and a sister and two brothers survive him.

Judge Robert M. Curley Milwaukee County Circuit Court

Judge Robert M. Curley, a Milwaukee County judge from 1960 to 1983, and father of Judge Patricia S. Curley, died Feb. 12 in Florida. He was 78.

Curley was the son of a Milwaukee police detective who urged him to go to law school. Prior to studying law, Curley was a truck driver and worked in a brewery and factory. World War II further delayed his education; he served four years—first in the Marines and later in the Navy.

After graduating from Marquette Law School, Curley made two unsuccessful political bids before winning a seat in the state Assembly in 1958. He was appointed a judge in 1960. Curley remained on the bench until his retirement in 1983. He was Milwaukee County's chief judge from 1969 through 1971 and again in 1974.

His daughter, a judge on the Court of Appeals, District I, told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* that her father's advice to her when she took the bench was "Remember what is right is not always what everybody tells you is right."

Curley's wife of 55 years, Mary Irene; his daughter and three sons; and grandchildren and step-grandchildren also survive him.

Judge Elliot N. Walstead Milwaukee County Circuit Court

Former Milwaukee County Judge Elliot N. Walstead, 95, died Jan. 23 in Madison. His wife of 59 years, Magdalena Madge Walstead, died two days later at the age of 97.

Walstead graduated from the University of Wisconsin Law School in 1929. He worked as an assistant Dane County district attorney, an attorney and executive secretary for the Wisconsin Real Estate Brokers Board, a deputy attorney general, and as legal counsel to Governor John W. Reynolds before his appointment to the Milwaukee County bench in 1964. He also taught law classes at the University of Wisconsin Extension for 22 years.

Walstead served three years of active duty in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was made lieutenant commander in the U.S. Naval Reserves in 1949.

Walstead's two stepchildren and six step-grandchildren survive him. ❖

People



Judge
Ramona A. Gonzalez

Judges, court administrators, and citizens came out in April to support the court system's plea for adequate funding in the state budget. More than 100 people testified at a public hearing of the Joint Finance Committee in La Crosse. "It doesn't make sense to talk tough on crime and not provide funding," Senator **Brian B. Burke**, D-Milwaukee, told the *La Crosse Tribune*. Speaking in support of greater court funding, especially for training and certifying court interpreters, were La Crosse County Circuit Court Judge **Ramona A. Gonzalez**, District Seven Court Administrator **Steven R. Steadman**, La Crosse County Justice Sanctions Coordinator **Jane Klekamp**, **Za Moua**, who works at Family Resources, and La Crosse County Sheriff **Michael J. Weissenberger**. Representative **Michael D. Huebsch**, R-West Salem, said "to have the sheriff and Judge Gonzalez" both support interpreters, "that's an area I'll take a look at."

Newspapers and magazines in Green Bay, Appleton, Madison, Stevens Point, Milwaukee, and elsewhere have written about the Director of State Courts Office's study regarding the growing demand for qualified court interpreters in Wisconsin. "Perhaps nothing is more terrifying than appearing in court with your freedom, parental custody, or livelihood at stake—and not being able to comprehend a word or the proceeding," according to an article in *Wisconsin Lawyer*. "Our courts are intimidating even to people who understand English," said Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge **Elsa C. Lamelas**, who chaired the study committee created by the Director's Office. Editorials in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* have supported funding for interpreters in the state budget.

District Court Administrator **Michael G. Neimon**, District Three, received a fellowship from the Institute for Court Management at a May 11 ceremony at the U.S. Supreme Court. Neimon's class elected him to speak at the ceremony, which featured a presentation by Justice **Sandra Day O'Connor**. Neimon's research paper, *Can Interactive Video Work in Waukesha County?*, focused on a survey of the local bar and their thoughts about video technology, and touched on constitutional issues and the costs/benefits of court appearances via videoconferencing.

Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson** gave a presentation entitled "Judicial Selection, Retention, and Accountability" at *Caught in the Middle: A National Symposium on the Role of State Intermediate Appellate Courts*. The symposium, sponsored by the Indiana Court of Appeals, the *Indiana Law Review*, the Indiana University School of Law, the Indiana State Bar, and the Indiana Continuing Legal Education Forum, was held in celebration of the Indiana Court of Appeals' 100th anniversary.

Wayne Pfister Jr., court manager of the Dane County Records Center, recently received recognition from the Air Force Recruiting Service. "As is the case with other clerks of courts offices, we receive numerous requests for record searches from this branch of the

armed services," said Clerk of Court Judy Coleman. The certificate is "For Outstanding Achievement" and included a note that read: "Even if you do make me pay the \$5."

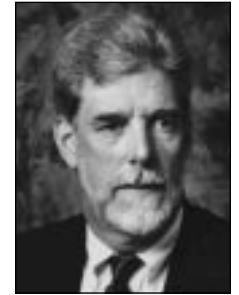
Municipal Judge **Sandra Sweeney** opened the first session of the Wisconsin Dells Municipal Court in January. Sweeney is an attorney who grew up in the Dells. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and her law degree from Thomas Cooley Law School in Michigan, reported the *Dells Events* (Wisconsin Dells).

The Judicial Affairs Department of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations will use Wisconsin's lawyer regulation system as a model to encourage reform of its attorney discipline process. Two representatives of the department traveled to Wisconsin from Tokyo to meet with Director of State Courts **J. Denis Moran** and Office of Lawyer Regulation Director **Keith L. Sellen** during the winter. "Owing to your cooperation," **Mayumi Tomizawa** wrote upon return to Tokyo, "our study will be very fruitful and suggestive, and encourage the reform of our own system."

"Study says Winnebago County needs new courthouse; taxpayers bracing for new jail now see \$9 million law center recommendation" was a headline in *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton). An architectural report shows that the courthouse is too small to house its projected judicial functions and other county administrative offices. The study recommends construction of a 51,446-square-foot addition to the courthouse that would double the facility's usable office space.

"Outstanding Warrants in Milwaukee County: Fugitives from the Justice System" was issued in June 2000 by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute, a not-for-profit institute established to study public-policy issues affecting the state of Wisconsin. The report, available at www.wpri.org/Reports/Volume13/Vol13no3.pdf, recommends that Milwaukee develop a "pretrial service agency" that would be responsible for assuring that defendants arrive for appearances. The county courts are doing just that (see story, page 13). In March 2000, Milwaukee County Chief Judge **Michael J. Skwierawski** started a "failure to appear" unit. Early statistics show that the unit returned over 50 percent of the defendants within a week of their missed appearances (see *The Third Branch*, summer 2000).

The Lake County Municipal Court launched its own Web site in January, reported the *Kettle Moraine Index*. The site includes downloadable forms, explanations of court procedures, a list of outstanding warrants, and court staff contact information. According to Municipal Judge **Douglas R. Stern**, the site is intended "to provide you with useful information, directions, and the ability to communicate with your community's municipal court." Village of Oconomowoc Lake Chief of Police and Village Administrator **Don Wiemer** designed the site. The court serves the



Director J. Denis Moran

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city and town of Oconomowoc; the towns of Merton, Summit, Lisbon; and the villages of Hartland, Lac La Belle, Nashotah, Dousman, Chenequa, and Oconomowoc Lake.



Chief Judge
Barbara A. Kluka

In March, Chief Judge **Barbara A. Kluka**, Kenosha County Circuit Court, was the keynote speaker at the **Susan B. Anthony** Award Dinner. The award, sponsored by the Kenosha Women's Network, Kenosha Business and Professional Women, and the American Association of University Women-Kenosha, recognizes women who work to improve the lives of women and children. This year's winner was **Kay Wade Wikel**, who works with the Coalition for Dismantling Racism, the Boys

and Girls Club, the Cancer Society Relay for Life, and other community organizations. Kluka is a past recipient of the award.

The Columbia County Restitution and Community Service Program for juveniles was labeled a success in the *Daily Register* (Portage). In just three months, Program Coordinator **Melissa Simonson** placed more than 60 juveniles in community service or restitution programs. "Our goal is to hold the juveniles accountable by paying back to the community," Simonson said. Court Commissioner **Ann Krummel** said that lack of work sites is a challenge for rural counties like Columbia, and praised the community for supporting the program.

Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge **Mark S. Gempeler** "is the perfect judge for television. He typifies what we're looking for. He keeps decorum in the court, and he even comes up with bits of humor," **Adam Pitluk** of *Court TV* told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* regarding the judge's handling of the Mark Chmura trial. "He is too experienced and too evenhanded to let any case veer out of control—even one as high-profile as this one," Chief Judge **Kathryn W. Foster** said.

In response to the murder-suicide of a Hmong couple in La Crosse in 1999, area residents and officials have created the Task Force on Domestic Violence in the Hmong Community. "What we've been trying to do is take that case, learn from it, and make the community a safer place," said District Attorney **Scott Horne** at a press conference in December. To help Hmong people and others through the court system, the La Crosse County Circuit Court hopes to train more interpreters, said District Court Administrator **Steven R. Steadman**. **John Voelker**, executive assistant to the chief justice, facilitates task force meetings. He told the *La Crosse Tribune* that the La Crosse effort could be a model for other counties that serve diverse populations.

In Marathon County, the Wausau Area Hmong Mutual Association is hiring a court liaison to help make the court process less confusing to Southeast Asian refugees, reported the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. The liaison will be more than an interpreter for Hmong who do not speak English, said **Peter Yang**, chief operating officer for the Hmong Association. The liaison will educate Southeast Asians about the judicial system. "I can tell you almost

on a daily basis there are cases that come through court that would be benefited from that position," said Marathon County Circuit Court Judge **Gregory E. Grau**.

Students in **Mary Hunter's** American Government class at Green Lake High School took part in the Wisconsin Supreme Court's *Court with Class* program, where students come to Madison to hear an oral argument and meet with a justice. Prior to the visit, District Attorney **Jim Camp**, Attorney **Mike Sias**, and Police Officer **Mike Ratter** helped students prepare for the experience by giving presentations on the prosecution of criminal cases, the Fourth Amendment, and law enforcement. Hunter is a graduate of *From the Courtroom to the Classroom*, a professional development program that helps teachers educate their students about the court system. "I really thought this was an authentic learning experience for the students...they definitely got a real-life view of the Supreme Court and education beyond what can be taught in the classroom," Hunter told the *Green Lake County Reporter*.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice **Diane S. Sykes** was a panelist at the *Federalist Society Judicial Selection Conference* at the University of Toledo School of Law in March. The session was titled "Appointment Versus Election: Balancing Independence and Accountability," and focused on the strengths and weaknesses of both judicial selection systems with an eye on identifying effective reform options.



Justice Diane S. Sykes

Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice **Diane S. Sykes** was the featured speaker at the Education Foundation of Wauwatosa's 10th anniversary celebration, according to the *Wauwatosa News-Times*. The foundation supports the Wauwatosa School District.

Federal Judge **Myron L. Gordon**, 82, was "such a stickler for punctuality that he fined lawyers for being late.... He timed lawyers' arguments and did not hesitate to cut them off at the verb," according to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Gordon retired from the federal district court bench (Eastern District of Wisconsin) after more than 50 years of wearing the black robe. Gordon first took judicial office in 1950 in Milwaukee County. He was then elected to the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 1961, where he served until 1967 when President Lyndon Johnson appointed him to the federal bench.

"By one vote, the Barron County Board of Supervisors put its stamp of approval on a resolution to borrow \$25.5 million for a Justice Center," reported *Rice Lake Online* (the Internet publication of the *Rice Lake Chronotype*). This is the largest project to be bonded in the history of the county.

Ralph Hollmon, Milwaukee County Department of Human Services director, called foster parents "unsung heroes" who provide loving and caring homes for children in a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article. In January, about 250 foster parents were honored for their service.

Atty. **Ernesto Romero**, former director of the Wisconsin Family Justice Clinic in Milwaukee, has developed a free Internet program to help self-represented litigants complete the forms for their

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Attorney Ernesto Romero

divorce, custody, support, legal separation, and annulment, reports *Wisconsin Opinions* (now known as the *Wisconsin Law Journal*). The program is called Z3 and can be found at www.WisconsinForms.com.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice **N. Patrick Crooks** and District IV Court of Appeals Judges **Paul Lundsten** and **Patience D. Roggensack** participated in a moderated discussion titled "Effective Appellate Practice" at the University of Wisconsin Law School. More than 60 stu-

dents attended the discussion, which was sponsored by the State Bar of Wisconsin's Appellate Practice Section. **Aviva Meridian Kaiser**, Legal Research and Writing Program director, and **Meredith Ross**, Remington Center director, also attended the session and plan to incorporate the judges' advice in their programs.



Judge
Mary M. Kuhnmuench

Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge **Mary M. Kuhnmuench** was the keynote speaker at the *Stop the Violence* symposium sponsored by the Ho-Chunk Nation in Black River Falls in February. More than 90 people participated in this two-day workshop, which focused on ways to work together to address the devastating effects of domestic violence. **Rick McCarthur** and other Ho-Chunk leaders organized the event. Kuhnmuench, who has presided over a domestic violence calendar for the past

two years, spoke of the need for a coordinated community response to these cases.

Racine Police Officer **Julia Burney** believes that books open doors for child victims. Burney grew up in a violent home, but her love of reading provided her with an example of how life could be better, according to an article in *Wisconsin Crime Victims Report*, a publication of the Wisconsin Department of Justice's Office of Crime Victim Services. Now when she patrols Racine she sees children exposed to street fights, drug dealing, and domestic violence. To counteract the negative environment they live in she hands out free books to children through a program she started called COPS N'KIDS. Since 1998, the program has distributed more than 250,000 books.

Chief Judge **Barbara A. Kluka's** path from student to judge and mentor was recalled in an article in *The Chronicle* (Kenosha). "Career options for female college students in the 1960s seemed primarily to be teaching or nursing," said Kluka, now a judge on the Kenosha County Circuit Court. She taught high school social studies for nine years before deciding to go to law school. "Most of the big changes, or advances in my life were because someone else encouraged me to consider them: 'Why don't you go to law school?' ... 'Why don't you run for judge?'" Now she is the mentor—counseling students considering law school and teaching at the Judicial Colleges in Wisconsin and Nevada.

Five new members were elected to the Green Bay Packers' board of directors, including Brown County Circuit Court Judge **Donald R. Zuidmulder**. He will serve a three-year term.

Justice **N. Patrick Crooks** told the *Wisconsin Law Journal* that he would be interested in the new Green Bay federal judgeship. "It would be challenging, going up and setting up the Green Bay division of the federal court. And going back to Green Bay would be nice," he said. As of press time, no appointment had been announced.

The Chief Judges' Subcommittee on Juror Treatment and Selection is planning to meet with the Department of Transportation to find new ways to retrieve more accurate addresses for juror summons lists. One possibility is cross-referencing driver's license information with vehicle registration data, according to the *Dane County Bar Association Newsletter*. Chief Judge **Robert W. Radcliffe**, Jackson County Circuit Court, chairs the committee.

As recent events heightened concerns about school violence, Rock County Circuit Court Judge **John H. Lussow** was faced with sentencing a 14-year-old girl charged with being party to the crime of issuing a false bomb threat. This was the focus of an article in *The Janesville Gazette*. The sentence included a 30-day assessment at Southern Oaks Girls School, nine months in the corrective sanctions program, two months of supervision by the juvenile probation department, 100 hours of community service, mandatory counseling, an apology to the school board and school, restitution, and an essay on terrorism. "I want to find out if you understand just how terrible this stuff is," he told the girl. Lussow will also speak to Janesville students about the recent wave of bomb threats.

Vilas and Oneida counties have started using victim impact panels to help operating while intoxicating (OWI) offenders comprehend the possibly devastating effects of driving drunk. "We've got to instill a human side to the impacts of operating while intoxicated using real-life stories of victims who have lost loved ones," Chief Judge **James B. Mohr**, Vilas County Circuit Court, told the *Vilas Co. News-Review*. **Kelly Jo Vanderstelt** is coordinating the two-county program.

La Crosse County is expanding its Victim Impact Panel program in response to studies, including one of the Outagamie County program, indicating that such programs are effective in reducing OWI recidivism. In February, La Crosse County judges announced that jail time for repeat-offense drunken drivers who attend a victim impact meeting will be reduced by 10 days, reported the *La Crosse Tribune*.

In March, Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge **Richard J. Sankovitz** became the first Milwaukee judge to sentence someone using videoconferencing technology, according to the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. He sentenced **Billy J. Turney**, who was at the Dodge Correctional Institution, on drug trafficking charges. Transporting Turney was especially challenging because it would have required taking all of the medical equipment necessary for his frequent kidney dialysis sessions. Sankovitz



Judge
Richard J. Sankovitz

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Dodge, Grant Counties Dedicate Courthouses



The octagonal glass-and-copper dome atop the Grant County Courthouse is visible for miles and earned Lancaster the nickname, "The City of the Dome."

This spring, two Wisconsin communities celebrated the birth and rebirth of two very different courthouses.

The Dodge County Courthouse, sparkling new and wired for state-of-the-art technology and security, was dedicated in May in a ceremony with the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Circuit Court Judge Daniel W. Klossner presided over the event. The

state's high court heard two cases in the new facility on May 1 to help mark the occasion. More than 300 people turned out to watch the proceedings and to take a tour of the bright, modern building. Overflow crowds watched the oral arguments in adjacent courtrooms on full-size screens that glided down from the ceiling.

Throughout the afternoon, Circuit Court Judges Andrew P. Bissonnette and John R. Storck gave tours and led discussions. Bissonnette gave presentations on real-time court reporting, computerized legal research, and Wisconsin Circuit Court Access (the courts' Web-based system for accessing court records), and Storck demonstrated the videoconferencing system.

One month later and about 140 miles to the west, the people of Grant County celebrated the rebirth of their own courthouse in a ceremony with Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson presiding. The 1905 brownstone building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, features a glass and copper dome patterned after the St. Peter Basilica in Rome. Civil War artifacts are on display in one entryway, including weapons and bullets from Gettysburg. The first Civil War monument erected in Wisconsin stands on the northeast corner of the courthouse square.

Like many of its counterparts around the state, the Grant County Courthouse was bursting at the seams to accommodate modern government offices. In addition, its

layout of entrances and public walkways led to a dangerous and uncomfortable mix of jurors, prisoners, witnesses, and court officers.

After an extensive review and approval process, the Grant County Board decided to remodel and expand the courthouse and build a new administration building on the courthouse square. Construction on the \$2.6 million project ended in January. Now, only court-related offices are housed in the courthouse, while county administrative offices have moved to the administration building.

The county board chose Ayres Associates to design the project. The firm was able to complete the work without altering the building's character. "They did a nice job of preserving the old part of it, handling it with no problems," County Board Chair Eugene Bartels said. "I think that new life has been breathed into this old courthouse. It shows that with care and commitment, you can extend the life of a building and make it useful for many more years. I'm sure it will serve the county for another 50 or 60 years." ❖

This story contains portions of a feature article on the remodeling of the Grant County Courthouse that was written by Jennifer Schmidt, Ayres Associates, and published in the spring 2001 edition of Trends magazine. The full article is available on the Ayres Associates Web site at www.ayresassociates.com.

Judges Share Ideas, Concerns

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Sacramento, said this material was new and important for his court. He said there is little communication among the family, criminal, and civil courts in his jurisdiction, making it difficult to take children's needs into account.

Sujata Warriar of the New York State Office for Prevention of Domestic Violence spoke about cultural awareness. She encouraged the audience to be aware of cultural biases and to remember that "each victim comes to the courtroom as a member of his or her community; however, he or she is still a unique individual."

Several judges spoke about their need for interpreters. AT&T's "Language Line" provides translation services but it is difficult to find the AT&T translator if he or she is needed for later hearings or to clarify what happened at past hearings.

Participants also considered their role outside the courtroom and how they might participate in or spearhead activities to develop effective responses to domestic violence in their communities.

Suggestions included staff training, a team approach among courthouse employees, and fatality review boards. Some judges, however, questioned how active they should be outside the courtroom. Judge Ronald Adrine, a faculty member from Cleveland, responded: "We're not trying to impose our practice on the community and its agencies. We're saying that when the judge is fully engaged, the system operates better." ❖

The National Judicial Institute is a project of the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Family Violence Prevention Fund. This meeting was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Violence Against Women Office in cooperation with the technical assistance project at the Vera Institute of Justice's National Associates Program on Domestic Violence. For more information about upcoming judicial institutes, visit the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Web site at www.nationalcouncilfvd.org and look under training and conferences. For information about the Vera Institute of Justice, go to www.vera.org. For more information about the Violence Against Women Office, go to www.ojp.usdoj.gov/vawo.

Law Library Debuts New Electronic Newsletter

by: Elaine Sharp and Connie Von Der Heide, librarians
Wisconsin State Law Library

WSSL @ Your Service, a monthly e-publication of the Wisconsin State Law Library (WSLL), debuted in February. It replaces the print *WSLL Newsletter*, published from 1989 to 1998.

WSLL @ Your Service is written by library staffers Amy Crowder, Elaine Sharp, Connie Von Der Heide, and Heidi Yelk. Each issue includes five regular columns:

Focus On outlines resources and services offered by WSLL and its branches and features information on special research topics such as tax resources.

WSLL Web highlights sections of the Library's Web site (<http://wsll.state.wi.us>) and describes recent additions and changes.

Tech Tip in Brief answers questions about finding legal information on the Internet and using the features of Web browsers such as page printing frames. Readers are encouraged to submit questions for this column.

What's New at... highlights recently acquired titles that court staff may wish to borrow, describes staff activities and changes, and gives progress updates on the new library facility, which is currently under construction.

Odds 'n' Endings is a catch-all for legal and research tidbits. Wondering whether Wisconsin has ever had a law that required serving a slice of cheese with apple pie? Or when the telephone will celebrate its 125th birthday? Find it here.

Because the newsletter is in electronic format, it includes many hypertext links so readers can go directly to featured Web-based resources with just a click. The library is maintaining an archive of issues of *WSLL @ Your Service* on the site. Click the purple "News" button on the WSLL homepage or visit <http://wsll.state.wi.us/news.html>. ❖

For more information or to subscribe to *WSLL @ Your Service*, contact Von Der Heide at (608) 267-2202 or connie.vonderheide@courts.state.wi.us.

Criminal Justice Council

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variety of committees to address recidivism and reduce the jail population.

Klekamp said that among other things, the council is examining the effectiveness of alternatives to incarceration. She hopes this will lead to positive changes in the criminal justice system. "Possibly the criminal justice system won't feel pressured to use incarceration to deal with all people," she said.

Klekamp said the council is working on alternatives to spending money to house people convicted of crimes, and examining whether the money would be better spent on programs aimed at breaking the cycle of crime. For example, rather than building a work-release facility, the county might construct a daily check-in center. Instead of living at the facility, people could be monitored electronically and work, go to classes, care for their families, and get counseling or other treatment.

Klekamp stressed the importance of the council's work with the community in this process. "[The community members] will give criminal justice players a better understanding of what the community wants," she said.

Another council member, Kimberly

Vogt, Ph.D., a sociologist who specializes in criminology and teaches at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, agreed that community input is essential. "The involvement of the community helps to hold the criminal justice system accountable while at the same time building stronger lines of communication between the criminal justice agencies themselves and the community," she said.

Council members stressed the importance of working together to make progress. "When we are dealing with something as complex as crime in a community, we are dealing with a phenomenon that is a concern of many agencies," said council member Richard Kyte, director of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership at Viterbo University. "We need to make sure that the county's efforts are coordinated, and to do that we need to come up with a philosophy and set of guidelines that everyone involved buys into."

Dorothy Clark, one of the community members on the council, said that there are challenges in working with such a large council from diverse backgrounds. "While it was made clear from the start what we would be doing on this council, there are some members who resist change or do not appear to have an open mind," she said. "I naively

believed all members were there to put the greater good above their own agenda."

Council member Julie Bacon, a nurse in crime victim services at Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse, said divergence of opinion actually makes the council stronger. "Although we come from different places, we all share an interest in the safety of La Crosse and a responsibility to the citizens to do what is best for the overall health of our community," Bacon said. "We have an incredible group of individuals with the intention to improve our community's well-being who aren't afraid to discuss changes in the system."

The council will give a final presentation for the county board in June, Klekamp said, and will continue to meet regularly after that to discuss these issues.

Several members of the council said they have been pleasantly surprised with the progress so far. "Although I wasn't sure when we started that we would be able to accomplish all we were setting out to do," said Kyte, the ethics expert from Viterbo, "it now looks as though we will be able to make recommendations to the county that will save money, reduce the number of repeat offenders in jail, and increase the level of public safety." ❖

Courts Give a Valentine to Lucky Couples

by: *Beth Bishop Perrigo, deputy district court administrator Milwaukee County Circuit Court*



Judge Jean DiMotto donated her courtroom for the wedding ceremonies and courthouse staff bedecked it with flowers. DiMotto was on standby to perform a Spanish ceremony if need the arose, which it did not.



Court Commissioner Jon Sanfilippo and Rosemarie Bruns, Office of the Clerk of Circuit Court, take a moment to reflect on one of the wedding items that the court staff purchased for the Valentine's Day event.

In most years, a couple choosing to marry on Valentine's Day at the Milwaukee County Courthouse would exchange their vows

in small claims court between evictions and landlord-tenant disputes. Not this year.

District Court Administrator Bruce Harvey decided that Valentine's Day should be special and memorable, and he approached several staff members with the idea of holding a "wedding court" for the many couples who choose Valentine's Day to get married at the Milwaukee County Courthouse. The response from staff was positive and the rest is history.

Court Commissioner Jon Sanfilippo volunteered to preside over the ceremonies, and Susan Adler, Felony Court coordinator, handled the detail work. For the big day, there were cupcakes donated by the courthouse café; colorful plants and ribbons on loan from the Milwaukee County greenhouse; decorations purchased with donations from court staff; music from a borrowed boombox; and a new box of tissues. The result: a beautifully decorated courtroom perfect for the day.

Rosemarie Bruns and Sally Shaffer checked in the couples and provided a warm welcome to the celebration. After each ceremony, the couples and their families took pictures, sampled wedding cupcakes, and signed the "wedding register."

The response from the newlyweds was overwhelmingly positive and the couples and their families were genuinely touched by the efforts of the staff. Flashbulbs snapped and tears were shed. Before the day was over, 26 couples had tied the knot, television cameras and newspaper reporters had come and gone, and staff looked forward to an opportunity to make it all happen again next year. ❖

Act 84, Rules for Driver's License Withdrawals

Submitted by the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles

On April 9, all sections of 1997 Wisconsin Act 84 not previously made effective went into effect. These include the following:

- Sections 8, 9, 10, 16, 57, 59, 60, and 61: All demerit point license withdrawals will be suspensions. Revocations were used in some cases under prior law. Amends Wisconsin Statutes Section 343.085(3) and (5), 343.10(1)(3), 343.23(2)(b), and 343.32(2).
- Sections 20, 21, 22, 36, 37, 41, 42, and 45 through 48: Withdrawal action on first-offense operating while intoxicated (OWI) conviction will be a revocation. Drivers will not be required to file an SR-22 to reinstate their operating privilege (see sections 62–66 of the law). First offense OWI with a date of conviction prior to April 9, 2001, will continue to result in a suspension. Amends Wis. Stats. Sec. 343.30(1q)(b)1 and 2, 343.30(1q)(b)4m, 343.307(1), and 343.31.

- Sections 11, 13, 23, 24, and 35: All non-compliance (NCP/NCI/NCA) withdrawals will be revocations. Driver will not be required to file an SR-22 to reinstate their operating privilege. Amends Wis. Stats. Sec. 343.10(2)(dm), 343.16(5)(a), 343.30(1q)(c)1, 343.30(1q)(d), and 343.305(10)(d).
- Section 44: License withdrawals for people who have an occupational license and are convicted of an HTO major offense (except falsified application/perjury), excessive speeding, or racing will be suspensions. Creates Wis. Stats. Sec. 343.31(2)(u).
- Sections 81 through 135: Driver license and registration withdrawals under the safety responsibility and damage judgment laws (Wis. Stats. Ch. 344) will be suspensions. Drivers must file an SR-22 to reinstate their operating and registration privileges. Amends Wis. Stats. Sec. 344.01 to 344.27.
- Sections 136 through 146: Withdrawal action for cancellation of proof of insurance (SR-22) after reinstatement will be a suspension. Amends Wis. Stats. Sec. 344.29 to 344.42. ❖

Collaborating Can Mitigate Divorce Damage

by: *Atty. Gregg Herman, executive director
Collaborative Family Law Council of Wisconsin, Inc.*

Sherry Goren Slovin, a Cincinnati divorce lawyer, will never forget the day she appeared in court to represent the devastated mother of a 14-year-old girl who had committed suicide with her father's gun. The father had filed a motion for reimbursement of funeral expenses.

Once upon a time, Slovin litigated many of her cases. But often she found that when she thought she had "won," the bitterness of the trial endured and post-divorce issues continued to traumatize families. She grew tired of seeing children as victims in these battles.

All of the anger that is intrinsic to family law litigation made her feel that her legal abilities were being abused. Rather than helping people, she felt that she was adding to their problems. There must be a better way.

Today, a significant portion of Slovin's practice is collaborative divorce. A presentation on collaborative divorce was given at a recent Second Judicial District meeting and the concept has also been raised at chief judges' meetings. Unlike other divorce cases, in a collaborative divorce, the parties and their attorneys work together to solve problems. There is a commitment at the beginning of the case to work towards settlement. To ensure the clients that the lawyers join in this commitment, at the beginning of the case the lawyers and the parties sign a stipulation, which is submitted to the court for entry as an order, where the lawyers contractually agree to withdraw from representation if the case goes to trial.

In a collaborative divorce, there is no formal discovery. Both sides must agree to make full and voluntary disclosure. All appraisals are joint. Both attorneys refrain from attack letters and confrontational behavior.

Collaborative divorce is not for every case or every attorney. It cannot work where there are allegations of hidden assets. It may not work if there is substance or alcohol abuse, domestic violence, or mental illness.

However, many divorce cases involve none of the above issues. Many involve two people who just cannot live together anymore. While anger may temporarily blind them, their long-term best

interests when there are minor or adult children involved require a decent, if not amicable, relationship.

The legal process can do harm to this relationship, which may fester for years to come. As a result, many people are reluctant to use lawyers for their divorce, preferring mediation or even proceeding *pro se*. In many cases, this may be perfectly fine. In other cases, having a trained, experienced professional involved may be essential for agreements that are tax-friendly, address all relevant issues, and afford parties the security of approval by a lawyer focused on their best interests.

Collaborative divorce requires lawyers who believe in the process and commit to work to resolve problems. Collaborative lawyers use problem-solving techniques to fashion a "win-win" approach to the case, rather than the intimidation and threats of going to court to litigate.

Judge Mary Howard Davidson encouraged collaborative divorces during her years on the bench in Minneapolis. Calling it "divorce with dignity," Davidson found that collaborative divorce significantly eased the trauma of divorce on the couples who appeared in front of her without prolonging the process. In fact, she found collaborative divorces, on average, were resolved in less time than conventional ones.

Today, collaborative divorce groups are operating in California, Connecticut, Georgia, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere. Many other states are in the process of starting groups. Although details vary from state to state, collaborative divorce has uniformly reduced the stress of divorce on parties and their attorneys.

In Wisconsin, a group of lawyers has formed a private, non-profit organization called the Collaborative Family Law Council (CFLC) of Wisconsin, Inc., which is dedicated to bringing collaborative divorce to Wisconsin. Chapters of the CFLC of Wisconsin have been started in southeast Wisconsin (Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties), and northeast Wisconsin (Outagamie, Winnebago, and Brown counties), as well as in Dane, La Crosse, and Racine counties. Prerequisites for membership include training in collaborative divorce principles. ❖

For more information, visit the CFLC Web site at www.collabdivorce.com.

Celebrating Library Week

The Wisconsin State Law Library, Milwaukee Legal Resource Center, and Dane County Law Library observed National Library Week and Legal Research Teach-In, April 1-7, with many activities including a trivia contest on lawyer movies and television shows. The winners—Sheelah Fox, Supreme Court/Court of Appeals Clerk's Office; Susan Myers, Wood County Clerk of Courts Office; Joy Schmitz, Vilas County Clerk of Courts Office; and Frank Sullivan, District IV Court of Appeals—each received a

mug, mouse pad, gavel pen, and tin of mints from West Group. Judge Daniel Anderson, District II Court of Appeals, was also recognized for his speedy entry, with all correct answers just 17 minutes after the contest began.

The Milwaukee Legal Resource Center offered demonstrations of online legal research databases and gave tours of the library. The Wisconsin State Law Library held a *What's New on Westlaw* lunch seminar and hosted the third annual Court Coffee Break. ❖

People

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said he missed the eye contact he has with the person when s/he is in the courtroom. "Seeing each other over the monitor isn't the same thing," Sankovitz said. "But this way his treatment isn't interrupted and our calendar isn't affected."

"A lot of people who represent themselves have the expectation that the system should be user friendly," Atty. **John Hendrick** of Family Law Education Inc. told *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton). "It's a system that was built for lawyers to argue out cases. It's not user friendly, but there are some things we can do." Hendrick was interviewed for an article on *Pro Se Litigants: Meeting the Challenge of Self-Represented Litigants in Wisconsin*, a report released by a committee convened by Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson. The report is available at www.courts.state.wi.us/misc/reports/Pro_Se_Report_12-00.htm.

As the number of people choosing to represent themselves in court increases, so too do the challenges faced by judges, court staff, and lawyers, according to a *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* article. "They just don't have the necessary information," said Chief Judge **Kathryn W. Foster**, Waukesha County Circuit Court. Often proceedings are delayed because *pro se* litigants are unprepared, which "clogs an already over-burdened court system." To help alleviate this problem, Waukesha County is starting a Self-Help Program. Other programs to help litigants without lawyers have been developed in Eau Claire, Chippewa, and Dane counties, and Richland Center.

Former Winnebago County Assistant Corporation Counsel **Karen Seifert** is the newest of three court commissioners in Winnebago County, reported *The Oshkosh Northwestern*. The new position was created because of a growing caseload. According to Chief Judge **Robert A. Haase**, Winnebago County Circuit Court, there has been a need for an additional judge in the county for several years. "The state, for one reason or another, has never provided it," he said. Seifert will handle domestic abuse, harassment, support enforcement, divorce, and paternity cases.

Court of Appeals, District I, Judge **Ted E. Wedemeyer Jr.** has been selected as president of Goethe Haus of Wisconsin, a non-profit cultural institute that works to preserve and enhance the culture of German-speaking people.

A. John Voelker, executive assistant to Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, has been selected to

participate in the Toll Fellowship Program sponsored by the Council of State Governments (CSG). Each year, the program identifies 40 emerging state leaders from across the nation to take part in a weeklong 'intellectual boot camp' focusing on trend analysis, policy development, and institutional changes. The program is named in honor of Henry Toll, a Colorado senator who founded CSC in 1933. It is aimed at developing the next generation of leaders from all three branches of government.

Abrahamson nominated Voelker, who also received endorsements from Dale Cattanach, retired state auditor, and Washburn County Sheriff Terry Dryden. Voelker began a career in public service in 1987 as a program analyst with the Legislative Audit Bureau. Since 1992, he has worked for the Wisconsin court system as a senior policy analyst and executive assistant to the chief justice. Voelker also served on the McFarland village board from 1995-1999.

Justice **William A. Bablitch** gave the keynote address at the University of Wisconsin Law School graduation on May 18. Bablitch talked about lessons learned in his 30-year career in the law, which has included prosecuting, legislating (as Senate majority leader), and judging. He distilled his advice into five "Bablitch Maxims," which he called "very simple," but said, "the simplicity of expression hides a wealth of complexity." The maxims are as follows:



Justice
William A. Bablitch

1. Life is a process of making choices, so develop a decision-making process to help you discover every alternative before you make a choice.
3. Intelligence is a lot more than IQ. You must have "street smarts"—the ability to get along with people, to read their reaction to you, to recognize your own shortcomings, to be creative.
4. In life, there are very few contracts. Value your word, give it sparingly and honor it.
5. Understand two basic tenets of human communication and behavior: Until someone tells you "yes," they are telling you "no," and everyone has one person they share a secret with, so if you want a secret kept, don't tell it.
6. Coincidences rarely occur, so if you are trying to determine why something happened, look for another explanation.

Bablitch has been a member of the Wisconsin Supreme Court for 18 years. ♦

Court's Budget Sinks

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At its May 23 administrative conference, the Supreme Court tightened its own belt, voting not to hire second law clerks next term unless the expenditure is approved in the state budget process. Five of the seven justices had hired second clerks as limited-term employees this term. Justice William A. Bablitch reluctantly made the motion not to continue the program, saying he believes the clerks have been a great asset to the Court. Other justices agreed that the addition of a second clerk has improved their preparation for oral argument and generally improved

functioning and morale. However, Bablitch said, with the state facing a budget crisis, axing the second clerks—for now—is the right thing to do.

While the budget is supposed to be finalized by late June, some legislators have indicated that this budget session will likely go well into fall. Gridlock in the Legislature held up passage of the 1999-2001 budget for four months. ♦

For a summary of the courts' budget requests and how they fared in the governor's budget, go to www.courts.state.wi.us/director/pdf/bbudg.pdf. The full text of remarks by Abrahamson and Chief Judge Thomas Cane, Court of Appeals, to the Joint Finance Committee can be found at www.courts.state.wi.us, under "What's New."

The Third Branch

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PPAC Asks Judges to Envision the Future

*by: Dan Wassink, senior policy analyst
Director of State Courts Office*

What do you see as the key issues that will affect the future of the Wisconsin court system? Technology? The growing diversity of court users? Or perhaps the influence of alternative dispute resolution on the legal process?

Wisconsin judges will have two opportunities this year to provide input on this issue. First, judges can expect a mail survey in late summer from the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee's (PPAC) Planning Subcommittee. This survey will assist the subcommittee in identifying issues of primary concern to judges. Second, the subcommittee is coordinating an interactive session at the Judicial Conference in October that will utilize keypad voting technology to allow conference participants to provide instant feedback to further refine the issues. The success of the session, however, will largely depend on the level of response from the mail survey.

The subcommittee will identify critical issues facing the Wisconsin court system in the next three to five years. It began that process in March by prioritizing 26 trends and examining their potential to impact the courts. Ultimately, strategies for addressing the key, long-term issues will be presented to the Supreme Court for consideration. ❖

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