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## Weighted caseload study to be released; next step is judge-need formula

by Robert Brick, Office of Court Operations

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has completed its 18-month study of judicial workload in Wisconsin's circuit courts. NCSC staff delivered the working draft of the judicial needs assessment in late December and was expected to finalize the report in late January. The next step is to develop a formula for calculating which counties have the highest judge need for purposes of focusing our requests for judgeships.

The formula will help the director of state courts to identify counties with the most pressing need. For example, if County A and County B both need one judge, and County A currently has one judge but County B currently has 10 judges, the per-judge workload in County A is quite a bit higher. When the director has identified the counties, work on a judgeship bill can begin.

That we are able to start 2007 with discussion of a judgeship bill is a testament to the value of this weighted caseload study, an effort that differs from the studies conducted in 1980 and 1995 in at least five important ways:

- First, it uses information from all courts, rather than a sample of information from a few courts. 240 of the state's 241 judges and 109 circuit court commissioners participated in the study's data collection effort.
- Second, it integrates the work of the circuit court commissioners into the calculation of judicial officer need.
- Third, it takes into account all judicial time, not just specific case-related time.
- Fourth, it incorporates judicial time for both post-judgment activity and "uncontested" cases into the case weights.
- Fifth, it acknowledges the administrative and managerial responsibilities of the chief judges by assigning an administrative need of one full-time judge position to the

First Judicial District and a half-time judge position to each of the other nine districts.

The final report shows a workload-based need for 12.2 additional judicial officers statewide. This is derived by subtracting the actual number of 241 judges and the estimated number of 84.35 circuit court commissioners from the 337.5 judicial officers needed to process the cases in our circuit courts. Adding the 5.5 chief judge administrative need increases the need to 17.7 additional judicial officers.

In addition to providing new case weights, the NCSC report offers four recommendations for the future:

1. Create a standing committee to conduct annual reviews of the effect of new legislation or policies on case weights.
2. Update workload standards every five years with funding allocated as part of the process for assessing judicial need.
3. Conduct regular audits of data entry and collection to ensure the integrity and reliability of the workload standards.
4. Use a three-year average of case filings when determining judicial need.

Now that we have gathered solid data to justify the need, the Director's Office plans to formulate a judgeship bill to be introduced in spring 2007. Between now and then, we'll develop the formula that will help us calculate which counties have the highest judge need, and those will be our counties. The formula will take into account the individual county's judge-need and county support as well as the judicial district's need. ■

## Courts bid farewell to four long-serving judges

by Amanda Todd, court information officer and Brigid Moroney, court information intern

Four long-serving judges have retired from the bench (or soon will), taking more than eight decades of experience with them. The La Crosse County Circuit Court will be particularly hard hit, with two of the five judges retiring. Here are the retirees:

### Judge David G. Deininger Court of Appeals, District IV

When Judge David G. Deininger retires from the Court of Appeals this month, leaving behind a job that he described as "perfect for a person of my interests"

and "the closest thing to law school since law school," he'll step into a new adventure full of activities that, to his colleagues, may not sound entirely relaxing. Among them: parenting a 7-year-old and taking a more active part in public policy debates.

Deininger's decade as a member of the District IV Court of Appeals in Madison has given him an opportunity to deal with some of the public policy issues that have intrigued him since his four terms in the state Assembly, where he represented parts of Green and

see **Retirements** on page 14



## Director's column: Moving forward together

As we enter a new two-year budget cycle and legislative session, the Director of State Courts Office will be taking a more pro-active approach to legislative issues than in the past.

We'll still need to be prepared to react quickly as the budget process unfolds and bills are introduced, but we'll also be taking the initiative to promote our own legislative agenda and introducing new mechanisms to keep you informed.

I outlined our six major budget initiatives in previous newsletters and in my speech at the Wisconsin Judicial Conference, so I'll focus here on our legislative efforts.



A. John Voelker

### The judgeship bill

One of our primary goals is passage of a judgeship bill. The judgeship bill would help ensure our courts are adequately staffed to effectively administer justice as caseloads continue to increase.

A recent study conducted by the National Center for State Courts shows Wisconsin would need 18 additional judges to maintain current service levels in light of increasing caseloads. If current filing trends continue, the courts will be handling 150,000 more cases in 2008 than in 1999, the last time a new judgeship was approved by the Legislature. The objective study of the judicial workload demand should help bolster our request.

You can read more details about the study elsewhere in this newsletter, but we plan to include in the bill counties shown to have the greatest need. The primary factor in determining need is workload per judge within the county. Once we've identified those priority counties, we'll move ahead together.

I'd like to thank all of you who helped with the study and to ensure its accuracy and reliability. This was the first

comprehensive look at judicial workload in nearly a decade. The end result will help us effectively manage the system and identify possible areas for improvement.

### Guardianship reconciliation bill

Another initiative we're actively promoting is a guardianship reconciliation bill. A version of this passed the Senate last session but it didn't make it through the Assembly because it was introduced late.

The urgently needed bill will clean up language and statutory cross references in three pieces of legislation approved last year. As some of you know, some of last session's work didn't get a sufficiently thorough review and resulted in some excessive paperwork and confusion.

We'll coordinate efforts with other justice stakeholders and partners in the legal community, urging legislators to pass this bill as soon as possible. We hope to get legislation to the floor in January, the first month of the new legislative session.

### Judicial compensation

Another initiative on which we're already working with administration officials is a judicial compensation package. We'd like to build on last session's success and move Wisconsin judges closer to the Midwest average for judicial compensation.

If the past is any indication, we should have a better idea of how our proposal is being received by late spring or early summer, depending on how the budget process goes.

### CCAP funding

In addition to our proposal to restructure state funding to the counties, our budget also looks to increase funding to the Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP), which rely almost exclusively on program revenue. Unfortunately, as the demands on CCAP have increased, revenue from the Justice Information Fee has not kept pace.

see Director's column on page 9

## Kenosha judge will lead PPAC Planning Subcommittee

Judge Barbara A. Kluka, a former chief judge who has served on the bench in Kenosha County Circuit Court for nearly 18 years, has been selected as the new chair of the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC) Planning Subcommittee. She succeeds Judge Richard J. Sankovitz of Milwaukee County, who stepped down from the subcommittee after having served the maximum number of terms.

The nine-member subcommittee identifies and prioritizes the critical issues facing the court system and recommends ways to address these critical issues.

The subcommittee's membership also changed: Judge James Evenson (Sauk County), Judge Jeffrey Kremers

(Milwaukee County), and Clerk of Circuit Court Sheila Reiff (Walworth County) were added. They succeed Chief Judge Michael N. Nowakowski (Dane County), Sankovitz, and Clerk of Circuit Court Carolyn Olson (Iowa County).

The subcommittee will begin its new planning cycle in January 2007. ■



Judge Barbara A. Kluka

## AWARDS

**Two Wisconsin judges receive national honors**

This winter, two Wisconsin judges received national recognition for their achievements. District IV Court of Appeals Judge Paul B. Higginbotham and Barron County Circuit Court Judge Edward R. Brunner received separate honors for their service, dedication to justice, and active involvement in their communities.

**Brunner accepts Rehnquist Award**

First, Judge Edward R. Brunner, Barron County Circuit Court, was honored with the National Center for State Courts 2006 William H. Rehnquist Award for Judicial Excellence on Nov. 16, 2006 in the Great Hall of the U.S. Supreme Court. Chief Justice John Roberts presented the award, which is considered to be one of the most prestigious judicial honors in the country.



*Judge Edward R. Brunner celebrates the Rehnquist Award with Justice Ann Walsh Bradley and U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts at the U.S. Supreme Court.*

As reported in the summer edition of *The Third Branch*, the award recognizes Brunner's leadership on initiatives designed to instill public trust and confidence in the Wisconsin courts, and his success in building programs that have become national models, such as initiatives promoting restorative justice and improving relations between state and tribal courts.

In addition to the presentation by Roberts, the ceremony included remarks from Justice Ann Walsh Bradley; Mary McQueen (president of the National Center for State Courts); Chief Judge Robert M. Bell of Maryland; and Brunner. Approximately 30 of Brunner's Wisconsin friends, family, and colleagues traveled to Washington to help him celebrate the recognition.

In accepting the award, Brunner recognized the Wisconsin court system – and in particular Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson – for embracing judicial leadership, innovation, and intellectual excellence, and for creating an environment which has encouraged access to justice for all.

"It has been my good fortune," he said, "to serve the majority of my judicial career during Shirley Abrahamson's tenure as chief justice. I stand before you tonight honored for achievements which may not have been encouraged by a less visionary chief.... She has raised the bar, and judges responded. We have a Wisconsin judiciary replete with judicial excellence. There are any number of my Wisconsin colleagues, including those who have joined me here tonight, who are deserving of this award. I am proud to be a member of the Wisconsin judiciary and share this award tonight with all of my Wisconsin colleagues."

In his presentation, Brunner reflected on the changing

role of the state court trial judges. "Citizens look to their judges and courts for leadership and partnership to help solve community problems like domestic violence, delinquency, addiction, care for the mentally ill and neglected children, to mention only a few," he said, adding that "providing a mere thumbs up or thumbs down on some

legal issue or set of facts" no longer is sufficient.

While he discussed serious issues, Brunner also showed his sense of humor. "For those of you who don't know me," he said at the beginning of his remarks, "I am standing." He added, "I tried to bring in a box to stand on, but I was stopped at security. When the officer took it from me, I heard him mutter something about the last person who tried that was Justice Ginsburg."

**Higginbotham selected for Dominion leadership honor**

Also taking the national stage is Wisconsin Court of Appeals Judge Paul B. Higginbotham, who has been selected to receive the 2007 Excellence in Leadership award from the Dominion Strong Men and Women: Excellence in Leadership Program, which recognizes African Americans for outstanding achievement. Past honorees include Hank Aaron, Maya Angelou, Coretta Scott King, Thurgood Marshall, Rosa Parks, Oprah Winfrey, and other individuals who have distinguished themselves as extraordinary.

Higginbotham will accept the award at a ceremony on Thursday, January 18 in Richmond, Virginia.

"I am humbled by this honor," he said. "I'm just doing a job that needs to be done, and trying to do it thoughtfully, with diligence, and with compassion. I know that my work has an impact on the society we live in, and I am grateful to have had an opportunity to make a difference."

Higginbotham was appointed to the Court of Appeals in 2003, becoming the first African-American to serve on a Wisconsin appellate court (he remains the only judge of color on the Court of Appeals). He brought to the appeals court a wealth of experience in the law, including nine years on the Dane County Circuit Court as well as service as a municipal court judge and time spent practicing law with the Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Fair Housing Council.

A Philadelphia native who was raised in Ohio and Tennessee, Higginbotham came to Madison for college.

see Awards on page 11

**ELECTION 2006****New clerks take office**

Voters across Wisconsin elected 10 new clerks of circuit court in November and re-elected 62 incumbents. They will all benefit from the new, four-year terms that were enacted pursuant to a constitutional amendment. The four-year terms replace two-year terms that had been in place since 1848. Meet the new clerks:



*Lisa Wilson*

In **Brown County**, Lisa Wilson, chief deputy clerk of courts, succeeds Paul G. Janquart, who retired after nine years on the job. Janquart was appointed to fill a mid-term vacancy in 1997 and turned back a challenge in 2004.



*Carlo Esqueda*

In **Dane County**, Carlo Esqueda, a former Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP) employee who was most recently information systems coordinator for the Madison Police Department succeeds Judith Coleman, who retired after 16 years on the job.



*Carla Robinson*

In **Forest County**, Penny Carter, clerk of court for the Forest County Potawatomi Tribal Court, succeeds Tom Kalkofen. Kalkofen served as clerk for two decades.

In **Jefferson County**, Carla Robinson, justice information sharing coordinator, succeeds Ken Schopen, who first took office in 1968, and retired after a

remarkable 38 years as clerk of circuit court.

In **Kenosha County**, Rebecca Matoska-Mentink, district attorney office manager, succeeds Gail Gentz.



*Rebecca Matoska-Mentink*

Gentz was elected in 1989 in a tough contest against a former clerk of circuit court who also was a former pro baseball player.



*Shari Rudolph*

In **Kewaunee County**, Rebecca Deterville, chief deputy clerk of courts, succeeds Lorraine Riemer. Riemer served as clerk of court for just six years before retiring, but spent 17 years as register in probate.



*Vicki Meister*

In **Marquette County**, Shari Rudolph, who was deputy clerk in Portage County, succeeds Mary Lou Schmidt. Schmidt retired after 22 years in office.

In **Pepin County**, Audrey Lieffring, deputy clerk of courts, succeeds Rosemary Carlisle, who retired after 26 years on the job.

**Sauk County** was the only county in which an incumbent was defeated. Donna Mueller, who had served since 1986, lost to challenger Vicki Meister. Meister worked in the banking industry for 32 years prior to her election as clerk.



*Margaret M. "Maggie" Gebauer*

In **Taylor County**, Margaret M. "Maggie" Gebauer was elected without opposition to succeed Yvonne "Bonnie" Bauer, who has served since 1986. ■

**New online systems will change payroll, HR**

by Pam Radloff, deputy director  
Office of Management Services

Over the next few years, the court system's administrative processing systems will undergo a wide-scale conversion to improve the efficiency and accuracy of our administrative operations, as well as to increase the availability of information online. Consequently, many of our business processes in the budget, fiscal, purchasing, payroll, and human resources areas may be changing significantly in response to this new automation and these changes will affect the manner in which employees receive and/or report information to Management Services.

We will be taking our first step for this conversion in 2007 when we transition to a new system of reporting work time and leave. The new system, a web-based Payroll Time and Attendance system (referred to as PTA Web), will replace our current leave accounting system and paper-based

timesheets. The executive branch has used PTA Web since the late 1990's and currently over 10,000 state employees use this system to report their biweekly work schedule and leave use to the State's central payroll system.

PTA Web provides improved accountability and offers many benefits to both employees and supervisors for managing work time and leave including:

- Having leave balances printed on biweekly payroll checks;
- Allowing employees to view an image of their current and past payroll stubs online;
- Increasing security over employees' personally-identifiable information;

see **Online** on page 13



## LEADERSHIP

## Faces of Leadership

“Faces of Leadership” is an annual feature that recaps leadership efforts that have been highlighted throughout the past year. Here are the individuals and initiatives that earned attention in 2006:



Judge  
Roger W. Le Grand

Recognizing a lack of public interaction with the courts, Judge Roger W. Le Grand, La Crosse County Circuit Court, established two outreach programs in order to educate community members about the judicial system and demystify the courts. The monthly “brown bag lunch” series includes a discussion forum about law-related topics, while the second

program features a courtroom orientation, followed by an opportunity to observe proceedings. Citing the popularity of the summer sessions, Le Grand hopes to continue the program throughout the year with the help of his intern.

Judge Dennis C. Luebke, Outagamie County Circuit Court, turned to Marquette Law School’s Restorative Justice Initiative to assist in a case that, in his words, “cried out for restorative justice.” The case involved a defendant who was convicted of homicide at age 17. Restorative justice programs seek to achieve two goals: (1) help victims heal their emotional wounds and (2) rehabilitate offenders by having them participate directly in fixing the damage they have caused. Lacking a local option, Luebke contacted former Justice Janine P. Geske at Marquette, who accepted

the case. “There’s a need for redemption in this process,” Luebke said. He plans to refer more cases to Marquette as the need arises.

Judge Sue E. Bischel and Judge Mark A. Warpinski, Brown County Circuit Court, worked with staff of the Jackie Nitschke Center and the local jail to revamp treatment options for inmates with three or more drunk driving convictions. The effort ultimately yielded a free, six-week intensive outpatient program at the Huber Center and a 16-week aftercare program. Since its launch in 2004, the program has already established a track record of success. Of the 48 offenders who participated in 2004, 22 who completed the full (intensive outpatient plus aftercare) program have not been arrested for drunk driving to date (one was arrested for operating after revocation). ■



Judge Dennis C. Luebke



Chief Judge  
Sue E. Bischel



Judge Mark A. Warpinski

## New in the CourtNet Grant Info Center...

The Grant Info Center (GIC) located on CourtNet provides information on court-related grant funding sources and opportunities. The GIC aims to position the court system to be competitive in obtaining grant funds and to consolidate ad hoc efforts. To visit the GIC, go to CourtNet and look for the “Grant Info Center” tab on the left side of the home page.

## Quarterly highlight: NCSC Grant Solicitation Guide

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) has developed a grant solicitation and alternative funding resource guide on its Web site in the CourTopics section.

The comprehensive guide contains links and information for courts to assist in their search to identify alternative funding for court initiatives and innovative practices. Tools to assist in grant seeking and proposal development are also listed. The resource guide can be found by entering the following Web address into your browser. ■

<http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Education/GrtsolGuide.htm>

Contact Erin Slattengren in the Office of Court Operations at [erin.slattengren@wicourts.gov](mailto:erin.slattengren@wicourts.gov) for further information about the GIC or grant prospects.

## WISCONSIN CONNECTS

### Den Haag visit yields lessons in international law

*Editor's note: Two Wisconsin circuit court judges were selected to attend a seminar sponsored by the International Judicial Academy in November 2006 in The Hague, Netherlands. Judges Frederic W. Fleishauer, Portage County, and David T. Flanagan, Dane County, learned – among other things – that there is no world court. Rather, there is an impressive array of separate 'world courts' and judicial equivalents, each of which serves to resolve disputes involving international law. Here, as told by Flanagan, is the story.*

Judge Fleishauer and I were among 20 state and federal judges attending the 2nd Sir Richard May Seminar, sponsored by the International Judicial Academy.

The city of Den Haag, also known as 'The Hague,' justifiably proclaims itself to the world center of international law. It is the remarkably attractive capital of the Netherlands and has served as the primarily location for various international courts since the founding of the International Court of Arbitration in 1899.

A primary source of international law is the large existing body of bilateral and multilateral treaty agreements. Currently, there are some current 7,000 treaties, many of which include a provision committing disputes to resolution before various international courts. Public international law governs relations between nations. Private international law governs relations between businesses and people from different nations and, increasingly, there has been recognition of potential individual responsibility for a limited range of extremely serious criminal offenses.

#### A broad array of international courts

Courts that resolve international disputes include the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, the Iran United States Claims Tribunal, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the Inter American Court of Human Rights, the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights, the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the newly created International Criminal Court. Moreover, there are numerous treaty-based dispute resolution mechanisms which essentially function as international courts, including the WTO Dispute Settlement System, the NAFTA Dispute Settlement Panels and the

World Bank's Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes.

There has long been and continues to be significant professional involvement in nearly all of these courts by U.S. judges and attorneys, as well as official participation by the U.S. government. The seminar we attended included presentations by representatives various international courts, government officials, and representatives of an emerging 'justice department' of the 25-nation European Community. The U.S. Embassy and the Supreme Court of the Netherlands hosted social events.

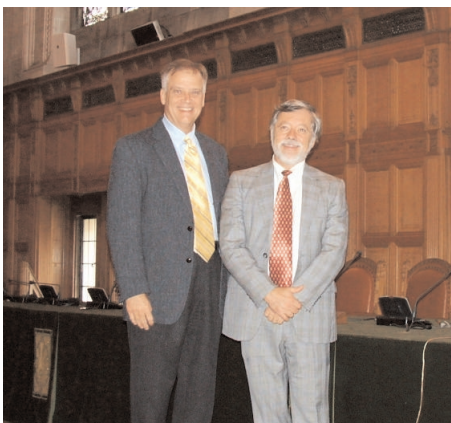
#### A response to crimes that cannot be handled in one nation's courts

Beginning with the Nuremberg Tribunal, a series of ad hoc international criminal courts have been created, each in response to particular crimes which appeared to transcend the capacity of any national court system. Nuremberg was followed by tribunals in Tokyo and the Philippines. More recently, with the support of the United States, international tribunals have been created to investigate and prosecute ethnic crimes in Yugoslavia and Rwanda. The purpose of each of these courts, beyond punishment and deterrence, is to create through a fair and thorough judicial process an unassailably solid historical record of what has been done and by whom.

For each tribunal, a court and a procedure as well as investigative, prosecutorial and defense capability had to be created. This led to an effort to consider the creation of a permanent international tribunal with jurisdiction limited to the most significant crimes of international scope. The result was the 1997 Statute of Rome, adopted by 120 nations, with 21 abstentions and seven negative votes, one of which was cast by the United States, which created the International Criminal Court, with very limited resources, that now exists in Den Hague. The intent is that the International Criminal Court exercise only complimentary jurisdiction; that is, it acts only where there does not exist a functioning national justice system. Subject matter jurisdiction is limited to the most serious of crimes: genocide, crimes against humanity, and grave violations of the rules of war. The court may consider only cases in which such a crime is alleged to have been committed on the territory of a signatory nation or by a citizen of a signatory nation. Alternatively, the court may consider an alleged crime upon recommendation of the U.N. Security Council, where Britain, France, Russia, China, and the U.S. each holds veto power.

#### A subject of public discussion

The new International Criminal Court has been a subject of public discussion and in the case of *Medellin v. Dretke*, 544 U.S. 660 (2005), the Supreme Court considered a claim founded upon a decision of the International Court of Justice, *Mexico v. U.S.*, 2004 I.C.J., No. 128, holding that the State of Texas had failed to provide the consular access required by the Vienna Convention treaty signed by the United States. The suggestion communicated in the Sir Richard May Seminar was that these international developments in criminal law, together with expanding international commerce and travel, may well generate here in the U.S. greater attention to, and possible involvement with, international law and international dispute resolution systems. ■



Judges Frederic W. Fleishauer (left) and David T. Flanagan soak up a bit of the art and history of the Netherlands during the 2nd Sir Richard May Seminar at The Hague.

## Lessons from Katrina: The court system and disaster planning

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

“You see for us it isn’t over. We are still feeling the crisis on a daily basis,” Denise LeBoeuf, a criminal defense attorney told those gathered in New Orleans for a conference entitled Disaster Preparedness and the Criminal Justice System. The American Bar Association (ABA) Criminal Justice Section presented this conference in November, and the roster of presenters included the Louisiana Atty. General Charles Foti, Associate Supreme Court Justice Catherine D. “Kitty” Kimball, representatives of prosecutors, the defense bar, the court system, corrections, Homeland Security, and other public safety agencies.

We have heard repeatedly that the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina and by Hurricane Rita, which followed three weeks later, was the largest natural disaster in the history of the country. But all of the news reports did not adequately describe the scope of the disaster or how it affected the court system. Consider this:

❑ When the levees broke, 8,000 prisoners were trapped in 11 feet of water in the New Orleans jail. They were evacuated and spent several days under guard on a highway overpass before being moved to prisons around the state.

❑ Misdemeanants and even ordinance violators spent weeks or months in maximum security

prisons before they could be identified and released. For example, two Ohio tourists who were picked up in the French Quarter for public drunkenness the night before the hurricane spent five weeks in Angola, the highest security state prison, before being released to return home.

❑ Juveniles in temporary detention were moved to corrections facilities.

❑ Foster parents evacuated with their foster children, leaving no record of where they had gone.

❑ The Greyhound bus station in New Orleans was turned into a temporary jail processing facility for new arrestees, with inmates held outdoors in a fenced-in area.

- ❑ Federal and state courthouses in New Orleans closed, so the few attorneys who attempted to represent prisoners held past their release dates or held illegally in state facilities found they were unable to file *habeas* petitions. There was no place to post bond.
- ❑ The phone systems went down, including cellular systems using the New Orleans area code. There was no way to contact court employees, or for them to contact the court, to plan to reopen.
- ❑ Victims and witnesses relocated across the country, leaving no forwarding addresses.
- ❑ There was no mail delivery in New Orleans for several months. Most court deadlines were suspended by Supreme Court order, but statutes of limitation were not tolled.



*Dozens of file drawers, emptied of hundreds of soaked court files, await garbage pick-up outside the New Orleans Parish Criminal Courthouse.*

Now, more than a year later, the population of New Orleans is less than 190,000 compared to nearly half a million before the disaster. Jury trials are just beginning to resume. Family courts are deluged with relocation issues. Many people with pending court actions have just disappeared, finding it convenient to take advantage of the disruption. Without filing fees and fines, the

money the court system survives on has been greatly reduced, and federal funds had to be obtained to continue to operate.

### Planning for the worst in Wisconsin

Of course we can feel comfortable in Wisconsin that we won’t have to deal with a devastating hurricane. But public safety experts stressed that court officials should “think all hazards” when planning for the types of emergencies that could affect the justice system. Tornadoes, flooding, power outages, fires, bio- or nuclear terrorism, and pandemics are some of the disasters that could affect court systems anywhere.

To prepare for such emergencies, conference attendees were given a lot of advice; some was very practical:

see **Katrina** on page 13



## RETIREMENT

### Longtime assistant to justices will miss life at the Court

After 30 years, there isn't much Joyce Dohse hasn't seen at the Supreme Court. She has welcomed new justices (most recently, Justice Louis B. Butler Jr., who hired her as his judicial assistant after her previous boss, Justice Diane S. Sykes, was appointed to the federal bench) and has said fond farewells to those who have departed. She has worked alongside dozens of law clerks. She has learned to survive the month of June, when final mandates mean around-the-clock work at the Court. And above all, she has come to understand the value of an unflinching sense of humor.

On January 2, Dohse traded in her busy Capitol office, a frequent stop for Court staff lured by her delectable treats, for a white sand beach in Mexico and then quiet time at home with her two cats (rescued ferals named Bonnie and Clyde), the promise of new hobbies, and road trips with her husband Bob, who is also retiring.

"I've always wanted to take a road trip, but we've never had the time," she said. "I think upstate New York and New England will be high on the list."



Joyce Dohse

Also high on the list will be visits to the Court, a place Dohse said she would miss. "Coming to work was always a pleasure," she said. "I really feel fortunate that I've had great people to work with and for."

Through the years, Dohse worked for three justices with very different management styles and philosophical leanings but with one

common thread: all came to the Supreme Court from the Milwaukee County trial bench. Dohse began (after a stint in the court commissioners' office) with Justice Donald W. Steinmetz, who served on the Court from 1980-99. "He has a great sense of humor," she said. "He really likes people and was very easy to work for. We became very close."

When Steinmetz retired, Dohse stayed on with Justice Diane S. Sykes, who served on the Court for five years before her appointment to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. "She is a wonderful person," Dohse said, recalling how she and her husband accompanied Sykes to her confirmation hearings in Washington, D.C. "Her schedule was unbelievably tough; she had two young children and commuted every day from Milwaukee, and still always got her opinions out."

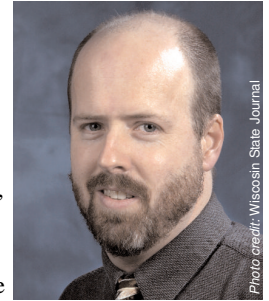
After Sykes departed, Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. kept Dohse on his staff. "He is so warm and friendly, incredibly energetic, enthusiastic, and hard-working," she said. "He cares a lot about the job – as do all the justices."

Replacing Dohse as judicial assistant to Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. will be Rita Lord, a longtime court employee who will move over from the Supreme Court Clerk's Office. "Rita will enjoy the work," Dohse said. "She's got a good sense of humor, and that's very helpful – especially in June." ■

## NEW FACES

### Second court information officer is hired

The Director of State Courts Office has hired a second court information officer. Tom Sheehan, a longtime newspaper reporter and columnist, began work in mid December and will work full time. Amanda K. Todd, who has served as court information officer for 14 years, will reduce her hours to half time in order to focus on her media training firm. She will be in the office Mondays, Tuesdays, and every other Wednesday.



Tom Sheehan

Sheehan has 18 years of full-time reporting and editing experience at Wisconsin newspapers. During the last six years, he covered Wisconsin state government for a group of newspapers owned by Lee Enterprises, including the *Wisconsin State Journal*, *La Crosse Tribune*, and *The Journal Times* (Racine).



Amanda K. Todd

Tom Sheehan can be reached at (608) 261-6640 or [tom.sheehan@wicourts.gov](mailto:tom.sheehan@wicourts.gov); Amanda Todd is at (608) 264-6256 or [amanda.todd@wicourts.gov](mailto:amanda.todd@wicourts.gov).

### Children's Court Improvement Program adds staff

The Children's Court Improvement Program (CCIP), which focuses on improving the processing of cases involving abused and neglected children, added to its staff effective Nov. 27, 2006.

Terri Wilcox is the new project assistant and will be mainly responsible for entering data collected during Children's Court Initiative reviews and providing support to work groups and committees. Wilcox brings experience from the Monona Grove School District, where she worked with children with special needs.

The project is currently recruiting for a CCIP project coordinator. The project coordinator will conduct court file reviews, focus groups, and court observations as part of the Children's Court Initiative with fellow coordinator Bridget Bauman. ■



## Supreme Court will consider electronic signatures

The Supreme Court has set a hearing date of March 21 to consider a petition to authorize the use of electronic signatures by court officials. Electronic signatures are a key component in the development of electronic filing in the Wisconsin courts.

The director of state courts petitioned for the rule. The proposed electronic signature technology has been developed as part of the electronic filing pilot project, and court officials in Kenosha and Washington counties have been electronically signing small claims judgments and orders under an interim rule since April 2005.

The technology can be used even for cases that are not electronically filed, to sign any order or form generated by the CCAP (circuit court) and SCCA (appellate courts) case management systems. The same signature can also be used for administrative documents such as certifications of pending cases, requests for judicial assignment, and interpreter reimbursements.

If approved, electronic signatures will be made available to circuit court judges, clerks of circuit court, registers in probate, juvenile clerks, and court commissioners appointed under Wis. Stat. § 757.68 and SCR 75.02(1), and to the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, and the appellate courts' Clerk's Office.

If the Supreme Court authorizes electronic signatures, and if funds are made available in the biennial budget, statewide implementation of e-filing might begin in fall 2007. The project is expected to take several years to implement for all types of cases. ■

*More information on the e-filing project is available at [www.wicourts.gov/services/public/electronicfile.htm](http://www.wicourts.gov/services/public/electronicfile.htm).*

## Court commissioner looks to enhance family law assistance to self-represented litigants

Ozaukee County Court Commissioner Darcy E. McManus, a longtime member of the Supreme Court Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC), is helping to expand and improve the self-help legal clinic in Ozaukee County.

Specifically, McManus and the Ozaukee County Bar want to expand the Ozaukee County Family Law Assistance Center, which opened its doors about a year ago, to litigants who cannot get to the courthouse when the volunteer attorneys are available.

"I can see some potential problems with this and wonder how other counties might be addressing the issues," McManus said. "I have some ideas but wonder if anyone else is doing this and how they do it."

The center is sponsored by the Ozaukee County Bar Association and staffed by volunteer attorneys. The county provides the space (a small meeting room down the hall from the Clerk's Office), the Internet connection, the supplies and technical support.

The center offers assistance at the courthouse every Wednesday from 11:30-1, serving four or five individuals at each session. Organizers recently secured a grant from the State Bar of Wisconsin to purchase a computer and printer to use at the self-help center.

"We think it would be very helpful to be able to generate the forms right on the computer; they will be more legible than handwritten forms – a big issue for me – and they'll also be filled out more accurately and completely, especially if they use the online interview process," she said. "In addition, we won't have to worry about keeping a stock of forms and having to discard those that are out-of-date." ■

*Those who might have thoughts on serving pro se litigants who cannot come to an on-site clinic are invited to contact Darcy McManus at (262) 284-8378 or [Darcy.McManus@wicourts.gov](mailto:Darcy.McManus@wicourts.gov).*

### Director's Column *continued from page 2*

#### Keeping you informed

To help keep everyone informed and to offer opportunities for judges and court staff to be involved, we shall initiate a bill-tracking service on CourtNet, our intranet site. Legislative Liaison Nancy Rottier will keep an eye on bills introduced that would have a significant effect on court operations. When appropriate, she will add a link and current status to CourtNet, so you can check some of the details and communicate with legislators. My office will coordinate organized efforts to make our positions clear to the Legislature.

We won't post every bill or proposal; mostly those that could use further examination by our Legislative

Committee will be highlighted. You also may be able to use this as a tool to strengthen partnerships and build support with lawyers and county government officials. While people outside the system won't be able to access CourtNet, links will be available to public Web pages maintained by the Legislative Reference Bureau.

We're also examining ways to use new technologies to help keep you informed as the state budget and legislative session progresses. Keep an eye out for updates.

In all of these efforts, we'll emphasize two key commitments: moving forward together and keeping you informed. ■



*Court Commissioner  
Darcy E. McManus*



*Atty. Karl D. Schefft of Schefft Law Offices in Cedarburg takes a break from his law practice to assist a pro se litigant at the Ozaukee County Family Law Assistance Center.*

## OBITUARIES

**Judge Dennis E. Barr  
Barneveld, Blue Mounds, and  
Ridgeway Municipal Courts***Judge Dennis E. Barr*

Municipal Judge Dennis E. Barr, who served Blue Mounds, Barneveld, and Ridgeway, died on July 13, 2006, from injuries sustained in a car accident. He was 59.

A Vietnam War veteran, Barr served in the U.S. Air Force from 1966 until his retirement in 1991. He then took a job with the state Department of Transportation, and, for the last 10 years, had

been a municipal court judge.

Survivors include fiancée Jan Keyser of Sauk City; two grown children, Michelle and Michael; two brothers; and numerous nieces and nephews.

**Court Commissioner  
George W. Greene Jr.  
Milwaukee County Circuit Court***Court Commissioner  
George W. Greene Jr.*

George W. Greene Jr., a Milwaukee County court commissioner, died of an apparent heart attack on Nov. 26, 2006. He was 68.

Greene served in the small claims and family courts, and particularly delighted in performing marriages. He also served for a brief time as a judge, after being appointed to a vacant seat on the Milwaukee County Circuit Court by former

Gov. Tommy Thompson. In 1994, he ran for a full term, but lost to Kitty Brennan, who is now chief judge for District I.

Greene, a widower, is survived by three adult children, a brother, and grandchildren.

**Judge J. Richard Long  
Rock County Circuit Court**

Judge J. Richard Long, who took the bench in Rock County at age 60 and served until he was 77, died Nov. 30, 2006 at a Rock County assisted living center. He was 87.

Long became a judge after practicing law for 30 years. Friends recalled in interviews with the *Beloit Daily News* that his first act as a judge was to reset all of the clocks in the courthouse – most of which were off by 5-10 minutes. Well known for his punctuality, he wanted to ensure that litigants and lawyers arrived on time.

Friends also recalled Long's active involvement in the Civil Rights Movement as a young attorney. When Martin Luther King Jr. visited Beloit in the 1960s, he met with Long, who had helped to push for integration of the municipal swimming pool by taking the son of an African-American client to the segregated facility and asking to buy a ticket for the boy. Long also helped to author Wisconsin's open housing law, which established the right of African-Americans to live where they chose.

*Judge J. Richard Long*

Long also had an excellent sense of humor. His friend and colleague, Judge James E. Welker, recalled Long's advice to him when he became a judge. "Now Jim, since you will be a judge, I would like to make three suggestions," Welker recalled Long saying. "First, you should buy a collection of loud neckties because they will make you look independent. Second, you should get a pair of glasses because they will make you look wise. Third, you should develop some hemorrhoids because they will make you look concerned."

Surviving Long are his wife of 65 years, Barbara; and his three sons: Joe, an attorney; Jim, a physician; and Rob, a business executive.

**Judge William Padway  
Fox Point Municipal Court**

Judge William Padway, the highly respected municipal judge who presided in Fox Point for nearly a decade, died at home on Nov. 24, 2006 of an apparent heart attack. He was 49.

A newspaper account of Padway's life described him as an involved father of three who coached youth soccer, basketball, and other sports in the same neighborhoods where he had grown up.

The son of a lawyer, Padway earned a law degree and practiced with his brother, Nick, in Padway & Padway, focusing on civil matters and occasional criminal defense work.

Padway was elected Fox Point municipal judge in 1997 and was re-elected three times.

Surviving Padway are his wife, Vicky; his three teenage children; two brothers and two sisters. ■

*Judge William Padway*

## PEOPLE

Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson** decided to have some fun with longtime Secretary of State **Doug La Follette**



Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson

during his swearing in at the state Capitol on January 3. She told him that although he was beginning his eighth term as secretary of state, “You still need me to administer the oath.” La Follette took the ribbing well.

A story in the *Law Bulletin*, a publication of the American Bar Association, features an anecdote about Judge **Richard S. Brown**, Court of Appeals, District II. Brown, who is deaf, recounted how, as a trial attorney, he always made sure to tell jurors about his hearing impairment. “It was just a subtle feeling that I had that juries were very attentive to me,” Brown told the *Bulletin*. “I even got the sense that they were pulling for me.”



Judge Richard S. Brown

Though Brown kept the perception to himself, a district attorney who had lost a few cases against Brown eventually sensed it, too. So the opposing lawyer reminded the jury that Brown’s handicap should not be a factor in a verdict.

“He told me, ‘I watched the jury. The minute you talked about your hearing impairment, you had them eating out of your hand,’” Brown told the *Bulletin*. “And I just started laughing because he had seen what I had seen.”

Brown was interviewed as part of a campaign to promote a new ABA report that highlights the contributions that attorneys with disabilities can make, and explains how to accommodate them.

Justice **Louis B. Butler Jr.** was the subject of a cover story in a Madison weekly called *The Capital City Hues*. Butler, who is in his third year on the Wisconsin Supreme Court, told the newspaper that the volume of non-case-related work on

see **People** on page 12



Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. (in his chambers with the portrait of Justice Thurgood Marshall that hangs above his desk) graces the cover of the November edition of *The Capital City Hues*.

AWARDS *continued from page 3*

Judge Paul A. Higginbotham

During college, he took a break from studies to travel through Europe and Iceland, and run his own plant shop (called Sugar Magnolia). After completing his undergraduate degree, Higginbotham stayed in Madison for law school. Upon graduation, he took a job with the Legal Aid Society of Milwaukee, which allowed him to work with low-income clients

on issues that held special interest for him, including employment and housing discrimination. He said his concern for protecting individual liberties grew from personal experiences with racism and bigotry, and from watching his father – a civil rights leader – march with Martin Luther King Jr. in Montgomery, Ala.

In addition to his work as a judge, Higginbotham is being recognized for his commitment to and involvement with the community. He serves on the advisory board of the African-American Ethnic Academy and 100 Black Men of Madison.

Among the eight other 2007 honorees are Billy K. Cannaday Jr., the first African-American state superintendent of public instruction in Virginia; Marc H. Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League; and actor/producer Blair Underwood. ■

Court employees win **Unsung Heroes** awards

Two members of the court system staff – a case manager in the Racine County Clerk of Circuit Court Office and a law librarian in Madison – were selected to win the Wisconsin Law Journal’s inaugural **Unsung Heroes** Award.

Bonnie Nagy, case manager for felony and traffic court in the Clerk of Circuit Courts Office in Racine, is known for her hard work and problem solving skills. “I ... seem to be the ‘go-to girl’ when someone has any issue that needs taking care of,” she said. “My door is always open.”

Julie Tessmer, deputy law librarian at the Wisconsin State Law Library, also is a ‘go-to’ person – for courts around the world. In 2001, she traveled to the West African country of Nigeria to assess court library collections. In 2004, she worked a similar project in Serbia and Montenegro. Both programs were run by the National Center for State Courts. ■



Law Librarian Julie Tessmer with her ‘Unsung Heroes’ award.



PEOPLE *continued from page 11*

the Court surprised him. "I was an appellate lawyer for over nine years," he said. "I think there's more than even I imagined and I thought I knew the job from appellate experience. But you don't think about the administrative stuff. I didn't anticipate how intensive the administrative side was until I got here."



Justice Jon P. Wilcox

The *Wisconsin State Journal* commended Justice **Jon P. Wilcox** for publicly announcing he would not seek re-election this spring, which allowed Supreme Court hopefuls to prepare campaigns. The column characterized as admirable his decision to allow the people to choose his successor rather than open the seat mid-term to a gubernatorial appointment.

After 47 years, Port Edwards Municipal Judge **Don Carl** retired Oct. 1, 2006, ending his career as the longest serving municipal judge in the state. **Mary Armatoski**, Carl's clerk of court for 23 years, told *The Daily Tribune* (Wisconsin Rapids) reporter that, "He was genuinely interested in helping the people who appeared before him. He took some of the young people under his wing and helped to straighten them out."

Lt. Col. **Scott Johnson**, District Nine court



Scott Johnson

administrator, returned to work after serving nearly five months in Kirkuk, Iraq, as the deputy commander for the air base. Johnson has served overseas three times since 2002, spending time in Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates. Johnson plans to be home for an extended stay this time, as he told the *Wausau Daily Herald* that he will only

be called back in the near future for an "extreme emergency."

Chief Judge  
Dorothy L. Bain

The *Wausau Daily Herald* also reported on the illness of Chief Judge **Dorothy L. Bain**, who experienced bleeding on the brain as she handled intake. Bain and her husband report that she is on the mend, with the help of family, friends, and her canine companions.

The Waukesha County Courthouse recently implemented a screening station at the main public entrance,

becoming one of the last in southeast Wisconsin to establish a security checkpoint. In its first few months of operation, the system has been functioning well. "The purpose is to

stop prohibited items, to stop all contraband, from getting into these buildings," District Court Administrator **Michael Neimon** told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Neimon credited Waukesha County Circuit Judge **Michael O. Bohren** and County Executive **Dan Vrakas** with bringing the project to fruition.



Judge Michael O. Bohren

After spending years in storage, the "Lady Justice" sculpture returned to the Dane County Courthouse, soaring over the Hamilton Street entrance. Created by **James Watrous** in the 1950s for the State Bar of Wisconsin, the sculpture formerly adorned the State Bar headquarters before it was removed due to remodeling in the early 1990s.

Following a decision to forego constructing a new justice center, Green Lake County is working on plans to remodel the current courthouse. Sixth District Chief Judge **John R. Storck**, Dodge County Circuit Court, addressed the Property and Insurance Committee to ensure that decisions adhere to statutory standards set for courthouses. "A court facility needs to demand respect," he was quoted as saying in the *Markesan Regional Reporter*. ■

Chief Judge John R.  
Storck

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson poses with members of the Supreme Court of Cordoba during a break in the International Judicial Academy, which offered sessions on insurance law in Buenos Aires, Cordoba, and La Plata, Argentina in November. Abrahamson and Judge Roger Titus, U.S. District Court, District of Maryland, were the U.S. judges chosen as faculty. The participants were federal and provincial judges, staff attorneys, lawyers, insurance company counsel, and insurance company executives.

**Online** *continued from page 4*

- Validating the availability of employees' leave at the time of entry;
- Allowing both employees and supervisors to view a historical record of work, leave time and other adjustments online; and
- Allowing the real-time reporting of work hours.

Beginning with the February 15th payroll check, employees should see their up-to-date leave balances on each biweekly payroll check. Over the next few months, we will be notifying employees as to when they can expect to switch over to PTA Web. We will conduct training sessions and, at that time, will provide employees with an identification code and password to use the new system. Until employees receive the training, they should continue to report their leave use to the Payroll Office as they have been over the past year.

One of the difficulties that we face when converting to

PTA Web is how court reporters will use the new system to report their work hours and leave use to district offices. Over the coming weeks a group of DCAs and district administrative assistants will work to develop standard procedures that district offices will follow in handling the reporting and recording of court reporter time and attendance. Once finalized, we will provide court reporters training on these procedures at district meetings that we plan to schedule throughout 2007.

We know that our current system is cumbersome, costly, and delinquent in getting employees information on their leave balances. PTA Web promises to correct these problems by providing not only online, real-time information but also by greatly improving security over vulnerable employee information. While it may take a bit for PTA Web to become a welcomed part of an employee's routine, in the long run, we are hopeful that everyone will appreciate the benefits this new system has to offer. ■

**Katrina** *continued from page 7*

1. In order to ensure that court system employees continue to receive pay during a disruption, require all to arrange direct deposit of paychecks.
2. Have cell phones available for use in an emergency with an area code different than the local area code.
3. Purchase walkie-talkies or direct connect phones for selected personnel.
4. Have staff fill out emergency contact forms that include contact information for a friend or relative outside the area, and keep a set of these forms off site. Court officials and staff should have family disaster plans, complete with copies of important documents and medications.

Other advice was more broad-based. Courts should have occupant emergency programs (OEPs) and continuity of operations plans (COOPs). An OEP is a short-term emergency response plan that establishes procedures to safeguard lives and property during emergencies. It might take the form of a chart in every office describing the appropriate response to everything from a threatening phone call to encountering a hazardous substance in the mail. A COOP ensures that essential functions and activities continue without undue interruption, and allows for resumption of normal services as quickly as possible. Over and over again conference speakers emphasized that a COOP must include an agreement to use an alternate site for the courthouse. This could be a hotel or other privately owned facility or a public building in another location. There should be a signed memorandum of understanding with the alternate facility ahead of time. And the COOP is worthless unless all affected staff are familiar with it. Court staff should know where the court will relocate and what

the plan is for communication pending re-location. It is too late when disaster strikes to start making a plan to deal with it.

"If we had a COOP plan, I didn't know about it", said Judge David S. Gorbaty, Louisiana Court of Appeals.

COOP plans should also be coordinated with public safety departments including police and sheriff. Computer data should be backed up daily to a location that is physically remote from the originating site, so both won't be affected by the same catastrophic events.

Court staff in New Orleans have suffered greatly, but took time out to try to help. A lot can be learned from their experience. ■



*Workers attempt to salvage court files in New Orleans.*

*There are online resources to help in preparing your disaster recovery plan:*

*[http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/calendar/disaster\\_nacm.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/calendar/disaster_nacm.pdf)  
National Center of State Courts Report on Emergency Management for Courts:*

*[http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/calendar/disaster\\_ncsc.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/crimjust/calendar/disaster_ncsc.pdf)  
Preparing the Justice System for Pandemic:*

*[http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pandemic/pandemic\\_main.html](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/pandemic/pandemic_main.html)*

**RETIREMENTS** *continued from page 1*

Rock counties prior to taking the bench in 1994. Those issues range from gambling to inclusionary zoning to school choice.

"I have a strong interest in government and how it works," Deininger said. "In that sense, the Court of Appeals – and particularly District IV – has been perfect for me. But it can be isolating," he acknowledged. "We spend 95 percent of our time with our noses in briefs and transcripts. It's like being a grad student with term papers due every week in a semester that never ends."

A passion for public policy and a desire to work on issues and to speak out on issues is, in part, behind



Judge David G. Deininger

Deininger's retirement decision. As he explained in a front-page Sunday story in the *Wisconsin State Journal*, "As a judge you really have to keep your mouth shut about so many things that you might want to take a public policy position on. After I take the robe off, I'll have more of an opportunity to do that."

Also a key consideration is his family: he and his wife,

Mary, a registered nurse, are raising their 7-year-old grandson Emerson. Last August, Emerson lost his mother – and Deininger and his wife lost their daughter – in a car accident. For years before her death at age 30, Emilie Deininger had struggled with bipolar disorder and addictions to drugs and alcohol.

Deininger said his family's struggle to help Emilie address her mental illness and addictions gave him a new perspective as a judge, both on the Green County Circuit Court where he served from 1994-96, and on the Court of Appeals. At the same time, his experiences on the bench helped to shape the way he approached his daughter, who was incarcerated on several occasions for drug-related offenses.

"The insights go both ways," he said. "I do believe that most of the people who find themselves in trouble with the law are not bad people. They are people with problems, and our criminal justice system becomes the repository for them."

While Deininger said he strongly believes that people who commit crimes must be held accountable for their actions, he also believes there is room for more and better alternatives. "The easiest thing is to increase penalties," he said. "The tough thing is to commit resources."

As Deininger considers what he will do next (the immediate future involves cross-country skiing and building Star Wars Lego ships), Gov. Jim Doyle is considering whom to appoint as Deininger's successor. At press time, the list of finalists for the post included Atty. Burneatta L. Bridge, Doyle's top deputy when he was attorney general; Dodge County Circuit Judge Andrew Bissonnette; and JoAnne F.

Kloppenborg, director of the state Department of Justice Environmental Protection Unit. The seat will be up for election in April 2008.

**Judge Moria Krueger  
Dane County Circuit Court**

After trailblazing the way for women judges in Dane County with her election nearly 30 years ago, circuit court Judge Moria Krueger will retire in February, ending her career as the county's longest serving judge.

Krueger's judicial career began when she won the only successful judicial recall election in the history of Dane County – and possibly the state – defeating the incumbent and four other challengers. "They changed the constitution after the election," she said. "Now it's easy; I would have had a run-off election with [just] the incumbent."

As the first woman judge in the county, Krueger admits she was initially worried about how she would be received. "I could have been viewed as threatening, but that was not the perception. I was welcomed."

Between the election and her first day on the bench, Krueger didn't have much time to prepare, but was graciously helped by her fellow judges. "I had about 12 days to close my law firm and recover from a very intense campaign. I didn't even have time to attend the judicial college so I needed their goodwill and I got it."



Judge Moria Krueger

Throughout her career, Krueger has maintained a special focus on juvenile cases. Among the most rewarding on a personal level was a case involving a young girl whose mother (and the mother's boyfriend, a convicted child molester) fled the state with her to avoid a pending trial. After issuing warrants and getting them back to Wisconsin, Krueger helped to find a safe and permanent home for the girl. The girl continues to keep in touch with the judge, and invited her to her high school graduation.

Cases involving prisoners who are representing themselves are also one of Krueger's interests. "I've found them very gratifying, but they are about 10 times as much work as the other cases," she said. "They're so powerless in their current position and they make so many procedural errors."

Krueger shared some advice that was passed down when she became a judge. "A lawyer friend told me 'let other people do the talking'. I had been a practicing attorney and it was very difficult to sit and let people argue it through," she said. "I thought it was very good advice, but I didn't always follow it."



**RETIREMENTS** *continued from page 14*

Fellow Judge Thomas H. Barland, who retired from the bench in Eau Claire County in 2000, gave Krueger another piece of advice that she holds onto: "Remember you don't have to make the decision the minute they are done arguing."

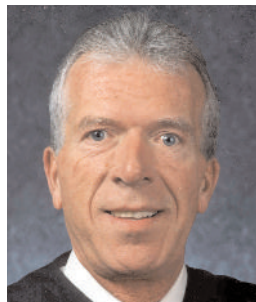
After February 2, her last day in office, Krueger plans to take six months to relax, write, meet friends for lunch, read, and clean. "I have an attic that hasn't been cleaned for 35 years," she said. Later, she hopes to take some classes at the UW Law School and possibly get back into law-related work.

Reflecting on her lengthy career, Krueger said the key reward has been the opportunity to serve. "It's a privilege to make a difference in people's lives," she said. "And especially in young people's lives."

At press time, Gov. Jim Doyle was considering four finalists to succeed Krueger. They are: Ellen Berz, an assistant state public defender; former Dane County Circuit Judge Mark Frankel, La Follette Godfrey & Kahn; Atty. Jon Furlow, Michael Best & Friedrich; and Assistant Atty. General William Hanrahan.

### **Judge Michael J. Mulroy** **La Crosse County Circuit Court**

Following a 24-year career in La Crosse County Circuit Court, Judge Michael J. Mulroy plans to retire when his term ends in July.



*Judge Michael J. Mulroy*

Mulroy was elected in 1983 after serving as La Crosse County district attorney. "I thought it would be a natural progression from prosecutor to judge being in the courtroom on an almost daily basis for nearly 12 years and it was something I wanted to do," he said.

Mulroy said he has found that being an effective judge requires "intelligence, common sense, and what's sometimes referred to as 'judicial temperament' or patience." And key to that last quality: "a good sense of humor, because things aren't always in your control."

Throughout his years on the bench, Mulroy has presided over a vast array of proceedings. "Among the most rewarding are adoptions," he said. "Certain criminal cases [are also gratifying]; you get positive feedback from victims

and perpetrators about how you've treated them."

After retiring, Mulroy plans on training for the Wisconsin Ironman Competition. He hopes to participate in Madison in 2008.

### **Judge John J. Perlich** **La Crosse County Circuit Court**

A key force behind the development of La Crosse County's Drug Court, over which he had presided since its inception in 2002, Judge John J. Perlich retired Nov. 29, 2006 after serving on the bench for 21 years.



*Judge John J. Perlich*

Perlich started his career as a part-time municipal judge. "I liked being a judge, but I also liked practicing law and trying cases," he said. When a fourth judgeship was created in La Crosse, Perlich was torn between maintaining his law practice and becoming a judge. Ultimately, of course, he chose the latter – to the immense benefit of the community and the judiciary.

In 2003, the State Bar of Wisconsin named Perlich 'Judge of the Year', citing his leadership on development of the La Crosse Drug Court, a program aims to help defendants overcome their addictions and become contributing community members.

Perlich said his experiences in dealing with offenders who appear in drug court have been among the most gratifying for him. "When a father stands up and is crying and thanks you for saving his son's life, that's pretty memorable," Perlich said. "Everything we [judges] do involves some sort of tragedy, with a few exceptions like adoptions, but this has a very positive feeling."

Having the capacity to interact with people is part of what makes an exceptional judge, Perlich believes. "I don't think you have to be a particularly brilliant legal scholar, but you have to have some common sense, and I think you have to have an ability to deal with people and understand people," he said.

In retirement, Perlich intends to travel with his wife, Helen. High on the list are nautical adventures. "There may," he acknowledged, "be a boat in the future." ■

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*Shirley S. Abrahamson*

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## **Winter Celebration almost makes up for lack of snow**

*by Deborah Brescoll, budget officer*

**O**n Dec. 14, 2006, the court system Events and Entertainment Committee hosted the 2nd Annual Winter Celebration, held at The Brass Ring restaurant located in a historic building on Madison's east side. In attendance were justices, judges, and staff from almost every office/department – 110 people in all. Staff from the Court of Appeals dominated the competition for door prizes, which included Supreme Court coffee mugs, tee shirts, and tote bags.

Attendees commented that they appreciated the opportunity to socialize (and play pool) with co-workers and those from other offices. The next E & E event, yet to be planned, will be held sometime this summer. The summer event for the last two years was held at the Madison Mallards baseball stadium with a tailgate party preceding the game. Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson threw out the first pitch, to the delight of the crowd.

E & E Committee members are Terri Borrud, Deb Brescoll, Jane Colwin, Colleen Flesher, Toni Gilbertson, Kathy Gundlach, Trevor Kravick, and Bill Weigel. Comments and ideas for future events are welcome; feel free to contact any committee member with suggestions. ■



*Atty. Bill Weigel and Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. pause for a photo during a pool game at The Brass Ring during the courts' 2nd Annual Winter Celebration.*



*Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson demonstrated a multitude of skills at the Winter Celebration.*