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Judgeship bill introduced

The Director of State Courts has introduced legislation that would create seven new circuit court judgeships. Identical bills were introduced in both houses on June 1. The legislation is in response to the Judicial Needs Assessment Study showing Wisconsin needs 18 additional judgeships to maintain current service levels.

The bill would establish new circuit court branches as of August 1, 2008 in six counties: Barron, Chippewa, Dodge, Green, Juneau, and St. Croix. It would also establish an additional circuit court branch in Monroe County as of August 1, 2010.

Senator Lena Taylor (D-Milwaukee) and Representative Garey Bies (R-Sister Bay) are the lead authors of the bills. Senator Taylor chairs the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Corrections; Representative Bies chairs the Assembly Committee on Corrections and Courts. The bills have been referred to these two committees.

At its March meeting, the Committee of Chief Judges examined 2006 calendar year filing data and determined the ranking of counties with the greatest need for an additional judgeship. The primary factor in determining need was the workload per judge, as shown in the Judicial Needs Assessment Study. The Committee recommended these seven counties be included in the legislation.

County boards in all seven counties have passed resolutions in support of establishing new circuit court branches. County support is a crucial element in

deciding to include a county in the request for additional judgeships because financing of the courts remains a state-county partnership. The counties will be responsible for paying additional expenses for courtrooms, court personnel, and supplies.

No judgeships have been created in Wisconsin since August 2000. There are currently 241 circuit court branches in the state.

The Director's Office is working with the authors to facilitate public hearings on the bills, so that action can be taken by the Legislature in the next several months. ■



The Juneau County Courthouse, where a second judge is urgently needed.

Spring election brings in five new judges

In some of the highest-profile judicial races in memory, voters in April selected five new circuit court judges, elevated two trial judges to the appellate courts, and backed three of the four incumbent judges who faced challenges. One incumbent lost his seat, and 26 others were reelected without opposition. Here is the story.

Ziegler elected to Supreme Court



Justice-elect
Annette K. Ziegler

By now it is well known that Judge Annette K. Ziegler, who has served in the Washington County Circuit Court for 10 years and who took on administrative duties as deputy chief judge in the Third Judicial District, won the Supreme Court race with an impressive 58 percent of the vote. She succeeds the retiring Justice Jon P. Wilcox (see *The Third Branch*, spring 2006).

Brunner elected to Court of Appeals

Longtime Barron County Circuit Court Judge Edward R. Brunner was elected without opposition to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, District III (headquartered in Wausau). Brunner succeeds Chief Judge Thomas Cane, who served for 26 years (see *separate story*, page 17).



Judge Edward R. Brunner

Hinkfuss is new Brown County judge

Green Bay Municipal Judge Timothy Hinkfuss will become a Brown County Circuit Court judge after soundly defeating Atty. Thomas Schober, a longtime civil trial lawyer with the Green Bay firm of Davis & Kuelhau. Hinkfuss garnered about 65 percent of the vote.

Hinkfuss will succeed Judge Richard Dietz, who is retiring at the end of his term after 18 years on the bench (see *separate story*, page 17). In addition to his service as a

see **Elections** on page 13



Spring
2007**Director's column: Keeping the courts competitive**

When financial mogul Warren Buffett considers buying a company, one of the qualities he looks for is “a sustainable competitive advantage.”

While the court system doesn't have the same type of competition that exists in the business world, I believe it is important in administering the court system that we still think in terms of competitive advantage.

For us, I see competitive advantage as the measure of our performance against factors prevailing in the external environment. It is our ability to address these factors, such as recruiting and retaining talent, that will determine if we are able to keep our “company” viable.

We've worked hard to ensure we're competitive in the past, and we'll continue to do so as we face challenges ahead.

Last legislative session we were successful in boosting judicial compensation, and we're making it a priority again as the 2007-09 biennium approaches. Future potential candidates will be looking for reasons to seek a judgeship, and compensation is an important part of that picture.

While most judges don't seek the office for financial reasons, salary requirements can't be ignored in the competitive marketplace. Judges shouldn't have to make significant economic sacrifices to serve the public. State judges now are paid less than many government attorneys, law professors, and their counterparts in federal courts.

We've also incorporated a variety of management tools to ensure quality and effectiveness in the court system.

With the help of the National Center for State Courts, for example, we conducted one of the most comprehensive judicial workload studies in the nation. This study serves as the objective basis for the judgeship bill in the Legislature, and it remains a valuable tool for assessing and managing judicial workload throughout the state.

We also recently completed a classification study of non-judicial personnel to ensure we're not falling behind in

compensation for other court system positions. This two-year process helped us identify needs and better structure court system personnel. As a result, we instituted a pay-for-performance program and made salary adjustments where necessary. We'll work diligently to keep up to date.

We're doing everything we can to remain competitive. But as an organization we also face some challenges. A demographic study conducted by our management services team shows that we will be experiencing significant changes in the coming years.

During the next ten years, roughly eight in ten Wisconsin judges will become eligible for retirement, compared to just about 20 percent of judges who are now eligible for retirement.

We'll face increasing pressure to fill judgeships as retirements occur. In recent weeks alone, you've probably heard about judgeship openings in Dane, Outagamie, and Oneida counties due to retirements. We can expect this trend to continue, only at a more rapid pace in coming years.

Court reporters also are going to be retiring at a faster pace, and the pool of stenographic reporters is limited. I have appointed a “Making the Record Committee” to identify how technology may be used to help fulfill this vital function.

Court staff, from administrators to support personnel, will also be affected. Currently, we are recruiting for two district court administrators. We just hired a new clerk for the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, filling a position that was open due to the retirement of a long-time employee.

While we can't compete with the private sector at every level, especially when it comes to salaries of some private attorneys, we need to continue doing everything we can to keep the organization competitive.

As we move ahead to tackle these challenges, we will continue to innovate together, even if our best incentive is to “beat the competition.” ■



A. John Voelker

Supreme Court appoints new chief judges**Brown is new Court of Appeals chief**

Judge Richard S. Brown, who has served on the Wisconsin Court of Appeals since 1978, has been named chief judge of the state's intermediate appeals court. He will begin his three-year term on August 1.

The Supreme Court selected Brown to succeed Chief Judge R. Thomas Cane, who plans to retire this summer when his term ends (*see separate story, page 17*). Cane has served as the Court of Appeals' chief judge since 1998.

In addition to maintaining a caseload, the Court of Appeals' chief judge handles a variety of management duties for the four-district, 16-judge court. Brown will work with court staff on budget matters and personnel issues, and monitor the flow of cases – with the assistance of the presiding judges – to equalize the workload among the districts and ensure prompt decisions.

Brown has been a leader in the Wisconsin courts and in national justice-related initiatives. He is chair of the committee that developed Wisconsin's program for training and certifying court interpreters; he is a member of the Supreme Court Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC); and he has taken leadership roles in national organizations including the American Bar Association and the American Judicature Society. He is a frequent speaker at judicial education programs.

Deets, Dyke, Foust selected as chiefs

The Wisconsin Supreme Court has selected circuit court judges from Dane, Iowa and Manitowoc counties to serve as the new chief judges for their respective judicial administrative districts. Judges from Milwaukee and Eau Claire counties were reappointed. Terms run from August 1, 2007 through July 31, 2009.



Judge Richard S. Brown

NEW FACES

Bridge is Court of Appeals judge

Judge Burneatta "Burnie" L. Bridge took office on January 12 as Gov. Jim Doyle's appointee to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, District IV. She succeeds Judge David G. Deininger (*see The Third Branch, winter 2007*).

Judge Margaret J. Vergeront administered the oath of office at a ceremonial investiture held in April. The



Judge Burneatta
"Burnie" L. Bridge

Governor was among the featured speakers at the ceremony, which took place in the Senate Chamber, and a number of Supreme Court justices, Court of Appeals judges, and cabinet secretaries also attended.

Prior to her appointment, Bridge served as an administrator in the state Department of Health and Human Services, chair of the Public Service Commission, and as a deputy attorney general and assistant attorney general.

Bridge is the sixth female judge to serve on the Court of Appeals, which was created in 1978. The other five are: Judge Martha Bablitch, who served from 1978-85 and recently passed away (*see obituaries*); Judge Margaret J. Vergeront, who was first elected in 1994 and serves in District IV; Justice Patience Drake Roggensack, who served in District IV from 1996-2003 and is now a member of the

Wisconsin Supreme Court; Judge Patricia S. Curley, who was first elected in 1996 and serves in District I; and Judge Joan F. Kessler, who was elected in 2004 and serves in District I.

Dane County welcomes new judge

Judge William E. Hanrahan, appointed to the Dane County Circuit Court bench by Gov. Jim Doyle to succeed Judge Moria Krueger, who retired after 29 years (*see The Third Branch, winter 2007*), was sworn in by Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. on February 15.

Prior to taking the bench, Hanrahan worked at the Department of Justice; most recently, he was an assistant attorney general leading a specialized unit that is responsible for the prosecution of fraud and crimes involving residents of healthcare facilities. Hanrahan also headed the state's first elder abuse prosecution unit and directed numerous high profile criminal matters such as the investigation into the bribery scandal involving former Winnebago County District Attorney Joseph Paulus and the successful prosecution of an individual and his itinerant magazine-sales corporation for multiple homicides resulting from the crash of a company van filled with teenage workers near Janesville. Before he joined the Department of Justice, Hanrahan was an assistant district attorney in Milwaukee.



Judge
William E. Hanrahan

see New Faces on page 25

Joint Finance Committee acts on court budgets

by Deborah Brescoll, budget and policy officer

In early May the Joint Committee on Finance, the Legislature's budget-writing committee, took executive action on the court budget provisions included in 2007 Senate Bill 40, the Governor's biennial budget bill.

First, the committee approved the Governor's proposal to provide an additional \$19.1 million over the biennium to the circuit court support payment program, to be funded through an increase in the real estate transfer fee. The program provides state payments to counties for support of circuit court operations. While the bill left the current distribution formula unchanged, the committee modified the formula as proposed in the Court's budget request. We believe the new formula will provide a better measure of circuit court activity when allocating payments to counties.

Second, while the committee approved requiring counties to adhere to a uniform chart of accounts when recording court financial transactions and authorizing the Director of State Courts Office to audit county court financial information, the committee authorized a two-year project position rather than a permanent auditor position and added some program requirements.

Third, the committee narrowed the scope of the director of state courts' authority to establish and charge fees for use

of the circuit court automated information systems to fees for use of electronic filing (e-filing) only. While the language came from a Court request that was part of a larger e-filing proposal, legislative and public concerns arose that the director would begin charging fees for use of the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Web site, which provides access to the public records of the Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP).

The committee also approved: (1) requiring a qualified interpreter when needed for all cases and regardless of indigency, with increased funding for county reimbursement; (2) a position and funding for required state match for a new federal Children's Court Improvement training grant; (3) a justice coordinator position to implement priority court projects; and (4) \$10,000 for a courthouse safety training program.

Finally, the committee added an attorney position and funding to recreate the Judicial Council as a separate entity.

Most of the Court's budget proposals remain in the budget bill. However, the bill is subject to change until final enactment, which is not expected until mid-summer at the earliest. We will keep you informed on further developments. ■

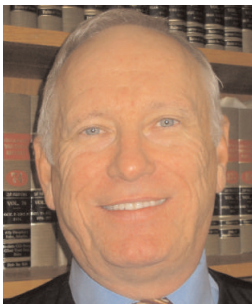
LEADERSHIP

Rock County Circuit Court launches two innovative programs*by Brigid Moroney, court information intern*

Rock County judges have been hard at work this spring, collaborating with the county's Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (*see separate story, page 5*) to iron out the details of two programs designed to improve the handling of drug cases and domestic violence cases. Here is an update.

Judicial oversight in domestic abuse cases

After attending a winter conference aimed at improving skills in the handling of domestic violence cases, Judge Daniel T. Dillon is spearheading an effort to enhance

*Judge Daniel T. Dillon*

Rock County's domestic abuse program, modeling it after Milwaukee County's Judicial Oversight Initiative (JOI) project.

Rock County currently has a domestic violence intervention program (DVIP) available to those deemed eligible by the prosecuting attorney. Suitable participants are generally first-time misdemeanor offenders who must first complete a drug and alcohol screening. Repeat offenders are unlikely to be accepted into the DVIP for a second time; thus they are the population that the new program is intended to serve.

In Rock County, as in Milwaukee, the program requires offenders to appear regularly before the judge along with their probation officer to ensure that progress is being made. "Judicial oversight is the common denominator that judges and probation officers are finding that

makes a difference," Dillon said.

After the plea is taken, sentence is withheld and offenders are placed on probation with imposed and stayed jail sentences and treatment requirements. "All of the special courts – the drug courts, the domestic abuse courts – monitor the behavior of the offender frequently in court to determine whether the person is following the program that was scheduled at the time of sentencing. If they fail, the consequences are immediate," Dillon said.

An independent evaluation of Milwaukee's program conducted by The Urban Institute suggested that batterers who are required to appear before a judge as part of their probation are 47 percent less likely to be arrested for a domestic violence crime than those who were on probation prior to the JOI project. "Milwaukee is a state-of-the-art program and it'd be nice to get to that," Dillon said.

Dillon cited Judge Marshall Bertram Murray, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, as the authority on domestic abuse cases. Murray's work has been key in the development of

Milwaukee County's JOI project. Another model project, in La Crosse County, owes much of its success to Judge Michael Mulroy who has led the effort. Murray and Mulroy also attended the December conference, along with Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Daniel A. Noonan and Price County Circuit Court Judge Douglas T. Fox.

A new drug court

In March, Rock County Circuit Court launched its drug treatment court, which is intended to help offenders and help ease the demand for jail space, said Judge John W. Roethe, who oversees the court.

In opening the court, Rock County joins at least 13 other Wisconsin counties that have begun treatment courts. The goal is to address the root of a problem for many offenders: substance abuse and addiction.

Roethe said he hopes that it will be more effective in some cases than fines and incarceration. In Rock County, as in counties across the state, there is a space crunch in the jail. The county already sends inmates to other counties, and is studying the possibility of building a new, \$140 million jail, Roethe said.

The new court is modeled after Dane County's drug court. Qualifying for, and getting through, drug court will not be easy. First, only offenders who don't demonstrate violent or strong anti-social behavior will be considered, Roethe said. Candidates will go through a vigorous screening process, which includes defense attorneys, prosecutors, treatment specialists, and the judge. When all parties agree that a candidate is appropriate, the participant must sign a contract agreeing to the terms of the court.

The process amounts to a plea agreement with a signed contract, whereby an offender must achieve certain goals to graduate from the nine-month program.

"It's not easy to get through," Roethe said.

Participants must agree to active treatment and random drug screening. The program also includes components for anger management and education, which are geared toward employment. Participants also must make weekly court appearances. As in other counties, participants will appear together in open court, addressing their problems in each others' presence.

*Judge John W. Roethe*

Costs of the drug court initially will be paid through a grant, but Rock County will have to demonstrate its commitment by picking up the costs after three years. ■

Rock County CJCC helps innovations succeed

by Erin Slattengren, policy analyst, Office of Court Operations

Many communities in Wisconsin have learned that in order to analyze and effectively respond to local public safety concerns, collaboration is a necessity. The development of policy-focused teams, widely known as collaborating councils, provides a forum for local justice system professionals and community leaders to come together and focus on justice system improvements and initiatives.

The Rock County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) was established in May 2006 by the Rock County Board of Supervisors to improve the overall functioning of the local criminal justice system. The 17-member group established its priorities based on public input and the recommendations of a local *ad hoc* jail alternatives study committee. The goals of the Rock County CJCC are to:

- Enhance public safety
- Make suggestions to provide better outcome for system users, their families, and the public at large
- Make suggestions for more efficient use of resources
- Increase communication among the criminal justice community and the public
- Eliminate duplication
- Provide coordination across departments and budget areas
- Provide ongoing oversight for new or alternative programs

Key to the success of a CJCC is having the right decision-makers at the table. In short, the CJCC members must be in a position to make decisions on behalf of the various groups they represent. The team must develop a common vision of public safety for the community and take a broader view of responsibilities.



Neil Deupree

The Rock County CJCC, chaired by County Board Sup. Neil Deupree, includes a circuit court judge (Judge James P. Daley), who said the diverse

membership has improved problem solving.

“Our collaborating council is a diverse group of professionals and community members who deal with extremely difficult community issues,” he said. “The breadth of experience at the table allows us to problem-solve and come up with ideas and solutions that we otherwise would not have considered.”

Among the Council’s members are the school district superintendent, the sheriff, the district attorney, a public defender, the chief of police, and representatives from: county human services, organized labor, the Department of

Health and Family Services, the Department of Corrections, the Rock County Juvenile Detention Center, Mercy Health System, and two local community organizations. The meetings are open to the public, and citizens also play a vital role in the process.

As experiences in Rock County and elsewhere have demonstrated, the involvement of judges is critically important. Judges are able to offer a unique perspective on the administration of justice, and they have the ability to convene the community leaders who must be part of the planning and policy making.

“The role of the judiciary on these types of committees cannot be overstated,” Daley said. “It assists us in both helping to educate the public and criminal justice community and understanding their concerns further. Judges must be a part of the strategy to prevent future crime.”

Examples of the work of the Rock County CJCC abound:

- With funding from a state Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) grant, the Council implemented a jail diversion program that targets non-violent offenders whose crimes are related to their alcohol or drug addictions.
- The CJCC has endorsed the expansion of the electronic monitoring program that is operated by the Sheriff’s Department. Once fully implemented, the program will monitor an average of 70-80 individuals per day.
- The Council is in the process of reviewing different models of community service programming throughout the county and hopes to expand this as a strategy for alternative sentencing in the near future.
- The Council worked with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), which has agreed to conduct a local criminal justice system assessment and provide recommendations on areas of possible system improvement.
- The Council is also conducting its own “gap analysis” to identify areas where sufficient resources exist and where additional treatment and wrap around services are needed. ■

For more information about coordinating councils and collaborative problem solving, and to view the directory of Wisconsin coordinating councils, visit the PPAC Effective Justice Strategies Web page at www.wicourts.gov/about/organization/programs/alternatives.htm

Self-represented litigants: Pilot project focuses on public libraries

by Ann Zimmerman, *pro se coordinator*

The Wisconsin court system launched a pilot project on April 10 in Manitowish Waters and April 11 in Eau Claire to further assist people who are representing themselves in court proceedings. The project's goal is to foster communication between local courts and public libraries in an effort to better meet the legal service needs of self-represented litigants.

Leading the initiative are the Tenth Judicial District, which consists of 13 northwestern Wisconsin counties, and the Wisconsin State Law Library. The Indianhead Federated Library System and the Northern Waters Library Service co-sponsored the April programs, which were aimed at informing public library staff about the various court-related services and information currently available to assist self-represented litigants.

The project's first component was an information and training session for a group of librarians and staff from libraries around District Ten. The second component will send clerks and registers in probate into every public library in their respective counties in order to foster relationships and provide further information related to available circuit court resources.

"The Wisconsin court system and public libraries have a strong, mutual interest in helping citizens to access current and reliable legal information," said Tenth District Chief Judge Benjamin D. Proctor. It has been our goal to improve access to the courts for citizens who choose, for whatever reason, to come to court without the assistance of an attorney. Doing so improves public trust and confidence in the legal system."

Featured speakers at the first event were Judge Edward F. Vlack III, St. Croix County Circuit Court; State Law Librarian Jane Colwin; Atty. Ann

Zimmerman, who, as executive assistant to the Chief Justice, is responsible for coordination of statewide *pro se* efforts; District Court Administrator Gregg Moore, District 10; Atty. Robert Hagness, the District Ten coordinator for the Access to Justice project; Register in Probate Jean Gay, Eau Claire County; and Clerk of Circuit Court Karen Hepfler, Chippewa County.

This pilot project is the latest in a series of steps the court system has taken to improve access to the courts for people who are representing themselves, and it is hoped that the program can be replicated. It is an outgrowth of the American Judicature Society Conference on Self-Representation held in Des Moines in September, where an eight-member team from Wisconsin developed an action plan that included three pilot projects to provide assistance to self-represented litigants. The other two projects being developed include a self-help center and a *pro bono* telephone assistance project for self-represented litigants in divorce cases. ■



A group of public librarians and staff from libraries in northwest Wisconsin listens as Judge Edward F. Vlack III, St. Croix County Circuit Court, discusses the challenges that self-represented litigants present to the courts.

Self-represented litigants: La Crosse opens new Law Information Center

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson marked the opening of the La Crosse County Law Information Center at the La Crosse County courthouse on February 23. Staffed by volunteer attorneys, retirees, and paralegal students, the center will provide free guidance to people representing themselves in court proceedings.

Abrahamson said such programs are needed as the number of litigants without attorneys increases. "Navigating the legal system is confusing without a lawyer," she said. "The courts have attempted to make the process easier



Chief Justice
Shirley S. Abrahamson

by developing simplified forms and clinics where litigants can go for help."

Family Court Commissioner Gloria Doyle and Doyle's assistant, Tammy Pedretti, along with the La Crosse county circuit court judges, helped to develop the information center. Many of the center's resources come from the La Crosse County Bar Association, whose members provide legal assistance. Also participating in the effort are Legal Action of Wisconsin, the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, and Western Technical College. ■

Supreme Court visits Wautoma

The Wisconsin Supreme Court traveled to Wautoma in April to hear two cases as part of its Justice on Wheels outreach program. An estimated 250 people packed into the courthouse to watch the oral arguments.

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson chose Wautoma in honor of Justice Jon P. Wilcox, who will be retiring from the Supreme Court this summer. Wilcox served as Waushara County Circuit Court judge from 1979-92, stepping down upon his appointment to the Supreme Court. During his time on the circuit court, he served as the Sixth Judicial District's chief judge. Wilcox also represented Waushara and its environs in the State Assembly, where he served from 1969-75.

Prior to each hearing, Abrahamson spoke to the assembled crowd about Wilcox and his many contributions as a public servant. ■



Justice Jon P. Wilcox listens as Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson details his professional accomplishments and explains that he has been lobbying the Court to visit Wautoma since he took office in 1992.

PPAC Court Security Subcommittee Appointed

by Erin Slattengren, policy analyst,
Office of Court Operations

Court security was identified as a top priority in PPAC's biennial report titled *Critical Issues: Planning Priorities for the Wisconsin Court System*. This topic was discussed at length during the November PPAC meeting, and the committee decided to establish a state-level policy subcommittee to address court security and the corresponding recommendations outlined in *Critical Issues*. These recommendations include: revising/updating SCR 70.39; courthouse security audits; courthouse security training; development of a comprehensive security plan; incident reporting and tracking; and extending outreach on this topic to educate those outside of the court system.

The new subcommittee will meet for the first time on June 7. The following are the new members of the PPAC Court Security Subcommittee.

- ❑ Judge Michael O. Bohren, Waukesha County (co-chair)
- ❑ Judge Sarah B. O'Brien, Dane County (co-chair)
- ❑ Judge Wayne J. Marik, Racine County
- ❑ Judge Dennis J. Mleziva, Kewaunee County
- ❑ Beth Perrigo, deputy district court administrator
- ❑ Lt. Bryon Schaefer, Lt. of Court Service, Sheboygan County
- ❑ Bob Brown, architect, Ayers Associates, Eau Claire
- ❑ Kris Deiss, clerk of court Washington County
- ❑ Bill Morgan, Green County corporation counsel
- ❑ Sallyanne Danner, court commissioner, Fond du Lac County
- ❑ Karl Jeske, Racine County Building and Facilities manager
- ❑ Police Chief Jeff Schinzing, Village of Grantsburg
- ❑ Bill Weigel, City of Verona Municipal Court judge (also of the Office of Lawyer Regulation)
- ❑ Sharon Schmeling, Jefferson County Board chair ■

CourtNet Grant Info Center

The Grant Info Center (GIC) available through the CourtNet Intranet site is a resource providing information on court-related grant funding sources and opportunities. It is the goal of the GIC to position the court system to be competitive in obtaining grant funds and to consolidate ad hoc efforts that are currently underway or being contemplated. Visit the site on CourtNet by clicking on the "Grant Info Center" tab on the left side of the main page.

Highlight: Grant review process streamlined

The Grant Info Center Committee has recently updated and streamlined the grant proposal review and notification process. The streamlined process will ensure that grant projects requiring the support of the Director of State Courts and/or the Wisconsin Supreme Court are carefully reviewed from a programmatic, strategic planning, and budget perspective. The process also will help facilitate technical support in the beginning stages of a proposal.

Those pursuing grant funding that does not require state level support are asked to take part in a shortened version of this process to facilitate development of an inventory of projects taking place throughout the Wisconsin court system. The inventory will be a resource for others with similar programmatic interests. ■

Contact Erin Slattengren in the Office of Court Operations at erin.slattengren@wicourts.gov for further information about the Grant Info Center or grant prospects. See also *Administrative Bulletin 07-04* located in both the "Bulletins" and "Grant Info Center" links of CourtNet.

AWARDS

NAMI honors Leineweber

The Wisconsin branch of the National Alliance on Mental Illness has chosen Judge Edward E. Leineweber, Richland County Circuit Court, to receive its 2007 Community Service Award.



Judge
Edward E. Leineweber

Leineweber was selected for his work to establish the Richland County Assistance to Kin of Mentally Ill Persons (AKOMI) program, which provides trained volunteers to connect with relatives of a person who is subject to an involuntary mental health commitment.

"We present this award to you with the knowledge that equitable and proactive treatment of persons with mental illness in our court systems can be a reality," wrote NAMI-Wisconsin President Frank Mixdorf.

Leineweber said the program was developed under the auspices of Court & Community, Inc., a non-profit that he helped to start about eight years ago to improve how the court serves the needs of the community.

"The idea behind AKOMI came out of watching families [that] often appeared to be frightened, bewildered and totally lost in the process, not knowing what was happening, or what to expect next," he said.

As part of the program, written materials have been developed that include contact information for various staff members, so that families have a place to turn when they have questions or concerns.

A related initiative is a series of mental illness training workshops offered in Richland County over the last two years. The workshops help justice system personnel with little or no formal training in mental health issues to acquire basic knowledge and skills to deal with mentally ill people in crisis situations. Targeted personnel include police, jailers, court staff, social workers, group home workers, probation and parole officers, and health care workers.

The award was presented in May in Wisconsin Rapids.

Skwierawski wins 'Lifetime Achievement' award

Former Milwaukee County Chief Judge Michael J. Skwierawski, who is president of the Milwaukee Bar Association, has been selected to receive the State Bar of Wisconsin 2006 Lifetime Jurist Achievement Award.

The annual award recognizes a jurist who made a difference during a long tenure on the bench. It was presented at the State Bar's Annual Convention, May 9-11 at the Midwest Airlines Center, Milwaukee.

"During his 25 years on the circuit court, Judge Skwierawski implemented many innovations that make the Milwaukee court system the highly effective system it is today," said Beth Hanan, chair of the State Bar's Bench and Bar Committee. "He was instrumental in introducing jury trial schedule rules that reduce delays in trial dates, speeding up the processing of criminal matters, and creating a court interpreter program for non-English speaking litigants as well as a *pro se* center."

Skwierawski was appointed in 1978 and elected to four terms. He served five years as chief judge and as chair of

the Committee of Chief Judges before he retired in August 2003. He also was a member of the Supreme Court Planning and Policy Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on Sentencing Guidelines.

Before becoming a judge, Skwierawski was in private practice for eight years and served as a Milwaukee County assistant district attorney for three years. He is now a mediator with an emphasis on commercial litigation and complex civil cases.

In nominating Skwierawski, Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Michael D. Guolee wrote: "Service and hard work have always been part of his code of conduct and that continues to this date. He continues to be a teacher of the law at various seminars and serves on various committees in our legal and general community. Because of his excellent reputation in the legal community, he was recently elected President of the Milwaukee Bar Association."

Past recipients of the Lifetime Jurist Achievement Award include the following circuit court judges: Edward R. Brunner, Barron County; Lee E. Wells, Milwaukee County; Peter G. Pappas, La Crosse County; Patrick T. Sheedy, Milwaukee County; Mark J. Farnum, Rock County; P. Charles Jones, Dane County; Edwin C. Dahlberg, Rock County; and Myron L. Gordon, who served on the Milwaukee County Circuit Court, the Wisconsin Supreme Court, and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

Employees honored for unparalleled service

Director of State Courts A. John Voelker presented the second round of Director's Recognition Awards in December. The awards are reserved for court employees who have provided unparalleled service to the court system. Winners included:

- Bridget Bauman, benchmarks coordinator, Office of Court Operations, for exceptional performance related to the Children's Court Improvement Program.
- Terri Borrud, forms and records officer, Office of Court Operations, for coordinating changes made to more than 100 forms as a result of changes in probate and guardianship laws.
- Mary Brister, legal assistant, Court of Appeals, for handling an unusually heavy workload during a temporary staff shortage.
- Connie Dillon, court reporter in the Tenth Judicial District, for accepting extra assignments and helping out in three other judicial districts during a staff shortage.



Judge
Michael J. Skwierawski

AWARDS *continued from page 8*

- Andrew Goodnough, lead software engineer, CCAP, for leadership on several software infrastructure improvements and transitioning CCAP to a new code versioning system and developing new testing tools.
- Rita Lord, former deputy clerk for the Wisconsin Supreme Court and Court of Appeals (now judicial assistant to Supreme Court Justice Louis B. Butler Jr.) for going above and beyond the call of duty to help process a court order in a high-profile case.
- Sarah Motif, legal assistant, Court of Appeals, for helping to handle an unusually high workload during a staffing shortage.
- Angie Semrau, senior business process analyst, CCAP, for delivering many high-profile and successful Web applications, including changes to the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Web site.

Marquette honors Milwaukee judge

Judge Maxine A. White, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, received the Alumni Service to the Community Award as part of Marquette University's 2007 Alumni National Awards Dinner on April 28.



Judge Maxine A. White

A 1985 graduate of Marquette Law School, White has been a leader in the Wisconsin judiciary and in the National Association of Women Judges (NAWJ). Among many honors, White has been the recipient of the State Bar Judge of the Year Award and the NAWJ Judge Mattie Belle Davis Award, the YWCA of Greater Milwaukee Outstanding

Woman of Achievement Award, and more.

This latest award is part of a program by Marquette to recognize alumni who contribute extensively to their communities.

Jury bailiff training, Hmong directory win awards

The State Bar in April presented achievement awards to 10 local bar associations for 12 public service projects, including two accomplished in collaboration with state court staff – a Hmong legal glossary and a jury bailiff training program.

The Local Bar Grant Competition (LBGC) awards, were presented in April by committee chair Ben Brantmeier.

"The caliber of the local community service programs put forth by local bars is exceptional," said Brantmeier. "These awards recognize the ability and willingness of members of these local bar associations to address needs in our society and help to creatively and effectively assist those public needs."

The Marathon County Bar Association received an Award of Exceptional Achievement for developing a Hmong Legal Glossary in conjunction with the Director of State Courts Office. Believed to be the first Hmong-English legal glossary in the United States, it defines more than 800 common court terms and suggests equivalent White Hmong phrases for many of them. The glossary is useful to the courts, law enforcement, social services, researchers, teachers, and state government as a resource for interpreting legal proceedings, translating forms, and training interpreters.

The glossary has been translated into White Hmong as the predominant dialect in America and the one most commonly used in court.

Three Hmong interpreters with a strong background in court work provided translating and editing for the glossary. They are: PaDer Lilian Lawbeerjour (Language Solutions, Milwaukee); Kazoua Yang (Ramsey County Interpreter Coordinator, St. Paul); and Ying Lee Xiong (Urgent Translations, Wausau).

The glossary grew from a collaboration of the Wisconsin courts, the Minnesota Translation Lab, the Marathon County Bar Association Southeast Asian Outreach Committee, and contributors throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin. The project was funded by grants from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (Bureau of Migrant, Refugee, and Labor Services) and the State Bar of Wisconsin.

The Racine County Bar Association received an Award of Outstanding Achievement for helping to develop the statewide Jury Bailiff Training Program, which provides orientation and a training curriculum for civilian bailiffs and deputy sheriffs. Last year, about 400 people at 53 sites statewide participated – many of them via videoconference.

The session originated from the Pyle Center at UW-Madison. It was designed to help ensure that bailiffs have the tools they need to interact with jurors in a manner that reflects positively on the court system.

District Two Court Administrator Kerry Connelly steered the project as committee chair. District Five Court Administrator Gail Richardson, one of the courts' resident experts on jury issues, was also involved. Chief Judge Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County Circuit Court, and Judge Jean W. DiMotto, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, helped to develop the curriculum and



District Court Administrator Kerry Connelly (left) joined State Bar President Steve Levine (second from left), Racine County Bar President Wynne Laufenberg, and Judge Gerald P. Ptacek at the presentation of the Award of Outstanding Achievement for the Jury Bailiff Training Program.

WISCONSIN CONNECTS

New action plan will focus on disaster preparedness, info sharing

Wisconsin court staff and child protection workers have identified two primary issues for inclusion in a new action plan that is being developed to improve court outcomes for children who have been abused and neglected. First, an emergency preparedness plan to track children in the child welfare system and maintain their legal cases in the event of a disaster should be developed. Second, an interface between CCAP and eWiSACWIS, the state's child welfare information system, should be created to share data across systems efficiently while at the same time protecting privacy.

These recommendations came from the team that Wisconsin sent to a national summit in New York City in March. The team was comprised of A. John Voelker, Director of State Courts; Judge Mary Triggiano, Milwaukee County Circuit Court; Mark Campbell, bureau director in the Division of Children and Family Services; Michelle Jensen Goodwin, Children's Court Improvement Program director; and District Court Administrator Patrick Brummond.

Wisconsin was one of 42 states that sent a team to the Summit. As part of the program, the state's team met individually to determine needed and available resources, what other agencies and officials should be involved in strengthening foster care and services to families and children, what programs and strategies developed in other states may be applicable in Wisconsin, and how best to address new federal requirements for improving the safety and well-being of children, the permanence of placements, and the timeliness of child protection proceedings.

Justice Butler is moot court jurist

Justice Louis B. Butler Jr. was one of three judges selected to serve on Southwestern Law School's 2007 moot court panel in April.

The intramural competition gives first-year law school

students the opportunity to develop appellate brief writing and oral advocacy skills.

Butler, who also served as a jurist on the "final bench" last year, served alongside Judge Steven Levinson, an associate justice of the Supreme Court of Hawaii; Judge Charles R. Wilson, U.S. Court of Appeals.

Butler said some of the arguments were better than many heard before the Supreme Court.

CIO consults in Bahrain



Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd meets with Ministry of Justice officials in the Middle East nation of Bahrain.

Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd was selected by the American Bar Association to help the Kingdom of Bahrain to develop a new public outreach office this spring. Bahrain is a Persian Gulf nation that is working to build a democratic government.

Todd led top government officials and members of the bar through a strategic planning exercise designed to establish goals and set priorities. From this, she developed a plan that will guide the Ministry of Justice in establishing a communications office. In addition, she conducted media training workshops, working with a local video crew and many language interpreters to help participants improve their interviewing skills, learn to write press releases, and begin to develop rules governing cameras in the courts. ■

Turkemenistan visitors



District Court Administrator Gail Richardson answers questions about the state court system as posed by judges visiting from Turkmenistan. Madison was one of many stops the group made while studying courts in the United States as part of a program sponsored by the U.S. State Department.

Voelker speaks at WCA



Director of State Courts John Voelker was a featured speaker at the Wisconsin Counties Association's legislative exchange, which was held in Madison in February. Voelker emphasized the importance of partnerships with counties and other stakeholders in the criminal justice system heading into the 2007-09 state budget process.

Assembly Speaker Huebsch, other legislators, 'ride along' with judges

Assembly Speaker Mike Huebsch, R-West Salem, took the bench alongside La Crosse County Circuit Court Judge Ramona A. Gonzalez as part of the Judicial Ride-Along Program on March 26.

The visit gave Huebsch a first-hand look at the criminal intake court, which featured about 25 cases that afternoon. He said he was most struck by the number of defendants who had been in court before.

"It was an eclectic group that came before us. The judge seemed to know a good number of the people who were there," Huebsch said.

Huebsch is one of about a half dozen legislators who have 'ridden' along to get a close-up look at local courts in 2007. The program also gives legislators a chance to discuss with judges the impact of legislation on the delivery of justice.



Judge
Ramona A. Gonzalez



Rep. Mike Huebsch

As a result of his visit, Huebsch said he'd like to see review of income standards for indigent people and of the process used to reimburse private attorneys appointed to represent indigent defendants. The system needs to ensure balance between constitutional rights and taxpayers' ability to pay, he said.

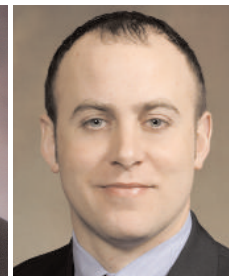
While in court, Huebsch said he was taken aback when the judge recruited an attorney from the courtroom audience for one low-income defendant.

Another legislator who was along for the ride on March 26 was Rep. Gordon Hintz, D-Oshkosh, who sat with Winnebago County Circuit Court Judge Scott C. Woldt. Hintz said he, too, was concerned about the number of repeat offenders making court appearances.

In talking over the day's events with Hintz, Woldt said he found that nearly all the suspects that day had one thing in common: They failed to complete their high school education in a traditional setting. Hintz said the visit underscored for him the relationship between education, or lack thereof, and contact with the criminal justice system.



Judge Scott C. Woldt



Rep. Gordon Hintz

Other legislators who have participated in the Ride-Along Program since the beginning of the legislative session include: Rep. Anthony J. Staskunas, D-West Allis; Rep. Joan Ballweg, R-Markesan; Rep. Fred Kessler, D-Milwaukee; Rep. Sondy Pope-Roberts, D-Middleton; and Rep. Jeff Smith, D-Eau Claire.

The program was started in 1993 as a way to improve understanding and communication between the judiciary and the Legislature.

"I think every legislator should be required to do it," Hintz said. "I hope to do it with other judges. I think I only had a snapshot of what happens." ■



Rep. Joan Ballweg



Rep. Fred Kessler



Rep.
Sondy Pope-Roberts



Rep.
Anthony J. Staskunas

Call for investiture speeches

Judge Richard J. Sankovitz, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, is working to develop a collection of judges' investiture speeches. The speeches will be placed in an archive that will be available on the court system's Intranet and through the Court Information Office.

Judges are also asked to submit samples of the programs and invitations that they developed for investitures; these, too, will be available to the judiciary on the Intranet.

The archive may be useful to judges planning investitures, and will be an important historic record. ■

Transcripts donated to this project may be e-mailed or mailed to Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd at Amanda.todd@wicourts.gov or Director of State Courts Office, PO Box 1688, Madison, Wis. 53701-1688, or mailed to Judge Richard J. Sankovitz at Milwaukee County Courthouse, 901 N. 9th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53233-1425.

Supreme Court's discussions with legislators are wide-ranging

The Wisconsin Supreme Court met this spring with members of four legislative committees to share ideas and discuss topics related to crime and the courts.

Discussion was lively during the meetings, which were held in the Supreme Court Hearing Room – one each in April and May. Topics were sometimes serious, but the tone of the meetings was casual and friendly.

“We were glad to have the opportunity to share how the court system operates and discuss our goal of improving the justice system for the people of Wisconsin,” said Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson.

In April, the justices met jointly with the Assembly Committee on Corrections and the Courts, headed by Rep. Garey Bies, R-Sister Bay, and the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Corrections, headed by Sen. Lena Taylor, D-Milwaukee.

Among the many topics discussed at that meeting: interpreters, public defender representation, access to justice for low-income individuals, drug and alcohol treatment

programs, disproportionate minority contact, the state budget, and the Judicial Council.

In May, justices met with the Assembly Committee on Judiciary and Ethics, headed by Rep. Mark Gundrum, R-New Berlin, and the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice, headed by Rep. Joel Kleefisch, R-Oconomowoc.

At that meeting, legislators and justices addressed some of the same issues and others: the proper roles of the branches of government, court information, the need for judges, the use of reserve judges, offender re-entry, the legislative process, judicial review, and court costs.

While discussion didn't go too in-depth on any one topic, the meetings were successful at building relationships, sharing information, and discussing the challenges that each branch faces, Abrahamson said.

Abrahamson started the informational meetings several years ago in an effort to encourage sharing information about the challenges facing the judicial system. ■

Symposium addresses problem-solving courts, other initiatives

In 1999, Minnesota District Court Judge Joanne M. Smith admits she had a bias against what she referred to then as “boutique courts.”

Today, however, she finds herself stumping for problem-solving courts – and Minnesota is recognized as a leader in implementing successful initiatives to reduce incarceration and improve outcomes in criminal cases.

Smith joined Eau Claire County Circuit Court Judge Lisa K. Stark as a featured speaker at a Legislative Council symposium on effective criminal justice strategies held at the state Capitol in Madison in March.

Smith, who oversees a substance abuse court in St. Paul, said Minnesota's experience with problem-solving courts has made her a believer, and she presented numbers to justify her change in attitude.

A 2006 cost-benefit analysis of the Ramsey County Juvenile Substance Abuse Court (JSAC) showed graduates had the lowest cost of any group, averaging \$12,000 less than a comparison group over two years. Comparison group costs were 41 percent higher per juvenile.

JSAC was started in 2001, two years after Ramsey County officials began examining ways to more directly address juvenile substance abuse. Since then, Ramsey County initiated an adult substance abuse court, OWI court, mental health court and community court, which targets

“livability crimes, such as underage drinking.”

Similar to the membership make up of Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCC) in Wisconsin, the Ramsey County group included key stakeholders from the offices of the county administrator, county attorney, public defender, county commissioner, sheriff, corrections and health officials.

“The courts cannot do this alone. We need all the justice partners working with us,” Smith said. Wisconsin has 23 CJCCs, which bring together a similar mix of stakeholders at the county level, Stark told the group. She then presented some details, highlighting the success of Eau Claire County's drug court, which is proving effective at treating non-violent criminals in need of alcohol and other drug abuse treatment.

During the first 18 months of the court's existence, the average yearly cost for a drug court participant in Eau Claire County is \$6,135,

compared to the average yearly cost for prison of about \$25,000, Stark said. The recidivism rate for Eau Claire County's drug court participants is 12 percent, compared to between 65 percent and 75 percent nationally for those drug and alcohol offenders who have not participated in a treatment court.

At least 16 Wisconsin counties have established problem-solving courts. ■



Judge Joanne M. Smith, of the Minnesota district court in St. Paul, shares information on Minnesota's efforts to reduce incarceration. Smith spoke at a Legislative Council-sponsored symposium in Madison.

Four Court of Appeals judges serve on GAB candidate board

In a brief ceremony at the state Capitol, the seven justices gathered around the attorney tables in the Supreme Court Hearing Room as Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson drew the names of four lucky winners from a hat.



Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson selects Court of Appeals judges for service on the committee that will select Government Accountability Board candidates for the Governor's consideration.

The winners – four Court of Appeals judges – will serve on a candidate committee that will submit names for the state's new Government Accountability Board (GAB). The GAB will replace the State Elections Board and the State Ethics Board and will be responsible for state laws related to elections, campaign finance, ethics, and lobbying.

The chosen four – one each from the state's four Court of Appeals' districts – are:

District I (headquartered in Milwaukee):

Judge Patricia S. Curley

District II (headquartered in Waukesha):

Judge Neal P. Nettesheim

District III (headquartered in Wausau):

Judge Gregory A. Peterson

District IV (headquartered in Madison):

Judge Margaret J. Vergeront

Elections *continued from front page*



Judge-elect
Timothy Hinkfuss

municipal judge, Hinkfuss also has been a member of the Green Bay City Council and the Brown County Board. Hinkfuss is married with three children.

Sazama wins re-election in Chippewa

Judge Thomas J. Sazama, on the bench in Chippewa County since 1995, prevailed over Atty. Julie A. Anderl of Anderl Law Office, LLC, by a two-to-one margin. Another challenger, Atty. Sonia Lee Anderson, was defeated in the primary.



Judge
Thomas J. Sazama

White wins in Columbia County

Judge Alan J. White, appointed by Gov. Jim Doyle last July to succeed Judge Richard L. Rehm, won about 75 percent of the vote on April 3. Challenging White was Assistant Columbia County District Atty. Troy D. Cross.



Judge Alan J. White

La Crosse voters select three new judges

In La Crosse County, voters selected a state public defender and the county's district attorney to succeed the well-respected Michael Mulroy and John J. Perlich. Incumbent Judge Roger W. LeGrand lost in a close race.

LeGrand, who had served as the county's family court commissioner for 14 years when Gov. Jim Doyle appointed him in spring 2006 to succeed the retiring Judge Dennis Montabon, lost his seat by less than 500 votes out of about 19,000 cast. The victor was Assistant District Atty. Todd W. Bjerke, who has been a prosecutor since 1989. Bjerke is a 1984 graduate of Hamline University Law School.

In the race for Branch 2, Public Defender Elliott M. Levine beat Deputy District Atty. Loralee Clark by a margin of 10,812 to 7,952. Eliminated in the primary was Assistant State Public Defender Christine Clair. Levine oversees public defenders in 10 counties and was a founding member of the La Crosse County Drug Court. He is also a member of the Alternatives to Incarceration Subcommittee of the Supreme Court Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC), and is president of the Wisconsin Association of Treatment Court Professionals. He is a 1990 graduate of the UW Law School.

Succeeding Perlich, who retired in November 2006 after



Judge-elect
Todd W. Bjerke



Judge-elect
Elliott M. Levine



Judge Scott L. Horne

OBITUARIES

Judge Martha J. Bablitch Court of Appeals, District IV

Judge Martha J. Bablitch, who served on the Wisconsin Court of Appeals from its creation in 1978 until her resignation in 1985, and who made history as the first woman to serve on the Court of Appeals, died April 4 of lung cancer. She was 62.



Judge Martha J. Bablitch

Bablitch was born in Lawrence, Kansas, and grew up in Ypsilanti, Michigan, where her mother was an attorney and her father was an English professor. She was a graduate of Lawrence University and the UW Law School. Before her election to the Court of Appeals she practiced law with the Stevens Point firm of Bablitch & Bablitch. She was also married at one time to former Justice William A. Bablitch.

An obituary said this: "Martha waged her battle with lung cancer the way she lived her life; she never gave an inch. She wielded her courage and strength of character with grace and dignity, humor and passion and often downright brilliance. To those who knew her and whose lives Martha's life informed, she was beyond description. No words can convey the depth and generosity of her nature...."

Bablitch is survived by her sister, Veronica "Ronnie" Virtue, who lives in Minneapolis.

Judge Thomas E. Fairchild U.S. Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit; Wisconsin Supreme Court

Judge Thomas E. Fairchild, who served on the Wisconsin Supreme Court from 1956-66 and on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit from 1966-81, died Monday, February 12. He was 94.

Prior to joining the Supreme Court, Fairchild served as state attorney general and as a U.S. attorney, and ran twice for U.S. Senate - once against Sen. Alexander Wiley and once against Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

Fairchild's state service ended in 1966, when he left the Wisconsin Supreme Court to accept an appointment from President Lyndon Johnson to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, located in Chicago. He presided there until his retirement in 1981. In 1988, underscoring the enormous respect that Fairchild commanded within the legal community, the UW Law School named a lecture series for him.

When journalists sought comment on Fairchild's legacy, they turned to Chief Justice Shirley S.

Abrahamson, who predicted that Fairchild would be remembered as a man who served with "great distinction, not only as a jurist but as a human being."

Abrahamson told the *Wisconsin State Journal* that Fairchild had a great sense of humor, and kept a stock of limericks in a box. "When I started on the court and had to start making a lot of speeches, I thought I could borrow some of his limericks. But I found they were not suitable for

public consumption," she recalled.

Former Chief Justice Nathan S. Heffernan, who sadly passed away just two months after Fairchild, also commented upon his old friend's legacy. Heffernan called Fairchild "One of the greatest judges I've ever known."

On April 11, the Wisconsin Supreme Court accepted Fairchild's portrait for hanging in the Capitol, following tradition. Many members of Fairchild's family, and numerous former law clerks were present.

Fairchild's wife of 68 years, Eleanor Dahl Fairchild, passed away in 2005. He is survived by his sons, Tim of Madison and Andy of Enterprise, Ore.; his daughters, Susan Chase of Andover, N.H., and Jennifer Lord of Cripple Creek, Colo.; his eight grandchildren; and his four great-grandchildren.

Chief Justice Nathan S. Heffernan Wisconsin Supreme Court

Former Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Nathan S. Heffernan, who served on the Court from 1964-95, died Friday, April 13 in Madison. He was 86.

Heffernan's 31 years on the Court made him one of the three longest-serving justices in state history. Heffernan's work on the bench distinguished him as a top scholar with eclectic opinions and a good sense of humor. He was well known for his commitment to civil liberties and women's rights and is recognized for his involvement in the court reorganization of 1978, which created the Wisconsin Court of Appeals.

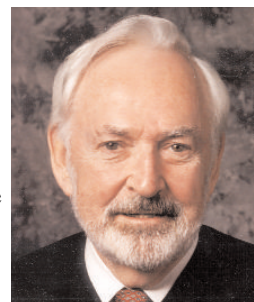
Heffernan became a justice at the age of 43, when he was appointed to the Court by Gov. John W. Reynolds. Before that, he served two years as U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin - a position to which he was appointed to by President John F. Kennedy. From 1959-62, Heffernan served as deputy attorney general for Wisconsin; prior to that he worked in Sheboygan, where he began his career in the law.

Heffernan's passions were, in addition to the law, breeding Labrador Retrievers and fishing on the Brule River. His beloved dogs, Lex Loci and Stare Decisis, survive him.

In recent years, Heffernan had devoted himself to caring for his wife, Dorothy, whose health had declined. She survives him, as do his children, Kate Thomas of Wales, Great Britain; Michael of Madison; and Tom of Port Wing. Also surviving him are his five grandchildren.

Chief Judge Burton A. Scott Court of Appeals, District II

Judge Burton A. Scott, who served on the Wisconsin Court of Appeals (District II) for 11 years and on the trial



Chief Justice
Nathan S. Heffernan



Judge
Thomas E. Fairchild

OBITUARIES *continued from page 14*

bench in Kenosha County for eight years before that, died April 2 at home. He was 72.

In an interview with the *Kenosha News*, Reserve Judge Michael S. Fischer recalled his friend and mentor. "He was a good friend," Fisher said. "And he was a wonderful teacher. I think he enjoyed teaching more than he enjoyed actually



Photo credit: Kenosha News

Judge Burton Scott in his boat, Resolute. Scott didn't care for golf, but loved to fish.

along with him. During his tenure there, he served six years as chief judge, from 1983-89, and well known for his administrative skills. In 1988, he was elected chair of the National Council of Chief Judges of the Courts of Appeals of the United States.

Shortly after his retirement, he accepted a post as associate dean of the National Judicial College in Reno, Nev., where he served until 1994. After that, he and his wife traveled the country before settling in Alabama, where Scott became a Habitat for Humanity volunteer. The Scotts returned to Wisconsin in 2001.

Surviving Scott are his wife of 50 years, Evelyn C. Magnuson Scott; a daughter, Kiffie, and a son, David.

Judge Michael T. Sullivan Milwaukee County Circuit Court/County Court Court of Appeals, District I

Judge Michael T. Sullivan, who became a judge at the age of 28 and served in both the Milwaukee County and Circuit Courts and in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, died in late March.



Judge Michael T. Sullivan

Sullivan was a judge in Milwaukee County for 41 years. During his 29 years on the trial court in Milwaukee, he served in every division and as chief judge, a position he held for five years.

Sullivan championed civil rights and was an early supporter of victim/witness programs and domestic

violence programs. He also was a role model and an

sitting up on the bench.... He helped me quite a bit."

The newspaper also interviewed Atty. Fred Zievers, who recalled Scott's enthusiasm for new ideas. For a while, Zievers said, Scott wanted to hold night court at different locations around the county. "That didn't thrill too many people," he recalled.

When Scott moved to the Court of Appeals, he brought his love of teaching and learning

advocate for the removal of barriers – physical and otherwise – to people with disabilities. Stricken with polio at age 6, Sullivan spent much of his life using arm braces and a wheelchair.

After his service on the trial bench, Sullivan became a Court of Appeals judge. He served there for 12 years, establishing a reputation for legal scholarship and hard work (he was known to rise at 4 a.m. and be to work by 6), until he was defeated in the 1996 election.

Throughout his life, according to his obituary, Sullivan enjoyed checkers, Sheepshead, swimming, fishing, and snowmobiling. Later in life, he successfully played the stock market.

He was born in Milwaukee in 1924 and graduated with B.A. and J.D. degrees from Marquette Law School. He earned an LL.M. degree in taxation from John Marshall Law School in 1972.

Sullivan's wife, Jeanne, preceded him in death. He is survived by his son, Michael T. Sullivan Jr., and his brother and two sisters.

Judge Eric J. Wahl Eau Claire County Circuit Court

Judge Eric J. Wahl, who was elected to the bench in Eau Claire County in 1993 and reelected in 1999 and 2005, died suddenly on a Saturday morning in early April from an aneurysm. He was 64.

Wahl was known for his sense of humor, his delight in storytelling, and his ability to connect with the people who entered his courtroom.

Newspaper accounts of his life spoke to the simple pleasures he enjoyed: cooking, reading, listening to music, and spending time with family.

Wahl's career reflected his colorful personality, and his long and varied work in law-related fields guided and enriched his work as a judge. As a new graduate of the UW Law School in 1967, the Eau Claire native signed on with the FBI, where he served as a special agent for four years. He then returned to school, earning an LL.M. from George Washington University in Washington D.C. After working as an assistant U.S. attorney, Wahl spent 17 years in private practice, during which time he also served as president of the Eau Claire City Council. He was elected to the bench in 1993.

Since Wahl's death, Reserve Judge Thomas Barland has been helping to handle the caseload. Gov. Jim Doyle is expected to appoint a successor.

Wahl is survived by his wife, Bette, and three grown children, Matthew of Louisville, Tenn.; Carter of San Diego; and Kathryn of Eau Claire. ■



Judge Eric J. Wahl

State-Tribal Justice Forum update

by Erin Slattengren, policy analyst, Office of Court Operations

In July 2005, the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance sponsored a national gathering in Green Bay to foster tribal-federal-state court relations. This conference, titled, *Walking on Common Ground: Pathways to Equal Justice* served as the catalyst for Wisconsin to reconvene its State-Tribal Justice Forum. This is an update on the Forum's work.

The newly re-established committee consists of five circuit court judges, five tribal judges, one district court administrator, one representative from the State Bar Indian



Judge James B. Mohr

Law Chapter, and one representative from the Legislative Council's State-Tribal Relations Committee. The director of state courts is an *ex-officio* member, and a policy analyst from the Director's Office is designated committee staff. The committee's general charge is to promote and sustain communication, education and cooperation among tribal and

state court systems and to promote initiatives outlined in the final report of the Walking on Common Ground conference. The Honorable James B. Mohr, Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Court Judge and former state court Chief Judge was appointed by Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson to chair this committee.

The State-Tribal Justice Forum met for the first time in May of 2006. Members who had been involved in the previous state-tribal committee provided background to new members. The committee discussed past initiatives and decided to take a new approach in facilitating and supporting efforts statewide in fostering cooperation among state and tribal systems.

Following the first meeting, all members agreed to go back to their local jurisdictions and meet with their respective state or tribal counterpart and discuss projects and priorities that the Forum should focus its attention on for the next year.

The Forum has met four times in the last year and discussed the feedback they received from their meetings and worked to prioritize the initiatives on which to focus. From these meetings and also from the input received at the Walking on Common Ground Conference, the State-Tribal Justice Forum is focusing efforts on the following areas:

1. Work to institutionalize meetings and ongoing communication between state-court and tribal-court counterparts. This could include quarterly meetings and a "ride-along" once per year.
2. Develop a process or model protocol of communicating court orders among court systems. The Forum has met

with the Wisconsin Tribal Judges Association (WTJA) and offered advice and support around development of automated case management systems within tribal courts. This system would allow for improved communication of orders among tribes and potentially with the state court system. The Forum also sponsored a training by CCAP for the WTJA on the benefits of automated case management and how to use WCCA. This training will be provided again in the near future for tribal clerks.

3. Study and make recommendations regarding issues of criminal jurisdiction and transfer of jurisdiction. The Forum is currently developing a petition to the Wisconsin Supreme Court on a process for the discretionary transfer of jurisdiction in concurrent jurisdiction cases. Two judicial administrative districts in Wisconsin (9 and 10) have already developed detailed district protocols for handling concurrent jurisdiction cases. This rule would provide a statewide legal mechanism for discretionary transfer. The Forum is currently in the process of seeking comment from various interested groups, such as the Committee of Chief Judges.
4. Endorse and promote educational opportunities for state and tribal courts. ■

Wisconsin State-Tribal Forum membership:

Judge Richard L. Ackley, Bad River Chippewa
 Judge John P. Anderson, Bayfield County
 James Botsford, Wisconsin Judicare, Inc.
 Judge Michael J. Gableman, Burnett County
 Judge James R. Habeck, Shawano County
 Judge Gerald W. Laabs, Jackson County
 Jerry Lang, District 4 court administrator
 Judge Chris McGeshick, Sokaogon
 Chippewa Community
 Judge Robert Miller Jr., Stockbridge-Munsee
 Tribal Court
 Judge James B. Mohr, Lac Courte
 Oreilles (chair)
 Judge Neal A. Nielsen III, Vilas County
 Rep. Gary Sherman, D-Port Wing
 Judge Kim Vele, Stockbridge-Munsee
 Tribal Court
 A. John Voelker, director of state courts

Staff: Erin Slattengren, Office of Court
 Operations

RETIREMENTS

Longtime Court of Appeals judge will retire

When a veteran judge retires, there is an attendant loss of institutional memory and experience. With Chief Judge Thomas Cane's departure, the judiciary will also lose a prolific writer, an energetic teacher, a seasoned administrator, and a judge with a national reputation.

One of the strongest testaments to Cane's abilities and independence is his appointment history. Though it may be



Chief Judge
Thomas Cane

hard to imagine today, Cane was appointed by two governors of different political stripes. Gov. Patrick J. Lucey (a Democrat) appointed him to the circuit court bench in Outagamie County; Gov. Lee S. Dreyfus (a Republican) elevated him to the Court of Appeals nine years later.

"I have been very fortunate to serve as a judge for over half of my life," Cane said, "and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything."

Some of the facets of the experience that he will miss most have nothing to do with case deciding – although he said he has enjoyed working as a member of a collegial court. Cane has found great satisfaction in service on the faculty at the Wisconsin Judicial College, service on the Wisconsin Judicial Commission, and service on the National Council of Chief Judges, where he was a member of the Education Committee and the Executive Board.

"One thing I did learn from my national experience was to appreciate what a wonderful judicial system we have in Wisconsin," Cane said. "Other than pay, I would say our judiciary is second to none and our judicial education system is probably one of the best, if not the best in the nation."

With 26 years of service on the Court of Appeals, Cane is the third-longest-serving judge in the court's brief history (two sitting judges, Richard S. Brown, District II, and Charles P. Dykman, District IV, have served for 29 years). Judge Edward R. Brunner, Barron County Circuit Court, was elected without opposition to succeed him.

Cane began his law career in the Air Force, where he served as a Captain in the Office of the Judge Advocate General on Okinawa from 1964-67. Following that, he worked in private practice in Kaukauna for a short time prior to joining the Outagamie County District Attorney's Office. In 1972, he was appointed to the circuit court bench in Appleton, where he served until his 1981 appointment to the Wisconsin Court of Appeals. He has been elected to the seat four times and, for the last nine years, has served as the court's chief judge, a position that has given him a unique perspective on the issues facing the statewide intermediate appellate court.

"One of the concerns I have for all judges is the very heavy workload, and the possibility of burnout," he said. "Taking our full vacation at one time is impossible because

of the workload. And keeping up with changes in the law is another big issue; you just have to stay current in so many areas of the law, and that can be a challenge."

In retirement, Cane hopes to serve as a reserve judge in the trial courts, which provide a measure of human interaction that he has missed on the Court of Appeals. "The trial bench is my first love," he said. "There you get to meet a lot of people – community members from all parts of life, lawyers, litigants, jurors – and, though it can be at times very isolating, it's also a very rewarding job."

He also hopes to travel extensively with his wife, Jane, who retired last year from teaching English and history at Wausau East High School. The couple plans to upgrade the motor home, pack up the three German Shorthairs (Cane's hunting companions), and travel through the southwest and along the East Coast. "That's something you can't do as a sitting judge, because you can't get away for more than two weeks at a time," he said, adding that journeys to Ireland, Germany, Argentina, and Chile are also planned.

Finally, Cane hopes to spend more time with his four grown children, who include a University of Oklahoma professor, a Ford Motor Company executive in Michigan, a Milwaukee social worker, and a speech pathologist in the Appleton schools.

Brown County loses veteran judge

In his 19 years on the bench, Judge Richard J. Dietz has enjoyed all of the things that make judging a great job: the people (some of them), the adoptions, collegial relationships with his colleagues, and the challenges presented by thorny legal issues. So it is no surprise that one of the highlights of his career has been serving on the Juvenile and Civil Jury Instructions Committees, which has satisfied his need to do analytical work and has given him an opportunity to develop friendships with colleagues from across the state.

"It's a very academic experience, and one that you share with some truly great judges," he said. "I will treasure that."

Dietz was appointed in 1988 by then-Gov. Tommy Thompson. He had been working in private practice and serving as De Pere city attorney, following a stint as city attorney for the City of Green Bay (a position for which he was selected when then-City Attorney Richard Greenwood became a judge). He has been elected three times without opposition and he loves the job, although – like many of his colleagues – he would prefer a caseload heavier on civil litigation. He also has concerns about the lack of mentoring for young lawyers, and about the occasionally sloppy filings he receives. But these, he acknowledges, are overall relatively minor issues. So why leave?

"I've reached a point where I want to spend more time with my family," he said. "My daughter in New Hampshire is expecting twins, and I have six other grandchildren who are growing up too fast."



Judge Richard J. Dietz

RETIREMENTS *continued from page 17*

Dietz and his wife, Candace, have three daughters and a son. "We had a family meeting and told them we were going to live three months with each of them," he joked. "That didn't go over too well. But we do look forward to more time with the grandkids."

His New Hampshire daughter is a published poet; a daughter in California is a massage therapist; and his two Wisconsin children - a daughter in Wauwatosa and a son in Milwaukee - are, respectively, a physical therapist with the Veterans Administration and an executive with Wells Fargo. In addition to visiting family, Dietz also plans to travel a lot more in retirement. He and his wife, who teaches Spanish at the high school and college level, hope to spend more time in Spain and to return to Ireland. Finally, as time permits, he hopes to serve as a reserve judge and do some mediation and arbitration work.

"I really have enjoyed these 19 years," he said. "While I'm looking forward to a different life, I am going to miss it. But there's a lot to be said for retiring while you still enjoy the job. You don't want to leave as the courthouse curmudgeon."

Dane County judge ends 40-year career in the law

Judge Robert A. DeChambeau retired June 1 after a legal career spanning over 40 years, including 20 in Branch 1 of Dane County Circuit Court.

"I have mixed feelings about retiring, but it's time," DeChambeau told a reporter from *The Capital Times*. Prior to his 1987 election, DeChambeau spent the majority of his career in the Dane County District Attorney's Office, with the exception of a few years in private practice immediately following his graduation from the UW Law School.

DeChambeau told *The Capital Times* he has always found that sentencing defendants in drunken driving homicides is among the toughest parts of the job - a sentiment with which many of his colleagues across the state would concur.

"They are particularly difficult, because many times you've got someone who has made a very serious error in judgment who is otherwise a normally law-abiding citizen, and you have very, very tragic results and a need for there to be some punishment. Those are very difficult," he said.

While he has seen his fair share of challenging cases, DeChambeau has also found his work to be rewarding, especially when "you see people walk out of the courtroom giving me the impression they know they've been listened to, and knowing why I made a decision and being able to accept that and move on with their life," he told the newspaper.

In retirement, DeChambeau plans to serve as a reserve judge and to travel with his wife, Gretchen Hayward, who recently retired from the Dane County District Attorney's Office. DeChambeau also told *The Capital Times* that he's considering a building project in northern Wisconsin.

"...I've got it in my mind that maybe I will build a log cabin on land I own near Rhinelander," he said.

Abbott to retire, but continue sharing his sense of humor

Just because Monroe County Circuit Court Judge Steven Luse Abbott is retiring doesn't mean he's cracked his last joke about being a judge. While he treats the work of judging with the seriousness it demands, he has found that civil litigants appreciate his occasional use of humor in the courtroom.

In fact, during his retirement, Abbott said he'll compile a book of some of the more humorous events he experienced during his 12 years as a judge. Just don't expect the language to be cleaned up.

Abbott said he'll probably include in his book the one about the defendant who, as he was escorted out of court by a bailiff, called the judge by an epithet and then blamed it on the bailiff. He'll

also probably include the one about the dirtiest divorce case, the details of which will have to wait for the book.

Abbott has faced several major medical challenges in recent years and is now a double amputee, which has not slowed him down and will not deter him for a moment from serving as a reserve judge. But the rigorous schedule of an active judge, though he hated to give it up, was taking its toll. "I was in the hospital," he said, "and things weren't looking too good, and I had to cancel a couple of trials."

Abbott declined to seek re-election this year, and plans to remain in office until August 1, when Atty. Todd Ziegler will succeed him (*see separate story, page 26*). Abbott was first elected in 1995 and re-elected in 2001. Before becoming a judge, Abbott worked in private practice and as a court commissioner. His first run for judge was in 1992, when his now-colleague Michael J. McAlpine defeated him in the race for an open seat.

Abbott and his wife, Jean, have one son, Barry, who lives in Berlin, Wis.

Oneida County judge announces retirement

Judge Robert E. Kinney, a longtime, well respected judge whose commitment to the State Bar Mock Trial Program helped Rhinelander to win an unprecedented number of state and national competitions, retired from the bench effective May 18. Gov. Jim Doyle is expected to appoint a successor.

Kinney is one of the longest serving judges in Wisconsin, having taken the bench 31 years ago at age 28. An appointee of Gov. Patrick J. Lucey, Kinney has since been elected five times. Prior to becoming a judge, Kinney was Oneida County district attorney.



Judge
Steven Luse Abbott



Judge
Robert A. DeChambeau

RETIREMENTS *continued from page 18*

Reaction to Kinney's retirement decision was reported in *The Daily News* (Rhinelander), which quoted Sheriff Jeff Hoffman as saying, "Judge Kinney is highly respected



Judge Robert E. Kinney

among fellow judges, lawyers and by the men and women of our department. He has always been fair, hardworking and very knowledgeable of the law."

Kinney's judicial assistant, Mavis Winkler, has been with him for 12 years. She also granted an interview with the newspaper. "Working firsthand with Judge Kinney, I see the fulfillment (he) receives in

being on the bench for 31 years," Winkler said. "It will certainly be difficult to find a replacement who is as hardworking as he is and so dedicated to his job, especially with the youth of this community."

Kinney was unavailable for comment on his plans for retirement. He is married with three children.

Outagamie County bids farewell to two veteran judges

Over the next three months, the Outagamie County Circuit Court will bid a fond farewell to two longtime judges whose departure will mean a loss of 43 years of combined judicial experience.

The judges, Dennis C. Luebke and Joseph M. Troy, are leaving for new opportunities in the legal profession – opportunities that highlight the diverse work available in the law. Luebke has accepted an appointment as an international judge for the United Nations Mission in Kosovo, while Troy will join the law firm of Habush, Habush & Rottier.

Luebke's last day was in June; Troy's will be in August. Gov. Jim Doyle is expected to appoint replacements for both judges; the successors will stand for election in April 2008.

Although Luebke and Troy will be missed for their longtime service on the bench, some of their most important contributions have been made outside of the courtroom. Both are known for their teaching skills, which they have put to use in state and national forums, their leadership in



Judge Dennis C. Luebke

local efforts to find alternatives to incarceration and to institutionalize restorative justice, and their service on statewide committees and commissions such as the State/Federal/Tribal Court Forum (Luebke) and the Public Trust and Confidence Steering Committee (Troy). Troy also served as the Eighth Judicial District's chief judge.

Luebke joined the bench by appointment in 1984, and has been elected four times since. Prior to becoming a judge, he worked for 11 years in private practice and for

three years as an assistant district attorney in Racine County. Troy joined the bench by election in 1987, and was reelected three more times. Like Luebke, he comes from a background in private practice. He said he looks forward to a return to his roots.

"The firm attracts good cases, they develop the law, and they get to take sides on important issues," Troy said. "I miss not being the advocate and the representative of individual people and causes I believe in," he told *The Post Crescent*. "I have valued and loved being a judge. But part of what a judge does is serve as a referee. And there's a part of me that wants to get back in the game as a player." Beyond that, Troy said he looks forward to "going to the hardware store on a day off and not having to answer questions about why I'm not at work."

But there is no doubt that he will miss his work on the bench – and that the bench will miss him. Justice David T. Prosser, a longtime Appleton resident who represented the area in the state Assembly for 18 years, told *The Post Crescent* that the high esteem in which Troy's colleagues hold him is evident in the state Capitol. "If he were not first-rate, he would not have been selected chief judge of his district by the Supreme Court – and then elected 'chief of the chiefs' by the other (chief) judges. I think that is symbolic of the high regard in which he is held by other judges," Prosser said.



Judge Joseph M. Troy

Troy said he would miss his colleagues and "the unexpected moments in the courtroom where you feel like you're reaching someone at a moment when they're ready to change."

He was less certain that he would miss "being the punch line in Dennis Luebke's pranks," although he acknowledged that his other colleagues have been quite entertained by the 'trophies that Luebke has cooked up for him.

"Basically, anytime he can celebrate something I've done to embarrass myself, he does so with a trophy," Troy explained. "For example, I have a driver here that he bore a hole through in honor of my whiffing more than once from the same tee. I also have a set of mounted mechanical teeth with the letter to the editor which described how much I like the sound of my own voice."

Luebke, although unavailable for comment in this story, indicated in his letter to the governor that he would be working to rebuild the criminal court system in Kosovo, an eastern European nation that is bordered by Serbia, Macedonia, and Albania. "I ... recognize that any successes I may achieve in this new endeavor will, in great measure, be the result of the guidance afforded me and the principles of justice imparted to me by the Wisconsin court system."

Milwaukee's unofficial 'wedding planner' retires

In her decade at the Milwaukee County Courthouse, Rosemarie Bruns deftly managed an array of secretarial tasks – typing, filing, customer service and so forth – and,

RETIREMENTS *continued from page 19*

on Valentine's Day, took on a very different set of duties as the courthouse's unofficial wedding planner.

"We had committees for arranging the flowers and background music; volunteers to bake cupcakes for the newlyweds; and people in charge of printing keepsake wedding vows and notifying television stations," she said.

While professional wedding planners might hope for nothing unexpected on the big day, Bruns relishes the surprises that invariably accompany Valentine's weddings at

the courthouse. Some couples arrive in classic tuxedos and white gowns; others show up in blue jeans. Some bring entourages; others favor privacy. "We had one couple that wanted to be married in the back room and they didn't want anyone from the TV crew to see them," Bruns said. "We didn't know if they were hiding something or what, but we had to promise we would do the wedding in the back room and they could leave through the back door."

Though managing dozens of weddings could feel like a full-time job, Bruns – who retired January 12 – spent most of her time assisting Court Commissioner Frank Liska.

"Ninety percent of my job was working for Frank Liska, who was the head judicial court commissioner," Bruns said. "He retired the week before I did. When people asked why I retired a week after him, I joked that I needed a week to clean up what he left."

In addition to working for Liska, Bruns was also an assistant secretary to Clerk of Circuit Courts John Barrett. Bruns' first official day of retirement fell on a snowy Monday. "I got out of bed, listened to the weather and traffic report, looked outside at the winter blizzard and said to myself 'now this is retirement' and went back to bed," Bruns said.

In retirement, Bruns hopes to continue writing a book of her memoirs, which will include a chapter on the Valentine's Day weddings. She also plans to take trips and spend time with her son and daughter, as well as her grandchildren and great-grandchild.

In retirement, Liska's busier than ever

Following 28 ½ years as Milwaukee County's administrative court commissioner, Frank Liska retired January 2, finally leaving what he jokingly called the three-block area where he has lived in his entire life.

"I was putting my last box of papers into the back of my car and I looked up and saw the courthouse where I spent the bulk of my professional life, to my left was the community corrections facility, formerly St. Anthony's Hospital where I was born, and over my right shoulder there was Marquette, where I attended law school," he said. "It was like I had been running in place."

Before his appointment in 1978, Liska spent seven years in private practice working on a variety of cases until deciding it was time to try something different. "You know, when you're young, you're enthusiastic to try it all. I was

looking to go to the next thing, so when this job became available, I interviewed and I was lucky enough given the competition to make the appointment. In those days there were only five court commissioners, and I was one of them," he said.

Nearly 30 years later, Liska decided it was time to retire, but still plans to stay involved with the legal profession. "I'd like to connect with some of the people that I worked with over the years to act of counsel, do research, and maybe handle some cases ..."

In addition, he is deciding how to use his newly acquired spare time. "I have some trips planned and my hobby, hunting, has been something I've been doing a lot of this winter." Liska also plans to spend time with his family. As it turns out, he said, "I'm as busy as can be."

Sanfilippo lands in federal court

After 12 years as chief deputy in the Milwaukee County Clerk of Circuit Courts Office and 13 years prior to that as clerk of circuit court for Washington County, Jon Sanfilippo was recently appointed clerk of the United States Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

Sanfilippo started his new position at the end of January, replacing Sofron Nedilsky who retired after 25 years. While his duties as a clerk at the federal level are fairly similar to those he carried out on the state level, he has noticed there are more general responsibilities.

"For example, the relationship of the courts and clerk of courts office to the building," he said. "I find myself involved with building issues and the physical plant. We have more input and control than in state court."

Although he is growing accustomed to working in the federal court, Sanfilippo acknowledges that he misses the people he worked with in Milwaukee County. "I still have contact, but it's a different kind of thing," he said.

What he decidedly does not miss is the lack of budget control. "The thing I'm finding that I'm really excited about in federal court is that the federal court has a decentralized budget system that means we have a lot more control over how we spend the money that is allotted," he said.

Pepin County RIP retires

When Corine Bien retired on May 16, Pepin County Circuit Court lost more than 37 years of experience and four court officials rolled into one.

Bien served as Pepin County's register in probate, probate registrar, juvenile court clerk and judicial assistant.

She began work at the courthouse in 1969 at age 28 as deputy to then-Register in Probate Thelma Pfeiffer. Bien said she never expected to match Pfeiffer's 41 years of service, but she doesn't regret getting close.

"It seems like you learn something new just about every



Rosemarie Bruns



Jon Sanfilippo

Flight of the Johnsons

Two longtime, highly regarded court employees are leaving the state court system (and the state) this spring to embark upon new careers with the federal government. District Court Administrator Scott Johnson has accepted a position with the federal district court in Des Moines, Iowa, while Court Reporter Ed Johnson (no relation) will take up with the U.S. House of Representatives.

Scott is a lieutenant colonel in the Air National Guard, and has served both District Six (headquartered in Stevens Point) and District 9 (headquartered in Wausau) during his eight years with the Wisconsin court system.

"I will miss my current and past chief judges, Dorothy Bain and Jim Evenson, and the DCAs, and the many talented and hard-working staff I've

had the pleasure to know over the years," Scott said. He added that he has been fortunate to work on a number of statewide committees that have tackled major issues affecting the delivery of justice in Wisconsin - issues such as making the record, developing effective justice strategies (including alternatives to incarceration), language interpretation, caseload management, and improving services to *pro se* litigants.

Scott will become chief deputy clerk for the U.S. District Court that serves southern Iowa. In that capacity, he will work closely with the clerk - a good friend and former classmate at the Institute for Court Management - to manage a large, complex court system. "I am a person who always looks for new challenges," he said, "and this is a position that will offer many opportunities. It will be an honor to work in the federal courts, just as it has been an honor to work in the state courts."

Scott's last day in his Wausau office was May 4. He began work in Iowa on May 17.

The other Johnson, Court Reporter Ed, is leaving Wisconsin after 26 years of working as an official court reporter. He will step down from his Ozaukee County post to work as an official reporter for the U.S. House of Representatives.

Ed and his wife Katie, who live in Port Washington, will move to Silver Spring, Maryland as Ed prepares for his new career. His goal is to work on the House floor, but he'll start

with a training program that includes reporting for committee meetings, depositions, and other special proceedings.

Ed worked six years as an official reporter in Marinette before heading to Ozaukee County, where he's worked for 20 years.

Ed said he will continue to dabble in stand-up comedy as he has done over the years. He hopes to continue performing before gatherings of the National Court Reporters Association, for which he has served as legislative advisor. He's also a past president of the Wisconsin Court Reporters Association.

Some of his self-deprecating humor is better appreciated by court reporters than general audiences, Ed acknowledged. For example, the running joke among a few of his colleagues is that he has only worked the equivalent

of 13 years as a court reporter because he's missed every other word.

District Court Administrator Mike Neimon, who, like all court administrators, has struggled in recent years with the shortage of certified court reporters, was among those who had to dig deep to find humor in Ed's announcement. "We (District 3 and the state) are the big losers in this deal on many different levels," Neimon wrote. "Ed is of the highest caliber both personally and professionally." ■



In February, Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson accepted, on behalf of the Supreme Court, a Wisconsin flag presented by (from left) Col. Ted Metzgar, Col. Michael Hinman, and Lt. Col. Scott Johnson. The flag, now on display at the Court, was presented in thanks for the Court's support of Johnson's active-duty military service.



Court Reporter Ed Johnson, who is leaving Wisconsin for the intrigue of Washington, D.C., where he expects to put his stand-up-comedy talents to good use, is shown accepting the Distinguished Service Award of the Wisconsin Court Reporters Association in 2003.

PEOPLE

When Rep. **Joel Kleefisch**, R-Oconomowoc, introduced legislation that would require bright green license plates for convicted sex offenders, he got people talking. In a front page story, *The Capital Times* quoted Kleefisch as saying



Rep. Joel Kleefisch

that he proposed the color green because children already equate it with 'Mr. Yuk,' a symbol developed for use on poisons. The article noted that Ohio issues bright yellow plates to repeat drunk drivers. No word at press time on the bill's chances of becoming law.

Wisconsin's early years were marked by numerous tugs-of-war waged between

municipalities that sought to be designated as county seats. The battle waged in Juneau County – a battle sparked by the need to build a courthouse – was recently recounted by county historian **Rose Clark** in the *Juneau County Star Times*. The contenders were Mauston and New Lisbon. The people of Mauston hatched a two-part plan: first, create a new county from land that had been part of Adams County; second, win designation as the new county's seat. Mauston was brilliantly successful in the first endeavor, but not so much in the second. After working diligently to establish Juneau County, Mauston found itself bested by New Lisbon as county seat. Furious, Mauston brought its case to the Wisconsin Supreme Court, which was sitting in Janesville in the summer of 1860. The key to Mauston's case was election clerk **C.N. Holden**, who was expected to testify that New Lisbon officials had stuffed the ballot box. In an attempt to prevent Holden's testimony, New Lisbon obtained a warrant for his arrest. A Mauston lawyer whom the account does not name prevented the New Lisbon authorities from serving Holden by moving him around a series of houses in Janesville. Holden ultimately gave



Judge Charles Kahn reacts to an unusually trying week in Milwaukee's Civil Division.

damaging testimony against New Lisbon but subsequently recanted – supposedly for fear of being lynched. The Court in 1864 held that Mauston was the rightful county seat. The county's courthouse was built in Mauston in 1875 at a cost of \$10,000.

As numerous media outlets reported, hundreds of hardy souls

shed perfectly good parkas this winter and ran into Lake Michigan's icy waters. Judge **Charles Kahn**, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, was among those taking the Polar Bear Plunge.

Media across Wisconsin reported on a poll of 500 likely voters in the Supreme Court race. The poll, conducted by the Federalist Society, asked respondents to name any one of the current justices or any one of the candidates. Seventy-six percent could not name anyone. Nine percent named Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson**, but no other justice was named by more than two percent. Other questions revealed that most (78 percent) do not know that there are seven justices on the state's court of last resort.

"Heading from classes on a local college campus to his job inside a brewery, **Corey Stern** has to make one stop. He has to go to jail." So began a feature story in the February 8 edition of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* on La Crosse Justice Sanctions, a day reporting center



Photo credit: La Crosse Tribune

Justice Sanctions Program Coordinator **Jane Klekamp** participates in a meeting with Judge Dale T. Pasell and other members of the La Crosse County Drug Court. Klekamp was lauded in the May 21 edition of the *La Crosse Tribune* for her tireless work to build effective justice strategies in La Crosse.

that has replaced La Crosse County's Huber Center, which closed in January 2006. Most Justice Sanctions 'clients' are required to appear frequently – sometimes daily – and submit to various alcohol and drug tests. An offender who misses an appointment is subject to immediate incarceration. Coordinator **Jane Klekamp** told the newspaper that she revokes 20 or fewer clients per month out of the 200 in the program. Klekamp said that the center's biggest advantage – other than cost savings – is its ability to focus on rehabilitation. The staff includes counselors who work with the offenders on a variety of issues.

Among the thousands in Madison for the UW commencement ceremonies was U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Antonin Scalia**, who, with his wife, watched his son receive a Ph.D. in English. While in town, Scalia also did a favor for his son's advisor: he teamed up with Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson** to perform the professor's wedding ceremony in the Capitol. When Scalia realized that he had forgotten his robe, he called the chief justice to see about borrowing one. Justice **Louis B. Butler Jr.**'s robe fit perfectly.

"Community service hours need tracking" headlined an editorial in the March 14 edition of the *Green Bay Press Gazette*. The newspaper's editorial board, following a meeting with Corrections Secretary **Matt Frank**, called for

PEOPLE *continued from page 22*

a statewide, searchable database of community service sentences that would track completion of court-ordered community service. “[L]et’s find an easy-to-use means of letting the public check up on our defendants’ handy work,” the editorial proposed. “Are they cleaning up ditches? Are they volunteering time for nonprofits? [Or] are they getting off easy?”

“Offender monitoring could be delayed,” an article in the March 14 edition of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, discussed the challenges that Waukesha County is experiencing as it works to move about 50 work-release inmates into a new day-reporting program that was proposed by the county’s Criminal Justice Collaborating Council and approved by the Waukesha County Board. Law enforcement had hoped that the move would permit the transfer of officers over to the jail, which is short staffed, but a recent surge in the number of inmates on work-release will make that more difficult. Officials still hoped to begin day reporting in April.

Justice **Louis B. Butler Jr.** is in demand as a speaker during commencement season; first, Lawrence University will recognize his accomplishments by conferring an honorary degree during its spring graduation ceremony. Butler is an alumnus of Lawrence, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in 1973, and also was keynote speaker for this year’s **Martin Luther King Jr.** celebration held at the Lawrence University Memorial Chapel, and written up by *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton).



Justice Louis B. Butler Jr.

Butler gave the keynote address at his other alma mater, the UW Law School. He spoke during the hooding ceremony on May 18 at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in Madison. Butler is a member of the Law School’s Class of 1977, and was appointed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court by Gov. **Jim Doyle** in 2004, becoming the first African-American Supreme Court justice in Wisconsin history.

Former District Five court administrator **Mary Kay Baum** was recognized in *Madison Magazine* for her tireless efforts as executive director of Madison-area Urban Ministry (MUM), a social action organization. In a column headlined “A Selfless Servant,” Baum was lauded as “a constant reminder of the presence still of good people doing public service.”

Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson** attended the January dedication of the Washington County Courthouse, part of the larger Justice Center which underwent a \$13.9 million renovation, including numerous security enhancements. Featured in *The West Bend Daily News*, Abrahamson commented on the greater likelihood of violent

outburst in family court, which many people overlook. “Court security issues tend to come up mostly in family law matters traditionally because emotions run high, children are involved and things they hold dear to them are being threatened.”

Washington County Clerk of Court **Kristine Deiss** has been selected to serve as acting mayor of West Bend until the city council picks a more permanent replacement. Deiss was appointed to the West Bend Common Council in 2005 to fill the aldermanic seat left vacant by former Mayor **Douglas Bade**. Bade recently resigned to take a private-sector job in Louisville, Ky.



Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson

The *Ohio University Press* has published a new book on the saga of **Joshua Glover**, the escaped slave who found freedom in Wisconsin and sparked a stand-off between the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the federal courts over the Fugitive Slave Act. The book, “The Rescue of Joshua Glover,” was written by **H. Robert Baker**, an assistant professor of legal and constitutional history at Georgia Tech University. It recently won the Milwaukee County Historical Society’s Gambrinus Prize for best book-length contribution to Milwaukee history during 2006. The Glover story was the basis for the Wisconsin supreme court play produced for the state’s sesquicentennial.



Joshua Glover

Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson** received an honorary doctorate of law degree from Roger Williams University’s Ralph R. Papitto School of Law on May 18 in Bristol, R.I. Abrahamson also was the featured speaker at the law school’s commencement ceremony, where she delivered her remarks “A View from the Bench.” In conferring the degree, law school officials noted the significance and impact of some of Abrahamson’s many accomplishments: “Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, your path-breaking judicial career, your dedication to public service and the administration of justice and your intellectual curiosity serve as an example to all of our graduates, and we are honored to award you this Doctor of Laws, honoris causa.” The degree, the 15th honorary doctorate of law received by Abrahamson, was conferred by Hon. **Ronald A. Cass** and Atty. **Roscoe C. Howard**, members of the law school’s board of directors. In her speech, Abrahamson encouraged graduating law students to be courageous and committed to democracy, justice and neutral, fair, impartial, non-partisan judiciary. She urged them to take risks in accepting and facing life’s challenges in their careers, relationships and exercising social and political responsibility. ■

Chief judges *continued from page 2*

Chief judges are responsible for supervising judicial administrative business in each of the state's ten judicial districts. They manage the flow of cases, supervise personnel, develop budgets, and meet monthly as a committee to work on issues of statewide importance. With the exception of Milwaukee, where the chief judge is a full-time administrator, chief judges and their deputies maintain court calendars in addition to handling administrative matters.

In the Fourth Judicial District, which encompasses Calumet, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Sheboygan, and Winnebago counties, Deputy Chief Judge Darryl W. Deets, Manitowoc County, succeeds Chief Judge L. Edward Stengel, Sheboygan County.



Chief Judge
L. Edward Stengel



Deputy Chief Judge
Darryl W. Deets

Deets, who has been deputy chief judge since August 2001, has served on the Supreme Court's Judicial Education Committee and on the planning committee for the 2005 Bench and Bar Conference at which he was a presenter.

In Manitowoc County, he led several initiatives, including setting up a CASA (court-appointed special advocates) program and a victim impact

panel for repeat drunk drivers in Sheboygan, Manitowoc, and Calumet counties. He also started a mentoring program and served as a mentor for youth in the juvenile justice system. Judge Deets was appointed to the bench in 1998 and has been re-elected since 1989.

Stengel, who has served as chief judge since August 2001, is president of the Wisconsin Voluntary Trial Judges Association. He is a past deputy chief judge and has served on the Executive Committee of the Judicial Conference and on the Criminal Benchbook Committee.

In the Fifth Judicial District, which encompasses Dane, Green, Lafayette and Rock counties, Judge C. William Foust, Dane County, succeeds Chief Judge Michael N. Nowakowski, Dane County.



Chief Judge
Michael N. Nowakowski



Judge C. William Foust

Foust is a former Dane County district attorney who was appointed as a judge in 1997 and elected in 1998. He served as presiding judge of the Dane County criminal division from 2001 to 2005 and has headed the Criminal Benchbook Committee since 2002. He is a member of the Dane County Criminal Justice Group and has served on the

Coordinated Community Response Task Force, first as district attorney, and then as a judge, since 1989.

Nowakowski became chief judge in 2001 and was selected as chair of the Committee of Chief Judges in August 2006. During his administrative tenure, he has served in a variety of key posts, including as chair and secretary of the Judicial Conference. He also has served on the Civil Benchbook Committee and the Supreme Court's Planning and Policy Advisory Committee's Planning

Subcommittee. Most recently, Nowakowski chaired the committee that developed the new weighted-caseload study, and he helped oversee completion of the new Dane County Courthouse.

In the Seventh Judicial District, which encompasses Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Iowa, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Pierce, Richland, Trempealeau and Vernon counties, Judge William D. Dyke, Iowa County, succeeds Chief Judge Michael J. Rosborough.

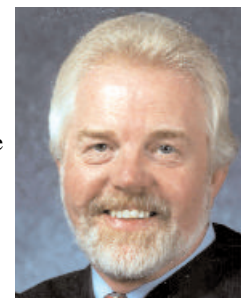
As circuit court judge in Iowa County, Dyke has overseen a variety of innovative outreach and diversion programs, including a successful teen court. He's a member of PPAC's Subcommittee on Effective Justice Strategies. Under his leadership, Iowa County became one of five counties in the state participating in Assess, Inform and Measure (AIM) to help assess the needs and risks of criminal offenders. Dyke was appointed in 1997 and has been re-elected since 1998.

During his 12 years in judicial administration – six years each as chief judge and deputy chief judge – Rosborough has become known for his collaborative and supportive management style. His district-wide training programs for judges on topics such as domestic violence, and child abuse and neglect became models for training programs statewide. Rosborough has headed the PPAC Court Finance Committee and the Chief Judges Juror Selection and Treatment Subcommittee.

Chief judges re-appointed to their posts include First District Chief Judge Kitty K. Brennan, Milwaukee, and Tenth District Chief Judge Benjamin D. Proctor, Eau Claire. The First District encompasses Milwaukee County; the Tenth Judicial District encompasses Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Chippewa, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, and Washburn counties.

Other chief judges are:

- ❑ District 2, Judge Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County (District 2 encompasses Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth counties)
- ❑ District 3, Judge J. Mac Davis, Waukesha County (District 3 encompasses Jefferson, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties)
- ❑ District 6, Judge John R. Storck, Dodge County (District 6 encompasses Adams, Clark, Columbia, Dodge, Green Lake, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Sauk, Waushara, and Wood counties)
- ❑ District 8, Judge Sue Bischel, Brown County (District 8 encompasses Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie, and Waupaca counties)
- ❑ District 9, Judge Dorothy L. Bain, Marathon County (District 9 encompasses Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Menominee, Oneida, Price, Shawano, Taylor, and Vilas counties) ■



Chief Judge Michael J.
Rosborough



Judge William D. Dyke

NEW FACES *continued from page 3*

Prior to his legal career, Hanrahan led several social justice efforts including an inner-city emergency food and clothing program in Milwaukee.

Hanrahan recently was selected for the Leader in the Law Award of the *Wisconsin Law Journal*. He is also a recipient of the Stellman Justice for Women Award. He lives in Middleton with his wife, Anne LeGare, and his three children, Katie, 8; Daniel, 10; and Joseph, 12.

Indiana lawyer is new appellate court clerk

Who is David R. Schanker?

- A novelist and playwright
- A guy who enjoys home fix-up projects
- The clerk of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals
- A film buff and former teacher of film and creative writing
- All of the above

Given that this article appears in *The Third Branch*, one might guess Schanker is the new clerk of Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. But technically speaking, “all of the above” is the best answer.

Schanker just relocated from Indianapolis, where he served as chief deputy to the clerk of the Indiana Supreme Court, Court of Appeals and Tax Court – a job he held for nearly eight years. He is moving to Madison with his wife Suzanne and youngest daughter Julia. He started with the courts April 9.



David R. Schanker

When he spotted the Wisconsin job posting on a national listserv, he said he “jumped at it.” The couple already had a good impression of Wisconsin from visiting Stevens Point with their now college-age daughter Cheshire, who attended a violin camp there as a child. Contributing to Madison’s appeal, Schanker said, are the Capitol, the UW, and natural resources such as the Arboretum.

While Cheshire has moved on to attend Connecticut College, the Schankers anticipate

Madison will be a good place to raise Julia, 6, whom the couple adopted from China last year.

Schanker grew up in New Jersey and lived in New York City for 15 years as “a starving artist,” working in theater and film before earning a law degree at Indiana University, as did Suzanne. He worked in private practice for four years in Indianapolis.

Schanker also holds an undergraduate degree in film and television from New York University and a master’s degree in writing from Columbia University. He has authored two legal-themed novels, *A Criminal Appeal* (St. Martin’s Minotaur, 1998) and *Natural Law* (St. Martin’s Minotaur, 2001), and he’s working on a third. Both published novels focus on the appellate process and feature a lead character named Nora Lumsey, who works as a law clerk in one novel and as a public defender in the other.

The works are fiction, but people familiar with the Indiana court system may see similarities to real figures and events of the mid-1990s, Schanker said.

As the couple works on relocating, Schanker is settling into the role that brought him to Madison. “I am delighted to be working with the Clerk’s Office staff, a dedicated and professional group of people,” he said. “I look forward to collaborating with CCAP and the other judicial agencies in improving the services the Clerk’s Office provides to the courts, the bar, and the public.” ■

Chief Justice welcomes crowd to first-ever equal justice conference

by Ann Zimmerman,
statewide pro se coordinator

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson welcomed more than 200 lawyers and judges who gathered to discuss the future of equal access to civil justice in Wisconsin at the first Wisconsin Equal Justice Conference, held on March 16. Organized by the State Bar of Wisconsin Legal Assistance Committee, the conference was hosted by Marquette Law School.

Abrahamson told the audience (which also included Justice Ann Walsh Bradley) that increasing the availability of civil legal services would require collaborative partnerships between the bench, bar and academia to create permanent funding streams for services, increase *pro bono* legal services and develop initiatives to help self-represented litigants.

Milwaukee County Judge Richard J. Sankovitz, a member of the State Bar Access to Justice Committee, presented the results of Wisconsin’s first comprehensive civil legal needs study. The study, issued in March and titled “Bridging the Justice Gap: Wisconsin’s Unmet Legal Needs,” reveals that more than 500,000 Wisconsin residents face serious civil legal problems without legal assistance.

Meeting these legal needs was the topic of the closing session, a brainstorming exercise facilitated by former Justice Janine P. Geske, now a distinguished professor at Marquette Law School. The discussion was lively and engaging, and focused on how to work and plan collaboratively to ensure access to justice for all Wisconsin citizens. ■

Much of the conference discussion focused on other key findings and recommendations contained in the new report on unmet civil legal needs. Read the report at www.wisbar.org/committees/atj/study.

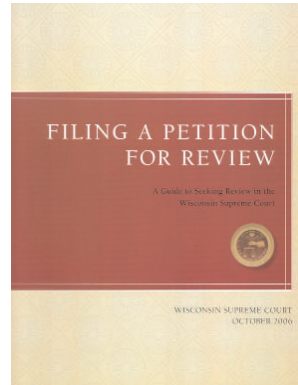
AWARDS *continued from page 9*

conduct the training, as did Clerk of Circuit Court Diane Fremgen, Winnebago County; Deputy Clerk Susan Schaffer, Eau Claire County Circuit Court; and Deputy Bill Blumer, Dane County Sheriff's Department.

New guide is best in Wisconsin

Filing a Petition for Review, a new booklet developed by Supreme Court Commissioner Nancy Kopp and former Clerk of Supreme Court Cornelia G. Clark, edited by Court Information Officer Amanda K. Todd, and designed by Cricket Design Works, has been recognized as one of the top two government publications produced in Wisconsin during 2006.

The booklet, a plain-English instructional guide for litigants and lawyers, tied for first place in the Wisconsin Library Association's Government Information Round Table. The award will be presented in June.



The award recognizes documents that contribute significantly to the expansion of knowledge and public understanding of government agencies, and that provide inspiration and pleasure to an identifiable readership. Work is recognized for clarity of presentation, typography, design and overall appeal.

The association will submit the publication for consideration by the American Library Association for national honors. ■

More winners

In addition to the Hmong Glossary and the Jury Bailiff Training Program, the following programs also won awards from the State Bar:

Awards of Exceptional Achievement

The Clark County Bar Association, for developing and implementing a free legal clinic that offers residents an opportunity to speak with a Wisconsin attorney on basic divorce, family matters, small claims, and probate issues. The clinic is open once a month at various locations.

The La Crosse County Bar Association, for developing a custody assessment team DVD in response to comments from parents who felt a need to better understand the process.

The Marathon County Bar Association, which received three awards for three separate projects, including the Hmong Legal Glossary, Hmong Small Claims/Landlord Tenant brochures, and "Transitions: An Immigration Legal Resource Guide" in Hmong/English and Spanish/English.

The Washington County Bar Association, which was instrumental in planning the conference entitled, *Domestic Violence: The Batterer as a Parent*. This one-day conference focused on strengthening the relationship between institutions and agencies that work to reduce domestic violence.

Awards of Achievement

The Dane County Bar Association, for preparing divorce and paternity flow charts for use with the association's family DVD series for *pro se* litigants. The association's Delivery of Legal Services Committee developed the flow charts to accompany its second DVD for unrepresented litigants going through the divorce or paternity process.

The Douglas County Bar Association, which produced an educational DVD for divorcing parents.

The Oneida-Vilas-Forest County Bar Association, which created a free legal clinic for residents of the three-county area providing an opportunity to speak with a lawyer about basic legal questions. Meetings were held in four locations in Oneida, Vilas, and Forest counties. The clinic closed due to lack of use by the general public.

The Outagamie County Bar Association, which established a safe exchange center where parents can exchange their children for placement purposes in a safe, neutral, supervised location. The project's goal is to minimize the exposure of children to domestic violence.

The Portage County Bar Association, which developed "Justiceworks," a public service initiative that educates the public about the justice system and facilitates citizen involvement to help bridge the gaps between the justice system and related community needs. Association members gave presentations to more than 500 residents, including victims, youth and adult offenders, families, elected officials, and community groups.

Each year, local and specialty bar associations develop public service projects with funding from the State Bar's Local Bar Grants Competition. Bar associations can receive up to \$2,500. ■

Visit www.wisbar.org/bargrants to download an application. For more information, contact Kris Wenzel, State Bar outreach coordinator, at (800) 444-9404, ext. 6185, or (608) 250-6185.

Elections *continued from page 13*

21 years on the bench, is District Atty. Scott L. Horne, who defeated private practitioner Kara Burgos by a two-to-one margin. Eliminated in the primary election was Atty. John Brinckman. Horne is a 1979 graduate of the UW Law School. He was sworn in May 14 to help deal with the backlog that has accrued since Perlich's retirement.

Pocan wins Milwaukee race

Judge William S. Pocan

Judge William S. Pocan, appointed by Gov. Jim Doyle last July to succeed Judge Michael Sullivan, won election to a full, 6-year term by a margin of about 1,000 votes out of about 80,000 cast. Pocan beat challenger Christopher A. Liegel, an assistant district attorney who ran on a 'tough on crime' platform.

Pocan, a Kenosha native, entered college at age 16 and law school at 20. He came to the bench after a 22-year career in private practice emphasizing consumer law.

Sparta lawyer will succeed Judge Abbott

Atty. Todd L. Ziegler, of the Sparta law firm of Gleiss, Locante & Ziegler LLP, will succeed Judge Steven L. Abbott, who is retiring after 12 years on the bench in Monroe County (*see separate story, page 18*).

Ziegler defeated another private practitioner, Atty. Mark L. Goodman of the Sparta law firm of Osborne, Goodman & Tripp SC, by about 650 votes out of 6,700 votes cast.

Ziegler is a 1995 graduate of the UW Law School and served as a law clerk to retired Court of Appeals Judge Gordon Myse, who endorsed him in the election. ■

No opposition

The following judges were elected or re-elected without opposition on April 3:

Court of Appeals:

Daniel P. Anderson, District II
Paul Lundsten, District IV

Circuit Court:

Michael Kirchman, Crawford County
Diane M. Nicks, Dane County
Andrew P. Bissonnette and John R. Storck,
Dodge County
William F. Hue, Jefferson County
Barbara A. Kluka, Kenosha County
Ramona A. Gonzalez, La Crosse County
Daryl W. Deets, Manitowoc County
Gregory Grau, Marathon County
Richard O. Wright, Marquette County
Thomas G. Grover, Menominee/Shawano Counties
Dominic S. Amato, Michael B. Brennan, and
Joseph R. Wall, Milwaukee County
Tom R. Wolfgram, Ozaukee County
John V. Finn, Portage County
Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County
Daniel T. Dillon, Rock County
Edward F. Vlack, St. Croix 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. ■

RETIREMENTS *continued from page 20*

day, and there have been a lot of changes over the years," Bien said.

Among those changes: an increase in juvenile court work, a dramatic increase in divorces, and – a positive development – the advent of information technology. Bien, who remembers setting up her own computer after attending a Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP) workshop, said technology has made her job "infinitely better" – particularly the advent of e-mail, which is of special importance in small, rural counties where opportunities for professional interaction are limited. "I'll miss the people, the camaraderie with the other registrars around the state," she said.

In all, Bien served five judges during her career: Judge Joseph H. Riedner, Judge Gary Schlosstein, Judge Dane F. Morey, Judge James J. Duvall, and Judge John

Bartholomew, a circuit judge who came to Pepin County when Riedner was county judge.

Bien's retirement was reported in an Eau Claire Leader-Telegram article, where Duvall said, "She has the storehouse of knowledge that comes with long experience and attention to the public." He added that he would miss her wisdom and expertise. "It will be like trying to replace the entire system."

In retirement, Bien looks forward to spending more time with her family, including husband Ronald, seven grown children (four of whom live in Eau Claire), and 16 grandchildren. ■

By Amanda Todd, Tom Sheehan, and Brigid Moroney, Court Information Office.

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OCO leader celebrates 35 years

Deputy Director for Court Operations Sheryl A. Gervasi is celebrating 35 years with the court system, casting doubt upon her contention that she is still 39 years old.

Gervasi started with the Administrative Director of the Courts Office – as it was then known – in 1972. She worked in a clerical position for several years before her promotion to legislative assistant. That job eventually became the legislative liaison post, which Gervasi held until her 2003 appointment as deputy director.

In her current role, Gervasi oversees a group of central-office staff as well as the district court administrators, working to provide judges and clerks of circuit court with technical assistance and management help. This includes disseminating relevant legislative information, offering guidance as to the practical effects of new legislation, and setting

policies and procedures for court management. The office also provides statistical data on circuit court caseload, manages the interpreter program and the Children’s Court Improvement Program, and provides staff for the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee.

Gervasi’s institutional history and people skills (which include a remarkable ability to say just about anything to anyone) have served her well in the court system. She counts many of the state’s judges, the chief justice, and members of the Supreme Court among her close friends. A number of judges and legislators attended her 25th anniversary party in 1996.

Although she frequently threatens to retire, she insisted that no change is imminent – much to the relief of her colleagues in Madison and judges across the state. ■



Sheryl A. Gervasi

First-ever statewide *pro se* conference set

On Tuesday, June 19, for the first time in the history of the state, a statewide conference on self-representation will be held. Representatives of the courts in all 10 Wisconsin judicial districts will come together to focus on improving services to people who represent themselves in court. The statewide conference is an outgrowth of last June’s first-ever joint meeting of the Ninth and Tenth Judicial Districts in Chippewa Falls.

The program will focus on how to build the necessary infrastructure for supporting sustainable court-based *pro se* programming; available resources for program development; and various Wisconsin-based model programs.

Judge Kevin S. Burke, who serves on the district court in Hennepin County, Minn., will deliver the keynote address on the connection between public trust and confidence in the justice system and *pro se* assistance. Burke is the recipient of many national awards for judicial leadership and excellence, and has spoken frequently both within the United States and in Canada, Mexico, China, India, and Ireland regarding improvement in judicial administration and court leadership.

Leading the program will be the respective chairs of the District 9 and District 10 committees on self-represented litigants: Deputy Chief Judge Gary L. Carlson, Taylor County Circuit Court; Clerk of Court Karen Hepfler, Chippewa County Circuit Court; and Atty. Ann Zimmerman, who coordinates statewide *pro se* projects as executive assistant to Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson. Director of State Courts A. John Voelker will also participate.

More than 50 committee members and others – including judges, attorneys, court commissioners, clerks of court, registers in probate, staff from the State Bar and Wisconsin Judicare, academics, and community members are expected to attend. For more about services for the self-represented litigants, see page 6.

The conference will run from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., June 19, at 212 River Drive in Wausau. For more information, contact Ann Zimmerman at (608) 261-8297 or ann.zimmerman@wicourts.gov.