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a publication of the Wisconsin Judiciary

# The Third Branch



## Veterans court programs growing across state

Court programs for veterans have picked up steam in 2012. New this year are court programs serving veterans in Kenosha, Outagamie, Racine and Walworth counties, and a Veterans Law Center developed by the UW Law School *Pro Bono* Program in partnership with the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Dane County Bar Association, the Dane County Veterans Service Office and Porchlight, Inc., an agency that serves the homeless.

Five years ago, court programs to assist Wisconsin veterans did not exist, although circuit judges were urged to bring in the county veterans services officer when a veteran appeared in court. When the Rock County Circuit Court, with Judge James P. Daley in the lead, opened the state's first veterans court program in 2009, the development was noted by judges across the state and followed closely in the media.

Other counties soon followed suit, and by last fall,

Wisconsin had eight court-connected programs serving veterans in 15 counties. Today, that number has grown to 11 programs covering 27 counties – and more may be in the works.

Here is the scoop on the programs that are new in 2012:

### Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court

Serving veterans in the Second Judicial District (Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties), this court program was introduced to the community at an event on July 31. It will officially open its doors at a ceremony on Nov. 14 to coincide with Veterans Day.

The court will serve veterans in the criminal justice system (post-conviction) who have substance abuse and/or mental health issues. Like most veterans court programs, it will focus on helping the veteran connect with available services and assign a mentor to each participant.

Judge Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County Circuit Court, will be the veterans court judge; the program will be headquartered at the Racine County Courthouse.

The planning group, which participated last spring in an intensive, five-day training session in Buffalo, N.Y. (the site of the nation's first veterans treatment court), included Judge Gerald P. Ptacek, Racine County Circuit Court; District Court Administrator Andrew Graubard; Department of Corrections Region 2 Assistant Chief Barb Hanson; Assistant State Public Defender Margaret Johnson; Veterans Mentor Coordinator Jason Lowman; Program Evaluator Jennifer Madore, Kenosha County Department of Human Services; Racine County Assistant District Atty. Maureen Martinez;

see **Veterans** on page 14



*Racine County Circuit Court Judge Gerald P. Ptacek addresses a gathering of attendees at a late-July meeting to put the finishing touches on the new Second District Veterans Treatment Court. Participants came not only from Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties, but also from Veterans Administration offices in Milwaukee, Madison and North Chicago. Standing center is Racine County Circuit Court Judge Eugene A. Gasiorkiewicz.*

## Two new judges appointed to circuit court

### St. John appointed in Dane County



*Atty. Rebecca Rapp St. John*

Gov. Scott Walker announced the appointment of Assistant Atty. General Rebecca Rapp St. John on Aug. 24. St. John will fill the vacancy on the Branch 16 bench created by the retirement of Judge Sarah B. O'Brien (see **Retirements** on page 12). St. John is a graduate of the University of Chicago Law School. She holds a master's degree from the University of Oxford.

"I have tremendous respect for the role that judges play in our system of government and our society," St. John told the *Wisconsin State Journal*.

St. John has worked as a state assistant attorney general since 2004 in the Criminal Appeals Unit, where she represents the state in criminal appeals and federal habeas actions.

### Yackel appointed in Lincoln County



*Atty. John M. Yackel*

Atty. John M. Yackel has been appointed to the Branch 2 bench of the Lincoln County Circuit Court. Yackel follows in the footsteps of his father, Judge Norman L. Yackel, who retired from the Sawyer County Circuit Court in 2009 after 18 years on the bench.

see **New judges** on page 5

## Director's column: eFiling: Moving closer to another tipping point?

By A. John Voelker, Director of State Courts

During my remarks at last year's Judicial Conference, I talked about the book *"The Tipping Point"* by Malcolm Gladwell. He notes that "the tipping point is that magic moment when an idea, trend, or social behavior crosses a threshold, tips, and spreads like wildfire." What's encouraging from my perspective is that, despite a tough



A. John Voelker

fiscal environment, we currently have a number of positive initiatives throughout the trial courts that are reaching a tipping point. One example is paperless systems, as you'll see on the next page. Another is eFiling. While I wouldn't say it's spread like wildfire, in the past few months I have observed a variety of indicators that suggest we may be getting closer to a tipping point.

The primary indicator is that Milwaukee County Circuit Court has implemented eFiling, raising awareness of the system to a large number of attorneys statewide, and providing us with some valuable feedback. This feedback allowed Consolidated Court Automation Programs (CCAP) to improve the functionality of the system, which will make it easier to use from the attorney, judge and court staff perspectives. Increasing awareness and improving the product will move us closer to that tipping point. Eighteen counties now offer eFiling in some case types, and several other counties are working with CCAP on eFiling plans.

There are risks involved in developing a system like eFiling in-house, and many jurisdictions across the country have turned this work over to private contractors. Recently, during a meeting with consultants from the National Center for State Courts, I realized that for us this risk was worth taking. The consultants were in town working on a project for Dane County, and they were interested in a demonstration of the Wisconsin eFiling system. During this demonstration one of the consultants commented that the system was "slick" and one of the better systems he has seen in the state courts.

As I see other states try to tackle eFiling with vendors, I am glad we did not, since it can result in higher fees as the vendor tries to minimize profits. It may take a little more time up-front to develop such a system internally because of limited staff resources, but it allows us to be much more

responsive to users in the long run. This approach also makes sense because CCAP already is responsible for operating the statewide case-management system and acquiring and maintaining the court system's technology base.

We also differ from many other jurisdictions, which have mandated eFiling. While a mandate may accelerate implementation, it's no guarantee that such a system will be functional and effective for its end users.

Being responsive to the users, as we have been in Milwaukee County, will move us closer to the tipping point.

Our efforts are being recognized by attorneys and others who see the practical advantages of eFiling. Milwaukee Atty. Thomas Ogorchock was recently quoted in a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel article as saying, "You don't have to wait in line, or only file when the courthouse is open, or depend on messengers, you get immediate confirmation by email, you have fewer paper copies and you don't have to worry about file security."

Another sign of interest in the expansion of eFiling is the fact the Committee of Chief Judges recently created an eFiling committee to provide circuit courts guidance on the topic. It is important that we understand administrative or other issues that may need to be addressed as we work to improve the effectiveness and functionality of the eFiling system. There are many constituents involved, and it's important to gather feedback from each.

eFiling provides the greatest benefit to the court system when it can be implemented seamlessly from the trial courts to the appellate courts, and that also is a key goal. Diane Fremgen, former clerk of court in Winnebago County and now clerk of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals, understands the potential benefits and is taking steps to investigate with CCAP how this can be done. Offering a system-wide solution also moves us closer to the tipping point.

The numerous benefits of eFiling have made the move toward less paper in the courts a national trend. Florida, for example, will require eFiling in all trial court cases next year. Minnesota's two largest counties will require eFiling this year. And the state of Iowa's court system has a plan to be paperless within three years. While we may be behind some other states in the level of implementation, I think our approach provides us the greatest opportunity to be successful in the long term. ■

## Milwaukee boosts eFiling with WIFI

Clerk of Circuit Court John Barrett announced this summer that free wireless Internet access (WIFI) is now available in the Milwaukee County Circuit Courts complex. The announcement was met with delight from lawyers, litigants and media.

"With the recent implementation of eFiling for civil, small claims and family cases, the timing was perfect to

provide access to the Internet," Barrett said. "Now attorneys and litigants can access eFiled court records and also remotely access their office records from the courtroom."

The WIFI system is secure, so users must request a login and password from the deputy court clerks or in the administrative offices, room 104 in the Courthouse and room 117 of the Milwaukee Safety Building. ■

## Courts move toward paperless systems

Paper has long served as the medium for court documents and case records, but that's changing around the nation and across Wisconsin. Milwaukee Municipal Court is in the vanguard, but circuit courts are also testing the waters.

One popular initiative that streamlines the process and reduces, but does not eliminate, the flow of paper, is in-court processing, which involves creating, printing and distributing court orders to parties before they leave the courtroom. In-court processing got an early start in Washington and Dane counties and is taking hold across the state.

And now, a pilot project to reduce paper in certain case types in Clark and Dodge counties is showing success, in part by demonstrating the many advantages digital files offer:

- Each case is available simultaneously to any number of users;
- Access to documents is immediate 24 hours a day;
- Copies are easily obtainable and can be printed locally;
- Research time is reduced;
- Out-of-office time involving staff having to retrieve files is reduced;
- Documents are secure and can't be lost or altered;
- All court documents are in the courtroom at the appropriate time;
- Storage costs and needs are reduced as retention requirements are shorter for digital records; and
- Court orders can be produced and made immediately available to parties.

### Paperless and 'paper-less' in Clark and Dodge

Both Clark and Dodge counties are currently operating "paperless" court calendars that use only digital court records in traffic (Clark) and small claims (Dodge) cases. Although exclusively paperless in only these case types, the counties are expanding their use of the paperless/paper-less application into other court calendars such as criminal and

family hearings and to manage complex cases and documents. In addition, clerks of circuit court are scanning cases assigned to out-of-county judges, permitting the assigned judges immediate access to the case and any new case filings without the clerk's office having to copy and mail documents to the assigned court. The clerks are sold on the technology.



*These shelves once held small claims case files in Dodge County. A new system reduces paper and frees up space in the clerk's office.*

"I wouldn't want to go back," said Bonnie Budde, the Dodge County small claims clerk who is directly involved in developing the paperless court. "Electronic files save time and resources."

Digital records are created in the clerks' offices using a combination of eFiling and scanning. EFiled documents are only retained in a digital format, but more commonly cases are filed in hard copy and then digitized. The scanned paper is retained for the appropriate amount of time, pursuant to SCR 72.03(3). Existing case documents also are being scanned. These methods generate 100 percent online, digital cases available to multiple users. In court, judges, attorneys and clerk staff use computers to access case information.

"It's quite useful to be able to access court files without delay and from any location," said Judge Jon M. Counsell, Clark County Circuit Court. "It's just a far more efficient system, and that saves litigants time and money."

Transitioning to digital records is a complex process. Judges have to adjust (and agree) to seeing court documents on a computer screen, and going digital requires developing a strategy for changing local culture and coordinating these changes with litigants, prosecutors, the law enforcement community, and other justice partners.

As the approach to paperless/paper-less court expands it is expected that unexpected issues will emerge that will need to be dealt with and managed to ensure that the use of technology makes the courts more effective, efficient and economical. At the same time, it's anticipated that unexpected efficiencies also will be discovered.

"Would any business today be viewed as efficient and customer-friendly if it relied solely on paper files? For the courts to be efficient and to serve the public to the best of our ability, we need to make this transition," said Judge John R. Storck. "Change is difficult, but we learn as we go, and we continually improve the process to ensure that it runs smoothly and that we may focus our efforts on hearing and deciding cases for the people we serve."



*Presiding Judge Phillip Chavez, Milwaukee Municipal Court, reviews the 'Judges' Workbench,' which shows pending cases. The system has two work queues; one shows the docket and the other shows out-of-court work, including mail that has been received and scanned in. These scanned documents are routed to the appropriate clerk and then, if necessary, to the judge.*

## New chief judges and 'chief of chiefs' selected

The Wisconsin Supreme Court in late June selected circuit court judges from Jefferson, Vilas and Wood counties to serve as new members of the Committee of Chief Judges, effective Aug. 1. In addition, the Committee of Chief Judges elected a new chair ('chief of the chiefs'): Chief Judge William D. Dyke, Iowa County Circuit Court, will serve in that capacity for one year, replacing Chief Judge C. William Foust, Dane County Circuit Court.

The Court also re-appointed judges from Brown and Kenosha counties to continue serving on the committee, which, along with the Supreme Court, helps oversee administrative matters in circuit courts statewide. The Committee of Chief Judges consists of 10 chief judges, one from each of the state's 10 judicial administrative districts.

Chief Judge Randy R. Koschnick, Jefferson County Circuit Court, was appointed to lead the Third Judicial Administrative District, which covers Jefferson, Ozaukee, Washington and Waukesha counties. He selected Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Lloyd V. Carter to serve as his deputy chief judge.

Koschnick replaces Chief Judge J. Mac Davis, Waukesha County Circuit Court. Davis served the maximum three, two-year terms on the committee, including one year as its chair.

Koschnick has served as deputy chief judge of the Third District since 2008. He was elected to the Jefferson County bench in 1999 and re-elected in 2005 and 2011. He served as an assistant State Public Defender from 1985-99.

Chief Judge Neal A. "Chip" Nielsen III, Vilas County Circuit Court, was appointed to lead the Ninth District, which encompasses Florence, Forest, Iron, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Menominee, Oneida, Price, Shawano, Taylor and Vilas counties. Nielsen selected Marathon County Circuit Court Judge Gregory B. Huber to serve as his deputy.



Chief Judge William D. Dyke



Chief Judge Randy R. Koschnick



Deputy Chief Judge Lloyd V. Carter



Chief Judge Neal A. "Chip" Nielsen

He succeeds Chief Judge Gregory E. Grau, Marathon County Circuit Court. A former deputy chief judge, Grau had served as the district's chief judge since Sept. 8, 2008.

Nielsen was appointed to the Vilas County bench in 2003, elected in 2004 and re-elected in 2010. He worked as a corporate attorney from 1999-2003 and in private practice from 1981-99. He serves as chair of the State-Tribal Justice Forum, which works to promote and sustain communication, education and cooperation among tribal and state court systems.

Chief Judge Gregory J. Potter, Wood County Circuit Court, will lead the Sixth Judicial Administrative District, which encompasses Adams, Clark, Columbia, Dodge, Green Lake, Juneau, Marquette, Portage, Sauk, Waushara and Wood counties. Potter selected Waushara County Circuit Court Judge Guy D. Dutcher to serve as his deputy.

Potter replaces Chief Judge John R. Storck, Dodge County Circuit Court. Storck served the maximum number of terms, and served as chair of the committee.

Potter was appointed to the Wood County bench in 2001, elected in 2002 and re-elected in 2008. He served as Wood County district attorney from 1987-2000 and was in private practice from 1984-87.

The Supreme Court also re-appointed two chief judges.

Chief Judge Donald R. Zuidmulder, Brown County Circuit Court, will continue as chief judge of the Eight Judicial Administrative District. Zuidmulder was elected to the bench in 1997 after a 22-year career in private practice. He was re-elected in 2003 and 2009. Zuidmulder also served as district attorney, and as an assistant attorney general.

The Eighth District encompasses Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie and Waupaca counties.

Chief Judge Mary K. Wagner, Kenosha County Circuit Court, was re-appointed chief judge of the Second Judicial Administrative District. Wagner was first elected to the bench in 1991, and re-elected in 1997, 2003 and 2009. She served in the state Assembly from 1978-82 and as clerk from 1976-78. She also has served as a deputy chief judge



Deputy Chief Judge Gregory B. Huber



Chief Judge Gregory J. Potter



Deputy Chief Judge Guy D. Dutcher

## Court Ops welcomes three new employees

The Office of Court Operations, which provides technical assistance to the circuit courts on issues such as caseload management, records management and policy analysis, has hired three new employees. Two of them replace former Court Ops staffers; one is filling a new position.

### Leicht will work on EJS

Niki Leicht joined the office in July as a special projects manager. The position was previously held by Shelly Fox, who stepped down to spend more time with her young son.

As a special projects manager, Leicht will be working with the Effective Justice Strategies Subcommittee, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the STOP Violence against Women grant, treatment courts, and other evidence-based initiatives.

Prior to joining Court Ops, Leicht spent two and a half years at the Office of Justice Assistance as a policy analyst in the Criminal Justice Unit. She came to Madison from Minnesota, where she worked for the Second Judicial District, Ramsey County, in Court Administration as coordinator of the DWI Court. She also has experience with drug courts and pre-trial diversion programming.

Leicht received her undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota and a graduate degree from Metropolitan State University in Public Administration.

Leicht can be reached at [niki.leicht@wicourts.gov](mailto:niki.leicht@wicourts.gov) or (608) 261-0684.



Niki Leicht

rights and adoption.

Roehl was most recently a fellow at Equal Justice Works and senior staff attorney with the Kinship Caregiver Law Project at MFY Legal Services, Inc. in New York City. In New York she represented relatives raising children outside the formal foster care system in matters involving custody, guardianship and adoption. She also served as co-chair of the New York City Kinship Task Force.

From 2006-07, she served as the law clerk to the Honorable Bernadette DeCastro in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Family Division of Hudson County.

Roehl graduated from UW-Madison in 2002 and from the City University of New York School of Law in Queens, NY in 2006.

Roehl can be reached at [amy.roehl@wicourts.gov](mailto:amy.roehl@wicourts.gov) or (608) 264-6905.



Amy Roehl

### Wilson will work on statistics, jury issues

Jacob Wilson is a new policy analyst, replacing Kathleen M. "Kassie" Murphy. He will primarily specialize in statistics and jury information.

A 2008 graduate of the University of Memphis with a degree in Management Information Systems, Wilson lived in Washington D.C. for a little over a year before moving to Madison in 2009 for law school. He graduated this year.

In his spare time, he enjoys playing soccer and tennis, and likes to build and modify computers. ■

Wilson can be reached at [jacob.wilson@wicourts.gov](mailto:jacob.wilson@wicourts.gov) or (608) 267-7336.



Jacob Wilson

### Roehl joins Children's Court Improvement Program

Amy Roehl began working as a policy analyst with the Children's Court Improvement Program in May. The Children's Court Improvement Program is funded by a federal grant and works to improve the handling of cases involving child abuse and neglect, termination of parental

### Chief judges *continued from page 4*

in the Second District and was a teacher from 1971-76. District Two encompasses Racine, Kenosha and Walworth.

Working as a team with a deputy chief judge and a professional court administrator, chief judges manage the flow of cases, supervise personnel, develop budgets, and meet several times a year as a committee to work on issues

### New judges *continued from front page*

"Growing up with my dad as a judge, I always knew I wanted to be a lawyer," the younger Yackel told the *Wausau Daily Herald*. "I also wanted to keep my options open in case I wanted to become a judge."

A graduate of Marquette University Law School, Yackel

of statewide importance. With the exception of Milwaukee County (First Judicial Administrative District), where the chief judge is a full-time judicial administrator, chief judges and their deputies maintain court calendars in addition to handling administrative matters. ■

served as a law clerk for the District III Court of Appeals, and has worked in private practice. He fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Glenn H. Hartley (*see The Third Branch, spring 2012*). ■

## LEADERSHIP

## Barron County opens night court for child support matters

By Judge James C. Babler, Barron County Circuit Court

June 28 marked a milestone in Barron County and for the state of Wisconsin: the first night court session for child support hearings. The county is believed to be the first in the state to offer night court for child support matters. In its first two sessions, the court heard 22 cases – just slightly fewer than are handled in a regular daytime session.

Here's how we do it:

- Court is held one evening per month, with the judges rotating through.
- Court is held the same evening as the weekly child support hearings to simplify scheduling.
- When night court is requested, cases are set for the next night date regardless of which judge is assigned to the case so that cases are not delayed.
- The child-support agency included notices in its mailings several months before implementation announcing that night child support court was available.
- When hearing child-support collections cases, the judges routinely tell litigants that night hearings are available.
- Night child support hearings are limited to post judgment matters including contempt and motions to modify support.

Clerk of Court Sharon Millermon and I began working to establish the court after learning of a similar program in California while attending a conference entitled *Improving Rural Courts*. The California program was conducting hearings in about one third of its child support cases at night. We brought the idea back to Barron



Sharon Millermon



The Barron County Justice Center, where judges began holding nighttime child support hearings in June.



Judge James C. Babler

County where the other two judges, Timothy M. Doyle and James D. Babbitt enthusiastically endorsed it.

Night child support court is designed to allow custodial and non-custodial parents to have their day in court and not lose income or use up vacation time. In the past, the judges have

often been asked if the court hearings might be held at a different time. However, without night court, such an option was not possible. Where the main objective is to collect child support, it made little sense to have people lose work and income to attend court. ■

### To start a night court

Night court is not possible without careful planning and cooperation. The new Barron County program took six months to establish. The first key step is to involve the right partners. They include:

- Judges, whose support, leadership and willingness to preside over night court is crucial to success;
- Clerk of Court, who needs to provide the staffing for the night court session;
- Child Support Agency, which must be willing to provide an attorney to handle the cases;
- Sheriff, because court security in these volatile cases is essential; and
- Public Defender – defense counsel must be assigned to provide representation in contempt cases.

Once the planners have enlisted the cooperation of justice partners, several additional steps must be followed to ensure that the night session comes off without a hitch:

- Meet with the child-support agency to determine appropriate day and time to regularly hold the night session;
- Develop a protocol for determining which cases should be held at night;
- Figure out how to communicate the availability of the night court, so that interested parties may request a night session; and
- Select an implementation date. ■

Questions about establishing a night child-support court may be addressed to Judge James C. Babler, Barron County Circuit Court, (715) 537-6262.

## Judge hosts legislator for day on the bench

By Samantha Alisankus, Court Information Intern

Rep. Howard Marklein, R-Spring Green, ‘rode along’ with Judge James R. Beer this summer in Green County Circuit Court. Marklein, a certified public accountant who was elected to the Assembly in 2010, asked to take part in the Judicial Ride-Along Program in order to better understand how the judicial process works.

The Judicial Ride-Along Program began in 1993 as a way to improve communication between the legislature and the judiciary. In its early years, the program drew more than 70 percent of the state legislators into courtrooms in their districts to “ride-along” or shadow a trial judge for a half day.

During the ‘ride,’ Rep. Marklein was able to see hearings ranging from initial appearances to misdemeanor sentencings. Following court, Beer and Marklein attended a lunch

together with Green County court officials that provided them with an opportunity to reflect on the morning’s experience, and also to discuss some issues related to the county and state budgets.

Both the judge and the lawmaker agreed that the program met its goal to create a more open dialogue between the courts and legislature. Marklein commented that, as a legislator authoring bills in Madison, it can be difficult to

stay connected with the effects of each piece of legislation, and that the Ride-Along Program is a helpful tool to bridge the gap between the bill writing process and the ramifications of the legislation that is enacted.

Beer and Marklein mentioned that the relationship they have built through the program will help each to reach out in the future when there are issues to discuss. This long-term benefit is frequently cited by participants and has been among the most valuable outcomes of the program. ■



Green County Circuit Court Judge James R. Beer, right, explains a court filing to Rep. Howard Marklein, R-Spring Green, during a visit in late July. Marklein was participating in the Judicial Ride-Along Program that gives legislators an opportunity to spend a day with a judge from their districts.

To take part in the Judicial Ride-Along Program, contact Legislative Liaison Nancy Rottier at (608) 267-9733 or [nancy.rottier@wicourts.gov](mailto:nancy.rottier@wicourts.gov).

## PPAC welcomes new members

By Shelly Cern, PPAC Policy Analyst

The Supreme Court Planning and Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC) welcomed new members this summer. Terms began July 1 for the following:

Judge James J. Bolgert, Sheboygan County Circuit Court, who replaces Judge Richard J. Nuss, Fond du Lac County Circuit Court. Bolgert has been on the bench in Sheboygan County since 1994. He has been active in court outreach programs including Sheboygan County Law Day events and the Mock Trial program.

Judge David M. Reddy, Walworth County Circuit Court, who replaces Judge



Judge James J. Bolgert



Greg Moore



Judge David M. Reddy



Carlo Esqueda

Wayne J. Marik, Racine County Circuit Court. Reddy was elected to the circuit court in 2010 after serving for five years as a court commissioner. He succeeded Judge Michael S. Gibbs on the committee.

Former District 10 Court Administrator Gregg Moore, who is now chair of the Eau Claire County Board and president of the Wisconsin Access to Justice Commission, replaces Jim Dwyer, longtime PPAC member and former chair of the Waukesha County Board. Moore will serve as the elected county official representative on PPAC.

Clerk of Circuit Court Carlo Esqueda, Dane County, is the new PPAC clerk of court representative. He replaces Kristine Deiss, longtime clerk of court in Washington County. Esqueda took office in 2007, succeeding Clerk of Circuit Court Judy Coleman. He was re-elected in 2010.

see PPAC on page 11

## WISCONSIN CONNECTS

### Bradley visits Vietnam

Justice Ann Walsh Bradley visited Vietnam this summer, meeting with representatives of the judiciary, law schools and the private bar. The discussion touched upon the status of the practicing bar, the role of the judiciary and challenges that are facing the legal system in Vietnam as it becomes one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

UW Law School Associate Professor John K. M. Ohnesorge, director of the Law School's East Asian Legal Studies Center, provided assistance in arranging the meeting, which took place at YKVN Law Offices in Ho Chi Minh City.



Justice Ann Walsh Bradley meets with judges, litigators, bar association leaders and law school administrators in Ho Chi Minh City this summer. Atty. Truong Trong Nghia, far left, a partner in the law firm of YKVN, is a leader of the Vietnam legal community and serves as vice president of the Vietnam Bar Federation and vice chair of the Ho Chi Minh City Bar Association. Pictured to the right of Bradley are Pham Vinh Thai, a retired judge and vice chair of the HCMC Jurist Association, and Bui Huan Hai, vice rector of the Ho Chi Minh City University of Law.

### Gonzalez elected to three-year term on NCJFCJ Board



Judge Ramona A. Gonzalez

Judge Ramona A. Gonzalez, La Crosse County Circuit Court, has been elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ). Also elected to the board were judges from New Mexico, Maryland and South Carolina.

Gonzalez has been a judge for 17 years, and has been involved in numerous statewide, national and international initiatives related to

improving how the justice system operates. She has been a national trainer for the NCJFCJ Domestic Violence Program and an international trainer at The Hague, where she presented on civil legal issues related to child abductions.

NCJFCJ is dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile and family courts. The organization offers training programs and technical assistance to courts, and works on a list of major initiatives. Current projects focus on issues related to child victims, delinquency, and launching/operating juvenile drug courts.

### International visitors learn about Milwaukee courts

Chief Judge Jeffrey A. Kremers hosted participants in the International Visitor Leadership Program on July 30, meeting with visitors from Belize, Japan, Greece, Sri Lanka, Macedonia, the Philippines and Somalia who are in the United States under the auspices of the Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. All are involved in a multi-regional project on conflict resolution.

"It's always a pleasure to host visitors to the Milwaukee courts," Kremers said. "Because of their work in conflict resolution, they were particularly interested in not just the structure of the system, but how we resolve conflict through mediation, particularly in small claims cases."

The chief judge met with the group to describe the Wisconsin court system and answered questions, many of which were about judicial elections and how judges keep current on the status of cases when they rotate from one assignment to another.

The group also visited with Small Claims Commissioners Grace Flynn and Maria Dorsey, and Professor Natalie Fleury, an attorney who directs the Marquette University Law School mediation project in the small claims courts. They also watched a plea in a domestic violence case presided over by Judge Mary Triggiano and had an opportunity to speak with and ask questions about the proceeding.



Visitors from across the globe came to the Milwaukee County Courthouse this summer as part of a U.S. State Department program.

see **Wisconsin Connects** on page 9

## Judge flies with 128th Air Refueling Wing

By Judge Mel Flanagan, Milwaukee County Circuit Court



Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judge Mel Flanagan took a break from her busy calendar this summer in order to participate in a 'Take your Boss to Work Day' event with Major Robert Ulander, a recent UW Law School graduate who is an intern in her court.

On July 11, I found myself high above the State of Michigan as a guest of the 128th Air Refueling Wing of the Wisconsin Air National Guard. Major Robert Ulander, an intern in my court and recent graduate of the UW Law School, arranged for me to come along on the in-air refueling mission with other employers of guard members. Major Ulander is normally up in the cockpit flying but on this day he rode in back with me to explain the mission and activities during the flight.

Upon arrival at the airport, invited guests were given a briefing on the 128th and on the mission of the day. The Wisconsin Air Guard conducts operations nationally and internationally to transfer fuel to US military and Allied aircraft, to provide aero-medical evacuation, and to airlift personnel and equipment to strategic locations as needed. They also provide assistance during state or national emergencies or disasters.

We flew in a KC-135R Stratotanker, an enormous, empty, grey and virtually windowless plane, with none of the amenities common in commercial jets. We belted into our hammock-like seats and carried oxygen with us whenever we left our seats. There were two jet engines *inside* the cabin that are used to start the KC-135R's engines, so the noise was tremendous. I was able to spend time down in the belly with the operator as he attached the boom to a pair of A-10 Thunderbolt II's, while we were flying amazingly close to each of the planes. I also was invited to sit up with the pilots as they approached and landed the nearly block-long plane in Milwaukee, safe and sound.

This was a fabulous experience and tremendously informative about the accomplishments of the 128th Air Wing. They are very grateful for the patience and support shown to guard members by their employers and were happy to thank them and have the opportunity to show how important their employees are to the overall mission of the National Air Guard. ■

### WISCONSIN CONNECTS *continued from page 8*

#### CCC showcased in St. Louis

Courts Connecting with Communities, a statewide outreach initiative of Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, shared the details of its 20 outreach programs at the annual Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of the State Court Administrators in St. Louis.

Wisconsin was among 22 states and entities selected to participate in the conference's first-ever Civics Education Fair. The goal of the Fair was to showcase programs that have had an impact on awareness and knowledge of the courts.

After the conference, the National Center for State Courts released a *Civics Education Resource Guide* that provides a comprehensive list of civics education programs around the country that inform and educate the public about the court system. ■

The NCSC guide is available at [www.ncsc.org/Services-and-Experts/civics-education.aspx](http://www.ncsc.org/Services-and-Experts/civics-education.aspx). The outreach materials available through Courts Connecting with Communities are on the court system's Intranet, CourtNet.



Atty. Theresa Owens, executive assistant to Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson, staffs the Wisconsin table at a first-ever Civics Education Fair held in conjunction with the annual Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators in St. Louis this summer. Owens won a scholarship from the National Center for State Courts, which allowed her to attend and share information on the Courts Connecting with Communities initiative.

## Waukesha County demonstrates new courtroom technology at budget presentation

By Kathleen Madden, Clerk of Court, Waukesha County Circuit Court

A 15-month, \$991,000 project to outfit all 12 courtrooms and five hearing rooms in the Waukesha County Courthouse with state-of-the-art technology is nearly complete – and a recent budget presentation provided a perfect opportunity to demonstrate the many functions of the new equipment.

The project aims to improve the presentation of legal materials in the courtroom and to meet the service demands of a technologically advanced group of legal professionals and justice partners with audio/visual, annotation, and presentation equipment. It also enables and improves remote video and telephone appearances by parties in all courtrooms and hearing rooms to enhance security and reduce transport costs and requirements for prisoners, patients, witnesses and other court participants.

The county used the videoconferencing technology this summer to link District Three Chief Judge Randy R. Koschnick into a budget presentation that he could not attend in person due to his court calendar in Jefferson County. Koschnick interacted with Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas, members of the County Board, Deputy Chief Judge Lloyd V. Carter and me, along with other Waukesha County staff. I also made use of the



*The Waukesha County Courthouse, where a nearly \$1 million technology upgrade is facilitating videoconferencing and improving the presentation of legal materials in court.*

opportunity to demonstrate many components of the new technology throughout my presentation by using a laptop at the presentation cart, annotating documents from various locations in the courtroom, demonstrating easy system controls from the clerk's workstation, and discussing the interpreter/assisted listening system, the document camera and more.

The meeting was an excellent example of how technology is changing courtrooms across the country and an excellent way to show the County Executive and County Board members the technology upgrades and enhancements that were funded through this capital project. ■

### Paperless continued from page 3

#### Milwaukee Municipal Court sets the pace

In the vanguard on paperless court processes is Milwaukee Municipal Court, which secured more than \$1 million from the Common Council to move to a paperless system beginning Jan. 1, 2011. The Milwaukee Municipal Court has developed a model that is winning accolades from litigants, judges, lawyers and court staff. The transition took place after two and a half years of preparation, and has been implemented in steps.

"Our mantra has been 'piece by piece, step by step,'" said Chief Court Administrator Kristine Hinrichs. "We've done one document type at a time, and that's really been the key – doing it in small pieces so we solve problems and use those solutions to inform our process moving forward."

The Milwaukee court was able to secure funding to cover the project (which has required development of proprietary software and new hardware including 16 scanners) after the Milwaukee Police Department moved to electronic citations, and court representatives successfully made the case that "Somebody hitting the print button 130,000 times a year

was not an effective use of resources," Hinrichs said.

The Milwaukee program, which in 2011 won the Public Policy Forum award for effective use of technology, continues to add features. Recently, it began allowing litigants to enter not guilty pleas, select preferred court dates online, and request that court dates be rescheduled (with safeguards to confirm the identity of the litigant). Next up is a program that will allow litigants to request a payment extension online, according to Network Manager Jane Tabaska.

Both Hinrichs and Tabaska emphasized the importance of securing adequate funding and involving staff at all levels to offer ideas and feedback.

"We are so proud of our system, and we continue to work on improvement every day," Hinrichs said. "This was truly a transformational project for us." ■

*-District Six Court Administrator Ronald Ledford contributed to this story.*

## Judicial rotation no small feat in state's busiest court

By Beth Bishop Perrigo, Deputy District Court Administrator, First Judicial District

What takes 96 moving carts, two full-sized moving vans, hundreds of hours of preparation, execution and follow-up, and potentially affects all residents of Milwaukee County? In a word, rotation.

Due to the sheer size of the system and fact that more than 150,000 cases a year are processed in it, life in the Milwaukee courts is, well, different. Nothing really brings that home like the last full week of July when approximately one quarter of the judges

move to a new assignment. But it's not just the judges; it's the clerks, court reporters and ... all of their stuff. This year, there were a total of 28 moves. And while judges and affected staff are given a set of "rotation rules" weeks in advance, there are always last-minute questions and issues that arise.

Here's what the week of Monday, July 23 looked like in Milwaukee County Circuit Court:

On Monday at 5:15 a.m., the Coakley moving company used one semi and one straight truck to deliver 96 moving carts between downtown and the Vel Phillips Juvenile Justice Center, which is approximately eight miles west of the Courthouse, the Safety Building and the Criminal Justice Facility.

Thirteen Coakley crew members and five court employees were assigned to the move, according to Holly Szablewski who coordinates the annual ritual. This year she was assisted by Mary Jo Swider, Felony Court coordinator; Jackie Thachenkary, Intake Court/Interpreter coordinator;



*The Milwaukee County Courthouse is one stop in the all-encompassing late-July ritual known as judicial rotation.*

Donna Anderson, assistant to the Chief Judge; and Liz Finn Gorski, Children's Court coordinator.

"Each member of the rotation crew is given a specific set of moves for which they are responsible," Szablewski said. "We literally have it down to a science and it generally goes more smoothly than one might expect given the size of the project because we're quite clear about our expectations."

To execute the move, Coakley used 30 four-

wheeled dollies, 20 speed packs and several rolls of shrink wrap to protect books, files and personal items. The actual move, mapped out by Szablewski and Swider, took approximately five hours – from 3:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 26.

Aside from the physical move, Julie Schroeder, district administrative assistant, is responsible for coordinating and updating myriad schedules and lists for court employees and the public; telephone changes; exchange of key cards and keys; and parking spaces. This year, the rotation work was in addition to the organizational task of settling three new judges into their new positions and working with them on investitures.

Those who moved were responsible for unpacking their courtrooms and offices and returning the carts to the hallway by 2:30 p.m. on Friday, July 27, for pick up at 5:15 a.m. on Monday, July 30. And in April of 2013, the process will begin again. ■

### PPAC *continued from page 7*

PPAC formally welcomed these new members at its Aug. 30 meeting in Madison. Also at that meeting, the PPAC Planning Subcommittee presented the final draft of the 2012-14 Critical Issues report to PPAC for consideration and adoption. In addition, committee members reviewed the court system's biennial budget requests to make recommendations about which proposals to forward to the Supreme Court for consideration. This fall, PPAC will take steps to determine how to move forward on each critical

issue.

Further information about PPAC, its subcommittees and initiatives can be found at:

[www.wicourts.gov/about/committees/ppac.htm](http://www.wicourts.gov/about/committees/ppac.htm). ■

*Questions about PPAC and its subcommittees may be addressed to Shelly Cern in the Office of Court Operations, (608) 266-8861 or [michelle.cern@wicourts.gov](mailto:michelle.cern@wicourts.gov).*

## RETIREMENTS

## Judge Sarah O'Brien steps down

By Samantha A. Alisankus, Court Information Intern



Judge Sarah B. O'Brien

With Judge Sarah B. O'Brien's retirement this past year, many will likely remember her best for her role as presiding judge in the 2001 John Doe trial involving three Senate and Assembly members accused and convicted of spending state time and money on "partisan political purposes." O'Brien recalled the massive quantity of information that was presented and reviewed at the trial, and described how the court made

new caselaw while handling the matter. A true credit to O'Brien's adaptability is the fact that this case, possibly the longest John Doe hearing in state history, was O'Brien's first-ever John Doe case. But one case certainly does not define a judge; particularly not a judge who has served on the Dane County Circuit Court for 20 years. When O'Brien looks back on the last two decades, the proceedings she remembers most fondly are adoptions.

One particularly memorable adoption involved a family who was adopting their second child from China. When the hopeful new parents entered O'Brien's chambers, their 5-year-old daughter exclaimed, "I was so excited this morning that I forgot to put on any underwear!" O'Brien said "The parents visibly shrank, certain that I would not put a second child in their care when they couldn't properly dress the first one." But that was not the case, of course; the adoption went off without a hitch. Moments like these, O'Brien said, were among her favorite experiences in the courts.

Outside of the courtroom, O'Brien fondly recalled her involvement on the Juvenile Benchbook Committee, and her time spent working with committee staff person Ronnie Jones, who passed away several years ago. In addition to serving on the Juvenile Benchbook Committee, O'Brien also served on a variety of study committees related to access to the courts and courthouse security.

In retirement, O'Brien hopes to do more painting, photography and traveling, and catch up on "neglected" household tasks. And fortunately for Dane County, she does not intend to completely remove herself from local issues. In fact, she plans to spend some of her time helping community organizations deal with issues related to drug addiction.

Already missing her office staff, and faithful court clerk Paula McCullough, O'Brien does leave one final touch on her office and bench, and that is for her successor, to whom she says, "After learning the ropes, get involved with a benchbook committee, jury instruction committee, or other statewide group of judges. I really enjoyed my experiences learning from, and sharing with judges around the state," admitting that some of her best memories in the system were made while serving on committees.

## Judge Willis to step down in October

This year, Manitowoc County marked a milestone that was particularly meaningful for Judge Patrick L. Willis. The county entertained its 10,000th second grader during the annual Law Day presentation of *State v. The Big Bad Wolf* in the courthouse. In a county of just over 80,000 people, that means one in every eight residents has attended the presentation as a 2nd grader.

After proudly overseeing the Law Day celebration for 12 years – and after serving for 15 years on the bench – Willis has announced his plan to retire on Oct. 5. Gov. Scott Walker is expected to appoint a successor.

Willis' work on Law Day has been a tiny part of his role as a judge, but, like adoptions, public outreach programs can provide a bit of fun and satisfaction in a job that, as any judge knows, can be grueling. At the end of each trial, the 2nd graders get to deliberate as jurors and explain why they believe the Wolf is guilty or not guilty. Willis' favorite all time explanation is the comment from one second grader who was asked to explain why she thought the Big Bad Wolf was guilty. The girl zeroed in on the wolf's claim that he was allergic to straw, and only unintentionally blew the straw house down. The girl explained that she knew he was lying when he indicated that he'd called his veterinarian and gotten an inhaler all in one day. She said that she had a dog and knew very well that same-day veterinary appointments are simply not available.



Judge Patrick L. Willis

The Law Day activities have been an important balance against the day-to-day challenge of judging. Willis' most challenging case was the trial of Steven Avery, who was convicted of murdering a 25-year-old photographer. The six-week trial in 2005 drew national attention and was telecast live by several media outlets because Avery had previously been wrongfully convicted of rape and freed based on DNA evidence. Because of the media spotlight, Willis said the trial presented a number of unique monitoring problems.

Willis has written and spoken on his experiences in the Avery case, and the case has been used in law schools to teach trial procedure.

Willis was first appointed to the Branch 1 bench in 1997, and won three subsequent elections, the most recent in 2010. Prior to taking the bench, he served as city attorney for the city of Manitowoc and worked in private practice. A graduate of Marquette University and the UW Law School, he has served as an associate dean of the Judicial College and a member of the Civil Jury Instruction Committee.

Willis said he has enjoyed the job and has appreciated the opportunity to serve on committees. But he advises new judges that the job is a difficult adjustment.

"My predecessor [Judge Allan Deehr] told me that it

## September is Juror Appreciation Month in Wisconsin

Circuit courts statewide will celebrate Juror Appreciation Month during September by hosting a variety of activities to thank the tens of thousands of people who report to Wisconsin courthouses for jury service each year.

“Jurors are a cornerstone of our democracy. They serve to ensure that our rights are protected, and that we are all held accountable under the law. Without jurors, our system of justice would not function properly, and the constitutional right to a trial by jury could not be upheld,” said Wisconsin Supreme Court Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson.

The theme of statewide Juror Appreciation Month, is *Jurors Serve Justice; Justice Serves Us All*. The occasion also offers an opportunity to thank jurors’ families and employers, who may be inconvenienced by jury duty. September was first declared statewide Juror Appreciation Month in 2008 by Abrahamson, then-Gov. Jim Doyle, and by the state Senate and Assembly. Abrahamson has twice served on juries during her tenure on the Supreme Court.

In all, 83,768 people reported to a Wisconsin courthouse ready to serve on a jury during 2011, and 20,896 people served as jurors during a trial. Just like voting, jury service provides an opportunity for direct participation in our government, and each juror makes a difference, Abrahamson said.

“They are there; they know it’s fair,” said Abrahamson, borrowing a line from Milwaukee County’s juror appreciation program, which was established in 2007.

Each county takes the initiative to recognize jurors in its own way – some activities are as simple as providing jurors with snacks or extra coffee and hanging a “thank you” banner in the courthouse lobby. Other celebrations are a bit more elaborate, involving visits with jurors by justices, judges, clerks of circuit court. Several counties will issue press releases or submit letters to the editor, thanking jurors for their service.

Contact the clerk of circuit court for more specific information about activities that may be planned in a particular county. A phone directory can be found at: [www.wicourts.gov/contact/docs/clerks.pdf](http://www.wicourts.gov/contact/docs/clerks.pdf)

Among the planned activities:

- In Forest County, Circuit Court Judge Leon D. Stenz, Clerk of Circuit Court Penny Carter, and District Atty.

Charles Simono marched in a parade in Crandon on Aug. 31, displaying an 8-foot-by-4-foot banner and distributing notepads, buttons, magnets and Tootsie Rolls. The group also was scheduled to visit three schools and three senior centers to discuss the importance of jurors during September.

- In Manitowoc County, the county board approved a proclamation designating September as Juror Appreciation Month. Clerk of Circuit Court Lynn Zigmunt recorded a radio public service announcement, thanking jurors for their service. And items including magnets and bookmarks are being distributed to jurors.

- In Dane County, Supreme Court Chief Justice Abrahamson, Justice Patience Drake Roggensack and Chief Judge C. William Foust will meet with prospective jurors on selected days to thank them for their service. A juror appreciation banner will be hung at the courthouse to mark the occasion and items including magnets and tote bags will be distributed to jurors.

- In Milwaukee County, Chief Judge Jeffrey A. Kremers is scheduled to appear on a radio show to discuss jury service.

Some passes to county attractions, including the zoo and museum will be made available to jurors.

- In Calumet County, the county board passed a resolution and banners and posters have been hung in the lobbies and jury room.

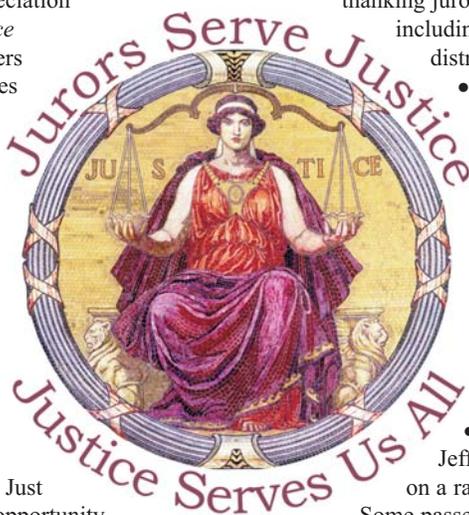
- At the Waukesha County Courthouse, items will be distributed, banners and posters will be hung, staff will wear “We Appreciate Jurors” buttons, and cookies will be served to empaneled jurors.

- In Green County, Circuit Court Judges James R. Beer and Thomas J. Vale have written letters to the editor thanking jurors for service and helping to uphold the right to a trial by jury.

- In Rock County, judges and lawyers will greet jurors and thank them for their service.

- In St. Croix County, an open house will be held at the courthouse to show appreciation for jurors from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. on Sept. 25.

The statewide juror appreciation program was initiated by the Chief Judges Subcommittee on Juror Treatment and Selection. ■



### RETIREMENTS *continued from page 12*

would take five years to get comfortable in the position. I found his assessment to be very accurate,” he said. “But if you work hard, it will come.”

Technology has helped with the hard work, he said, and his ability to type fast has allowed him to take notes on his computer as well as conduct research from the bench. And a great courthouse staff doesn’t hurt either.

“I have an excellent judicial assistant [Robbie Marcelle] and a wonderful court reporter [Diane Teshneck],” he said.

Willis said he plans to spend more time with his grandson and hopes to do some mediation work.

“I would also like to find out,” he quipped, “if you get any better at golf by playing more often.” ■

**Veterans** *continued from front page*

Investigator James Muller, Racine County Sheriff's Department; Racine County Veterans' Services Officer Aloysius Nelson; and Licensed Clinical Social Worker Mary Jane Whitmore, Racine Psychological Services, Inc.

More information is available from District Court Administrator Andrew Graubard at [Andrew.graubard@wicourts.gov](mailto:Andrew.graubard@wicourts.gov) or (262) 636-3133.

**Outagamie Veterans Court**

The Outagamie Veterans Court began hearing cases in mid-July after about a year's worth of planning. The court began with three cases, and anticipated adding two more by September. Like similar programs across the state, the Outagamie Veterans Court provides close supervision of participants and pairs each defendant with a trained mentor.

Unique to Outagamie County is that two judges share the bench during Veterans Court proceedings. Judges John A. Des Jardins and Gregory B. Gill Jr. work closely together, and also work as a team with the district attorney, the public defender, the Department of Corrections, law enforcement, service providers and Outagamie County Veterans Affairs Officer Jon LiDonne.

In an interview with *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton), LiDonne explained the need for the new program.

"We're dealing with a unique population of persons with unique needs," he said. "[They face] special circumstances, including multiple deployments that certainly added to the stress of these veterans, coupled with the fact of coming back to a not-so-favorable economy."

**Veterans Law Center**

The new Veterans Law Center will open Nov. 8 to serve low-income veterans with civil legal problems in Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Rock and Sauk counties.

The center is an initiative of the UW Law School Pro Bono Program in cooperation with the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Dane County Bar Association, the Dane County Veterans Service Office and Porchlight, Inc., which provides services to Madison's homeless population.

Volunteer lawyers, law students and paralegals will provide help and referrals to veterans on a walk-in basis at Madison's City-County Building (CCB) and at Porchlight, 306 N. Brooks St., Madison. Clinics will be held two times per month: At the CCB on the second Thursday of each month, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., and at Porchlight on the fourth Thursday,

4 – 6 p.m. More information is available from UW Law School Pro Bono Director Ann Zimmerman at [amzimmerman3@wisc.edu](mailto:amzimmerman3@wisc.edu) or (608) 890-3754.

**Sheboygan County Veterans Treatment Court**

The new Sheboygan County Veterans Treatment Court program opened its doors in August to much media attention.

Judge L. Edward Stengel swore in the first group of mentors at a ceremony in mid-August, and Circuit Judge Angela W. Sutkiewicz – the veterans court program judge – explained how the diversion program will work.

*The Sheboygan Press* interviewed Mike Wieck, a U.S. Air Force veteran who now works as a corrections officer and as a veterans liaison in the Sheboygan County Detention Center. Wieck, a member of the Veterans Treatment Court team, told the newspaper that he is saddened to see more veterans serving jail time.

"There are more and more vets coming home and there's no work for them," Wieck was quoted as saying. "And it's no secret there's a lot of issues with alcohol and drugs."

Like veterans court programs across the state, the Sheboygan program will focus on veterans who have been diagnosed with drug and/or alcohol addiction, or mental illness.

The development of court programs for Wisconsin veterans began four years ago, when the Office of the State Public Defender and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs received a federal grant to bring Judge Robert Russell - who started the nation's first veterans treatment court in Buffalo, N.Y. - to Wisconsin to tell his story. A short time later, a delegation from Wisconsin visited Judge Russell's court in New York.

Soon after that visit, a conference entitled *Leave No One Behind: Veterans in the Criminal Justice System* was held in June 2009. The Wisconsin court system joined the State Public Defender, Department of Corrections, Department of Justice, Veterans Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs in co-sponsoring the conference, which brought together judges, prosecutors, public defenders, treatment providers and County Veterans Services Officers from across Wisconsin. Participants developed plans for building specialty court programs in the state. More than 100 people at sites in Madison, Milwaukee and Tomah participated. ■



Judge John A.  
Des Jardins



Judge Gregory B. Gill Jr.



Judge L. Edward Stengel, Sheboygan County Circuit Court, swears in members of the county's new veterans court program, including Judge Angela W. Sutkiewicz, who will preside in the court.

## PEOPLE

“Chief Justice Roberts’ key message lost on many critics,” a guest editorial by Chief Justice **Shirley S. Abrahamson**, ran in the Sunday, July 15 edition of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and was reprinted in newspapers across the state. Abrahamson discussed Roberts’ opinion in the case that challenged the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly known as Obamacare. Abrahamson took the opportunity to call attention to Roberts’ discussion of the basic principles of judging, and explained that these principles should guide fair, neutral, impartial, non-partisan judges:

- Public policy is for the legislature.
- Judges do not consider whether a legislative act embodies sound policy.
- Judges ask only whether the legislative or executive branch has the power under the Constitution to enact the challenged provision.
- The judiciary has an important but limited role.
- The judiciary should have a general reticence to invalidate the acts of the elected members of the legislative and executive branches.
- The Bill of Rights imposes restrictions on state and national governments.
- State governments are not granted power by the Constitution but may be restricted by it.
- The Constitution has granted enumerated powers to the national government. The independent power of the states serves as a check on the power of the national government.
- By denying any one government complete jurisdiction over all concerns of public life, federalism protects the liberty of the individual from arbitrary power.

“Barron County adds night court” headlined a story in the *Rice Lake Chronotype* in late June. The newspaper reported that the Barron County Circuit Court judges decided to open a night court (*see separate story*) after Judge **James C. Babler** and Clerk of Circuit Court **Sharon Millermon** attended a seminar last fall on improving rural courts.

“Milwaukee police website gets nod in *Advertising Age*” headlined an entry in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*’s popular ‘Proof and Hearsay’ blog in late August. The blog reported that the trade publication called the website “a thing of beauty.” The ad agency that produced the site for the Milwaukee

Police Department (Cramer-Krasselt Milwaukee) told the magazine that it did the work for free. The site debuted in spring. See [www.milwaukeekeepolicenews.com](http://www.milwaukeekeepolicenews.com).



At its 100th anniversary celebration, Wisconsin Community Services shared historic photos from past events. This one, from 1941, was originally captioned as follows: “Mrs. Ruth Baker, who has retired as superintendent of the Wisconsin Service Association, an organization for rehabilitating released prisoners, was honored at the annual dinner-meeting of the organization Wednesday night in the City club. Left to right are District Judge Harvey Neelen, Federal Judge F. Ryan Duffy, Mrs. Baker, State Supreme Court Justice Edward T. Fairchild and Municipal Judge Max Nohl.”

Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) celebrated its 100th anniversary with an event that featured presentations by several former clients, including graduates of the Waukesha Alcohol Treatment Court. Among the more than 500 people attending the anniversary celebration were Judge **J. Mac Davis** of Waukesha County, Milwaukee County District Atty. **John Chisholm**, former Milwaukee County District Atty. **E. Michael McCann**, and former Milwaukee Municipal Judge **James Gramling**. WCS was recently awarded a contract to operate the Milwaukee County Day Report Center. It also operates the Waukesha County Day Report Center, Alcohol Treatment Court, Drug Treatment Court, and bail verification and monitoring programs.

“Bayfield County Risk Reduction Court gives offenders another chance” headlined a story in the *Ashland Daily Press* as the Bayfield County program marked its one-year anniversary. The court aims to improve public safety by focusing on a core group of repeat offenders. It offers treatment and intensive supervision for defendants arrested multiple times for drunk driving and other offenses that involve drug and/or alcohol addiction. Participants also often struggle with mental illness.

Judge **John P. Anderson**, Bayfield County Circuit Court, explained to the newspaper why the court focuses on hard-core offenders who are facing substantial prison time.

“Putting people in jail, unless they are there for the rest of their lives, doesn’t really solve the problems; rarely does it rehabilitate them, oftentimes, and the evidence shows it, it just makes things worse,” Anderson was quoted as saying. “With the process we are using, risk

### TEAMWORK PUTS THE PUZZLE TOGETHER AND CLEARS SEVERAL BURGLARIES



The Milwaukee Police Department’s new website.

PEOPLE *continued from page 15*

reduction, we are using methods that actually work. It doesn't mean we are being soft; most of the people that are going through this program are still spending time in jail, but before we let them loose back to society, we give them the tools to help them succeed. I would much rather be part of solving a problem than being a cog in a wheel that just spins and spins."

"DA fights for gun in court" headlined a story in the June 19 edition of *The Post-Crescent* (Appleton). The story described Winnebago County District Atty. **Christian Gossett's** challenge of a circuit court order that requires everyone other than on-duty law enforcement officers to secure permission prior to carrying a concealed weapon into court. The Winnebago County Circuit Court judges responded that they issued the order because they "...have a duty and obligation to ensure that everyone participating in a court proceeding has a safe and secure environment in which to settle a dispute." The judges went on to say that "The first step in fulfilling that obligation, and in assessing safety and security threats in a courtroom, is for judges and law enforcement to be aware of who is carrying a weapon during a proceeding."

The Wisconsin Supreme Court unanimously denied Gossett's petition for a supervisory writ in June; Gossett responded by filing a similar petition in the Court of Appeals, District II. The Court of Appeals also unanimously denied Gossett's petition.

"Court reporters see their numbers dwindle" headlined a story on Law Blog at WSJ.com, the *Wall Street Journal's* popular law-related reporting site. The blog reported that three courts in Indiana have just replaced court reporters with digital audio equipment, the latest step in a national trend that the blog attributed to "improving technology and squeezed state budgets." The blog noted that "most U.S. bankruptcy courts, federal magistrate courts and at least five states now solely use digital recording systems while 18 other states are increasingly making it common practice." The article also quoted Judge **John R. Storck**, Dodge County Circuit Court,

who has used a digital audio recording system in his courtroom for more than a decade. Storck emphasized the need for a high-quality system that is sophisticated enough to allow a court reporter to step in when needed. "You need a well-designed, well-integrated system to make a good record with a digital recording device," Storck said.



Justice Patience Drake Roggensack

Justice **Patience Drake Roggensack** spent much of her summer speaking to community groups across the state about the work of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Among the groups was the Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce. The *Beloit Daily News* covered Roggensack's speech at the Chamber under the banner headline, "Justice:

Court often unified/Roggensack says conflict not as bad as reported." Roggensack told the group, "Most of the time we agree, but a strength we have is different points of view. When we put it all together and write an opinion, you get a better reasoned one and I consider it a strength."

Justice **Ann Walsh Bradley** recently spoke at the annual conference of the American Constitution Society in Washington DC. Together with state supreme court justices from Michigan, Arizona and New Mexico, she addressed the topic of "Judicial Campaigns and Public Confidence in the Courts."

Bradley also joined Dane County Circuit Court Judge **Stephen E. Ehlke** on a panel addressing "Challenges to Judicial Independence in Today's Legal Environment" at the annual State Bar institute at Chula Vista.



Judge **W. Andrew Sharp**, Richland County Circuit Court, manages the caseload in a busy one-judge county but he also finds time to act in, and direct, community theater productions. This summer, he took the role of Captain Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*, the summer show for the Community Players of Southwestern Wisconsin, a theater group that Sharp helped to start in Richland Center more than a decade ago. "I was very active in plays at our local campus and I wanted to do summer musicals, which our local director had no interest in," he explained. Sharp directed the first show that summer, *Godspell*, and has been a part of every show thereafter for the past 12 years.

Wisconsin welcomed new veterans court programs in several counties this summer (*see separate story*), and kick-off events made headlines. The *Journal Times* (Racine), in a story headlined, "Vets helping vets succeed," previewed the new Second Judicial District Veterans Treatment Court that will open in November.

Racine County Circuit Court Judge **Gerald P. Ptacek**, who will preside in the court, told the newspaper that veterans admitted into the court will be given 18 months to successfully complete the program. To be eligible, participants must be post-conviction, must have served in the military for at

see **People** on page 17

PEOPLE *continued from page 16*

least 90 days and must have a diagnosis of drug or alcohol addiction or mental illness.



*Evan Goyke*

Milwaukee Atty. **Evan Goyke**, son of Legislative Liaison **Nancy Rottier** and former Wisconsin State Senator **Gary Goyke**, won the seven-way Democratic primary for the 18th Assembly District. The district encompasses a diverse cross-section of downtown Milwaukee, including some of the poorest and wealthiest areas of the city. It was formerly held by Rep. Tamara Grigsby. Goyke took 37 percent of the vote – 1,627

votes. In the general election, he will face Libertarian **Melba Morris-Page** on Nov. 6.

The annual TV Guide survey of television personalities' pay reveals that Judge **Judy Sheindlin**, the former family court judge who is the star of "Judge Judy" tops the list at \$45 million per year. A distant second is David Letterman at \$28 million. Also on the list was Crystal the monkey from NBC's "Animal Practice," who earns \$12,000 per episode.

Wood County's unique two-city circuit court ended service in late July, consolidating its work at the main location in Wisconsin Rapids. For 40 years, Wood County Circuit Court judges traveled to Marshfield every Tuesday to conduct court proceedings. Judge **John R. Storck**, Dodge County Circuit Court, announced the decision to close the court, citing costs and concerns about the resources needed to operate a duplicate court. The Marshfield branch was the last "remote" circuit court branch in Wisconsin.

In mid-May, Milwaukee County Circuit Court Judges **Michael J. Dwyer**, **Daniel A. Noonan** and **Frederick C. Rosa** joined Deputy Chief Judge **Maxine Aldridge White** and Family Court Commissioner **Ana Berrios** to present a program for guardians *ad litem* entitled "Talking to Kids: When, Why and How." The judges and commissioner presented with Psychologists **Jeanne Schroeder** and **Judith Goodman** and several family law practitioners at the Milwaukee Bar Association program. The presenters focused on the role of the GAL in divorce proceedings and on judges' expectations of GALs to deliver accurate, comprehensive information on the needs of the child. The program was held at Marquette Law School and will be available on video this fall.

District One Chief Judge **Jeffrey A. Kremers** was featured in the "Point of View" column in the September edition of *Milwaukee Magazine*. Kremers talked about the Milwaukee County

Community Justice Council, which has launched a number of initiatives related to improving the justice system in Milwaukee. Among these efforts: a new focus on improving pretrial release decisions, for which Milwaukee was awarded a competitive grant from the National Institute of Corrections.

Using Skype for long-distance testimony has been a hot topic in the news recently. The State Bar of Wisconsin tackled the topic in its Aug. 15 edition of *Inside Track*, interviewing Director of State Courts A.

**John Voelker** about the possibility that Wisconsin courts will embrace the technology. "I don't know if we're ready to go there," Voelker said. "I could see how Skype might be beneficial for informal proceedings. But for witnesses, especially in criminal cases, I'm not sure Skype is something that both sides will agree is sufficient."

Court testimony via Skype – a free, Internet-based video chat program – first made news in July 2011, when a Pennsylvania judge permitted long-distance testimony via Skype in a matter involving minor children in Florida and their deported migrant parents in Mexico. That is believed to have been the first use of Skype in court. This year, an Ohio court permitted a service member in Afghanistan to testify via Skype in an attempted murder case – but news reports noted that the connection was choppy at times, and that use of a Webcam to display documents was cumbersome. ■



*Photo credit: Milwaukee Magazine*

*An artsy photo of Chief Judge Jeffrey A. Kremers, Milwaukee County Circuit Court, accompanied a September 2012 interview in Milwaukee Magazine.*



*Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson took a brief break from the Court's busy June calendar to meet with a small group of Janesville students who worked as legislative interns this summer. The students are, from left, Felicia Arambula, Parker High School; Natalie Arriaga, Craig High School; Connor Sheedy, Craig High School; and John Muetz, Parker High School.*

## Summer internship program celebrates 15 years

*Judge James L. Carlson, Walworth County Circuit Court*

The Wisconsin Volunteer Summer Law Student Internship Program marked its 15th summer this year by hosting 23 students from 14 law schools around the nation. The students worked for judges in 19 counties across the state, doing research, helping to draft opinions and more.

Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson launched the program in 1997 by writing personal letters to law schools nationwide inviting students to submit applications. Now coordinated by the Office of Court Operations, the initiative strives to assist judges and train future lawyers.

Walworth County Circuit Court has participated in the program since its inception. This summer, Andrew Leibfried, a second year law student from Northern Illinois University College of Law assisted me in the civil court along with Michelle Ingram, a first-year law student from Chicago-Kent College of Law. Casey D. Cane, Appalachian School of Law, again volunteered his services to Judge John R. Race, in felony court.

My interns were extremely helpful in reviewing briefs regarding summary judgment motions, assisting in drafting opinions in various cases, helping me prepare guidelines for making oral decisions in complex cases and in reviewing the stacks

of foreclosure files on a daily basis to let me know of any contested issues.

This was the first time I'd had two interns working together and I found they profited from being able to speak with each other before reporting back to me. The interns sat in on many cases in all of the courts to get a better perspective on what lawyers do in the real world.

Before returning to school, both interns wrote

letters summarizing the work they did for me so that when the time comes when they may be seeking employment, I can make a meaningful recommendation. This is the only compensation they may receive except for the experience. In her letter, intern Michelle Ingram summarized her work then closed by stating, "This internship gave me a new perspective on the law and will enable me to better succeed...thank you for allowing me to be a part of this amazing learning experience." ■



*Andrew Leibfried, who just completed his second year at Northern Illinois University College of Law, and Michelle Ingram, a first-year law student from Chicago-Kent College of Law, worked as interns for Judge James L. Carlson, Walworth County Circuit Court, this summer.*

*For more information on the Volunteer Summer Law Student Internship Program, contact Melissa Lamb in the Office of Court Operations at [Melissa.lamb@wicourts.gov](mailto:Melissa.lamb@wicourts.gov) or (608) 266-3121.*



*Judge James L. Carlson*

## A judge, a justice and the chief justice

Richland County Circuit Court Judge Andrew W. Sharp is celebrating his son's election as chief justice this summer. Atticus J. Sharp, 17, was elected chief justice of the Supreme Court at Badger Boys State in Ripon in June.

Badger Boys State is a week-long program of the American Legion that brings together top-ranked juniors from across the Wisconsin to create a 51st state. Participants develop party platforms, attend caucuses and elect their own state government.

Atticus Sharp was a standout in a field of outstanding participants this summer. A 4.0 student at Ithaca High School, he is class president, was elected prom king, and is active in football, wrestling, track, band, chorus and forensics.

Justice Ann Walsh Bradley swore in the boys who were elected to the top state positions. She was also one of the keynote speakers at the festivities, along

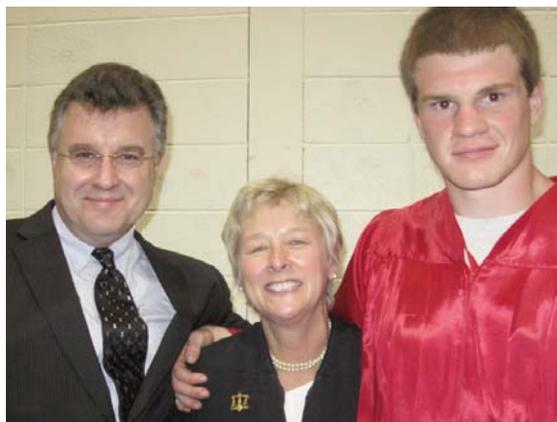
with Gov. Scott Walker. After the ceremony, the elder Sharp asked Bradley to pose for a picture with him and the chief justice.

"She gave me an odd look, but nicely informed me that the chief justice wasn't there. I then told her that the chief justice was my son," Sharp recounted.

Atticus Sharp was one of 883 attendees at the 2012 Badger Boys event. As chief justice, he appointed a marshal, presided over several Supreme Court sessions and conducted oral arguments on an issue of BBS Constitutional law. He then authored a decision in the case, which is binding on future courts.

With such a first name and this accomplishment, is Atticus headed toward a legal career?

"I don't think so," his father said. "He's very mechanically inclined. I think he'll be an engineer." ■



*Richland County Circuit Court Judge W. Andrew Sharp celebrates his son's election as chief justice of Badger Boys State with Justice Ann Walsh Bradley, who swore in the newly minted chief.*

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# Court outreach takes root at Sheboygan farmers market

Members of the Sheboygan County bench and local attorneys greeted more than 200 visitors at the Sheboygan County Interfaith Farmers Market on a sunny Saturday in June. The event was so successful that organizers are already planning for another public outreach event at the Mills Street Festival in Plymouth next year; the festival typically attracts several thousand people.

At the farmers market, the group fielded questions about the court system and community- and court-related services. Brochures about the Sheboygan County Courthouse and circuit court, contact information for community service and volunteer organizations, and magnets with information about the State Bar Lawyer Referral Service were distributed.

“Our goal is to meet people, hear their questions, concerns and ideas, and to answer as best we can,” said Judge Angela W. Sutkiewicz. “For some, the best response is to provide

information on how to seek legal representation, and that’s helpful both for the litigant and the court system. Ultimately, I hope that our outreach efforts convey that the courts are here to serve the public, to help resolve difficult disputes as efficiently and effectively as possible.”

Working with Sutkiewicz on planning were Judge Patricia S. Curley, Wisconsin Court of Appeals, District I; Atty. Roberta A. Heckes; Court Commissioner Rebecca L. Persick; and Atty. Elizabeth G. Rich.

The event was the first of its kind at this venue. The organizers selected the farmers market because of its visibility, and because it offered them the ability to easily interact with the public, answer questions, and hand out information. In addition, the event was simple to plan and expenses were low.

The State Bar of Wisconsin Bench Bar Committee worked with the Courts Connecting with Communities outreach program to initiate this event. ■



*The Sheboygan County Circuit Court public outreach team during a brief break in the action at the popular Saturday farmers market. From left, Judge Angela W. Sutkiewicz, Sheboygan County Circuit Court; Atty. Roberta A. Heckes; Court Commissioner Rebecca L. Persick, Sheboygan County Circuit Court; and Atty. Elizabeth G. Rich.*