

Friends OF THE COURT

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Judicial Council Holds Fall Conference

Arkansas Judicial Council members held their fall meeting in Rogers in October. Hon. Harry Foltz/12th Judicial Circuit was elected to serve as President for 2009 - 2010, and the Hon. Joyce Warren was chosen as President-Elect. Pictured are Council Officers and Board of Directors who have just completed the 2008 - 2009 term. Front row (l to r): Judge David Guthrie, Judge John Homer Wright, Judge Phillip Whiteaker and Judge Joe Griffin. Middle row: Judge John Fogleman, Judge Kathleen Bell, Justice Annabelle Imber, Judge John Dan Kemp and Judge Harry Foltz. Top row: Judge Mark Lindsay, JD Gingerich, Judge John Scott and Judge Vann Smith.



District Court Judges Meet



District Judges met in Eureka Springs in September and the following judges were elected to the Council and Board for the 2009-2010 term: (l.- r.) Judge Don Bourne/District Rep., Judge Wayne Gruber/District Rep., Judge Mike Irwin/President, Judge Lucky Crumpler/District Rep., Judge Butch Hale/Secretary-Treasurer, Judge Dan Stidham/District Rep., and Judge Mike Robinson/Immediate Past President. (Judge Kim Bridgforth/Vice President not pictured.)

Passing of the Gavel



At the conclusion of the Judicial Council meeting in October, Judge Harry Foltz, incoming Judicial Council President, presented a plaque of appreciation to outgoing President, Judge John Dan Kemp.

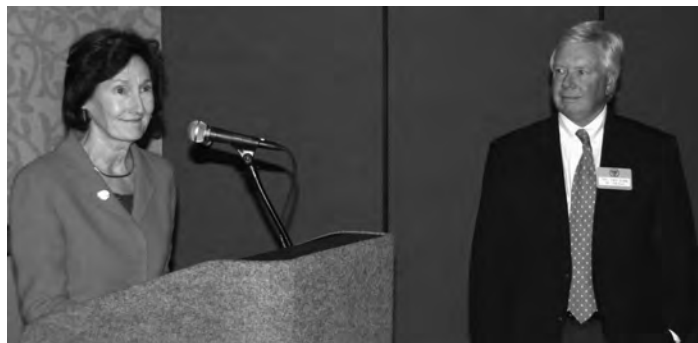
35 Attorneys Recognized for 10 Years of Service to the Attorney Ad Litem Program

In 1997, the Arkansas Supreme Court Ad Hoc Committee on Foster Care and Adoption issued a report making recommendations for improvement in court practice to enable children who are abused and neglected to be placed in safe and permanent homes in a timely fashion. In the report, the Committee recommended the creation of a state-sponsored system through the AOC for attorney ad litem representation of every child in dependency-neglect proceedings. A pilot program was initiated in the 13th Judicial District in 1999, followed by the creation of a statewide system of contracts for attorneys to represent children in dependency-neglect cases which started on January 1, 2000.

The Attorney Ad Litem Program recently celebrated their 10 year anniversary at the Fall AAL Conference held in Little Rock. The program currently has 32 full time attorneys and 40 part time contractors. On October 15, 2009, the program acknowledged the work of 35 attorneys who have zealously advocated on behalf of dependent-neglected children since the beginning of the program.



Senator Sue Madison Receives “First Branch Award”



Senator Sue Madison of Fayetteville was presented the “First Branch Award” during the fall Judicial Council meeting in Rogers. The award was established in 1992 to recognize outstanding service on behalf of and for the improvement of the state judicial system by a member of the Arkansas Legislature. Pictured: Senator Madison speaks to Judicial Council members after receiving the “First Branch Award” from Judge Vann Smith, Chairman of the Council’s Legislative Committee.

Jury Management Training



Representatives from the 3rd, 11th, and 16th Divisions in the 6th Judicial Circuit attended training at the AOC on October 23. On November 2, all divisions that hold jury trials in the 6th Circuit went “live” with the Jury Management Software. The software, which enables courts to manage the jury selection process, was created by ACS and is offered through the AOC at no cost to the courts. Currently 45 of Arkansas’s 75 counties use the software. For additional information, please contact Susan Yarbrow, Program Manager, at 800-950-8221 or 501-682-9400. Pictured: Judge Jay Moody-3rd Div. (background), Debbie Hall, Trial Court Assistant-3rd Div. (left), and LaQuina Reed, Trial Court Assistant-11th Div. listen to details of the jury software program.

Historic Trees Donated to Polk County

Mena, Arkansas suffered tremendous damage in April due to a tornado that passed through the area. All the trees around the courthouse were destroyed by the high winds. A committee, chaired by Bonnie Kenney, Jury Business Analyst, was established in the Administrative Office of the Courts to determine how best to assist, and a fund raising picnic was held in May at the Justice Building. With money collected from the fund raiser, nine trees were purchased from the American Forests' Historic

Tree Program: three John Madison Red Maples, three Chickamauga Black Maples, and three Montpelier Crape Myrtles.

Committee members traveled to Mena in October to be a part of the tree planting ceremony at the courthouse. Judge J.W. Looney, presiding judge in the 18th West Circuit, his Trial Court Assistant, Michelle Boehler, and other courthouse and county officials were present and assisted with the planting.



At the Justice Building picnic, Bonnie Kenney, displayed the “money tree” and pictures of the courthouse before and after the tornado.



Polk County Courthouse personnel, county officials, Garden Club members, and AOC staff gathered together with shovels in hand to plant the donated trees.

Veteran AOC Employee Retires

Dinda Hemphill

After being employed for over 27 years at the Administrative Office of the Courts, Dinda Hemphill is retiring in December. During those years at the AOC, Hemphill served as a data auditor, gathering statistical information from court files around the State. Data auditors in the AOC are now referred to as Regional Functional Specialists. Hemphill is retiring as the Regional Support Manager, a position that heads up the AOC's data gathering division.

Upon learning of Dinda's retirement,



John Stewart, Deputy Director of the AOC, commented, “I have had the privilege of working with Dinda for the last 27 years. She was so good at what she did; you never gave it a second thought. Now that she has decided to retire, all I do is think about it. I know that she has earned this, but it wasn't supposed to happen until I retired.

I speak for judges, clerks, trial court assistants and fellow coworkers that have depended on her knowledge and willingness to assist with whatever issue that had arisen, she will be missed. I will miss her too.”



Seven Arkansas District Judges were selected to attend the ABA Traffic Court Seminar held in Providence, Rhode Island in November. District Judges Robert Abney, Vic Fleming, Ben Beland, Marianne McBeth, David Saxon, John Finley and Park Eldridge represented Arkansas.

The program consisted of training for traffic-related violations and crimes, including specific training on radar, lidar, and other speed-detection devices, enforcement of violations detected by automatic cameras, issues related to teenaged drivers, handling pro se defendants and guilty pleas for due process, how to detect prima facie racial profiling based on traffic records, bonds, dispositions, case flow management, addiction, sentencing recommendations, and judicial ethics and elections.

While there, the judges and their spouses attended a program at the Rhode Island Capitol, complete with Colonial Militia and Minutemen in full regalia and with replica flintlock rifles, knives and bayonets.



Judge Marianne McBeth of Eureka Springs with an Officer of the Colonial Militia holding a prized original 1761 officer's sword at his side.

New faces in the Judiciary

Benton Co. (Sulphur Springs)
Peggy Gunter replaces Kathy Holland.

Mountain View - **Emmie Gentry** replaces Gail Jason.

CALENDAR

February

District & City Court 12
Clerks Certification- 2nd & 4th Districts (Little Rock)

District Court Officers 18-19
(Eureka Springs)

March

Trial Court Assistants Conf. 4-5
(North Little Rock)

April

Drug Court Conference 8-9
(Little Rock)

District Judges Spring 18-19
College/District Court Clerks Annual Mtg. (Rogers)



Happy Holidays



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Address Correction Requested

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are welcome.

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