



Friends of the Court

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Justice Building West Wing Dedicated



Chief Justice Arnold receives the keys to the West Wing from Robert L. Laman, Director of Arkansas State Building Services



Hon. Richard S. Arnold, Senior U.S. Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit, was the keynote speaker for the dedication.

A dedication ceremony for the Justice Building West Wing was held the afternoon of April 27th with approximately 250 guests attending. The Dedication Committee, appointed by the Supreme Court, consisted of Audrey Evans, Chair, Chief Justice W.H. "Dub" Arnold, Jack Deacon, Retired Justice Bob Dudley, J.D. Gingerich, Professor Mort Gitelman, Don Hollingsworth, Retired Chief Justice Jack Holt, Jr., former Chief Justice Brad Jesson, Peter Kumpe, Rosalind Mouser, Retired Justice David Newbern, Troy Price, Dennis Shackelford, Professor Scott Stafford, Charles Stewart, Court of Appeals Chief Judge John Stroud, Judge Joyce Warren and Carolyn

Witherspoon.

Master of Ceremonies for the event was Brad Jesson. Retired Chief Justice Jack Holt, Jr. introduced dignitaries and Mrs. George Rose Smith led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance. Remarks were made by Chief Justice Arnold, Governor Mike Huckabee, and Ron Harrison, President of the Arkansas Bar Association. The National Anthem was sung by Donald Creer and the invocation and benediction were given by The Reverend Rickey Hicks and The Reverend Peggy Hays, respectively. Robert Laman, Director of Arkansas State Building Services, presented a ceremonial key to the new building to Chief Justice Arnold. The

keynote speaker was the Honorable Richard S. Arnold, Senior U.S. Circuit Judge, United States Court of Appeals, Eighth Circuit.

Before and after the ceremony music was provided by Solid Brass of Little Rock, and self guided tours were open to the public, with assistance from the Supreme Court staff. Following the 3:00 P.M. dedication, the Arkansas Bar Association hosted a reception at the Arkansas Bar Center.



From the Director.....

Soon after I accepted the offer of employment as Director of what was then known as the Arkansas Judicial Department some thirteen years ago, I identified as one of the most pressing needs of our office and of the state court system the need for an integrated, comprehensive automation system. Despite many consultants and expensive reports and sincere and dedicated work and study by members of AOC staff and volunteers on court and court-related committees, we have very little to show for our efforts. It would be misleading to say that nothing has been done. A number of individual projects and the utilization of appropriate technology in specific settings are, in some instances, nothing short of impressive. As to movement toward a comprehensive statewide system, however, we are really no further along than we were thirteen years ago.

It is with much excitement and a sense of real optimism, therefore, that I am pleased to recognize and introduce Tim Holthoff as the Director of our State Court Automation Project. It is my honest belief that Tim's appointment marks the beginning of a process which will result in the implementation of a real system in the not-so-distant future. With the appropriation of a significant amount of money to our agency by the 2001 General Assembly, the active collaboration of a number of state agencies and the renewed leadership of the Arkansas Supreme Court Automation Committee, we are on the verge of making real and substantive progress. During the coming months there will be much discussion and communication between the project office and those entities and individuals who both serve and are affected by the court system. We owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the General Assembly, who were generous in their support of the project, and the assistance of the Arkansas Crime Information Center, through which federal funds from the U.S.

Department of Justice have been provided to fund the initial stages of the project office. The next two years will be exciting times for state court automation. It's about time!

J.D. Gingerich

Administrative Office of the Courts



Municipal Judges & Clerks Meet

Municipal Judges and Municipal & City Court Clerks met in Springdale in May for their Spring College and Certification Program, respectively. New Officers for both organizations have been elected for the 2001-2002 terms and are as follows:

Municipal Judges - President/Dennis James-Little Rock, 1st Vice President/Stephen Routon-Forrest City, 2nd Vice President/Kirk Johnson-Texarkana, Secretary/Treasurer/David



Stewart-Little Rock, Immediate Past President/Robert Abney-Des Arc, 1st District Rep./J.R. "Rusty" Porter-West Helena, 2nd District Rep./Jim Hamilton-North Little Rock, 3rd District Rep./Rodney Owens-Bentonville, and 4th District Rep./David Saxon-Fort Smith.

Municipal & City Court Clerks Association - President/Geneva Vance-Forrest City, 1st Vice President/Judy West-North Little Rock, 2nd Vice President/Judy DuVall-Russellville, Secretary/Debbie Lewis-Pine Bluff, Treasurer/Pat Lipps-Nashville, Historian/Ruby Baker-Beebe, and Parliamentarian/Marla Wallace-Gillette. District Representatives for the Clerks include: 1st-April Rasdon/Jonesboro, 2nd - Sherry Casey/Wrightsville, 3rd - Jimmy Story/Farmington, 4th - Carolyn Cole/Lewisville, At Large - Cheri Mitch/Greenwood and Mandy Hogg/Monticello.

HUMOR IN THE COURT

Q. Do you know if your daughter has ever been involved in voodoo or the occult?

A. We both do.

Q. Voodoo?

A. We do.

Q. You do?

A. Yes, voodoo.

Q. How old is your son, the one living with you?

A. Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

Q. How long has he lived with you?

A. Forty-five years.

ACAP Director Chosen



Tim Holthoff, Director of the Arkansas Supreme Court Library since 1999, has taken a leave of absence from the library to direct the Arkansas Court Automation Project (ACAP), beginning April 15, 2001. Ava Hicks, the Assistant Librarian, was named Acting Director of the Supreme Court Library while Holthoff is working on the automation project. Holthoff's position is funded by a National Criminal History Improvement Program grant to the AOC through the Arkansas Crime Information Center. The goal of the project will be to plan, select, and implement appropriate integrated systems to automate the general and limited jurisdiction courts in Arkansas. Holthoff will be working closely with the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Automation to complete the project. Holthoff may be contacted with questions or comments by mail at Suite 200 Aegon Building, 501 Woodlane Drive, Little Rock, AR 72201-1025, by phone at (501)683-4030, or by e-mail at Tim.Holthoff@mail.state.ar.us



Arkansas Court Automation Project

The Arkansas Court Automation Project (ACAP) is a new project under the auspices of the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the Arkansas Supreme Court Committee on Automation with an ultimate goal of connecting all the Circuit Courts and District Courts to a statewide automated court system that will be consistent with the goals of the Arkansas Integrated Justice Information System Council. The project will involve not only case management, but also document imaging, and eventually electronic filing. Important aspects of the project will be to permit public access to case information and automatic transmission of case dispositions to the Arkansas Crime Information Center (ACIC).

On April 15, 2001, Tim Holthoff, the director of the Arkansas Supreme Court Library since 1999, became the director of the Arkansas Court Automation Project when he took a leave of absence from the library. Before becoming director of the Supreme Court Library, he served as the Assistant Librarian for nearly a decade.

Mr. Holthoff is confident that his education and experience will benefit the court automation project. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science from the Vanderbilt University School of Engineering. He received a Master of Library Science degree from Vanderbilt University in 1988. In January 1998, he received a Juris Doctor With High Honors from the UALR School of Law, and was admitted to the Bar of Arkansas in March of 1998. Mr. Holthoff has presented several judicial education programs on computers and the Internet, has taught computer and legal research classes at Pulaski Technical College, and has taught a seminar on computer law as an adjunct faculty member at the UALR Law School. He has extensive experience with library automation, both at the Supreme Court Library, and as an automation librarian in Mississippi before he joined the Supreme Court.

ACAP's first task is to assess the funding situation. The ACAP office is funded by a National Criminal History Improvement Project (NCHIP) grant from the Bureau of Justice Statistics through ACIC to the AOC. The amount of the initial grant is \$105,500. These funds, which must be spent by September 30, are being used to set up the office and get the

project underway. ACAP is requesting additional grant funds from ACIC's 2001 NCHIP grant to fund the office through 2002. The ACAP office is presently located in Suite 200 of the Aegon Building, but will be moving to Suite 303 after July 1.

The AOC will receive several state appropriations for the project. Section 10 of Act 1418 of 2001 includes an appropriation of \$500,000 in each year of the biennium from the Judicial Fine Collection Enhancement Fund "for operating expenses for the purchase of computer hardware and software to be used for uniform assessment, collection, management, and reporting of judicial fines and other costs and services associated with the development and implementation of the state court automation system." These funds will focus on the automation of Circuit Courts.

Representative Jo Carson was instrumental in passing several acts supporting the automation of the District Courts. Act 1507 of 2001 appropriates 1.5 million dollars in each year of the biennium to the AOC for District Court automation from safety incentives received by the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department from the United States Transportation Department. Act 1590 of 2001 provides one million dollars each year of the biennium for District Court automation from the State Administration of Justice Fund.

In addition to the appropriations, two other acts impact statewide court automation. Act 1696 of 2001 implements a "performance based budgeting option for the state, counties, and cities to utilize for those courts which choose to acquire the uniform computer system selected by the Supreme Court Committee on Automation for the state's district courts." This Act permits District Courts or the State to contract with the automation vendor selected by the Automation Committee to pay a percentage of increased fine revenue for system maintenance. The Act directs the Automation Committee to develop forms for reporting and allocating fines, and requires District Courts to provide fine collection information to the Committee for the 12-month period preceding installation of the system.

Section 7 of Act 1809 of 2001 permits courts collecting fines under Ark. Code Ann. § 27-50-311 to retain two percent as a collection fee to be deposited in the city or county Court Automation Fund. Section 12 of the Act requires courts to deposit monthly into the city or county Court Automation Fund one half of the five-dollar service fee for installment payments of fines.

Finally, Act 1045 of 2001 modifies the uniform filing fees and court costs, and directs that thirty-five percent of the collection of certain fines be used to "purchase, maintain, and operate an automated records system."

With initial funding available, and avenues of additional funding to continue the project, ACAP and the Automation Committee have a challenging task before them. ACAP will immediately begin investigating the established workflow and dataflow in the courts, examining the current level of automation in the courts, and determining which vendors have systems appropriate for this project. Selecting a single vendor to serve both types of courts would be ideal; however, it may be necessary to select a different vendor for the Circuit and District Courts.

To accomplish these tasks, over the next several months, ACAP and members of the Automation Committee will be conducting visits to and surveys of the courts and meeting with vendors. In April and May, Mr. Holthoff attended the spring Judicial Council meeting and the ACIC System Conference in Hot Springs, and he visited with District Court judges and clerks in Springdale to begin collecting data on the courts' needs. This summer, Jeremy Bruner, a college intern, is helping Mr. Holthoff collect and compile data on court automation. In August, the Automation Committee will travel to Baltimore for the 7th Court Technology Conference, where the committee will interview several vendors.

After establishing the necessary elements for a statewide system and examining available systems, ACAP and the Committee will draft an RFP. By the end of the year, the Committee will likely select a vendor or vendors and begin implementing court (See ACAP, next page.)



(ACAP, cont.)

automation systems in District and Circuit Courts.

For this project to be successful, ACAP and the Automation Committee must keep the information from and to the courts flowing smoothly. ACAP is developing a set of web pages on the Arkansas Judiciary Home Page (<http://courts.state.ar.us>) to keep everyone posted on project developments. Visitors may reach the ACAP pages directly at <http://acap.state.ar.us>.

Please send questions or comments about the Arkansas Court Automation Project to Timothy N. Holthoff, Director, Arkansas Court Automation Project, Suite 200 (after July 1, Suite 303) Aegon Building, 501 Woodlane Drive, Little Rock, AR 72201, by phone at (501) 683-4030, by fax at (501) 682-6877, or by e-mail to Tim.Holthoff@mail.state.ar.us.



New Faces in the Judiciary

Municipal Clerks

East Camden - Deanna Landreth replaces Ann Nordmeyer.
Elkins - Becky Caler replaces Crystal Waggonery.
Miller County - Lisa Houser replaces Judy Wilson.

City Judges

Menifee - Bart Virden replaces Howard Yates.

City Clerks

Cotton Plant - Janice Hardy replaces Nicole Carroll.
Horseshoe Bend - Michelle Grabowski replaces Chuck Simmons.
Menifee - Betty Campregher replaces Sharon Wiggins.

CALENDAR

AUGUST

District Court Officers **2-3**
(Little Rock-Holiday Inn Select)

SEPTEMBER

District Judges Fall College **6-8**
(Heber Springs - Red Apple Inn)

CASA Conference **20-22**
(Little Rock-Doubletree Hotel)

District and City Court Clerk **21**
Certification (Eureka Springs-Inn of the Ozarks)

OCTOBER

Fall Judicial College* **17-20**
(Fort Smith-Holiday Inn)

Arkansas Court Reporters Assn. **19-20**
Fall Meeting-(Little Rock)

NOVEMBER

District and City Court Clerk **16**
Certification
(Little Rock - Holiday Inn Select)



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**Address
Correction
Requested**