

Arkansas ADR Commission

“Plans” continued from first page)

plans, the judicial circuits have recognized that the Arkansas Judiciary is in a transitional stage. We have considered this fact in passing judgment on their proposed plans. Identifying these practical problems at the front end will hopefully permit the General Assembly, as well as county quorum courts, to work with us in formulating answers to these issues, including the appropriation of necessary funding. Thus, we believe that a realistic target date for completing implementation of the new unified court system should be July 1, 2003. On that date, we expect all circuit judges to be available to try all ‘justifiable matters.’ ”

Of the plans which were submitted, the Court approved outright those from the 8th South and 9th West Circuits. Plans from fourteen other circuits were approved with some reservations. In four circuits, the proposed plans attempted to retain a distinction for equity jurisdiction, and these were rejected by the Court. In one circuit, the plan did not provide for random assignment of cases and selection of judges and was rejected. The Supreme Court also drafted and adopted its own plan for the three circuits in which no agreement was reached at the local level.

Each of the circuit plans and the Supreme Court’s per curiam order will be available for review on the Arkansas Judiciary Website at

<http://courts.state.ar.us>



The past year has been very busy for the Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission. The Commission has, among many other things, developed requirements for mediator skills and qualifications, developed rules for the conduct of mediators, created a statewide Roster of Mediators, set up a presence on the Arkansas Judiciary website, sponsored a week long mediation training course, awarded \$50,000 in grants and directed the continued growth of the only statewide mediation program.

Congratulations to the following organizations and programs for being awarded a grant from the Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission for 2001-2002!

Arkansas Bar Association - Family Law Section
Jefferson County Juvenile Court
Pulaski County & North Little Rock Municipal Court
Searcy Municipal Court
University of Arkansas - Child Study Center
University of Arkansas - Northwest
Arkansas Dependency-Neglect/FINS Project
University of Arkansas at Little Rock Institute of Government

The Commission applauds the dedicated work of the members of the Commission and acknowledges the contributions of two members in particular. Judge Warren Kimbrough (retired) and Gary Corum are both charter members of the Commission, having served as members since November 1995. Judge Kimbrough also generously served as Chairman during his tenure. During that time

they were both invaluable to the growth and development of the ADR Commission, and alternative dispute resolution in general. As of June 30, 2001, both men completed their terms. Chief Justice W.H. “Dub” Arnold was on hand at the June meeting for a special presentation acknowledging their dedicated service. While their presence on the Commission will be missed, both will continue to contribute to the development of alternative dispute resolution in Arkansas.

Robert Hornberger of Ft. Smith and Robert McCallum of Arkadelphia were appointed by Arkansas Supreme Court Chief Justice W.H. “Dub” Arnold to fill the open positions on the Commission. Their terms began on July 1, 2001 and expire June 30, 2007. Both men bring valuable experience, enthusiasm and new insight to the Commission.

In addition, Angie Pearrow has been hired to be the new Assistant Coordinator. Ms. Pearrow is originally from Helena, Arkansas and lived there for 18 years. She recently graduated from Hendrix College with a degree in Psychology and Sociology, and has a background in communications and volunteer management.



Angie Pearrow
Assistant ADR Coordinator

First Issue of Statistics Newsletter Unveiled

Benchmarks & Bar Charts: Arkansas Court Statistics Research is a new publication of the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) that will highlight the state's courts from a quantitative perspective. In fact, the newsletter's title is a pun using research-oriented words to allude to the judiciary and legal community.

The statistical newsletter is written for the lay reader with legal and mathematical terms explained in the analysis. Furthermore, the newsletter will be of interest to academic researchers and journalists alike as it highlights court data gathered and made available by the AOC.

The newsletter will be available in both a print and an electronic format, and data sets used in the analysis will be available for computer download. The electronic version and its downloads are available on the Arkansas Judiciary Web Site at http://courts.state.ar.us/courts/aoc_pubs.html.

The first issue of the quarterly newsletter addresses dependency-neglect cases filed in Arkansas' juvenile courts. Among the highlighted findings are the following:

Dependency-neglect filings have increased 31% from 2,119 in fiscal year 1999 to 2,779 in fiscal year 2000.

Dependency-neglect proceedings take 1.6 times as much court time as juvenile delinquency.

In calendar year 2000, 74% of all dependency-neglect filings were adjudicated by the court as abuse or neglect.

The newsletter is set to be released in January, April, July, and October of each year. Each report

will address a different court topic. Future issues will address criminal court topics, civil court topics, and special interest topics.

For further information, please contact Kellye Mashburn, Research Analyst at the Administrative Office of the Courts, by phone (501) 682-9400 or email at kellye.mashburn@mail.state.ar.us.

JUDICIAL



APPOINTMENTS

In June, Governor Mike Huckabee made two judicial appointments to fill positions that were created by the 2001 Legislature. In the 2nd Judicial Circuit, which consists of Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Greene, Mississippi and Poinsett Counties, William Fergus was appointed as a circuit judge. Fergus received his bachelor's degree from Westminster College in Missouri and his law degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Prior to his appointment to the trial bench, Judge Fergus was serving as Municipal Judge in Osceola.

Keith Rutledge was appointed by Gov. Huckabee to the position of circuit judge in the 16th Judicial Circuit. Rutledge attended the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville for both his undergraduate and law degrees. Judge Rutledge was serving as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for the 16th Judicial District at the time of his appointment.



Congratulations to Vicky Maxwell, Stuttgart Municipal Court Clerk, who received the "Municipal Court Clerk of the Year" award at the Municipal and City Court Clerks' Association meeting in May. She was chosen out of more than 200 municipal and city court clerks to receive the honor. Maxwell has worked for the city of Stuttgart for the past 25 years. First as the deputy court clerk and now the Municipal Court Clerk.



Be sure and check out District (Municipal) Court and Circuit Court web sites in Arkansas that are linked from the Arkansas Judiciary home page. <http://courts.state.ar.us>

From the Arkansas Judiciary home page, go to "Circuit Courts" listed on the left of the page. Open that link and you will find web sites listed at the bottom for the 9th West Circuit Court, Pulaski County Chancery Court, Pulaski County Circuit Court, Saline County Courts, and White County Courts.

For District Courts, open the "District Courts", below "Circuit Courts" on the home page, and at the bottom are listed web sites for Maumelle, McGehee, Mountain Home, Pulaski County, Rogers, Searcy, and Siloam Springs.



New Faces in the Judiciary

AOC

Angie Pearrow - Assistant Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator

Bridgitte Newson - Administrative Assistant for Dependency Neglect

Terri Wardlaw - Administrative Secretary

Maggie Honorable - Case Coordinator

Holly Heitt - Assistant Judicial Education Specialist

Circuit (formerly Circuit, Chancery, Circuit/Chancery) Judges

2nd - **Lee Fergus** is the new Circuit Judge.

16th - **Keith Rutledge** is the new Circuit Judge.

Case Coordinators

2nd - (Fergus) - **Nikki Maness** is the new case coordinator.

4th - (Gunn) - **Linda Massanelli** replaces Lynn Simco.

4th - (Mashburn) - **Ann Wood** replaces Kelly Montgomery.

16th - (Rutledge) - **Tabatha Evans** is the new case coordinator.

Court Reporters

2nd (Fergus) - **Cynthia D. White** is the new court reporter.

2nd (Hill) - **Iris Brooks** is the court reporter.

District (formerly Municipal) Judges

Osceola - **Mike Gibson** replaces Lee Fergus.

City Clerks

Holly Grove - **Stephen Tyler** replaces Gigi Kelly.

Rose Bud - **Wyevette Jackson** replaces Linda Moore.

Greenbrier - **Sarah Watson** replaces Judith McEuen.

Sulphur Springs - **Jane Smith** replaces Rhonda Mize.

County Judge

Lonoke - **Bill "Pete" Pedersen** replaces Charlie Troutman

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

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

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

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

OCTOBER

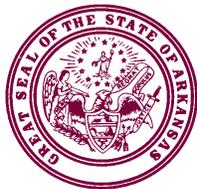
Fall Judicial College* (Fort Smith-Holiday Inn) **17-20**

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

NOVEMBER

Juvenile Judges Annual Conf. (Heber Springs - Red Apple Inn) **7-9**

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



Friends of the Court

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Friends of the Court is a bi-monthly publication by the Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts. Contributions, comments, and inquiries are welcome. Please submit to **Friends of the Court**, A.O.C., Justice Building, 625 Marshall, Little Rock, AR 72201. Tel. (501) 682-9400. Karolyn Bond, Editor.

**Address
Correction
Requested**