



# Friends of the Court

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## ArLAP – Helping Lawyers Find Personal Solutions.....Now

Lawyers and judges spend their professional lives negotiating, advocating and protecting their clients. They do it for the love of the law and their profession.

Yet, lawyers and judges are no less vulnerable than others to life struggles. They are proportionately overrepresented among those battling alcoholism, drug abuse and mental health problems, a fact understandable in view of personal and professional patterns of over achievement, heavy workloads, intense competition, and daily stress. As professionals in positions of special trust, the consequences of their impairment are potentially greater.

Arkansas lawyers and judges have a safety net. Have you heard?

The Supreme Court of Arkansas established the Arkansas Lawyers Assistance Program (ArLAP) which is open to all lawyers and judges in the state who may be experiencing problems as the result of alcohol, drug abuse, mental health concerns, physical disability, trauma or aging. In doing so, the Supreme Court recognized the need for privacy and amended the Arkansas Model Rules of Conduct, Rule 8.3 (d) and (e) and the Arkan-

sas Judicial Code of Conduct, Canon 3D (4) and (5) to relax the reporting requirements within the assistance program.

ArLAP is a specialized version of the familiar employee assistance program which provides confidential assistance exclusively to members of the legal profession, their coworkers and families. Services include, but are not limited to:

**Assessment and Referral:** Confidential referrals are as simple as a phone call, email or personal contact. The ArLAP Director and/or members of the Committee personally follow up on all referrals and meet with the lawyer or judge and concerned others to assess the problem and recommend appropriate evaluation, treatment and rehabilitation options.

**Interventions:** When appropriate, the ArLAP Director will

plan, rehearse and facilitate a formal intervention to assist the affected person to access services, allowing recovery to begin.

**Peer Support Network:** ArLAP provides a statewide network of recovering lawyers and judges who are trained volunteers to provide support and guidance into the recovery process for a wide variety of clinical issues.

**Education and Prevention:** ArLAP works with law firms, the courts, state and local bar associations to provide individualized educational programs, intervention skills and early identification techniques.

It is an exciting time for the Arkansas legal profession, and a great opportunity to help your fellows. To learn more, just contact ArLAP

(501.907.2529).



ArLAP Director, Gail Harbor

## Integrating the Criminal Justice Systems in Arkansas

Like many other states in the country, Arkansas is exploring ways to electronically link all of its criminal justice systems for information sharing. The Arkansas Integrated Justice Information Systems Coordinating Council, created by Act 1272 of 2001 to lead this project, envisions state-wide, seamlessly interfaced criminal justice information systems. The council's goal is for local law-enforcement agencies, prosecuting and defense attorneys' offices, state courts, correction facilities, and all affiliated state agencies to be able to electronically share data, eliminating duplicate data entry and delays in providing criminal justice data to each other.



While many criminal justice agencies have existing systems that meet their needs, a problem usually occurs when information has to be transferred from one agency to another. To transfer that data, usually a document has to be printed and delivered to the receiving agency, where the information is then manually entered into that agency's system. Obviously, printing a document from one system and delivering it to another agency for entry into that agency's system is not particularly efficient. It would be quicker and more reliable to electronically transfer the information between agencies. Once data is transferred, it can be received into

the existing system without manually re-entering it. This avoids the inevitable errors generated by re-entry, and, most importantly, makes information available



*instantly* to those who need it.

Timely access to information is a critical factor at many justice decision points (for example, setting bail). Reliable, complete, timely data will significantly improve the quality of justice — an intangible that too often is measured by the size of civil suits resulting from improper confinement, improper release, or other errors traceable to poor data quality or untimely access to critical information.

Integration does not mean creating a separate "super" information system that exists outside of the agencies and entities. In an integrated system, justice agencies maintain control of their information and make that information available to authorized users. Protocols and standards guide the interagency exchange of information at key decision points in the justice process.

A Pilot Project has begun in Faulkner County to integrate the Sheriff's Office, the Faulkner County Detention Facility, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Circuit Clerk's Office, and the Circuit Courts, and ultimately the affiliated state agencies. Directly supporting the statewide criminal justice system's integration effort is the AOC's Arkansas Court Automation Project which will automate all courts and provide electronic filing.

Additional information is available on the Arkansas IJIS web page: [www.ijis.state.ar.us](http://www.ijis.state.ar.us) or by contacting Brenda Barber, project director, at [brenda.barber@mail.state.ar.us](mailto:brenda.barber@mail.state.ar.us)



**Pam King**

As of March 1<sup>st</sup>, Ms. Pam King, formerly of Arkadelphia, became the new Office Manager for the Administrative Office of the Courts. Ms. King replaces Nancy Jewell who is now serving as a data auditor for the AOC.

Ms. King has worked in the Circuit Court system since 1992, with the past three years as Circuit Clerk for Clark County.



The Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission will be accepting grant applications for projects promoting or furthering the use of ADR in Arkansas. Application deadline is May 10, 2002 at 5:00 P.M. For an application or further information, contact the Arkansas ADR Commission at (501) 682-9400.

## Case Coordinators Attend Their Annual Meeting



(L.-R.) Donna Zaerr(14th), Eunice Dunkin (14th)Diane Duncan (11thW), and RaLenn McBee(14th).



(L.-R.) Sarah Bird (13th), Verna Clark(13th), Nancy Hargett(13th), Tonja Gill(13th), and Linda Wolfe(13th).

Case Coordinators met in Hot Springs on February 28<sup>th</sup> - March 1<sup>st</sup> for their annual conference. 57 of their members attended the event at the Arlington Hotel. The two days were filled with educational sessions on Amendment 80 and it's changes, the Court Automation Project, pro se litigants, life altering changes in probate and chancery court, the ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) Commission, and the Supreme Court Professional Conduct Committee. Next year's annual meeting is scheduled to occur on March 6th and 7th.

### Arkansas ADR Commission - ADR Summit

The Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission hosted ADR Summit 2002 on March 15, 2002 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas. The growth of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in Arkansas over the past several years was examined through the government, courts, private sector, and educational institutions. Representatives from various programs across the state provided a "snapshot" of their dispute resolution programs, including their successes and challenges. The goal was to give the participants a picture of what is happening in ADR in the state and to help develop a plan for the future.

The Summit was a success! Close to 100 people participated in the Summit, including 24 speakers highlighting the successes and challenges of 18 different ADR programs.

Shannon Hall, Director of the Arkansas Access and Visitation Mediation Program reported that the program has grown exponentially over the past two years, expanding from 8 cases referred in 1999 to over 200 cases referred last year. Judge Gayle Ford of the 18<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit spoke

of his experience with the Program, explaining the benefits of the program to the children it serves and to the parents who find a new way to communicate and a better way to solve their problems through mediation. Judge Joyce Warren of the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit spoke about the benefits of using mediation in dependency/neglect cases. She refers cases to the Dependency/Neglect Mediation Program at the UALR School of Law Mediation Clinic. Judge Warren believes that mediation is a valuable tool in the effort to get families the services they need and effectively resolve dependency-neglect cases.

The University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock reported great success with their mediation clinics and ADR course work. Both schools are teaching conflict resolution curriculum to students in undergraduate, graduate, and law school programs. Alternative Dispute Resolution courses have become an integral part of the education for budding professionals and attorneys. Angela Brenton, Dean of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's College of Professional Studies,

announced that they have proposed an inter-disciplinary 15 -hour graduate certificate program in Conflict Mediation based on courses drawn from business, communications, education, law, public administration, psychology, and social work.

Government agencies such as the Arkansas Employment Security Department, Arkansas Insurance Department and the Arkansas Worker's Compensation Commission were also represented at the Summit. Jackie Moore, from the Arkansas State Government Uniform Grievance Procedure spoke about the state's inter-agency pilot mediation program to address employee-employer disputes within state agencies. By offering mediation, the program provides a neutral place for employers and employees to discuss their problems and concerns.

The Better Business Bureau of Arkansas was represented by Janet Robb, who spoke about the Bureau's Dispute Resolution Division. Conciliation, mediation, and arbitration are offered to consumers and businesses to

(See **ADR** next page)



(ADR continued)

help resolve customer concerns and problems that may not be suitable for litigation. The program has been extremely successful and has helped customers quickly address disputes at a low cost.

The biggest challenge for most dispute resolution programs is securing sustainable funding to maintain existing programs and fund new programs. Education of the public and attorneys about the benefits of mediation and alternative dispute resolution processes was also a major challenge for many of the programs. However, the achievements of the programs already in place provides a great deal of optimism for ADR advocates. ADR is developing rapidly across the state thanks to those of you who provided so much support to the ADR Commission and other dispute resolution programs across the state.

## New Faces in the Judiciary

### District Judges

Melbourne - **David Miller** replaces Dwayne Lawrence.

Lonoke - **Kenneth Williams** replaces Jerry Kelly.

### District Court Clerks

Booneville - **Amanda Farley** replaces Sherry Hughes.

### Case Coordinators

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

5th (Coker) - **Erika Bower** replaces Shirely Stewart.

### Court Reporters

17th (Mills) - **Shirley Perry** replaces Alan Hill.

### City Judges

Elm Springs - **Stephen Taylor** replaces Rodney Owens.

### City Court Clerks

Mountain Pine - **Pamela Irons** replaces Mable Garner.

Centerton - **Elizabeth Lewis** is the clerk.

### AOC Staff

Auditor - **Sherri Cole** is a new auditor.

### Circuit Clerks

Clark County - **Betty Clower** replaces Pam King.

## CALENDAR

### APRIL

Circuit Judges' Changing Hats - **11-12**  
Probate (Little Rock - Holiday Inn Select)

### MAY

Circuit Judges' Changing Hats - **9-10**  
Juvenile (Little Rock - Holiday Inn Select)

District Court Judges' Spring College **16-18**  
(Hot Springs - Arlington Hotel)

District/City Court Clerks Cert. **16-18**  
(Hot Springs - Arlington Hotel)

Children and the Law **22-24**  
(Fayetteville - Radisson Hotel)

### JUNE

Spring Judicial College/Council Mtg. **12-14**  
(Hot Springs - Majestic Hotel)

Official Court Reporters' Program **14-15**  
(Hot Springs - Majestic Hotel)

### SEPTEMBER

Adjusting Your Hats/Criminal & Civil **13**  
(Little Rock-Holiday Inn Select)

District/City Court Clerks' Cert. **20**  
(Little Rock - Holiday Inn Select)

CASA Conference (North Little Rock Hilton) **20-21**

District Judges' Fall College **26-28**  
(Heber Springs - Red Apple Inn)



### 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**