Equal Justice Under Law

March 2014

Judicial Branch News

Judicial Photo Day 2014

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Cover - Superior Court Judges gather on the front steps of the Old Courthouse for a group photo.

Judicial Branch News

The Judicial Branch News is an online newsletter published by the Media Relations Department.

If you wish to contribute to this newsletter, please send articles, news items, photos or other correspondence to: karra@superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.

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Photo - Sheila Copalman (left) and Debbie Croci (right)

Celebrating 30 Years of Work and Friendship

If you ask Sheila Copalman and Debbie Croci about their 30-year careers at Superior Court, they will talk about their special friendship.

On January 16, Sheila, a judicial assistant for Judge Michael Gordon at Northeast, and Debbie, a court reporter at the Downtown Complex, celebrated their 30-year anniversary with Superior Court. The two friends started working for now retired Judge Stephen Gerst on the same day in 1984.

“We met at Judge Gerst’s swearing-in ceremony, and we’ve remained best friends,” said Debbie. “We’ve been through births, deaths and cancer together. I even taught Sheila how to pump gas and use her cell phone.”

The women have fond memories, especially the 22 years they spent together with Judge Gerst.

“We had so much fun that staff from other divisions were jealous. In fact, they would call me to ask when I was leaving because they wanted my job,” Sheila said.

Much of their fun centered around birthday celebrations and practical jokes. Nobody was off limits, including the judge.

“Our court family has been and continues to be a major part of who we are. Deb and I have been so fortunate to have shared this amazing experience,” Sheila said.

Despite the distance between their homes and work locations, Sheila and Debbie talk every day and visit any chance they get. They still reach out to Judge Gerst and celebrate birthdays and special dates, including January 16th.

Court Prepares for Commissioner JPS

From April 1 to June 24, Superior Court will be distributing surveys to litigants, witnesses, jurors, attorneys and court personnel to measure the performance of Court Commissioners.

Surveys will be available online at the Self-Service Centers and handed out in court. Also, surveys may be mailed; no postage is necessary.

During the survey period, each Commissioner or courtroom staff member will begin every court session with a brief statement regarding the Commissioner Judicial Performance Surveys (JPS).

Survey results will be compiled and posted by the Administrative Office of the Courts, as required by law, and provided to each Commissioner.

The evaluation of commissioners is required by statute, rule, and administrative orders: A.R.S. § 12-119.04; Arizona Supreme Court Rule 97; Supreme Court Admin. Order 2012-21 (Feb. 29, 2012); Superior Court Admin. Order No. 2010-103.

Boxes of Commissioner performance surveys awaiting distribution.

Training for Judicial Performance Surveys

Superior Court is making preparations for the upcoming Commissioner Judicial Performance Survey (JPS) season.

Administrative Order 2010-103 specifies, *To ensure consistent administration of the survey, all Commissioners, staff and administrative staff are required to attend training regarding JPR in every even-numbered year.* Training and packet distribution sessions for Commissioners, judicial assistants, bailiffs and courtroom clerks (clerks in courtroom settings where they will be involved in distributing the surveys) are scheduled as follows:

- **Downtown complex:** March 25 (Tuesday) at 12:15 in Table One with video conferencing to Durango, Southeast, Northeast, Northwest
- **Durango:** March 25 (Tuesday) at 4:00 in Room 1164
- **Southeast:** March 26 (Wednesday) at 12:15 in Judges Dining Room
- **Northeast:** March 27 (Thursday) at 12:15 in Multipurpose Room
- **IA Court:** Training to be announced

Packets with JPS surveys, posters, and other relevant information are available at the training sessions. Packets must be obtained prior to survey distribution on Tuesday, April 1.

If there are any specific questions that need to be addressed before the training, feel free to contact Diana Hegyi or Commissioner James Morrow.

Submitted by Commissioner James Morrow

Employee Anniversaries

5 Years
Delia Carranza, Judicial Clerk
Dana Lowe, Security Officer II
Rosie Roque, Judicial Clerk

10 Years
Dorothy Webber, Judicial Financial Clerk
Margaret Ennis, Judicial Clerk Associate
Michael Chavez, Building Maintenance Supervisor

15 Years
Nancy Musser, Judicial Clerk Associate
Gloria Vallecillo, Case Administrator
Jeffrey Luick, Surveillance Officer
Lorna Guffin, Judicial Financial Clerk
Linda Zeamer, Communications System Operator

20 Years
Jacqueline Williams, Adult Probation Officer

25 Years
Laura Ashbrook, Court Reporter
Janet Wiebelhaus, Judicial Assistant

30 Years
Geraldine Okuna, Judicial Clerk

34 Years
Cindy Butler, Court Investigator

** Information provided by Debbie Gilliland in the Human Resources Department.*

Criminal Court Administration awarded certificates to Judicial Assistant Jan Landmeier and Bailiff Larry Forte for 30 years of service at Superior Court.

Judge Announces Retirement

Maria del Mar Verdin

Judge Maria del Mar Verdin, who was appointed to the Bench in 1999, announced her retirement, effective April 27.

In a letter to the Governor, Judge Verdin said, "It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with my fellow jurists and our many dedicated administrators, clerks and staff, on a bench that is nationally recognized for the outstanding service it provides the people of Arizona."

During her tenure, Judge Verdin presided over Civil, Family, Juvenile and Criminal Court matters. She also served as a Court Commissioner for four years.

Presiding Judge Norman Davis said, "Judge Verdin is well-known for her affable, courteous, and professional demeanor and has been a real asset to our Court and the administration of justice during the last 18 years. She has also been a calming and insightful voice for merit selection during her time as a member of the Arizona Commission on Judicial Performance Review. We will miss her, but wish her the best in her well-deserved retirement."

Judge Mead's Investiture

Arizona Supreme Court Justice Robert Brutinel delivers the oath of office to Superior Court Judge Kathleen Mead during her investiture ceremony in Phoenix.

CASA Wins Award

The National CASA Association awarded CASA of Maricopa County its Promising Practices Spotlight Award for its Court Orientation Dependent Youth Program (CODY) in Juvenile Court.

CASA of Maricopa County will receive the award at the National CASA Conference in Grapevine, TX on June 7-10.

CASA was honored for its exceptional leadership in supporting its volunteer advocates' efforts on behalf of older youth in the foster care system.

CODY helps foster youth 12 years and older better understand the dependency process and become empowered to self-advocate; ensuring that more youth actively participate in their cases.

"We are honored by the good standing and recognition we receive from the National CASA Association which allows us to continue the good work that we do," said Laurie Laughlin, program director at CASA of Maricopa County.

Submitted by Justine Grabowsky

Phil Knox Named Editor of National Publication

Phil Knox

The National Association for Court Management appointed General Jurisdiction Court Administrator Phil Knox as editor of its Court Manager quarterly journal.

Knox will be responsible for reviewing and overseeing its publication.

"I'm excited for this opportunity. The Court Manger is a nationally recognized publication that serves as a research tool for many judges and court systems. It provides insightful and substantive information in many areas of the law," Knox said.

The National Association for Court Management, the largest organization of court management professionals, has more than 1,700 members from the United States, Canada, Australia, and other countries.

Southeast Remodel

Restoration and upgrades began in the courtrooms, jury rooms, hallways, Court Administration and Family Court Conference Center lobby areas, and other open spaces at the Southeast Regional Center.

Most of the renovation will involve installing new carpet in all court and jury rooms, painting, drywall, plaster and replacement of ceiling tiles.

The County "Refresh" construction project will be completed in phases; renovation began on the first floor on March 10; the second floor on March 25; the third floor on 4/11; the fourth floor is expected to begin on 4/28.

The final walk through is scheduled for 5/12.

Submitted by Tanya Luther

Connecting Communities and the Court

Photo (left to right): Gilbert Jacinto (Juvenile Court Guide), Lisa Nash, Julio Flores, Andrea Perez and Pat Mesa (Juvenile Court Guide).

Gilbert Jacinto provides information to a member of the community.

On Saturday, March 8th, five Juvenile court staff members and ASU student-interns participated in the 5th Annual Arts and Academics family event at John R. Davis Elementary School in the Roosevelt School District in South Mountain.

At the event, Juvenile Court employees met and shared with parents and adults how the Juvenile Court and the Community Services Unit may serve as a resource for their families. An estimated 4000 volunteers, children and adults were in attendance.

The CSU team can answer questions about the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. This includes non-legal questions about guardianship, emancipation, dependency, child safety, behavioral issues and mental health services.

Submitted by Linda Sandbloom

Superior Court to Celebrate Law Day

The Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County invites all Maricopa County students in 11th and 12th grade students to participate in a competition to celebrate Law Day, 2014. The focus of this year's competition will be the current relevance of the Magna Carta, which will be 800 years old in 2015. Students may participate in either an essay or an art competition, or both.

The Magna Carta was written in the middle of an English field in 1215 by a group of disillusioned barons who were tired of the restraints of the feudal system imposed upon them by the King. The principles set forth in the Magna Carta found their way into English law. When Englishmen left their homeland for the new colonies, they took with them their traditions and their knowledge of the legal precepts set forth in the Magna Carta. This singular document became the basis for the charters of the Massachusetts Bay and Virginia colonies and was revered and emulated in fledgling United States.

The Magna Carta provided the basis for the idea of a higher law, one that could not be altered either by executive mandate or legislative acts. In turn, the Magna Carta established some fundamental concepts of liberty that our founders accepted, refined, and embedded as core principles in our government and in our thinking.

For the essay competition:

- Questions: As we reflect on the Magna Carta's 800-year legacy, is the concept of a "higher law" still applicable? How does the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution reflect the ideals set forth in the Magna Carta? What is the relevance of the Supremacy Clause and the Magna Carta in modern America?
- Specifications: Please provide your answer in 3-5 pages, one-sided, double spaced, Arial 12 point font. Margins must be at least 1.5 inches on all sides.
- Essays should be submitted in Microsoft Word format.
  For the art competition:
- Concept: Create an original piece of artwork that depicts how the Supremacy Clause reflects the ideals set forth in the Magna Carta.
- Specifications:
- Medium: Your choice of watercolor, ink, acrylic, oil, goache, pen and pencil, pen or pencil, pastel (or any combination thereof)
- Size: 9" x 12"
- Entries should be submitted electronically as a jpeg. Do not submit original art. If your entry is selected, we will ask for the original, where it may be displayed at a court location.

Submit Entries to: Entries should be submitted to kvogel@superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.

Deadline: All entries must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 1, 2014.

Judging: Winners will be determined by the Superior Court. All decisions will be final.

Prize: Winners will be awarded a certificate and signed copy of the Magna Carta from US Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O' Connor: The Foundation of Freedom 1215 - 2015. An award ceremony will be held on Law Day, May 1, 2014 in the Old Courthouse at 125 West Washington Street, Phoenix AZ 85003.

Commissioners

Superior Court Commissioners gather on the front steps of the Old Courthouse for a group photo.

Executive Leadership Team

First Row *- Judicial Branch Administrator Raymond Billotte, Adult Probation Chief Barbara Broderick, Phil Hanley, Hugh Gallagher.* ***Second Row*** *- Juvenile Probation Chief Eric Meaux, Phil Knox, Diana Hegyi, Karen Westover.* ***Third Row*** *- Richard Woods, Danna Quinn and Presiding Judge Norman Davis.*

Executive Directors

Juvenile Probation Chief Eric Meaux, Adult Probation Chief Barbara Broderick and Judicial Branch Administrator Raymond Billotte.

Departmental Presiding Judges

Front Row *- Judge Dean Fink (Tax), Judge Joseph Welty (Criminal), Judge Andrew Klein (Probate/Mental Health), Judge Colleen McNally (Juvenile).* ***Back Row*** *- Presiding Commissioner James Morrow, Judge John Rea (Civil), Judge Janet Barton (Associate Presiding and Family) and Presiding Judge Norman Davis.*