

GENESEE COUNTY CIRCUIT AND PROBATE COURTS E-NEWSLETTER

a quarterly publication

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VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION GUIDE

Volunteers are an essential resource. They work to improve communities and help organizations meet their mission.

The court has been fortunate to have an amazing group of volunteers.

Basically, there are two types of court volunteers: *Information Desk Volunteers* and the volunteers who serve in family division in a capacity we call *Officers of the Day*.

The *information desk volunteers* serve as ambassadors for the court. They are centrally stationed in the court and frequently are the first person with whom the public intersects.

Court officer volunteers serve in a quasi-bailiff capacity in the family division of circuit court. They coordinate proceedings before a judge or referee.

The current *Information Desk Volunteers* are below:

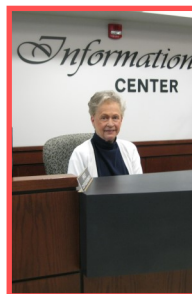
Edie Campbell has been with us since 2001 and is one of the original information desk volunteers. She is active in Last Chance Rescue, an organization committed to finding homes for abandoned pets. She is retired from General Motors where she worked in the Public Relations Department.



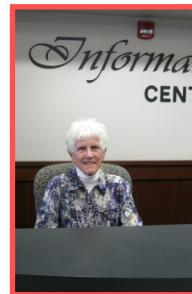
Matt McEwen joined us in 2003. He is a retired General Motors employee who worked at the V8 engine plant for 34 years.



Nancy Clark joined us in 2007. She is a retired nurse who worked at Hurley Medical Center for 26 years. In addition, she spent 15 years with the U.S. Army Reserve.



Shirley Dreasky is another one of our original volunteers. She joined us in September, 2001 after her daughter, Dawne Nicholas, told her we were looking for help.



Shirley Wallace heard of us through another volunteer experience and became interested in joining the courthouse team. She has a long tenure of volunteer service, including working with the Hurley Hospital Auxiliary.

Hospital Auxiliary.

The current *Court Officer Volunteers* are:



Herb Jensen has volunteered since 1998. He is a retired teacher who also operates a working farm. He currently serves in Judge Thiele's courtroom on Tuesdays.

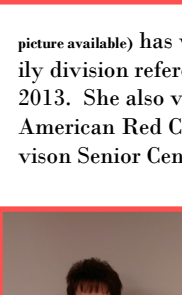


Greg Bisonette is a retired Delphi plant quality manager and has also volunteered for the Flint Police Westside Mini Station. He works on Thursday mornings in

family division referee office assisting with post termination reviews.



Mary Hick Tibbs started volunteering for Judge Newblatt in 2004. She is retired from the Genesee Intermediate School District.



Janet Jones (no picture available) has worked in the family division referee office since 2013. She also volunteers for the American Red Cross and the Davison Senior Center.



Robyn Brown is a retired skilled trades worker. She volunteers on Tuesdays in Judge Behm's courtroom. She also volunteers at the Flint Art Fair and Back to the Bricks.

There are other information desk volunteers who are no longer active. We acknowledge and recognize their invaluable service: Rob-bye Holloway, Don Landesman, Judi Landesman and Coral Sharp.

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THE CHIEF SPEAKS

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year! 2015 promises to be a year of planning for creative and productive ways to be the court of the future. Courtroom technology, electronic record storage and working across traditional lines between divisions, courts and other governmental agencies is on the horizon. We have a great court team that is certainly up to the challenge. I appreciate the willingness to travel the road of change.

2013 Trial Court Performance Review



On October 22, 2014, SCAO Regional Court Administrator Jim Hughes presided over a meeting to which all of the Probate and Circuit Judges were invited to review court

performance measures for 2013. Bobbi Morrow, former judicial advisory assistant for Judge Farah, and current SCAO Management Analyst, was also present. The materials reviewed included:

- New filing trends
- Case age disposition rates and trends
- Clearance rates and trends
- Problem solving courts recidivism data
- Public satisfaction survey
- Collections model program components
- Court appointed counsel payments
- Performance measures implementation plan

The judges and staff are working hard to deliver services to the public.

92% of civil cases - disposed of within the time guidelines
94% of felony cases - disposed of within the time guidelines
96% of domestic cases with minor children - disposed of within the time guidelines
99% of domestic cases with no

minor children - disposed of within the time guidelines
100% of probate estates, trusts, guardianships, conservatorships and protective orders - disposed of within the time guidelines

All court cases are under the management of a dedicated group of judges and court staff, doing their job every day for the citizens of Genesee County. -cjrby

SPECIALTY COURTS

I also want to highlight the judicial teams who preside over and support the specialty court programs of the Circuit and Probate Courts.

Adult Felony Drug Court,
 67th District Court Judge Mark W. Latchana,
 Presiding as a Circuit Court Judge
 Family Dependency Drug Court,
 Judge Duncan M. Beagle
 Truancy Court,
 Judge Duncan M. Beagle
 Juvenile Drug Court,
 Judge John A. Gadola
 Mental Health Court (Adult and Juvenile),
 Judge Jennie E. Barkey
 Veterans Mental Health Court,
 Judge Jennie E. Barkey
 Business Court,
 Judge Judith A. Fullerton
 Maltreated Infant and Toddler Court (Baby Court),
 Judge David J. Newblatt
 Girls Court (pending implementation),
 Judge David J. Newblatt

Nearly every member of the court staff supports specialty court programming in one way or another. Please know that your work is appreciated by myself and the other judges.

ADMINISTRATOR CORNER

I often encourage lawyers and other visitors to discover the historical side of the courthouse. I believe that we work in one of the most beautiful courthouses in the State of Michigan. Most of the larger counties in our state have long ago moved out of a historical building and built a non-descript, functional, government building to house court services. In contrast, many of the rural counties have maintained their historical build-

ings and refurbished the courtrooms to their previous splendor. But the rural counties generally have only one or two restored courtrooms. Genesee County took a hybrid approach several years ago by restoring several courtrooms and building a major addition with new offices and courtrooms. The cost of the restoration of the historical courtrooms was funded entirely by private donations from lawyers, the Genesee County Bar

Foundation, and a grant from the Ruth Mott Foundation. The planners were dedicated to maintaining the historical integrity of the 1926 building. The facade of the addition matches the older building, and both sides of the courthouse contain many historical photographs from the Flint area. As a result, the overall effect is a seamless blend of old and new, and a working courthouse that contains a museum of art and local history. The

sweeping murals behind each Judge's bench in the historical courtrooms are inspiring. I have previously worked in a tiny office located above a convenience store in Wakayama, Japan, and a windowless classroom in a deteriorating Flint High School. As a result, I truly appreciate coming to work every day in a building that is a historical treasure.

-jbauer

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Ruby Allen, judicial secretary to Judge Theile, retired in December 2014. She hired in to the county in 1991 and worked 14 years for Judge Robert Ransom. She began working for Judge Theile in 2005.

We will miss Ruby's smile. She always extended herself to help the self-represented litigants.

Angela Marsh is the new judicial secretary. Previously, she worked nine years in the Friend of the Court as caseworker.

Melissa Gifford was hired in December as a court collection specialist. She is located in the Reimbursement office and brings 28 years of court collection experience with her.

Cheryl Wyms retired from the court services division, formerly known as pre-trial services. Cheryl was assigned to the jail population management team.



Angela Marsh and
Ruby Allen

"We have a fundamental responsibility to ensure each child grows up knowing the love of a permanent family."

Judge Jennie E.
Barkey

ADOPTION DAY

Two families welcomed the newest members of their families when their adoptions were finalized Tuesday, Nov. 25, as part of Michigan Adoption Day.

Michigan Adoption Day is held each year on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. Participating courts finalize adoptions, hold parties for adoptive families, and educate the public about the adoption process. Michigan Adoption Day is co-sponsored by the Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan Department of Human Services, Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, and the Child Welfare Services Division of the State Court Administrative

Office. Currently, there are several hundred children in Genesee County who are placed in foster care and many of those children are available for adoption and are waiting for a loving, permanent home. Probate Court Judge Jennie E. Barkey told those in attendance, "Family has absolutely nothing to do with genetics. It has to do with relationships that never, ever die." The confirmation hearings were preceded by a song from the Glee Club of Northwestern Academy High School and comments from Undersheriff, Christopher Swanson. "This celebration is to honor those who have opened their

hearts and homes through adoption," Barkey explained. "We also recommit ourselves to providing support to all children who still need a home to call their own. We have a fundamental responsibility to ensure each child grows up knowing the love of a permanent family." -rihm



- **REMINDER:** Follow us on twitter @7thcourt for important court announcements, inclement weather notification and schedule changes. You can also read our posts on Facebook, 7th Circuit Court Flint.
- In January 2015, the juvenile records staff and the circuit and probate administrative staff will spend a significant amount of time reviewing and auditing two mandat-

ed reports that must be uploaded to SCAO by January 31st. The *caseload report* includes pending cases, new filings, method of disposition, and case age at disposition. This is a source of vital information for planning, identifying trends and judicial resource recommendations. The *permanency indicators report* was designed to capture hearing and trial data of children removed

- from the home. It consists of eleven reports that measure adherence to statutory and court rule time requirements.
- A special thank you to the 2014 holiday charity donors. \$500 was delivered to The Disability Network.
- The 2014 Court Survey Day was a huge success. > 200 surveys were completed by court users. Thanks to the staff who participated.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION GUIDE

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Craig Vargo has been volunteering with the juvenile probation office since 2010. He is a retired technology educator from the Grand Blanc school system. He also has worked as an adolescent counselor for the McLaren Regional Medical Center and volunteers at his church.

Sheila Weston (no picture available) volunteers as a court officer with Referee Krellwitz on Thursday afternoon. She is also a foster care parent and helps her brother by working occasionally at his restaurant in the Flint Farmers Market.

Carol Ann Smela (no picture available) works with Referee Boegner on Friday mornings. In addition, she volunteers at the American Red Cross and the Applewood Estate of the Ruth Mott Foundation.

Jeannine Osterman (no picture available) began volunteering for Referee Boegner in 2010. She will begin volunteering in Judge Beagle's courtroom this month. Jeannine retired from Flint Community Schools where she worked as a paraprofessional with special needs children. She currently works part-time at Macy's. -jep

Recognizing the work of volunteers is crucial for any organization that wants to retain its volunteers and attract new ones. When you encounter any of these volunteers, please take a moment to express your sincere appreciation.



2014 SPECIALTY COURT GRADUATES

Genesee County has several specialty courts designed to aid in helping people get back on the right track after entering the court system. Last year, more than 60 people successfully graduated from the one of the specialty courts.



Adult Felony Drug Court: 20
Urban Drug Court Initiative: 13
Family Dependency Treatment Court: 13
Infant and Toddler Treatment Court: 2
Juvenile Drug Court: 9
Juvenile Mental Health Court: 13

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY

January 11, 1805	President Thomas Jefferson signed an act establishing the Michigan Territory
January 12, 1835	Acting Governor Stevens T. Mason declared that we have a "right" to be a state
January 26, 1837	Michigan became the 26 th state
January 29, 1900	The Detroit Tigers became 1 of 8 charter members of the new American League
January 1, 1902	Michigan defeated Stanford in the first Rosebowl, 49-0
January 15, 1919	The first all-female jury heard a trial
January 1, 1972	The age of majority was lowered from 21 to 18

WORD SEARCH

B	P	J	U	R	Y	H	U	R	I
D	T	E	N	U	R	E	E	T	B
A	B	A	T	E	E	V	C	K	H
L	Q	W	R	R	I	I	T	Y	A
C	S	R	Y	A	D	U	J	C	B
E	R	L	W	R	J	H	Q	G	C
H	F	I	E	S	D	U	M	B	C
M	B	V	M	F	I	T	Y	R	T
V	E	R	D	T	C	T	X	I	A
A	S	A	Z	C	N	U	R	N	T
L	A	W	S	K	O	A	G	V	O
A	A	N	C	I	L	O	L	E	Y
S	N	E	B	O	N	D	J	N	S
P	H	G	V	F	E	R	R	T	W
A	S	L	W	G	R	H	I	O	P
S	N	E	B	H	E	Y	U	R	M
P	F	C	S	E	S	O	P	Y	J
X	L	T	I	O	C	G	G	D	S

JURY
TENURE
ABATE
WAIVER

VERDICT
ACQUIT
INVENTORY
LAWS

BOND
NEGLECT

By: Edgar Carter

We want to hear from you! Send an email letting us know what you would like to see in the newsletter and feedback on the current edition. You can also submit ideas and information about what's going on within your department.

hearsay@7thcircuitcourt.com