

HEARSAY

GENESEE COUNTY
CIRCUIT AND
PROBATE COURTS
E-NEWSLETTER

a quarterly publication

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VOLUME 7, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 2021

CIRCUIT AND PROBATE COURTS MEET WITH STAKEHOLDERS

On Thursday, September 9, 2021, Chief Judge of the Circuit and Probate Courts, Duncan M. Beagle, hosted a meeting with various stakeholders to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the practices adopted by the Michigan Supreme Court (MSC) as emergency measures during COVID and to discuss possible changes to improve court operations.

Chief Judges around the state were mandated to host such meetings and provide a summary to the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) upon completion.

Judge Beagle opened by reviewing the purpose of the meeting and the authority by which it was being conducted. Attendees were advised of the opportunity to submit written remarks by September 16, 2021, which would be submitted along with the summary to be prepared by the court.

Judge Beagle also provided an overview of the various administrative orders issued by MSC beginning in March 2020 and highlighted the subject matter of many, indicating that the trial courts were obliged to follow these orders and implement their intent in the local setting.

There was much direction given by SCAO, including gating criteria which had to be met before courts were permitted to engage in more in-person court

proceedings. The gating criteria also addressed the requirements for jury trials.



At this point the direction is that courts should work with their local health departments and implement best practices based on the local circumstances and health department advice.

The local perspective was provided by various administrative staff from both the circuit and probate courts.

Facility issues were distilled down to how does the court receive incoming mail, how does the outgoing mail vendor pick up the mail and how agencies doing regular business with the court exchange information.

A temporary mail room was established on the first floor adjacent to the security check point with designated areas within the space for courts or other tenants. Gloves and masks were provided for mail

handling. Timestamping of mail was less precise than ideal but was generally completed on day received.

Because SCAO had previously provided judges and attorney referees with a zoom license, the courts quickly converted essential court hearings to participation by the zoom application. The court tech staff then created YouTube channels for all judges and the transition to public access by zoom was established.

Criminal jury trials were suspended until the fall of 2020, at which time they were conducted with strict Covid protocols, utilizing "mini-jury pools" as opposed to the larger number of potential jurors that are typically summoned.

Two criminal jury trials were conducted without incident. As COVID ramped up, jury trials were suspended.

In June 2021, criminal jury trials resumed and many other serious felony cases disposed of by negotiated disposition.

Civil jury trials were suspended, not being deemed essential. The case evaluation process was halted and then converted to all zoom in October 2020.

Over 600 sessions were scheduled and nearly 300 held. The reduction in number is a factor

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THE CHIEF SPEAKS



MEMORIES SINCE COVID-19

Any events we recall since March of 2020?
Where do we begin, for there sure were plenty.

The #1 story should not surprise us,
It's the ongoing challenges dealing with the Coronavirus.

Covid-19 has greatly changed how each of us lives our life,
Which has caused fear, and anger, and ongoing civil strife.

Shouts of Black Lives Matter and calls to defund police,
Led to protests and violence, and calls for healing and peace.

We are now living in very tumultuous times,
With increases in mass shootings, and many other violent crimes.

There are still ongoing issues from our voting in November,
A presidential election that we will long remember.

So many storms with strong winds and heavy rains,
To be perfectly honest they've become a big pain.

"Road work ahead" and "Detour" are signs we don't like,
There are days I would rather be riding my bike.

Staying positive is not always an easy thing to do,
Just know the sun will keep shining and the skies will be blue.

No matter what the future brings, one thing I know is true,
You will all keep giving and caring, and as Chief Judge I say,
"Thank you."—cjdmb



ADMINISTRATOR CORNER

Congratulations to *David Combs*, who was promoted to Court Technology Coordinator in August 2021. Dave joined the court in 2014 and assumed his current position upon the departure of Rob Gifford, who retired to work with JIS at the Michigan Supreme Court.

Rhonda Ihm has also been promoted to deputy court administrator for juvenile services. Rhonda has been with the court since 2012, starting out as the adoption supervisor, followed by the juvenile section administrator. Rhonda has been the lead administrative staff on the juvenile justice center construction project and other initiatives related to juvenile services.

James Terry has been promoted to deputy court administrator for fiscal services and technology. James started with the court in the fall of 2020 as the court financial director. Because of his background in IT, the combination role is ideal and positions the court to evaluate future projects as part of our strategic budget planning.

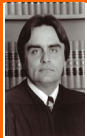
Other employee news of note: *Teresa VanArsdale*, former judicial administrative secretary to Judge Newblatt retired in June 2021. Teresa had in excess of 30 years of service to both the Probate and Circuit Courts.

Debra Gray transferred from the family division of circuit court to Judge Newblatt's judicial administrative secretary upon Teresa's departure.

I want to acknowledge the contribution of these individuals and express my appreciation to all of the Circuit and Probate Court staff team.



INFORMATIONS AND INDICTMENTS- MICHIGAN'S UNIQUE GRAND JURY LAW



67th District Court Judge Mark C. McCabe writes "Ask the Judge" for the Tri-County Times.

Informations and Indictments—Michigan's Unique Grand Jury Law appeared in the August 25th, 2021 edition.

Under Michigan law, criminal felony prosecutions in circuit court are commenced by either an information or an indictment.

An information is a document which gives notice to the defendant of the charges against them and the possible penalties.

It is filed in the circuit court by the prosecutor after preliminary proceedings and hearings have

been completed in the district court. These include the preliminary examination where the prosecutor must prove to the district court judge that there is "probable cause" to believe that crimes were committed and that the defendant committed them.

Probable cause means there is a reasonable ground of suspicion supported by circumstances sufficiently strong to warrant a cautious person to believe the accused is guilty of the offense charged.

When proved (or the defendant waives their right to an exam) the case is sent to circuit court for the information filing and further proceedings.

An indictment is also a charging instrument. However, the deci-

sion to approve it is made by a grand jury after hearing the evidence against an accused and then finding probable cause. It, too, is filed by the prosecutor in circuit court.

There are a number of important differences between the information and indictment process, not the least of which being that grand jury proceedings are conducted in secret and the defendant first learns that they've been charged after the indictment is issued.

While all states have grand juries of one kind or another, Michigan has a unique system providing for two types of grand juries - one with 13 to 17 citizen jurors and a second called a "one person grand jury" presided over by a single judge.

Other differences include: (1) there is no right to a preliminary examination after an indictment; (2) the Rules of Evidence do not apply; (3) after the indictment, the defendant is entitled to receive transcripts of all witness testimony and records of the proceedings that touch upon the guilt or innocence of the accused as determined by the county's chief circuit court judge; (4) every witness is entitled to legal counsel being present in the grand jury room.

Michigan's grand jury law has been upheld as being constitutional. It is a readily available alternative to the more frequently used information prosecutions.

JURY TRIALS IN THE ONGOING COVID WORLD

As the COVID pandemic continued, jury trials in Genesee County were put on hold for a second time from October 2020 to June 2021.

In order to even consider bringing the public in for jury trials, many planning sessions were conducted with the Genesee County Health Department including air quality testing in the courtrooms to ensure public safety.

The decision was also made to attempt conducting jury selection at the Harris Auditorium in the Genesee County Administration Building allowing for a larger, socially distanced group at once.

The hope was to be able to get three seated juries in a week in an attempt to move through

the criminal trial backlog caused by the pandemic shutdowns.



In order to prepare for the start-up of jury trials for June, 2021, Jury Management sent out more summons than usual to ensure the yield of confirmed jurors would be adequate to accommodate the planned increase in jury trial activity. For June 3,100 summons and July, 3,500 summons were sent out and a higher average continues to be sent monthly.

The first jury trial was held on June, 8, 2021 with jury selection conducted in Harris Auditorium.

This would end up being the only jury selection conducted at Harris Auditorium. For the next few weeks, the cases scheduled resolved without a trial. By July, 2021 due to a significant reduction in the COVID positivity rate, Circuit Court was permitted to return to full operations in the courthouse.

Measures to ensure public safety for jury trials were still being followed with face coverings being encouraged especially in the courtrooms if social distancing could not be max-

imized. Public access to the trials was also limited to reduce the number of people in the courtrooms.

Since the beginning of June, a total of ten criminal jury trials have been conducted and one civil jury trial.

In early August, Chief Judge Beagle imposed a mask mandate in the courtrooms as the COVID numbers had been on the rise again.

Jury Management sent out electronic messaging to the prospective jurors that masks were required if they reported for jury duty. In addition to masks and social distancing in the courtrooms, Jury Management has been calling in smaller jury panels for jury selection and only one

(Continued on page 6)

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

The Employee Spotlight article has been omitted from past editions, as we turned attention to COVID related activities that were essential to sustain the courts. Every effort has been undertaken to review our new employee roster for submission in this edition.



Left to Right: Danielle Leepart, Doreen Fulcher

Probate Court

Doreen Fulcher is a deputy register clerk for the Probate Court. Doreen formerly worked in the vital records division of the Genesee County Clerk-Register.

Danielle Leepart is a deputy register clerk for the Probate Court. Danielle formerly worked for the City of Flint in customer service.



Left to Right: Jennifer Strauel, Tim Sweeney

Circuit Court

Logan Byrne is the judicial advisory assistant for Judge Elizabeth A. Kelly. Logan attended Eastern Michigan University and graduated from Michigan State University College of Law.

Carley Cerak is the judicial advisory assistant for Judge Brian S. Pickell. Carley graduated from Taylor University and received her law degree from the University of the District of Columbia, David A. Clarke School of Law.

Emily Donnellon is the judicial advisory assistant for Judge Joseph J. Farah. Emily attended Grand Valley State University and graduated from WMU Cooley Law School.

Bridget Ondocsin is the judicial administrative secretary for Judge B. Chris Christenson. Bridget formerly worked in the



Left to Right: Bridget Ondocsin, Carley Cerak, Logan Byrne, Emily Donnellon

legal division of the Genesee County Clerk-Register.

Jennifer Strauel is the administrative secretary for Barbara A. Menear, circuit court administrator. Jennifer formerly worked in the legal division of the Genesee County Clerk-Register.

Tim Sweeney is the circuit court IT tech II. Tim formerly worked for the county IT department as an IT user support technician.



Left to Right: Morgan Mikkola, Lisa Lanxton, Leslie Miracle

Family Division

Lisa Lanxton Attorney Referee for the family division. Lisa was formerly a private practice attorney

and an attorney for Attorneys for Indigent Fathers (ATIF).

Morgan Mikkola is a family court clerk in the juvenile records department. Morgan was formerly an administrative assistant at a business in Saginaw.

Leslie Miracle is a family court clerk in the juvenile records department. Leslie was formerly a coordinator at a business in Swartz Creek.



Left to Right: Geoffrey Teeple, William Harris

Friend of the Court

Geoffrey Teeple started with FOC on July 26, 2021. Geoffrey formerly worked in the family division as a court clerk.

William Harris (Will) started with FOC on August 30, 2021. Will formerly worked for Optum Specialty Pharmacy/Diplomat Specialty Pharmacy and prior to that he worked on the Water Crisis here in Flint.



SPECIALTY COURTS' SUPERVISOR FILES A REPORT

Things look a little different now that COVID is here. Genesee County Recovery Court (drug court) and Family Dependency Treatment Court have made some changes to adapt to this new way of living with COVID.

Once COVID hit we had to work with participants by phone. Not seeing participants in person created a lot of challenges. Sometimes substance use is easy to see but not necessarily easy to hear. Trying to build rapport with someone you have never met in person is also hard.

Confronting negative behavior and encouraging participants to address issues and be honest is difficult over the phone.

We also began using email as a way to communicate with our participants which was a new way of functioning in our office. It has created an easier way for participants to get us 12 step support group meeting sheets to our office, which has turned out to be a benefit of COVID.

Participants are in outpatient treatment at a minimum. Our outpatient treatment provider also had to switch from in person contact to telehealth con-

tact. Some participants like the flexibility of telehealth not having to drive into Flint twice a week, some use lunch breaks at work and sit in their cars and do sessions.

Some participants liked the safety of being at home and addressed issues that may have not been addressed in person.

Drug testing during COVID made several changes. We did no drug testing from March 2020 to May 2020. Our drug testing provider at one time did urine drug tests with a breathalyzer.

We no longer do a breathalyzer and have added an alcohol urine test that detects alcohol use over the last 80 hours. All participants must wear a face mask and wash their hands upon entering.

For a while only one participant was allowed in the building. As numbers of COVID cases fell, they began to allow a few more participants in the building to wait their turn.

Our 7th Circuit Court Adult Probation agents have also changed to phone and video contact with participants with the same challenges. Home visits and face to face check-ins

are very limited.

Child Protective Services and Foster care workers have moved to more phone contact and very limited time spent in person with participants.



Isolation took a toll on some participants. They lost face to face contact with our office, our treatment provider, 12 step support group meetings, and review hearings with the Judge. They felt abandoned and alone, we had several who relapsed and a few who gave up and dropped out of the program.

Specialty courts were developed to use a team approach. Our Recovery Court team and Family Dependency Treatment Court team have done a wonderful job at adapting to COVID life.

Our team consists of a judge,

assistant prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, compliance managers, drug court supervisor, CPS and foster care workers, treatment provider, and adult probation agents.

Recovery Court is still held each Tuesday at 2pm but things look a little different. At one time we had 55 participants packed in the courtroom to hold review hearings, today we have 6-9 participants in the courtroom and 45 on zoom for review hearings.

We all know the challenges of zoom – someone not on mute, cameras looking in all directions, low signals, and poor quality phones all create problems.

Family Dependency Treatment Court is held every other Wednesday and was only on zoom for a while but now is in person in the courtroom due to smaller numbers of participants in this program.

With the challenges comes success. We had 52 participants graduate from March 2020 to September 2021 in Recovery Court and 7 graduate from Family Dependency Treatment Court in that same period. –sj

E.D.G.E. CONFERENCE TO EDUCATE ON DANGERS OF ELDER ABUSE

The E.D.G.E. Conference (Educating, Defending, and Guarding the Elderly), an education and awareness event highlighting the dangers of elder abuse, will be held on October 7, 2021 at the Genesys Conference and Banquet Center in Grand Blanc.

The conference, organized jointly by the Genesee Coun-

ty Sheriff's Department and Elder Abuse Alliance, aims to educate those working in the senior community about elder abuse in all aspects, including how elder abuse affects seniors' health and quality of life, and how elder abuse cases are investigated and prosecuted. A number of medical professionals, nursing home administrators, Michigan Adult Protective Services representatives, law

enforcement, and elder law attorneys will be among the speakers discussing elder abuse and financial exploitation. Prosecutor David Leyton and a representative from the Probate Court will also be speaking at the conference. Attorney General Dana Nessel and her staff will speak on the office's statewide initiatives.

The conference will provide continuing education units to social workers, nursing home administrators, and paramedics. Individuals working with the senior community are encouraged to attend the event. Registration for the conference can be found at www.gcsomichigan.com. –so



- Thanks to building and grounds for assisting the court to get new carpet in Judge Kelly's courtroom.

It takes several members of the staff to remove benches, tables and other courtroom fixtures and return it all for court on Monday morning.

21 years of wear and tear on the original carpet has come to an end.



Special mention to tech staff, Dave Combs and Todd Sweeney for the before and after work associated with the courtroom technology. Great Job!!



- Who are these young attorneys? Take a look. Judge Beagle and retired Referee Mike Krellwitz. Mr. Krellwitz does not have socks on in this photo. Once pointed out to him, he said he was a "real rebel." A friendly edit, "A quiet rebel."

- Probate Judge Jennie Barkey is back again, after a short stint on the disabled list. With a new knee, we will see her on the trails once again very soon.



JURY TRIALS IN THE ONGOING COVID WORLD (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 3)

jury trial is being selected at a time. Jury selection is only being conducted in the double jury courtroom to maximize social distancing and take advantage of the presence of protective glass.

Once the criminal jury is seated, the trials are being conducted in the courtrooms of Judge Newblatt, Judge Bell and Judge Farah as they are larger and can better accommodate the required social distancing.

The one civil case was held in Judge Behm's courtroom due to the protective glass and a smaller civil jury that can be accommodated with social distancing.

Once the jury was seated, the jurors were provided personal protection equipment (PPE) packages that include additional masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, notepads, pens and Kleenex for their own use.

The Circuit Court continues to make great efforts to ensure the

safety of jurors required for jury duty. The feedback received from our citizens has been positive overall. They recognize the challenges continue to step up to their civic duty. -cmg

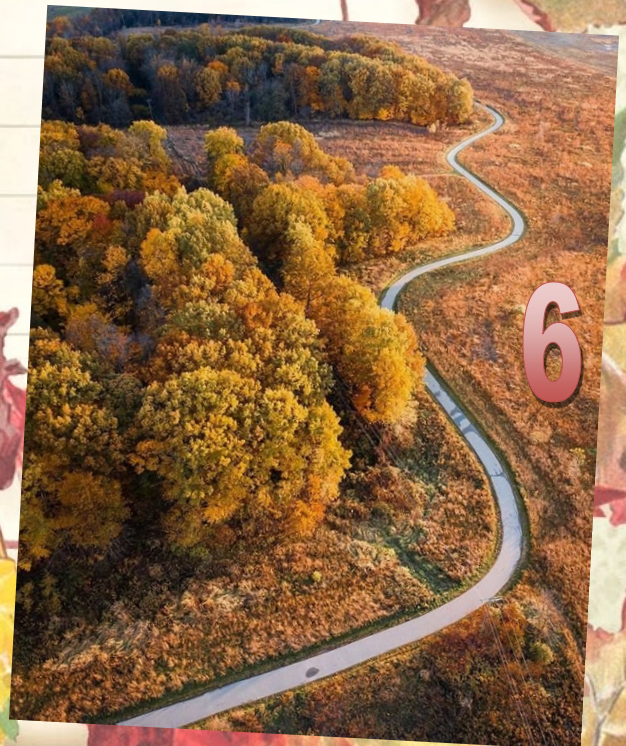


DO YOU KNOW WHERE THESE WERE TAKEN?

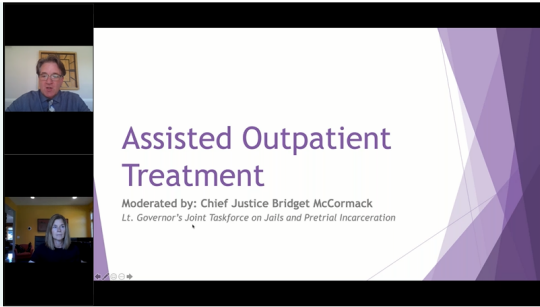
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PURE MICHIGAN

Answers on page 11



GENESEE COUNTY PANELS SPEAKS ON BENEFITS OF ASSISTED OUTPATIENT TREATMENT



treatment. State Court Administrator Emeritus Milton Mack and Dr. Debra Pinals were keynote speakers, and Michigan Supreme Court

- Joseph Novak, Hurley Hospital
- Jennifer Kimmel, Genesee Health System
- Sam Olson, Probate Court
- Deputy Greg Howard, Sheriff's Department

Recognized as one of the Michigan counties that has operationalized and seen the benefits of AOT, Genesee County and its panel representatives answered questions from Chief Justice McCormack on strategies to implement AOT and challenges and successes in developing an effective program.

A recording of the webinar can be found [HERE](#). —so

On September 28, 2021, the State Court Administrative Office, in conjunction with the Michigan Mental Health Diversion Council, the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, and the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan, hosted a statewide webinar focusing on Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) in an effort to educate and discuss the advantages of AOT as a treatment tool for those under an order for mental health

Chief Justice Bridget McCormick moderated the presentation.

Genesee County was featured to discuss the benefits AOT can offer, with community stakeholders serving on the webinar panel. The following representatives from Genesee County served on the panel:

- Jay Snodgrass, Prosecutor's Office



A CHANGE IN VENUE: THE NEW FRIEND OF THE COURT OFFICE

As the end of 2019 was winding down, so was the Friend of the Court renovation. All signs were pointing to the move from the Administration Building to the 2nd Floor of the McCree Courthouse to be the big change for the FOC in early 2020.



As we all know, early 2020 had different plans and the move had to be put aside due to the pandemic.

Eventually, the FOC was able to move into the new space in May of 2020, but with the pandemic still severe and the building limitations, our grand opening was anything but grand.

As the McCree Courthouse opened up more in 2021, the new Friend of the Court space really began to see some of its potential. Clients are getting the benefit of additional security, more space for confidentiality, and a layout that allows all of the Friend of the Court team to be in one space.

We are looking forward to being able to eventually have a “grander” opening and to continue to see the office be used by more and more of the families in Genesee County.

As things open up more, please come visit the FOC at our new



venue on the 2nd Floor of the McCree Courthouse, 630 S. Saginaw St. Flint, MI. –tm





geneseeLIVING

Although we can say goodbye to summer and its activities, there are plenty of fall favorites that are returning this year. Check out this list of local events, workshops and concerts for you and your family.

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

The Clio Center for the Arts at Clio Center for the Arts has lots of workshops including Watercolor, Theatrical Makeup, Hand Built Pottery, Teen Drawing, Teen Graphic Arts, Children's Arts and Crafts, Photography and more.

The Swartz Creek Area Art Guild/Gallery at Messiah Lutheran Church has lots of sewing and craft workshops coming up that include Sewing Sock Monsters, Crocheting Premie Hats, Making Balloon Bowls and Origami Boxes.

FOOD & DRINK

Mixdown: Flint Local 432's Fall Foodie Fundraiser
10/15/2021

After a pandemic-enforced break we are back in 2021 bigger and better than ever!

The Howling Halloween Party & Haunted Trail

Presented by Adopt-A-Pet at The Howling Haunted Trail
10/8 – 10/23/ 2021

See if you have what it takes to enter our haunted trail and make it to the end!

FREE EVENTS

Jazz on Wheels @ Old Farmers Mkt

Presented by Jazz on Wheels at Old Farmer's Mkt
Until 10/8/2021

Jazz on Wheels will continue it's popular Friday evening concert series at the Old Farmer's Mkt.

Flint Community Players FREE Trunk-or-Treat

Presented by Flint Community Players at Flint Community Players
10/9/2021

Join us for a free family friendly Halloween event!

Fenton Street Experience

Presented by Southern Lakes Parks & Recreation at Downtown Fenton
Until 10/15/2021
Enjoy downtown Fenton this summer and fall!

Downtown Flint Mural Tour
10/16/2021 12-2 p.m.

Discover a new side of Flint through a colorful and thought-provoking experience!

THEATRE & ART

Those Dazzling Divas of Motown
Presented by The New McCree Theatre at The New McCree theatre
Until 10/9/2021

A tribute to the Motown girl groups and female solo artists who helped to make Motown the giant it became.

Happy Days

Presented by Flint Repertory Theatre at Flint Repertory Theatre
10/8 – 10/17/2021

Longway Planetarium

The planetarium shows are Longway Planetarium are back and at full capacity. Visit their website or call to purchase tickets.

Entropy

Presented by Buckham Gallery at Buckham Gallery
10/8/2021 – 11/6/2021
Buckham Gallery is pleased to present our next exhibition- Entropy, featuring works by Jennifer Bock-Nelson, Kelly A. Mueller and Amy Sacksteder.

Brush with Reality: Yigal Ozeri
Until 1/2/2022

Based in New York City, Yigal Ozeri is an Israeli artist best known for his meticulously crafted large-scale images of women in lush landscapes.

FALL FAVORITES & HALLOWEEN

Corn Maze & Hay Rides at Porter's Orchard

Until 10/31/2021
The fall season comes with many beloved seasonal activities from hayrides to corn mazes.

Exit 13 Haunted House

Until 10/31/2021
This year, we're back with even more TERROR. The attraction has been completely renovated and expanded bringing you all new HORRORS around every turn. Those brave enough to enter will be taken on an unparalleled journey until their deepest fears.

Flushing Farm: Get Lost in Our Corn Maze

Until 10/31/2021
Three Corn Mazes (from easy to expert – hours of fun!) Also includes a pumpkin patch, bounce house, petting zoo and more.

Fall Color Rides at For-Mar

10/9, 10/15, 10/16, 10/22 and 10/23/2021
New this season, Come and enjoy a colorful tram ride through the For-Mar Arboretum and Nature Preserve. This guided ride through For-Mar Arboretum and Nature Preserve. The guided ride through For-Mar focus on sharing fun fall nature facts and history of the For-Mar property.

The Howling Haunted Trail & Halloween Party

10/8, 10/9, 10/15, 10/16, 10/22 and 10/23/2021
Unlike any other local haunted attraction, the Howling mixes

unexpected scares with the fun of Halloween. Our trail takes you back into the deep woods to where the wild things come out to play. You will encounter spirits & creatures that lurk after dark as you attempt to find your way thru the twisting & turning path.

Storytime at Applewood

10/15, 10/29/2021 from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
The Ruth Mott Foundation invites you to Storytime at Applewood!

The Rocky Horror Picture Show Featuring Barry Bostwick

10/21/2021
The Capitol Theater
Let's do the 45th Anniversary Spectacular Tour again! Join the original "Brad Majors" – Barry Bostwick – for a screening of the original unedited movie with a live shadow case and audience participation! Plus a memorabilia display with artifacts and an actual costume from the movie, a costume contest, and more.

Halloween Ghosts and Goodies

10/8, 10/9, 10/15, 10/16, 10/22, 10/23, 10/29 and 10/30/2021
Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad
Through October, you'll find treats and tricks, cider and doughnuts, little monsters and big fun for the whole family.

Source: exploreflintandgenesee.org and Genesee County Parks –fs



JOIN US FOR AN:

EXPUNGEMENT CLINIC

Co-Sponsored By:



**GENESEE COUNTY
BAR ASSOCIATION**
Professionalism Since 1897



LEGAL SERVICES
of Eastern Michigan

**Thursday, October 28,
2021**

11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Legal Services of Eastern
Michigan**

436 S. Saginaw St.

Flint, MI 48502

Volunteer Attorneys

needed to give legal advice at an in person & virtual clinic where eligible clients begin the expungement process.

If interested in
volunteering contact:
jgardner@lsem-mi.org
or
ikrishen@lsem-mi.org

OR
Complete the form at
www.lsem-mi-volunteer.org/contact-us

CIRCUIT AND PROBATE COURTS MEET WITH STAKEHOLDERS (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 1)

of case resolution or adjournments permitted by the assigned judge. Currently, the case evaluations are in-person. The cases could be re-noticed and converted back to zoom, should circumstances require.

Civil jury trials are gradually resuming, with one civil jury trial having been completed as of this writing.

Family Division, preliminary hearings were deemed essential. The fact that the juvenile justice center was connected to the court via polycom was

an advantageous circumstance on DL cases.

Zoom was fully utilized in NA cases to permit participation by all of the necessary parties and counsel.

The Friend of the Court worked remotely for the most part and were able to access desktop information to do their work. A very small number of staff were on-site. Calls were routed to case management and enforcement staff as may be required

The Probate Court case filings presented their own issues related to the immediate

needs of mental health proceedings and estate matters.

Many parties are self-represented or are suffering from a disability that makes zoom proceedings a challenge. The court worked closely on protocols designed to address these circumstances.

The divisions of the circuit court and probate court established protocols identifying which court matters continue to be suitable for the zoom application and others that will require in-person court appearances.

The Genesee County Board of Commissioners was represented by the Board Chair, Mark Young, and Director of Administration, Joshua Freeman.

The courts voiced appreciation for the support shown by the Board, including the use of Harris Auditorium for jury selection for a criminal jury trial.

The presentations were followed by an opportunity for the stakeholders to offer their remarks, suggestions and comments. –bam

Those in attendance at the meeting included:

Peter Bade - Associate General Counsel, Hurley Medical Center

Honorable Duncan Beagle - Chief Judge

Bill Brickley - President, Genesee County Bar Association

Melissa Caldwell - Victim Advocacy Coordinator, YWCA

Joshua Freeman - Director of Administration, Genesee County Board of Commissioners

Rhonda Ihm - Deputy Court Administrator, Juvenile Services

Honorable Elizabeth Kelly - Chief Judge Pro Tem

Kim LaFear - District Manager MDHHS

David Leyton - Genesee County Prosecutor

Tony McDowell - Friend of the Court

Barbara Menear - Circuit Court Administrator

Mike Milks - Child Welfare Director, MDHHS

Stephanie Musser - Area Manager, MDOC-Adult Probation & Parole

Julia Norton - State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) Region II, Court Administrator

Jill Nylander - Executive Director, Legal Services of Eastern Michigan

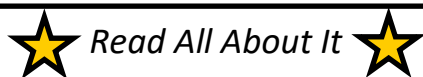
Sam Olson - Probate Court Administrator

Nathaniel C. Perry III - Chief Public Defender, Genesee County

Mark Young - Chair, Genesee County Board of Commissioners

HEARSAY PURE MICHIGAN ANSWERS

1. Empire Bluff Trail, Leelanau County, MI 2. Marquette, MI 3. Northport, MI 4. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Munising Township, MI 5. Scotts Falls, Au Train, MI 6. Upper Macatawa Natural Area, Zeeland, MI



Hearsay is now available on the Circuit Court website www.7thCircuitCourt.com/hearsay-newsletter

We want to hear from you! Send us 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 activity in your department. hearsay@7thcircuitcourt.com