

**GENESEE COUNTY
CIRCUIT AND
PROBATE COURTS
E-NEWSLETTER**

a quarterly publication

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CAPTURING THE SPOKEN WORD

What is said in a courtroom when the court is in session is right at the top of the list of what makes a court proceeding a settled matter. Along with the phrase, “the court speaks through its written order” should be the phrase “what is said in a courtroom is what is recorded.” Sounds simple. Think about it.

How many times do people sit in the same room and hear the same speaker, yet later recite what was said in varying ways. The same can and does occur in a courtroom. In order to have integrity and acceptance of a court proceeding, courts instituted methods by which the official record was established and referred to with the reverence it deserves. It is as if every word was sacred and nearly independent of the speaker.

I can recall past newsletter editions of the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, of which I am a member, refer to very early justices and their roles in keeping the record. In the beginning, there was no official court reporter. Some of the justices were better at taking notes than others. In fact, some of the early records were not published so as to not appear as though only a select few were involved.

The court administrator version of all of this is he or she

who takes notes at a meeting often effects the eventual outcome. It can help others remember the issue and discussion is better. Others go by memory on occasion and in many instances the collective memory will vary to the point of saying, “Did anybody write anything down?” Sometimes

ing, now part of the University of Michigan properties.

In addition, to this being my first workers compensation hearing (and last), I was the only female attorney on the hallowed floor where all of the male attorneys seemed to know each other, were reading newspapers and rattling off “comp talk” to each other.

Flint Attorney Jerry O’Rourke was there and had mercy on me, introducing me to the administrative law judge who would hear my case. This is all a lead up to the hearing and how the official record was kept.

I looked over and saw a man, I supposed the official recorder, who was writing down what was said at the hearing. It was not shorthand. He was actually writing it down, perhaps in his own abbreviated way.

It was the official record and I suspect had been the way that the record was captured for many years. The judge told me after the hearing that his wife had maladies similar to those of my client. I am not suggesting that this was outcome determinative for my client, but it may have put the fact finder in an open-minded position.

The next kind of court reporter for me was the individual who



In 1969, Genesee County Circuit Court had seven official court reporters. Pictured are Donald Gillis (with the pad and pen), Garner Pleasant, Deane Williams, Glendon Parks, Alfred Johnson and Ernest Hawkins. Robert Gunterman, the last of the court reporters to serve the court, is not pictured.

what is written becomes not just what was written but what was actually said. The keeper of the record is important and necessary, especially for a court.

When I first started to practice, there were a number of ways that the official court record was captured. Let me start with the one that was fading, even at that time.

I had a workers compensation case early in my career, a bad injury to a local construction worker. It went to a full hearing which was located at that time in the Metropolitan Build-

THE CHIEF SPEAKS

From late February until mid-August I was away from the bench with a serious health issue. Needless to say, I'm glad to be back!

I want to deeply thank all of you who assisted my staff in moving our court docket. Another thank you to those who sent a get well card, or included me in your prayers.

A special thanks to Court Administrator, Barbara Menear, and fellow Judge's Elizabeth Kelly, and David Newblatt. They worked well as a team to address several serious issues while I was gone.

Most of all, I want to thank my secretary, Christine Lintz,

and my law clerk, Todd Stamos, who survived during a very stressful period.



RETIREMENT AWAITS ME

Effective December 31st I will be retiring as a Circuit Judge. The 31 years I have been on the bench have gone by quickly. During one of my hospital stays I began putting together my bucket list, which will include traveling, cheering on

my favorite sports teams, and volunteering in ways to make our community a better one.

A retired lawyer recently sent me a card which said, "What do you call a person who is happy on a Monday motion day? Retired!" Another retired friend sent me a card that read, "Why do retirees smile all the time? Because they can't hear a word you're saying!"

Another old friend sent me a nice retirement coffee mug which read, "Senior's texting code." I'll give you a few. WAITT: Who am I talking to?

BFF: Best friend's funeral. IMHO: Is my hearing aid on?

GHA: Got heartburn again. TOT: Texting on toilet.

Most of all I will miss working, talking, and joking with each one of you. The Coronavirus pandemic challenged all of us since March of 2020. We stood together and did our best to provide quality services to the public. Keep up the good work!

Finally, I want to offer my best wishes to Joe Farah in his retirement. He always made himself available to colleagues to discuss procedural and evidentiary issues.

ADMINISTRATOR CORNER

Security Leader Joins the Courts

On September 26, 2022, Sheriff's Lieutenant Ryan Ulshafer began his assignment as the Courts' *Court Security Lieutenant*. With this first day in this role came a new era for the approach to court security for the Circuit, District, and Probate Courts.

For the greater part of 2022 and prior, the courts have made efforts to plan for a future of enhanced court security, and the many aspects that the important issue entails.

With cooperation from the Sheriff's Office, funded from the court budget, Lt. Ulshafer has been assigned to the courts to coordinate, review and expand existing security measures at the direction of the chief judges.

Among his many responsibilities in this role, Lt. Ulshafer

will be tasked with implementing and managing a court security team at the 67th District Court facilities located in Grand Blanc, Fenton, Burton, Davison, Flushing, and Mount Morris.

Dennis MacDonell, the *Court Security Specialist* with the Michigan Supreme Court, met with court administrators, chief judges, and Lt. Ulshafer to lend his expertise in future planning and partner with Lt. Ulshafer to share ideas. Areas of immediate review for Lt. Ulshafer include security camera updates and panic button upgrades to court facilities.

Lt. Ulshafer will serve as the vice-chair of the courthouse security committee, a standing committee mandated by the Michigan Supreme Court through Administrative Order No 2019-1.

In the short time Lt. Ulshafer has been with the courts, he



has "hit the ground running" on several projects. Court leadership is thrilled with his addition to the courts, and the outlook for court security with the lieutenant.

Meeting the Lieutenant

Q: Talk a little bit about yourself. Where are you from? What is your background?

A: I graduated from Goodrich High School. Upon graduation, I went to Adrian College

where I majored in Criminal Justice and minored in Business Administration, while playing football.

I have worked for the Office of Genesee County Sheriff for approximately 16 years. I was assigned to the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) for nearly a decade.

While assigned to the GISD, I was a key member in the creation and implementation of their first ever Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP was adopted county wide and is currently in use in all public-school districts, some private and charter academy schools.

I have trained thousands of people active shooter response, EOP's, and conducted hundreds of safety assessments. I pride myself on being safety oriented. There is not anything any one person can do,

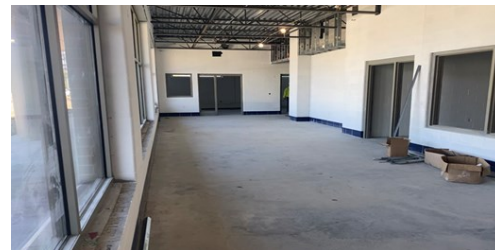
(Continued on page 5)

JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER



Sept. 16, 2020
Genesee County officials and judges broke ground at the site of the future Juvenile Justice Center on Pasadena Avenue in Flint Township.

ors, furnishings, and spaces that feel more like classrooms **than** detention. At the same time, the design offers clear lines of sight and layouts that allow for efficient use of staff resources and strong supervision.



education, family-treatment, and vocational support; and a residential treatment program for youth who need more intensive support. ri

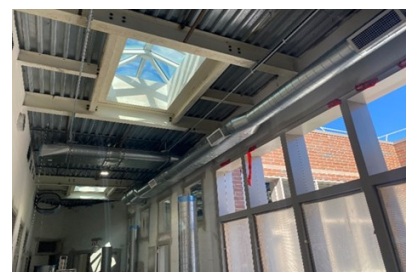


The facility's trauma-informed design provides an environment that encourages mental and physical well-being in a secure environment with multiple rehabilitation services.

The design offers ample natural light, softer col-

The facility will also have a full-service prep kitchen/cafeteria, gymnasium exterior recreation space, and a central security control

The Juvenile Justice Center is projected to be complete in January, 2023. Once completed, the building will provide a secure detention program, day treatment services to include



• The courthouse information desk is now staffed for 2 hours each morning to provide information and greeting to court users, most notably jurors who are summoned for service. Rebecca Gillette, Holly Ostrom and Jennifer Strauel rotate this assignment and it is appreciated.

• Another note of appreciation to Ray Zanke and his team at the Building and Grounds Department for courthouse square exterior clean-up and

the many other tasks they do around the Courthouse.

• Each of the floors on the new side of the Courthouse now have digital directories near the elevators. They can be easily changed to provide accurate information. David Combs, Court IT Manager, was the project lead with a big assist from Rich Srda, Trevor Adolph and Brent Waldeck, Building and Grounds Department.

• Thanks to Sgt. Dennis Sprague, GCSD, for his recent and ongoing work with the court on security. Judges and staff appreciate the partnership!



THE FINAL WORD ON THE USE OF ZOOM IN THE COURTROOM



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

The Final Word on the use of Zoom in the Courtroom appeared in the August 30th, 2022 edition.

The purpose of the Michigan Court Rules is to ensure that there are uniform rules and procedures for all levels of Michigan’s court system.

The rules come to us from the Michigan Supreme Court and are constantly being reviewed for when amendments or new rules are necessary

Since the court rules were first enacted in 1935, one of

the biggest issues that the Supreme Court has ever faced is the COVID-19 pandemic and how to keep Michigan’s courts open and safe for all concerned.

In the spring of 2020, an Administrative Order was issued requiring judges to “make a good faith effort to conduct proceedings remotely.” The use of Zoom technology turned out to be the preferred method for conducting remote court proceedings and has been used on an interim basis pending final word from the Supreme Court as to what will ultimately happen.

The wait is now over and, based on the input of over 2,000 stakeholders, Zoom is here to stay with the court amending five court rules and creating a new one all to be effective Sept. 9, 2022.

Since there are so many changes, I will only present some general highlights.

In civil cases, the use of Zoom shall be presumed in most preliminary and scheduling matters and for most motions.

It will not be used in bench or jury trials or any proceedings, which require the testimony of witnesses or the presentation of evidence. This is subject to change at the discretion of the court.

In criminal cases, the use of Zoom will be the preferred mode for conducting arraignments and probable cause conferences for in-custody defendants.

For all other criminal proceedings the in-person appearance of parties, witnesses, and other participants is

presumed. This also applies to bench trials, jury trials, or any proceeding wherein the testimony of witnesses or presentation of evidence is necessary, subject again to modification by the individual judge.

Since March 2020, judges, magistrates and referees have presided over six million hours of online court proceedings broadcast to the public. These broadcasts have been accessed more than 560,000 times with YouTube court channels having almost 220,000 subscribers.

Quoting Chief Justice Bridget McCormack from her opinion endorsing these changes: “Michiganders are participating in their justice system like never before.” I wholeheartedly agree.

AN INFORMAL ASSEMBLY

No, it is not a jury trying to reach a verdict. No, it is not a GCBA meeting in a casual setting.

Yes, it is an informal meeting of past and present judges *PLUS* Attorney Dean Yeotis and Attorney Reese Stipes, master of ceremonies extraordinaire, attorney extraordinaire and the best storyteller that will ever come our way. Are they really stories, if they are true?

Seated from left to right, Judge David Newblatt, Judge Thomas Yeotis, Attorney Reese Stipes, Judge Robert Ransom, Attorney

Dean Yeotis, Judge Duncan Beagle and Judge Stewart Newblatt. The collective number of years admitted to the bar would be staggering.

The ultimate question: Who bought? Judicial immunity, judicial discretion and the other phrases that are spoken and said about judicial conduct will leave this matter under advisement. – bam



Courtney Evans is judicial advisory assistant for Judge F. Kay Behm. Courtney graduated from the University of Michigan and received her law degree from University of Wisconsin Law School.

Caroline Goodall is a program clerk for the Friend of the Court. Caroline formerly worked at Genesee County Intermediate School District.

Rachael Greene is the judicial advisory assistant for Judge Celeste D. Bell. Rachael graduated from Central Michigan University and received her law degree from Northern Illinois University College of Law.

Kati Hutchinson is a deputy register clerk for the Probate Court. Kati formerly worked in the Genesee County Clerk's office-vital records.

Monique Jones is a program clerk for the Friend of the Court. Monique formerly worked at the City of Flint Water Department.

Ariel McMullen is a program clerk for the Friend of the Court. Ariel formerly worked at Complete Eye Care. —js



Rachael Greene



Kati Hutchinson



Courtney Evans



Left to Right: Ariel McMullen, Caroline Goodall, Monique Jones

ADMINISTRATOR CORNER CONT'D

(Continued from page 2)

without being safe first! I have a wonderful wife, Jessyca. Together, we have 5 children, Ava (9), Landon (8), twins, Liam (6) and Alivia (6), and Aubrey, Ava's twin (deceased). They are my heartbeat! My wife is my rock. She is literally the toughest person I know. She's had many brain surgeries but has always remained the most positive person I know.

Q: What are your goals in the first 90 days as court security lieutenant?

A: To say I am thrilled to be in this position is an understatement! We are currently working on several technological aspects within our courts. I am working with many people on reviewing our surveillance camera system(s), panic alarms, and on implementing training for employees.

I am also learning the mode of operation within every facet of the court system. Everyone has both good and bad habits when it comes to safety. Bad habits are generally unknown, but if changed can drastically increase safety.

Unfortunately, safety and convenience do not go hand in hand. If one wants to be safe, it will not be convenient. If they want to be convenient, they will not be safe.

Q: What is your general approach/philosophy to security for the courts?

A: Policy and procedure can only take you so far. It takes everyone's "buy in" to increase safety at any given location.

At every mass casualty incident, it has never been a technological failure that has led to the result of more injuries/loss

of life; it has been the human failure of not utilizing technology correctly, coupled with poor mode of operation.

Situational awareness, mode of operation, technology, and its use, along with training are just some of the areas that will always need to be assessed. A chain is only as strong as its previous link!

According to the FBI, 76% of ALL active killer situations could have been avoided had someone just spoken up. This is because someone other than the killer themselves knew about the incident prior to it occurring. Therefore, it takes a team to maintain safety.

Q: What do you enjoy in your free time? Hobbies?

A: All my free time revolves around spending time with my family. Having worked in law enforcement for over 16 years,

and having lost a child, I know tomorrow isn't promised. Therefore, any chance I get with my family, I take it!

As my children have grown older, it has been awesome witnessing their new interests and partaking in them, along with my wife. They play various sports and balancing that schedule is always fun! I enjoy watching college football with my boys and acting silly with all of them.

We started a yearly summer family trip, and it has generated memories I will hold close to my heart the rest of my life. I have fished since I was a child, and it has been an awesome experience seeing all my children start to love it as well.

To summarize, my interests are family, sports, and fishing. —so

geneseeLIVING

Fredricka Savage is
the columnist for
geneseeLIVING.

It's spooky season! As we say good-bye to summer, the smell of apple cider donuts and pumpkin spice fills the air. Even though it is getting colder, there are still tons of events happening around the county.

SPOOKY TRAILS FARM PUMPKIN PICKING HAYRIDE & CORN MAZE

8266 Baldwin Road, Swartz Creek, MI 48473
October 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2022
12:00 PM to 5:30 PM

FLINT CAR CRUISE BY CHRISTIAN CRUISERS

3388 S. Linden Rd., Flint, MI 48507
Dates: 10/3/2022
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

HALLOWEEN GHOSTS & GOODIES 2022 - DRIVE THROUGH

Crossroads Village 6140
Bray Road, Flint, MI 48505
Dates: October 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2022
5:00 PM to 9:00 PM

NATURE STORY TIME

For-Mar Nature Preserve -
14098 N. Genesee Road,
Burton, MI 48509
Dates: 10/4/2022, 10/18/2022
11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

POOY SPOOKY LIGHT SHOW

Longway Planetarium -
1310 E. Kearsley Street,
Flint, MI 48503

Dates: October 4, 2022 -
October 30, 2022 (4:00 PM
Tues.-Sun., 7:00 PM Thurs./
Fri./Sat.
8:00 PM Thurs./Fri./Sat
(starting October 20)

ANASTASIA THE NEW BROADWAY MUSICAL

Presented By: The Whiting
1241 E. Kearsley Street,
Flint, MI 48503
Dates: October 6, 2022
7:30 PM

ATTACK ATTACK!

Presented By: The Machine
Shop Concert Lounge 3539
Dort Highway, Flint, MI
48507
Dates: October 7, 2022
6:00 PM
Price: \$18.00 in advance

BARLEY & VINE'S COUN- TRYFEST

Presented By: Barley &
Vine 1072 S. Elms Road,
Suite B, Flint, MI 48532
Dates: October 7, 2022 -
October 8,

OWL PELLETT DISSEC- TION

Presented By: Genesee
County Parks & Recreation
Commission
2142 N. Genesee Road, Bur-
ton, MI 48509
Dates: October 7, 2022
10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

THE HOWLING HAUNTED TRAIL & HALLOWEEN PARTY

13575 N. Fenton Rd., Fen-
ton, MI 48430
Dates: October 7, 2022 -
October 22, 2022
Recurrence: Recurring
weekly on Friday, Saturday
7:00 PM to 11:00 PM

4TH ANNUAL JEEPERS CREEKERS COSTUMED

FUN RUN & 5K

8047 Miller Road, Swartz
Creek, MI 48473
Dates: October 8, 2022
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

5K ON THE RUNWAY

5081 Torrey Road, Flint, MI
48507
Dates: October 8, 2022
8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

5TH ANNUAL DOWN- TOWN SWARTZ CREEK TRUNK OR TREAT

8047 Miller Road, Swartz
Creek, MI 48473
Dates: October 8, 2022
5:00 PM

CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW

12473 Seymour Road, Mont-
rose, MI 48457
Dates: 10/8/2022, 10/9/2022
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

Presented By: Davison
DDA
Downtown Davison, Da-
vison, MI 48423
Dates: October 8, 2022

VEHICLE CITIES OF THE DEAD BIKE TOUR

Presented By: Flint City
Bike Tours
300 E. First St., Flint, MI
48502
Dates: October 8, 2022

CARS & BARS FUNDRAIS- ER 2022

Presented By: Flint Insti-
tute of Music (FIM)
1111 James P. Cole Blvd. ,
Flint, MI 48503
Dates: October 12, 2022
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

GREATER FLINT AFRI- CAN AMERICAN QUILT- ERS GUILD, 31ST EXHIBIT

Presented By: Flint Public
Library

1026 East Kearsley St, Flint,
MI 48503
Dates: 10/13/2022, 10/14/2022,
10/15/2022
11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

NERF WARS

Presented By: Lake Callis Rec-
reation Complex
1152 N. Gale Rd, Davison, MI
48423
Dates: October 13, 2022

THE ROCKY HORROR PIC- TURE SHOW - 47TH ANNI- VERSARY SPECTACULAR TOUR

Presented By: The Capitol The-
atre
140 E. Second Street, Flint, MI
48502
Dates: October 13, 2022
8:00 PM

UM-FLINT MUSIC COLLAGE

Presented By: University of
Michigan-Flint Theatre and
Dance
UM Flint Theatre, 327 East
Kearsley Street, Flint, MI
48503
Dates: October 13, 2022
7:30 PM

ART ON TAP: BEER, BOUR- BON & BBQ

Presented By: Flint Institute of
Arts (FIA)
1120 E. Kearsley Street, Flint,
MI 48503
Dates: October 14, 2022
7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

HALLOWEEN ARTS & CRAFT MARKET

Presented By: Southern Lakes
Parks & Recreation
150 S. Leroy St., Fenton, MI
48430
Dates: October 14, 2022
5:00 PM to 8:00 AM

(Continued on page 7)

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WITCHES' & WIZARDS' BALL

Presented By: Southern Lakes Park and Recreation
150 S. Leroy St., Fenton, MI 48430
Dates: October 14, 2022
8:00 PM to 11:00 PM

ZOMBIES, SCARECROWS AND MONSTERS

Eagle's Wooden Park, 116 Walmar St., Linden, MI 48451
Dates: 10/14/2022, 10/15/2022
6:00 PM to 11:00 PM

2ND ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL

Presented By: Creasey Bicentennial Park - Grand Blanc Parks & Recreation
1505 E. Grand Blanc Road, Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Dates: October 15, 2022
2:00 PM to 5:00 PM

DRU HILL, SWV AND DAVE HOLLISTER

Presented By: The Capitol Theatre
140 E. Second Street, Flint, MI 48502
Date: October 15, 2022
7:30 PM

FALL COLOR RIDES AT FOR-MAR

Presented By: Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission
2142 N. Genesee Road, Burton, MI 48509
Date: 10/15/2022, 10/22/2022

FIRST ANNUAL FIRE-FIGHTERS 5K WALK/RUN

Presented By: Grand Blanc Fire Department
1 Jewett Trail, Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Date: October 15, 2022
10:00 AM

FLINT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA LIVE: RACHMANINOFF & TCHAIKOVSKY

Presented By: The Whiting
1241 E. Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48503
Date: October 15, 2022
7:30 PM

TRICK OR TREAT DOWN MAIN STREET

Presented By: Davison DDA
Downtown Davison, Davison, MI 48423
Date: October 15, 2022
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

WARRIOR XTREME COMBAT

3501 Lapeer Road, Flint, MI 48503
Date: October 15, 2022
7:00 PM

ALL FAMILY HALLOWEEN EXTRAVAGANZA

Presented By: Glenwood Cemetery and Certified Arboretum
2500 W. Court Street, Flint, MI 48503
Date: October 16, 2022
2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

FENTON CAR CRUISE BY CHRISTIAN CRUISERS

Presented By: Christian Cruisers
1355 N. Leroy Street, Fenton, MI 48430
Date: 10/17/2022
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

WE CAN BE HEROES

Presented By: The Capitol Theatre
140 E. Second Street, Flint, MI 48502
Date: October 19, 2022
5:30 PM

PINK NIGHT PALOOZA - PEACE, LOVE & PALOOZA

Presented By: Hurley Medi-

cal Center
9512 E. Lippincott Blvd., Davison, MI 48423
Date: October 20, 2022
5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

BLUE FELIX

Presented By: The Machine Shop Concert Lounge
3539 Dort Hwy, Flint, MI 48507
Date: October 21, 2022
7:00 PM

DIXON'S VIOLIN

Presented By: Blackstone's Smokehouse
531 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502
Date: October 21, 2022
8:00 PM to 10:00 PM

TRUNK OR TREAT

Presented By: Lake Callis Recreation Complex
1152 N. Gale Rd, Davison, MI 48423
Date: October 21, 2022
4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

TRUNK OR TREAT - BURTON

Presented By: Tall Oaks Realty
5046 Davison Rd., Burton, MI 48509
Date: October 21, 2022
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

FAMILY FUN WEEKEND

12473 Seymour Road, Montrose, MI 48457
Dates: 10/22/2022, 10/23/2022
9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

IRONSNAKE ANNUAL HALLOWEEN BASH

Presented By: The Machine Shop Concert Lounge
3539 Dort Highway, Flint, MI 48507
Dates: October 22, 2022
7:00 PM

SMETANKA FALL CRAFT SHOW

Presented By: Smetanka
1250 N. Oak rd., Davison, MI 48423
Date: October 22, 2022
10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

SPOOKY MONSTER MAGIC SHOW

Presented By: Grand Blanc-McFarlen Library
515 Perry Rd., Grand Blanc, MI 48439
Date: October 22, 2022
11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

1ST ANNUAL 2022 ADULT HALLOWEEN DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT

Presented By: Mundy Sportsplex
5432 Hill 23 Dr., Flint, MI 48507
Date: October 23, 2022
12:00 PM

BOO! ART WORKSHOP

Presented By: Southern Lakes Park and Recreation
150 S. Leroy St., Fenton, MI 48430
Date: October 26, 2022
4:30 PM to 6:30 PM

ABSOLUTE QUEEN & SERIOUS MOONLIGHT

Presented By: The Machine Shop Concert Lounge
3539 Dort Hwy, Flint, MI 48507
Date: October 27, 2022
7:00 PM

R.E.S.P.E.C.T. - THE ARETHA EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER

Presented By: The Whiting
1241 E. Kearsley Street, Flint, MI 48503
Date: October 27, 2022
7:30 PM

More information on these events can be found [HERE](#).

CAPTURING THE SPOKEN WORD (CONT'D)

(Continued from page 1)

sat in a courtroom with a small machine in front of them and whose fingers would move all of the time taking down what was said in a courtroom. The official court reporter.



At least to my understanding, they also had a small cassette recorder as back up to supplement the record in case when typing it out, a word or phrase needed the 2-step process of review.

These positions in circuit court were held by both male and female staff. They were held by fulltime court employees, most or all of whom had an office in the courthouse for typing transcripts when they were not in court.

The court also employed a “swing” court reporter to cover courtrooms when the various court reporters were on vacation or needed to be out of the courtroom to catch up with transcripts from a lengthy trial.

The male court reporters wore a suit and tie, some judges permitted them to take their suit jacket off when in court. Some

of them knew not to ask to be able to take their jacket off. If you are reading this and smiling, you know which judge I am referring to and no name is necessary.

The female court reporters were known to “dress to the nines” as the old expression goes. The apparel was often on the sophisticated side, high heels and attention to detail. There was no suggestion of a costume or uniform to all of this, but color coordination to the ensemble was standard operating procedure.

Very tasteful, but not distracting. I believe that the court reporters considered their role to be important to the courtroom proceeding and their demeanor bore this out.



The oddest of the ways to capture the record was a court reporter that worked for Judge Philip C. Elliott. He had what appeared as a mask that he held tightly to his face and repeated what was said in court as it was happening, it was recorded somehow and then typed. I suppose he had a cassette tape backup, not sure.

There came a time when he wanted to leave or Judge Elliott wanted him to leave and a bit of a scuffle ensued about

who owned the recording equipment. If you remember back that far, you fill in the blanks. This method must have been very taxing to do all day. One wonders how it could even be done, but it was an approved method.

Moving from court reporters to court recorders was the next step, at least to my recollection. The machines with the undecipherable scratches, were replaced by recording decks with cassette tapes that recorded the record.

The court recorder was still present to make sure that the recorder was working and that all parties were close enough to a microphone to be heard. They had earphones that permitted them to hear from the various microphones or channels to make sure a good record was being made.

Enter the advent of voice activated courtroom recording systems. In Circuit Court, as the fulltime court recorders retired, the courtroom systems were introduced. In the beginning, there were multiple companies from which the court purchased systems. In time, a number of the companies either went out of business or combined with others.

The State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) is active in this arena, both certifying the court reporters and court recorders.

At first, SCAO approved the courtroom recording systems and now there are established standards for the systems. The

voice activated digital recording systems are sophisticated in what they can do and archiving the record is a significant upgrade.

In Circuit Court, we have a small group of court record managers who are retained by the court to produce a transcript when required for appeal or otherwise.

In addition, an attorney or party of record may purchase a CD of court proceedings, but it may not be published. If an individual would like to hear and see a specific court proceeding, arrangements may be made to do so in the law library working with court staff.

I can recall challenges to the accuracy of transcripts on occasion and the judge might permit the actual courtroom recording to be available. This was a rare event but did take place.

I was prompted to write this article, upon learning that one of our retired veteran court reporters recently passed away, Mary Ann Siegel. Mary Ann worked for Judge James Shaker, 68th District Court, and Circuit Judge Philip C. Elliott. —bam

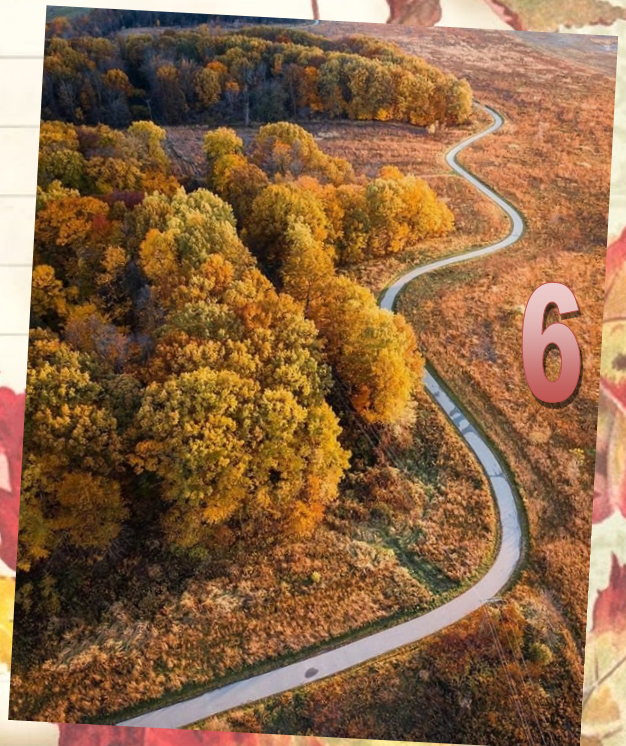


DO YOU KNOW WHERE THESE WERE TAKEN?

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PURE MICHIGAN

Answers are on the last page



THE TOWER

The new Genesee County Administration Building will be located at 324 S. Saginaw Street.

County employees have been kept up to date on events and timelines surrounding the move by Joshua Freeman, Administrator, Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

Tours have taken place and other timelines shared. Roofs

and elevators are in the process of replacement. Progress is being made on the expansive upgrade to facility systems to insure a solid plan for the future.

Below are conceptual drawings for the location which has been dubbed, "The Tower."



This photograph was taken from the roof of the courthouse and given to me. It hangs in my office with appreciation –bam



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

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