



# The Circuit Times

Newsletter of Twentieth Judicial Circuit

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## Korean Delegation Visits 20th for Second Time

Three years ago the Twentieth Judicial Circuit was honored to host a small delegation of Korean judges and court administrators to observe our court system in action. On November 2-3, 2009, we were once-again honored to host a group of judges, court administrators and two clerks of court from Korea. With the assistance of the National Center for State Courts the Supreme Court of South Korea selected the Twentieth Circuit to observe and study the jury selection process, voir dire, case management system, pretrial services and our organizational framework.

The first day our visitors were very busy. They began with an orientation in Court Administration with a review of our various programs. Scott Wilsker, Criminal Division Director, provided an overview of the Pretrial Services Department and the first appearance process. Case Management for criminal and civil cases was introduced to them, followed later in the day by a presentation.

Next, Jennifer Savage, Civil Division Supervisor in the Clerk of Courts office explained to the delegation how jurors are selected and notified to serve. They were able to view the video that prospective jurors are shown and were given examples of questions asked of jurors by the court.

By mid-day the Korean judges were seated for a roundtable discussion with Chief Judge G. Keith Cary, Circuit Judges, Thomas Reese and Edward Volz, and County Administrative Judge John Duryea. The Presiding Korean Judge, Judge Jang



Korean Delegation in front of Tower Building (lt. to rt.): Choi Ki Soo, Clerk of Court; Park Gyu Sam, Asst. Court Officer; Chee Bong Park, Judge; Jan Hongsun, Presiding Judge; Soyoung Kwon, Associate Judge; Lee Yun Hee, Asst. Court Officer; Byungmann Kim, Associate Judge; and Kang Kil An, Clerk of Court.

Hongsun, wondered what benefit a jury trial held over a bench trial. He explained that his District Court only began using juries 2-3 years ago. They are in a "trial" phase with the use of juries. There have been approximately ten jury trials a year since the "trials" began. Their jurors are all volunteers. Judge Reese responded to the inquiry as follows:

*"When you have different people, from different backgrounds with different experiences coming together and talking things out, well, whatever they decide is probably the closest thing you are ever going to get to the truth."*

Later in the afternoon a group presentation on case management took place with Scott Wilsker, Assistant State Attorney Kelly Worcester, Assistant Public Defender Kathleen Fitzgeorge, Pretrial Services Manager Liza Maldonado and Case Management Supervisor Jim Sullivan. There were many questions posed to the group, specifically as to how case managers interact with the attorneys and judges.

Korean cont. from pg 1



*End of program group photo (lt. to rt.) front row: Asst. State Attorney Kelly Worcester, Asst. Public Defender Kathleen Fitzgeorge, Supervisor Jennifer Savage, Clerk's Office, Pretrial Svcs. Mgr. Liza Maldonado, Assoc. Judge Kwon, Interpreter Hyon Green, Presiding Judge Hongsun, Judge Park, Court Officer Sam, Clerk of Court Soo and Court Officer Hee. Second row: Court Operations Mgr. Ken Kellum, Case Mgmt Supervisor Jim Sullivan, Judge Mark Steinbeck, TCA Rick Callanan, Court Operations Mgr. Sheila Mann, Judge John Duryea, Criminal Div. Dir. Scott Wilsker, Assoc. Judge Kim and Clerk of Court An.*

The day closed with a presentation by Rick Callanan, Trial Court Administrator, on our court system's organization and the roles and responsibilities of court administration and the clerk's office.

The second day included a tour and Q&A of the Digital Court Reporting department. The delegation was able to watch first appearance hearings and motions hearings as they were recorded and tagged. They asked the staff questions as to process, storage of records and workloads. Korea utilizes court stenographers only; there is no electronic record of court events. Therefore, this facet of our system generated much discussion.

The Korean judges finished their visit by observing jury voir dire in a battery case, followed by a debriefing discussion with Judge Mark Steinbeck.

The delegation's "observation assignment" provided a wonderful opportunity for each culture to learn about the other and share ideas and visions for the future of each court system.

**Judge Seals Elected to Serve on Board of National Council**

The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) announced in August 2009 that Judge James H. Seals was elected to its Board of Trustees at their 72nd Annual Conference.

Long a staple in the Twentieth Judicial Circuit, Judge Seals has served on the Circuit Court bench since 1986 after serving two years as a County Court Judge. For the last several years he has been assigned to the Juvenile Division and presided over Dependency Court in Lee County. He is dedicated to improving the lives of children and has said he enjoys "working with children and families in crisis because I like trying to solve their problems." He has worked hard to develop a balance between meeting-the-needs of the children and families who come before him and adhering to the law as set forth by the State of Florida. Judge Seals has said that Dependency Court "is where my heart is" and this is evident in all that he does both inside and outside the courtroom.



*Judge James H. Seals*

Off the bench Judge Seals serves as the president of the Florida Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, is a Board Member and Chair of the Division of Youth and Justice Studies of Florida Gulf Coast University and Board Member of the Lee County Community Alliance. He is the co-founder of Lee County's PACE Center for Girls and sits on its board of directors. Additionally, Judge Seals has taught on juvenile and family justice-related topics on both the state and national levels.



*Craig McLean at CTC in October.*

**Information Systems Director Presents at National Conference**

Craig McLean, IS Director for the Twentieth was a guest presenter at the 2009 Court Technology Conference in Denver, Colorado. He addressed the group of "techies", court administrators and judges on AWACS (Active Warrant Alert Calendar System) and the success of the program locally. The presentation was

well-received and attendees were "particularly interested in the number of databases the system connects to and the ability to screen for 'in custody's which reduces our failure to appear (FTA) count."

## Hendry County Opens New Courtroom and Chambers

The Hendry County Judiciary and Court Administration in collaboration with Hendry County Administration held an "Open House" to debut the new first floor courtroom of the Hendry County Courthouse. The event was held on October 30, 2009 at 3pm.

After brief comments by County Administrator, Judi Kennington-Korf, Chief Judge G. Keith Cary and Administrative Judge James D. Sloan addressed the audience expressing their gratitude for the perseverance and hard work of all those involved in making the new courtroom a reality.



*Judge Sloan speaking to the guests at the Hendry Courthouse Open*

Guests were invited to take a tour of the new holding facilities, judicial chambers and conference area. A reception was held in the

conference area. The guests included State Representative Grimsley, Judges from Charlotte, Collier, Glades and Lee Counties, local dignitaries, members of the bar and representatives from Chris Tel Construction and BSSW Architects, as well as, courthouse staff.



County Administrator Judi Kennington-Korf during opening remarks at the Open House ceremony.

Courtroom 1 is used 8-10 days a month presently, but its use will be expanded with the addition of more magistrate and DOR hearing officer time.

*Below, Judges in attendance (lt. to rt.): Judge John W. Dommerich, Judge Peter A. Bell, Judge James D. Sloan, Judge Janeice T. Martin, Chief Judge G. Keith Cary, Judge Christine H. Greider and Judge Jack Lundy.*



## Hendry County Receives New Positions

Hendry and Glades Counties soon will have their own part-time magistrate. This new position will assist Circuit Judge Christine Greider with civil and family matters thus leaving Judge Greider more time to preside over criminal cases. Judges Sloan and Lundy will also benefit from the magistrate position as it will assume some of the circuit work they currently handle.

This is a contract position that will serve six days a month- five days in Hendry and one day in Glades- the schedule has yet to be decided. However, the magistrate will hear foreclosures, probate, civil motions, DOR, family and dependency cases.

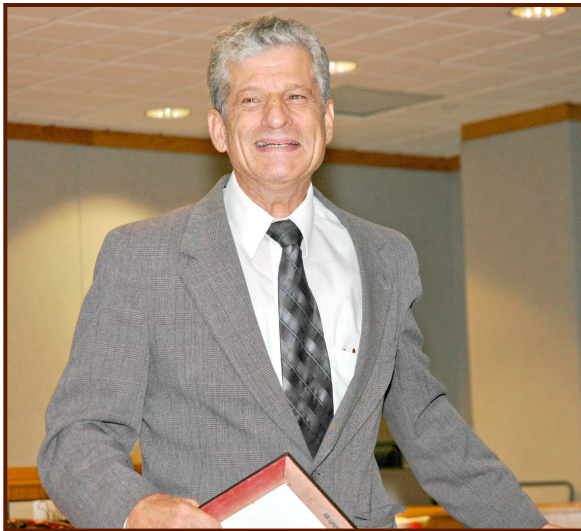
Currently, Hendry and Glades Counties receive assistance from magistrates in Collier and Charlotte Counties. As soon as the contract magistrate is ready to take the bench, the magistrates "on loan" will no longer provide services there.

**A BIG THANKS** to Collier and Charlotte Counties for sharing very valuable magistrate time with the inland counties. And, Extra Big Thanks to Magistrates David Friedman, James McGarity III, Amy Wilson and Lisa Spader Porter for their time and energy. Special thanks to Magistrate Porter who has travelled east for quite some time to help out the circuit court judge.

Also, new to Hendry County will be a criminal case manager to assist the court with pretrial release and case management on felony cases. This position will interview and investigate defendants prior to first

## Lee County Probation Officer Names “Line Office of the Year”

For the second time in its history the Florida Association of Community Corrections (FACC) has honored a probation officer of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit for distinguished service. The first was in 2005 when Debbie Offut from the Collier County Probation Department received the “FACC Line Officer of the Year” award. Now in 2009, David Nemeč from the Lee County Probation Department was declared the FACC “Line Officer of the Year”.



Lee County Probation Officer David Nemeč at awards ceremony.

Mr. Nemeč began his career with the Twentieth Judicial Circuit in 2000. Since that time he has proven himself worthy of this award and the respect and admiration of his fellow probation officers and supervisors.

One of several nominees for this award, Mr. Nemeč cinched the deal with his dedication and “can-do” attitude. His supervisor Jeff Nichols, Deputy Criminal Division Director, submitted his name for consideration with a recommendation letter that sums up why Mr. Nemeč was deserving of this honor. It reads:

*“...David’s contributions to the law enforcement community date back to his days as a student at Ohio’s Youngstown University from which he graduated in 1977 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Law Enforcement and an Associate’s Degree in Police Science.*

*Shortly thereafter he began employment with the Mahoning County Juvenile Court system in Youngstown, as a Statistician. His job was to ensure efficient administration of Juvenile cases as mandated by the State of Ohio. His*



David Nemeč presented with FACC Award on July 30, 2009. From left to right: Dep. Criminal Division Dir. Jeff Nichols, Judge Radford Sturgis (back), David Nemeč, Judge John Duryea, Criminal Division Director Scott Wilsker.

*reports were the basis of State and County funding, as well as a water mark for the Ohio Youth Commission for the purposes of expungement of Juvenile records.*

*In 1989 David was promoted to Court Investigator for that same jurisdiction which redirected his focus to pre-sentence data gathering from clients which consisted of field work at local schools, homes and social agencies in order to aid the Court in making well informed dispositions. It was then that David became involved in the Court’s Victim Restitution Program; a path that he would continue to follow for many years to come.*

*After working as a Court Investigator for ten years...David moved to Florida and in spring 2000 accepted a Probation Officer position in Lee County with great pride and enthusiasm. David has since demonstrated that he did not simply write those words to impress his new employer. This was and is his professional credo and he has never allowed high caseloads or life’s challenges to discourage him through the years.*

*David has flourished as a member of the Lee County Probation’s Domestic Violence Unit. David has shown unmatched dedication as a victim advocate while maintaining the balance of coaching defendants and enforcing the Court’s orders. His positive attitude has elevated him above others and I have never met anyone with more heart”.*

This letter encapsulates David Nemeč the Probation Officer; however, it leaves out one very significant piece of the David Nemeč story: David was born with cerebral palsy. At that time there were not the services that are available today for youth growing up with challenges. As David approached his college years he was discouraged from entering college to

## Collier County Dedicates Courthouse Annex to Judge

The Collier County Courthouse Annex was opened for business on June 15, 2009, however, the dedication ceremony took place on October 9, 2009. The special guest of honor at the event was the Honorable Hugh D. Hayes, circuit court judge, former Chief Judge, and, the Annex's name-sake.

By unanimous vote, the Collier County BOCC decided to name the courthouse structure after Judge Hayes for his work and commitment to courts and to the citizens of Collier County.

The event was hosted by the Collier County Bar Association and the guests included judges from the other four counties, BOCC board members, family, friends, colleagues and courthouse staff.

*Below:*

*Judge Hayes being congratulated by Administrative Services Manager for Collier County, Mark Middlebrook.*



*Above: Collier County Courthouse Campus. Original Courthouse is in the foreground. Annex is in the background to the left.*

**Nemec** cont from pg 4

study law enforcement and emphasis was placed on developing a career more suited for him. However, law enforcement was what suited him. Luckily, someone took an interest in what he wanted and helped him on the path to the “dream job” he now holds. It was hard work, but David persevered and always demonstrated that he could do the work if given the chance.

Mr. Nemec’s selection as FACC “Line Officer of the Year” was announced in early July at an FACC conference. His heartfelt acceptance comments told of his story to overcome and garnered him two standing ovations. Later on July 30, 2009 Chief Judge G. Keith Cary presented Mr. Nemec with his plaque.

**Hendry** cont from pg 3

appearance and provide valuable information to the judge to aid in the decision whether or not to release the defendant on pretrial supervision while the case is pending trial. Additionally, the case manager will assist the circuit judge on specified cases in order to keep cases on track and moving through the justice system in a timely and efficient manner.

The position has been posted and Court Administration hopes to have someone hired and begin training by January.

## The Human Resource FYI

### The Twentieth Judicial Circuit to Offer Case Management Workshops

January 14, 2010 the Twentieth Judicial Circuit will host a workshop on caseflow management at Edison State College. Dr. Barry Mahoney, President of The Justice Management Institute (JMI) and an international consultant will conduct the workshops that include the fundamentals of caseflow management, identifying best practices and strategies for utilizing case management staff and magistrate support to judges to improve civil case management in the Twentieth Circuit.

Dr. Mahoney helped found JMI in 1993. He has worked for the National Center for State Courts, the Vera Institute of Justice, consulted on several "Rule of Law" projects and was the Assistant Attorney General for the State of New York. He is a graduate of Harvard Law School and has a Ph.D in Political Science from Columbia University.

## Employee Reminders...

### W-2 Mail-outs

County Funded Employees- W-2's will be mailed out to you in January 2010. Please notify Human Resources if you have had any changes to your address over the last year. This will ensure timely receipt of your W-2. If you receive a paystub you can verify the address that HR has on file for you by checking the address on your paystub. If you need to make changes go to <http://caintra> and download the W-4 form necessary to make the change and forward to HR. If you need to verify an address you can contact Dawn Cicchesi (239-533-1705) or Shannon Redden (239-533-1707).

State Funded Employees- Your W-2's are delivered to you by interoffice mail; however, this is a good time to review you information and advise HR of any changes that need to be made.

### Circuit Times Newsletter

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