



The Circuit Times

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COVER:

Judge Thompson
Investiture

Remote Learning
Program

Hendry County's
New Court
Operations Manager
pg. 2

Collier County ASM
Moves On
pg. 2

Judge Martin Proud
of Drug Court
Participants
pg. 2

CourtConnect
Building On
Excellence
pg.3

Judge Dommerich
Retiring
pg. 4

New Circuit Judge
Appointed
pg. 4

Judge Cary
Recognized For
Service
pg. 4

Human Resources
FYI
pg. 5

Three Managers
Earn Certifications
pg. 5

Judge Nicholas R. Thompson Takes Oath of Office

On December 9, 2011 Judge Nicholas (Nick) R. Thompson was sworn in as a Twentieth Judicial Circuit Judge in an Investiture Ceremony at the Old Lee County Courthouse. His father, retired Senior Judge James R. Thompson had the honor of administering the oath of office (at right).

Judge Nick Thompson is a graduate of William and Lee University and received his Juris Doctorate from Nova Southeastern University.

After graduation he worked for the State Attorney's Office in Lee County. Later he began a career practicing law in the private sector and served as a member of the Florida House of Representatives.

Judge Thompson took the bench on 1/4/11. He initially served in Hendry and Glades Counties but currently presides over criminal, probate and guardianship cases in Charlotte County.



Twentieth Launches Remote Learning Program

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit began implementing a Remote Learning Program for Law School Students in January 2012. The plan is to provide a learning experience to Florida's Law School students with flexibility so that students can choose the level of their participation through either an externship or internship.

After planning and consultation with the administrative judges, Chief Judge Jay B. Rosman authorized the Office of Court Innovations and Program Analysis to develop the Remote Learning Program. The intern/extern position entails research for and writing of legal memoranda, draft opinions and orders in a variety of case types in both circuit and county court.

Work is performed under the general supervision of the administrative judge of the pertinent judicial division and the circuit's Office of Court Innovation and Program Analysis.

Currently there are 14 interns working in the five counties of the Twentieth Circuit; 1 in Charlotte, 1 in Hendry/Glades, 3 in Collier and 9 in Lee. The students attend Ava Maria Law School and are in their 2nd and 3rd years of school.



*Intern Ernest Ricci,
assigned to Charlotte
County.*



*Work study students: Cheyenne
Whitfield, assigned to Collier
County and Joel Garcia, assigned
to Lee County.*

Twentieth Circuit Welcomes New Court Operations Manger



Hendry and Glades Counties now have a full time Court Operations Manager. Historically, operations management coverage was provided on a part time basis by operations managers located in one of the coastal counties. For the previous four years that position was held by Sheila Mann. However, in 2011 efforts were made to create a full time position to address the needs of the inland counties. The efforts proved successful and Court Administration hired Dawn Oliver to fill the new position in December 2011.

Ms. Oliver relocated to Lee County from Virginia where she was a Criminal Justice Manager for the Office of Criminal Justice Services in Prince William County.

Ms. Oliver has a BA in spanish and psychology and a Masters Degree in Public Administration.

Collier Administrative Services Manager Will Be Missed



Collier County Court Administration staff, judges and justice partners said good-bye to Mark Middlebrook at a farewell get-together on January 26th. Mark, had been the Administrative Services Manager for the Collier courthouse from May 1995 to January 2012.

A number of judges, judicial assistants, attorneys and law enforcement personnel gathered to acknowledge Mark's support and commitment to the Twentieth Judicial Circuit and citizens of Collier County. Chief Judge Jay B. Rosman presented a plaque in appreciation of his service to the courts. The Trial Court Administrator, Rick Callanan, spoke of the successes Mark had and of the dedication he had



Left to right: Chief Judge Rosman, Mark Middlebrook, Court Administrator Rick Callanan, and Collier Administrative Judge, Hugh Hayes.

to get the job done- any job-on behalf of the courts. Finally, Mark addressed the group and humbly thanked everyone for supporting him throughout the years. His closing remarks acknowledged the staff for their hard work and that they "made me look good."

During his time in court administration Mark filled a very important role in maintaining the security of all five of our courthouses throughout the circuit. Having a law enforcement background, he designed and spearheaded all the courthouse security testing in the circuit and provided feedback to the individual courthouses regarding any needed improvements or to report successful testing.

Mark leaves his position in Court Administration to pursue a career as an Operations Manager for the U.S. Clerk for the Middle District of Florida.

Drug Court Participants Managing Jobs, School and Court

The Collier County Drug Court Team feels it has bragging rights when it comes to their participants and Judge Janeice Martin is not afraid to say so. Judge Martin who has been presiding over drug court since July 2011 recently announced that all of the 35 drug court participants are 100% schooled or employed. A rather large accomplishment given the economic environment. According the treatment provider, "they are working hard at keeping their jobs while dealing with the demands of Drug Court."



Drug Court is an intense program in which appropriate defendants (as determined by the State Attorney's Office) enter a plea of guilt or no contest and sign a probation document. The program runs 18-24 months and requires weekly court appearances (initially) which are gradually reduced as the defendant passes through its four phases. Additionally, defendants must participate in treatment for substance abuse, submit to drug screens, appear in court, and respond to inquiries from any member of the drug court team. The judge has a very active role in the process and must strike a balance between being firm, demanding accountability and being supportive and positive.

Judge Martin is "absolutely enjoying the privilege of being a part of the Drug Court Team." The team, which includes ASA Laura Farrell, APD Richard Grant, State PO Jay Freshwater, and clinicians David Rodriguez and Cindy Shannon, works well together and has the ability to confront challenges unique to drug court on a level that is "unparalleled."

New Virtual Library Rolled Out

By Cheryl Pace, Intranet/Internet Manager

CourtConnect has some new and exciting features to aid in connecting you to the information you need to work more efficiently and effectively. Think of CourtConnect as your portal to retrieving and sharing key court documents, reference materials and statistical data. Click on CourtConnect and you will find improved ease of use features with tabs for our most visited sites, buttons for court resources such as helpdesk, Vista HRMS, Circuit Events, Training, Judicial Resources and shortcuts on each page to the most used links on the page. Here's a list of new developments and upgrades that will make CourtConnect our electronic gateway to access key court information:

- ✓ Legal reference materials, AO's, Bench books
- ✓ Judges Virtual Library of research, jury instructions and other key reference materials shared by judges in the circuit
- ✓ Legal Intern program information and contact numbers
- ✓ Legislative updates
- ✓ Current court statistical data, monthly trends analysis and workload data on all calendar performance statistics circuit wide, by county and by division
- ✓ Easy access to complete agendas and materials for all circuit Chief/Administrative Judges conference (CJC) meetings, TCBC meetings and materials on status of state budget
- ✓ Electronic access to complete Personnel information, policies, forms, training calendars and court job postings and new hire activity

A new addition, the CourtConnect Virtual Library for the 20th Circuit Judiciary was conceived by our own Chief Judge, Jay B. Rosman. This Library is a repository to store how-to tips, jury instructions, guidelines, forms, orders, rules, articles, references, etc. from the current judiciary to pass on to future judges. The library is located on the judges' CourtConnect site and can be viewed either by subject or by topic. The Virtual Library will be a great resource for new judges, judges starting out in new divisions as well as for a duty judge reference. The Virtual Library has gotten off to a great start with submissions by Judge Corbin, Judge Paluck, Judge Keith Kyle, Judge Krier, Judge Gagliardi, Judge Lundy, Judge Seals, Chief Judge Rosman and Senior Judge Radford Sturgis.

The screenshot shows the '20th Circuit Virtual Library' website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Judges' and 'JA's' tabs, and a search bar. The main content area is titled '20th Circuit Virtual Library By Subject'. It features a search box with a 'Search' button and a 'Search Tips' link. Below the search box is a dropdown menu for 'Tips from other Judges...'. The library is organized into two columns of subject categories:

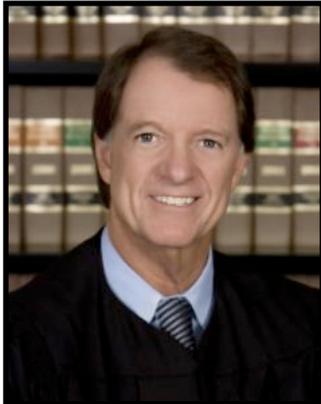
- Civil Law**: Duty Judge, Jury Instructions, Orders, Small Claims, ...
- Criminal Law**: Caselaw, Contempt, Drug Court, Guidelines, Jury Instructions, Rules, Mental Health Court, ...
- Domestic Violence**: Published Article, ...
- Family Law**: Forms, Orders, Rules, Published Article, ...
- General Law**: Ceremony, Duty Judge, Guidelines, Jury Instructions, Orders, Research, ...
- Judicial Administration**: Guidelines, Rules, ...
- Judicial Ethics**: Research, ...
- Traffic Law**: Guidelines, ...

At the bottom, there is a section titled 'Virtual Library - New Library Items' with a table of recent additions:

Supreme Court Decision - GPS Tracking Device on Cars NEW	Criminal Law	Caselaw	US Supreme Court
Mental Health Court - The Role of the Judge	Criminal Law	Mental Health Court	Judge Tara Pascotto Paluck
Functional requirements for in-court processing (DRAFT)	Judicial Administration	Guidelines	Trial Court Integrated Management Solution (TIMS) committee

Judge John Dommerich To Retire In Early Spring

Judge John W. Dommerich will bring a close to a lengthy legal career on March 31, 2012 after 35+ years of service to the citizens of Lee County and the Twentieth Judicial Circuit.



Judge Dommerich began his career as a prosecutor at the Office of the State Attorney in 1976. He became a county court judge by appointment in November 1989 and was later appointed to the circuit bench in April 2008.

As a county judge his dockets covered a variety of civil and misdemeanor cases. As a circuit judge the first division he presided over was the Family Law division handling family law and dependency cases. He commented at the time of his circuit appointment that he would eventually like to return to the criminal bench. Judge Dommerich has come full circle; he will finish his career having presided over felony cases in the criminal divisions initially in Charlotte County and since January 2011 in Lee County.

Judge Dommerich announced his plans to retire in a letter of resignation he submitted to Governor Scott on October 12, 2011.

Amy Hawthorne Appointed to Circuit Bench

Governor Scott appointed Amy R. Hawthorne to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge John W. Dommerich at the end of March. The appointment was announced on February 7, 2012.



Hawthorne has been in private practice since 1998 but served as Assistant Public Defender from 1993-1998 and as a general magistrate in the Twentieth from 2010-2011.

In his press release the Governor stated “Amy’s handling of cases as a civil magistrate has shown a clear understanding of the application of the law in a consistent and predictable manner. Her experience has given her the skills necessary to serve on the bench.” Judge Hawthorne will begin her duties on the 2nd of April. Her assignment will be the circuit bench serving both Hendry and Glades Counties.

Judge G. Keith Cary Honored By Florida Police Chiefs Association



On February 16, 2012 Judge G. Keith Cary was presented with a special certificate of recognition for his “admirable and distinguished service as 2011 Chair of the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA), Inc.” by the Southwest Florida Police Chiefs Association (SWPCA). President of the SWPCA, Chief Albert

Arenal, stated it was Judge Cary’s six years as a Commissioner for the CFA in conjunction with his service as Chair, that garnered him the recognition award.

In a statement Chief Arenal said Judge Cary’s “service [is] a direct reflection of his commitment to our region, as well as state law enforcement as a whole.”

The CFA is responsible for the accreditation of law enforcement agencies in the state. The Commission consists of representatives from law enforcement, an executive from State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association, an appointed commissioner by the Florida Association of Counties, an appellate or circuit judge appointed by the Florida Supreme Court and a representative of the Inspector General.



The Human Resource FYI

by Sharon Suhar

Supervisor Training Opportunities Are Planned For 2nd Quarter

The Human Resource office is planning several high end training programs for its supervisors during the second quarter to ensure that supervisors are kept up-to-date with current trends in Employment Law, Interviewing Skills and HR Processes. Among the offerings will be a Diversity interactive on-line program that focuses on the changing work force of the future and its many challenges and opportunities. In addition, a Behavioral Interviewing workshop is being planned to help supervisors involved in employment interviewing enhance their ability to hire the best qualified candidate for a position. And finally, a workshop on current and new HR Processes will be offered to all current and new supervisors to acquaint them with myriad functions, benefits and HR programs available. Once the dates are set they will be posted on the HR Announcements and Training sections on CourtConnect.

Circuit Times Newsletter

*Chief Judge
Jay B. Rosman*

*Trial Court Administrator
Rick Callanan*

*Deputy Court Administrator
Lisa Kiesel*

*Editor
Sheila Mann*

*Photographer
Carrie Chalker-Smith*

Contributors

*Cheryl Pace, Intranet/Internet Manager
Sharon Suhar, Human Resources Manager*

Lee Criminal Division Directors, Supervisor Obtain Certifications

Deputy Criminal Division Director, Jeff Nichols (Probation Department) and Administrative Services Supervisor, Amy Kinsey (Pretrial Services Department) recently attained their Certified Court Managers level of achievement from the Institute of Court Management (ICM) at the National Center for State Courts



(NCSC). Mr. Nichols and Ms. Kinsey join the ranks of fifteen other court operations managers within the circuit who have participated in ICM program and have been certified.



The NCSC provides high level education in the core competencies of court management on both the manager and executive levels. The goal is to enhance the knowledge, abilities and skills of court management personnel so that they are equipped to address the issues relevant to today's court systems.

Liza Maldonado, Deputy Criminal Division Director, Pretrial Services Department, became a Certified Pretrial Services Professional after having completed all requirements and training as set forth by the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA). NAPSA certification "increases credibility; promotes leadership; and provides opportunity to attain a level of expertise" (Peter Kiers, NAPSA President) that is the foundation for administering pretrial services in a fair and impartial manner.

