



Chief Justice Praises State of Judiciary; Calls for Reforms

Address to General Assembly

Chief Justice Norman S. Fletcher delivered his State of the Judiciary address to a joint session of the Georgia House and Senate on January 31, 2003.

“We have competent, dedicated judges at all levels; judges who take seriously the solemnity of their oaths, their duties and the important roles they play in our form of government,” the Chief Justice said.

He called on the legislature to support initiatives ranging from nonpartisan election of probate judges and district attorneys to the findings of the Governor’s Commission on Certainty in Sentencing and the Commission on Indigent Defense. He named certainty in sentencing and indigent defense the two most pressing issues facing the courts today.

Indigent Defense

“This indigent defense reform package is the right thing to do and this is the time to act. So, let us ‘finish the drill’ together and enjoy the reward that flows from doing what our hearts tell us is right,” the Chief Justice said.

The Chief Justice also highlighted other accomplishments in the past year.

• **Court fees:** The AOC has almost completed a report on the collection of court fees. “The preliminary report indicates there is significant



Chief Justice Norman S. Fletcher

room for improvement which should result in the collection of additional millions of dollars for distribution to both the general fund and to the specific beneficiary groups designated by statute,” Chief Justice Fletcher said.

The report should help the legislature decide which fees to keep and which to discontinue. The AOC has already begun training municipal court staff in fee collection procedures and has developed a web-based fee calculator to assist them.

• **Commission on Interpreters:** The need for interpreters has grown along with the diversity of Georgia’s population, Chief Justice Fletcher stated. “Our Commission on Interpreters has stepped up to the plate and is doing an exceptional job meeting that demand.” He also praised the leadership of Justice Carol Hunstein in the development of this vital service.

• **Sentencing Reform:** Chief Justice Fletcher urged support for the findings of the Governor’s Commission on Certainty in Sentencing. He noted that adoption of the Commission’s findings “...will help

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State of Judiciary Address continued

judges and prosecutors boost the public's confidence in equal justice by insuring that people who have committed similar crimes and have similar criminal backgrounds get similar sentences, without regard to their sex, race, or economic means, or where the case was tried."

Chief Justice Fletcher also noted that family violence remains a severe problem in the state. "We are encouraging all judges to be involved in local efforts to end family violence and to coordinate the response of the courts with law enforcement, healthcare, prosecution, and other important community stake holders who have an investment in ending family violence," he said. ☪

The Report of the Governor's Commission on Certainty in Sentencing can be viewed at www.sentencing.state.ga.us

Supreme Court Pilot Project Grants Appeals of Divorce Judgments Automatically

The Supreme Court has begun a pilot project under which appeals of divorce cases will be automatically granted unless the application is found to be frivolous by a majority vote of the Court. The project applies to all divorce discretionary applications filed with the Court between January 6, 2003, and December 16, 2003. The Court may assess a penalty up to \$2,500 for a frivolous appeal. Attorneys filing must certify that the application "is not taken for the purpose of delay, harassment or embarrassment." Further information may be found at www2.state.ga.us/Courts/Supreme under the link Family Law Pilot Project. ☪

Court of Appeals Honors Judge Beasley, Justice Carley

On November 18, 2002, Judge Dorothy Toth Beasley, the first woman to serve on the Georgia Court of Appeals and the first woman Chief Judge, was honored for her service to the court.

Many friends, family members, and colleagues attended the unveiling ceremony in the Court of Appeals courtroom. Presiding Judge John H. Ruffin spoke of Judge Beasley as a scholar, pioneer, and maker of history. Senior Judge Marion T. Pope noted Judge Beasley's many accomplishments during her time on the bench.

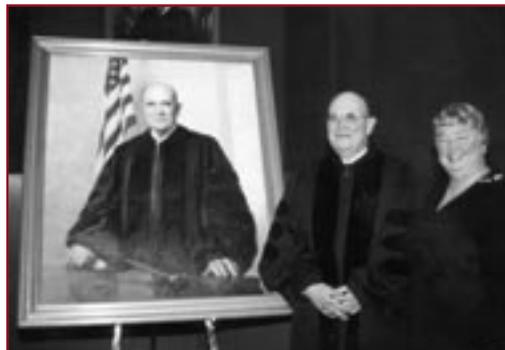
The portrait, which will hang in the Court of Appeals courtroom, was unveiled by Mrs. Beatrice Dodd Toth, Judge Beasley's mother, and her sisters, Virginia Toth Palmer and Stephanie Toth Wells. ☪



Judge Dorothy T. Beasley along with her family stands beside her portrait at the unveiling ceremony.

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Supreme Court Justice George H. Carley was honored for his service on the Court of Appeals on February 25, 2003. His portrait was unveiled and will hang in the Court of Appeals Courtroom.



Justice George H. Carley, accompanied by his wife, Sandra, stands beside his portrait.

Former Governor George Busbee and Mr. Harry L. Cashin, Jr., paid tribute to the Justice's distinguished service. Justice Carley's grandsons, Matthew and Alex Carley, unveiled the portrait before a large crowd

of family, friends, and colleagues.

Justice Carley served on the Court of Appeals from 1979 to 1993, serving as Chief Judge from 1991 to 1993. In 1993, he was appointed to the Supreme Court by Governor Zell Miller. ☪

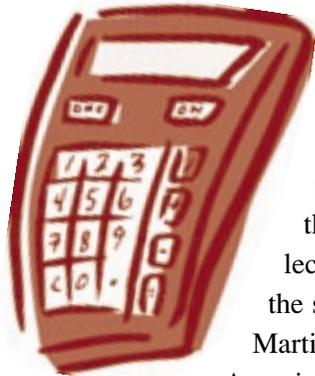
New Procedures Streamline Annual Case Count

Case count season has begun again in Georgia and this year new procedures will be used. Previously the District Court Administrators (DCAs) have compiled the superior court caseload in the 49 circuits. This year, staff from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will take over that responsibility.

The case count is used to prepare the annual judgeship study for the superior courts. Counting the cases filed in any particular court is one way of measuring the workload in that court. The General Assembly consults data on case counts when deciding whether to create more judgeships. The data is also analyzed to research specific issues, such as multiyear trends in types of cases.

Nationally, case count data is used to support applications for fed-

eral grants and to compare the workload of Georgia's and other states' trial courts.



AOC teams have received training to enable them to do their work with consistency and accuracy. "The foremost consideration is that the caseload data be collected uniformly throughout the state," said Ms. Jane Martin, AOC Senior Research Associate.

Criminal case count changes

- The AOC will collect case count data electronically. However, for counties that do not have this capability, staff will visit and assemble the data by hand.

- To achieve uniformity, all criminal cases now will be counted on a per defendant basis, according to Mr. Greg Arnold, AOC Assistant Director for Research and

Technology. Some counties already follow this docketing practice, but in others, even if several defendants were named, only one docket would be counted.

- Cases will be counted by filings only instead of by both filings and dispositions. Data on dispositions of cases by type, such as guilty plea, jury trial, charges dismissed will be compiled only if a circuit requests a new judgeship.

- Unified Appeals (death penalty cases) will be counted based on information provided by the local District Attorney, not from the docket.

Other case count changes

This year, data on civil cases will be gathered by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority. In previous years, civil data was counted by DCAs.

The AOC will now collect data on cases involving indigent defendants. "Our research shows that indigent defense data is going to be difficult to collect, since generally it is not available on the docket. It is kept in a variety of different ways by counties, and will require a separate data collection effort," Mr. Arnold said. The data will be used to verify caseload numbers that counties submit to the Georgia Indigent Defense Council in grant applications.

For more information on the new case counting procedures, contact Ms. Jane Martin, Research and Technology, at 404-656-5171. ☎

2003-2004 DIRECTORY UPDATE

It's That Time Again!

Production of the **2003-2004 Georgia Courts Directory** will soon be underway. Your help is needed so that we can provide accurate information.

Address Verification postcards will be in the mail soon. Please return your card ASAP!

Fulton County Juvenile Court: New Courthouse Keeps Kids in Mind

Fulton County's light-filled new Romae T. Powell Juvenile Justice Center is now open for business.

The new courthouse is a multipurpose center dedicated to finding solutions for children whose lives have gotten off to a troubled start.

A Community Facility

The design of the new courthouse is intended to cut down on the stress children, families and court officers usually feel in such situations. At the main entrance, a four-story wall of glass opens into a spacious atrium. On both sides of the atrium, large artworks designed by Atlanta's CherryLion Sculpture Studios and made by children under court supervision brighten the walls.

For Chief Presiding Judge Nina R. Hickson, Presiding Judge Sanford J. Jones and the five associate judges of the juvenile court, the new building is a welcome change.

Built at a cost of \$31.2 million, the new building is designed for efficiency. It features separate hallways, elevators and even waiting areas that minimize contact between judges, parties, and witnesses.

The entrance floor features a branch library that occupies 8,000 of the courthouse's 187,000 square feet.

"The community was involved in the planning, and they see it as a

facility that is user-friendly," said Judge Hickson. She noted that the library has agreed to place reading materials in the courthouse for chil-



The new Juvenile Justice Center is named in honor of Judge Romae T. Powell (inset).

dren to enjoy and keep. "We will have a real opportunity to deal with literacy among the children," she said.

Spacious Courtrooms

The first and second floors house the services most used by the public, including probation offices. Four courtrooms used mainly for delinquency hearings occupy the third floor. Defendants in custody are brought from basement holding cells in separate elevators to the designated courtroom. Deprivation cases are heard in four courtrooms located on the fourth floor. Each courtroom has separate tables for representatives of the State and the child or family involved, and also for the child advocate attorneys or guardians ad litem who represent the best interests of the child.

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New Addresses for Fulton Juvenile Court Judges and Staff

Chief Presiding Judge Nina Hickson
395 Pryor Street, 3rd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4815/F 302-8495

Presiding Judge Sanford J. Jones
395 Pryor Street, 4th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4822/F 302-8588

Chief Assoc. Judge Charles G. Hodges
395 Pryor Street, 4th Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4712/F 730-1121

Assoc. Judge George Blau
395 Pryor Street, 3rd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4841/F 730-1121

Assoc. Judge David Getachew-Smith
395 Pryor Street, 3rd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4851/F 730-1121

Assoc. Judge Sharon N. Hill
395 Pryor Street, 3rd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-224-4871/F 730-1121

Assoc. Judge Juliette Wiltshire Scales
395 Pryor Street, 3rd Floor
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-224-4881/F 730-1121

Court Administrator/Clerk
Michael N. Wilson
395 Pryor Street, SW, Suite 3128
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-224-4675/F 224-4680

Study on Automation Service Delivery in GA Courts

The Administrative Office of the Courts has entered into an agreement with BearingPoint, a national consulting group, for a review of Information

Technology service delivery in the state court system. The study will focus on current policies, roles and responsibilities of the AOC, the Georgia Courts Automation Commission and the Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority. These agencies share the common goal of automation of court system procedures — a system that includes 159 county clerk's offices, 49 superior court circuits and numerous county-level state courts, probate courts and magistrate courts.

The final work product will describe current initiatives of each of these court system agencies as well as the efforts of the (executive branch) Georgia Technology Authority. The report will contain specific recommendations for coordinating and restructuring Information Technology policy-making and service delivery within the state court system.

For additional information on the BearingPoint study please contact Mr. Vince Harris, AOC Associate Director for Administration, at 404-656-5171. ☞

Fulton County Juvenile Justice Center continued

A Place for Everyone

The courthouse provides space for representatives of all the agencies involved in delinquency and deprivation proceedings: public defenders, district attorneys, special assistant attorneys general, the Department of Family and Children's Services, child advocate attorneys, the Citizens' Panel Review program, the Fulton County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program, and mediation and truancy intervention programs. The building also houses a professionally staffed mental health unit.



Chief Presiding Judge
Nina Hickson

The building is a tribute to its namesake, the late Romae T. Powell, a revered Fulton County Juvenile Court judge who was the first African American appointed to a Georgia court of record. ☞

Measuring Success: A Colorful Message from Drug Court

How can courts measure the success of their work?

The Municipal Court of Thunderbolt's Drug Court need only point to "The Dangers of Drinking: A Coloring Book" to know its message is getting through. The book was created by Robert Ashman, a participant in the Thunderbolt program. Drug Court Administrator Patrick Flynn says that, "Robert's achievement is just one example of what can happen when early intervention is put into place."

"The Dangers of Drinking" warns of the physical and mental consequences of abusing alcohol.



It also offers activities to keep kids away from alcohol.

The coloring book will be distributed to Chatham County Schools. ☞

Columbia County Justice Center Dedicated

The new Columbia County Justice Center in Evans was dedicated November 20, 2002. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy was the invited speaker. Justice Kennedy spoke of the need for justice, and those on the frontlines of administering justice, to be traditional as well as forward-looking. With its new technology, architecture, and feel, the Columbia County Justice Center enables the community to have, as a free society must, “a functioning legal system” that allows “free peoples to govern themselves.”

The Dedication Ceremony, held on the front lawn of the new facility, was attended by all Augusta Judicial Circuit superior court judges, local county commissioners both past and present, Evans County Probate Judge Pat Hardaway, local bar officials, courthouse personnel, and a large crowd of citizens and invited guests. Justice Kennedy was introduced by Chief Judge William M. Fleming, Jr. A history of Columbia County as reflected by the old courthouse and the new was presented by superior court Judge James G. Blanchard, Jr.

Pride in the new facility was apparent throughout the ceremony and the reception following. Many people took time to tour the building and enjoy the music and refreshments provided.

Technology and Tradition

Augusta Circuit Superior Court judges assigned to Columbia County are enjoying the new courthouse. “It’s a useful facility,” said Judge Neal W. Dickert. “It has all the modern technology of a new building but maintains a traditional appearance that is very attractive, and it meets the needs of the county.”

Judge Robert L. Allgood concurs. “The courthouse has worked out very well,” he said. “The technology is first class and we have much more



Justice Anthony M. Kennedy speaks to the crowd at the dedication ceremony.

Ceremonial courtroom in the Columbia County Justice Center.



space. It handles prisoners better and we have improved security.”

The 72,000 square foot courthouse is designed for efficiency, security and the demands of an electronic society. Its courtrooms are equipped with a video presentation system that can broadcast pictures, X-rays, computer presentations, and audio throughout the courtroom. Electronic data storage and data transmission have reduced the amount of space needed for library facilities.

Judge Dickert noted that the new technology is not yet being

used to its full potential. “Lawyers need to use it and feel comfortable with it, and that is taking a little while,” he said.

Planning for the Future

Tenth District Court Administrator Tom Gunnels says many needs have to be addressed in courthouse design. Intensive planning for security is now a necessity. For example, circulation patterns in the new courthouse were designed to keep court staff, the public and criminal defendants separated. “They should not meet except in the courtroom,” Mr. Gunnels said. The

Columbia County courthouse also has sophisticated video monitoring of interior and outside spaces.

Mr. Gunnels says courthouse design should be flexible enough to adapt to new technology as it is developed. Energy

efficiency and provision for expansion and future growth are other important factors.

Customer-friendly service is also being given high priority in the design of other new courthouses in the Tenth District, Mr. Gunnels said. “The lower floors have the offices the public is most likely to visit, like the Clerk of Superior Court’s office and Probate Court. People need to be able to conduct their business with the minimum amount of problems.”

Web Design Consortium at Work

Mr. Brian Collins, AOC Webmaster, talks about the services provided by the AOC's Web Design Consortium.

Q. What is the purpose of the Web Design Consortium?

B.C. The AOC is working hard to provide a web presence for all the courts and judicial agencies in Georgia. The consortium began with contracts with Kennesaw State University, Valdosta State University, Georgia Southern University, and Sandersville Technical College



Mr. Brian Collins

Faculty and student at these schools work on web design, under the direction of Mr. Greg Arnold, AOC Assistant Director for Technology and Research.

Q. Why do courts need a web page?

B.C. These days, almost everybody

is on-line. People are used to buying things on-line, checking stock quotes, researching; just about everything you might think of, people are doing on-line.

It isn't a stretch to assume that people want to find out about the courts on-line, too. A page with basic information — an address, phone number, driving instructions — is more helpful to citizens who might need to find your court than having no web presence at all.

Q. Can my web page go beyond just basic information?

B.C. There's no limit to what your page can encompass. We'll work to make sure you have what you want the public to see.

Q. Has there been a lot of interest from courts?

B.C. Since May 2000, the AOC web consortium has developed sites for about 80 courts and agencies. Websites have also been created, or are being developed, for each judicial administrative district.

Q. How much does it cost to use the web consortium's services?

B.C. Our web page development services are offered free of charge.

Q. Will I have to travel to Atlanta to get the work done on my web page?

B.C. You won't need to leave your office. The AOC has contracted with several colleges and universities throughout the state. Once you express interest in our services, I will come to your office to discuss exactly what you want.

Q. How long will it take to put a web page up?

B.C. Initial development time averages from six weeks to two months. The main consideration is how quickly you provide content to the school so that work on your web page can go forward.

Q. Is there going to be a big hassle when my information needs to be updated?

B.C. No hassle at all. When changes need to be made, let me know what needs updating. Contact me at 404-463-0837 or collinsb@gaoc.us

Q. Is the web consortium working on other projects?

B.C. One project we're excited about is the development of databases with web interfaces. Soon courts will be able to submit caseload data to the AOC using this technology. This will result in less paperwork on each side. ☺

Web Projects in Development

Kennesaw State University — State Court of Fulton County; Magistrate Court of Fulton County; Council of Magistrate Court Judges homepage; Northeastern Judicial Circuit.

Valdosta State University — Alapaha Judicial Circuit; Southwestern Judicial Circuit; Tifton Judicial Circuit; Worth County Probate Court; Valdosta Municipal Court.

Georgia Southern University — Brunswick Judicial Circuit; Bibb County Civil and Magistrate Court; Montgomery County Probate Court; First, Third, and Eighth Judicial Administrative District updates.

Sandersville Technical College — Online Caseload Reporting Database.

People, Places and Events ...

In Memoriam

* **Senior Judge William (Billy) Shaw Abney**, of LaFayette, died November 18, 2002. Judge Abney served as judge of the juvenile court of Walker and Catoosa counties for 26 years. He retired in 1997. He earned his law degree from the University of Georgia.

* **Judge Glen H. Evans**, former Jackson County magistrate, died December 17, 2002.

* **Senior Judge A.R. Kenyon** of Gainesville died February 18, 2003. Judge Kenyon became a senior judge of the Northeastern Circuit in 1986, after serving twenty years on the bench. He obtained his law degree from the University of Georgia after serving in the Army Infantry in World War II.

AG Opinion

OFFICIAL OPINION

Updating of crimes and offenses for which the Georgia Crime Information Center is authorized to collect and file fingerprints. Adds twelve misdemeanor charges for which fingerprints must be collected by GCIC. This opinion supersedes 2002 Op. Att’y Gen. 02-07. (2/20/03 No. 2003-3)

Note: For full text of the opinion, visit the Attorney General’s website, <http://www.ganet.org/ago>

Retirements

* **Chief Judge William Ison** was honored with a reception in December in recognition of his 25 years on the Clayton County Superior Court bench. A portrait of Judge Ison was unveiled and will hang in the Harold R. Banke Justice Center. He was appointed by Gov. George Busbee in 1977, after serving as district attorney for 5 years. Judge Ison officially retired on December 31, 2002, and takes senior status.



* **Chief Judge Ben Miller**, of the Griffin Judicial Circuit, retired on December 31, 2002. Judge Miller served for 12 years as district attorney of the Griffin Circuit prior to his appointment by Gov. George Busbee in 1977 to the superior court bench. Judge Miller has assumed senior status.

* **Judge William J. Smith**, of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit, retired on December 31, 2002, after serving 14 years on the superior court bench. He was appointed in 1988, after serving 10 years as district attorney.

* **Chief Judge T. Penn McWhorter**, of the Piedmont Judicial Circuit, retired on December 31, 2002. A reception was held in his honor at the Winder

Community Center with many judges and well-wishers in attendance. Judge McWhorter was appointed to the superior court bench in 1986, after serving as city attorney for Winder for 26 years. He will continue to hear cases as a senior judge.

* **Chief Judge Joseph Gaines** was sworn-in as a senior judge of the Superior Courts on December 12, 2002. Judge Gaines served the Western Judicial Circuit for 26 years before his retirement.

Court of Appeals

* The **Honorable J.D. Smith** took the oath of office to become Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals on January 7, 2003. Judge Smith was appointed to the Court Appeals in 1993, after serving on the superior court bench in the Northeastern Judicial Circuit.



* **Judge A. Harris Adams** was sworn in as the newest member of the Court of Appeals of Georgia on December 30, 2002, in the House Chambers of the State Capitol. Judge Adams, who served 18 years as a judge of the State Court of Cobb County, was appointed to the Court of Appeals seat by Gov. Roy Barnes.



Nolan Named GCAC Director

The Georgia Courts Automation Commission (GCAC) named Mr. George Nolan as Executive Director effective February 1, 2003. Mr. Nolan served as Interim Director of the Commission for five months.



Mr. George Nolan

Mr. Nolan began his information services career in 1964 as a computer operator for the Bell System. He has been involved in the planning, develop-

ment, support and management of information systems in business, banking and state government. He received his education in Management and Information Systems from the University of Georgia, Mercer University and Georgia State University.

He joined the staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts in 1975 and served on the development team that designed and implemented Georgia's first fully automated judicial information system.

Mr. Nolan served as the Georgia Courts Automation Commission's first Executive Director from 1990 until 1996. ⚖️

Changes in Phone/Fax Numbers in Macon/Bibb County

Effective January 1, 2003, phone numbers in many judicial offices in Bibb County were changed. Numbers with the 749 exchange were changed to 621. See below for a listing of those affected.

Superior Court Judges:

Chief Judge Tommy Day Wilcox
 Judge G. Bryant Culpepper
 Judge Martha C. Christian
 Judge S. Phillip Brown
 Judge Lamar W. Sizemore, Jr.

State Court Judges:

Judge William P. Adams

Juvenile Court Judges:

Judge Thomas J. Matthews
 Judge Quintress J. Gilbert

Note: Judge Kapiloff's number does NOT change

Probate Court Judge:

Judge William J. Self, II

Magistrate Court Judges:

Judge William C. Randall,
 Chief Magistrate
 Judge Selinda D. Handsford
 Judge Dorothy Pertilla
 Judge Jane E. Reeves
 Judge William M. Shurling, III
 Judge John R. Watts

District Court Administrator:

Greg Jones

Superior Court Clerk:

Dianne Brannen

State Court Clerk:

Marlene M. Johnson

Juvenile Court Clerk: Steve Pace

District Attorney: Howard Sims

Solicitor-General: Otis L. Scarbury

Official Court Reporters:

Kathryn C. Geeslin
 Elizabeth Holloway
 Elizabeth S. Lyles
 Connie K. Martens

People, Places and Events ... continued

Appointments

Before leaving office on January 16, 2003, Governor Roy Barnes made the following appointments:

Superior Courts

Piedmont Circuit,

Judge Joseph H. Booth

Chattahoochee Circuit,

Judge Roxann Gray Daniel

Griffin Circuit,

Judge Tommy R. Hankinson

State Court

Appling County,

Judge Emmett Johnson, Jr.

Cobb County,

Judge Kathryn Tanksley

DeKalb County,

Judge Janis C. Gordon

Effingham County,

Judge Ronald Thompson

Forsyth County

Judge Philip C. Smith

Grady County

Judge John Bass

Henry County

Judge James Troy Chafin, III

* Gov. Roy Barnes appointed **Penny A. Penn** as District Attorney for the Bell-Forsyth Circuit. Ms. Penn fills the vacancy left by Philip Smith's move to the State Court of Forsyth County.

* **Benjamin S. Richardson** was appointed by Gov. Roy Barnes as Solicitor-General for Muscogee County. ⚖️

2002-2003 Georgia Courts Directory Corrections

Please note these corrections/additions.

SUPERIOR COURT

Augusta Circuit

Judge Robert L. Allgood
PO Box 2657
Evans, GA 30809-2657
706-312-7355/F 312-7365

Judge Neal W. Dickert
PO Box 2656
Evans, GA 30809-2656
706-312-7356/F 312-7365

Chattahoochee Circuit

Judge Roxann Gray Daniel
PO Box 1340
Columbus, GA 31902-1340
706-653-4266/F 653-4268

Clayton Circuit

Judge Stephen E. Boswell
Harold R. Banke Justice Center
9151 Tara Boulevard
Jonesboro, GA 30236
770-477-3432/F 473-5827

Griffin Circuit

Judge Tommy Richard Hankinson
132 East Solomon Street
PO Box 1527
Griffin, GA 30224
770-467-4329/F 467-4333

Piedmont Circuit

Judge Joseph H. Booth
30 North Broad Street
PO Box 685
Winder, GA 30680-0685
770-307-3032/F 307-3033

Towaliga Circuit

Judge Thomas H. Wilson
One Courthouse Square, 2nd Fl.
PO Box 950
Forsyth, GA 31029
478-994-7658/F 994-7660

Western Circuit

Judge David R. Sweat
PO Box 1706
Athens, GA 30603
706-613-3186/F 613-3187

SENIOR JUDGES OF THE STATE COURT

Judge Robert E. McDuff
4345 King Valley Drive
Smyrna, GA 30082

STATE COURT

Appling County

Judge E. Preston Johnson, Jr.
442 North Boulevard
PO Box 304
Baxley, GA 31515-0304
912-367-2476/F 367-4650
prestonj@altamaha.net

Cobb County

Judge David Darden
Division I
12 E. Park Square
Marietta, GA 30090
770-528-1721/F 528-1726

Judge Kathryn Johnson Tanksley
Division I
12 E. Park Square
Marietta, GA 30090
770-528-1701/F 528-1710

DeKalb County

Judge Janis Gordon
Suite 108, The Callaway Building
120 W. Trinity Place
Decatur, GA 30030
404-687-3999/F 687-3989

Judge John Panos
604 DeKalb County Courthouse
556 N. McDonough Street
Decatur, GA 30030
404-371-2354/F 687-3524

Effingham County

Judge Ronald Thompson
901 N. Pine Street
PO Box 1074
Springfield, GA 31329
912-754-8853/F 754-6071

Forsyth County

Judge Philip C. Smith
100 W. Courthouse Square
Suite 200
Cumming, GA 30040
770-205-4654

Grady County

Judge John W. Bass, Sr.
311 N. Broad Street
PO Box 88
Cairo, GA 39828-0088
229-377-2424/F 377-7228

Henry County

Judge James T. Chafin, III
PO Box 2000
McDonough, GA 30253
770-898-9550/F 898-9601
JimChafin@worldnet.att.net

Court Reporters Gather to Learn about Electronic Filing

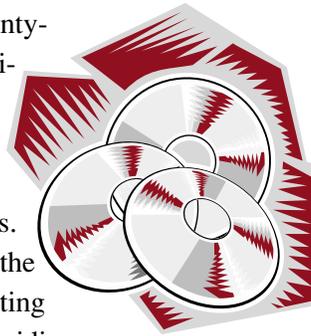
In October 2002, the Supreme Court ordered that official court reporters must file an electronic copy of a transcript, along with a hard copy, in all death penalty

appeals. A two-hour class, coordinated by the Clerk of the Supreme Court and the Administrative Office of the Courts, was held in January to educate official reporters on this new rule.

Technology Liaison on the Supreme Court; Ms. Sherie Welch, Clerk of the Supreme Court; Mr. Todd Vincent, author of the Transcript Filename Convention; and Mr. John Ruggeri, appellate court information technology department.

A video of the program was made and will be available to District Court Administrators and Superior Court Administrators for distribution to official reporters who missed the program. For technical assistance, contact Mr. Ruggeri at efile@gaappeals.us

The twenty-seven participants were instructed on the new requirements. Speakers at the Atlanta meeting included Presiding Justice Leah Ward Sears,



Directory Corrections cont.

Turner County
Judge John Holland
320 North Street
PO Box 824
Ashburn, GA 31714-0824
229-567-2824

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Bell-Forsyth Circuit
Add: Penny A. Penn
100 W. Courthouse Square
Suite 200
Cumming, GA 30040
770-781-2125/F 781-2236

Delete: Philip C. Smith

SOLICITORS-GENERAL

Muscogee County
Add: Benjamin S. Richardson

Delete: Roxann Gray Daniel

Turner County

Steve Ivie
PO Box 825
Ashburn, GA 31714

SUPERIOR COURT CLERKS

Houston County
Carolyn V. Sullivan
201 Perry Parkway
Perry, GA 31069
478-218-4720/F 218-4745

Court Reporters Fee Schedule Increase

Effective April 1, 2003, the per diem and page rates in the official reporters' fee schedule will increase by 2.25% as approved by the Judicial Council of Georgia.

Per Diem	.....	\$172.39 to 8 hours
	.....	\$193.05 to 9 hours
	.....	\$206.87 maximum
Page Rates	.....	\$3.43 per page for Orig. + 2
Expedited	.....	\$5.16 per page for Orig.
Daily	.....	\$6.87 per page for Orig.
Copies	.....	\$1.37 per page
Civil Takedown	.....	\$39.28 per hour

Mark Your Calendar...



The next meeting of the Judicial Council of Georgia will take place June 11, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Savannah.

Indigent Defense Commission Report

The Chief Justice's Commission on Indigent Defense presented its report to the Supreme Court of Georgia on December 12, 2002 in Atlanta. The report calls on the state to assume responsibility for paying for indigent defense services and to establish and enforce basic standards for indigent defense programs.

"The concepts of fairness and equal justice are basic to our American system of government and to our identity as Americans," said Mr. Charles R. Morgan, chairman of the commission. "This report is in essence about ensuring fairness for all citizens."

The Georgia General Assembly is now considering recommendations from the Commission on Indigent Defense. Senate Bill 102 and House Bill 770 both call for creation of a Georgia Indigent Defense Board. The Board will have the responsibility of assuring adequate and effective legal representation to indigents throughout the state.

Copies of the commission report are available from Mr. Jay B. Martin, Deputy Director of the AOC, 404-656-5171. ⚖️



Members of the Chief Justice's Commission on Indigent Defense listen as the report is presented to the Supreme Court.

Findings:

- The state is failing to meet its constitutional duty to protect the rights of indigents and to fund indigent defense;
- There is no effective state-wide structure in place to enforce compliance with guidelines on indigent defense;

Recommendations:

- The state should assume responsibility for paying for constitutionally adequate indigent defense;
- Establish a public defender system based on the 49 judicial circuits, rather than 159 counties;
- Oversight of the system would be handled by the Georgia Indigent Defense Board, made up of representatives of all regions of the state.



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