



# THE Gavel

*Probate News*

## Message from the President

October was a busy and productive month for our Council. At the September 30 Judicial Council meeting, Chief Justice Thompson requested that funds be transferred from the Judicial Council/AOC's budget to the CPCJ's budget, in order to allow our Council to hire an executive director.

His motion passed with no opposition. Accordingly, the CPCJ withdrew its previously approved FY 2017 budget enhancement request that sought funds for an executive director position.

The Council is grateful to the Chief Justice and the AOC for helping us achieve this longtime goal of having an independent staff member. With this accomplishment, we will be able to move forward more quickly with communications, technology, strategic planning, and other areas that should provide noticeable benefits to our members.

On Oct. 1, CPCJ leadership and Mental Health Committee members met with GCIC and DBHDD staff, including DBHDD Commissioner Frank Berry. Discussion items included access to treatment issues, lack of bed capacity for OTAs, and gaps in mental health reporting related to the issuance of weapons carry licenses.

As a result of this meeting, GCAL is now working to improve the protocol its operators follow when a probate judge calls regarding placement for a person ordered to be apprehended. A list of DBHDD field offices, information on inpatient facilities, and referral procedures for crisis and inpatient services are now available on the CPCJ website, under the Mental Health tab of the Behind the Bench section.



The 2015 COAG Fall Conference, held in Savannah Oct. 5 through 8, was significant for two reasons. First, Evans County Probate Judge Darin McCoy was sworn in as president of COAG.

He will continue to serve our Council as Secretary-Treasurer, despite his new duties. Second, the CPCJ Executive Committee approved Catherine Fitch as our Council's first executive director. Catherine had been serving in this role as an AOC employee and her bio was featured in the summer edition of *The Gavel*. I know you will join me in helping them achieve great success in their new roles.

Training provided at the COAG Fall Conference covered weapons carry license law, mentor certification, and records management and records reten-

tion. Judge Chase Daughtrey provided a review of the 2015 legislative session, as well as a preview of 2016 legislation that could affect probate courts. COAG training ended with the AOC's research staff explaining significant changes to the probate caseload reporting form that will go into effect at the beginning of 2017. COAG training materials can be found on the CPCJ website, under the Training Council tab of the Behind the Bench section.

Very truly yours,

Judge Don E. Wilkes President, CPCJ

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## From the Archives

Noteworthy accomplishment: In October of 1987, the Probate Judges Council of Georgia published the first pictorial directory of judges. It was compiled by a committee composed of Judge Pat Hardaway of Columbia County. Other members of the committee included Judge Nancy K. Aspinwall of Liberty County, Judge Frances Y. Seckinger of Effingham County and Judge Dora C. Watson of Pulaski County.

In the January 1995 issue Judge William J. Self II of the Automation Committee explains that "Computers have no intelligence and can only do what they are programmed and instructed to do. A Computer system will generally consist of the central processing unit (the "CPU"), the television like screen that displays the information and functions to the user (the monitor) and the typewriter-looking thing the user uses to put in the information (the "keyboard")." The author goes on to elaborate on memory, files, floppy disks and operating systems.

In the same issue under "Entertainment" is an excerpt from a church bulletin: "This afternoon there will be meetings in the North and South ends of the church. Children will be baptized on both ends."

## Message from the Editor

Here's wishing you all a happy fall and early Christmas. Won't be long now until we are clearing off the turkey and getting ready to trim the tree.

This issue is the first with a new crew of contributors and designers. I trust you find something of interest and use within these pages.

Judge Mike Green and Judge Susan Tate contributed some informative articles on Retirement and Mental Health. We get to see a glimpse of into the lives and hobbies of two of our council members with articles on Judge Eddie Hulsey and Judge Gary Nobles. We recognize the accomplishments of some of our

judges, our new COAG president, our new Director, and note the passing of some of our council family. Many thanks to all you have contributed and keep an eye out for things we should be made aware of.

As we end this year, do not forget to reach out to our friends in the legislature and let them know we appreciate them.

Very respectfully yours,  
Tony Thompson

## McCoy Elected President of COAG



Judge Darin McCoy of Evans County Probate Court was elected President of the Constitutional Officers of Georgia Association at the annual COAG convention in Savannah on Oct. 7, 2015. Judge McCoy was sworn in by Emanuel County Probate Court Judge Don Wilkes, current President of the Council of Probate Court Judges. Judge McCoy was elected Probate Judge of Evans County in 1993. He served as President of the Council of Probate Court Judges in 2002-2003. He currently serves as the secretary-treasurer of the Council.

# Profile

## Twiggs County Probate Court Judge Gary Nobles, Jr

Judge Gary Nobles was born in Macon, Georgia, on September 24, 1965, the oldest of three (brother & sister), to Gary Nobles, Sr., and Johnnie Patsy Langston Nobles. My dad was the oldest of nine children and my mom was the baby of nine children. I've lived in Twiggs County my entire life.

Until age seven, we lived next door to my grandpa's farm and I had a small Shetland pony named Prissy. She would come running to the fence gate when called, and I could throw a bridle on her and ride bareback across the pasture at age six.

Growing up around my younger aunt and uncles, I picked up the nickname "Samples," as in Jr. Samples from Hee Haw. Not that I was a chunky child, I assumed it was because I was a "Jr."

My siblings and I all graduated from

a small private school in the county, Twiggs Academy. As a 10th grader, I was hired by the school to be the custodian. I just endorsed my paycheck and handed it back to the school secretary to pay my own tuition. It was something I didn't have to do, but wanted to do to help my dad. He had three in private school and mom was a domestic engineer. I did graduate as Valedictorian in 1983.



I then earned an Associates Degree from Middle Georgia College in Cochran, finished my Bachelor degree in business at Georgia College in Milledgeville in 1987.

My first job out of college was with the Hilton Corporation. I was in hotel management training for six months before leaving to take a position in insurance sales management for the next 23 years. I resigned from my position

in November 2010, to be sworn in as Probate Judge.

I met my future wife, Lisette Smith, while at MGC. We were married in August 1988 (now 27 yrs). We have four children, we call "the vowels:" Alex (24), Evan (20), Ivie (17), and Owen (15). There won't be a U, cause I had the V. All of my children's births were special, however Ivie's was exceptional. I had to help deliver her at the house. I say "help" because all I did was catch. We made it as far as the den, put the wife in the recliner, she pushed one good time and there she was!

I am an active member of Mt Zion Baptist Church in Danville where I serve as Sunday School Director, Deacon, and sing in the choir.

Spare time is keeping up with the kids. We have a house full of athletes. I stay on the road watching and cheering them on.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being the Twiggs County Probate Judge. You never know what's going to walk through the door.

## 5th District Meets in Oglethorpe County

The 5th District probate judges met in Oglethorpe County on September 18, 2015. Training was conducted by Judge Leslie Jones, Municipal Court Judge for the City of Athens regarding the overlap and differences as to The Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches and seizures and Georgia's Implied Consent law.

The training included an overview of case law pertaining to "searches" by testing blood or urine. was discussed at length, as was the criteria for determining whether a search warrant was justified. After the training, our host, Judge Beverly Nation served a delicious lunch of barbecue, Brunswick stew, traditional sides and

the best German chocolate cake I've ever eaten.

Respectfully submitted,  
Susan Tate, District Director

## Lessons Learned from the CJIS Symposium

By Judge Susan Tate

In August, I attended the 2015 CJIS Symposium, or, as it is affectionately known, the “TAC conference.” This article is not an exhaustive review of what I learned, but a brief summary of a few workshops and bits of information which, for me, were the highlights. There is a great deal more information where this came from – I found the experience to be invaluable.

1. Conversions: If you keep up with the list serve, you will have received an email from me about the new systems that will require courts with their own Live Scan machines for fingerprinting and terminals on which to run criminal histories on Weapons Carry License Applicants to convert to new software for their Live Scan machines and for their terminals.

2. Clues: Courtesy of various speakers at the Symposium, I have composed a handout with the meaning of various acronyms used by the FBI and GBI, including some that appear on RAP sheets . . . Records of Arrests and Prosecutions. This handout also includes some helpful tips for determining whether a batch of information pertains to the applicant or not. This handout is available in the Behind the Bench section of our website.

3. Audit Updates & Mandatory Requirements: See the GCIC website, with all new policies, at [www.GCICWeb.GBI.state.ga.us](http://www.GCICWeb.GBI.state.ga.us). You can find information about the agreements you need in place, personnel security requirements, the Security Awareness Program (including Awareness Statements) and Security & Integrity Training, plus the audit schedule. Don't forget that you can also request a pre-audit assess-

ment three months in advance through the GCIC Training Program Manager. [Hint: The “Compliance” button on the GCIC website has the manuals, the forms, etc.]

4. True Confessions: Apparently, we have been told different things by different people regarding the dissemination of criminal history information, or else I misunderstood. In any case, I confess: I had it wrong. The Georgia criminal history must be given to the applicant if he or she requests it. We can give the FBI criminal history to the applicant (but not to anyone else), BUT this does NOT include information from the NICS check, Mental Health info, etc. – just the criminal history.

5. Exciting Developments: NGI – The old national fingerprint repository IAFIS (Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System), which has an accuracy rate of 92%, is being replaced by the Next Generation Index (NGI), which will increase accuracy to 99.6%. It also has the capability of storing and using biometrics: the iris, facial recognition, scars, marks and tattoos. This advanced fingerprint I.D. technology will also reduce manual fingerprint review by 90%, so it will greatly speed up the identification process. Another feature of the NGI is that it will automatically incorporate a Rap Back feature, provided the state which generates the record maintains a fingerprint database. GCIC does not, so a legislative change would be necessary for this to become a reality in Georgia.

6. ODR: Opening Doors to Recovery (ODR), which is probably familiar to the judges in and around Savannah, is a NAMI Georgia 5 year project funded by the National Institute of Mental

Health to test whether a comprehensive community based system of care can reduce recidivism, hospitalization and homelessness and promote recovery. Data collection and research are a part of this project in order to establish evidence-based best practices. Data is gathered on each participant at 4, 12 and 18 months. A computer randomly assigns people into either standard Intensive Case Management or the ODR program, so this will be one of only a few studies which has a control group. ODR participants, in addition to aggressive case management, receive treatment, supportive housing and services, a meaningful day and technology assistance. They are afforded tailored personal care, such as is offered in mental health courts, only more so. Each person has a 3 member team supporting him or her above and beyond the treatment team: a Peer Navigator, a Family Navigator and a Professional Navigator, collectively called “Community Navigations Specialists.” These teams identify gaps and barriers to successful recovery and plug or overcome them. They identify all the resources available in the community (resource mapping), develop community support and provide a wealth of information both to the people in the program and people in various entities with whom they interact, increasing collaboration. Everyone knows who to call in a given agency for a particular problem. Participants consent to being enrolled in an ODR database, portions of which are shared with law enforcement, jails, the courts, hospitals, etc. There is one number to call if someone is in trouble or needs help. With this kind of support, recovery happens. I heard some amazing stories from people who have experienced it, as well as some navigators who are in

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## DCA Compliance (A Miscellaneous Duty of the Probate Court)

36-80-16. Local Government Authorities Registration.  
 by Judge Tony Thompson

The Code section below outlines the process whereby Local Government Authorities are registered through an annual registration process. In paragraph (i) the Probate Court's role in the process is described. It has been the experience of this editor that a letter from the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will outline the statutory requirement and invite the Probate Judge to review the registered or unregistered entities at the DCA website. The law appears to be silent as to the specific action a probate judge should take. Since the penalty for non-compliance (paragraph f) can affect new debt or credit obligations the Probate Judge may choose to inform by letter the appropriate offices (Mayor, City Council, County Commissioners, etc.) The letter can direct the notified parties to contact the DCA's Office of Research if they have any changes to report. A certificate of service indicating which parties were served can complete the process.

O.C.G.A. §36-80-16:

(a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the "Local Government Authorities Registration Act."

(b) The General Assembly finds that there is a need for the state to create and maintain a record of all local government authorities. Such a record can best be maintained through annual registration of all local government authorities.

(c) The purpose of this Code section is to prescribe a registration process for all local government authorities authorized to operate in the State of Georgia by general statute, local law, or local constitutional amendment.

(d) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) "Debt" includes all long-term or short-term credit obligations including, but not limited to, mortgages, bonds, loans, notes, interest-bearing warrants, and advances. For the purposes of this Code section, debt shall also include lease-purchase obligations.

(2) "Local government authority" includes without limitation instrumentalities of one or more local governments created to fulfill a specialized public purpose or any other legally created organization that has authority to issue debt for a public purpose independent of a county or municipality, not to include state authorities. Local government authorities include joint authorities, regional authorities, hospital authorities, housing authorities, residential care facilities for the elderly authorities, resource recovery development authorities, solid waste management authorities, downtown development authorities, airport authorities, industrial, payroll and other development authorities, transit authorities, water and sewer authorities, parking authorities, recreation authorities, stadium and coliseum authorities, building authorities, public service authorities, or any other local government authority regardless of name. Such local government authorities may have been created by local constitutional amendment, general statute, or local law.

(e) All local government authorities authorized to operate in the State of Georgia must register annually with the Department of Community Affairs.

(f) Any local government authority which fails to register with the Department of Community Affairs shall not incur any debt or credit obligations until such time as it meets the registration requirement. Failure to register shall not have any adverse affect on any outstanding debt or credit obligation.

(g) The Department of Community Affairs shall establish registration and reporting procedures for local government authorities. Such procedures shall include, but are not limited to, information on the authority's legal name, members, function, date and means of creation, contact person, address, and telephone number.

(h) The Department of Community Affairs shall establish reasonable fees for the work related to administration and enforcement of this Code section; provided, however, no fee shall be charged or allowed for the annual registration as required in this Code section.

(i) The Department of Community Affairs shall maintain a certified list of registered local government authorities, available on request. The department shall forward annually to the judge of the probate court in any affected county the registration information for all authorities operating in that county.

(j) Local government authorities shall initially register on or before January 1, 1996, and shall register on or before January 1 of each year thereafter.

(Code 1981, 36-80-16, enacted by Ga. L. 1995, p. 560, 1; Ga. L. 1996, p. 6, 36; Ga. L. 1998, p. 128, 36; Ga. L. 1998, p. 596, 1.)

## In Our Thoughts

Retired Probate **Judge Norma Lee Tidwell**, 89, of Cartersville, passed away Monday, October 26, 2015.

She was born June 14, 1926 in Goodspring, Tennessee, the daughter of the late Clay Smith Jackson and Iva Rena Jackson.

Judge Tidwell was well known in Cartersville and Bartow County for her more than two decades of service as the Probate Judge.

Her career in public service began with numerous positions in government after graduating high school and Martin College. During that time she was an avid basketball and softball player and a member of Epsilon Sigma Alpha. Judge Tidwell was also a talented and accomplished musician and singer, having sung with numerous big bands, including Jimmy Dorsey. Singing and serving others were her true passions in life.

Wayne County Probate **Judge Tammy Thornton's** father **James H. "Jim" Knight** passed away Sunday Nov. 1, 2015 after an extended illness. The Appling County, Georgia native was

a member of First Free Will Baptist Church and a much-loved Sunday school teacher. He was a retired Rayonier employee, former real estate agent, well-drilling business owner, and salesman with R & R Car Sales. He was an outspoken advocate of AA and mentored many in the community. He was a wonderful "Poppie" and also loved to fish and give to others. He was predeceased by his loving wife, Linda Priester Knight; parents, Gervis and Ethelene

Knight; brother, Reggie Knight.

Survivors are his daughters, Sandy Knight and Tammy (Deryl) Thornton, both of Jesup, Georgia; grandchildren, Nick Harper, Meah (Barret) Browning and Josh Thornton; great-grandson, Boone Browning; sisters, Dot (Douglas) Snead of Jacksonville, Florida, Nell Head of Baxley, Georgia and Jean (J.E.) Blanton of Surrency, Georgia; several nieces and nephews.

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### Lessons Learned from the CJIS Symposium cont.

long term recovery themselves. The goal is nothing less than the reduction of serious, persistent mental illness in treatment resistant individuals and it appears that they are achieving it. ODR may be pioneering the best mental health care in the nation. According to NAMI, every year, 57 million people suffer from mental illness, yet only 1/3 of the adults and less than 1/2 of the children receive some type of mental health services. ODR is now in 34 counties. I hope we can work together toward having this type of comprehensive program across the state.



*Judge Eddie Hulsey of Haralson County Probate is shown above with his 60 lb. pumpkin. The pumpkin measured 50 inches around. The enormous pumpkin was featured in the Georgia Farmers and Consumers Market Bulletin in the Aug. 19, 2015 issue. According to the report, Judge Haralson grew the pumpkin from seeds left over from the previous year, started indoors then transplanted outdoors to the garden spot. No fertilizer was used, just daily watering and TLC. The Gavel heard of this farming phenom through Greene County Probate Judge Laverne Ogletree, who brought this to our attention.*

# Probate Judges Appointed to Commissions/Committees

## Judge Mike Greene Appointed to State Commission on Family Violence

On May 29, 2015 Gov. Nathan Deal appointed nine members of the Georgia Commission on Family Violence: Judge Joe C. Bishop, Superior Courts, Pataula Judicial Circuit; Judge J. Mike Greene, Probate Court of Jones County; Steven E. Hatfield, Deputy Director, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; Judge Jeffrey Kight, Superior Courts, Waycross Judicial Circuit; Judge Jeannette Little, State Court of Troup County; Judge Katherine Lumsden, Superior Court, Houston Judicial Circuit; Melanie S.



*Judge J. Mike Greene*

McNeil, Georgia State Long-Term Care Ombudsman; Jessica Nunan, Executive Director, Caminar Latino; and Judge David Sweat, Superior Courts, Western Judicial Circuit. Each will serve a two-year term.

Judge Greene has served as Probate Judge of Jones County since 1981. He is a member of the executive committee for the Council of Probate Court Judges. He was president of the Council from 1985 to 1987. He recently marked thirty five years of service on the bench.

## Associate Judge Martin Cowen to Serve on State Bar Committee

Assoc. Judge Martin L. Cowen III, Probate Court of Clayton County, was appointed by the Governor to serve on the State Bar Committee for Member Benefits. Judge Cowen serves along with Clayton County Probate Judge Pam Ferguson.

## Judge Susan Tate to Serve on State Bar Committee

Judge Susan P. Tate, Probate Court of Athens-Clarke County, was appointed by the Governor to one of the State Bar Committees. She will serve on the Access to Justice Committee. Judge Tate was also nominated for Constitutional Officer Association of Georgia's Officer of the Year award for 2015. Judge Tate was elected as Probate Judge of Athens-Clarke County in 1997. She was president of the Council of Probate Court Judges from 2004 to 2005.



*Judge Susan Tate*



# Report from the Retirement Committee

By: Judge J. Mike Greene

We have recently had a few questions about our retirement bill, HB 635 (LC 43 0171s). This is an attempt to answer those questions.

1. This bill would increase the maximum years of service used to calculate benefits from 20 to 30 years.
2. It requires members to pay dues until they reach the maximum years of service (30 years). The cost to the Fund is minimal because the member continues to pay dues and a maximum of 10 years delay in drawing retirement benefits.
3. It would also allow active members who have more than 20 of service as of July 1, 2016 to purchase service in excess of 20 years (up to a maximum of 10 years) by paying an amount sufficient to cover the full actuarial cost of additional benefits earned. By the member paying the full cost of the additional benefits the Fund will not have any cost. The total cost for a member to buy back service would be according to their age. As an example, our actuary estimates the cost for a member who has attained

age 60 to buyback service to be approximately \$24,000 for each additional year of service or \$240,000 to purchase the maximum service of 10 years.

The following are additional highlights of the Fund:

- At the beginning of this fiscal year, July 1, 2015, the fair market value of the Fund was \$77,794,658. This was an all-time high.
- During the fiscal year ended June 30, 2015, we had the following:  

Investment Income.....	\$1,627,012
Member Dues .....	\$156,534
Court Income .....	\$1,317,037
- The best part, the Fund paid retired Judges and their families \$3,863,302 during the fiscal year.

The new version of the bill can be found on our CPCJ website, in the Behind the Bench section, under Legislative Advocacy. If anyone has additional questions, please reach out to a member of your Retirement Fund Board of Commissioners.

Submitted on behalf of:

Board of Commissioners of the Judges of the Probate Courts Retirement Fund of Georgia.

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*Save the Date*

*CPCJ Day at the Capitol  
Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2016*

# Probate Court Workload Reporting

This new workload reporting form was developed through a joint working group of Judicial Council/AOC staff and CPCJ. The intent of the new form is to better capture the true workload of probate courts and allow their case counts to reflect national standards. The JC/AOC requests that you contact your case management vendor to transition to the updated form as quickly as possible. The JC/AOC cannot guarantee that vendors will make changes at no cost to your county. Internal developers for SUSTAIN and PCIS are already aware of the requested changes. Please note that this new form will not affect 2015 case counts. This new form will be used for 2016 reporting.

## Case counts

### General Probate

	Initial Petition			Secondary Petition			Motions			Objections/ Caveats			Discharge (Uncontested)			Discharge (Contested)		
	Open	Filed	Disp	Open	Filed	Disp	Open	Filed	Disp	Open	Filed	Disp	Open	Filed	Disp	Open	Filed	Disp
Estates																		
Guardianship - Minor																		
Conservatorship Minor																		
Guard/Cons - Adult																		
Trusts																		
Other Filings																		

	Quantity Received						
	Inventory/Asset Management Plan	Personal Status	Annual/Final Returns	Bond	GAL	Indigent Affidavit	
Other Civil Actions							

### Mental Health

	Petition		
	Open	Filed	Disp
Involuntary Treatment			
Order to Apprehend			
Other Mental Health			

### Criminal

	Case			Manner of Disposition		
	Open	Filed	Disp	Transfer	Bench Trial	Non-Trial
Serious Traffic						
Non-Serious Traffic						
Other Criminal Citations						

## Administrative Actions

	Applications	Denied	Revocations
	Firearms		

	Birth	Death	Certified Copies
	Vital Records		

	Licenses Issued
	Marriage

	Number Issued
	Passports

	Yes	No	# of Precincts	# of Election Cycles
	Elections			

	Number Issued
	Misc. Administrative

## Case Characteristics

	Self-Represented Litigants	Interpreters
	Case Characteristics	

## From the Archives

The Courts Futures Committee gave this response to Hardy Gregory, Chair of the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Judiciary. If you have not responded to the letter you received, we encourage you to do so.

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September 17, 1999

Hon. Hardy Gregory, Jr., Chair  
Blue Ribbon Commission on the Judiciary  
708 Sixteenth Avenue, East  
Cordele, GA 31015

Dear Judge Gregory:

In response to your letter of August 10, 1999, the Probate Court Futures Committee met and makes the following observations and recommendations to the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Judiciary:

1. The Probate Court Futures Committee recognizes that the probate courts in Georgia are not uniform and that because of population disparity and demographic factors the courts should remain non-uniform.

*Commentary: In counties with over 96,000 in population the probate courts in Georgia are authorized to hold jury trials and appeals from their orders are to the appropriate appellate court. Judges in those courts must have the same qualifications as superior court judges. In other Georgia counties probate courts are not authorized to hold jury trials, appeals are de novo to the superior court and the judges of these courts are not required to be lawyers. Georgia citizens can best be served by continuing such a two-tiered system since the probate needs of urban and rural counties differ greatly.*

2. The Probate Court Futures Committee feels that all judicial officers should be elected in nonpartisan elections.

*Commentary: Presently, there is no uniformity in Georgia in the election of probate court judges. Many counties have opted through local legislation for nonpartisan elections while a greater number have allowed their probate court judge to remain partisan even where the probate court judge is in charge of elections. Georgia should require that all judicial officers be elected in nonpartisan elections.*

3. The Probate Court Futures Committee supports the efforts of the Pro Se Litigation Committee of the Judicial Council to make courts more "user friendly" and more accessible to the citizens of Georgia.

*Commentary: The probate courts have a history of being the people's court. The probate courts are in the forefront of efforts to make the court more accessible. Presently, the probate courts have uniform forms which are used throughout the state. Probate courts have an interactive web site which allows the public to access the uniform forms from their PC and even complete the forms online. The Probate Court Futures Committee asks that the Blue Ribbon Commission on the Judiciary support our efforts by recommending greater funding for our Uniform Forms Program, the Interactive Website Program and efforts toward making the probate court even more useful to the public.*

4. The Probate Court Futures Committee believes that the Blue Ribbon Commission should encourage cooperation between the different courts to utilize judicial personnel resources in the most efficient manner.

*Commentary: When actions are filed in a superior court and a probate court and the facts are essentially the same for both cases, the superior court and probate court should be encouraged to cooperate to consolidate the case in either the probate court or the superior court where the law permits.*

Thank you for this opportunity to have input into the Commission's deliberations.

Warmest regards,

Marion Guess, Co-Chair  
Probate Court Futures Committee

Belinda Griffin, Co-Chair  
Probate Court Futures Committee