

“Change of Venue”

by Art Heinz

Pennsylvania’s judicial system has an historic new home that provides the courts—and the citizens they serve—with a courthouse, conference center and office complex.

The Pennsylvania Judicial Center sits in the heart of the state Capitol Complex in downtown Harrisburg. The center provides staff and visitors with new facilities, amenities and even a little history. The nine-story, granite-and-limestone building is the first permanent home for Pennsylvania’s judiciary and the nation’s oldest appellate court.



Top right: Carol Narkiewicz of Administrative Services unpacks law books. Above: A view of the Capitol Building from a ninth floor conference room.



Built to eventually hold more than 500 employees, the center consolidates judicial staff working at scattered sites in the Harrisburg area into one building. They include most non-information technology AOPC employees and appellate court filing offices and rules committees staff as well as those at agencies that train and oversee the conduct of lawyers and judges.

Staff and judges began moving into the building in June during the first of several planned phases. The three-month occupancy process

concludes with the opening of three courtrooms for Commonwealth Court’s September sessions. The court previously met just across the street in the Irvis (South Office) Building.

Construction of the new building began in 2006. It was finished on time and under budget. Vitetta, a Philadelphia architectural and engineering firm, designed the center. The Mascaro Corporation, a Pittsburgh area construction firm, built the center.

Flooring at the main entrance features a signature-piece Pennsylvania coat of arms made of marble. Cherry-wood paneling, marble veneer and cherry-wood benches (made in Lancaster) decorate the largest of the three courtrooms on the center’s fifth floor. Watercolor prints of each of the state’s 67 county courthouses will also hang in the building.

Note: See page 16 for contact information for the judicial center offices.

[Art Heinz is managing editor of AOPCconnected.]

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New to the Judicial Branch

Counties

Brian R. Arthur - Mercer - magisterial district judge
Robert O. Baldi - Bucks - Common Pleas Court judge
Barry L. Bloss Jr. - York - magisterial district judge
Jennifer Bray - Cumberland - deputy district court administrator
John H. Fishel - York - magisterial district judge
Roger F. Gordon - Philadelphia - Common Pleas Court judge
Lisa Herbert - Allegheny - deputy administrator, special courts
Michael F. Marmo - Allegheny - Common Pleas Court judge
Amrand A. Martin - Allegheny - magisterial district judge
D. Neil McEwen - Mercer - magisterial district judge
Kenneth A. Mummah - Perry/Juniata - Common Pleas Court judge
John H. Pavlock - McKean - Common Pleas Court judge
Kenneth J. Powell Jr. - Philadelphia Municipal Court judge
Michael D. Snyder - Venango - magisterial district judge
Mark D. Stevens - Crawford - Common Pleas Court judge
Farley D. Toothman - Greene - Common Pleas Court judge
Ethan T. Ward - Washington - magisterial district judge
Joseph C. Waters Jr. - Philadelphia Municipal Court judge
Jennifer Y. Vandine - Wyoming/Sullivan - magisterial district judge

AOPC

David Anderson - Administrative Services - shipping and receiving clerk
Stephen Appleby - Judicial Automation - IT specialist
Melinda Brown - Finance - fiscal assistant

Phillip Burnette - Judicial Automation - communications/network technician
Fred Cassatt - Administrative Services - facilities maintenance assistant
Michael Daley Jr. - Legal - attorney
Irene Engart - Administrative Services - support assistant
Jeremiah Gohn - Judicial Automation - communications/network technician
Steven Grey - Judicial Automation - IT specialist
Mark Holland - Administrative Services - receptionist
Ramesh Lamichhane - Judicial Automation - database administrator
James Lenderman - Judicial Automation - database administrator
Elliot McConnell - Judicial Automation - student intern
Bret McHenry - Judicial Automation - IT specialist
Ancy Oommen - Assistant Court Administrator's Office - legal intern
Kevin Ramberger - Administrative Services - support assistant
Jason Ream - Judicial Automation - database administrator
Donald Reichert - Judicial Automation - IT service desk technician
Sam Russ - Judicial Automation - LAN technician
Anthony Russo - Judicial Automation - student intern
Maruf Singer - Judicial Automation - programmer analyst
Daniel Wentz - Judicial Automation - database administrator
Harry Wilfong - Judicial Automation - IT specialist
Kiana Williams - Judicial Automation - audio-visual technician
Adam Wissler - Judicial Automation - LAN technician

(Transitions continued on page 7)

10/6-10/8	Superior Court Session (Phila.)	11/9-11/13	Commonwealth Court Session (Phila.)
10/12	Columbus Day Holiday	11/17-11/19	Superior Court Session (Phila., Pgh.)
10/13-10/16	Commonwealth Court Session (Pgh.)	11/26	Thanksgiving Day Holiday
10/19-10/23	Supreme Court Session (Phila.)	11/27	Day after Thanksgiving Holiday
10/19-10/23	Supreme Court Session (Phila.)	12/1-12/3	Superior Court Session (Phila., Pgh.)
10/20-10/22	Superior Court Session (Hbg., Pgh.)	12/1-12/4	Supreme Court Session (Hbg.)
10/26-10/27	Superior Court Session (Phila.)	12/7-12/11	Commonwealth Court Session (Hbg.)
11/3	Election Day Holiday	12/25	Christmas Day Holiday
11/11	Veterans Day Holiday		

A Judicial Center to Reflect Our Dreams and Values

by Zig Pines

The architect Louis Kahn once said, "All we desire to create has its beginning in feeling alone. This is true for the scientist. It is true for the artist. Realization is the merger of Thought and Feeling."

The creation of a judicial center began as a deep-rooted feeling shortly after the adoption of the 1968 Pennsylvania Constitution and the establishment of a Unified Judicial System. For many years the judicial center was just the subject of talk as if it were an unrealizable dream. Then came Justice **Ralph Cappy**, on behalf of the Supreme Court, who linked his passionate desire for a Harrisburg building with a plan and leadership. With the support of successive governors (Ridge, Schweiker, Rendell) and legislative sessions, the dream of the late Chief Justice Cappy and his Supreme Court colleagues is now a reality.

What was once a parking garage in downtown Harrisburg is now the home of a nine-story limestone-concrete-steel-glass structure overlooking the Capitol rotunda.



The 400,000 square-foot building has been built for the present and future to accommodate approximately 500 occupants from the appellate courts, AOPC and judicial boards and committees.

The progression of thought and feeling to realization has been an amazing process to witness. A simple

The Pennsylvania Judicial Center is a tangible representation of our tripartite form of government, reflecting collaboration and cooperation with our legislative and executive neighbors. Most of all, the building conveys our identity as a coequal branch of government based on impartial justice for all our citizens.

(non-exhaustive) grocery list of considerations would include the following: funding; site selection; demolition; space needs assessment; design (interior and exterior); parking; environmental needs (heating, air conditioning, lighting, ventilation, carpeting); operational needs (plumbing, cabling, wiring, technology, security, court rooms, conference rooms, furniture, fixtures, equipment); coordination with existing leases and collaboration with architects (Vitetta), Department of General Services, consultants and engineers. And, of course, there is the important element of aesthetics.

The identification, coordination and reconciliation of competing needs and interests were persistently pursued by **Tom Darr**. He was assisted by an able AOPC team (especially **Bill Hollenbach** and **Kevin Frantz**). They attended meetings, reviewed designs, diplomatically worked with prospective judicial tenants and governmental partners, and resolved issues both big and small. Tom and crew have done a tremendous job for which we and generations to follow will be forever grateful.

Whether we are occupying a cubicle or an office in the new judicial center or just visiting, we can all take pride in the symbolic significance of having a new home on the Harrisburg hill. The Pennsylvania Judicial Center is a tangible representation of our tripartite form of government, reflecting collaboration and cooperation with our legislative and executive neighbors. Most of all, the building conveys our identity as a coequal branch of government based on impartial justice for all our citizens.

In *The Architecture of Happiness*, Alain de Botton speaks about the psychology and philosophy of architecture in terms of its impact on our happiness and quality of our environment. He makes a point that is especially pertinent. He says: "Belief in the significance of architecture is premised on the notion that we are, for better or for worse, different people in different places—and on the conviction that it is architecture's task to render vivid to us who we might ideally be." The judicial center embodies this belief beautifully.

Volunteer Reading Tutors from AOPC Help Make the Grade for Philly Students

by Kathy Radwanski

Ellen Conaway, Phyllis Durricks, Rosemary Figazzotto, Barry Stephenson, Andrea Tuominen and I committed to reading one-on-one with first grade students, once a week for the 2008-2009 school year, as part of the First Judicial District's participation in the Philadelphia READS Power Partner volunteer tutor program.

The children were from Vare Elementary School in South Philadelphia and Hamilton School in West Philadelphia and arrived weekly on a school bus. You could see the sparkle in their eyes, and often the toothless smiles on their faces, as they walked into the room and looked for their respective coaches.

We spent our lunch hour helping the children read by sounding out words, working on grammar and learning vocabulary and did our best to make a difference in their outlook on reading. The children would read several books to their coaches and, if time permitted, they would do hidden picture searches, word games or flash cards.

The reading ability of each student varied, sometimes greatly. Depending on the child, it was quite a challenge. However, the improvement was noticeable as the weeks passed, and that made it worthwhile. With lots of support along the way, the children worked hard, aimed to please and were rewarded with "great job" stickers, which they loved!

The READS program offers individual attention where it may not be available, by engaging children in

enjoyable experiences with literature. Our objective was to help the children understand that reading and writing are valuable activities that will help them achieve success throughout their lives. We accomplished this through positive feedback and individual encouragement.

Voices

First Judicial District Court Administrator **Dave Lawrence** was among the many volunteers who participated in the program. He was a very popular coach, and the boys tended to gravitate to him. He mentored no fewer than two boys each week, oftentimes more.

I asked Dave for his comment on the READS program: "Participation in the READS program is a tremendously rewarding experience. It provides all of us with an opportunity to acquaint young people with the benefits of developing their reading skills and having some fun at the same time. All of the volunteers and coordinators do a great job in making the program a success."

Philadelphia READS was established in 1997 as a result of the President's Summit for America's Promise, which was dedicated to finding ways to help build the character and competence of America's youth.

The First Judicial District has been actively involved in the program since 1999, and two years ago AOPC employees were invited to participate. Among the original mentors were judges, staff members and numerous FJD employees, many of whom continue in the program year after year. The initial response was so positive that volunteers from the courts were able to mentor children from two different schools at two separate sites, Philadelphia City Hall and the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center. At the conclusion of this year's program, the volunteers boarded school buses to visit the respective schools of the two groups. The children hosted a pizza party for us and were very excited and proud to show us their schools. After eight months with these first graders, it was a bitter-sweet day. My co-workers and I all left proudly with the personal satisfaction of knowing we had made a small difference in a child's future.

[Kathy Radwanski is an administrative coordinator for the AOPC's Legal Dept.]



Barry Stephenson from Administrative Services has been involved with the Philadelphia READS program for a number of years.

Special Commission Looks to Restore Confidence in Luzerne County Courts

by **Stuart Ditzen**

An Interbranch Commission on Juvenile Justice is investigating the underlying causes of judicial corruption in Luzerne County and what can be done to avoid similar scandals there or elsewhere in the future.

The idea for such a commission was suggested by Chief Justice of Pennsylvania **Ronald D. Castille** and the Supreme Court after two Luzerne County judges were charged in January in connection with receiving \$2.6 million from developers of two juvenile detention facilities. The former judges, Mark A. Ciavarella and Michael T. Conahan, negotiated plea agreements, but withdrew them on the federal district court refusal to abide by the agreed-upon sentence. An indictment was handed down in September and added charges of bribery, extortion and violations of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. No trial date has been set.

Ciavarella, who presided in Luzerne County juvenile court from 2003 to 2008, has been accused in civil lawsuits of denying juveniles their right to counsel and improperly committing many to detention in violation of their civil rights.

Legislators from Luzerne County advocated that public hearings be held to explore what had gone wrong within the county juvenile justice system. With the support of the Supreme Court and the governor, the Interbranch Commission on Juvenile Justice was created by an act of the General Assembly on July 28.

The legislation authorizes an 11-member commission to conduct a "non-criminal investigation and review" to ascertain how the Luzerne County juvenile justice system failed, with an aim to restoring public confidence in the justice system and preventing similar events from occurring in the future anywhere in Pennsylvania.

Castille was given four appointments to the commission, including the chair. Legislative leaders also were given four appointments. The governor was given three.

Castille named Superior Court Judge **John M. Cleland** as chair. Judge Cleland, the president judge of McKean County from 1984 until 2008, is a member of the state Juvenile Court Judges Commission. He was appointed to the Superior Court last year to fill a term that expires at the end of this year.

Others named to the commission by the chief justice are:

- **Dwayne D. Woodruff**, a judge of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas who presides in family court. Judge Woodruff is a member of the state Supreme Court's Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee.
- **Kenneth J. Horoho Jr.**, a Pittsburgh lawyer who was president of the Pennsylvania Bar Association in 2006-07.
- **George D. Mosee Jr.**, deputy district attorney of Philadelphia, chief of the district attorney's juvenile division and vice chair of the Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee.

Other members of the commission include Hon. **John C. Uhler**; Hon. **James A. Gibbons**; Robert Listenbee, Esq.; Jason Legg, Esq.; Tod C. Allen; Valerie Bender and Ronald Williams.

The interbranch commission will hold public hearings and has subpoena power to call witnesses. The commission is required to file a final report with recommendations to the Supreme Court, the governor and the legislature by May 31, 2010.

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This issue and past issues of AOPConnected are available on our Web site at www.pacourts.us/T/AOPC/Newsletters.htm.

Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

Ronald D. Castille
Chief Justice

Thomas G. Saylor
Justice

J. Michael Eakin
Justice

Max Baer
Justice

Debra Todd
Justice

Seamus P. McCaffery
Justice

Jane Cutler Greenspan
Justice

Zygmunt A. Pines
Court Administrator
of Pennsylvania

Adams County Court Targets Efficiency Planning

by the Hon. John D. Kuhn

The Adams County Court of Common Pleas has embarked on an ambitious initiative—a comprehensive examination of how business of the court is conducted, to achieve a higher level of performance and service. The Court Assessment and Transformation Project, or ATP, is being funded in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). It has also received support from the Adams County Bar Association and the endorsement of the Adams County Criminal Justice Advisory Board.

Adams County Commissioners Chair George Weikert said that the county is deeply appreciative of the DCED's support for an initiative that he predicted would be groundbreaking in the Commonwealth and in keeping with the DCED's commitment to innovation and efficiency in county government. Weikert credited the Adams County bench—Judges **Robert G. Bigham**, **Michael A. George** and me—with recognizing the need to examine court operations in light of the significant challenges posed by a growing county population, demanding caseload and difficult fiscal constraints. Adams is believed to be the first county in Pennsylvania to undertake such a comprehensive review of its court system.

The ATP represents an extraordinary and perhaps uncommon level of collaboration between a county and court. The support of U.S. Rep. Todd Platts, state Sen. Rich Alloway and state Reps. Dan Moul and Will Tallman is a positive example of intergovernmental cooperation. Input from members of the Adams County Bar Association also will be important to the ATP's success.

"The court has chosen to call this its 'assessment and transformation project' to reflect an in-depth

assessment of court operations, followed by transformation to a more efficient and service-driven culture," Judge Bigham said. "This will involve identification of opportunities for more innovative, streamlined practices and workflow within court offices and in the court's interactions with other county offices and agencies."

Judge George added that the ATP is "consistent with the court's vision, mission, principles and values, which encourage identifying talented employees and helping them to grow, promoting leadership and thinking 'outside the box' for the good of the court and the community it serves."

The project entered the planning stages in 2008. Consideration of how a fourth judge will be utilized also was part of the ATP's genesis. Between May and August of this year, the project contractor—the Mechanicsburg-based Davison Group—conducted some 100 detailed interviews with court and county staff and other court/criminal justice system stakeholders, including members of the bar and local law enforcement. Extensive research and workflow analysis were conducted as well. Because communication is so intrinsic to the success of a project of this scope, the Davison Group has met regularly with the judges, commissioners, DCED and county bar to provide progress reports.

Completion of the final report, with findings and recommendations that will provide a roadmap for the transformation, is expected in early fall 2009. In conjunction with the high level review of the court system, additional operations reviews were slated for the key offices of clerk of courts, prothonotary, adult probation and its corrections function, and juvenile probation.

[Judge Kuhn is president judge of Adams County Common Pleas Court.]

AOPC Employee Service Milestones

A number of AOPC employees have reached service milestones between April and August 2009. They are:

25 Years

Kathy Radwanski - Legal

20 Years

Dawn Brown - Court Administrator's Office

10 Years

Jonathan Anderson - Judicial Automation

Deborah Beam - Judicial Automation

Jonathan Anderson - Judicial Automation

Christy Hull - Judicial Automation

Larry Kerr - Judicial Automation

Lyudmila Rasolko - Judicial Automation

Rhonda Walters Lenig - Administrative Services

Prevalence of Juvenile Post-Trauma Stress Examined

by Paul S. Kuntz Esq.

The success of juvenile court in Pennsylvania is based partly on its ability to modify its philosophy and behavior to address the changing needs of the community, victims and young people who enter the system.

One of its most critical needs, as identified by both practitioners and policy makers, is the prevalence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD.

A Pennsylvania Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Project was created in 1999 by Dr. Ron Sharp at Alternative Rehabilitation Communities, Inc. A 15-session Residential Treatment Curriculum initially was created for females in placement, and ongoing training enabled more than 7,000 professionals to be educated.

In 2005 Westmoreland County Common Pleas Court Judge **John Driscoll** and the county commissioners agreed to serve as the first demonstration site for a juvenile program so the project could be replicated throughout Pennsylvania. The Westmoreland County Juvenile Probation Department was chosen because it was more advanced in PTSD work than any other county department in the Commonwealth and had shown early interest in the project.

Under Westmoreland County leadership, the program has flourished. Since it began, more than 10,000 additional professionals from around the

country have been educated in PTSD, and more than \$1 million has been spent on the project in the last seven years. The program is no longer grant funded, but it is included under the Needs Based Budget.

Statewide PTSD annual conferences have been designed and held in Westmoreland County during the past four years. Presentations covering many areas of mental health, juvenile justice and PTSD are offered. As part of the demonstration site, many train-the-trainer curricula have been developed. These are offered to participants at the annual conference and throughout the year, enabling the project to be self-reliant and ensure the continuation of the educational process.

A quarterly newsletter—the *PTSD Post*—was created and has been distributed to more than 1,700 professionals nationwide. The project has won state, national and international awards. Several states have contacted the project for information in replicating the educational/treatment project within their juvenile justice systems.

For more information contact Project Coordinator Deborah Ciocco, dciocco@co.westmoreland.pa.us or call 724-830-1815. You can also visit the projects Web page on Westmoreland County's Web site at www.co.westmoreland.pa.us.

[Paul Kuntz is District Court Administrator of Westmoreland County.]

Transitions, continued from page 2

Other Job Changes

Robert E. Colville - Allegheny - senior Common Pleas Court judge apptd. to Superior Court

Joseph A. Hudock - Westmoreland - senior Common Pleas Court judge apptd. to Superior Court

Deaths

Gordon J. Dagher - Elk/Cameron - former president judge

Maurice Dickson - Crawford - former district justice

Richard D. Grifo - Northampton - former Common Pleas Court judge

Harry L. Joslin - Erie - former (senior) district justice

Joseph Leo - Northampton - former district justice

William W. Lipsitt - Dauphin - former Common Pleas Court (senior) judge

Harry E. Randall - Crawford - former district justice

Bernard B. Yanich - Dauphin - former magisterial district judge

Retirements

Counties

Patricia Gildea - Blair - deputy district court administrator

Margaret Yokemick - Chester - district court administrator

AOPC

Aden "Bill" Curtis - Judicial Automation - programmer analyst

Resignations

Counties

Tama M. Clark - Philadelphia - Common Pleas Court judge

Maynard A. Hamilton Jr. - Lancaster - magisterial district judge

Robert P. Horgos - Allegheny - Common Pleas Court judge

Maureen E. Lally-Green - Superior Court judge

(Transitions continued on page 9)

Ensuring Public Confidence in the Courts: Balancing Flexibility and Accountability

by Joseph A. Massa Jr., Esq.

The Judicial Conduct Board is the independent agency within the judicial branch designated by the Pennsylvania Constitution to review complaints of misconduct against judges of the Unified Judicial System and, where appropriate, to seek public disciplinary determinations (of censure, suspension or removal from office) before the Court of Judicial Discipline.

The board's objective is to enforce high standards of conduct for judges, who must be free to act independently, on the merits and in good faith, but also must be held accountable should they commit misconduct.

The board has been very busy over the past 18 months, having handled seven public cases that resulted in the removal of one judge, the suspension of two and the reprimand of two, with two cases pending.

Each year the Pennsylvania judicial system resolves millions of cases—simple, complex, ordinary and extraordinary. These matters are routinely handled by earnest, dedicated, hard-working judges. Since the judiciary controls neither the "sword" nor the "purse,"¹ it is public confidence in the judiciary that underlines the "peaceful acceptance" of judicial decisions, in

accord with the rule of law, even in circumstances when those decisions might be "strongly resented."

We cannot see the forest for the trees. Most judges "wear their robes" in accord with their sworn oath of office—

port,
defend
stitution
United

Board Matters

to sup-
obey and
the Con-
of the
States

and the Constitution of the Commonwealth and to *discharge their duties with fidelity* [emphasis supplied].

Pennsylvania courts—defenders of our most precious freedoms—are, by and large, exemplary. Letting a few high-profile, unrepresentative cases guide our adherence to the Code of Judicial Conduct would be akin to the tail wagging the dog. Instead, let us commit to promoting better understanding and recognition of the Code of Judicial Conduct to ensure the "integrity, impartiality and independence of the judiciary."

¹Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist Papers* No. 78 (1788).

[Joseph A. Massa Jr. is chief counsel of the Judicial Conduct Board.]

Around the Judiciary

Justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania paid special tribute to **Lorraine Janicki** (center, at right), who retired from the Judiciary after more than 34 years of service. Janicki began her judicial career in Superior Court where she served as its chief clerk. She later transferred to the Supreme Court where she served as both an assistant to the executive administrator and acting executive administrator for the Supreme Court. Other noteworthy retirements included District Court Administrators **Peggy Yokemick**, Chester County, and **Pat Gildea**, Blair County. Both Yokemick and Gildea are former presidents of the Pennsylvania Association of Court Management. Among her accomplishments, Yokemick helped establish guidelines for the duties of president and other board officers. Gildea was helping usher in many enhancements to the tasks involving jurors and jury management.



Refreshing Statewide Systems Byte-by-Byte

by Steve Schell

With an ever-steady and ambitious pace, the AOPC's Judicial Automation staff is moving forward with efforts to rebuild and install new case management systems in magisterial district judge and appellate courts—replacing Pennsylvania's first two statewide court computer systems that were implemented in 1991 and 2000, respectively.

Upgrades to the systems became essential as rapid computer technological advances over recent years made the old systems less compatible with other systems throughout the state and the AOPC's Common Pleas Case Management System that was installed statewide at the end of 2006.

After years of designing, building and testing, the new appellate court case management system went live on July 6.

"Since then, we have been responding to issues," Senior Projects Director **Ralph Hunsicker** said, "resolving migration and application issues and fine-tuning it to meet user needs and performance expectations."

Like the new appellate court system, the new Magisterial District Judge System (MDJS) will take advantage of the latest technology and the AOPC's newest software developments by applying cross-court functionality to become more flexible and easier to modify as court procedures and laws change in the future. The system will be pilot-tested in Adams County later this year and then in Lancaster and Westmoreland

counties prior to the scheduled statewide rollout beginning April 2010 and lasting through 2011.

Judicial Automation staff is also working on two projects that will complement the existing and newly developed case management systems. An Integrated Document Management System, improving court efficiency by providing access to court documents associated with cases, is being developed for use first in the appellate court system. In addition, the document management system will eventually provide for an e-filing option to litigants as a means to increase efficiency and decrease the need to store and move paper files in order to process cases.

Perhaps the most anticipated upgrade will allow for the online payment of fines, costs and restitution. This will make it easier for defendants to remit monies owed via the Internet with a credit or debit card, thus avoiding a visit to a district or county court office. Both projects will be integrated into the existing case management systems and Web portal applications, providing additional, needed functionality.

"The overriding goal for rebuilding the systems is to make court management more efficient through increased interaction among systems used by the courts, law enforcement and executive branch agencies," Judicial Automation Director **Amy Ceraso** said.

[Steve Schell is an AOPC communications coordinator.]

Transitions, continued from page 7

Gordon R. Miller - Crawford - president judge
Michael F. Mychak - Northumberland - magisterial district judge
Louis J. Presenza - Philadelphia Municipal Court judge
Doris A. Smith-Ribner - Commonwealth Court judge

AOPC

Periann Doko - Assistant Court Administrator's Office - legal intern
Shanmuganathan Ramasubramanian - Judicial Automation - IT specialist
Dyan Schauer - Judicial Automation - systems trainer

Appointments

Supreme Court Committees

Eric N. Anderson, Esq. - designated vice chair of Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security

Edwin H. Beachler, Esq. - apptd. to Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security
Robert L. Byer, Esq. - apptd. to Appellate Court Procedural Rules Committee
Maria P. Cagnetti, Esq. - apptd. to Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee
Sal Cagnetti Jr., Esq. - reapptd. to Disciplinary Board
Honorable James J. Dwyer III - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board
John J. Flannery Jr. Esq. - apptd. to Committee on Rules of Evidence
Honorable Daniel B. Garber - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board
Mark J. Goldberg, Esq. - apptd. to Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee
Honorable Todd A. Hoover - apptd. to Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee

(Transitions continued on page 13)

Judicial Conference Airs Dialogue to Avert Public Health Crisis

by **Darren Breslin, Esq.**

In May 2009 approximately 30 Common Pleas judges from across the Commonwealth, along with Senior Commonwealth Court Judge **Rochelle Friedman** and Superior Court Judge **Jacqueline Shogan** gathered in State College to participate in an extraordinary three-day educational conference on public health law and science.

The Public Health Law and Science Conference was principally developed by Erie County Judge **John Bozza** and Superior Court Judge **John Cleland**. Planning began shortly after completion of the 2007 Pennsylvania Public Health Law Benchmark, well before the Spring 2009 H1N1 influenza outbreak. Fortunately or unfortunately, the timing of the course coincided with the heightened state of concern in Pennsylvania and elsewhere over an influenza pandemic.

The purpose of this program was to expose Pennsylvania trial court judges to the science and the law behind public health practice. To that end, nationally recognized infectious disease experts and public health practitioners spent the first day of the program discussing the nature of infectious diseases and the science behind public health practice, including, among other subjects, the nature and biology of infectious diseases; how infectious diseases develop, mutate and spread; disease investigation and disease control measures.

Day two of the program was devoted to the intersection between law and public health practice. Among the topics discussed were the role of the federal government in protecting public health and emergency response responsibilities, and a comparison of federal and state jurisdiction in ordering control measures and resolving legal disputes. Pennsylvania's public health laws, many of which date to the 1950s, and the state's public health regulations were highlighted and explained throughout the day. The benefits and perceived deficiencies in those statutes and regulations, such as a lack of statutorily defined due process protections, were key points of discussion and debate.

The third day of the program was devoted to the role of the courts in resolving disputes between public health authorities and the public or individuals. This

day was capped by a panel discussion where the participants worked through a hypothetical public health emergency scenario.

Panelists included, among others, Court Administrator of Pennsylvania **Zygmunt A. Pines**; Judge Cleland; Dr. Esther Chernak from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health; Grace Schuyler, formerly senior legal counsel at the Pennsylvania Health Department; and Megan Treber from the Governor's Office of

Public Health Preparedness. Hospital administrators also participated in the discussion, which was moderated by Judge Bozza.

Judges Bozza and Cleland, along with Court Administrator Pines, felt it would be not only prudent, but critical to train judges from diverse parts of the

state in the science and law governing public health practice because if a public health crisis were to emerge in the Commonwealth, it would be vital to have judges who understand this complex and largely obscure area of the law. Experts across the county have suggested the ability of the judicial branch to effectively respond during a public health emergency may help maintain civil order and stability at a time of tremendous public uncertainty.

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) are interested in exploring how the Pennsylvania Public Health Law and Science curriculum might serve as a prototype for similar programs in other states and jurisdictions. CDC Senior Public Health Analyst Dan Stier, Esq., served as a faculty member and presenter during the course. It was through the efforts and support of BJA that jurists from other states, including Maryland, Louisiana and Hawaii as well as the territory of Guam were able to attend the conference.

In the coming months, Judges Cleland and Bozza, along with other members of the Public Health Law and Science planning committee, will meet with representatives from the CDC, the BJA and other entities to help develop a national model based on the Pennsylvania prototype and experience. Once again, the Pennsylvania Judiciary is proving itself to be a national, and perhaps an international leader, in the critical area of public health preparedness.

[Darren Breslin, Esq., is AOPC Special Projects Advisor.]

Pennsylvania Participates in Pandemic Planning

by David Kutz

Following the Public Health Law and Science Seminar offered to judges in May, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) asked for assistance in preparing a session on pandemic planning for court managers at the National Association for Court Management's annual conference in Boston this July.

I joined Judge Eleanor Sinnott from Massachusetts, Cynthia Easterling from the North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts and Pam Casey from the NCSC in a session that covered pandemic planning from several perspectives.

Judge Sinnott provided information about the spread of viruses and ways to avoid infection in the workplace. Ms. Easterling offered ideas for court managers to consider when determining how they will manage essential court functions with a reduced workforce. Ms. Casey led interactive discussion with the audience.

Since the theme of this year's conference was "The Human Side of Court Management," my presentation focused on the development and implementation of emergency human resources policies that may become necessary in the event of a widespread pandemic and on the need for individual employees to create a personal disaster plan. I provided several take-away documents for attendees, including a model emergency

leave policy, a sample employee preparedness guide and an excerpt from the Continuity of Operations Planning Toolkit, developed for Pennsylvania's district courts, addressing pandemic-related human resources policies.

While the material covered in this session was extensive, participants should be able to use these documents as guides to create policies and procedures specific to their own states.

The program was well attended by court managers from across the country, and there was much discussion among the participants on this critical issue. Everyone in the group recognized the importance of advance planning so the essential functions of their courts can be maintained when the number of employees available to perform those functions is significantly reduced due to illness.

In Pennsylvania and many other states, pandemic planning for the courts is an ongoing process, and while it is impossible to predict the impact a specific virus may have on the workforce, court managers are becoming increasingly prepared to deal with this type of emergency.

[Dave Kutz is the AOPC's Director of Human Resources.]

First Symposium on Problem-Solving Courts a Success

by P. Karen Blackburn

Problem-solving court coordinators from around the state gathered in Erie in June for the first Problem-Solving Court Coordinators' Symposium.

During welcoming remarks Justice **Seamus McCaffery**, Supreme Court liaison for the Commonwealth's problem-solving courts, conveyed to coordinators the appreciation and support of the court for their hard work and dedication.

Day one highlights included a presentation from the president of the Pennsylvania Association of Drug Court Professionals, Judge **William Cunningham**, who presides over Erie County's drug and mental health courts. Bobby Jullip from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency provided an overview of current and existing funding opportunities, which included an update on the status of stimulus funding in Pennsylvania.

The focus of day two was programming for veterans and included a presentation by John O'Connell, mentor coordinator, and Hank Pirowski, program coordinator, of the new veterans court in Buffalo, N.Y. Representatives from the Veterans Healthcare Administration and the Veterans Benefits Administration also were available to answer questions.

The symposium provided an invaluable opportunity for newly hired coordinators to meet and network with coordinators from longer-operating programs and for the AOPC to learn more about the needs and issues facing counties. The meeting was supported with funds from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

[P. Karen Blackburn is the Problem-Solving Courts Coordinator within the AOPC's Judicial Programs Department.]



Karen Blackburn and Justice McCaffery

Honors and Dispatches

Chief Justice **Ronald D. Castille** led a delegation to an American Bar Association/National Center for State Courts-sponsored summit entitled "Justice Is the Business of Government: The Critical Role of Fair and Impartial State Courts." The goal was to improve inter-branch cooperation and address the challenges faced by state courts. Attendees included state Sen. Stewart Greenleaf, Secretary of State Pedro Cortés and Assistant Court Administrator **Andrea Tuominen**.

Supreme Court Justice **Max Baer** was a guest speaker at the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania's spring conference at the Hilton Harrisburg.

Erie County Judge **Stephanie Domitrovich** was honored by her alma mater, Carlow College, during its 80th anniversary celebration. Judge Domitrovich was among eight graduates named as Carlow Laureates—the first time the school honored its graduates in such manner.

Philadelphia Judge **William J. Manfredi** and Senior Superior Court Judge **James J. Fitzgerald III** presented an orientation and training seminar for members of the Philadelphia Bar Association, "Technology-Augmented Litigation in the Trial Division-Civil."

Philadelphia President Judge **Pamela Pryor Dembe** was honored by the Brehon Law Society during a reception at the Union League on Broad Street in Philadelphia. President Judge Dembe also was renamed chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Judicial Administration Committee.

Dauphin County Judge **Jeannine Turgeon** joined other Harrisburg community leaders in honoring middle school students who submitted essays addressing a rash of violent area crimes. More than 200 students presented papers in the "Do the Write Thing" Challenge.

Former Supreme Court Justice **Cynthia A. Baldwin** received the Anne X. Alpern Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association at its annual convention. She was selected in recognition of her excellence and leadership in the legal profession and her professional impact on women in the law.

Allegheny County District Court Administrator **Raymond L. Billotte** participated in the National Institute of Corrections Evidence-Based Decision-Making for Local Criminal Justice focus groups in Baltimore, Md. **Thomas McCaffrey**, director of pretrial services, also represented the Fifth Judicial District.

Allegheny County President Judge **Donna Jo McDaniel** and Criminal Division Judge **John A. Zottola** were among the panelists at the 21st annual meeting of the National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts at the William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh. Ray Billotte joined a panel discussion on achieving diversity on Pennsylvania juries.

The Pennsylvania Bar Association 50-Year Member Awards recognize lawyers who have been with the organization for five decades. A number of them were awarded at the association's annual meeting in Pittsburgh. They included Butler Retired Judge **Martin J. O'Brien**; Carbon Retired Judge **John Patrick Lavelle**; Clarion Senior Judge **Charles R. Alexander**; Delaware Retired Judge **Rita E. Prescott**; Erie Retired Judge **Michael M. Palmisano**; Lackawanna Retired Judge **James J. Walsh**; Lehigh Retired Judge **John E. Backenstone**; Lycoming Senior Judge **Clinton W. Smith** and Northampton Senior Judge **Michael V. Franciosa**.

A group of judges, lawyers and court administrators from the Republic of Moldova in Eastern Europe (formerly a part of the Soviet Union) toured court facilities in Philadelphia and Delaware County last summer while participating in a US Agency for International Development-sponsored program designed to help the Moldovan government improve its legal system. Hosting the Moldovans were **Joseph J. Mittleman**, director of Judicial Programs for the AOPC, and Superior Court President Judge Emeritus **Stephen J. McEwen Jr.**

York County Judge **John S. Kennedy** was renamed chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association Corrections System Committee.

Allegheny County Judge **John A. Zottola** has been named chair of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency's new Mental Health Justice Advisory Committee.

Focus Group Reaffirms Pledge to Find Stable Homes for Children in Courts

by Steve Schell

At its third annual meeting in Harrisburg on May 28-29, the Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable officially adopted the "Families 4 Children" mission statement and guiding principles. The statement and principles are aimed at improving the lives of abused and neglected children whose care is entrusted to the child dependency system under the supervision of the courts.

The mission statement and guiding principles establish four priorities for judges and others who make decisions affecting the lives of abused or neglected children:

- protecting children
- promoting strong families
- promoting child well-being
- providing timely permanency

Supreme Court Justice **Max Baer** said it is hoped that the statement and principles will play an important part in efforts to reduce the amount of time dependent children spend in temporary placements such as foster care and expedite their return to permanent homes.

"Children are young for a very short time, and they need the courses of their lives to be set during these formative years," Justice Baer said. "When days drag to months and years, children are harmed. Whatever decision is considered best, it often consumes too

much time for too many of the approximately 20,000 children in 'temporary' out-of-home care in Pennsylvania."

The mission statement and guiding principles were crafted by the Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Initiative, a group of state and local child welfare professionals, attorneys, county commissioners, judges and national experts, with the support of the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC). The group was chaired by Lehigh Common Pleas Court Judge **Brian Johnson**.

"The statement and principles underscore the expectation that every child deserves a family and that growing up in stranger care or institutional placement is no longer acceptable," Judge Johnson said.

Sandra Moore, OCFC administrator, said, "Everything we know about child development and well-being tells us that having a safe, stable family is critical. Without loving family connections, children struggle, and positive outcomes are jeopardized. Knowing this, we have a collective obligation to do better for our children."

For more information on Pennsylvania's overall Dependency Court Improvement Project or for a copy of the mission statement and guiding principles, please contact the OCFC at 717-231-3300.

Transitions, continued from page 9

Honorable Catherine M. Hummel Fried - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board

Honorable J. Brian Johnson - apptd. to Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee

David L. Ladov, Esq. - apptd. to Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee

Barbara W. Mather, Esq. - designated vice chair of Board of Law Examiners

Honorable Bradley K. Moss - apptd. to Minor Court Rules Committee

Francis X. O'Connor, Esq. - designated vice chair of Disciplinary Board

William Pietragallo II, Esq. - designated chair of Disciplinary Board

Honorable Thomas A. Placey - designated chair of Minor Court Rules Committee

Honorable John T. Robinson - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board

Robert A. Rovner, Esq. - apptd. to Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security

Jerry J. Russo, Esq. - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board

Honorable M. Teresa Sarmina - apptd. to Board of Law Examiners

Michael A. Scherer, Esq. - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board

Grace R. Schuyler, Esq. - apptd. to Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security

Lawrence J. Tabas, Esq. - reapptd. to Continuing Legal Education Board

Jack M. Treadway, Ph.D. - apptd. to Minor Judiciary Education Board

Ann G. Verber, Esq. - apptd. to Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee

Other Boards/Committees

Honorable Christine L. Donohue - appointed to Judicial Conduct Board

Chinese Student Delegation Visits Philadelphia Courts

by **Andrea Tuominen, Esq.**

On June 25 Assistant Court Administrator **Andrea Tuominen** and Special Projects Advisor **Darren Breslin** joined judges of the First Judicial District to discuss Pennsylvania's judicial system with approximately 50 candidates in the Master of Laws Program at Temple University's Beasley School of Law. The candidates were visiting from Temple's Beijing campus located at Tsinghua University School of Law.

The group met in the historic Supreme Court courtroom in Philadelphia's City Hall. Andrea Tuominen opened by providing an overview of Pennsylvania's judiciary and explaining the adjudicative and administrative authority of the Supreme Court. Philadelphia Municipal Court Judge **William Meehan** then discussed Philadelphia's treatment court, specifically the adult drug court and DUI court programs, which were of great interest to the audience. The topic of judicial ethics was addressed by

Judge **Anne Lazarus**, chair of the Judicial Ethics Committee of the Conference of State Trial Judges, who explained the standards to which Pennsylvania judges—and candidates—are held.

Judge **Ida Chen** spoke of how she became a judge and described her long service in Philadelphia family court. She explained the protection from abuse process—its benefits and limitations—and also described the Interbranch Commission on Racial, Gender and Ethnic Fairness, of which she is a member.

Judicial independence and retention elections were topics handled by Darren Breslin who explained the role of the Supreme

Court's Commission on Judicial Independence in monitoring threats to the judiciary and promoting



Students from Tsinghua University School of Law in Beijing, China, listened to presentations on Pennsylvania's judicial system.

civics education. A demonstration of the Philadelphia's high-tech courtroom was given by Courtroom Technologist Sean MacGregor, and an overview of the civil division was provided by Supervising Judge **Esther Sylvester**.

Jordan's Ministry of Justice Seeks Advice from AOPC IT Experts

by **Steve Schell**

Technology professionals from Jordan's Ministry of Justice traveled nearly 6,000 miles to meet with the Judicial Automation staffs of the AOPC and First Judicial District in

Philadelphia to gain insight into developing criminal case management systems.

Jordan—a country the size of Indiana and located in the Middle East—is planning to automate and link its 54 courts scattered throughout the country. Known as Jordan's "Rule of Law Project," the effort is funded and supported by United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

During the Jordanians' four-day visit, they studied operations at the First Judicial District and the Unified Judicial Sys-

tem Network Operations Center in Mechanicsburg. Staff provided operational overviews, covering numerous magisterial district and Common Pleas court system applications, including hardware and software, help desk procedures and data center functions.

Director of Judicial Automation **Amy Ceraso** said, "It is rare, but not unprecedented to have officials from other countries study our operations. In 2005 our staff provided case management system overviews for a delegation of Korean officials and most recently for officials from Moldova. We are pleased to assist those who seek our advice and flattered that we are considered a leader in judicial automation."



Members of the AOPC Judicial Automation staff shared their expertise on court computerization with professionals from Jordan's Ministry of Justice.

In the News



The **Easton Express-Times** reported how the **Northampton County** Courthouse is undergoing extensive repair work, including renovation to Courtroom One. The paper noted how the work was expected to be completed in time for a scheduled session of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

The **Harrisburg Patriot-News** featured a prominent story and photos about the ongoing occupancy of Pennsylvania's new **Judicial Center** in the Commonwealth's Capitol Complex. The paper noted how the project came in on time and under budget.

The **Centre County Daily Times** outlined community efforts led by Judge **Thomas King Kistler** to curb teen pregnancy rates through educational outreach programs at area high schools. The paper credited Judge Kistler, who heads the county's juvenile court, with facilitating collaborative efforts among the health community, schools and court-related offices.

The **Erie Times-News** profiled newly appointed **Crawford County** Judge **Mark D. Stevens** after his successful confirmation by the state Senate. He was appointed to a vacancy created by former President Judge **Gordon Miller**, whom the paper said retired in June. In a separate story, the paper also profiled Judge **Anthony Vardaro**, who became the new president judge.

The **Bucks County Courier Times** profiled newly appointed Judge **Robert O. Baldi**, who was sworn into office at the county courthouse in **Doylestown**. The story included remarks from President Judge **Susan Devlin** and Judge **Albert Cepparulo**, Judge Baldi's former law partner.

The **Legal Intelligencer** noted how Philadelphia's **First Judicial District** was honored twice within the same week by nationally recognized entities for administration of justice efforts. The legal trade publication said the National Judicial College presented the FJD with an Advancement of Justice Award for changes that transitioned it from one of the slowest courts in the country in moving civil cases to being a national leader in innovative court programs. The FJD also was honored by the National Association for Court Management for the court's residential mortgage foreclosure diversion program.



Judge Woods-Skipper

The **Philadelphia Inquirer** reported on plans for a new special court to provide post-prison supervision for convicted criminals with mental health problems. The plans were outlined during a news conference held by President Judge **Pamela Pryor Dembe** and Judge **Sheila Woods-Skipper**, the criminal division's supervising judge.

The **Punxsutawney Spirit** reflected on the career of Jefferson County prothonotary **Tonya Geist**, who also serves as the county's clerk of courts. A one-time tomato plant worker, Geist and Jefferson County Judge **John H. Foradora** were occupying temporary office space during Jefferson County Courthouse renovations, the paper noted.

The **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review** ran a feature story about how youths adjudicated delinquent in **Allegheny County juvenile court** were working in a community service project that helps disabled veterans and others. The paper said about 150 juveniles were participating by visiting nursing home patients, loading trucks at area food banks and cleaning graffiti.

Contact Information for Judiciary Offices

Pennsylvania Judicial Center
601 Commonwealth Ave.
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-231-3300

Supreme Court prothonotary	717-787-6181	Disciplinary Board	717-231-3380
Supreme Court executive administrator	717-231-9500	IOLTA	717-238-2001
Superior Court prothonotary	717-772-1294	Minor Judiciary Education Board	717-231-9515
Superior Court legal staff	717-772-0950	Pennsylvania Lawyers Fund for Client Security	717-231-9510
Commonwealth Court prothonotary	717-255-1600	Appellate & Orphans' Court Procedural Committees	717-231-9550
AOPC deputy court administrator	717-231-3326	Civil Procedural Rules Committee	717-231-9525
AOPC Human Resources	717-231-3309	Criminal Procedural Rules Committee	717-231-9520
AOPC Judicial Education	717-231-3311	Committee on Rules of Evidence	717-231-9535
AOPC Judicial Programs	717-231-3313	Domestic Relations Procedural Rules Committee	717-231-9350
AOPC Judicial Security	717-231-3315	Juvenile Court Procedural Rules Committee	717-231-9545
AOPC Payroll	717-231-3325	Minor Court Rules Committee	717-231-9545
AOPC Office of Children and Families in the Court	717-231-3303	Judicial Conduct Board	717-234-7911
Board of Law Examiners	717-231-3350	Court of Judicial Discipline	717-772-3771
Continuing Legal Education Board	717-231-3250		

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