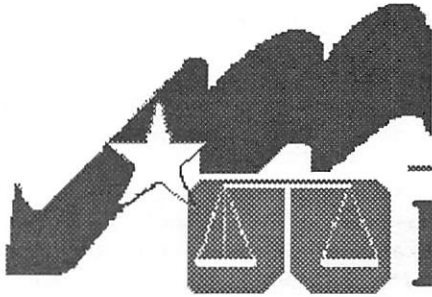


Rooker Report

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BESIEGED BY DEMAND, LOCAL BAR GROUP RALLIES MEMBERS TO REINFORCE COMMITMENT TO THE POOR

PRO BONO

Since its inception 15 years ago, the Nashville Bar Association's pro bono program has provided free legal representation to thousands of Davidson Countians who could not otherwise afford it.

It has been the spine of a moral and professional commitment to guarantee due process for all citizens, regardless of economic status.

Now, with demand for services increasing and the number of participating attorneys dwindling to attrition and other mitigating factors, the scales of equity are seriously threatening to tilt. And the program's evaluators are looking for an ounce of prevention.

To ensure there will be enough lawyers to maintain a balance, a two-month-long volunteer pledge drive has been launched to bring the program's membership rolls up to snuff.

The call for help has already neared the midway point and will continue to be heard through the month of June. By that time, organizers hope to restore the volunteer pool to at least 1,000 members.

Attorney Gareth Aden, chairman of the recruitment campaign, estimates there are roughly 850 voluntary participants at this point of the pledge drive. He encouraged non-participating barristers to get involved by simply filling out pledge cards (bearing the above symbol) that are conveniently available at all civil clerk offices.

"This is our way of giving back to the community..."

--Gareth Aden

CAMPAIGN CHAIRMAN



"This is our way of giving back to the community in which we earn our livelihood," said Aden.

The program has been effectively doing just that since 1982 when it was forced into existence by major cutbacks at the federal Legal Services Corporation, according to Victoria Webb, coordinator of the pro bono service here.

Organization of the indigent assistance program, noted Webb,

was spearheaded largely through the efforts of bar members Jack Robinson and Joe Haynes, a federal magistrate (no relation to state Sen. Joe Haynes). The kickoff year brought 250 lawyers into the program's recruitment fold.

By 1993 the program had established such an excellent history of service and growth that the Tennessee Bar Association made it the first recipient of the now-annual Pro Bono Award.

"Today the program is merged in operations with the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee, giving it a greater capacity to serve low-income and indigent residents and creating more demand for the help of local volunteer lawyers," said Webb.

During the first quarter of this calendar year, Webb noted, the two combined programs received more than 5,400 calls for help -- an average of 83 calls per day. "Out of those calls," she continued, "2,093 were taken through the intake process to see if they were eligible by their case type and income." The end result, she said, was that pro bono attorneys represented only 180 of the applicants while many of the others were given self-help advice or told that the program could not presently handle their type of case.

The alarm was sounded that the program was in danger of accommodating fewer requests than the previous year's 916 total client base. An infusion of new blood was now obviously needed to replace members who had retired, deceased or who had already fulfilled their ethical obligations to the program.

It should be noted that the pro bono program handles only civil cases that are not fee-generating and that participating attorneys are only asked to represent cases in the area of law for which they sign up.

"We recognize that low-income people have diverse and com-

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BEEFING UP THE RANKS

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licated problems which call for new means of attorney involvement," says Webb, noting that the program is designed to involve the services of all lawyers, "no matter what his or her expertise or interest."

While the majority of service listings (displayed at the end of this story) are self explanatory, others might be included under broader headings that incorporate a variety of other elements or require more description. For example, there are a number of programs that fall under the "non-litigation" category in which minimal volunteer time is required. "Attorney for the Day" is one such program.

Those volunteering for that particular service spend only a few hours once or twice a year at the pro bono offices in the Stahlman Building. "This is fun, easy and immensely helpful to our operation," say program organizers. "You may call other colleagues to ask them to accept cases or join the panel, or screen clients for case and income eligibility while in our office, if you choose."

Other ways for non-litigation attorneys to get involved include participation in:

- ASK (Transactional Attorneys Service Contract) which assists non-profit organizations helping poor communities;
- Early Truancy Intervention, a project in which volunteers become guardians ad litem for truant youth through Juvenile Court;
- Families First Project, designed to help welfare recipients negotiate workable "personal responsibility contracts" with the Tennessee Department of Human Services;
- AIDS Awareness Project, which includes a panel of lawyers working through the pro bono office to be matched with specific cases;
- Environment Court Assistance, a panel of volunteers interested in helping indigent clients who find themselves summoned to court on environmental law violations.

The pro bono program also needs attorneys who are interested in teaching other lawyers about civil areas of law as it applies to the special problems of low-income people.

PRO BONO



ENROLLMENT INFORMATION 244-4994

THE PROGRAMS

Attorneys may select from these areas of speciality::

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ◆ FAMILY LAW | ◆ TORTS |
| ◆ CONSUMER LAW | ◆ UNEMPLOYMENT |
| ◆ HOUSING | ◆ IMMIGRATION |
| ◆ TRANSACTION ATTYS SVC CONTRACT | ◆ PERSONAL PROPERTY |
| ◆ SOCIAL SECURITY OR OTHER BENEFITS | ◆ ATTORNEY FOR THE DAY |
| ◆ WILLS | ◆ EARLY TRUANCY INTERVENTION |
| ◆ PROBATE | ◆ AIDS AWARENESS |
| ◆ CONSERVATORSHIP | ◆ FAMILIES FIRST |

Courthouse Elevator Project Off Ground

All the activity is behind the scenes right now, but the long-awaited courthouse elevator renovation project is finally off the ground.

The impact on the general public won't be realized until preliminary work has been completed and some of the elevators are taken out of service, said Sam McPherson, director of General Services.

"Crews will be working on one elevator at a time," said McPherson, "but in the interest of safety, adjoining elevators will periodically be taken out of service at the same time." What that means, he added, is that only half of the building's six elevators will be operational during much of the renovation period.

"Our original thoughts were to close down only one elevator at a time," McPherson said. "That would have limited temporary inconvenience to the public, but it would have created a safety hazard at times while extending the project by several months."

As it now stands, the \$1.6 million renovation is expected to be completed in 9-12 months, McPherson said.

French is New '55 Alive' Coordinator

Miles French is the new associate state coordinator of the '55 Alive' mature driving program.

French, whose appointment was effective May 10, replaces Bob Roose, who held the position for the past four years.

Roose relinquished his responsibilities in order to care for his ailing wife. "He has left some big shoes to fill," said French, "and I hope that I might be able to provide the services he has in the past."

'55 Alive is an educational and service program of the American Association of Retired Persons.

Don't Forget New Traffic Office Hours

If you missed last month's report, you're probably not aware that new hours of operation are forthcoming for the Traffic Violations Bureau.

Starting June 2, both the main bureau and the traffic warrant office will close at 6 p.m. daily. That's two hours earlier than the current closing time.

Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker said the new closing time should have little impact on the general public, since most business is conducted before 6 p.m.

Job down the new operating hours: 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

...and bring extra cash for parking

Instead of the current \$2 rooftop special, employees and other early arrivals will be paying up to twice as much to park starting in June.

Metro adjusted rates at all of its parking facilities to bring them in line with privately owned parking garages in town. So, starting June 2, the early bird special will come with a \$3.50 a day price tag — just fifty cents less than the all-day rate for other daily parking.

And if you're fortunate enough to make the list for monthly parking privileges, the tab is a steal at \$75.

Mock Trial: A BAROMETER OF LEGAL PROFESSION'S FUTURE

The case never made it to the jury, but the performance of Arizona's Deer Valley High School was enough to win the verdict of judges in the National High School Mock Trial Championships held here earlier this month.

The far west entry edged out Anderson County High School of Clinton, Tennessee for the \$2,000 cash award from Court TV, which will air a videotaped documentary of the competition at 8 a.m. on June 21.

Teams from 40 states, plus Guam and the District of Columbia, converged on Nashville's courtrooms for the two-day competition May 9-10. They brought with them enough coaches, family members and supporters to fill 829 seats at an awards banquet at the Renaissance Hotel.

The teams were here to test the fictitious theory that Elvis Presley was murdered by a member of his band, a scenario concocted by attorney Wade Cowan, who played a key role in luring the national competition to Nashville. The test case was styled *Tennessee v. Terry King* with the defendant being accused of giving the *real* King an overdose of prescription drugs to prevent being exposed for stealing from him.

The lateness of the hour brought the trial finals to an end short of the case reaching the jury. But the purpose of the trial was not to necessarily achieve a conviction, but to gauge the performances of the young lawyers-to-be as they tackled both prosecution and defense roles based on Cowan's script.

What resulted was a renewed appreciation for the country's educational

system and assurance that the future of the legal profession is in very capable hands. The students conducted themselves in a manner so professional that even seasoned lawyers were envious. "We could take lessons from these kids," commented one observing attorney.

The final round of competition was held at the Customs House with Tennessee's newest Supreme Court justice, Janice Holder, presiding. A number of other Nashville judges and attorneys participated in preliminary rounds.

Tennessee's second entry, Germantown Houston, finished 17th in the final standings. Teams from Texas and Iowa placed third and fourth respectively.

A week prior to the competition, attorney John Kitch gathered a band of Nashville Bar Association volunteers for an old-fashioned spit-polishing of all 20 courtroom facilities in the Metro Courthouse and the Ben West Building where early rounds were conducted. About 70 lawyers, under supervision of personnel from the Department of General Services, turned out for the spring cleaning project.

Both Cowan and Kitch were complimentary of the efforts put forth by the local legal community.

In summation, it could be said that the total event was fit for a King.

AS A VETERAN CIVIL CLERK PREPARES TO PUT HER CAREER TO BED, COURT CHUMS TUNE UP FOR A FAMILIAR REFRAIN...

GOODNIGHT, IRENE

With almost 32 years of service to her credit, Irene Dady figures it's time to pull the covers over her civil service career and awaken to a more domestic lifestyle.

After all, she has done her time. Weathered the changes. Made the friendships. Retained the memories.

And on May 30, all of those elements undoubtedly will come into play as she says goodbye to the General Sessions Civil Division office that has played such an important role in her adult life.

In honor of her dedicated service, co-workers, family members and friends the day before will commandeer a courtroom in the Ben West Building for a retirement party that is sure to bring out many of the attorneys and judges who have befriended her and benefited from her professional assistance over the years.

It is difficult to speculate on the stories that will be rekindled. There have been so many.

Irene joined the General Sessions staff in 1965 after serving as a receptionist/paralegal at two law firms -- three years with attorney David Rutherford and two more with the late Jack Norman, Sr. Her experience and dependable work record convinced then-Circuit Court Clerk Alf Rutherford that she would fit in well with his operations.

Rutherford's hunch was correct and later was shared by his successors, the late George L. Rooker and current clerk Richard Rooker. Not only was she a competent worker, but her pleasant personality and helpful nature made her a hit with her immediate superiors. In all, she has served under eight department supervisors.

Irene remembers that her first chief deputy was Earl Cotton, who was known for the constant presence of a cigar in his mouth. "We called him

'cigar twirler,'" she recalled, "because every time he would get mad, he would twirl that cigar around in his mouth."

Then there was the late Allen Russell, a jokester who liked nothing more than teasing his friends and fellow workers. "I wore a jump suit to work one day," Irene remembered, "and Allen told me to go home and change into something that didn't make me look so large. He told me that if a fire broke out, he would have to make two trips to get me out of the building."

For 20 years, Irene worked out of a satellite office in the Lakewood City Hall in Old Hickory where daily civil dockets were held until judges decided to conduct all their business in the courthouse.

While her dearest friends were those with whom she associated in the clerk's office, Irene enjoys telling of the famous people who have crossed her path during her affiliation with the government. She once had dinner with Jimmy Carter when he came to Nashville as a candidate for President. She also dined with Michael (Little Joe) Landon and Dan (Hoss) Blocker when the two actors were in town to promote their hit *Bonanza* television series. And, although she can't recall his real name, she socialized with the actor who played "Sky King" in the movies.

But now it is time to make new memories. And that will involve spending a great deal of time with her six grandchildren who are products of the three sons she raised following her divorce 31 years ago.

"I will probably take the kids fishing a lot," she said. Then, as an afterthought, she clarified the remark. "After I get some rest."



DATA BANK

Statistics compiled for the month of April

Case Information

Circuit Court

New Civil Cases Filed.....	299
Civil Cases Concluded.....	376
New Divorce Cases Filed.....	366
Divorce Cases Concluded.....	359

General Sessions Civil

New Cases Filed.....	3,240
Executions Issued.....	2,989
Judgments Collected.....	\$613,363
Orders of Protection Petitions.....	201

Probate Court

New Cases Filed.....	175
Cases Closed.....	110

Traffic Violations

Moving Citations.....	21,882
Parking Violations.....	10,664
Total Fines Collected.....	\$375,093
Nullifications.....	2,308
Nullification Fees Collected.....	\$20,772

Circuit Court Jury Trial Verdicts

Week of April 14

Case	Type	Court	Verdict
93C-3360	Medical Malpractice	1st	Defendant
95C-868	Auto Accident	5th	Defendant
95C-4117	Auto Accident	2nd	Defendant
95C-4127	Auto Accident	6th	Defendant

Week of April 21

Case	Type	Court	Verdict
93C-3519	Auto Accident	6th (P)	\$7,500
94C-637	Auto Accident	5th (P)	\$1,200
94C-3	Auto Accident	2nd (P)	\$113,000
94C-2634	Slip/Fall	6th	Defendant
96C-98	Auto Accident	5th (P)	\$8,000
95C-3422	Assault	3rd	Hung Jury

FUNNY BONE

Cindy Stacey of the Department of General Services is the proud owner of a beautiful male Siberian Huskie with the unusual name of "Felony."

For some time now, Felony has been an "only child." But that could change, says Cindy, if another Huskie of equal beauty comes along.

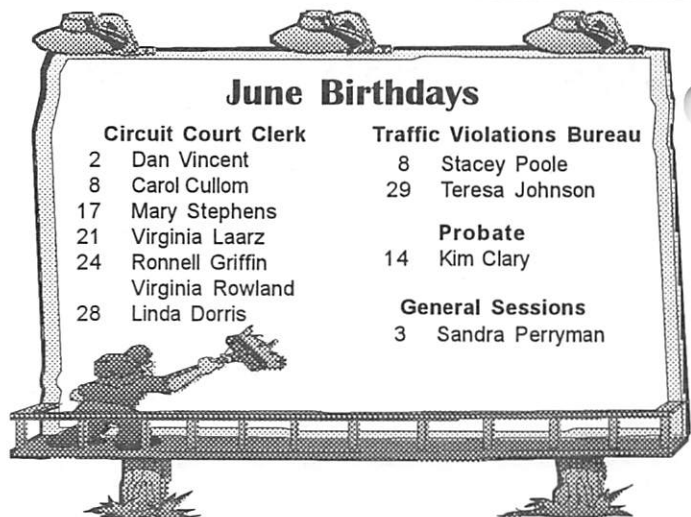
Should that happen, and should the canine cutie turn out to be female, Cindy will name her (what else?) "Miss Demeanor."

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Established by George L. Rooker (1929-1993),
(Circuit Court Clerk, 1968-1993)

Richard R. Rooker Circuit Court Clerk
Gene Baker Editor



June Birthdays

Circuit Court Clerk	Traffic Violations Bureau
2 Dan Vincent	8 Stacey Poole
8 Carol Cullom	29 Teresa Johnson
17 Mary Stephens	
21 Virginia Laarz	Probate
24 Ronnell Griffin	14 Kim Clary
Virginia Rowland	
28 Linda Dorris	General Sessions
	3 Sandra Perryman

Cheers...

Don't look for Jeff Filson around the Ben West Building for the next couple of weeks. The chief clerk of the General Sessions Civil Division is on vacation, learning the finer techniques of diaper changing and late-night feedings. A new father should know these things. And Jeff assumed that role on May 15 when wife Alison presented him with a son at St. Thomas Hospital. The new addition to the Filson family is Adam James Filson, whose cuddling weight was 8 pounds, 14 ounces and filled up 21.5 inches of blanket space. Mother and baby are doing fine. Daddy's status is being withheld for two weeks...Traffic docket clerk Beverly Swafford also experienced -- or "re-experienced" -- the miracle of birth this month when so. Jason and his wife Dusty made her a grandmother for the fifth time. Miss Shelby Ryan Swafford was the couple's third child and arrived weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces with a body length of 21.25 inches...But enough about babies. Congratulations of another kind are in order for some other employees, starting with Kim Jackson and Ricky Deatherage of our probate clerk's office, who shined during the recent March of Dimes Walkathon. The twosome combined their efforts to collect \$800 in sponsorship donations, then displayed their stamina by completing the five-mile charity walk route...Another member of the probate staff, John Clemmons, chose another route in attaining self satisfaction. He went the distance in the state bar exams and came out with his papers. Also among the February graduation list was Emmalyne Harris Squires, daughter of Temesia Harris, docket clerk for Circuit Judge Muriel Robinson.

...Tears

For a quarter of a century, Ned Davis Lentz presided over cases in Davidson County's Chancery Court -- twice winning election to the bench he gained through gubernatorial appointment. In 1972, two years shy of completing his second elected term, the lasting effects of childhood polio forced his retirement. Now, another quarter of a century later, the legal community mourns his passing while reflecting on his contributions as a judge, a role model, a mentor and a civic leader. He was 87.

We also join the legal community in mourning the deaths of two longtime Nashville attorneys -- Thomas E. Fox, 84, former state attorney general and state senator, and Elisha Paul (Steve) Carrier, 93, known for his legal work with the National Life & Accident Insurance Company.

Condolences also to two members of our Traffic Violations Bureau staff in the loss of family members...Nick Lane's grandfather, Herbert Charles Presley, 85, passed away at a hospital in Portland, Tennessee following a lengthy illness. And Beverly Estes said goodbye to her aunt Marguarite Caldwell on May 16.