

ROOKER REPORT

September 2002

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Mail-In Traffic Form Gets Test

Some motorists who get ticketed for traffic violations will soon be handed a friendly bonus package designed to soften the rigors of satisfying their obligations.

Under a pilot project to be tested by the Metro Police Department, a mail-in form--complete with self-addressed envelope--will enable certain errand drivers to register for traffic safety classes or remit their required fine without going to court.

Because the project, scheduled to get underway in October, will be going through a trial stage, only 10 traffic officers will be issuing the mail-in packages.

Traffic Violations Bureau chief clerk Bill Cartwright said 15,000 of the mail-in packages have been printed for the testing period. "Once those have been depleted, we will review the effectiveness of the program," he said, adding

that all aspects would be taken into consideration, including comments from the public and whether revisions to the package itself might be necessary.

Those receiving the mail-in form will find it to be comprehensible, clearly spelling out their options for satisfying the penalties of their infractions.

A chart depicting violations and the penalty amounts is included for those wishing to pay the fine by mail without going to court. And there is a traffic safety school registration form, along with information on classes offered for first and repeat offenders.

Of course, if neither of those options is appealing to the violator, he may choose to appear in court on his assigned date and let a judge determine his guilt or innocence.

Certain criteria must be met in determining a driver's status for traffic school.

(SEE TRAFFIC, PAGE 3)

Judges Propose Schedule Changes to Help Lawyers When Courts Relocate

Ask Input on Criminal Bond Docket Changes

When the mass exodus to the Metro Center takes place next Spring, only the General Sessions criminal courts will remain in the current downtown judicial hub.

Because of its close proximity to the Metro Jail, the Ben West Building will continue to house courtrooms to accommodate the lower court's criminal dockets.

With all state trial courts being temporarily located several miles away, attorneys who practice in both general sessions and the trial courts on the same day will lose that convenience.

Criminal bond dockets are conducted daily in general sessions with the highest volume being settled on Thursday at both levels of court. Currently, attorneys are able to represent clients in both courts on the same day since the venues are across the street from one another.

That will not be possible, however, when trial courts relocate to the Metro Center sometime around April, leaving the general sessions courts downtown.

So, in an effort to minimize criminal docket conflicts, general sessions judges are proposing to move the settlement of general sessions level criminal bond cases to Wednesday morning and afternoon, as well as morning and afternoon dockets on Thursday, as part of a schedule overhaul to accommodate attorneys.

◆ Other proposed scheduling changes include the criminal bond drug dockets, which would be moved from Wednesday to Monday and would be conducted at 9 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. in two courtrooms.

◆ The DUI bond docket would be moved from Thursday to Tuesday and would be held in two courtrooms at 9 a.m. and 9:15 a.m.

◆ Trial dockets, now held daily, would be moved to Monday and Tuesday at 1 p.m. and 1:15 p.m. in separate courtrooms.

(SEE SESSIONS, PAGE 3)

In Memorium



Joe Torrence

1912-2002

Criminal Court Clerk 1982-1994

CHEERS...

Attention game show fans. Look for a familiar face on an upcoming Wheel of Fortune airing. It will be that of our own **Penny Hubbell**, who jetted to Los Angeles this month to test her skills on the super popular high-dollar show. Penny, judicial assistant to Circuit Judge **Carol Soloman**, earned an appearance on the game show this summer when auditions were held in Nashville. The shows, of course, are taped in advance, meaning that Penny's Sept. 19 performance will be aired at a date to be announced later. Penny has "voweled" to tell us when that will be, once the show's producers give her the information. The show, hosted by former Nashville TV weatherman **Pat Sajak**, airs week nights at 6:30 on Channel 2.



HUBBELL

Best wishes to **Jean Gillum**, who retired from the Criminal Court Clerk's office on Aug. 30 after 27 years of service. Co-workers, friends, attorneys and judges she served were on hand for a farewell reception in the courthouse jury assembly room where her departure was bemoaned during speeches lauding her valued service to the legal community. Among the speakers was Criminal Court Clerk **David Torrence**, whose late father **Joe Torrence** was among several clerks Gillum served, beginning in 1975. She is married to **Jim Gillum**, a retired member of the Davidson County Sheriff's Department.



GILLUM

Diana Reed will probably be doing a lot of traveling, now that she has a new nephew in Mississippi. The deputy General Sessions clerk became an aunt on Aug. 25 when sister **Joy Stewart** gave birth to 7-pound, 14-ounce **Jaxon Parker Stewart**. The new arrival was born in Jackson, Miss., where Joy and husband **Jerry Stewart** make their home. Says Diana: "He was born with a head full of black hair and already needs a haircut." Knowing Diana's giving nature, the child just might get his own set of hair clippers for Christmas.

...TEARS

Sympathy to **Randal Turner**, a law clerk for Circuit Judge **Carol Soloman**, in the sudden death of his father **Hampton Turner**, who passed away on Aug. 29.

Condolences to General Services employee **Cindy Silver** in the passing of her father **Morris Stacey**, who lost his fight with pancreatic cancer on Aug. 23 following two bypass operations. Mr. Stacey retired from the Metro Water Services Department two years ago after 33 years of service. He was 68.

We are saddened by the unfortunate death of attorney **Mike Richardson**, 50, who was killed in a freakish auto accident near Crossville while on his way to Knoxville for the Tennessee-Florida football game on Aug. 21. He was co-founder of the firm Richardson & Golden.

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Published by the Davidson County Circuit Court Clerk's Office
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Established by **George L. Rooker (1929-1993)**,
(Circuit Court Clerk, 1968-1993)

BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER

Traffic Violations

- 4 Joe Hurt
- 5 Kim Smith
- 9 Kim Soto
- 21 David Patterson
- 24 Mary Archey
- 30 Marvin Cohen
- Susan Grannis

Probate Clerk

None

Circuit Court Clerk

- 6 Carolyn Davis
- 8 Cheryl Morgan
- 9 Sandy Adams
- 22 Clay Hardin
- 28 Christine Strassner

General Sessions

- 3 Mark Sheffield
- 9 Margaret Larobardiere

Law Clerk Jason Kane Will Join Secret Service

Jason Kane, a former deputy clerk in the General Sessions Civil Division clerk's office and most recently a law clerk for Criminal Court Judge Steve Dozier, is now on his way to becoming a federal agent.

Kane has been selected by the United States Secret Service as a special agent, headquartered out of Chicago where he will relocate within the next few months.

The secret service is under the Department of the Treasury.

Kane says he will eventually be providing protection for both President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. His short-term primary duties will be to investigate counterfeiting crimes, bank fraud and some anti-terrorism activities.

Kane, 29, was a member of the General Sessions clerk's staff from March 1997 to December 1999 when he accepted the criminal court position.

After graduating from the Nashville School of Law in June 2001, he passed the state bar examinations four months later.

Kane said it took about a year to complete the federal application process, including multiple interviews, extensive background checks and numerous other types of testing.

Kane will undergo six months of training in Georgia and Maryland en route to a special agent commission.



KANE

United Way Offers Money Back Guarantee As Employee Charity Drive Gets Underway

With the annual Metro Employee Consolidated Charities Campaign set to kick into high gear, it is interesting to note that one of the participating charitable agencies is adding a twist.

United Way says that if you are not satisfied with the way the agency is investing your gift, you can request your money back.

"This applies only to gifts to United Way and demonstrates our dedication to being accountable to our donors," the agency reports.

The other two federations included in the consolidated government employee charity drive--Community Shares and Community Health Charities of Tennessee--have not adopted the same strategy but will share in what is hoped to be \$23.5 in overall contributions.

DA coordinator, Gen

er Clerk



JURY

TRIAL VERDICTS

ABBREVIATIONS:

P	PLAINTIFF	CP	COUNTER PLAINTIFF
D	DEFENDANT	CD	COUNTER DEFENDANT
NP	NON-PARTY	GSA	GENERAL SESSIONS APPEAL
ST	SOFT TISSUE	PUN	PUNITIVE

APPEALS

GENERAL SESSIONS

Week of August 5

CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
01C-985	DAMAGES**	8TH	(P) \$100,000*			

*--\$50,000 COMPENSATORY & \$50,000 PUNITIVE

**--NON-JURY

Soft Tissue

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
01C-2658	AUTO ACCIDENT/ST	8TH	NONE	DEFENDANT			
01C-1517	AUTO ACCIDENT/ST	5TH	\$50,000	(P) ZERO DAMAGES			

Week of August 12

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
01C-3949	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	8TH	(P) \$23,183		P-\$14,999	DEFENDANT
01B-103	GAMBLING/CRIMINAL	8TH	GUILTY			

Traffic Mailers

(FROM PAGE 1)

Three levels of class time are offered, based on the defendant's driving record. If the driver has not attended driving school for a moving violation within the previous 12 months, he or she may be eligible for a two-hour or four-hour class. An eight-hour defensive driving course is available to those who have attended traffic school within the previous year, provided they are declared eligible.

Those accepted for classes will not have their charges reported to their insurance companies, provided they complete their assigned courses.

Because those opting for traffic school may prove to be ineligible, they are required to include two payments with their mail-in form--one for \$40 made payable to General Sessions Court to cover the cost of school (all levels cost the same) and one for \$25 made payable to Traffic Violation Bureau to cover clerk fees.

Should a defendant fail to complete the traffic school course, the \$25 will be applied toward the moving fine amount due.

Sessions Schedule

(FROM PAGE 1)

◆ Settlement dockets would be heard in the mornings and afternoons on Wednesday and Thursday, rather than the current Monday-Friday schedule.

◆ Friday dockets would be flexible, providing the option of probation hearings, review dockets, trials or other cases deemed most pressing to each judge.

But the judges are quick to point out that the schedule revisions are subject to scrutiny of lawyers who will be affected by the changes. They have asked for feedback on the proposed schedule

All communications concerning the schedule changes should be in writing and mailed to:

General Sessions Judges
 211 Union Street, Room 326
 Stahlman Building
 Nashville, TN 37201

Athletics Win World Series



Meet the world champion Tennessee Athletics. Back row (l-r): Steve Moffitt (coach), Josh Moffitt, Jeff MacMahon, John Hooper, James Parker, Brad Cobb, Chris Fox, Casey Moreland (general manager) and Scotty Yates (head coach). Front row (l-r): Mark Hartsfield, Jay Moreland, Blake Bratcher, Miles Hartsfield, Michael McGee and Danny Pulley.

Judge Moreland Squad Makes Fifth Time Count

To say that the Tennessee Athletics is a perennial world title contender would be an understatement.

Under the general management of General Sessions Judge Casey Moreland, the team has made five trips to the National Baseball Congress World Series for players 16 years of age and under.

Previous appearances had gotten the squad no better than a third place finish. But that all changed this year when the Mid-State Amateur Baseball Association team defeated the Wichita Jets 8-2 in the championship game at Vanderbilt on July 30.

After taking a one-run lead in the opening inning, the Athletics put on a four-run rally in the fifth to seal the victory.

As an added bonus, seven members of the squad were named to the All-World Series team. They were Jay Moreland, Brad Cobb, Blake Bratcher, Danny Pulley, Michael McGee, Chris Fox and Matt Brown.

TRENDS



RATIO: PLAINTIFFS 5.4-1

CASE ANALYSES

AUTO ACCIDENTS

PLAINTIFFS 34
DEFENDANTS 6

MONTH-BY-MONTH

MONTH	TOTALS	JURY	NON-JURY	PLAINTIFF	DEFENDANT	NONE
JANUARY	9	9	0	8	1	0
FEBRUARY	5	5	0	3	1	1
MARCH	3	1	2	2	0	1
APRIL	5	5	0	3	2	0
MAY	7	5	2	5	1	1
JUNE	8	3	0	8	0	0
JULY	3	2	1	2	1	0
AUGUST	3	3	0	2	1	0

JURY AWARDS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	1,342,250	578-945,000	89,235
FEBRUARY	263,905	3,225-258,946	4,734
MARCH	10,000	N/A	N/A
APRIL	49,743	1,000-46,030	2,713
MAY	122,373	0-100,000	12,686
JUNE	73,034	5,032-62,500	34,001
JULY	25,000	N/A	N/A
AUGUST	\$23,183	23,183-100,000	N/A

NON-JURY AWARDS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	N/A	N/A	N/A
FEBRUARY	N/A	N/A	N/A
MARCH	2,374	N/A	N/A
APRIL	N/A	N/A	N/A
MAY	1,500	N/A	N/A
JUNE	N/A	N/A	N/A
JULY	60,000	N/A	N/A
AUGUST	N/A	N/A	N/A

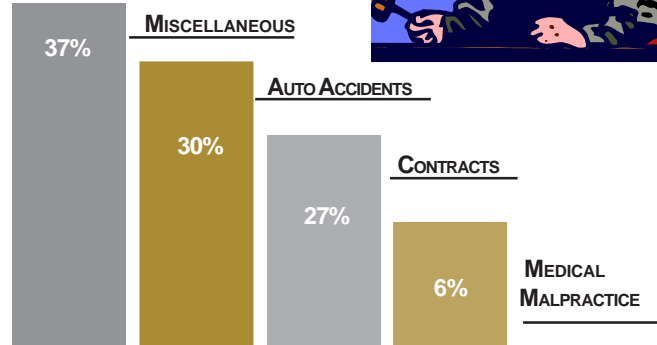
SOFT TISSUE CASES

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	185,578	578-150,000	35,000
FEBRUARY	3,225	N/A	N/A
MARCH	N/A	N/A	N/A
APRIL	1,000	N/A	N/A
MAY	373	0-373	N/A
JUNE	N/A	N/A	N/A
JULY	25,000	N/A	N/A
AUGUST	N/A	N/A	N/A

*GENERAL SESSIONS APPEALS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	PLAINTIFF	DEFENDANT	NONE
JANUARY	10,200	1	0	0
FEBRUARY	9,401	1	1	0
MARCH	12,374	2	0	1
APRIL	N/A	0	1	0
MAY	1,873	2	1	0
JUNE	10,534	2	0	0
JULY	N/A	0	0	0
AUGUST	23,183	1	0	0


CIVIL TRIALS BY CLASS



DATA BANK

Statistics compiled for the month of August

CASE INFORMATION

		Circuit Court	
NEW CIVIL CASES FILED	.....	281	
JURY	.....	122	
NON-JURY	.....	159	
CIVIL CASES CONCLUDED	.....	261	
JURY	.....	138	
NON-JURY	.....	123	
NEW DIVORCE CASES FILED	.....	230	
DIVORCE CASES CONCLUDED	.....	229	
		General Sessions Civil	
NEW CASES FILED	.....	3,384	
EXECUTIONS ISSUED	.....	3,499	
GARNISHMENT PAYMENTS	.....	3,540	
JUDGMENTS COLLECTED	.....	\$602,334	
ORDER OF PROTECTION PETITIONS	.....	238	
		Probate Court	
NEW CASES FILED	.....	191	
CASES CLOSED	.....	188	
		Traffic Violations	
MOVING CITATIONS	.....	20,295	
PARKING VIOLATIONS	.....	6,503	
TOTAL FINES COLLECTED	.....	\$353,884	
NULLIFICATIONS	.....	1,862	
NULLIFICATION FEES COLLECTED	.....	\$22,338	

Other Classes

	CONTRACTS	YTD	PLAINTIFFS	DEFENDANTS	NO VERDICT
		39	29	2	8
AUGUST AWARDS: NONE- TOTAL AWARDS TO DATE: \$153,574					



MISCELLANEOUS

53

PLAINTIFFS	37
DEFENDANTS	6
NO VERDICT	10

MALPRACTICE

8

PLAINTIFFS	2
DEFENDANTS	6
NO VERDICT	0