

Rooker Report

10th Anniversary Edition

February 2003

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Vol.11, No. 1

New Court Venues Eye April 21 Openings

State and local courts have designated April 21 as the target date to be open for business at their new MetroCenter locations.

The new venues will become temporary homes to virtually all Nashville-based courts while current judicial locations are undergoing renovation and additions expected to take up to three years to complete.

When it's over, the trial courts will return to a more functional Metro Courthouse. And a brand new multi-level Courthouse Annex will house all General Sessions operations.

But for now, the focus is on packing up and moving out so the work can be done. Lock, stock and barrel.

The massive moving project, already underway on a minor scale, officially kicks into high gear on April 4 and will continue throughout much of the month on a staggered schedule with 5-6 days being devoted to each entity.

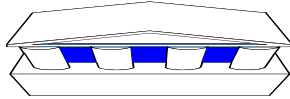
The physical aspects of the relocation project make it a gigantic ordeal with courtroom and office furnishings, along with tons of paper files and containers, literally being reassembled intact in different space.

Because of the enormity of the undertaking, the courts have struggled

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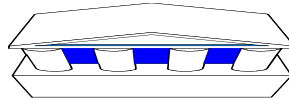
New Home of the Courts

Criminal Courts
5th, 7th, 8th Circuit Courts
Criminal Court Clerk
Probate Clerk
Criminal Justice Coordinator
Jury Assembly Room



601

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th Circuit Courts
Circuit Court Clerk
Trial Court Administrator
Circuit Special Master
Community Corrections



523

MAINSTREAM DRIVE

METRO CENTER BOULEVARD

Getting There

THE NEW COURT VENUES ARE LOCATED IN METROCENTER IN NORTH NASHVILLE.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES INTO THE COMPLEX, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

METROCENTER BOULEVARD EXIT
OFF I-65 S OR CLARKSVILLE PIKE;
3RD AVE. N. FROM DOWNTOWN;
8TH AVE. N FROM DOWNTOWN.

DIAGRAM SHOWS LOCATIONS
OF EACH COURT AND RELATED OFFICES.



501

Chancery Courts
General Sessions Civil Courts
Traffic Court
Traffic Violations Bureau
Chancery Clerk & Master
General Sessions Civil Clerk

GREAT CIRCLE ROAD

Kicking Off Year Eleven Of Report

A decade has passed since the Rooker Report made its debut in February 1993.

That was 120 issues ago--the same number of months without interruption.

As we kick off our 11th year, we do so with an expression of gratitude to a legal community that has embraced and supported the publication through loyal readership, both printed and internet versions.

For the record, 1,000 copies of the report are printed each month and distributed free of charge via countertop displays in each of our civil clerk's offices. Copies also are made available to a number of governmental offices with direct or indirect relations to the courts.

Additionally, the report is reproduced on the Circuit Court Clerk's web site (www.nashville.gov/circuit) where back issues also can be downloaded for printing.

While the report is not available through subscription, copies through the mail can be obtained by providing a self-addressed, self-stamped envelope.

The objective of the newsletter has been and continues to be to provide pertinent information regarding the operations of the civil court system--specifically circuit, probate, general sessions civil and traffic violations. An overview

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Clerk's Uncle, Last of Late Clerk's Brothers, Passes Away

William Roy Rooker, the last surviving brother of the late Circuit Court Clerk George Rooker, Sr. and uncle of current clerk Richard Rooker, passed away on Feb. 19 of congestive heart failure.

He was 70 and resided in Smyrna.

Known to his friends as "Willie," his death came in line with a 10-year cycle that claimed three of the family's four brothers. An older brother died in 1983 and George

Rooker succumbed to heart disease in March of 1993.

George Rooker served as Circuit Court Clerk for a record 25 years. Following his death, son Richard Rooker was appointed to fill the position and subsequently was elected to three four-year terms.

Willie Rooker is also survived by nephew George L. Rooker, Jr., a staff member of the Metro Property Assessor's Office.

Breakfast to Honor 42-Year Career and Fellow Retiree Jean Hart

Health Forces 'Granny' Harris to Retire

For almost 42 years, Elizabeth Harris occupied a desk in the Traffic Violation Bureau where she began her public service career at the age of 43.

During those years, about the only time she wasn't on the job was during mandatory vacation periods. Full of spunk and possessing a high level of energy, she compiled an unbelievable number of sick day credits and was the envy of her younger counterparts.

Because of her longevity, she was affectionately known as "Granny" to fellow workers--a title she didn't seem to mind. She was the perfect prototype of the label, always neatly dressed, polite and regimental in carrying out her assigned daily duties.



ELIZABETH HARRIS

She was looking forward to celebrating her 85th birthday with co-workers gathered around her desk in the bureau last September. But she developed a blood clot in her leg several months earlier and was forced to go on sick leave for the first time in her career.

It would be a health problem that would prevent her return, a fact she finally conceded on Feb. 1 when she reluctantly accepted retirement.

Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker, her boss for the past dozen years, called her one of the most dedicated employees he had ever known. In a word, he described her as a "trooper" who set a great example for others to follow.

A retirement breakfast will be held on Friday, March 7 at 8 a.m. in Courtroom IV of the Ben West Building to honor Ms. Harris and retired Traffic Violations Bureau bookkeeper Jean Hart, who ended her 20-year public service career last May because of an extended illness.

Bureau Chief Clerk Bill Cartwright will preside over the festivities.

BIRTHDAYS MARCH

Circuit Court Clerk

- 10 Penny Hubbell
- 17 Deanna Alexander
- 29 Cheryl Kennedy
- 30 Suzanne Wheeler

Probate Clerk

- 21 Kyle Sowell

General Sessions

None

Traffic Violations

- 2 Dana McGregor
- 5 Wanda Clymer
- 12 Roy Bohannon
- 24 Lisa Jones

Courts Girding Up For Move to MetroCenter; April 21 Opening Target

(From Page 1)

with devising a shutdown and reopen schedule that would minimize inconvenience to the legal community while being compatible with the schedules of their companion clerk's offices.

General Sessions judges firmed up a two-week closing period for the weeks of April 7 and April 14 and scheduled Monday, April 21 as the reopening date in the new facilities. Following suit, the General Sessions Civil Division clerk's office and the Traffic Violations Bureau adopted the same dates to complete their moves.

Those same dates were tentatively agreed upon by the trial courts, which had already planned to close the week of April 14 for a judicial conference. Circuit, Probate and Criminal Court clerks' offices are operating under the same tentative schedule.

Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker said a satellite office would remain open in the Ben West Building for the purpose of stamp-filing legal instruments affected by statutory date requirements. A clerk from each of the circuit, probate and general sessions civil offices will be assigned to accommodate such filings during the two-week shutdown period, he added.

A number of other government and court-related departments being displaced by the renovation project have varying move dates and, consequently, will announce their own schedules.

While the majority of the court system will be moving from the courthouse, the General Sessions civil operations will be vacating the Stahlman Building, which has been sold to a private company with plans to convert it to an apartment building. Other tenants of the building, including the Metro Public Defender and several private law offices, will also be displaced. There has been no official announcement as to where the public defender's office will relocate.

The Traffic Violations Bureau will be moving from the Ben West Building to make way for other judicial-related offices which will be losing their spaces in the courthouse. Among them will be the General Sessions Criminal Court Clerk's main office, which will be servicing the lower court's criminal dockets that will remain in the building.

CHEERS...

General Sessions Court Administrator **Warner Hassell** thought he would be attending a routine meeting when he was summoned to the judges' conference room in the Ben West Building on Jan. 31. Boy,



WARNER HASSELL

was he wrong. It was just a ploy to assure Hassell's presence for a surprise birthday party in his honor. While such occasions are not common, the eleven judges who are Hassell's bosses figured this would be a once-in-a-lifetime thing, since a person can never repeat a 50th birthday. You can imagine how large the cake had to be to support that many candles, much to the delight of court personnel not in attendance but later treated to the remaining portion. They send their thanks and congratulations, Warner. As do we.

...TEARS

Cody Lee Smith, 17-year-old student at Mt. Juliet High School, died unexpectedly on Jan. 23 after his vital organs shut down from a bacteria-related illness. He was the son of **Robin Smith**, former deputy clerk in the Traffic Violations Bureau, and the great nephew of **Connie Colley**, cashier in the General Sessions Civil Division Clerk's Office.

Deepest sympathy to attorney **William A. Moody, Sr.** in the death of his mother, **Mary Sue Moody**, who passed away on Jan. 27 at her Nashville home following a long illness. Mrs. Moody was 81.



JURY TRIAL VERDICTS

ABBREVIATIONS:

P	PLAINTIFF	CP	COUNTER PLAINTIFF
D	DEFENDANT	CD	COUNTER DEFENDANT
TCPA	TN. CONSUMER PROTECTION	GSA	GENERAL SESSIONS APPEAL
ST	SOFT TISSUE	PUN	PUNITIVE

APPEALS

Week of January 6

CIRCUIT COURT

GENERAL SESSIONS

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
01C-3516	CONTRACT	8TH	P-\$5,390			
00C-3379	PERSONAL INJURY	1ST	P-\$1,694,873			
02C-2732	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	6TH	P-\$9,098		P-\$13,85	DEFENDANT

Week of January 13

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
01C-1386	MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	3RD	P-\$500,000			
01C-760	AUTO ACCIDENT	6TH	P-\$7,142			
02C-1597	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT*	5TH	P-\$10,000		DEFENDANT	PLAINTIFF

*--JURY WAIVED

NON-JURY TRIAL RESULTS

Week of January 21

CIRCUIT COURT

GENERAL SESSIONS

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
02C-1600	GSA/CONTRACT	5TH	P-\$450		P-\$1,619	DEFENDANT
00C-2057	CONTRACT	8TH	P-\$200,000			
02C-735	PROPERTY DAMAGE	1ST	P-\$325			
01C-3807	WORKERS COMPENSATION	5TH	30% Voc. DISABILITY			
02C-2113	GSA/CONTRACT	6TH	P-\$1,000		P-\$3,036	DEFENDANT
97C-1594	WORKERS COMPENSATION	1ST	UNDER ADVISEMENT			
02C-400	DAMAGES	5TH	P-\$80,000			

Week of January 27

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
02C-1833	GSA/CONVERSION	1ST	UNDER ADVISEMENT		DISMISSED	PLAINTIFF
01C-1033	GSA/CODES	6TH	DIKSMISSED		MANDATORY INJUNCTION	DEFENDANT
99C-38	WORKERS COMPENSATION	8TH	UNDER ADVISEMENT			
02C-1521	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	5TH	P-\$5,700		P-\$5,785	DEFENDANT
01C-3098	GSA/DETAINDER	8TH	P-\$11,100		P-POSSESSION	DEFENDANT
02C-1769	GSA/CONTRACT	6TH	P-\$2,511		P-\$711	PLAINTIFF
02C-2299	GSA/CONTRACT	1ST	DISMISSED		DISMISSED	PLAINTIFF
02C-2507	GSA/DETAINDER	8TH	VEHICLE POSSESSION		P-POSSESSION	DEFENDANT
02C-238	WORKERS COMPENSATION	5TH	55% Voc. DISABILITY			
02C-2449	GSA/CODES	5TH	DEFENDANT		DISMISSED	DEFENDANT
01C-2230	WORKERS COMPENSATION	8TH	12.5% Voc. DISABILITY			
02C-1767	GSA/DETAINDER	5TH	DISMISSED		P-\$2,446	DEFENDANT

ROOKER REPORT



ADA coordinator, Gene Baker (880-3309)

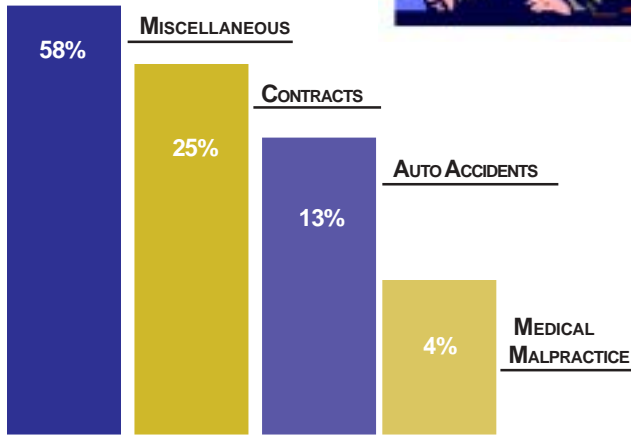
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Established by George L. Rooker (1929-1993),
(Circuit Court Clerk, 1968-1993)

Richard R. Rooker Circuit Court Clerk
Gene Baker Editor

TRENDS

CIVIL TRIALS BY CLASS



CASE ANALYSES



AUTO ACCIDENTS

PLAINTIFFS 3
DEFENDANTS 0

RATIO: PLAINTIFFS 3-1

MONTH-BY-MONTH

MONTH	TOTALS	JURY	NON-JURY	PLAINTIFF	DEFENDANT	NONE
JANUARY	3	2	1	3	0	0

JURY AWARDS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	19,098	9,098-10,000	N/A

NON-JURY AWARDS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	5,770	N/A	N/A

SOFT TISSUE CASES

MONTH	\$TOTALS	DOLLAR RANGE	\$MEAN
JANUARY	NONE	N/A	N/A

*GENERAL SESSIONS APPEALS

MONTH	\$TOTALS	PLAINTIFF	DEFENDANT	NONE
JANUARY	24,798	3	0	0

Other Classes



CONTRACTS	YTD	PLAINTIFFS	DEFENDANTS	NO VERDICT
	6	5	0	1

JANUARY AWARDS: \$209,351--TOTAL AWARDS TO DATE: \$209,351



MISCELLANEOUS	
14	
PLAINTIFFS	8
DEFENDANTS	3
NO VERDICT	3

MALPRACTICE
1

PLAINTIFFS	1
DEFENDANTS	0
NO VERDICT	0



Report Celebrates 10th Anniversary

(From Page 1)

of each department's monthly activities is published in the "Data Bank" section, regularly located on the back cover adjacent to the analytical "Trends" feature which provides insight into trial results according to types.

Both jury and non-jury trial results are published each month, a feature that has become a popular planning tool for attorneys with upcoming cases before the courts.

On the human interest side, our "Cheers" and "Tears" column spotlights special events in the lives of employees and others of judicial reputation. And, of course, news stories focus on matters relevant to the court system and on personality profiles.

Visually, the report has evolved from the simplicity of typewritten sheets to a more sophisticated, computer generated design, accentuated by effective spot color application and greater use of graphics.

From the beginning, the report has been produced by the same editor, who is charged with all phases of its publication.



DATA BANK

Statistics compiled for the month of January

CASE INFORMATION

Circuit Court

NEW CIVIL CASES FILED	247
JURY	109
NON-JURY	138
CIVIL CASES CONCLUDED	251
JURY	161
NON-JURY	90
NEW DIVORCE CASES FILED	216
DIVORCE CASES CONCLUDED	194

General Sessions Civil

NEW CASES FILED	2,937
EXECUTIONS ISSUED	3,524
GARNISHMENT PAYMENTS	3,660
JUDGMENTS COLLECTED	\$638,859
ORDER OF PROTECTION PETITIONS	214

Probate Court

NEW CASES FILED	193
CASES CLOSED	181

Traffic Violations

MOVING CITATIONS	20,108
PARKING VIOLATIONS	5,403
TOTAL FINES COLLECTED	\$301,474
NULLIFICATIONS	2,101
NULLIFICATION FEES COLLECTED	\$25,212

Courthouse Celebration Schedule

Following is the remaining schedule of the floor-by-floor celebration commemorating the 66th year of the Metro Courthouse:

March 6--Fifth Floor, Circuit Courts.

March 28--Sixth Floor, Criminal Courts.

March 30--40th Anniversary Celebration of Metro Government