

Anniversary Issue

Rooker Report

February 2006

Published by the Davidson County Circuit Court Clerk's Office

Vol.14, No. 1

Here We Go Into Our 14th Year

Goodness, how time does fly.

With this issue, we are celebrating 13 years as a monthly publication. That equates to 156 months of words, pictures and statistics that, in a small way, preserve the history of the local civil judicial system.

It was for this purpose that the Rooker Report was established in February 1993 with primary focus on current events from the Circuit, Probate, General Sessions Civil Division and Traffic Violations operations.

Over the years, the report has gained favor as both a reference tool for attorneys and an instrument of information for the general public.

Thanks to advanced technology, the report has become more visually appealing, easier to read and flavored with digestive

statistical information reflecting the ongoing history of the civil judiciary.

Published monthly, the newsletter is offered in printed format for distribution via countertop display in each of the civil clerk offices. It can also be accessed on the Circuit Court Clerk's internet web site at www.nashville.gov/circuit.

Each edition features stories on current events within the civil court spectrum, keeping readers abreast of news relevant to the inner workings of the courts and the people involved in their operations. Court case information and trial results are offered on a regular basis, along with case analyses that help lawyers, judges and others determine trends.

The report is published totally in-house.

Thank you for picking up a copy.

Ruben Honored For 25 Years On Bench

It was a rare milestone worth celebrating. And many did.

A spill-over crowd came together on February 24 to pay tribute to Leon Ruben, who one month earlier celebrated his 25th anniversary as a General Sessions Court judge.

Representatives of the judicial and legislative branches and professional sports lined a courtroom in the First Image Building, many offering congratulatory speeches.

Ruben shared the moment with wife Sandy and his children and grandchildren, who were present for the occasion.

Also in attendance were Tennessee Titans Quarterback Steve McNair and Tank Williams, both friends and supporters of the judge.

The event was hosted by Presiding General Sessions Judge Casey Moreland, who shared the speaker's podium with other fellow judges.

Before taking the bench on Jan. 26, 1982, Ruben was a popular Metro councilman and practicing attorney. Long before seeking a judgeship himself, he served the court by volunteering to hold court on Christmas Day so judges could



TITANS QUARTERBACK STEVE MCNAIR JOINED CELEBRATION



JUDGE LEON RUBEN ADDRESSES GUESTS DURING CEREMONY COMMEMORATING HIS 25TH YEAR AS A GENERAL SESSIONS JUDGE

PHOTOS BY MARGARET LAROBARDIERE

See RUBEN, Page 4



RENDERING OF NEW A.A. BIRCH BUILDING

Some Courts to Close For June Relocation; Clerks' Offices Open

To accommodate the relocation move from Metro Center to the new downtown Justice A. A. Birch Building, the General Sessions civil and traffic courts will be closed during the week of June 12.

Dockets for those courts will resume in the new facility on June 19.

However, the General Sessions Civil Division and Traffic Violations Bureau clerks' offices will be in operation at the new building on June 12.

Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker pointed out there will be no interruption of service at either of the clerks' offices. The last day of business at their temporary quarters in the First Image Building in Metro Center will be Friday, June 9.

The General Sessions Civil Division office will be located on the second floor of the new

See RELOCATION, Page 2

CHEERS...

If you're looking for a movie with a local connection, check out "The Second Chance" at one of the area theaters. The film was shot in Nashville and features local teen Calvin (C.J.) Hopson as one of the main characters. Hopson, a 17-year-old student at the Nashville School of Arts, is the son of Sarah McClain, a deputy clerk in the Traffic Warrant Office. The movie focuses on the connection between an inner-city church and one of suburban affluence with Hopson portraying Julius, whose desire to vacate membership in a gang has brutal consequences. You can catch the full plot by joining the lines of movie-goers who are taking in the just-released flick, which stars singer Michael W. Smith. Hopson, a communications and drama major, was his school's choice to audition for a role last year. The Ruckus Film Co. filmed the movie in Nashville last October.



C.J. HOPSON

...TEARS



WALT DRAPER, 52, veteran chief administrative officer for the Criminal Court Clerk's Office, lost a two-year fight with cancer on February 10. He served the clerk's office for 24 years, first under the late Joe Torrence and then current clerk David Torrence. He is survived by his wife Donna, daughter Kara and son Chase.

DAVID LESTER, 45, son of Deputy Probate Court Clerk Ruth Lester, died suddenly on February 26 at his home. He was preceded in death by two brothers, Charles Pat Lester in 1998 and Mike Lester in 2004.

DONALD DRAKE HOLLIDAY, JR. 54, a Nashville attorney who devoted his practice to the Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee, passed away on February 2. He leaves a wife, a daughter and a son.

Court Relocation Schedule

(From Page 1)

facility while Traffic Violations will occupy space on the first floor.

General Sessions Court Administrator Warner Hassell released the following schedule for the transition:

June 9- Regular docket schedule for all traffic, civil and criminal dockets.

June 10- Saturday Jail Review Docket: Criminal Justice Center (CJC).

June 12-16--Jail Dockets will be open for business in the CJC. One-Stop Citation Docket will be closed due to transitioning to the 3-week reporting from 2-week. However, Metro Traffic, Civil, Criminal Bond and Misdemeanor Citation Dockets will be closed.

June 17--Saturday Jail Review Docket: CJC.

Monday, June 19--First day of business for all General Sessions dockets in the Justice A. A. Birch Building.

As General Sessions and Traffic courts vacate the First Image Building, the following judicial offices will relocate temporarily to that facility pending completion of the Metro Courthouse renovation:

Probate Clerk's Office; Seventh Circuit Court (Judge Randy Kennedy), Eighth Circuit Court (Judge Carol Soloman), Jury Assembly Room and Trial Court Administrator's Office.

All judicial operations currently located at 601 Mainstream Drive will be relocated, including the Criminal Courts, which will move to the new A. A. Birch Building.

Circuit operations, including courts and clerk's office, will remain at 523 Mainstream Drive until the return move to the courthouse.



PHOTOS BY MARGARET LAROBARDIERE

Attorneys Warren Smith (left) and Jim Tomkins with hallway-lined paintings commissioned from attorney/artist John Cannon.



JOHN CANNON

Attorney's Love for Painting Rekindled Cannon Takes Up Brush To Brighten Law Offices

When John Cannon decided to pursue a career in law in 1975, he reluctantly abandoned his love for painting and an ambition for making it a professional career.

Putting his brush and palette aside, he attended law school and went on to build a successful law practice. His good fortune eventually enabled him to resume his first love and now he has renewed hopes of making painting a second professional career.

Those hopes got a boost recently when two fellow Nashville attorneys, Warren Smith and Jim Tomkins, commissioned Cannon to produce paintings to brighten what they considered drab areas of their office in the Washington Square Building.

The two partners decided the hallway and conference room needed art landscapes to give a feel of the outdoors and nature to their office space. After seeing Cannon's work in the Status Conference Room of the Metro Courthouse, they invited him to present preliminary ideas of Tuscan landscapes. They liked what they saw.

The result was a large piece on an evening sunlit road, winding through Tuscany to a villa tucked away among Mediterranean pines. The 44x60 inch piece found its way to the conference room while four smaller works of like quality were placed in the hallway for visitors to enjoy.

"We are really excited about those works of art," said Tomkins. "Not only are they beautiful and really add a tremendous amount of character to our office, but we have the distinction of having original, commissioned pieces from a talented artist who also happens to be an excellent lawyer."

As for Cannon? He says he would like to see his work hanging in law offices around the area.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Traffic Violations

- 3 Bethany Hulan
- 5 Wanda Clymer
- 7 Denise Beverly
- 9 Hayden Guest
- 24 Lisa Jones

Warrant Office

- 12 Roy Bohannon

BIRTHSTONE:
AQUAMARINE

Probate Clerk

- 21 Kyle Sowell
- 24 Tommy King

Circuit Court Clerk

- 12 Cyndi Snuggs
- 17 Deanna Alexander
- 20 Barbara Hinch
- 30 Suzanne Wheeler

General Sessions Civil

None

JANUARY JURY TRIALS

APPEALS

Week of January 9

CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
02C-726	AUTO ACCIDENT	1		\$65,000			
05C-3171	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	2		DEFENDANT		DEFENDANT	PLAINTIFF

GENERAL SESSIONS

Week of January 23

CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-2334	AUTO ACCIDENT	1		\$151,500			
05C-2627*	GSA/PROPERTY	2		\$1,700		P-\$2,000	DEFENDANT
04C-836	FRAUD CONVERSION	3		DIRECTED			
04C-3131	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	6		\$7,300		P-\$7,000	DEFENDANT

GENERAL SESSIONS

*--WENT NON-JURY

Week of January 30

CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-1640	AUTO ACCIDENT	6		\$181,260	D-90/P-10		
05C-1987*	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	3		PENDING		P-\$4,300	DEFENDANT

GENERAL SESSIONS

*--WENT NON-JURY

Soft Tissue Auto Cases

CASE	PRAYER	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	GENERAL SESSIONS	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-1135	\$150,000	3	PENDING				
04C-2127	\$150,000	2	\$30,000				
05C-988		5	\$4,160	D-60/P-40			
03C-2397	\$150,000	1	\$20,000				
03C-2577		3	\$9,263	D1-100			
04C-1639	\$110,000	2	NO AWARD				

NON-JURY TRIAL RESULTS

APPEALS

Week of January 17

CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-1120	WORKERS COMP	6	ADVISEMENT			
05C-1411	WORKERS COMP	1	\$70,000 TTD			
05C-1427	GSA/CONTRACT	2	DEFENDANT		DISMISSED	PLAINTIFF
05C-184	DAMAGES	5	\$105,000			
05C-3505	CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS	5	GRANTED			
05C-3175	GSA/CONTRACT	7	DISMISSED		P-\$866	DEFENDANT
05C-2743	WRIT/CERT&SUPER.	6	DISMISSED			
03C-2962	AUTO SUBROGATION	5	\$16,600			
04C-3084	WRIT/CERT&SUPER.	1	PERMIT REINSTATED			

GENERAL SESSIONS

P	PLAINTIFF	GSA	GENERAL SESSIONS APPEAL	TPD	TOTAL PARTIAL DISABILITY
D	DEFENDANT	TTD	TOTAL TEMPORARY DISABILITY	ST	SOFT TISSUE

CASE ANALYSES

GENRE	JANUARY	YTD
AUTO ACCIDENTS	13	13
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	10	10
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
•NONE	2	2
CONTRACTS	2	2
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	0	0
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
•NONE	1	1
TOTAL AWARDS	0	0
MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	0	0
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	---	---
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	---	---
MISCELLANEOUS	8	8
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	6	6
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
•NONE	1	1

Auto Accident Cases

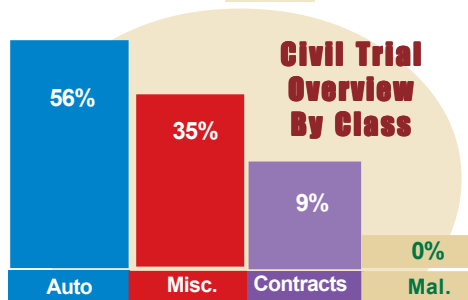
	JANUARY	YTD
JURY TRIALS	12	12
NON-JURY TRIALS	1	1
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	10	10
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
NONE	2	2
HIGHEST JUDGMENT	\$182,260	
AVERAGE JUDGMENT	\$4,160	

Soft Tissue Auto Cases

	JANUARY	YTD
JURY TRIALS	5	5
NON-JURY TRIALS	1	1
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	5	5
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	0
PENDING	1	1
HIGHEST JUDGMENT	\$30,000	
AVERAGE JUDGMENT	\$11,141	

General Sessions Auto Appeals

	JANUARY	YTD
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	1	1
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
NONE	1	1



DATA BANK

Statistics compiled for the month of January

CASE INFORMATION

Circuit Court

NEW CIVIL CASES FILED	169
JURY	75
NON-JURY	94
CIVIL CASES CONCLUDED	292
JURY	163
NON-JURY	129
NEW DIVORCE CASES FILED	69
DIVORCE CASES CONCLUDED	194
DOMESTIC PETITIONS FILED	349
DOMESTIC PETITIONS CONCLUDED	251

General Sessions Civil

NEW CASES FILED	3,326
EXECUTIONS ISSUED	2,450
GARNISHMENT PAYMENTS	3,932
JUDGMENTS COLLECTED	\$632,945
ORDER OF PROTECTION PETITIONS	230

Probate Court

NEW CASES FILED	155
CASES CLOSED	170

Traffic Violations

MOVING CITATIONS	31,782
PARKING VIOLATIONS	5,363
TOTAL FINES COLLECTED	\$574,255
NULLIFICATIONS	4,481
NULLIFICATION FEES COLLECTED	\$53,762

Ruben's Bench Service Honored

(From Page 1)

spend the holiday with their families. Until Judge Dan Eisenstein won election to the bench last year, Ruben was the only Jewish member of the 11-member court. His Santa Claus tradition has endured for 36 years.

Ruben's knowledge of the Metro Charter has made him a go-to judge for answers to questions on local law issues. Fellow judges have relied on his leadership by electing him presiding judge four times.

Following the formal ceremony, the guests adjourned to another courtroom where food prepared by Ruben's court officer Forrest Garrett and other court personnel was served. Among the choices was, you guessed it, Ruben sandwiches.

Rooker Report

Published by the Davidson County Circuit Court Clerk's Office
523 Mainstream Drive, Nashville, TN 37228

Internet @ www.nashville.gov/circuit

Established by George L. Rooker (1929-1993)

(Circuit Court Clerk, 1968-1993)

Richard R. Rooker.....Circuit Court Clerk
Gene Baker.....Editor



ADA Coordinator, Margaret Larobardiere (862-5204)