

# Rooker Report

August 2006

Published by the Davidson County Circuit Court Clerk's Office

Vol.14, No. 7

## NEW COURT

With three judges announcing their retirement this year, there was a mad scramble for their vacant seats. Both men and women tossed their hats into the ring for two General Sessions Court seats and one Circuit Court opening.

When the smoke had cleared, women had swept to victory in all three races, creating the strongest female presence ever for the local judiciary.

Amanda McClendon, a South Nashville attorney and a member of the Metro Council, emerged victorious as the replacement for retiring Circuit Court Judge Marietta Shipley.

At the same time, two General Sessions seats vacated by the retirements of veteran judges William Faimon and John Brown were wrested by former prosecutor Angie Blackshear Dalton and private attorney Dianne Turner, bringing to four and doubling the number of female jurists on that 11-member tribunal.

Dalton, whose legal background includes six years as an assistant district attorney general, becomes judge of the court's Division III, a seat held by Faimon since 1982.

Perseverance paid off for Turner, who had previously sought a judgeship. This time, voters rewarded her history of serving as a substitute judge by electing her to replace Brown, who presided over Division V for 24 years.

## Dumas Assumes Role Of Presiding Judge

As General Sessions Judge Gloria Dumas begins her second eight-year term, she takes with her a new leadership role--that of overseeing internal business affairs of the multifaceted court.

Dumas was chosen by her 10 fellow judges to be presiding judge during the court's first year of operations at its new permanent location where new concepts are being tested in the name of improved efficiency.

Dumas sees her role as "keeping the train on the tracks" and ensuring smooth adaptation to the new environment.

Saying she was "honored" to be selected by her fellow judges to manage the court's business functions, Dumas emphasized that no dramatic changes were in the offing for the court. "We might need to make some minor tweaks in the way we conduct our dockets," she said, adding in the same breath that she could foresee no need for more speciality courts at this point. In recent years, the court has established specific dockets for mental health, environmental codes and drug treatment.

Dumas applauded the achievements of her predecessor, Judge Casey Moreland, who was instrumental in bringing about positive advancements in

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GLORIA DUMAS

## New Faces Join Judicial Lineup



ANGIE BLACKSHEAR DALTON  
GENERAL SESSIONS DIV. III



AMANDA MCCLENDON  
SECOND CIRCUIT COURT

For Angie Blackshear Dalton, success came in her first attempt at becoming a judge. But she spent years of polishing her credentials by pursuing justice for victims of domestic abuse.

During six years of service with the District Attorney General's Office, the married mother of one became a fearless advocate for battered and abused women, children and elders.

Her tenaciousness in prosecuting such cases earned her respect from both sides of the bar.

Dalton gravitated to domestic violence prosecution after spending two years across the table from juvenile offenders and arguing thousands of cases in General Sessions Court. Her decision to seek a judgeship came in 2005 when she learned that

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Amanda McClendon is a longtime community leader, having served on the Metro Council for two terms and bringing major improvements to South Nashville.

Her work in those areas gained her favor with voters, who chose her for an eight-year term as judge of the Second Circuit Court, replacing the retiring Judge Marietta Shipley.

A 1980 graduate of Vanderbilt University where she earned a double major in economics and history, McClendon went on to earn her law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law in 1984. While there, she received the American Jurisprudence Award for academic excellence. Following law school, she opened a small law office in South Nashville that evolved

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## Circuit, Probate Fax Numbers

Even though the fax filing numbers for the Circuit Court and Probate Court Clerk's offices changed some time ago, some people continue to mistakenly use the old numbers.

To bring everyone up to date, below are the numbers to be used for fax filing through those two offices. The numbers are for fax "filing" only.

CIRCUIT COURT CLERK ..... 296-4501  
PROBATE CLERK ..... 296-4502

## CHEERS...

Circuit Court Clerk **Richard Rooker** and staff join the legal community in saluting the many years of service by Second Circuit Court Judge **Marietta Shipley** and General Sessions Judges **William Faimon** and **John Brown**, all of whom retired this year. The three judges were honored in separate ceremonies by colleagues, family and friends as they ended their terms this month.

Judge Shipley served the Circuit Court with dignity for two eight-year terms beginning in 1990 and now will enter into a private practice focused on mediation. At a reception in her honor, her portrait was unveiled and will be on permanent display inside the Second Circuit courtroom.

Both Faimon and Brown devoted 24 years to the General Sessions bench. Their length of service was surmounted only by Judges **William Higgins** and **Leon Ruben**, who continue to serve.

In addition to our expression of thanks to the three judges, we salute their supporting personnel, each of whom will be transferring to other positions or, in some cases, themselves retiring.

We recognize **Lisa Smith, Ronnell Griffin and Patty Stranch** for their service to Judge Shipley. A fond farewell to longtime court officers **Opie Sory** and **Chic Donaldson**, both retiring along with Faimon, and to veteran court officers **Carol Crews** and **Tony Carroll** for their many years of loyal service to Judge Brown.

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We wish a speedy recovery for **Anita Carter**, information booth deputy clerk, who recently underwent hip replacement surgery. Anita is employed by the General Sessions Civil Division Office and is assigned to assist the general public in the main lobby of the Justice A.A. Birch Building.

## ...TEARS

**JAMES I. VANCE BERRY, 80**, prominent Nashville attorney with the law firm of Boulton, Cummings, Connors & Berry, passed away on August 8. He practiced with the firm for 56 years following his law studies at Yale University, University of Virginia Law School and Vanderbilt Law School. His main area of expertise was real estate law, but he also was active in the areas of general corporate and the administration and planning of estate matters. He was recently honored by a joint session of the Tennessee Legislature for meritorious service to the citizens of Tennessee.

**MURRAY NORRIS JENKINS, 71**, a Nashville attorney and active Shriner, passed away on August 7. His memberships included the Nashville Bar Association and the Al Menah Shrine Temple, Scottish Rite Lodge. He leaves two daughters and three grandchildren.

**JOHN REYNOLDS HUBBARD, 91**, uncle of Public Information Director Margaret Larobardiere, passed away on Aug. 13.

**LUCILLE BRENT**, a former bookkeeper with the Circuit Court Clerk's Office, passed away on August 15 at the Jackson Park Christian Home. Mrs. Brent was employed by the clerk's office from June 10, 1966 to June 30, 1986.

**SALLY ANN OLIVER, 71**, sister of Sixth Circuit Court Judge Thomas Brothers, passed away on August 9 in West Memphis where she resided.

**RAYMOND GUEST, 60**, father of Traffic Violations Bureau Deputy Clerk Hayden Guest, succumbed to a heart attack on July 28. Services were held in San Diego, California where he resided.

### Post Judgment Fee Question Clarified

The State Attorney General issued an opinion on August 1 stating that the standard post judgment fee contained in T.C.A. 8-21-401 applies to all motions and occurrences after a judgment is properly entered and that the statute does not distinguish between plaintiff and defendant filings.

For those wishing to refer to the opinion, it is number 06-121.

## ANGIE DALTON

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two of the General Sessions judges would not be seeking reelection. "I had known for a long time this was what I wanted to do," she said. "What better time than the present?"

She resigned her position as an assistant district attorney and turned her energies toward conducting a serious campaign. "I focused strictly on campaigning at that time," she said, adding that she received unshakable support from her family.

Following her victory in a crowded race to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of veteran judge William Faimon, she was complimentary of her opponents, whom she described as being "great and supportive."

"I have a great deal of respect for the law and those who come before the court," she stressed. "I want to make sure all of them are treated with respect. My goal is to bring fairness and justice to the bench."

Dalton earned her law degree from the University of Toledo (Ohio) in 1997, four years after serving as student body president at Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee where she received her bachelor's degree.

Her first job in a legal capacity was with the law office of Jones & Shockley. From there, she joined the staff of Supreme Court Justice A. A. Birch where she performed legal research for cases pending before the high court.

She is married to Derrick Dalton, an employee of the Tennessee Municipal League. The couple have one son, Ryan.

## MCCLENDON

(From Page 1)

into a thriving 23-year-old private practice.

While serving on the Metro Council as chair person of a number of committees, she realized her proudest accomplishment when she acquired \$1.6 million in federal and state funds to implement the Nolensville Road Streetscape project. "Our district had never been the recipient of such a large sum of money," she noted.

McClendon's leadership qualities were recognized early in life. During her junior high school days, she won awards for excellence in marching band and chorus and was co-editor of the Rosepark school newspaper. Her leadership abilities continued to be recognized in high school where she was elected class president in both her junior and senior years--complemented by a number of awards of academic excellence.

A year before passing the Tennessee Bar, she was a recipient of the American Jurisprudence Award for excellence in the study of Decedent's Estates.

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

### BIRTHSTONE: SAPPHIRE

**Circuit Court Clerk**  
3 Annecia Donigan  
19 Rob Rutherford

**Traffic Violations**  
11 Bill Cartwright  
20 Nancy Capps  
22 Elaine Howell  
24 Amanda Overstreet  
27 Leslie Preston  
27 Don Rosso

**General Sessions Civil**  
5 Anita Carter  
21 Stephanie Phillips

**Traffic Warrants**  
7 Stephen Leary  
9 Joey Torrence  
21 Tony Eden

**Probate Clerk**  
18 Ricky Deatherage  
18 Bob Bradshaw

## JULY JURY TRIALS

### APPEALS

#### GENERAL SESSIONS

#### Week of July 17

#### CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
03C-2804	SEXUAL HARASSMENT	1		\$100,100			

#### Week of July 24

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
05C-1781	AUTO ACCIDENT	1		P-No Award			

## NON-JURY TRIAL RESULTS

### APPEALS

#### GENERAL SESSIONS

#### Week of July 10

#### CIRCUIT COURT

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
05C-3832	GSA/CONTRACT	1	\$7,274		P-\$6,954	DEFENDANT
06C-849	GSA/TRAFFIC	5	P-\$50+Costs		PLAINTIFF	DEFENDANT
05C-3912	GSA/CONTRACT	6	\$5,500		P-\$1,000	DEFENDANT
06C-210	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	6	\$9,307		P-\$15,000	DEFENDANT

#### Week of July 31

#### CIRCUIT COURT

#### GENERAL SESSIONS

CASE	TYPE	COURT	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-2616	PERSONAL INJURY	1	DISMISSED			
02C-2251	WORKERS COMPENSATION	5	UNDER ADVISEMENT			
05C-3357	BEER PERMIT	6	LICENSE REVOKED			
05C-3833	GSA/PERSONAL PROPERTY	6	DISMISSED		DISMISSED	DEFENDANT
03C-2190	ASSAULT	1	\$5,000			
05C-3092	REAL ESTATE	6	SALE GRANTED			
06C-804	GSA/DETAINDER	1	AFFIRMED		P-\$2,836	DEFENDANT
06C-618	GSA/BREACH-CONTRACT	1	\$3,000		P-\$11,000	DEFENDANT
06C-876	GSA/DETAINDER	1	DEFENDANT		P-\$1,356	DEFENDANT
06C-933	GSA/DETAINDER	1	P-POSSESSION		P-POSSESSION	DEFENDANT
06C-930	GSA/CONTRACT	6	DISMISSED		DISMISSED	DEFENDANT

## Legal Secretaries View CaseLink

Speaking before the Nashville Chapter of the National Association of Legal Secretaries (NALS) a year ago, Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker mentioned the advantages of CaseLink, the electronic service that allows subscribers to access case files through computer hookup.

The concept struck a responsive chord from the chapter members, who asked Rooker to return this year with a complete presentation of the service.

At the chapter's July gathering at the Nashville City Club, Rooker and Public Information Director Margaret Larobardiere accommodated the group's request with a powerpoint presentation explaining all aspects of the service, which allows subscribers to check circuit, probate and general sessions files without leaving their offices.

While the service has been available for several years, recent technological advances have taken it to a higher level of efficiency through internet connection and electronic accounting--factors that have resulted in lower subscriber costs.

Our thanks to Chapter President Penny Denton of the firm Waller, Lansden, Dortch & Davis for inviting us to make the group presentation.

## Dumas: Some Tweaking Likely As Court Adapts to New Venue

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several areas during his three years as presiding judge. (Note: Moreland's accomplishments will be featured in our September issue.)

One of the changes instituted by the court in conjunction with the move to the Justice A. A. Birch Building was the consolidation of civil dockets from three to two per day. Dumas said a new law increasing the court's monetary jurisdictional limit from \$15,000 to \$25,000 could swell the number of claims and necessitate reinstatement of the third docket. The new limit goes into effect on Sept. 1. "We will monitor that situation and make a collective decision at the proper time," she said.

Dumas received her law degree from Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham in 1987 after first attending Vanderbilt University School of Law and Middle Tennessee State University where she earned her bachelor's degree in 1984. In private practice, she concentrated on domestic and criminal law and won election to the General Sessions Court's Division IV in 1998.

### CASE ANALYSES

GENRE	JULY	YTD
<b>AUTO ACCIDENTS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>32</b>
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	1	19
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	9
•NONE	0	4
<b>CONTRACTS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	3	13
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	3
•NONE	0	2
TOTAL AWARDS	\$15,774	\$111,072
<b>MEDICAL MALPRACTICE</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	0	0
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	1
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46</b>
•PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	7	29
•DEFENDANT VERDICTS	3	8
•NONE	1	9

### Auto Accident Cases

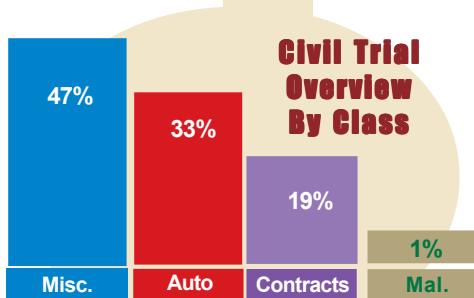
	JULY	YTD
JURY TRIALS	1	20
NON-JURY TRIALS	1	12
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	2	20
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	8
NONE	0	4
HIGHEST JUDGMENT	\$9,307	N/A
AVERAGE JUDGMENT	N/A	N/A

### Soft Tissue Auto Cases

	JULY	YTD
JURY TRIALS	0	8
NON-JURY TRIALS	0	1
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	0	6
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	2
PENDING	0	2
HIGHEST JUDGMENT	N/A	
AVERAGE JUDGMENT	N/A	

### General Sessions Auto Appeals

	JULY	YTD
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	1	4
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	2
NONE	0	2



## DATA BANK

Statistics compiled for the month of July

### CASE INFORMATION

#### Circuit Court

NEW CIVIL CASES FILED .....	242
JURY .....	104
NON-JURY .....	138
CIVIL CASES CONCLUDED .....	249
JURY .....	120
NON-JURY .....	129
NEW DIVORCE CASES FILED .....	81
DIVORCE CASES CONCLUDED .....	116
DOMESTIC PETITIONS FILED .....	323
DOMESTIC PETITIONS CONCLUDED .....	343

#### General Sessions Civil

NEW CASES FILED .....	3,835
EXECUTIONS ISSUED .....	2,508
GARNISHMENT PAYMENTS .....	3,150
JUDGMENTS COLLECTED .....	\$623,040
ORDER OF PROTECTION PETITIONS .....	231

#### Probate Court

NEW CASES FILED .....	173
CASES CLOSED .....	159

#### Traffic Violations

MOVING CITATIONS .....	24,196
PARKING VIOLATIONS .....	3,940
TOTAL FINES COLLECTED .....	\$465,559
NULLIFICATIONS .....	4,086
NULLIFICATION FEES COLLECTED .....	\$49,031

## Rooker Report

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

Internet @ [www.nashville.gov/circuit](http://www.nashville.gov/circuit)

Established by George L. Rooker (1929-1993)

(Circuit Court Clerk, 1968-1993)

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