

Rooker Report

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Venerable Traffic Warrant Officer Ray Fuller Will Retire This Month

After almost 28 years of service to the Traffic Warrant Office, veteran Ray Fuller will take a road less traveled on June 27.

Fuller, well known for his contributions to state high school athletics, will retire on that date and will be honored with a reception that will be open to the public.

The reception will be held in the Jury Assembly Room of the Justice A. A. Birch Building, starting at 10 a.m.

Fuller's career as a traffic warrant officer began on Oct. 1, 1980 at the height of a legendary journey as a high school sports official. He would later be inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame while surpassing the 50-year mark as an official in several different prep sports, making him the dean of Tennessee officials. His latest tribute came just two years ago when he was honored by the Middle Tennessee Chapter of The National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame.

As a public service employee, Fuller spent his entire career with the Traffic Violations Bureau's Warrant Office. He admits that his retirement will be a bittersweet pill to swallow. But there are a number of motivating factors in his decision to leave his day job. Age is not one of them.

At 84, Fuller has the agility of a much younger man. His attendance record is near flawless and, believe it or not, he still referees girls softball and junior high football games. It goes without saying that he is the oldest active official in the state.

The main source of his concern, however, is his wife of 62 years, Anita, who suffers from Alzheimer's and requires constant care. "I need to spend more time with her and see that she is well taken care of," he said.

The two have been inseparable since meeting at a YWCA dance shortly after Fuller's release from the Army in 1946. She was Anita Murray at the time. "I wouldn't say it was love at first sight," Fuller smiled. "We dated about eight months before deciding to get married." It was a perfect union that produced two sons, a daughter and one grandchild.

Fuller is a native Nashvillian, born in 1924



PHOTO BY MARGARET LAROBARDIERE

Fuller, at his work station in Traffic Warrant Office, shows off photograph of himself with Gen. Dwight Eisenhower addressing troops on Normandy Invasion

to Edwin Ray Fuller Sr. and Josie May Fuller. His father owned a grocery store in the downtown area where the family resided. When Fuller graduated from Hume-Fogg High School in 1943, he was immediately drafted and sent to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia for what would be a 2.5 year tour of duty.

While serving with the 13th Field Artillery Observation Battalion in the European Theater, his unit received a visit from Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, who addressed the troops prior to the famous World War II D-Day invasion of Normandy. Fuller was among the troops photographed with Eisenhower during that occasion. He proudly displays a replica of the photograph inside his work area in the warrant office.

Upon his discharge from the Army, Fuller put his athletic talents to work. A standout base-

ball player in school, he signed on with the old Kitty League and played third base for the Clarksville Owls. But his pro ball days were short lived. He had become a married man now with financial responsibilities. He needed a regular job.

For the next three years, Fuller would support his family from the income he received as a clerk for American Radiator Standard. A better job opportunity presented itself in 1949 when Fuller was hired by Nashville Electric Service where he would spend the next 31 years. He worked his way up to supervisor of meter readers before taking his pension.

Along the way, Fuller would satisfy his desire for athletic competition by playing semi-pro

Cheers...

Wedding bells will soon be ringing for two deputy clerks in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

Karen Mallory and **Kristen Meulpolder** became engaged just weeks apart with their significant others picking special occasions to pop the question.

Karen was surprised on her birthday on April 26 when beau **Billy O'Byrne** chose a dinner occasion to ask her daughter's permission to marry her mother. Both said yes, culminating a reunion of the two childhood sweethearts just a year and a half earlier.

Billy is an employee of the Buford Lewis Company. No wedding date has been set.

Kristen's proposal came on her four-year anniversary with **Tim Morman**, a member of the Vanderbilt Life-Flight team, who had arranged a private art viewing at the Gallery of Andy Anh Ha in the Arcade Building downtown.

While standing in front of Kristen's favorite painting, Tim dropped to his knee and proposed. "The painting is now hanging in my living room as my engagement present," she said.

The couple plans to have their wedding in Las Vegas sometime in the future to accommodate each one's family, who reside in Ohio and California.

Congratulations to **Faith Peach** of the Traffic Violations Bureau upon becoming a grandmother for the second time.

The event took place on April 18 when daughter **Kristina Conyer** gave birth to **Landon John Conyer**, much to the delight of father **John Conyer**. The newborn weighed 8 pounds, 6 ounces and measured 20.5 inches. The Conyers reside in Gallatin.

Court of Criminal Appeals Judge **David G. Hayes** will retire on June 30 to become the state's fifth senior judge, joining Nashville's retired Fifth Circuit Court Judge **Walter Kurtz**, who was given status earlier this year.

Hayes, 64, has served on the appellate court since 1994. His announcement follows the recent decision by State Supreme Court Justice **William**

...Tears

Barker to retire in September after 25 years on the high court bench.

RICHARD 'SHAKEY' VESTER, 77, a former supervisor of the Traffic Violations Bureau Warrant Office, passed away on April 26. Mr. Vester, who was best known as "Shakey," the name of his clown character for the Al-Menah Shrine Temple, had been retired for the past 12 years. His wife Ruth Vester survives.

HENRY D. HONEY, 90, grandfather of Chief Probate Clerk Kyle Sowell, succumbed on April 23 in his home town of Fayetteville from heart complications.

ANNA MARGARET BOLIJACK, 69, sister of Traffic Warrant Officer Roy Bohannon, passed away on May 7 in Indianapolis where she resided.

JOHN DAVID SCOBAY, 85, who served as Nashville's Vice Mayor or under four mayors following an outstanding career in athletics, passed away on May 11. His term as Vice Mayor spanned 24 years, ending in 1995 when he returned to his private accounting business. Described as a "mover and a shaker" in every respect, he was a member of the TSSAA Sports Hall of Fame for his contribution as an official in both basketball and football.

RENA UPTON, 68, a devoted Metro employee for 36 years before her retirement from the Criminal Court Clerk's Office in January of last year, passed away on May 3 following an extended illness.

EMILY GONZALEZ, infant granddaughter of Monica England of the Traffic Violations Bureau, passed away on May 17 after becoming ill while visiting relatives with her mother in Savannah, Georgia.

BILL WEATHERFORD, 48, step-brother of Fifth Circuit Court Deputy Clerk Kelli Olin, passed away in Smyrna earlier this month. He was the son of former Lawrence County Circuit Court Judge James Weatherford, a retired senior judge from Lawrenceburg.

TONYA LENA LASSITER, 44, step-daughter of Joanie Young, a deputy clerk in the Traffic Violations Bureau, passed away early this month following a long illness. She was a resident of Greenbrier.

SARAH EDEN, aunt of Tony Eden of the Traffic Violations Bureau, passed away on May 23.

Reception to Honor Retiring Warrant Officer Ray Fuller

(From Page 1)

basketball on an independent team whose roster included the late Circuit Court Clerk George L. Rooker. The two became friends both on and off the court--mostly on the hardwood as basketball officials.

When Fuller became bored with retirement life after NES, the late clerk offered him a job in the traffic warrant office. It would be Fuller's last working career assignment, but certainly not his last as an official.

It seems only appropriate that his last boss would be the son of the man who hired him and that he, too, would be a sports official. Richard Rooker serves as a football official for the Southeastern Conference.

"I truly appreciate Mr. Fuller's dedicated service throughout the years," Rooker said. "He has been dependable and his positive attitude and pleasant disposition have carried over to his fellow workers. I wish him the very best in the retirement years he so richly deserves."

On the playing field, Fuller is seen in zebra stripes, distinguishing him as an official. In the warrant office, he is just as distinguishable by the full assemblage of an officer's uniform, replete with starched white shirt and official gold badge. It is not required attire for warrant officers because they no longer work in the field since service of process was placed under

the sheriff's department a few years ago, but Fuller says he is a creature of habit. "I would feel out of place by not wearing the uniform after 28 years," he said.

Indeed, the uniform adds an air of authority to the distinguished six-foot-one gentleman with snow-white hair, who remembers the early days when warrant officers actually were required to go out and collect fines from traffic violators. With the sheriff's department now handling those duties, Fuller and fellow warrant officers now perform their duties on computers and telephones.

High school sports enthusiasts reading this story probably need the photograph to identify Fuller. The name "Ray" would not ring a bell. For in that circle of his illustrious career, he is known only by "Hoss," a nickname given to him by his father when he was a child.

"A couple of guys were discussing high school officiating the other day," Fuller recalled. "One of them asked the other if he knew Ray Fuller. The guy scratched his head and said, 'No. I know a Hoss Fuller.'"

For everything he has accomplished, he deserves to be called "Mister Fuller."

April Trial Verdicts

Jury

CIRCUIT COURT

Week of March 31

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
06C-900	MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	2		*DEFENDANT			
*--DIRECTED VERDICT							

Week of April 7

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
04C-3176	ASSAULT	5		\$22,000			
07C-2418	GSA/AUTO ACCIDENT	6		DEFENDANT		DEFENDANT	PLAINTIFF
07C-3116	DETAINER	3		AFFIRMED		P-POSSESSION	DEFENDANT

Week of April 28

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
05C-3207	MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	5		PENDING			

Soft Tissue

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
05C-909	AUTO ACCIDENT/ST	1		\$24,913	D-51/P-49		
05C-3259	AUTO ACCIDENT/ST	1		\$45,000			

Non-Jury

CIRCUIT COURT

Week of April 14

CASE	TYPE	COURT	PRAYER	VERDICT	PCT. FAULT	JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
05C-3231	WORKERS COMPENSATION	1		\$41,253			
04C-3082	WORKERS COMPENSATION	6		DEFENDANT			
07C-3450	GSA/CONTRACT	5		DEFENDANT		DISMISSED	PLAINTIFF

Appeals

GENERAL SESSIONS

Balletto Completes Certification Program



GLENN BALLETO

Glenn Balletto, chief deputy clerk of the Circuit Court Clerk's Office, has earned certification as a public administrator.

Balletto received his certificate in graduation ceremonies at Montgomery Bell State Park on April 25 following completion of a 115-hour course administered by the University of Tennessee's County Official Training Program.

He becomes the eighth member of Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker's current staff to complete the program, which fosters creative leadership, managerial effectiveness, professional skills enhancement and lifelong development.

Rooker himself is among those completing the program, along with Karen

Brown (Chief Deputy Clerk of the General Sessions Civil Division), Bill Cartwright (Chief Deputy Clerk of the Traffic Violations Bureau), Tracy Cartwright (Rooker's Director of Operations), Becky Dye (Internal Auditor), Margaret Larobardi (Public Information Director) and Steve Rose (Traffic Warrant Office Supervisor.)

Those completing the course must take an additional 16 hours of training per year to retain their certification.

Balletto joined the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in 2001 and has served as chief deputy for the past three years.

Civil Trial Recap By Class



Miscellaneous52%
 Auto26%
 Contracts.....18%
 Medical Malpractice.....4%



DATA BANK

April 2008

Case Information

Circuit Court

New Civil Cases Filed.....	211
Jury.....	99
Non-Jury.....	112
Civil Cases Concluded.....	207
Jury.....	126
Non-Jury.....	81
New Divorce Cases Filed.....	185
Divorce Cases Concluded.....	220
Domestic Petitions Filed.....	283
Domestic Petitions Concluded.....	428

General Sessions Civil

New Cases Filed.....	4,425
Executions Issued.....	4,242
Garnishment Payments.....	4,523
Judgments Collected.....	\$899,303
Orders of Protection Petitions.....	153

Probate Court

New Cases Filed.....	189
Cases Closed.....	146

Traffic Violations

Moving Citations.....	13,199
Total Violations.....	19,476
Parking Violations.....	7,039
Total Fines Collected.....	\$569,020
Nullifications.....	2,634
Nullification Fees Collected.....	\$31,612
Environmental Citations.....	618
*Credit Card Payments.....	3,855

*--Online and phone payments combined

Postal Rate Correction

The new rate for sending certified mail through the General Sessions Civil Division Office was incorrectly reported as \$9.63 in last month's issue.

The correct amount is \$9.62. We apologize for the error and duly acknowledge that a penny saved is a penny earned.

Case Analyses

GENRE	APRIL	YTD
AUTO ACCIDENTS	4	13
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	3	11
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	2
NONE	0	0
CONTRACTS	1	9
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	0	5
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	4
NONE	0	0
TOTAL AWARDS	NONE	\$94,384
MEDICAL MALPRACTICE	2	2
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	0	0
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
PENDING	1	1
MISCELLANEOUS	5	26
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	3	18
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	2	7
NONE	0	1

Auto Accident Cases

	APRIL	
JURY TRIALS	4	11
NON-JURY TRIALS	0	2
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	3	11
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	2
NONE	0	0
HIGHEST JUDGMENT	\$66,000	\$66,000
AVERAGE JUDGMENT	\$45,000	N/A

Soft Tissue Auto Cases

	APRIL	
JURY TRIALS	2	6
NON-JURY TRIALS	0	0
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	2	6
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	0	0

General Sessions Auto Appeals

	APRIL	YTD
PLAINTIFF VERDICTS	1	5
DEFENDANT VERDICTS	1	1
NONE	0	0

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 Circuit Court Clerk's Office

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If you have a disability and require assistance, please contact 862-5204