



ROOKER MARCH 2013 REPORT

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

You must be the
change you wish to
see in the world.

—Gandhi



SOWELL NAMED NEW CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK IN GENERAL SESSIONS CIVIL DIVISION

Upon the retirement of Karen Brown as Chief Deputy Clerk in the General Sessions Civil Division at the end of February (see last month's issue), Circuit Court Clerk Richard Rooker has named Kyle Sowell as her replacement effective March 1st. Sowell, a 1992 graduate of the University of Tennessee College of Law, joined the Circuit Court Clerk's office in February 2002 and served for several years as Chief Clerk in the Probate Division. In the fall of 2008, he was named Public Information Director for the collective offices of the Circuit Court Clerk and served in that capacity until recently being tapped for the General Sessions position. Prior to joining the clerk's office, Sowell was engaged in the private practice of law primarily as a civil trial lawyer, including a stint as defense counsel for Allstate Insurance. He also served several years as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Tennessee handling civil rights cases in federal court. Prior to attending law school, Sowell worked in Washington D.C. as a legislative aide for former Tennessee U.S. Senator Jim Sasser. He is a Nashville native and a graduate of Lipscomb University. "I am grateful for this opportunity, and I am excited to work with our dedicated staff as we continue to carry out our mission to professionally serve the needs of the Courts, the legal community and the citizens who interact with the judicial system at this level," Sowell said.



KYLE SOWELL

CIRCUIT COURT TRIAL VERDICTS MARCH 2013

JURY TRIALS

**IF CASE WAS
APPEALED FROM
GENERAL SESSIONS**

CASE	TYPE	COURT	CIRCUIT JUDGMENT	GEN. SESSIONS JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
Week of March 18					
11C-221	AUTOMOBILE	CHANCERY PART 3 (BY INTERCHANGE)	DEFENDANT (50%/50% FAULT)	N/A	
10C-5051	HEALTH CARE LIABILITY	5	PLAINTIFF (C/S ON 5TH DAY OF TRIAL)	N/A	
12C-1398	CONTRACT	6	PLAINTIFF \$4,989 & DEFT \$7,164	DISMISSED	PLAINTIFF

NON-JURY TRIALS

CASE	TYPE	COURT	CIRCUIT JUDGMENT	GEN. SESSIONS JUDGMENT	APPELLANT
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**THERE WERE NO
NON-JURY DOCKETS
FOR MARCH 2013**

SPECIALLY SET TRIALS (JURY & NON-JURY)

CASE	TYPE	COURT	CIRCUIT JUDGMENT	DATE OF TRIAL	JURY OR NON-JURY
13C-118	TRAFFIC APPEAL	CHANCERY PART 4 (BY INTERCHANGE)	PLAINTIFF (SEATBELT VIOLATION REMAINS VALID)	3-13-13	NON-JURY

**USE CASELINK TO ACCESS MORE DETAILED INFORMATION
ABOUT THESE CASES AND THOUSANDS MORE**

DEPARTMENTS BY THE NUMBER

March 2013

CIRCUIT COURT

	MAR	YTD
New Civil Cases Filed.....	227	647
Jury Demand.....	89	271
Non-Jury.....	138	376
New Divorce Cases Filed	228	636
Domestic Petitions Filed	157	678
New Adoption Petitions	14	37
Civil Cases Concluded.....	191	659
Jury Demand.....	128	434
Non-Jury	63	225
Divorce Cases Concluded	174	582
Domestic Petitions Concluded	229	567

GENERAL SESSIONS CIVIL

	MAR	YTD
Total New Cases Filed	3,133	11,067
Civil Warrants	1,493	5,365
Detainer Warrants	760	2,773
Recovery Warrants.....	16	74
Pet for Order of Protection.....	244	761
Emergency Committals	605	2,050
Other.....	15	44
Executions Issued.....	3,574	11,275
Garnishment Payments.....	4,787	13,624
Judgments Collected.....	\$1,121,268	\$3,136,342

PROBATE COURT

	MAR	YTD
Total New Cases Filed	165	572
Total Cases Closed	153	454
Probate Will	71	269
Probate Will for Muniment of Title.....	8	21
Letters of Administration.....	27	91
Small Estate Affidavits.....	23	92
Conservatorship.....	22	55
Guardianship of Minor	1	5
Name Change	10	24
Trust Matters.....	1	4
Other Miscellaneous	2	11

TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS BUREAU

	MAR	YTD
Total Traffic Violations.....	9,646	29,942
Moving Citations	6,124	19,512
Parking Citations.....	3,522	10,430
Environmental Citations.....	94	394
Total Fines Collected	\$451,772	\$1,333,230
Nullifications.....	822	2,183
Nullification Fees Collected	\$9,864	\$26,194
*Credit Card Payments	4,669	12,470

Pro Bono Legal Clinic Seminar Promotes Methods for New and Existing Clinics

More than 50 lawyers, paralegals, judges, court clerks, and administrative staff of pro bono legal clinics gathered in Nashville recently to discuss strategies for pro bono legal clinics. The Pro Bono Legal Clinic Seminar was sponsored by the Access to Justice Commission with the support of the Tennessee Supreme Court. The event was designed to address issues and questions from those interested in starting a pro bono clinic or those who already operate pro bono clinics. The day-long event provided participants a chance to learn from each other about successful clinic operations and ways to expand or improve their clinic. Legal



service providers were highlighted as a possible and viable partner for beginning a legal clinic. Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Janice M. Holder provided opening remarks and Justice Cornelia A. Clark wrapped up the day with closing remarks encouraging the work of those in attendance. Participants had the opportunity to contribute in small group discussions about issues affecting pro bono clinics, such as whether the clinic will operate in a rural or urban community, how to incorporate technology into clinics to provide help to rural Tennesseans, and how to involve professions other than lawyers in legal clinics.

CIRCUIT COURT TRIALS
BY TYPE OF CASE

**MARCH
2013**



AUTO ACCIDENT

	MAR	YTD
Total Cases Tried	1	6
Plaintiff Verdicts	0	5
Defendant Verdicts	1	1
Other/Under Adv	0	0
Jury Trials	1	6
Non-Jury Trials	0	0
Appeal from G.S.	0	2
Plaintiff Verd.	0	2
Def. Verdict	0	0
Other/None	0	0

CONTRACT

	MAR	YTD
Total Cases Tried	1	8
Plaintiff Verdicts	1	5
Defendant Verdicts	0	3
Other/Under Adv	0	0

HEALTH CARE LIABILITY

	MAR	YTD
Total Cases Tried	1	1
Plaintiff Verdicts	1	1
Defendant Verdicts	0	0
Other/Under Adv/Hung	0	0

MISCELLANEOUS

	MAR	YTD
Total Cases Tried	1	17
Plaintiff Verdicts	1	12
Defendant Verdicts	0	5
Other/Under Adv	0	0

**New Toll-Free Line Offers Free
Legal Information & Referrals**

A coalition of Tennessee legal groups has joined forces to launch a toll-free phone line offering free legal information and referrals to low-income Tennesseans.

The service, known as aLEGALz, will assist Tennesseans in finding resources to deal with civil legal issues. Those who cannot afford a lawyer may call the line at 888-aLEGALz (1-888-253-4259) and leave a message at any time. Calls will be returned by a licensed Tennessee lawyer.

The aLEGALz program is made possible through a grant from International Paper and funding from the Tennessee Commission on Continuing Legal Education and Specialization.

The Access to Justice Commission is facilitating the aLEGALz project. The commission was created by the Supreme Court, which tasked it with developing initiatives to remove barriers to access to justice in the state.

“The Supreme Court considers access to justice for all citizens one of its highest priorities, and we are grateful to those that have made this new service possible,” said Supreme Court Justice Janice M. Holder, who serves as the court’s liaison to the commission.

aLEGALz is the first statewide phone line dedicated to assisting low-income Tennesseans facing legal problems, and is the next step in an ongoing effort to improve access to the legal system for all Tennesseans. The service will complement the existing web-based resource OnlineTN-Justice.org – a joint project of the Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services (TALS) and the Tennessee Bar Association, which allows users to post legal questions and receive answers from volunteer attorneys through a secure online messaging service. Since the service launched in 2011, more than 1,800 Tennesseans have received free legal assistance through the site.



A free legal resource for Tennesseans
1-888-aLEGALz
1-888-253-4259

**ROOKER
REPORT**

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RICHARD R. ROOKER Circuit Court Clerk
KYLE SOWELL Editor



To request an ADA accommodation,
please call Dart Gore at 880-3309

