



Georgia courts Journal

A Publication of the Judicial Council of Georgia

September 2007

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Judicial Council of Georgia

See inside back cover for names of members pictured.

Georgia Courts Journal

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Summer Meetings of Judicial Council

The Judicial Council of Georgia carried out important business during the summer months, meeting June 11 in Jekyll Island, and August 28 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Workload Assessment

Chief Judge Joe C. Bishop, Paulula Judicial Circuit, and Dr. Greg Arnold, AOC Senior Assist. Director for



Judge Bishop, left, listens as Dr. Greg Arnold answers a question regarding the time and motion study.

Research, reported the results of the Workload Assessment Committee's ongoing projects which included new average time to disposition figures for each type of case heard in superior courts.

Although the Council approved the new average time to disposition figures as presented, further action is required by the Judicial Council before their use in the Judgeship Study.

A Seat at the Table

The Council of Municipal Court Judges now has an ex-officio membership on the Judicial Council. Chief Judge



Judge Cielinski (center) of Columbus, listens along with Judge Jim Clarke and Judge Brenda Cole as Council business is discussed

Michael P. Cielinski, who served as president of the municipal court judge's council until recently, took his seat at the June meeting.

Judgeship Recommendations

At it's August meeting, the Council considered recommendations for new superior court judge-



AOC Research staff and Chief Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes (standing) tally votes.

ships. After reviewing case-load

data for the requesting circuits, the Council approved the following requests in order of priority:

1. Alcovy Circuit
2. Northeastern Circuit
3. Atlanta Circuit
4. Flint Circuit
5. Brunswick Circuit
6. Douglas Circuit
7. Piedmont Circuit
8. Mountain Circuit
9. Tifton Circuit
10. Alapaha Circuit
10. Southern Circuit

Cheshire Recognized for Service

Mr. Skip Cheshire, Court Administrator, Cobb Superior Court, was recognized by the Judicial Council for the significant contributions made



Mr. Skip Cheshire, center, with Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears and AOC Director David Ratley at the presentation luncheon.

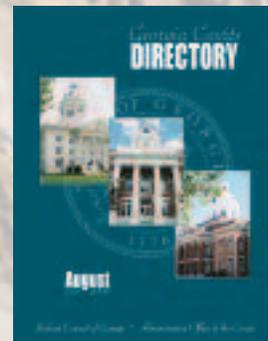
during his 20 years of service to the courts. A Resolution from the group was passed at the August 28 meeting and presented to Mr. Cheshire during a luncheon. Most recently, Mr. Cheshire was president of the National Association of Court Administrators. In attendance were judges of the Cobb Superior Court, friends, and staff.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Judicial Council will be held December 11, 2007, at the Wyndam Vinings Hotel in Atlanta. For more information about the meeting, contact Ms. Terry Cobb at 404-656-5171. ☞

2007-2008 Georgia Courts Directory Now Available!

Your copy should be on your desk by now. Additional copies are \$25. For more information, contact Ashley Stollar at stollara@gaaoc.us ☞



People, Places, & Events

In Memoriam

♣ **Senior Judge A. Blenn Taylor** of St. Simons Island died June 12, 2007. Judge Taylor assumed senior status on January 1, 2001 after 21 years on the bench of the Brunswick Judicial Circuit. He attended Campbell University and Wake Forest University and earned his law degree from John Marshall Law School.

♣ **Judge W. Glenn Thomas** of Jesup died July 9, 2007 as a result of injuries sustained in an assault. Judge Thomas served two terms in the Georgia General Assembly before becoming District Attorney for the Brunswick Judicial Circuit, a post he held for 29 years. After his retirement in 1997, he went into private practice and served as judge of the municipal courts of the cities of Jesup and Screven.

♣ **Senior Judge Ralph H. Hicks** of Atlanta died unexpectedly August 7, 2007. Judge Hicks was appointed in 1978 to the Fulton County Superior Court where he served until 1990.

Judge Hicks graduated from Emory University Law School. He served as president of the Atlanta Bar Association in the 1970s and more recently acted as a mediator and arbitrator.

Appointments

♣ On May 27, 2007, Gov. Sonny Perdue appointed **Mr. Brian K. Fortner** as Solicitor-General of Douglas County following the resignation of **Mr. Gregory R. Barton**.

♣ **Judge Tom Rawlings**, Juvenile Court, Middle Judicial Circuit, has been appointed Georgia's Child Advocate by Gov. Sonny Perdue. Judge Rawlings, a juvenile court judge since October 2000, began his new position on July 1, 2007.



♣ **Judge Lisa C. Jones**, Juvenile Courts, Southwestern Judicial Circuit, was appointed to the Georgia Commission on Child Support by Gov. Sonny Perdue on August 2, 2007.

♣ **The Judicial Nominating Commission** has forwarded short-lists to Gov. Sonny Perdue for newly-created superior court judgeships in the **Cobb, Cordele, Dublin, Enotah, and Gwinnett Judicial Circuits**, as well as state court judgeships in **Clarke and Richmond counties**.

Transitions

♣ **Chief Judge Bryant Culpepper**, Macon Judicial Circuit, has announced his upcoming retirement on October 31, 2007. Judge Culpepper was elected to the bench in 1982 to succeed his father **Senior Judge George Culpepper**; he became chief judge in 2007. He will enter private practice upon his retirement.



♣ **Judge Neal Dickert**, Augusta Judicial Circuit, has announced his retirement on October 31, 2007. Judge Dickert was elected to the bench in 1996 and plans to enter private practice.

♣ DeKalb County State Court Clerk **Kenneth Cheek** retired on June 30, 2007 after serving 29 years with the court. **Ms. Betty Sanders** succeeds Mr. Cheek as state court clerk.

♣ Piedmont Judicial Circuit District Attorney **Timothy G. Madison** has resigned his position. Gov. Sonny Perdue has appointed **Mr. Richard Bridgeman** of Hoschton to fill the vacancy.

♣ Effective August 1, 2007, **Mr. Randy Dennis** was named AOC Associate Director for the Financial Administration Division.

Ms. Jane Martin has been designated Associate Director for the Children, Families, and the Courts Division of the agency.

"Your Guide to the Georgia Courts" Brochure is Available!

Call 404-656-6783 today for copies.

People, Places, & Events cont.

Judicial Center Opening

☛ On June 22, 2007, the **Gregory A. Adams Juvenile Justice Center** in DeKalb County was officially opened in a ceremony led by Justice Robert Benham, Supreme Court of Georgia.



DeKalb County Juvenile Justice Center

Administrative Judges

☛ **Judge Anne Workman**, Stone Mountain Judicial Circuit, has been elected as the Judicial Administrative Judge for the Fourth Judicial Administrative District which includes DeKalb and Rockdale counties.

☛ **Judge Michael Karpf** has been named Administrative Judge for the Eastern Judicial Circuit by Chief Judge Perry Brannen. Judge Karpf will be responsible for overall court operations in the circuit. **Judge Perry Brannen** continues as Chief Judge.

Awards

☛ The National Bar Association, the country's oldest and largest African American bar association honored two members of the Georgia Supreme Court at its 82nd Annual Convention in Atlanta.

On July 31, **Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears** received the *Honorable A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Memorial Award* presented by the Young Lawyers Division.

On August 1, **Justice Robert Benham** was recognized with the *William H. Hastie Award*, the NBA Judicial Council's highest award recognizing legal and judicial scholarship.

☛ Two Cobb Judicial Circuit judges were honored by the State Bar of Georgia at its summer meeting in Ponte Vedra, Florida. **Judge Adele Grubbs** received the *Local Bar Excellence in Bar Leadership Award*, and **Judge George Kreeger** received the *Chief Justice Thomas O. Marshall Professionalism Award*.

☛ **Mr. Pete Skandalakis**, District Attorney of the Coweta Judicial Circuit, was named District Attorney of the Year by the District Attorneys' Association during its Annual Summer Conference on Jekyll Island.

☛ **Mr. Otis Scarbary**, Solicitor-General of Bibb County, was named Solicitor of the Year by the Georgia Association of Solicitor's General during its Annual Summer Conference on Jekyll Island. ☛

Georgia Supreme Court Honors National Mock Trial Champions

The Jonesboro High School Mock Trial Team (at right) was honored Monday, May 21, 2007, by the Supreme Court of Georgia for its national win in Dallas, Texas on May 12.

Moments before the court began oral arguments for the day, Justice George H. Carley called the team and its coaches before the bench and read a proclamation honoring the team and its achievement.

The Council of State Court Judges is a sponsor of the state Mock Trial Program. ☛



Judge John C. Carbo, III, State Court of Clayton County (front right) accepted the Supreme Court's proclamation on behalf of the team.

AOC Grants Funding Report

Grant Funds Secured in FY 07

Project & Source

DUI Video (GOHS)	\$85,000
GA Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (GA DHR)	333,333
7th District Drug Courts (US Health & Human Services) ...	369,782
Child Support Commission (GA DHR)	276,912
Child Support E-filing (GA DHR)	473,495
Mountain Judicial Circuit (CJCC)	22,000
Domestic Violence Courts (COSCA)	49,558
Committee on Justice for Children (US Health & Human Services) ...	875,155
Task Force to Promote Criminal Justice/Mental Health Collaboration (Council of State Governments)	14,543
Committee on Civil Justice (State Justice Institute)	30,000
TOTAL	\$2,529,778

During Fiscal Year 2007, the AOC secured grants totaling \$2.5 million to support the work of Georgia courts. Funds from state and national sources are being used for programs as varied as mental health issues, drug courts, domestic violence programs, civil justice initiatives, and educational videos.

Supreme Court

- The Council of State Governments awarded a \$14,543 grant to participate in a Chief Justice-led **Task Force to Promote Criminal Justice/Mental Health Collaboration**. Georgia is one of seven participating states.

- A \$30,000 State Justice Institute grant will be used by the Supreme Court's Committee on Civil Justice to develop a strategic plan.

- The **Committee on Justice for Children**, formerly the Child Placement Project, is chaired by Justice Harris Hines of the Supreme Court of Georgia. The committee administers federal funds (\$875,155) provided to the states for improvement in Georgia's juvenile court services and legal proceedings for neglected and abused children.

Judicial Response to Domestic Violence

- The Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) awarded a \$49,558 grant which will be used to assess the current **judicial response to domestic violence** and to develop a protocol and action plan for the implementation of domestic violence courts.

Additionally, the Council of Magistrate Court Judges is developing a **Domestic Violence Benchbook**.

Accountability Courts

- The AOC and Seventh District Court Administrator Jody Overcash won funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA TCE), US Department of Health and Human Services. The \$369,782 grant will be used to fund **drug courts** in the Conasauga and Tallapoosa Judicial Circuits.

- An \$85,000 grant was awarded by the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) to study the **effectiveness of DUI courts** and to create a public informational DVD. The AOC partnered with the Council of State Court Judges to secure the grant.

- The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) granted the **Mountain Judicial Circuit Drug Court** \$22,000.

For more information on AOC grant projects and assistance for applying, contact Ms. Eden Freeman, Program Manager, AOC Grants and Project Management, at freemane@gaoc.us or 404-463-0043. ☞

Please
Recycle



2007 Drug Court Conference

“Bridges to Recovery Through Accountability”

The golf cart trails were bustling in Peachtree City, when the 2007 Drug and DUI Court Conference came to town May 29 - June 1.

The Judicial Council of Georgia's Standing Committee on Drug Courts hosted 375 conferees eager to learn more about accountability courts and their effectiveness. Georgia judges, court administrators, program facilitators, and medical professionals attended the conference whose theme was “Bridges to Recovery through Accountability.”

Speakers included US Drug Czar Dr. Bertha Madras; Mr. West Huddleston, CEO of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals; Dr. Carlo DiClemente, Professor of Psychology, University of Maryland – Baltimore County; and Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears, Supreme Court of Georgia.

For more information on the Drug, DUI, and Mental Health Courts, contact Ms. Jane Martin, AOC Associate Director for Children, Families and the Court, at 404-463-4266. ☞



US Drug Czar Dr. Bertha Madras opened the conference on May 29.



**DRUG
COURTS
WORK!!!**



Conference attendees, above, were able to choose from breakout sessions, including: Treatment 101 for Non-Treatment Professionals; Recovery and Aftercare Design; Mental Health Court; How to Start a 501(c)3; Confidentiality and Ethics; and Next Steps for Family Dependency Treatment Courts among others.



Judge Kent Lawrence (left), State Court of Clarke County, listens to Mr. West Huddleston of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals.

Mark Your Calendar

The 2008 Drug Court Conference will be held July 17 - 19 at the Wyndham in Peachtree City.

E-filing Pilot Project Report

Office of Child Support Enforcement and Courts in Bibb, Washington Counties at Work

Two counties in middle Georgia are participating in a child support e-filing capability pilot project being developed by the AOC's Information Technology Section. Since early June, Bibb and Washington superior courts have accepted filings of child support cases electronically.

Armed with a \$473,495 federal grant and the cooperation of local judges, clerks of court, and staff of the Office of Child Support Services, Mr. Rex McElrath, Applications Development Manager, and his team of programmers at the AOC have created an integrated court management system which reduces the time and effort usually required for filing child support cases.

The Human Face of E-Filing

It comes as no great surprise that child support filings in Georgia courts are numerous and on the rise. It is also no surprise that behind each case filing, the welfare of a child or children is at stake. Any delay in pro-

cessing a child support case means a delay for a child's medical care, housing costs, or educational expenses.

Technically Speaking...

E-filing migrates what was once a paper-dependent realm to the digital domain.

Paperwork that in the past might have taken two to four weeks to process can now be handled in a matter of minutes. Tangible benefits of E-filing include reduction of staff time spent per filing, postage savings, and reduction of data entry errors.

Only recently, Bibb County Superior Court limited the number of child support filings it could accept to 40 per day. After the e-filing project began, 120 cases were filed in a single morning.

PDF (portable document file) documents are created and transmitted, secured by digital signatures. As stipulated in the grant contract, software produced by the AOC is OpenSource, meaning the code is

not copyrighted. The code is given to the user who may modify it and customize the code as necessary.

Now that the foundation of e-filing in the general jurisdiction courts has been created, e-filing can be expanded to other types of filings with little additional work.

By the Numbers

After three months, child support case filings in Bibb and Washington counties come to:

- 1183 active cases entered
- 1768 children involved
- 9133 documents involved
- 5280 digital signatures made:
 - 2881 signed by attorneys
 - 2399 signed by court clerks
- 1134 completed filings

For more information on the e-filing project, contact Mr. Rex McElrath at 404-657-9218. ☞

GAWL Announces Half-Year Membership Rates

The Georgia Association for Women Lawyers (GAWL) has announced half-year membership rates, available as of July 1, 2007.

Membership benefits available under the half-year rates will be renewable at regular membership

rates after December 31, 2007.

The current membership rates are as follows: members of the judiciary and public interest attorneys, \$25; all other licensed attorneys, \$45; and law students, \$10. To join go to www.gawl.org

For more information, contact Pilar Prinz, VP Membership (770-858-1288, pprin@cpmas.com) or Kathy Harrington, Chair Membership (770-914-1413, kathy@patentax.com). ☞

From the Board of Court Reporting...

New Members Take Oath

On July 24, 2007, Chief Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes (at podium), Court of Appeals of Georgia, administered the oath of office to members of the Board of Court Reporting. Sworn-in at the Board's meeting were (left to right) Ms. Kerry McFadden, Ms. Marilyn Roe, Mr. John K. Larkins, Jr., and Judge Linda S. Cowen, Chair. Board member Bill Abel was sworn-in separately. ✍



— CORRECTION —

Fee Schedule for Official Court Reporters

Please note the Fee Schedule published on page 7 of the May 2007 issue of the Georgia Courts Journal was incorrect.

Effective July 1, 2007, the new scale of compensation for court reporters appearing in court proceedings is as follows:

Per Diem	\$184.54 to 8 hours
	\$206.65 to 9 hours
	\$221.45 maximum ✍

2008 Court Reporting License Renewals

Effective January 1, 2008, every certified court reporter and registered court reporting firm eligible for renewal may process their License Renewal application online. Visit the Board of Court Reporting Licensing site at www.georgiacourts.org/agencies/bcr Click on the License Renewal link to begin the renewal process. Applicable renewal fees can be paid via our secure server using a Visa or Mastercard.

Please contact the Board if you would like a renewal form mailed to the address on file. A mailed license renewal form may take up to four weeks to process.

For more information, contact the Board of Court Reporting at 404-656-6422 or via email, bcr@gaaoc.us ✍

Keep the Date

October 2-4, 2007

Court Technology Conference 10
Tampa, FL

October 18-19, 2007

Advancing Court Technology
Conference
Suwanee, GA

October 29-31, 2007

Georgia Council of Court
Administrators Meeting
Athens, GA

December 11, 2007

Judicial Council Meeting
Wyndham Vinings Hotel
Atlanta, GA

“Let Justice Be Done”

Biography of Justice J. Harold Hawkins

A biography of Georgia Supreme Court Justice Harold Hawkins of Cobb County who served the Supreme Court from 1949 – 1960 has been written by Justice Hawkins’ son-in-law, David A. Dosser, Sr.

The life of Justice Hawkins unfolds against the historical backdrop of another time: a time when an 8th grade education was not a limit to a man’s ability to succeed.

Justice Hawkins began his legal career working as a stenographer for the Marietta law firm of Clay and Norris

and as a court report for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit — then comprised of Cobb, Milton, Cherokee, Gilmer, Fannin, Pickens and Forsyth counties.



At that time Georgia law did not require any examination for admittance to the bar for law school graduates; however, Justice Hawkins studied law in the evenings and went on to pass the bar exam in 1916. He served as a law clerk at the Court of Appeals of Georgia and was a partner

“Justice Harold Hawkins was a man dedicated to the administration of justice according to the highest ideals of fairness, impartiality, compassion, and fairness.”

at Morris, Hawkins, and Wallace in Marietta before being appointed to the superior court bench in the Blue Ridge Circuit in 1931.

“Let Justice Be Done” highlights events in Justice Hawkins’ life on the bench. The author intersperses local newspaper articles with photographs and excerpts from speeches made by Justice Hawkins.

Copies of the book are available for \$24.20 and can be ordered at: <http://letjusticebedone.info> or by mail. Send check to David A. Dosser, Sr., PO Box 157, Hiawasee, GA 30546. ✉

Directory Corrections

Check here for recent changes to the 2007-2008 *Georgia Courts Directory*.

Superior Courts

Enotah Judicial Circuit

Chief Judge David E. Barrett
706-439-6100/F 439-6099

Magistrate Courts

Catoosa County

Delete: Judge Michael Alan Helton

Clayton County

Delete: Judge Dorian Murry

Colquitt County

Add: Judge Rick D. Collum
PO Box 867
Moultrie, GA 31776
229-891-3000/F 985-5450

Fulton County

Add: Judge James Altman
170 Mitchell Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-526-8868

Henry County

Judge Robert L. Godwin
770-288-7700

Judge Martin Christopher Jones

One Judicial Center
McDonough, GA 30253
770-288-7700/F 288-7742

Judge Kay Veasley

One Judicial Center
McDonough, GA 30253
770-288-7700/F 288-7742

Special Courts

Recorder’s Court of DeKalb County

Add: Judge Michael L. Rothenberg
990 Hammond Drive, Suite 1150
Atlanta, GA 30328
404-236-5000/F 236-5001

Superior Court Clerk

Berrien County

Delete: Daniel V. Leccese

Public Defender

Stone Mountain Circuit

Lawrence Schneider
lschneider@gapublicdefender.org

Juvenile Court Administrator

Rockdale County

Keith Parkhouse
922 Court Street
PO Box 452
Conyers, GA 30012
770-388-57634/F 388-5035
keith.parkhouse@rockdalecounty.org



Members of the Judicial Council of Georgia August 2007

1. Presiding Justice Carol W. Hunstein; 2. Judge Brenda H. Cole;
3. Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears; 4. Chief Judge Anne Elizabeth Barnes;
5. Judge Kimberly Warden; 6. Chief Judge Doris Downs;
7. Judge Anne Workman; 8. Judge Lillis Brown; 9. Judge Jim Clarke;
10. Judge Bill Clifton; 11. Judge Velma Tilley; 12. Judge Connie Holt;
13. Chief Judge John Ott; 14. Judge A. Quillian Baldwin;
15. Judge John C. Carbo, III; 16. Judge F. Gates Peed;
17. Judge Stan Smith; 18. Judge Steve Teske; 19. Chief Judge Shepherd Lee Howell;
20. Chief Judge Rucker Smith;
21. Judge Ronnie Joe Lane; 22. Judge Stephen S. Goss;
23. Chief Judge Arch McGarity; 24. Chief Judge David E. Barrett.

Not pictured: Judge M. Yvette Miller.

Courthouse Spotlight



Colquitt County

County Seat: Moultrie

Built: 1902

Cost: \$29,500

Judicial Circuit: Southern

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