



THE DOCKET

News of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks

Laissez Les Bons Temps Rouler!

By Christine Crow (LA)

As time is flying by, the Louisiana Team has put together a couple of ideas for events for the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks 34th annual educational conference to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana August 5 through August 10, 2007, at the Wyndham New Orleans at Canal Place. We are optimistic that our traditional sponsors, Thomson West, Lexis-Nexis and BNA will share our enthusiasm for these attractions.

As all of you know, New Orleans is the home of the biggest Mardi Gras celebration in the United States, so we are hopeful we can schedule a night at Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World. Tons of fun and excitement will be all in one place! Since 1947, the Kern family has become the largest parade float builder for Mardi Gras and Carnival celebrations throughout the world. Kern Studios' parade floats are world renowned and Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World is a museum that holds the history of Mardi Gras and invites an exciting look behind the magic of Mardi Gras in New Orleans. This showcase of carnival with thousands of sensational sculptured props and breath-taking giant figures is truly a treasure of New Orleans. Brian Kern creates exceptional party experiences with true Mardi Gras magic and we believe Blaine Kern's Mardi Gras World would be an unforgettable experience for all of our attendees and an extremely festive welcome to New Orleans.

In addition, New Orleans is home to the country's official World War II Museum with remarkable attractions that illuminate the American experience during the WWII era, including moving personal stories, historic artifacts and powerful interactive displays. This museum, dedicated in 2000 as The National D-Day Museum, houses exhibits from the Normandy invasion, the sands of Pacific Islands, and from the Home Front, bringing to life the teamwork, optimism, courage and sacrifice of the men and women who won the war and changed the world. NCACC is proud to have many military veterans as members of our organization and this event will give you an opportunity to also meet other American heroes – the WWII Museum veteran volunteers.

The Sunday night reception and Morgan Thomas slideshow will take place at the Louisiana Supreme Court Building, which also houses the Louisiana Fourth Circuit Court of Appeal. Louisiana co-hosts, Supreme Court Clerk John T. Olivier and Fourth Circuit Clerk Danielle Schott, will welcome you to the newly restored Royal Street building in the heart of the historic French Quarter. This truly remarkable building with its stately interior is an architectural gem with a granite, marble and terra-cotta facade graced by Ionic columns.

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In the coming months, stay tuned for more information about the rest of the activities that will take place during the week. We, the “Krewe des Greffiers du Tribunal”* of Louisiana, are very pleased to host the 2007 Annual Meeting of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks.

We just want to point out that the great state of Louisiana is famous for the “joie de vivre”* of its people, for its varied culture, cuisine, and lagniappe*, and for throwing the greatest free party in the world: Mardi Gras*. As we always like to say: “*Laissez les bons temps rouler!*”*

*Translations

Krewe des Greffiers du Tribunal=Krewe of the Clerks of Court

Joie de vivre = joy of life

Lagniappe = something extra

Mardi Gras=Fat Tuesday; Shrove Tuesday festival, celebrated in some cities with great revelry

Laissez les bons temps rouler! = let the good times roll!

THE DOCKET

News of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks

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Please submit items of professional or personal news to your regional reporter. Articles, letters and other submissions may be sent or faxed to the editorial office.

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HELP KEEP US INFORMED!!



To Remit NCACC Membership Dues:

National Center of State Courts
300 Newport Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185

From The President



Sandra Skinner (MO)

I hope this finds everyone enjoying a good new year after having a happy holiday. I find that I am usually ready to go back to work after the frenzy of eating, shopping and general celebrating.

We had our fall executive committee meeting in Pittsburgh on November 17. As you may recall, Pittsburgh is the site of our annual conference the summer of 2008. Irene Bizzoso will be the host for that meeting and she certainly was a great host for our Executive Meeting. Committee work seems to be in full swing. Tom Hall and the program committee have discussed many different topics for the conference; all of which sound very interesting. Holly Sparrow and the membership committee continue to coordinate their efforts with the National Center regarding membership. I hope everyone saw and contributed their responses to Mike Catalano's technology committee's survey. Much work has gone into the survey questions and the more feedback they receive, the more comprehensive the conclusions. Be sure to help Pete Fitzgerald's nominating committee with nominations for the offices of Vice-President, Treasurer and the three executive committee positions. Should you have a proposal for the site of our conference the summer of 2010, get in touch with Ed Smith, chair of the site selection committee.

After the executive committee meeting, Michael Guillot presented his evaluation of the conference's potential for a fundraising campaign to help build the Education Fund. I would like to thank all those current and retired members who participated in the interviews. Your candid information and assessment assisted Mr. Guillot in making his presentation. Mr. Guillot's information included general concepts regarding an initial approach to a fundraising campaign. Philanthropic investment is not charity; it is not because the NCACC "needs" money. This type of investment goes to a larger purpose. Within the conference, we must have a view of how the needs of our members will change and how best to anticipate those needs and attempt to provide for them. Outside the conference, we need to expand our relationships with other organizations and the public so that we are acknowledged as the primary source of expertise on the operation of appellate courts. Mr. Guillot provided estimates of the time and money we should anticipate expending as the campaign develops. He also provided the names of many potential funding prospects. Like all new endeavors, there are now more questions than answers. The April executive committee meeting will give us a further opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of this new direction and how best to proceed.

This is a "heads up" for one of the many fun, yet productive, activities we will have at our summer, 2007 conference in New Orleans. The silent/not-so-silent auction for the education fund of arts and crafts created by clerks and their talented associates will be held once more. We may need to call on the talents of Mike Richie and Lisa Hall to get our auction juices flowing. I'm giving you this much notice so on those long winter nights you can pull out your canvas, cross-stitch or photo shop program and make something beautiful. I hope everyone has a good winter.

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Welcome, New Members



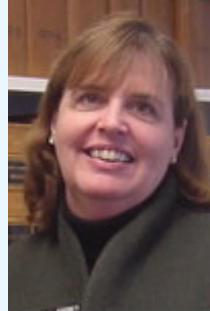
Blake Hawthorne
Clerk of the Court
Supreme Court of Texas

Blake A. Hawthorne was appointed to a four year term as the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Texas on August 1, 2006. Immediately prior to being appointed Clerk, Blake served as the Court's Staff Attorney for Original Proceedings.

Blake graduated from Tulane University magna cum laude with a B.A. Anthropology and Spanish in 1992. He then attended the University of Texas School of Law, graduating with honors in 1996.

After law school, Blake worked as an associate for Jackson Walker in Fort Worth. In 1997 he moved to Washington, D.C., where he was an associate for Wiley, Rein & Fielding,. Two years later, Blake moved back to Austin, Texas, taking a job as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Texas.

Blake is married to Wendy and they have a daughter named Sophie who is "almost three."



Therese S. "Tee" Barnes
Clerk of the Court
Supreme Court of Georgia

Tee Barnes was appointed as Clerk of the Georgia Supreme Court in August, 2006, following the retirement of Sherie Welch.

Tee graduated from the University of Virginia in 1978 and graduated Mercer Law School in 1981. She served as Managing Editor for the *Mercer Law Review*.

After working at the Atlanta law firm of Strickland, Wilson, and Benson for six years, Tee worked for the Court of Appeals with Judge Banke until his retirement. She was the first clerk in the appellate courts to institute job-sharing and worked in a job-shared position from 1992-2005 for Presiding Justice Carol Hunstein. In 2005, Tee decided to go back full-time, working for newly appointed Justice Harold Melton.

She has been married 24 years to Gary A. Barnes, Partner at Gambrell & Stolz and they have two children. Whitney is a junior at Davidson College and Matthew is a senior at Marist High School.



Ed Smith Wins Re-election in Montana

Ed Smith was re-elected to a fourth term as Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court in November 2006 by an overwhelming margin. Ed was sworn in to office by Montana Governor, Brian Schweitzer, at a ceremony held on January 2, 2007. Congratulations, Ed !

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

By Tom Hall (FL)

This year's Program Committee is hard at work developing a program for New Orleans. There are a number of things the Committee is excited about. Based on comments from the last two critiques and the evaluation forms filled out by everyone, we have made arrangements to spend one full day learning all about Emergenetics. For those of you who don't know, it has been described to me as an updated Myers-Briggs evaluation. Emergenetics comes highly recommended by the clerks in Louisiana who have used it in their courts and you can learn more about it at www.emergenetics.com. We are still working on the rest of the program, but here is what we have so far:

- ♦ University of Miami Law School Professor, Brian Spector – who spoke with us on ethics in Key West – will be making another ethics presentation;
- ♦ There will be a presentation on the Family Medical Leave Act and how it can impact your office;
- ♦ We are working on a presentation on what you can do when your court is attacked politically;
- ♦ We will have an expanded version of “What’s Bugging You.”
- ♦ We are hoping to arrange a presentation by a clerk’s office (or two) that have new CMS systems so we can see what the future looks like in that regard; and
- ♦ There will be some presentation on personnel matters.

We plan to have a break-out session on death penalty issues for those courts that deal with death penalty. Finally, we are working on a series of roundtable discussions of common interests, both problems and success stories.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

Sunday – One 90 minute program.

Monday – This day would be devoted entirely to the Emergenetics program. Tentative times – 8:30 to 4:30.

Tuesday – Joint session ending at approximately 12:30 p.m. with golf tournament that afternoon. Tentative times – 8:30 to 12:30.

Wednesday – Full day of programming with afternoon devoted to breakouts and vendor show. Tentative times 8:30 to 4:30.

Thursday – Morning education sessions with Business Meeting when education ends. Tentative times – 8:30 to noon (education); Business Meeting – noon to 1:00 p.m. and Executive Committee – 1:00 to 2:00.

Friday – Critique Breakfast – Tentative time 8:30 to 10:00.

Executive Committee Agenda
The Peabody
Little Rock, Arkansas
Lafayette Room
Saturday, April 21, 2007 at 8:30 a.m.

8:30 a.m.

Business Meeting

Approval of November 17, 2006 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Host's Report on New Orleans Conference – Chris Crow

Committee Reports

Awards Committee – Trish Harrington
Bylaw Committee – Chris Crow
Convention Assistance Committee – Colette Bruggman
Educational Fund Committee – Colette Bruggman
Finance and Investment Committee – Marilyn May
Membership Committee – Garland Pinkston
Nominating Committee – Chris Crow
Past Presidents Committee – Terry Lord
Pictorial Directory Committee – Marilyn May
Program Committee – Tom Hall
Publication Committee – Steve Lancaster
Public Relations Committee – Irene Bizzoso
Resolutions and Memorials Committee – Jim Pelzer
Scholarship Committee – Trish Harrington
Site Selection Committee – Garland Pinkston
Strategic Planning Committee – Steve Lancaster
Technology Committee – Jim Pelzer
Website Committee – Irene Bizzoso

Other Business

Membership Requirements
List-serve inquiries
Other

Adjournment

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

Kenneth deBlanc may be contacted by email at:

K.deblanc@suddenlink.net

PENNY MILLER NAMED CHAIR
COUNCIL OF BAR ADMISSIONS ADMINISTRATORS

In November, Penny Miller, Clerk of the North Dakota Supreme Court, was named Vice-Chair of the Council of Bar Admissions Administrator. Miller is slated to become Chair of the organization in August 2008.



The Council was established in 1975 to promote collegial relationships, cooperation, and common understanding among bar admission administrators; to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas that will improve the administration of bar admissions; to assist administrators in applying technology and best business practices in bar admission offices; to exchange information and conduct surveys among Council members on bar admission matters; to foster productive communications between administrators and boards of bar examiners; and to present high quality educational programs for the benefit of the Council members and the National Conference of Bar Examiners.

Membership in the Council is open to those persons having administrative responsibility for the process by which lawyers are admitted to the bar in the United States, its territories, commonwealths and protectorates, and the District of Columbia, who are employed as executive staff members of the boards of bar examiners and committees on character and fitness or like organizations in each jurisdiction.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NEW ORLEANS!



If you are having trouble obtaining funding for the annual meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana you may be eligible for a scholarship. **Please do not hesitate to apply**, last year we had money left over. The Scholarship Assistance Guidelines and the Selection Criteria are published in the NCACC Directory. If you plan to apply for a scholarship please read the Guidelines and the Selection Criteria and the following instructions:

DEADLINE: Mail or Fax the completed, signed application form by **June 1, 2007** to:
Ms. Brenda Williams
National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks
c/o National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185

FAX: 757-259-1520

If you are uncertain as to whether you will receive funding from your court you may still apply for a scholarship, just note this on your application and update the scholarship committee of any changes to your funding status.

If you have questions or concerns please email the Chair of the Committee, Lisa Matz at:
lisa.matz@5thcoa.courts.state.tx.us.

This year's committee members are, Lisa Matz (TX), Kelly McNeely (LA), Mike Richie (OK), and Trish Harrington (VA) is the Executive Committee liaison.

REMINDER FROM THE AWARDS COMMITTEE

There is still time to submit your suggestions to the Awards Committee for the person or persons to receive the J. O. Sentell Award and the Morgan Thomas Award.

Please submit your suggestion to the address below (email is preferred) or by fax on the form provided. The deadline is February 15, 2007.

Bill DeCicco
Chairman
NCACC Awards Committee
bill.decicco@armfor.uscourts.gov

Clerk of the Court
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
450 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20442
Fax: (202) 761-4672





Facts, Fiction, & Foolishness

By Leslie Steen (AR)

Another year has passed us by and now we greet 2007 with new hopes, aspirations, doubts, and uncertainty. Here are some thoughts to ponder before marching forward.

- ♦ Give a person a fish and you will feed them for a day; teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks.
- ♦ Life is sexually transmitted.
- ♦ Some people are like a Slinky not really good for anything, but you still can't help but smile when you see one tumble down the steps.
- ♦ Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in hospital beds and dying of nothing.
- ♦ All of us, being the clerks we are, could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
- ♦ Why does a slight tax increase cost us two hundred dollars and a substantial tax cut save us thirty cents?
- ♦ Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.
- ♦ In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird and people take Prozac to make it normal.

AND THE NUMBER 1 THOUGHT FOR 2007: We know exactly where one cow with mad cow disease is located among millions of cows in America but we don't have a clue as to where thousands of illegal immigrants and terrorists are located. Maybe we should put the Department of Agriculture in charge of immigration.



As those thoughts slowly soak into feeble minds, ponder this.

The number of physicians in the United States is 700,000.
Accidental deaths caused by physicians per year are 120,000.
Accidental deaths per physician is 0.171.

Statistics courtesy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The number of gun owners in the United States is 80,000,000. (Yes, that is 80 million.)
The number of accidental gun deaths per year in all age groups is 1,500.
The number of accidental gun deaths per gun owner is .000188.

Statistics courtesy of the F.B.I.

So statistically, doctors are approximately 9,000 times more dangerous than gun owners. Remember, "Guns don't kill people, doctors do."

FACT: Not everyone has a gun, but almost everyone has at least one doctor. Please alert your friends, relatives, and employees to this alarming threat. We must ban doctors before this gets completely out of hand.

Out of concern for the public at large, I have withheld the statistics on lawyers for fear the shock would cause people to panic and seek medical attention. Best wishes for 2007.