



# THE DOCKET

News of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks

## NCACC AWARDS COMMITTEE WANTS YOUR SUGGESTIONS

The 2004-05 Awards Committee wants your nominations for the **J. O. Sentell Award** and the **Morgan Thomas Award**. These awards will be presented at the 2005 NCACC Annual Conference to be held in Key West, Florida.

The **J. O. Sentell Award** is given to a member of the NCACC who has contributed substantially to the objectives of the conference, including improving skill and knowledge through conferences, seminars or other educational programs; promoting and improving the contribution of appellate court clerk offices within the area of effective court administration; and collecting and dissemination of information and ideas concerning the operation and improvement of the offices of appellate court clerks. (See Article II of the Bylaws.)



This award not only honors the recipient, but it also pays homage to a founding member, James Oscar Sentell, Jr. He was born in Alabama in 1909 and practiced law there until 1967, when he was appointed deputy clerk of the Alabama Supreme Court. A year later he became clerk of that court, serving until 1982. He was first president of the NCACC. In a tribute entered into the Congressional Record, Senator Heflin stated: Mr. Sentell made immeasurable contributions to Alabama's justice system as clerk of the Supreme Court of Alabama. Senator Heflin further described J. O. Sentell as a great public servant possessing a keen and analytical mind with perceptive insight and integrity beyond reproach.



The **Morgan Thomas Award** is for recognition of an individual, other than a regular member of the NCACC, and who has made distinguished contributions to enhancing professionalism and supporting the goals of the NCACC as a body and of its members individually.

Please complete and return the **Awards Committee Suggestion Form**, (included in this issue as an insert), by February 15, 2005.

### Awards Committee 2005

- |                       |                       |                          |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Kathleen Kempley (AZ) | Michele Angers (CT)   | Penny Miller (ND)        |
| Joseph A. Lane (CA)   | Debbie Causseaux (FL) | Daniel R. Schuckers (PA) |
| Keith Richardson (IA) | Danielle Schott (LA)  | Mike Yerly (CA)          |

Please see page 7 for a list of past recipients of the J.O. Sentell Award and the Morgan Thomas Award.

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**NEW ADDRESS: To Remit NCACC Membership Dues:**  
National Center of State Courts  
300 Newport Avenue  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

## THE DOCKET

### News of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks

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President	Diana Pratt-Wyatt (LA)
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Immed. Past President	Ed Smith (MT)
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	Daniel Schuckers (PA)
	Susan Clary (KY)
	Charles McNeely (LA)

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Leslie W. Steen (AR)	Volunteer Columnist
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Diana Pratt-Wyatt (LA)	Editor
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Brenda Stephens (LA)	Assistant
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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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Internet: [clerkdpw@lascco.state.la.us](mailto:clerkdpw@lascco.state.la.us)

HELP KEEP US INFORMED!!





## THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

By Diana Pratt-Wyatt (LA)



The Executive Committee met in New Orleans on November 13, 2004. Sherie Welch, Treasurer, reported that our Educational Fund contained at that time \$8,937. Thank you, each of you, for making this possible. It's the small steps that keep us on our journey. In April, the Executive Committee will participate in a workshop facilitated by Michael Guillot of Virtual Development Group. The workshop will be tailored to help the Educational Fund and Executive Committee develop clear and realistic goals relating to the future direction and purpose of The Educational Fund. With this help, we hope to be in a better position to give meaningful direction to our Educational Fund Board of Advisors who have been patiently awaiting their charge. The Educational Fund Board of Advisors was established to work in concert with the Educational Fund Committee in developing strategies for capital projects. These advisors were appointed by President Ed Smith. I personally thank the members of this board for their willingness to serve

in this capacity. The members are: Jean Kennett (MA); Frans Labranche (LA); Glen Clark (AZ); Bill Fulton (VA) and Mike Whetstone (MN).

I am also excited to announce that Rory Perry (WV) and the Website Committee have been hard at work redesigning NCACC's presence on the web. The Executive Committee had an opportunity to view the work in progress and I report that we are close to unveiling our new web page. Stay tuned for future announcements!

Get ready, Key West is going to offer a lot more than beautiful sunsets. NCACC and CATO will work together to present the first joint appellate court clerk/appellate technology educational session to take place at our 2005 Educational Conference in Key West. Bob Northrup of the North Carolina Supreme Court and President of CATO was present at our executive committee meeting to report CATO's progress in establishing their organization, as well as to accept our invitation to join us in Key West. There is a brief outline of the 2005 program in this issue and more information will be forthcoming. I thank the NCACC/CATO Liaison Committee for their vision and hard work in making this possible. The members of that committee are: Christie Cameron (NC), Chair; Chris Crow (LA); Kristen Brown (PA); Joe Lane (CA) and Tom Hall (FL).

I will be attending the Conference of Chief Justices the week of January 24<sup>th</sup> and will share my experience with you by list serve on my return. The Executive Committee meets again in April in Fort Worth, Texas, our 2006 conference site.

### LAST CALL FOR PROSPECTIVE HOSTS!

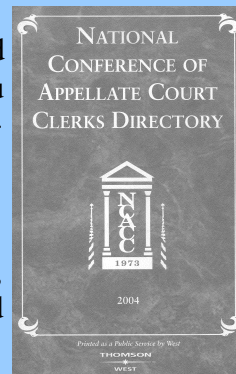
The site selection committee is still soliciting bids for the 2008 conference. If you are interested in submitting a bid, please contact Marilyn May, Chair, at [mmay@appellate.courts.state.ak.us](mailto:mmay@appellate.courts.state.ak.us) or (907)264-0606, or contact any of the other members of the committee.

We will be glad to work with you. We'd like to have all bids by February 15 to allow the committee time to review them and make a recommendation to the executive committee prior to their spring meeting.

### 2005 NCACC DIRECTORY Last Notice

Included as an insert to this issue of The Docket, is an information form for the directory. If you are a new member, please provide this information along with a 3X5 or 4X6 photo. Our directory will not be complete without you.

Current members may also use this form to update their information and submit an updated photo, if you wish. Please look at the 2004 directory to make sure your information is correct, and submit any changes that need to be made. Please give special attention to email addresses, as this is becoming a more preferred method of communication.



# 2005 Conference Program

By Chris Crow (LA)

## **SUNDAY (Total Program: 2 hrs. plus Business Meeting)**

2 hr. Joint Educational Session proposed with CATO:

*“E-Responsiveness: Ensuring Impactful Service to the Public.”* Speaker to be invited: Federal Judiciary Center

### **Other events that day:**

- \* Welcome for new members and orientation of guests (1/2 hr)
- \* Roll Call and Business Meeting (Part I – 2 hrs)
- \* Vendors have early set up time in Grand Ballroom
- \* Morgan Thomas Slide Show (1/2 hr)
- \* BNA/NCACC reception for NCACC, CATO with vendors
- \* Hospitality suite to open

## **MONDAY (Total Program: 6 hours and 15 minutes)**

2 hr NCACC Opening Plenary:

*“Dealing with Challenging Employees at Work”*  
Speaker Confirmed Preliminarily: Mark Stephens

1 hr and 25 minute Breakout Sessions (4):

VENDOR EXPO

*“Discipline: When To Use It; How To Write It Out; Performance vs. Conduct Discipline; How To Do It”*  
Speaker Confirmed Preliminarily: Mark Stephens

*“Transitioning to Case Management/Electronic Case Files: Managing the People Side of Change”*  
Speaker to be Invited: Federal Judiciary Center

“TO BE ANNOUNCED”

### **Other events that day:**

- \* Vendors set up in Grand Ballroom; presentations with NCACC and CATO (1/2 hr)
- \* Vendor lunch in Grand Ballroom
- \* Evening Social Event for NCACC

## **TUESDAY (Total Program: 3 hours and 15 minutes)**

2 hr Plenary

*“Best Practices”* and/or *“What’s Bugging You?”* session

One 1 hr. and 15 minute Plenary Session

*“Is it Legal Advice?”*

Speaker to be invited: Federal Judiciary Center

### **Other events that day:**

- \* Fun Run/Walk in a.m.
- \* Golf/Tennis Tournaments or Free Time in afternoon

## **WEDNESDAY (Total Program: 4 hrs.)**

1 hr and 30 min Plenary Session

*“How to Run Effective Meetings”*  
Speaker to be invited: Timm Fautsko, NCSC

1 hr and 30 min Plenary Session

*“COOP”*

Speaker to be invited: Representative of the Administrative Office of the US Courts

One 1 hr Plenary Session - “Ethics” Speaker to be announced.

### **Other events that day:**

- \* Evening Social Event for NCACC

## **THURSDAY (Total Program: 2 hrs plus Business Meeting)**

2 hr Closing Plenary

*“Leading To Inspire”*  
Speaker confirmed preliminarily: Moshe Rubinstein

### **Other events that day:**

- \* Business Meeting (Part II) 1 to 2 hrs
- \* Reception and Annual Banquet
- \* Hospitality Suite closes (eventually!)

## **FRIDAY**

1 hr and 30 minute Breakfast Critique

# *Facts, Fiction, & Foolishness*

By Leslie Steen (AR)



As appellate court clerks offices, we have all received many strange letters over the years. Unfortunately, with a name like “Leslie”, a lot of my mail is addressed to “Miss Leslie Steen, Mrs. Leslie Steen, or Ms. Leslie Steen.” However, two of the favorites I have received have been addressed to “Miss Lillian Stern”, which sounds like a librarian’s name, and “Ms. Lucy Sheen”, which sounds like a stripper’s name. Of course, I am well aware of the name you think suits me better. I also have a couple of favorite letters I would like to share with you. The first one was printed in “The Docket” in my second column in 1992, and I seriously doubt if any of you remember it. We called this letter, “The motion for immediate release from prison.” The second was received in 2003, and we decided we need not make an attempt to name it.

*Dear Mr. Leslie Steen:*

*I Robert Reynolds have no argument for my case. I have no counsel and myself know nothing about the so called Justice Process. All I can say is that in my case the Father of Lies has prevailed. But I will however give you a warning. If I am not released from Cummins Prison by September 29, 1996, space aliens from the planet Zargonian will destroy Little Rock Arkansas at approximately 2:30 p.m. September 26, 1996. May God have mercy on your soul.*

777

*Robert Reynolds*

#106198

*Dear Leslie W. Steen, Clerk of the Courts,*

*My name is James Lee Withers and I have a problem. I am trying to find out what court should I file a case in and if I need to file a case or not. My problem is 10 or 15 years ago. I was attacked by some strange force, while walking on two different occasions. The attack was mostly on my head and I could feel some type of force around me. I lost concentration and focus and every time I would squint (raise my brow), cattle would be created in the sky and then they would land on earth. The first time it happened was along highway 365 in between woodson and pine bluff. There were a few thousand that were created. The breed is mostly angus and a few other breeds mixed in. I also think some people were created under the surface of the state of arkansas. They were mostly women, maybe a few men. They were from magazines that I was looking at in my room. I have decided that I would like to sell some of the cattle, maybe at an auction. I have also decided I want to start a cattle ranch with some of the one’s left after the auction. I would also like to locate the people that were created and help them get their lives together. I want to use some of the money from the sell of the cattle to help them. I also think they need saving and baptising. I want to know can a judge order the cattle sold and cant the court set up the sell? I want to know exactly what could a judge do about what has happen to me? If a case can be filed could you send me the necessary forms and the other paper work I need to get my case heard? Also, if this is not the right court, could you give me the right court? My address is P.O. Box 277, Woodson, AR 72180.*

*P.S. I want the people who were created to have the same last name as me.*

*Yours truly,*

*James Lee Withers*

I did not respond to this letter, but the address is available to any of you who are on the same wave length as Mr. Withers, if you would like to help him.

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR KEY WEST!!

If you are having trouble obtaining funding for the annual meeting in Key West, Florida you may be eligible for a scholarship. The Scholarship Assistance Guidelines and the Selection Criteria are published in the NCACC Directory<sup>1</sup>. 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 **April 1, 2005** 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.

The Scholarship Committee is authorized to award up to \$6,797.94, these funds are not available to defray the cost of membership in the NCACC.

If you have questions or concerns please email the Chair of the Committee, Cynthia Rapp at [cjrapp@scus.gov](mailto:cjrapp@scus.gov)

This year's committee members are Michele Angers, Kristen Brown and Cynthia Rapp. Charles "Kelly" McNeely is the Executive Committee Liaison.

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<sup>1</sup>The guidelines were updated in 2003, the only significant change was to para. C which now states:

C. The Committee shall recommend to the Executive Committee the award up to \$5,000 in scholarships annually. Each scholarship award shall be allocated as the recipient deems appropriate for transportation to and from the annual meeting and lodging. Scholarship funds shall not be applied to defray the cost of membership in the NCACC or the cost of meals.

**Rattle those CANS, invest in the future of our educational conference, and give what you CAN, when you CAN.**

### PLEASE NOTE

**Les Steen (AR) has a new email address:**  
*les.steen@arkansas.gov*

**Past recipients of the J.O. Sentell Award:**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient/Court</u>	<u>Conference City/State</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient/Court</u>	<u>Conference City/State</u>
1979	J.O. Sentell Alabama Supreme Court	Monterey, CA	1992	Rema Mims South Carolina Court of Appeals	Washington, DC
1980	Ronald L. Dzierbicki Michigan Court of Appeals	Orlando, FL	1993	Steve Townsend	Nashville, TN
1981	Wilfried J. Kramer California Court of Appeals Third District	Jackson Hole, WY	1994	New Jersey Supreme Court Peggy Stevens McGraw Missouri Court of Appeals	San Diego, CA
1982	Morgan Thomas Georgia Court of Appeals	Boston, MA	1995	Kevin Swanson California Court of Appeal Fifth District	San Antonio, TX
1983	Lewis Carter Kansas Supreme Court and Court of Appeals	New Orleans, LA	1996	Glen D. Clark Arizona Court of Appeals Division One	Des Moines, IA
1984	Mary Ann Hopkins-Young Arizona Supreme Court	Seattle, WA	1997	William S. Fulton, Jr. (Retired) U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals	Point Clear, AL
1985	Alexander L. Stevas Supreme Court of United States	Lexington, KY	1998	Ella Williams (Retired) Michigan Court of Appeals	Skamania, WA
1986	Luella Dunn North Dakota Supreme Court and Court of Appeals	Austin, TX	1999	Joyce A. Goldsmith Arizona Court of Appeals Division Two	Portsmouth, NH
1987	Jean Kennett Supreme Judicial Court for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts	Hartford, CT	2000	John Wilkerson, Jr. Alabama Court of Appeals	Savannah, GA
1988	John Scott Kentucky Supreme Court and Court of Appeals	Helena, MT	2001	R. Keith Richardson Iowa Supreme Court and Court of Appeals	Newport Beach, CA
1989	Joline Williams Georgia Supreme Court	Charleston, SC	2002	Marilyn L. Graves Wisconsin Supreme Court and Court of Appeals	Minneapolis, MN
1990	Frans Lebranche Louisiana Supreme Court	Tucson, AZ	2003	David B. Beach Supreme Court of Virginia	Asheville, NC
1991	Jill Engel South Dakota Supreme Court	St. Louis, MO	2004	Penny L. Miller North Dakota Supreme Court	Anchorage, AK

**Past recipients of the Morgan Thomas Award are:**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Recipient</u>	<u>Organization</u>
1991	Charles Nelson	West Publishing Co.
1992	Justice James Duke Cameron (Retired)	AZ
	Justice Harry A. Spencer (Retired)	NE
	Justice William A. Grimes (Retired)	NH
1995	Sandra M. Roos	American Bar Association
1996	Jane Sanchez	Bureau of National Affairs
	Lew Tipett	Lexis/Nexis
1997	Michael J. Whetstone	West Publishing Co.
2003	Dwight D. Opperman	Former Chief Executive Officer West Publishing Co.

## JOIN US IN PARADISE

By Tom Hall (FL)

**M**ark your calendars for this year's annual education conference in Key West, Florida from August 7 through August 12. We are working diligently to put together a great conference for everyone. The program committee is hard at work and the social events promise to be a lot of fun. There will be an opening night reception right at the beach at our hotel. There is also going to be a fabulous reception at the Key West "Little White House," so-called because President Harry Truman used it as his retreat away from Washington during his terms as president. We are also finalizing plans for a wonderful event on the Ocean Key House private pier to watch the sunset and dance the night away to the sounds of the Landshark - formerly the house band at Margaritaville. All the regular events will be held as well: the morning fun run/walk, the golf tournament and we hope this year a renewed tennis tournament. All the details will be in the next issue of The Docket and will be posted on the conference's new web site soon. This is a conference you do not want to miss. But plan on arriving early on the 6th. We are putting together an optional tour of Key West on the world famous Conch Train just for our group. It will be the perfect kick off for the conference and get you totally ready to see and explore Key West. We hope to see you there.

