



NCACC's 51st Annual Conference Burlington, VT — August 4 to August 8, 2024

By Tim Gudas
Clerk of the New Hampshire Supreme Court

With the 51st annual conference in Burlington just a few months away, the Program Committee, chaired by Polly Brock (CO), has been meeting regularly to organize an informative and engaging week of educational content. But that's not the topic of this article. Rather, this article outlines some of the day-by-day activities that you and your guests might want to enjoy when you are not sitting in a conference room. If summer 2024 in Burlington follows the same pattern as summer 2023 (and I have no reason to suspect otherwise), here's what you could do in your free time.

Friday August 2. I plan to arrive in Burlington to meet with hotel staff and to welcome some of the Executive Committee members and other early birds. That evening, we have our choice of at least two free activities.



From 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., we can go to the South End Get Down (<https://getdownvt.com>), an outdoor block party featuring local food vendors, Vermont-based refreshments, live DJs, and clothing and art purveyors. Or, we can take advantage of Free First Friday Eve from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Shelburne Museum (<https://shelburnemuseum.org/visit/free-first-friday-eve>), the perfect time to visit galleries, enjoy a picnic on the grounds, listen to live music, stroll through gardens, and take in the summer evening. The South End is a 20-minute walk from the hotel. The Shelburne Museum is a 20-minute drive.

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THE DOCKET

News of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks

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Saturday August 3. Vermont prides itself on the number and quality of its local producers of food, drinks, and crafts. The Burlington Farmers Market (<https://burlingtonfarmersmarket.org/summer-vendor-directory>), which runs from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the South End, is a great opportunity to check some of them out for yourself. Later that day, consider a short walk from the hotel to Centennial Field on the University of Vermont campus to check out the Vermont Lake Monsters, a team in the Futures Collegiate Baseball League. Game time is 6:05 p.m., with a fireworks show following the final out. If you love craft breweries, organize a group of friends and book a tour to visit some of Burlington's finest. City Brew Tours in Burlington does pick-up and drop-off right at the conference hotel.

Sunday August 4. The conference officially begins in the afternoon! And so it's only fitting that the Festival of Fools — a free downtown event on the pedestrian-only Church Street (<https://vermontfestivaloffools.com/about>) — wraps up its final day. The Festival is devoted to community engagement through the celebration of circus arts, music, and comedy for family audiences. For those who prefer to explore the city in the morning, make sure to review the "Hello Burlington" website (<https://www.helloburlingtonvt.com>) for a complete list of restaurants and things to do. Church Street, Waterfront Park, and the Burlington Bike Path are all worth a visit and are all within a 20-minute walk of the hotel.

Monday August 5 and Tuesday August 6. Members will be in educational sessions or vendor demonstrations throughout each day, but the evenings will allow us to enjoy Burlington's amazing scenery. We'll cap off our day on Monday with a social event on the *Spirit of Ethan Allen* (<https://soea.com/waterfront>) for a dinner cruise on Lake Champlain, which is just a short bus ride away from our hotel. The Adirondack Mountains of New York and the Green Mountains of Vermont provide the views. On Tuesday, we'll be staying on land for the evening event, but enjoying the lake from the ECHO Leahy Center, a science and nature museum on the waterfront, <https://www.echovermont.org>.

Wednesday August 7. Educational sessions will run all morning, but the afternoon is yours to catch up on email, return phone calls, play in the Joe Lane Memorial Golf Tournament, or explore Burlington and the surrounding area. Because 2024 is an Olympic year, we'll also be staging a cornhole tournament to give Jim Hivner (TN) an opportunity to redeem himself from Williamsburg 2022. If you plan to explore the surrounding area, consider renting a car for a trip to Stowe (<https://gostowe.com>), with stops at the Ben & Jerry's Factory and Cold Hollow Cider Mill in Waterbury.

Thursday August 8. Join us for the early morning fun run/walk, which will be followed by additional educational sessions, part II of the business meeting, and the awards luncheon. You won't want to miss the day's educational sessions, so consider sticking around through Thursday evening to hit some of the sights that your packed schedule did not previously allow.

The conference page on the website will soon be updated with the hotel booking link, the online registration, and other information. In the meantime, if you have questions about logistics or activities, please contact me at tgudas@courts.state.nh.us. I look forward to seeing you in Burlington!

Conference Financial Aid is Available!

As we are getting closer to this year's Conference in Burlington, we would like to remind all members that scholarship funds are available to promote attendance at annual meetings of the NCACC by members who would otherwise be unable to attend. Funding may be requested to cover transportation and lodging costs (hotel rate \$187, per night, excluding taxes), and the registration fee (\$500) may be waived. You may request a full or partial scholarship. If you apply and later find that full or partial funds are available from your court, please inform the Scholarship Committee so they can reassign funds to sponsor as many applicants as possible.

Scholarship criteria may be found in the NCACC directory under the Committee Operation Guidelines/NCACC Scholarship Committee. If you are interested in applying, please submit your application electronically to the National Center for State Courts **by May 1, 2024** via the following link:

https://ncsc2.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_aWpOsUKXlpn1WQe

Our Scholarship Committee will be evaluating all applications submitted soon, so if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Lilia Oquendo-Solís (PR), Scholarship Committee Chair (Lilia.oquendo@poderjudicial.pr).





THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Jenny Kitchings (SC)

Spring is on its way, and I for one could not be more excited. The days are longer and my eye has turned towards the 51st Annual Conference and Meeting in Burlington, Vermont on August 4-8, 2024.

We had a lovely Executive Committee meeting in Albuquerque this past fall. We toured the hotel that will be hosting our 2025 conference, and I think we are going to have a fantastic time in New Mexico. Liz Garcia and Colette Bruggman will be fantastic hosts—Liz can't wait to show off her beautiful state to us! I don't want to spoil the magic of New Mexico for you too much, but I will say that chile is a way of life there. You get it with every meal, and can choose either red or green. Apparently, true New Mexicans order "Christmas," which is a mix of both! Now that I'm back in South Carolina, I can't wait to return for Christmas chile alone. Please mark your calendars for August 3-7, 2025.

One of the greatest joys of the National Conference of Appellate Court Clerks is opportunities to get together and share experiences. Our committees offer other opportunities to build friendships in support of the conference throughout the year. If you're unable to attend the conference, our listserv is available to questions about how other appellate courts operate to help you navigate the issues your court is facing. The Docket is also a great resource to keep up-to-date with the goings on in the NCACC.

I hope to see you
all in Burlington,
Vermont!

Warmly,

Jenny Kitchings



CALL FOR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

At the annual business meeting in July, the membership will elect officers to lead the NCACC in the coming years. The Nominating Committee would like your input on members that you believe would serve as effective leaders of the NCACC. After receiving and reviewing nominations from members, the Nominating Committee will submit a recommendation to the membership for members to fill the positions.

To be eligible to serve as an officer, a member must be a “regular” member in good standing for the two years preceding the election. If you know an eligible member who you believe could contribute as an officer, please consider nominating him or her. You may also nominate yourself or ask another member to nominate you.

A list of the offices to be filled and descriptions of the duties of each office are included below. If you have questions about what service as an officer or an executive committee member entails, feel free to contact me or another nominating committee member. The other members of the Nominating Committee are: Jakob Trierweiler (AZ); Meredith Montgomery (AK); Colette Bruggman (CA); and Deana Williamson (TX). Lon Weissblum (FL) serves as the Executive Committee Liaison to the Nominating Committee.

Please email nominations to me or another committee member by May 15, 2024.

Stacey Pectol (FL), Chair
Nominating Committee
pectols@flcourts.org

Offices to be filled:

Office of Vice-President: (one-year term, succeeding to office of President-Elect)
Presently held by Scott Mitchell (AL)

Office of Secretary: (two-year term)
Presently held by Claudia Jenks (TX)

Executive Committee Members, 3 positions (2-year terms):
Position 1:
Presently held by Pauline (Polly) Brock (CO)

Position 2:
Presently held by Tracie Lindeman (AZ)

Position 3:
Presently held by Lon Weissblum (FL)

Executive Committee Member, 1 position (1-year term) (to fill one year of a term expiring in 2025):
Position 4:
Presently held by Elizabeth Garcia (NM), as appointed replacement for Michael Cruz (TX)

Description of Offices and Duties of Officers:

Article V Par. 3: Election and Succession of Officers. The President – Elect shall succeed to the office of the President at the expiration of the term as President-Elect. The Vice-President shall succeed to the office of President-Elect at the expiration of the term as Vice-President. The President shall succeed to the office of Past-President at the expiration of the term as President. At each annual business meeting, the Vice-President shall be elected by a vote of a majority of the members present at the meeting and entitled to vote; the Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected for two-year terms, the Secretary in the even-numbered years and the Treasurer in odd-numbered years. The Treasurer and the Secretary shall be eligible for reelection.

Article VI Par. 1: Duties of the President. The President shall serve as the chief executive officer and shall preside at all meetings of the Conference and its Executive Committee.

Article VII Par. 2: Executive Committee.

Powers and Duties. The Executive Committee is the Board of Directors. It shall direct the affairs of the Conference and shall meet annually prior to the annual business meeting of the Conference and at other times at the call of the President or seven members of the Committee. All matters before the Executive Committee shall be determined by a majority vote of those present. Seven members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Executive Committee shall decide any question raised on the interpretation and application of these Bylaws.

Article V Par. 5: Duties of Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for the taking of the minutes of the Executive Committee and the annual business meeting or any called meeting and for distributing them to the Executive Committee and the National Center for State Courts. The minutes of the annual business meeting or any called meeting of the full Conference shall be transmitted to the members of the Conference with the call of the next annual business meeting; this requirement may be met by publication in *The Docket*, the NCACC newsletter. The Secretary shall be responsible for overseeing the billing of every member of the Conference for annual dues no later than January fifteenth of each year and the maintenance of a list of all members in good standing.

Please review the NCACC Bylaws for further details about these positions.

In Memory: Jean MacIntyre Kennett



Jean Kennett, an early and active member of the NCACC, passed away on December 30, 2023, at age 93. While Jean’s professional career began on a traditional path for women at the time, she became a trail blazer as the first female Clerk of the oldest appellate court in continuous existence in the Western Hemisphere, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (“SJC”), established in 1692.

After graduating from the Katherine Gibbs Secretarial School, Jean embarked on what she expected would be a long secretarial career. She was employed by a bank, an architectural firm, and an electronics company. After receiving word that her last employer was in the throes of a buyout, she decided to find a different job. Her alma mater scheduled her for eight interviews in one day, the last of which was to become secretary to the Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court, Paul Reardon. He immediately hired her. When Reardon was elevated to the SJC in 1962, Jean joined him there.

Inside the SJC, Jean rose through the ranks from secretary to third assistant clerk and then second assistant clerk. When the first assistant clerk position was vacated, Jean felt she was the logical choice for the position, but she knew the court wanted a lawyer in the position. Despite having no undergraduate degree, the then 47-year-old was admitted to Suffolk University Law School, which she would attend during evenings for four years, after working daytime at the court.

While Jean recalled some months in law school “were the most miserable of my life,” she also recognized that attending law school “was the most wonderful thing I ever did for myself.” While in law school, Jean was appointed first assistant clerk. She was the first woman the Justices appointed in the role, and also the first nonlawyer they had appointed to the position. Jean became a member of the bar in 1981. A few years later, the Justices appointed Jean as Clerk of the SJC for the Commonwealth, again the first woman to hold that position.

Jean noted that during her tenure at the SJC, she observed a growth in the number of women lawyers appearing before the court, attorneys wearing more bright colors to arguments, the recognition of environmental law as a subject, the development of discrimination law and LGBTQ rights, and an increase in self-represented parties from the family courts. After 35 years with the SJC and 15 years as Clerk, Jean retired in 1999.

Membership in the NCACC was a large part of her professional life. Jean joined the NCACC as an early member, with the Clerk of the SJC for Suffolk County, John Powers, who the NCACC recognizes as one of its founding members, and her boss, Patrick Hurley, Clerk of the SJC for the Commonwealth. Jean was instrumental in planning the NCACC’s 9th annual conference in Boston in 1982. She later served as an Executive Committee member and as member of multiple committees and was president in 1985-86. The NCACC awarded Jean with the J.O. Sentell Award in 1987.