



Administrative Memorandum

Administrative Memorandum 06-5
May 2006

Nebraska Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation
P. O. Box 98910
Lincoln, NE 68509
402-471-3730

John V. Hendry, Chief Justice
Janice K. Walker, State Court Administrator
Ellen Fabian Brokofsky, State Probation Administrator

Administrative Memoranda available at www.nebraskacourt.com under "Court Administrator's Office" on the main page, left-hand menu.

SPECIAL PROJECTS AND EVENTS

Note from the State Court Administrator

The Administrative Office summer legislative visits have been completed for 2006. Aside from enjoyable reunions with clerk magistrates, judges, and the opportunity to meet many clerks and staff of the district court, the trip contained several prominent highlights. Of particular note were:

- Touring the beautiful renovation of the Holt County courthouse
- Participating in the "Year of the Juror" proclamation signing ceremony in Gering
- Viewing the murals and the new landscaping at the Burt County Courthouse
- Observing Judge Skorupa's "Years of Service" presentation to his clerk magistrate

Thanks to everyone who assisted with the meetings by serving as coordinators and RSVP recipients. Every visit was enjoyable, the meals were wonderful, and the company was even better.

Janice Walker, State Court Administrator, 402-471-3730, jwalker@nsc.state.ne.us

National Drug Court Month

In celebration of National Drug Court Month, Nebraska's drug courts held a variety of events to honor drug court graduates and those in the process of breaking their addictions.

According to Statewide Problem-Solving Court Coordinator Scott Carlson, "Drug Court is a proven and cost-effective approach to breaking the cycle of drug addiction and crime. It is wonderful to have a designated Drug Court Month to celebrate the successes of our problem solving courts."

Nebraska's drug courts celebrated in a variety of ways throughout the state: The Douglas County Juvenile Drug Court held a graduation on May 1 and sponsored a mural painting project; the Douglas County Family Dependency Court held a pizza party; the Lancaster County Juvenile Drug Court held a graduation on May 2 and sponsored poem and essay contests; the Lancaster County Adult Drug Court held a graduation on May 22; and the Sarpy County Juvenile Drug Court held a graduation on May 25.

More detailed information on Drug Court Month celebrations will be mailed with next month's Administrative Memorandum.

Contact Scott Carlson, Statewide Coordinator of Problem-Solving Courts, 402-471-4415, scarlson@nsc.state.ne.us

Workload Assessment Study Finished

Thanks to all of the judges, child support referees, and clerk magistrates for participating in the Nebraska Judicial Workload Assessment Study.

The time study data collection phase ended April 27, 2006.

All participants will be contacted to complete a short Web-based survey which will aid in the interpretation of the time study data. It is very important that you complete this survey as part of your participation in the study. It is anticipated that the survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The National Center project director estimates that the final report will be produced by July or August, 2006.

Contact Eileen Janssen, Administrative Assistant, 402-471-4427, ejanssen@nsc.state.ne.us

Articles Worth Taking Time to Read

This month's "Nebraska Lawyer Magazine" has several articles regarding projects undertaken by Nebraska courts. One of the issue editors, Elizabeth Neeley, PhD, has worked closely with the judicial branch through her position as project director for the Minority and Justice Implementation Committee. If you don't receive the magazine through the mail, you can access articles on-line by going to www.nebar.com, look under "resources" on the left-hand menu, select "The Nebraska Lawyer Magazine" and "Current Issue."

Feature articles useful to judges and court staff include:

- Recent Efforts to Make Nebraska Juries More Representative of Their Communities
- Nebraska Efforts to Ensure Equal Access to Justice
- How to Get the Most From Working With a Court Interpreter
- Poverty As It Relates to Access to Justice - Why Your Help is Needed

Nebraska Court of Appeals in North Platte May 17 – 19, 2006

Nebraska Court of Appeals Judges Richard D. Sievers, Frankie J. Moore, and William B. Cassel traveled to North Platte May 17 -19 to hear arguments at the U.S. District Court Courtroom, 200 East 3rd Street.

Reminder: A copy of the Court Call and Case Summaries can be found on the Web site of the Nebraska Judiciary at www.nebraskacourt.com/judges/appealsjudges.htm.

Prior to the North Platte arguments, the Nebraska Court of Appeals heard cases in Norfolk and Omaha April 18 – 20 of this year.

Guardian/Conservator Education Classes

Please check the Nebraska Judicial Branch's Web site for updates on the class schedule list at www.nebraskacourt.com.

Contact Debora Brownyard, Dispute Resolution Services/Rural Court Services, 402-471-2766, dbrownya@nsc.state.ne.us

PEOPLE

Bar Foundation Honors Two Judges with Annual Awards

The Nebraska State Bar Foundation presented Chief Justice Hendry with its Public Service Award and Lancaster County District Court Judge Karen Flowers with the Legal Pioneer Award at their annual Fellows Dinner on March 24.

The Public Service Award is given to a lawyer or judge who has been or is currently employed with the local, state, or federal government in Nebraska or to a Nebraska lawyer in governmental employment outside the state for outstanding service in the performance of duty.

In recognizing Hendry, Lincoln attorney Thomas M. Davies noted that "since the day the Chief Justice took office, he began a campaign of public education and openness." Davies congratulated Hendry for keeping open lines of communication throughout the state, whether with the press, lawmakers, or students. He also cited Hendry's efforts to encourage other judges to communicate with their local reporters and to participate in public speaking engagements.

Hendry is credited with expanding the reach of Law Day observations and celebrations on several levels throughout the state. In 2000, he began a partnership with the Foundation for co-sponsoring a Law Day Essay Contest for 7th through 12th graders. The contest, now in its seventh season, culminated with activities on May 1 in Lincoln. Hendry also encouraged the Supreme Court's co-sponsorship with the Foundation for Law Day Job Shadowing for fifth graders, which involves more than 600 students around the state. (See enclosed Judicial News Special Edition on Law Day programming.) Hendry also positioned the Court as one of the state's leaders in implementing activities and observations for Constitution Day for schools as mandated by Congress.

Davies continued his tribute to Hendry by crediting the Chief with major changes in the legal practice areas of civil procedure and ethics. Davies concluded, "Under the watchful eye of the Chief, the Court continues to expand its outreach

efforts through openness and communication with other branches of government, the press, Nebraska's education system, and the legal community.”

The Legal Pioneer Award, given to Judge Karen Flowers, honors the past or current accomplishments of a lawyer or judge who makes innovative contributions to the improvement of justice.

In introducing Judge Flowers, Judge Laurie Smith Camp, U.S. District Court Judge for the District of Nebraska, recalled some of Judge Flowers' many achievements. Judge Smith Camp noted that Judge Flowers was the first female district court judge in Lancaster County and that she was one of the founders of the Women's Law Caucus at the University of Nebraska College of Law.

Judge Flowers is credited for her leadership and supervision of the first drug court in Lancaster County. Other contributions made to the improvement of justice by Judge Flowers include teaching the Domestic Relations section of orientation for new judges, teaching at continuing legal education seminars, serving as past president of the Lincoln chapter of the American Inns of Court, past president of the Lincoln Bar Association, and past chair of the Nebraska Bar Association's House of Delegates. Judge Flowers is also a past board member of Leadership Lincoln, and she helped that organization direct "Justice Day" activities.

The Nebraska State Bar Foundation is a voluntary organization with this mission: "To serve the citizens of Nebraska and the legal profession through the administration and funding of innovative and creative programs directed toward the improvement of the administration of justice and the fulfillment of the American vision of equal justice for all."

New Judge Appointed

On April 25, 2006, Gov. Heineman announced his appointment of Randin Roland as county court judge for the 12th Judicial District.

Roland, 40, has served as the chief deputy county attorney for Cheyenne County since 2003 and as a deputy county attorney from 1995 to 2003. Prior to returning to Nebraska in 1995, he maintained a private legal practice in Rapid City, S.D., where he engaged in general practice. In his final year of law school, Roland served as an intern with the Offutt Air Force Base JAG Office.

Roland is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Northern Arizona University, earning a degree in business administration in 1988. He received his law degree from the Creighton University School of Law in 1993.

Probation Appoints Chief Probation Officer

Robert Denton has been appointed the new Chief Probation Officer for Probation District #16 in Fremont effective May 16, 2006.

Denton began his employment with the Nebraska Probation System as a probation officer in November 1989, was appointed Chief Deputy in January 2002, and appointed Acting Chief Probation Officer in July 2005.

Denton graduated from Midland College with a bachelor's degree in behavioral science and from Bellevue University with a master's degree in human services. Denton is co-chair of Probation's Public Relations Committee and also serves on the Community Corrections Programs Committee as well as several sub-committees.

Office of Probation Administration Selects Financial Officer

Patricia M. Langer has been selected as the new Financial Officer in the Office of Probation Administration effective June 1, 2006.

Langer has been employed for six years as Senior Accountant with the State Historical Society and worked in a similar position for nearly five years with the Department of Roads. Langer holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska with an emphasis in business administration. She is presently completing her master's degree in business administration through the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

New Court Personnel

Diane Watson, Clerk Magistrate, Cheyenne County, effective May 8, 2006.

Kimberly Hansen, Clerk Magistrate, Wayne County, effective May 6, 2006.

New Probation Personnel

Amoreena Brady, Probation Officer, District #5, Papillion, effective May 1, 2006.

Alyssa Kruienga, Probation Officer, District #4, Omaha, effective May 8, 2006.

Brett Walker, Half-time Juvenile Intake Probation Officer, District #2, Norfolk, effective May 8, 2006.

Fawn Chandler-Sullivan, Probation Officer, District #4, Omaha, transfer from ISP/Region E, effective May 15, 2006.

Gary Grable, Case Manager, District #4, Omaha, transfer from Administrative Office, effective May 24, 2006.

Patricia Langer, Financial Officer, Office of Probation Administration, effective June 1, 2006.

Retirements

Carol Brown, Clerk Magistrate, Brown County, effective April 30, 2006.

Jack B. Lindner, County Judge, 3rd Judicial District, effective April 30, 2006.

Ronald D. Olberding, District Judge, 8th Judicial District, effective April 30, 2006.

Joan Rogers, Clerk Magistrate, Hooker/Logan/Thomas/McPherson Counties, effective April 30, 2006.

Thomas B. Dawson, Separate Juvenile Judge, Lancaster County, effective June 1, 2006.

Philip R. Riley, County Judge, 7th Judicial District, effective July 1, 2006.

PERSONNEL

Monthly Reports

Courts no longer need to send in the monthly statistical reports (cases filed, disposition, and financial information) as reported during the State Court Administrator's summer legislative update meetings. Eileen Janssen is currently creating spreadsheets which will enable her to upload the information directly from JUSTICE every month. The reports will print in Lincoln on the night of the 9th of every month for county courts and the 10th of every month for district courts. All reports will continue to print to your court as they have in the past. All other reports still need to be sent to the Administrative Office.

Contact Eileen Janssen, Administrative Assistant, 402-471-4427, ejanssen@nsc.state.ne.us

COMMITTEES • COMMISSIONS

Public Education Outreach Promoting the Law & Equity (PEOPLE)

Nebraska Bar Foundation President Dean G. Kratz announced the creation of a new committee to work in close cooperation with members of the judiciary on joint law-related education and community outreach programming. The Committee - Public Education Outreach Promoting the Law & Equity (PEOPLE) - has a core committee of 10 lawyers and judges. Judge Lyle Strom and former NSBA Law-Related Education Director Tom Keefe have agreed to serve as the Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Other members include: Judge Lawrence Gendler, Kathy Hall, Judge Todd Hutton, Larry Karel, Judge Thomas Otepka, Judge Richard Sievers, Terry Waite, and George Watson. Staff members from both the Bar Foundation and the Nebraska Supreme Court will serve as staff to the various subcommittees of the group.

The purpose of the PEOPLE Committee is to inform and educate the public (students, adults, members of the media, etc.) on the legal/judicial system in a proactive manner. The Foundation will continue to provide public education on the independence of the judiciary in a manner similar to addressing the 2003 Law Day theme "Independent Courts Protect Our Liberties." Expansion of current cooperative ventures in 5th Grade Job Shadowing and Law Day Essay Contests are planned.

Contact Janet Bancroft, Public Information Officer, 402-471-3205, jhammer@nsc.state.ne.us

POLICY AND RULE CHANGES

Trial Court Rule Amendment

Second Judicial District Court Rule 2-2 amendment was approved by the Supreme Court and is available on the internet. www.nebraskacourt.com/trialcourt/dist2index.htm.

These rules can be found on the Judicial Branch Web site, www.nebraskacourt.com under "Supreme Court Rules."

CALENDAR ITEMS

Judicial Branch Education Meetings/Trainings

June 14 - 16, District Judges' Education Meeting, Nebraska City

June 14 - 16, Official Court Reporters' Meeting, Nebraska City

June 15 - 16, Clerks of the District Court Summer Workshop, Embassy Suites, Lincoln

(Contact Jacque Stewart, jacquelyn.stewart@courts.ne.gov, for more information on the CDC Summer Workshop.)

June 27 - 29, County Judges Education Meeting, Nebraska City

August 1, Law Clerks Orientation, Lincoln

August 10 - 11, County Judges' Orientation, Lincoln

September 18 - 20, Clerk Magistrates' Meeting, Kearney

September 25 - 27, Children's Summit, Nebraska City *(mandatory for all judges with juvenile court jurisdiction)*

October 5 - 6, District Judge Orientation, Lincoln

October 25, Clerk Magistrate Orientation, Lincoln

October 31 - November 3, NSBA Annual Meeting and Judges Fall Education Seminars, Omaha

**** NOTE:** The Court Stenographers' Meeting originally scheduled August 24 - 25 has been postponed until later this year.

Contact Lynn Weiland, Administrative Secretary, Judicial Branch Education, 402-471-3137, lweiland@nsc.state.ne.us

JUSTICE Training

District Court, June 6 - 8, North Platte

County Court, July 10 - 14, Lincoln

County Court, August 7 - 11, North Platte

District Court, August 15 - 17, Lincoln

2006 County Court Calendar: www.nebraskacourt.com/community/cc_justice_train_cal.pdf

2006 District Court Calendar: www.nebraskacourt.com/community/dc_justice_train_cal.pdf

Contact Marcie Brush, Administrative Assistant, 402-471-2249, mbrush@nsc.state.ne.us

Probation Meetings/Trainings

June 8, Chief Probation Officers' / ISP Coordinators' Meeting, Work Ethic Camp, McCook

August 21 - 25, New Probation Officer Training, Grand Island

September 25 - 29, New Probation Officer Training, Lincoln

October 25 - 27, Probation Officers' Statewide Conference, South Sioux City

December 4 - 8, New Probation Officer Training, Kearney

Contact Linda Zabel, Administrative Secretary, 402-471-4140, lzabel@nsc.state.ne.us

MISCELLANEOUS

***Please note that the Governor's office asked the AOC for comment on the following press release issued May 15, 2006. The Adams County District Court reported that the Lt. Governor was selected as one of the original 24 jurors, but was later removed for cause.*

Lieutenant Governor Reports for Jury Duty in Adams County

During a year that Gov. Dave Heineman and Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court John V. Hendry have dedicated to celebrating citizen participation in the judicial system, Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy has been called to jury duty in his hometown of Hastings. The Lieutenant Governor reported to the Adams County Courthouse at 8:30 a.m. May 15 for initial screening as a potential juror.

Gov. Heineman said, "For our system of justice to succeed, we need the willing participation of people qualified to serve. I am proud on behalf of all Nebraskans that the Lieutenant Governor's service to his state includes answering the important call of jury duty."

Lt. Gov. Sheehy said, "As Americans, we have the high honor of participating in the outcomes of our judicial system. Participating on a jury is a civic responsibility for each and every one of us, and it is a responsibility we should embrace freely. Juries play an important role in adding a diversity of perspectives to our system of justice."

To help educate the public on the importance of jury duty, Gov. Heineman, Chief Justice Hendry, and Nebraska State Bar Association President William Ditrack proclaimed 2006 as "The Year of the Juror," earlier this year.

The proclamation recognized the important contribution that jurors provide to the justice system. It also launched a statewide campaign by the judicial branch to encourage jury service among Nebraska residents and promote the representation of people from every ethnicity, race, religion and economic background on juries in Nebraska.

State Court Administrator Janice Walker said, "We are pleased that Lieutenant Governor Sheehy is taking time to participate in our jury system. Much like voting, jury duty is a right and responsibility for all Nebraskans and an important way to be directly involved in our democracy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all citizens who have answered the call to jury duty in the past and those who will serve as jurors in the future."

ENCLOSURES

[Judicial News Special Edition on the Law Day Essay Contest and Job Shadow](#)