



Notebook

Vol 2, Issue 1

The Official Newsletter of Georgia's Magistrate Court Clerks

Executive Committee 2006/2007 Officers

President, Jo Anne Jones
Lowndes County

Vice-President, Debbie Barron
Fayette County

Secretary/Treasurer, Gayle Collins
Whitfield County

Executive District Members

DISTRICT 1:
Darlene Seagroves, Effingham Co.

DISTRICT 2:
Joyce Ray, Terrell County

DISTRICT 3:
Carla Brown, Lee County

DISTRICT 4:
Joy Wright, Rockdale County

DISTRICT 5:
Vacant

DISTRICT 6:
Jan Streetman, Upson County

DISTRICT 7:
Freda Maynard, Whitfield County

DISTRICT 8:
Tammy Underwood, Greene County

DISTRICT 9:
Brenda Gramling, Cherokee County

DISTRICT 10:
Cynthia Lewis, Burke County

Greetings from the President

Hope this newsletter finds everyone doing well. Have been terribly busy after coming back from our Clerks and Secretaries Training in Brasstown Valley. The training was great, if you didn't get to come, you missed a good training.

I have been out of the office a lot, because our entire office is going to a new computer system change, so I don't have much news.

Some of us will be meeting with

Dr. Lynda Hanscome of ICJE soon after the first of the new year to start working on our curriculum for our next training session scheduled in July, 2007.

If any of you have any news, please contact Judge Connie Holt, who does the newsletter. Our next news letter will come out in the Spring. Hope you all have a good holiday season.

Jo Anne Jones □

Greetings from the Vice President

Dear Members:

Our meeting in Young Harris this past July was a complete success. From the comments we received, most of you found our training sessions quite informative and enjoyed several of the speakers and would like for them to teach again in future sessions.

Our training session for 2007 will again be held in Young Harris during the week of July 16-20. Dr. Hanscome has to book a year in advance, so 2007 was already planned, however, we do plan on another location for 2008. I would like to encourage everyone who possibly can to plan on attending.

The Executive Committee met in Macon on September 15, 2006, and began planning for next year's session.

The comment sheets turned in at the close of July's session were thoroughly reviewed. The Committee will meet the first part of 2007 with Dr. Hanscome in Athens to plan next year's session and we will try to incorporate your suggested topics and instructors into the program. We really do appreciate your input. If you have any other suggestions you would like to make, please contact either one of the Officers or your District Representative.

Next year is an election year, so you need to be thinking about who you would like to serve on the Executive Committee for the next two years.

Also, next year the certificates given out at the close of business will

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Council of Magistrate Court Clerks and Secretaries

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Thanks

JoAnn,

Please extend my heart-felt thank you to the Executive Committee of the Clerks Council for the lovely travel items. I was terribly thoughtful, although unnecessary to compel me to try to do a good job. But thanks!

I will be in touch early in the New Year to discuss 2007 program and a venue for 2008!

Thanks,
Lynda

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From Your Advisor

Greetings to all. I hope that all of you had a wonderful summer and are looking forward to a great fall and holiday season.

It was so good to see all of you who attended our training in Brasstown Valley, in Young Harris, in July. For those of you who were unable to attend, you really missed a good training, as well as a lot of wonderful fellowship with fellow clerks.

Our training started on Wednesday at 1:00pm starting with our first speaker, Johnny Warren. He presented a program on Nuts and Bolts of Civil Procedures. He also presented each clerk with his new book, which includes forms. A lot of information to take in.

On Thursday, there was a split program (Track A and Track B). Track A, with Judge David Wood, who presented Legal Updates, and Judge Jennifer Lewis, who presented Writs of Certiorari? Track B, with Judge Joy Wright, who presented a course for New Clerks. We then had our business meeting. I was very proud to see most of the clerks in attendance. Then we all enjoyed a wonderful luncheon. In the afternoon, Track B continued for New Clerks, and Track A, Officer Silver presented a program on Gangs of Georgia. And finally the last program for the day was Ethics and Limits of Authority for Pro Se Litigants, presented by Judge Pfeiffer and Judge Lewis. We all then had the opportunity to socialize with our fellow clerks and had free time to take in some of the beautiful sites in Hiwassee and Blairsville.

Our training was concluded on

Friday with Landlord Tenant, first, presented by Judge Levenson, always very good, and ending with a Judges Panel with myself, Judge Wright and Judge Lewis. The training received very good evaluations, so I hope you all received some very valuable training and were able to carry home some new and useful practices.

We all have Dr. Lynda Hanscome to thank for all of our training. She always does a great job, and provides us, always, with a great place to stay and good food. Thank you so much Dr. Hanscome for everything that you do for us. We all really appreciate you so much.

Our Training for next year has been slated for the month of July and will also be at Brasstown Valley. I know that a lot of you wanted to go to a different venue, but because of a venue that cancelled on Dr. Hanscome at the last minute, we were in Brasstown Valley this time. Dr. Hanscome had already contracted for 2007, so maybe we can go to a different place in 2008. Early in the New Year, our Executive Committee will meet with Dr. Hanscome to discuss our training for 2007 and talk about a venue for 2008.

After our business meeting, I have two clerks to approach me, who stated that they would be interested in working on the newsletter, or even taking over the news letter. After we return home, the following Monday, my entire court office moved into our newly renovated courthouse. The move was great and we have wonderful new digs, but during the move I misplaced the names of the two clerks that were interested. I also received an e-mail address that was misplaced. So, to make a long story

short, to those clerks who would like to work on this newsletter, please contact me by phone or by e-mail. I promise I won't lose the information or your names again.

In closing, I want to thank all of you whom have shared news and information to go in the newsletter this time, just keep it coming. It is always so nice to hear from all of you and to be able to share with others. If any of you have any questions or need help with a problem, please call or e-mail.

To all of you, have a great Thanksgiving and a wonderful Holiday Season. I look forward to hearing from you. We will have another newsletter in the spring, so get that information in.

Take care, Connie ☐

Vice President cont.

be for training and not attendance. The certificates will state that you successfully completed 14 hours of training. Many of the clerks have advised that their counties require them to complete several hours of training each year that benefits their position, and it is felt that by preparing CERTIFICATES OF TRAINING, these may be turned into the respective counties for credit hours.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to serve as your Vice President. I am honored and ask for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to call me if I can be of service.

Sincerely, Debbie Barron ☐

Minutes • July 13, 2006

Call to Order and meeting began at 11:15 a.m. with the introduction of Officers and District Representatives. Minutes of last year's meeting were read and approved. It was announced that certificates would be given out on Friday at the last class. If there were persons here who did not receive a certificate from last year's meeting, let us know and we would send them one. Also, if their name was not on this year's attendance list, let us know and one would be prepared and sent to them.

Jo Anne asked if there was any Old Business and there was none.

Dues-Jo Anne advised we are paying for the Magistrate Book. We have 66 counties who have not paid due as yet-book costs \$29.95, but we are being offered book for \$15.00-it was stressed that dues be paid. Dues are \$10.00, so basically you are paying for the book-we want to do useful things with the dues monies that will benefit the most members.

Jo Anne brought up the suggestion of having a social on the second night of the seminar so that clerks can meet and get to know each other. As it is now, we only have short breaks between classes and most members sit with their own groups. It was suggested that we send out a form to all clerks attending next year to ascertain if they would be interested in attending a social-also they could bring a guest, however, guest would have to pay for their own meal, buffet, etc. whatever...A vote was taken to plan a social for next year and there was a Motion proposed and a Second. Vote carried and Social passed.

Next year is an election year-please consider running-Jo Anne is not running again for office. She asked Judge Holt about a Clerk of the Year Award and a Workhorse of the Year Award-Judge Holt stated the Magistrates did this and she actually won last year.

Judge Holt advised they had an Awards Committee-nominations were sent to them for review-Nominations Committee also. This would be great for elections next year-Judge Holt said council who has worked hard for the Clerks should be commended.

In the by-laws it states there is provision for awards-Jo Anne felt it should be the District Representatives who serves on the Awards Committee. Motion was proposed with a Second and vote carried.

A newsletter was prepared and sent out by Judge Holt to each of the 159 counties. She asked if anyone wanted to take on any responsibility of preparing or working on the newsletter. No one in the audience volunteered. Debbie Barron said she would assist and Lucinda Edwards was volunteered. Members asked to get a list. Debbie Barron gave out her new e-mail address (dbarron@fayettecountyga.gov) and advised members if they had any address changes, they needed to contact Jean Hughes of ICJE. Jo Anne asked that Jean Hughes also forward info to Gayle Collins.

Jo Anne advised Judge Holt wanted to speak to members about new \$3.00 Magistrate Retirement fee and where the form and monies

need to be sent-she asked them to let her know if they had not received the info that had been sent out-no one responded. She explained the \$3.00 fee and that monies needed to be sent in by the 10th of each month or clerk could be held responsible-any questions-please give info to Lucinda Edwards if you have not received the proper form for remittance.

It was asked if members had any questions for the District Representatives-no one responded. It was then asked if members had any questions or suggestions for the Officers-no one responded.

Dr. Hanscombe asked if anyone had any questions for her and it was asked where we might go next year. She advised that the venue was selected by setting up all required (mandated) training first-Magistrate Clerks and Secretaries are basically the last on list because we are not mandated to have training. She has to spread out all the sessions-as she can not do all of the sessions between only summer months. Venues are hard to set up-Savannah is one of the most expensive-rooms in October are approximately \$144.00 per night. She advised that rooms were approximately \$15,000.00 with food approximately \$15,000.00-\$20,000.00-example, an apple is \$5.00. She stated that we went to Callaway a couple of years ago and got a favorable response. She herself liked Callaway.

Committee has helped her by making suggestions-planning seminars for different months-there are several options available. The Council of Magistrate Judges feel

Minutes • September 15, 2006

The Executive Committee of the Council of Magistrate Clerks and Secretaries met this date at the Administrative Office of the Courts in Macon, GA at 10 a.m. Those attending included Jo Anne Jones, President; Debbie Barron, Vice President; Gayle Collins, Secretary- Treasurer; Freida Maynard and Jan Streetman, District Representatives and Judge Connie Holt.

The meeting began with Judge Holt's discussion of sending out a newsletter several times a year. She requested that Jo Anne as President write a letter with information concerning the seminar/training held in July and the Executive Committee Meeting. She also wanted the District Representatives and Officers to plan on submitting info to be included in the newsletter. Gayle was to send a treasurer's report and budget. Judge Holt was going to put in some of the info from last year-listing officers, executive committee, district representatives-addresses and phone numbers. She was hoping

to send out two newsletters per year-spring and fall. She planned to advise that next year is an election year. School next year will again be at the Brasstown Valley Resort, Young Harris, GA, week of July 16-20.

We need to stress to members that next year Certificates of Training will be given out showing that 14 hours of training was received and not just a Certificate of Attendance. We discussed what to do about those not attending all sessions. What could be done-general consensus was that it is not right being on county time and skipping sessions-there was a suggestion that the individual counties be notified.

Jo Anne asked Judge Holt if she knew when Dr. Linda Hanscome, ICJE, was going to have another planning meeting. Dr. Hanscome wanted to discuss what we wanted at the next seminar. In going over the evaluations the speakers got, some were rated very low. Judge Holt explained that some of the

Magistrates usually only taught to other magistrates and did not really teach what the clerks and secretaries were interested in and what benefited them the most. It is felt that Judge Joy Wright is so thorough and so good that she really could spend a whole day with new clerks. Mario Silva, the drug person, presented one of the best sessions and received high praise. Members would like to invite him back to hear more. Everyone liked Judge Pfeiffer and felt he should be asked to teach again. The consensus is that we need to recruit new instructors. Everyone was trying to remember the special speaker the last time we were in Jekyll Island and the speaker was female. She spoke about clothing, hair, posture, STRESS. She received good reviews and might like to see if she could speak again. Judge Holt advised we all needed to be making a list of topics for curriculum.

A suggested list for next year is landlord-tenant, criminal procedures, abandoned motor vehicles, stress, domestic violence, foreign judgments, dormant records, 10-yr. record retention, panel of experts, new clerks(two-days) with Joy Wright. Criminal procedures-bad checks on warrants, citations. Joy Wright could teach this on Thursday afternoon with all clerks. Garnishments, fifas, etc. It was also suggested we set up a FORMS table like we did several years ago which was a success.

A suggestion was made to give out two awards each year-Clerk of the Year and Workhorse of the Year. Joyce Ray-2nd District had given Jo Anne some pointers at the July

July Minutes cont.

that this training seminar is important for clerks and they set aside monies in their yearly budget to pay most of the costs for clerks to attend even though it is not mandated.

Dr. Hanscombe asked that the evaluations be filled out and to be sure and make recommendations for venue possibilities. One clerk advised they really did not know of possible places that might be more affordable than others. Could a list be prepared and let a selection be made from the list. She advised that

a venue had to be large enough to accommodate at least 125. She booked on actual pick up from the last year plus 5% increase. There are only a few members having to stay off-site. She has to take into consideration isolated venues, booking enough rooms, meeting space, food places- she tries to meet the needs of all constituents.

Dr. Hanscombe advised that lunch today was being provided by ICJE and then she adjourned the meeting. □

Letters

From: Carlette Gibson

Sent: Friday, October 20, 2006
Pulaski County Magistrate Court

I have been Chief Magistrate since 1995 and I finally have a full time Secretary!

BELIEVE IT OR NOT!! Her name is Mitzi Campbell, she started July 11, 2006.

She is wonderful and finally I have help doing the everyday work.

Just wanted to share the news with you all.

Carlette Gibson

Pulaski county Magistrate Court

From: Barbara A. Lowery

[blowery@cherokeega.com]

Wednesday, November 01, 2006

I would like to announce the retirement of Brenda Grambling July 31st, 2006 after 22 years of service to Cherokee county Magistrate Court. Brenda was our Chief Clerk for the last 7 years and she is greatly missed. Her husband has been in the hospital since the 8th of February and was moved to Windy Hill Long Term Care facility in May of this year and she is staying with him at the hospital 24-7. He is improving somewhat, his lungs are weak and has been on a ventilator since the 10th of February. The Doctors are trying to reduce the time he is on the

ventilator. I would like to request that everybody pray for his recovery.

As you may have heard on the news Cherokee County is the fastest growing county in the State of Georgia. Our population is 141,900 and the statistics show 55% increase in our population by the year 2030. They are comparing our growth to that of Cobb County. You know what that means for us in the next 24 years. More growth- more work, dare I say Job Security, no such thing.

Sorry this took so long to get this to you. It has been very busy, I start, and then I stop.

Thanks,

Barbara Lowery

Clerk

Cherokee County Magistrate Court.

September Minutes cont.

meeting. Judge Holt explained how they as Magistrate Council give out awards. Council has an Awards Committee who receives the nominations and makes the decision on who gets the most votes. Judge Hold also advised when choosing someone for award, it should be special appreciation for all hard work to Council-service, special. contributions. We need to decide who should serve on the Awards Committee. We need to appoint a Chairperson and at least two members. It was suggested Jan Streetman, Freida Maynard and Joyce Ray. They in turn would need to send out a ballot with newsletter- it was suggested that this next year we only do a "Clerk of the Year" and also some special appreciation awards. Active in Council - Someone who has accomplished outstanding achievements and dedication to the Magistrate Clerks & Secretaries Council - not necessarily

just in their county, but someone who has even contributed a lot at the yearly meeting. Special Appreciation is not necessarily a clerk or secretary but someone who has spent a lot of time working with the group to achieve a meaningful training session. Criteria for nominations will need to be included on the ballot.

Motion made by Gayle Collins to nominate Freida Maynard, Chairperson, Jan Streetman and Joyce Ray the Awards Committee. Seconded by Debbie Barron. Motion carried. Have a committee in place. Gayle Collins advised we have \$1 0,000+ in bank. When Dr. Hanscome officially names Brasstown Valley Resort as our location next year (there was a suggestion to see if she could swap us with another group/another location) we need to find a place to set up a night get together for socializing. It was

suggested we fix hot dogs, hamburgers, low country-boil-need to check with hotel to see how they could accommodate for food or make suggestions for different locations. Social needs to be on Wednesday Night so clerks can mingle with everyone and there would be more communication rest of training between different counties and not just in your own little group. It is also strongly suggested by the Executive Committee that we approach the legislators as an organized group to pas legislation making it mandatory that magistrate clerks, deputy clerks, secretaries receive annual training similar to the other courts.

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Barron, Vice President

Letters

From: Tammy Underwood
Judge Holt,

I wanted to share my news from Greene County. I have a new part-time deputy clerk. Her name is Debra Fleeman and she has been a wonderful asset to this office. With her help we are striving to stay on top of our work and keep up with the growing county that we work for.

This is all of my news for now. I had hoped I would have had more responses from the other counties in our district, but didn't hear but from two.

Thank you and hope to talk to you soon. Maybe our district will have more news for our Spring News Letter.

Tammy Underwood,
Clerk
Greene County Magistrate Court
District 8 Representative
Council of Magistrate Court Clerks
and Secretaries

From: Carolyn Boatright
Chief Clerk
Emanuel County Magistrate Court
October 17, 2006

This is the Office of Emanuel Magistrate Court of Swainsboro, Ga. We are very happy to let everyone know that we have new computers, and a new program and we are having a lot of fun learning.

We also have 3 Clerks now, Carolyn Boatright, Jo-Ann Parris, and Dawn Braddy.

Dawn was just sworn in as Clerk, August 29, 2006.

Judge: Ronald Wiggins has now been Judge for 2 years and has improved every thing in this office

except me, He inherited me, (Carolyn), and I came with the territory.

We all work good together just like a happy little family.

Carolyn Boatright, Chief Clerk
Emanuel County Magistrate Court

FROM: LUCINDA EDWARDS

CHIEF DEPUTY CLERK
MORGAN COUNTY
MAGISTRATE COURT

HELLO!

WE MOVED BACK INTO OUR NEWLY RENOVATED COURT-HOUSE IN MORGAN COUNTY, ON JULY 10, 2006. WE WERE ALL TRYING TO GET EVERYTHING SITUATED BEFORE WE WENT TO THE CLERKS & SECRETARIES SEMINAR ON JULY 12 THRU 14TH, 2006, AT BRASSTOWN VALLEY, SO THAT WE COULD ENJOY OUR TIME THERE AND NOT WORRY ABOUT COMING BACK HOME TO MOVE, BUT DIDN'T GET IT ALL DONE. WE STILL HAD A GREAT TIME AT THE SEMINAR, SEEING OLD FRIENDS AND MEETING NEW ONES. AFTER WE RETURNED, WE HAD TO CLOSE OUR OFFICE FOR ALMOST A WEEK IN ORDER GET EVERYTHING MOVED IN, COMPUTERS HOOKED UP AND RUNNING SMOOTHLY AGAIN.. WE ARE SETTLED NOW AND ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR NEW OFFICES AND WE ARE ENJOYING ALL OF NEW SPACE.

From: Gayle Collins Gazaway

Council of Magistrate Court Clerks
& Secretaries
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Ref: Newsletter input

I represented the Magistrate Court Clerks and Secretaries on a Supreme Court Technology Committee. This involved getting all the courts, from the Supreme Court to Magistrate, Juvenile, Municipal, State, etc, moving towards integration. Supreme Court Justice, now retired, Norman Fletcher's goal for Georgia was to be able to know an individual's record, from all over the state, with the touch of a mouse. I was also a part of the language usage for our court. This was very interesting because our courts are not uniform and it was amazing how we use different titles and words but we all mean the same thing. The only problem, for our court clerks and secretaries, at that time, was that we were not a council and all other courts thought we should not have a voice. Well, thanks, in large part, to Judge Connie Holt, as advisor, we accomplished that goal. We are now a Council, let our voice ring, and ring loud.

On a personal note, I would like to share with everyone that on July 21, 2006 I got married. My name is now Gayle Collins Gazaway.

If anyone has any questions for me please do not hesitate to call.

Gayle Collins Gazaway,
Secretary/Treasurer, Council of
Magistrate Court Clerks &
Secretaries ☐

Budget from September 23, 2005 - October 27, 2006

Balance turned over to me as new secretary/treasurer	\$8,756.83
Check order from bank	-29.64
Book of stamps-check 1001	-7.49
Cost of newsletter-check 1002	-214.20
157 stamped envelopes for dues letter-check 1003	-73.79
Labels for above envelopes-check 1004	-12.83
Deposits from 3/17/06-5/31/06-clerk dues	2,610.00
Cost of certificates-check 1005	-53.80
Deposit 8/25/06-clerk dues	20.00
Lynda Hanscombe's appreciation gift-check 1006	-90.93
64 stamped envelopes-reminder to unpaid dues-check 1007	-30.08
Deposit 10/6/06-clerk dues	210.00

Balance as of 10/27/06 **\$11,084.16**

The deposits consist of 104 counties paying dues, 55 counties have not paid. If you are unsure, please do not hesitate to call at (706) 876-1519.

Gayle Collins Gazaway,
Secretary/Treasurer



The Reporter's Notebook
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