

The Reporter's

Notebook



The Official Newsletter of Georgia's Magistrate Court Clerks

Executive Committee 2015-2017

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Vice President

Cynthia Kelley, Burke County

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Cheryl McMillan, Charlton County

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District 2:

Amanda Rowe, Berrien County

District 3:

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District 5:

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District 6:

Jan Streetman, Upson County

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Greetings from the President

I hope you are having a great spring. It seems like it was just yesterday when we were all at Lake Lanier for some awesome training. Speaking of training, this year's training will be held at Sea Palms Resort & Conference Center in St. Simons on June 16th and 17th. I hope to see you all there.



Please remember to pay your dues for the Council of Magistrate Court Clerks, Inc. If you have not done so, please see Cheryl McMillan of Charlton County. Remember it is just \$15.00 per clerk and/or deputy clerk in each office. The dues help pay for some of the expenses incurred for our training. Also, please remember that we changed our name from the Council of Magistrate Court Clerks and Secretaries to the Council of Magistrate Court Clerks, Inc. Our dues run annually with the fiscal year from July 1st to June 30th.

In January, the Executive Committee met with Tiffany, Missy, and Kathy from ICJE to plan for our training. We had a great turn-out for the planning session, as lots of great topics were discussed. ICJE is doing some cross-training and has placed Missy Tolbert as our go-to-person for the Magistrate Clerks.

We have been working on a Magistrate Court Clerks Benchbook with the help of Judge Michael Barker and Kathy Adams. Hopefully we will have it ready to pass out during our training this year. Thank you to everyone who has contributed time and information toward this project. Without your input, we would not have been able to accomplish such a task. I hope to see you all in June in St. Simons for some great learning and fellowship time.

In addition, the AOC has assigned Kevin Holder as the new liaison for the Magistrate Clerks. LaShawn Murphy will no longer be our liaison. I would like to thank LaShawn personally and from our Council for all the hard work you have done. Thank you, LaShawn!

Carla Brown
Lee County

Nominating Committee

Hello, and Happy Spring!

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce that all positions are filled at this time. We are looking forward to seeing everyone at training in June at St. Simons Island. Please let us know if there is anything you need or anything we can do for you. Thank you,

Stacey Askew - doolymagclerk@yahoo.com
Judy Clay - Judy.Clay@athensclarkecounty.com
Julia Floyd - quitco8@eufaula.rr.com

From Your Advisor

Hello All,

Spring has finally sprung! The weather is beautiful and we cannot wait for summer time. The first half of 2016 has moved along swiftly and our June training is on the horizon.



As you will all remember, we had a great time during last year's training at Lake Lanier. We had great participation and the training was top-notch.

For this year's training, ICJE has arranged for us to have some great speakers and we owe a big thank-you to Kathy Adams, ICJE's Associate Director and Missy Tolbert, who replaced Tiffany Sargent as the coordinator working with Magistrate Clerks, for putting it all together for our training at Sea Palms, St. Simons Island on June 16-17, 2016. We will miss Tiffany, but fortunately she isn't too far away.

The Executive Committee met in January in Forsyth to work on the curriculum for

June. It was a great place to meet, as it seemed to be a midpoint location that provided us all with an opportunity to attend. The meeting went well. Our Executive Committee, along with ICJE, put together the curriculum for our upcoming training. I know a lot of you are looking forward to the segment on Garnishments since the new law went into effect in May. We will have a lot of new forms and a lot of information at this training.

As always, I want to thank Carla, our President, for doing such a great job. She could not do her job as President without the help and support of all those serving on the Executive Committee. We need to thank her for all she does for this Council. We also owe a huge thank-you to our Executive Committee members and all those who serve on the Council.

I hope you all will enjoy this beautiful weather, and I look forward to seeing you in St. Simons!

Your Advisor,

Judge Connie Holt

Connie

The Clerks Authority & the 2016 Legislative Session

During the 2016 Regular Session of the Georgia General Assembly, multiple bills received final passage which may impact the courts in which you are clerks. The bills will be made available at www.courttrax.org by June 30, 2016. If you

have any particular questions or concerns, you may contact the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority at 404-327-7320 or visit their website at www.gsccca.org.

SB 255 Garnishment Proceedings; modernize, reorganize, and provide constitutional protections

A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Title 18 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to debtor and creditor, so as to modernize, reorganize, and provide constitutional protections in garnishment proceedings; to provide for definitions; to provide for an affidavit and summons of garnishment, contents, and procedure for garnishment; to provide for property being subject to and exempt from garnishment; to provide for a defen-

dant's and third party's claim and plaintiff's traverse and the procedure for claims and traverses; to provide for procedures only applicable to financial institutions; to provide for and require the use of certain forms for garnishment proceedings; to amend Code Sections 44-7-50 and 53-12-80 of the O.C.G.A., relating to demand for possession and spendthrift provisions, respectively, so as to correct cross-references; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

Legislation Securing Work Based Learning Opportunities for High School Students Signed into Law

On April 26, 2016, Gov. Nathan Deal signed House Bill 402 into law, measure that incentivizes employers to hire 16 or 17 year olds in work based learning positions. Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, along with Rep. Eddie Lumsden (R – Armuchee), State Board of Education Chair Mike Royal, the Georgia Department of Education and the Georgia Department of Insurance, worked together to pass legislation allowing Georgia's students to pursue work rooted in their educational instruction while simultaneously preparing them to enter today's workforce.

"I want to thank Gov. Deal for recognizing the great value in encouraging

our businesses to employ high school students in jobs that will lead them to life-long, fulfilling careers," said Lt. Gov. Cagle. "Georgia is on the forefront of education innovation as we continue implement public policy recognizing each child's individual goals and strengths."

HB 402 encourages employers to provide work based learning opportunities for high school students by allowing insurance providers to offer a 5% reduction (capped at \$2,500) in worker's compensation premiums. This initiative will foster an environment that provides real-world experience for students to prepare them for future career opportunities.

HB 402 will become law on July 1, 2016.

In the News...

Charlton County

Charlton County had some changes as of January 1, 2016. The probate and magistrate office was combined January 1, 2013. Judge Robert Phillips retired December 31, 2015. He is enjoying his retirement in his garden and on his tractor. Ms. Cheryl McMillan is finishing his term and is running for the office. Ms. McMillan has worked for the magistrate office for 16 years and has also been in the probate office since January 2013. On January 25, 2016, Mrs. Jenny O'Berry started as the magistrate clerk. From all indications, Mrs. O'Berry has adapted to her role quite nicely. She has been married to her childhood sweetheart for 27 years and loves to travel anywhere in the mountains, especially if there is a waterfall nearby. The probate clerk is Tammy Burch and she has been in the probate office for five years. She is married to Kelly Burch and the proud parents to two dogs, who are the loves of their life. The Burches both love RVing and fishing.

Dooly County

The Dooly County Magistrate Court would like to welcome Ms. Beverly Dail and Ms. Breanna Foster, who are the newest additions as part-time clerks. Ms. Foster is a 2016 Juris Doctorate candidate at Faulkner School of Law. Ms. Foster's graduation is set for May 2016.

Lee County

The Magistrate Court of Lee County is happy to announce that Judge Jim Thurman will be run unopposed for his fifth term as the Chief Magistrate Judge for Lee County. Judge Thurman has been Lee County's Chief Magistrate for nearly two decades. Judge Thurman's employees enthusiastically support him in his efforts. Judge Thurman's staff includes Carla Brown, Associate Magistrate Judge/Deputy Clerk (13 years of service), Buddy Craver, Chief Constable/

Deputy Clerk, (14 years of service, 11 years of which with Magistrate Court), Jack Gleaton, Deputy Clerk (15 years of service), and Jackie Norman, Deputy Clerk (6 years of service).

As is widely known, Judge Thurman, also known as "Dude" by "Midnight," his horse and trusty companion, have gained a couple of new friends at the Namruth Farm. "Dude" has welcomed Hank, Clyde and Sampson to their home. As of this deadline for this publication, "Midnight" could not be reached for comment. At any rate, the Namruth Farm crew is enjoying the beautiful weekends in South Georgia as they ride the trails.

Gil, Carla's oldest son, has embarked on a new career choice as a flight medic in Union County. Our most sincere well-wishes are extended to Gil as he embarks on his new career. In September, Matt returned home from a tour of duty in England and wasted no time getting married to his new bride, Kristine. Congratulations to Matt and Kristine and we wish them many years of marital bliss!

David, Buddy's son, will be leaving his probation job in Leesburg in order to move to Athens and marry Lauren Robbins, his beautiful bride-to-be, in August. Good luck to David and Lauren on their pending nuptials and congratulations to Buddy and his wife Marie on gaining a soon-to-be daughter-in-law!

Cory, Jackie's son, is engaged to Daniela Russell. Their wedding is scheduled for October. Jackie's daughter Deanna and her son-in-law Danny are keeping her busy with a 3-year-old granddaughter and 1-year-old twins.

continued next page

In the News... continued

Rockdale County

The Clerk's Office is pleased to announce that Incumbent Chief Magistrate Judge Phinia Aten is running unopposed during the 2016 election cycle.

Special appreciation is extended to Work-Based Learning Intern Mr. Austin Anderson for his dedicated efforts and commitment towards his fall internship completed at the Magistrate Court of Rockdale County.



The Magistrate Court of Rockdale County would like to publicly welcome Judicial Assistant Patricia Carreker and Deputy Clerk III Juanita Wells into its Magistrate Court family. The staff is excited about them coming aboard to add to the court's efficiency, productivity, and customer service.

Congratulations to Ms. Heidi Melendez on her promotion to Deputy Clerk II. After sifting through hundreds of resumes and interviewing several qualified applicants for the Deputy Clerk II position, Ms. Melendez was promoted in-house. She is noted for her professional manner in which she goes about her work, which she has done since arriving to the court.



Ware County

We are excited to announce that our Chief Magistrate Judge, Nathan Grantham, will be running unopposed for his third term during the 2016 election cycle. Judge Grantham and Magistrate Judge Charles Brown together with our two (2) on-call judges, Judge William E. Linton and Judge Etta M. Varnadore, work with their staff and law enforcement to make Ware County a better place to live.

Chief Magistrate Clerk Marilyn Roberts was chosen as the Ware County Employee of the Month for February 2016. She received a very nice plaque and a gracious monetary award, along with recognition at the monthly County Commission Meeting and an article in the local newspaper.

We are very thankful for having our courtroom updated with new sound equipment, along with a new laptop and television screen. We are also very appreciative for the new chairs in the courtroom, lobby and in our offices.

Ware County has been in the planning process of building a new Courthouse Annex and some much needed parking lots for some time now. We have just recently witnessed the demolition of the old Magistrate Court building, formerly the old Ware County Hospital. Although the building has been unused for over 5 years now, it is still bittersweet.

Congratulations to Deputy Clerk Sandie Blackburn on celebrating 20 years of meritorious service with Ware County, the last seven years she has worked in the magistrate court.

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Prayer Request

Joy Marchbanks, Clerk in Sumter County Magistrate Court in Americus, GA's is asking for prayers for her Granddaughter, Macelynn Grace Holland. Macelynn turned 3 years old on February 15, 2016 and upon completion of her 3 year old check-up, they heard a heart murmur for the first time. Jami Hodges who is her PA referred us to a Cardiologist. Our first

visit with a cardiologist was at the Columbus branch of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Sibley Heart Center Cardiology.



During this visit they did confirm she does have a heart murmur and they diagnosed her with ASD Atrial Septal Defect and upon more tests they stated she had what appeared to be a 1/2 inch hole in her heart. We discussed options and pretty much decided to go the route of a Catheter Procedure to implant an ASD device which is like a clamp to seal the hole and he then had to refer us to the main branch in Atlanta.

On April 19, 2016 we went to the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Sibley Heart Center Cardiology for more testing. They duplicated the tests previously done as well as additional more detailed tests. I must say Macelynn went thru it all like a champ she was wonderful! They were able to get very good images. After testing was complete and doctors reviewed it all we had a chance to meet with them. We

met with two Cardiologists and their PA and it was explained to us at this point Macelynn is not a good candidate for the ASD Device procedure since her heart has no Extra Muscle for the device to be clamped to. In addition, they found the hole to be twice the size as original thought as well as the hole goes into the back of the heart. Thus, she will need to



undergo Open Heart Surgery. The first Cardiologist from the Columbus office called us to ensure

we understood everything and asked if we had any additional questions. He informed us the next step will be the Surgeon will be contact us within the next two weeks to talk to us more and schedule the operation.

So this is the waiting stage we are currently at, waiting for the doctor to call and schedule a date for the surgery. We are anticipating a date of June 7, 2016, and it will require a 3-4 night stay in the hospital as long as all goes well and no complications arise. So far, all the people we have met up there and with this medical facility are outstanding! We feel very comfortable in the decision we made as a family to proceed with the Open Heart Surgery at the earliest chance we can. Please pray all goes well for her.

The Listserv...is ready to serve you!

The Magistrate Clerks' Listserv's purpose is to automatically send information out as well as provide interaction between all Magistrate Clerk subscribers. For those of you who are not aware here are a few reasons to join listserv:

- 1) It is a cost-free way to interact with fellow Magistrates Court Clerks and discuss issues concerning your class of court,
- 2) Great way to seek out advice on unusual cases or cases you may have not experienced before and,
- 3) It's a quick way to send urgent notices that may other wise require sending post-cards, making long distance calls (faxes) and playing phone tag (remember the cost buildup).

The Council encourages you to subscribe to this list. It is convenient, informative, and not to mention, it can be used as a great reference in referring to past events. Subscribing takes one call or e-mail.

Once you have subscribed, you will receive a welcome message, providing instructions on using the service

To subscribe to the Magistrate Clerks Listserv, please contact Kevin Holder, AOC, at (404) 463-6296 or via email at kevin.holder@georgiacourts.gov.

Welcome aboard to all new subscribers!

In the News... continued

Congratulations are also in order for Deputy Clerk Kathy Cook. Kathy has been with Ware County Magistrate Court for five years. Kathy enjoys spending time with her family and was able to spend time with her two sons and their families in the Atlanta area for Easter.

Deputy Clerk Rebecca Hall competed in the local YMCA Team Lean and placed 2nd in the women's individual class. Rebecca's husband, Matt, also competed and placed 3rd in the men's individual class. Together they lost over 60 pounds in a 10-week time period. They will continue for an additional 10 weeks in the YMCA Team Leaner. Good luck to both of them!

Deputy Clerk Tammy Douglas would like to give a shout-out to her children for their accomplishments. Her daughter, Jacy, recently won a \$500 Scholarship from HOSA. Jacy, a high school Senior, has already passed the State Board and is currently employed as a CNA at Satilla Hospice House. Jacy plans to attend South Georgia State College in the fall. Tammy's son, Nash, is a Freshman and is very active in the Ware County High School FFA and his Poultry Judging team placed 1st in the Region and moved on to State, where they placed 3rd.

Meet the JC/AOC Research Staff

Staff of the Judicial Council/AOC Research Office has changed a bit since the beginning of the year. Audrey Udemba, Communications Intern, took a few moments to speak with the Research Office's members recently.

The Research Office strives to provide evidence-based research and subject matter expertise to the Judicial Council of Georgia, the Georgia Courts, the AOC and to other stakeholders to improve the administration of justice. For more on their activities, go here.

Carla Hardnett

What is your educational background? Formally: I was educated on the mean liberal



streets of Portland, Oregon. Informally: I completed undergraduate studies at Clark Atlanta University in Criminal Justice (BA) and graduate studies at Georgia State University in Public Administration (MPA).

How long have you been with the JC/AOC? Long enough to know that wedding engagements are a matter of public record. Almost 4 months.

What is your work experience prior to coming to the JC/AOC? Prior to the AOC, I spent 15 years advocating for and training teens and young adults in various capacities.

What is your assignment within Research? Manager.

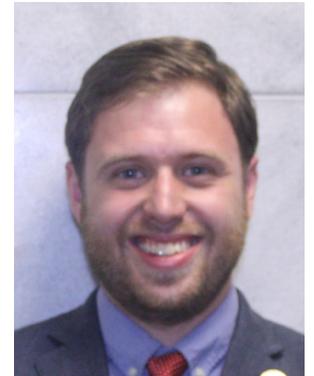
What assignment/experience has been the most rewarding or interesting? It depends on the day.

How do you spend your weekends? Most of it is spent on Interstate 85.

What is a fun fact about you or something people wouldn't know about you? I eat at Burgerville.

Robert Aycock

What is your educational background? Bachelors of Political Science at Georgia College & State University; Masters of Public Administration at Georgia State University.



How long have you been with the JC/AOC? One year.

What is your work experience prior to coming to the JC/AOC? I worked for a social research firm called NORC. Prior to that I worked in various positions within state government and politics.

What is your assignment within Research? I generally take the lead with caseload and survey research projects.

What assignment/experience has been the most rewarding or interesting? Revising the probate reporting caseload form.

How do you spend your weekends? Relaxing with my friends and my fiancé.

What is a fun fact about you or something people wouldn't know about you? I have read Lord of the Rings more times than I care to admit.

Jeffrey Thorpe

What is your educational background? I received my Masters of Public Administration (MPA) with a focus on Public Management. Also, I received my Bachelors of Art



in Political Science and International Studies with minor in Spanish Language. I focused on Government Operations as well as War and Peace with area emphasis in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Both were received from the fantastic

Georgia Southern University in Statesboro.

How long have you been with the JC/AOC? I have been with the AOC since Feb 1st 2016. And lovin' it!

What is your work experience prior to coming to the JC/AOC? Before coming to the AOC, I worked at a transportation spend management (TSM) company called Veraction as a Cost Allocation Specialist. Before Veraction, I interned with the Brunswick Circuit Defenders Office while I was working on my Masters. I also worked in Georgia Southern's Office of Student Activities as a graduate assistant that focused on Programming.

What is your assignment within Research? Currently, my main focus has been ADR Caseload Data Collection. I also assist with other research requests and other projects as needed.

What assignment/experience has been the most rewarding or interesting? It has definitely been the ADR caseload. It's one of the biggest projects I have been assigned. It has its challenges but definitely provides me with tons of knowledge and experience as well as travel opportunities.

How do you spend your weekends? Usually with friends, concerts, sporting events, theatre productions, and doing research on various international affairs topics.

What is a fun fact about you or something people wouldn't know about you? I am a pretty open book, but I have had an opportunity to do two speeches at the United Nations General Assembly. Unfortunately, it was to students and not to actual UN representatives, but the experience of being on stage where other world leaders do their speeches and being projected on the UN screens was an amazing experience. Plus I got to see the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon speak.

Danita Chiles

What is your educational background? Master of Arts degree in Criminology. I received my Bachelor degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Georgia.

How long have you been with the JC/AOC? 5 months.



What is your work experience prior to coming to the JC/AOC? Various criminal justice internships within state and federal government.

What is your assignment within Research? To support the AOC, Georgia courts and stakeholders with evidence-based research.

What assignment/experience has been the most rewarding or interesting? Creating the agency's most recent Judicial boundary map.

How do you spend your weekends? Concerts, coffee shops, and the gym.

What is a fun fact about you or something people wouldn't know about you? I am an expert in making a traditional Caribbean drink called Sorrel. It's the perfect beverage to have on a hot sunny day!

2015 Magistrate Court Clerks' Training Legacy Lodge, Lake Lanier Island



THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
SUITE 300
244 WASHINGTON STREET, S.W.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334-5900
404-656-5171
FAX: 404-651-6449

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE IN MAGISTRATE COURT PERSONNEL

In accordance with the Uniform Rules for Magistrates Courts: Rule 13. Notice of selection of magistrates, constables and clerks of magistrate court. Whenever a magistrate, constable, or clerk (but not deputy clerks) of the magistrate court shall take the oath required for office in O.C.G.A. § 15-10-3, the chief magistrate shall forward to the Administrative Office of the Courts the name and title of the person taking the oath; the name of the person being succeeded; the term of office, if appropriate; the date assuming duties; and the address and telephone number the official wishes to use for business correspondence.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE SENIOR MAGISTRATE MAGISTRATE
CHIEF CLERK DEPUTY CLERK CLERK CONSTABLE

COUNTY _____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

PHONE(____) _____ FAX (____) _____
EMAIL _____

GENDER: Female Male FULL-TIME PART-TIME
ATTORNEY: Yes No

ELECTION/APPOINTMENT DATE: _____ TERM from _____ to _____

REAPPOINTMENT: Yes No TERM from: _____ to _____

Replacing someone? _____ If So, Who? _____

Has this person ever served as a magistrate? If so, when and in what county? _____

(Optional) Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino Yes No

(Optional): RACE African American (Black) Asian \ Pacific
Euro American (White) American Indian or Alaska Native

Fax or mail this form to the Administrative Office of the Courts at the contact information above.

Submitted by: NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE # _____

CMCC, Inc. Membership Dues

*****NEW ADDRESS*****

Council of Magistrate Court Clerks, Inc.

1520 Third St, Suite B

Folkston, GA 31537

(912) 496-2617

FAX (912) 496-7045

Cheryl McMillan

EMAIL: gamagistratejudge@hotmail.com

Amount Remitted: _____

Date Received _____

Check # _____

Membership dues for 2016 are \$15.00 annually per clerk

COUNTY: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ Fax: _____

Name of Clerks and Email:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____