

COURT NEWS

Newsletter of the Alabama Judicial System

March, 1985

Chief Justice Appoints Three Committees

Chief Justice C. C. Torbert, Jr., recently made appointments to three new state-level committees.

Two of the committees, the Weighted Caseload/Time Standards Committee and the Level II Court Referral Program Committee, were established at the direction of the Chief Justice.

A committee on Sentencing was established at the direction of the Alabama Judicial Study Commission during its annual meeting in Tuscaloosa on January 10-11, 1985.

"With the appointment of these committees, the Alabama judicial system is embarking on a new period

of activity and progress," said Chief Justice Torbert.

"Working to more accurately assess our judicial manpower requirements, establishing case processing standards or goals, dealing effectively with DUI defendants who have a serious dependency on alcohol, and analyzing the sentencing process in Alabama are all timely and important considerations for the judiciary, the citizens of Alabama, and the state legislature," Torbert said.

Weighted Caseload/ Time Standards Committee

As the name implies, the committee has two areas of responsibility--the development of a "weighted" caseload system to assist in determining additional judge needs, and the development of time standards for each jurisdiction of court.

Because each of these areas of responsibility requires the development of separate criteria and standards for circuit and district court, a separate weighted caseload/time standards committee has been appointed for circuit and for district judges.

The circuit court committee will be chaired by Judge
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Tapley Receives Harley Award

On February 27, 1985, the American Judicature Society announced that it is presenting its Herbert Harley Award to Administrative Director of Courts, Allen L. Tapley for his successful efforts to improve the administration of justice in Alabama.

"I am highly honored and grateful to have been selected to receive the American Judicature Society's Herbert Harley Award," said Tapley. "Contributions I have made toward the improvement of judicial administration in Alabama would not have been possible without the efforts of Chief Justice Torbert, Senator Heflin, a concerned bar and public, a responsive legislature, and the everyday hard work of the officials and employees who manage the courts."



Tapley, who was nominated for this honor by U. S. Senator Howell T. Heflin, becomes only the sixth Alabamian to win the award. (Continued on Page 2)

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Tapley Receives Harley Award

Named for the founder of the American Judicature Society, the Harley award is presented to individuals who contribute substantially to the improvement of the administration of justice in their state or region. Previous Alabama recipients of the award were Sen. Heflin, 1973; Montgomery attorney-businessman Carl Bear, 1974; Montgomery Attorney M. Roland Nachman, 1974; Birmingham attorney Joseph F. Johnston, 1977; and the late Mobile Circuit Judge Joseph M. Hocklander, 1982.

Tapley was cited specifically "for his endeavors in the area of court modernization in Alabama and his leadership in establishing the state Administrative Office of Courts as a competent, effective, and efficient department to provide administrative services for the state judicial system."

Under Tapley's direction, Alabama courts have established financial, case management, jury management, and management information systems which are recognized nationally.

Tapley, who was appointed Administrative Director of Courts in 1977 by Chief Justice C. C. "Bo" Torbert, Jr., is a native of Camp Hill. He earned a B.S. degree from Auburn University and a M.A. degree from the University of Alabama.

"Allen Tapley is particularly deserving of this great honor," said Chief Justice

Torbert. "His endeavors to improve the management of our judicial system, to support comprehensive judicial education programs for judges, court officials and court employees, through the establishment of the Alabama Judicial College, as well as his efforts to institute law-related education programs for youth, will significantly benefit our courts and the people of our state for years to come."

In conjunction with the Alabama State Bar, Tapley initiated a Law and Court Observance Week program which received a special program award from the American Bar Association. He has served on the Jury Standards Task Force of the National Center for State Courts and was cited for his help in developing national standards for juror use and management.

Tapley's primary area of concern, however, has been youth education. Working with teachers and other educational leaders, he has overseen the publication of extensive law-related educational and teaching materials, has helped establish law-related educational programs for schools and has spearheaded the organization of educational workshops to assist teachers in informing their students about their courts and the law.

Because of his efforts, Alabama was recently selected as one of seven states to participate in a national pilot program on law-related education.

Changes Made To In-State Travel Rules

Administrative Procedures for In-State Travel have been revised as follows:

(1) Paragraph IV(1)(d) regarding "home base" has been revised to allow for reimbursement of travel from an individual's home when required to do so on nights, weekends, and holidays.

Primarily, this change was made to accommodate officials or employees who have additional duties, such as warrant clerks, and are required to travel to the jail or courthouse at irregular hours. If other job duties exist that require travel at irregular hours, please call Jeannine Stringer for assistance.

(2) Paragraph IV(2), regarding the approval of travel at regular judicial functions, has been amended to define the types of travel that require prior approval for reimbursement.

Basically, travel to any outside educational functions, speaking engagements, and other travel that is not directly related to normal judicial duties must have prior approval in order for officials and employees to be reimbursed by the Administrative Office of Courts.

(Continued on Page 11)

Law & Court Observance Week Is April 29-May 3

Judges Study Jail Crowding

"Liberty and Justice for All," the theme for the May 1 Law Day celebration throughout the United States, will also be the theme of Alabama's Law and Court Observance Week, April 29 - May 3.

The Alabama State Bar Association is again co-sponsoring the events of the week.

In a letter to all presiding circuit judges, Chief Justice C. C. Torbert, Jr., requested "that the bench join ranks with the bar, law enforcement agencies, civic organizations, and schools to ensure that our 1985 Law and Court Observance Week celebration is the best yet."

Alabama received a special service award from the American Bar Association for its 1982 Law and Court Observance Week program.

"Law and Court Observance Week provides the bench and bar with an excel-

lent opportunity each year to strengthen the judicial and legal system in Alabama. Educational activities involving students, such as mock trials, visits to the courthouse, and assembly programs, as well as activities involving adults, can play an important role in gaining public support for the courts and the judicial system," Torbert said.

In addition to the many local activities being planned, a public service television spot is being prepared for distribution to all Alabama television stations. It will feature the Chief Justice with a group of fifth grade students discussing the "Liberty and Justice for All" theme.

Bill Campbell and Peg Walker at the Administrative Office of Courts are available to assist local groups in planning activities and providing material which will assist in writing suitable speeches.

Circuit Judge John M. Karrh, Tuscaloosa County; Circuit Judge Leslie G. Johnson, Lauderdale County; and Rep. Tom Coburn, Colbert County, attended the national judicial conference on jail and prison crowding in Reno, NV, March 12-15.

The meeting was titled, "National Conference of the Judiciary: Crisis in the Streets; Jail and Prison Crowding."

Participants heard from nationally-prominent criminal justice experts and considered a series of recommended judicial practices on jail and prison crowding.

The conference was funded by a grant from the National Institute of Justice of the U.S. Department of Justice and was co-sponsored by the National Conference of Special Court Judges and the National Conference of State Trial Judges of the American Bar Association and the National Judicial College.

Isaac Judson Scott, Jr.

Isaac Judson Scott, Jr., a member of the Judicial Inquiry Commission since its inception in 1973, died January 2, 1985, in Opelika. He was 57.

His widow, Martha Mardre Scott, was appointed by Governor Wallace to succeed him on the commission.

A resolution, passed unanimously by the Judicial Inquiry Commission, said Mr. Scott's "wisdom and insight contributed greatly to the commission's efforts to serve the people of the State of Alabama and the Alabama Court System."

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Chief Justice Appoints

J. Edward Tease, Presiding Circuit Judge of Lauderdale County, and the district court committee will be chaired by Judge Charles A. Thigpen, District Judge of Hale County.

Current criteria for determining additional judgeship requirements are contained in a May 26, 1975, Supreme Court Order which is based on an Institute for Court Management Study.

The Order sets forth seven criteria for consideration: population per judge; population density; square miles per judge; case filings per judge; case dispositions per judge; cases pending per judge; and attorneys per judge.

As set forth in the Order, the criteria are unranked, and each factor has the same significance or "weight" as any other factor.

The second consideration of the committee will be the development of time standards or goals for processing cases in each jurisdiction of circuit and district court.

While the weighted case-load study involves measuring or estimating the amount of judge time spent on a case, the time standard study will analyze the total elapsed time from filing to disposition for each major type of case in circuit and district court.

The committee will determine the appropriate elapsed time for each jurisdiction and develop specific time standards or goals.

"Both the weighted case-load and time standard study are in keeping with our long-standing policy of judicial accountability. Because of the cost involved in adding judgeships, it is imperative that we provide the legislature with the most reliable and accurate information available.

"Also, the adoption of appropriate time standards will provide the judiciary with a yardstick by which we can be more accountable to the public," concluded Torbert.

Level II Court Referral Program Committee

State law currently provides that all persons convicted of DUI for the first time must attend an approved DUI school.

While these schools have had a favorable impact on defendants who are "social drinkers," they have not been effective in dealing with defendants who have a serious alcohol dependency.

The Level II Court Referral Program is designed to develop a method to accurately identify problem drinkers and establish a system of referral agencies which would assist them.

The committee, chaired by District Judge Val McGee of Dale County, is charged with the responsibility of developing a model for the overall court referral program, identifying individual components of the program and developing a service plan for each component and a method of evaluating their services.

The committee is composed of district and municipal judges, state traffic officials, municipal court officials, and mental health professionals.

Sentencing Committee

At the request of Chief Justice Torbert, Circuit Judge Joseph Phelps of Montgomery and State Representative Beth Marietta of Mobile attended a national conference on sentencing in Washington, D.C., recently.

As a follow-up to the conference, Judge Phelps and Representative Marietta presented a program on sentencing to the Judicial Study Commission at its annual meeting on January 10-11, 1985.

At the request of the JSC, the Chief Justice appointed a subcommittee to analyze the sentencing process in Alabama and to consider educational needs in this area.

Chaired by Judge Phelps, the committee will make recommendations designed to make the procedures utilized in determining sentences more uniform in Alabama.

Orientation Held for Municipal Judges

An Orientation for Municipal Court Judges, sponsored by the Alabama Judicial College, dealt with the judges' duties and responsibilities and the practical aspects and procedures of conducting municipal court.

The session was held in Tuscaloosa in February.



Municipal Judges, Clerks, Police Chiefs Meet

Municipal court judges, clerks and police chiefs from throughout Alabama are participating in regional seminars conducted by the Municipal Court Operations Division of the Administrative Office of Courts.

The seminars, being held in Huntsville, Mobile, Birmingham, and Montgomery, include sessions on bookkeeping, budgeting, computers and business equipment; Department of Public Safety issues and answers; dealing with irate citizens; jurisdiction problems; negotiating worthless instruments; bond forfeitures; and structuring the affidavit.

The seminar schedule

is as follows: Huntsville, March 28-29; Mobile, April 11-12; Birmingham, April 18-19; Montgomery, May 9-10.

Seminar participants include: Sue Price, City Clerk, Southside Municipal Court, Huntsville; Dan Turnmire, City Clerk, Hueytown Municipal Court; Gloria Hershiser, Clerk, Gadsden Municipal Court.

Judy Robbins, Clerk, Montgomery Municipal Court; Jerry Mitchell, Albertville Police Department; Chief Allen Needham, Montevallo Police Department; Chief Timothy J. Byrd, Enterprise Police Department.

Assistant Chief A. W. Hall, Foley Police Department; Hon. Henry W. "Bucky" McMillan, Judge, Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals, Montgomery; Hon. James H. Lackey, Judge, Mobile Municipal Court; Hon. John G. Lowther, Judge, Vestavia Hills Municipal Court, Birmingham; and Wallace Dorning, Clerk, Huntsville Municipal Court.

Participating on the programs from the Administrative Office of Courts will be Angelo V. Trimble, Director, Municipal Court Operations; Jean D. Holcomb and Frank Millo, Municipal Court Analysts; and Myra Baker, Staff Attorney, Legal Division.

Leave Without Pay Costly to Workers In Several Ways

When UJS employees take leave without pay (LWOP), it can affect more than their paychecks!

If the period of LWOP is an extended one (19 or more work days), and the employee entered State service prior to December 20, 1983, he must pay back the seven days wages advanced to him when the State revised the payroll periods in December of 1983 (see Court News, October, 1983). The seven days' pay is cut from the last pay period worked before the LWOP; if the employee worked less than seven days, the prior pay period is also affected. Upon return from LWOP, the employee is reimbursed for the seven days in a separate warrant at the time he receives his regular pay.

Generally, if the employee is on LWOP on the first day of the month, he must pay his health insurance premium for that month in order to maintain continuous coverage. The State does not pay for fringe benefits when employees are off the payroll. If he chooses to let the coverage lapse, he will be re-enrolled upon return from LWOP but will again be subject to the 270-day waiting period for preexisting conditions.

The premium for individual coverage (which the State pays for active full-time employees) is currently \$100 per month. The cost of dependent coverage is an additional \$82.50. Therefore, it would cost \$182.50 per month to maintain coverage for an employee and his family if he is on LWOP on the first of a month; premiums are always due prior to the first day of the month of coverage.

Other payroll deductions, such as Credit Union and life insurance premiums, can also be affected, especially if the employee is off the payroll during the pay period when the deductions are made.

Merit Pay Delayed

Also, an employee who is in pay status for less than 64 hours in a pay period does not earn leave during that pay period, and LWOP's of 15 days or more affect the employee's merit salary date, which means his annual raise could come at a later date. The total service date, used for calculating leave earning rates, is also affected.

Since LWOP affects so many areas, employees and their administrators are urged to coordinate these changes with the AOC Personnel Division well in advance of the leave. Early planning could save headaches as well as \$\$\$\$.

State Retirement IRA's Available To State Workers

Individual retirement accounts are available to public employees through the Public Employees' Individual Retirement Account Fund (PEIRAF), which is administered by the Retirement Systems of Alabama. PEIRAF accounts provide essentially the same income tax advantages as IRA's and are also subject to the same income tax penalties on early withdrawal as are applied to an IRA.

One of the main attractions of the PEIRAF is the Retirement Systems' superior investment performance, which has consistently surpassed the performance of similar funds. Superior investment return and a lack of membership fees and service charges combine to virtually assure that the interest credited to each account should exceed that offered through commercial financial institutions. The yield for the period April 1, 1984, through September 30, 1984, was an annual percentage rate of 13.89%.

Another advantage is the convenience of payroll deduction of contributions. A member can eliminate the inconvenience of mailing direct deposits by electing to make monthly contributions through payroll deduction to his or her PEIRAF account. In addition to the convenience, contributions made through payroll

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New Circuit, District Judges Have Orientation



District Judge Douglas I. Johnstone, Mobile Co.; District Judge Richard Lane, Lee Co.



Circuit Judge S. A. Watson, Jr., 23rd Circuit, Huntsville.



Circuit Judge Marvin Cherner, 10th Circuit, Birmingham.



Circuit Judge W. W. Rabren, 10th Circuit, Birmingham.



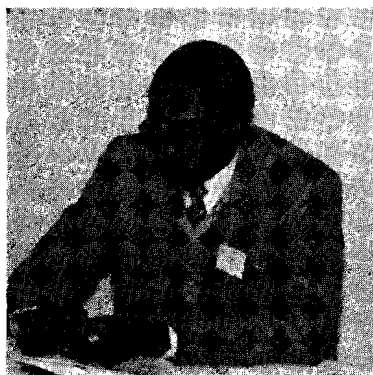
Circuit Judge Mike Suttle, 11th Circuit, Florence.



Circuit Judge Robert Kendall, 13th Circuit, Mobile; District Judges Celeste Pettway, Wilcox Co., Douglas Johnstone, Mobile Co.; Richard Lane, Lee Co.



Circuit Judges Arthur Haynes, Jr., 10th Circuit, Birmingham; Thomas Norton, 28th Circuit, Bay Minette; Anne Farrell McKelvey, 4th Circuit, Selma.



District Judge Aubrey Ford, Macon Co.



District Judge Gary McAliley, Coffee County.

Clerks/Registers' Courses in Progress

Spring Specialty Courses, including warrant issuance and accounting, are being conducted for employees of clerks and registers' offices by the Alabama Judicial College Division of the Administrative Office of Courts.

The courses are being taught in Decatur, Montgomery, Evergreen, and Birmingham in order to make them accessible to the maximum number of people.

During each Wednesday session, class members are learning about the Importance of Magistrates Functions and the Duties and Responsibilities of Magistrates. Other topics include Definitions, Procedures and Forms; Step-by-Step Process in Warrant Issuance; Step-by-Step

Examination of a Complaint and Warrant; Municipal Cases in the District Court; Traffic Cases; and How to Construct an Affidavit from Title 13A, Code of Alabama 1975.

Wednesday program participants include: James E. Berry, Assistant Director, Alabama Judicial College; Angelo V. Trimble, Director, Municipal Court Operations, Administrative Office of Courts; Lynda L. Flynt and Myra J. Baker, Staff Attorneys, AOC.

Thursday sessions on accounting include an Overview of Fiscal Procedures; Accounting in Criminal Cases; Accounting in Civil Cases; a Review of Revised Transmittal Cases; Accounting for Partial Payment;

and a round table discussion on Trial Court Accounting.

Conducting the accounting sessions will be: Robert H. Tillman, Director, AOC Operations; Larry Williard, Jr., CPA, Examiners of Public Accounts; Devon Kiker, Circuit Clerk, Russell County; Nina Poole, Bookkeeper, Perry County; Oliver Gilmore, Assistant Director, AOC Operations; Betty Washburn, Bookkeeper, and Febby Nail, Bookkeeper, Jefferson County, Birmingham.

The schedule for the seminars is as follows: March 20-21, Holiday Inn, Decatur; April 3-4, Holiday Inn-Capitol, Montgomery; April 10-11, Holiday Inn, Evergreen; April 17-18, Quality Inn-South, Birmingham.

(Continued from Page 6) State Retirement

deduction are not subject to a minimum deposit. Direct deposits to PEIRAF must be at least \$100.

The maximum contribution to a PEIRAF account is \$2,000 in any one tax year. Direct deposits made prior to April 15, 1985, may be designated as contributions for the 1984 tax year. However, contributions made through payroll deduction are credited in the year in which deducted and may not be otherwise designated. Members who wish to take advantage of the tax deferment for

1984 may do so by making a direct deposit prior to April 15, 1985, and designating the deposit as a 1984 contribution.

Public employees must submit a properly completed Member Record form to the PEIRAF office in order to open an account. Information about the PEIRAF and the necessary forms may be requested by writing to the Public Employees' Individual Retirement Account Fund, Retirement Systems of Alabama, 135 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL 36130, or by calling the Personnel Division at the Administrative Office of Courts, 1-800-392-8077, Ext. 254.

Name Changed?

UJS employees who have changed their names should be aware that it is their responsibility to notify the Social Security Administration so that their records can be updated and a new card issued. The employee should contact his local SSA office and fill out the required form number SS-5.

The AOC Personnel Division routinely requests updated tax forms and health and retirement enrollments when name changes are reported, but it is the employee's responsibility to notify the Social Security Administration.

Clerks, Registers Meet in Montgomery



(l-r) Veleria Thomley, Cir. Clk., Geneva Co.; John Lazenby, Cir. Clk., Elmore Co.; Joyce Martin, Reg., Winston Co.; Sandra Livingston, Cir. Clk., Hale Co.; Willouise Harper, Reg., Marion Co.; Mary Auburtin, Cir. Clk., Perry Co.



Polly Conradi, Jefferson Co., Pres., Ala. Assn. of Clerks & Registers.



Cir. Clerk Mary E. Snoddy, Green Co.



(F, l-r) Circuit Clerks Devon Kiker, Russell Co.; Ron Harwell, Sumter Co.; Dewayne Sealey, Marengo Co.; (R, l-r) Circuit Clerk Ray Bozeman, Covington Co.; Dist. Clerk Melba Dutton, Morgan Co.



Circuit Clerks Jerry G. (Pete) Trammell, Cherokee Co., Joe Newton, Franklin Co.



Chief Justice C. C. Torbert, Jr.

Administrative Office Welcomes New Employees

Stephen C. Tomberlin has joined the staff of the Administrative Office of Courts as a Micrographic Supervisor.

Steve is supervising AOC's micrographic program and is working with circuit clerks in the disposal of court records eligible for destruction.

A native of Atlanta, he attended Atlanta public schools and was graduated from DeKalb College with a degree in business administration.

Steve recently served as Records Management Supervisor with the Superior Court Clerk's Office in Sand Mountain, Ga.

He and his wife, Billie, have daughters ages 1 and 3.



Retired Mobile County Court Administrator Sedrick Woodruff presents a token of appreciation to his former employee, Emilie Cherry, who is now an employee of AOC.

A native of Lee County, **Emilie Jones Cherry** has joined the Administrative Office of Courts as a Court Management Analyst. She will assist Mike Carroll in working with judges and clerks throughout the state.

Before joining AOC, Emilie worked in Mobile for six years in the Office of the Court Administrator.

A graduate of the University of Montevallo, she is a member of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, serving in Headquarters, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing in New Orleans.

Court Reporter to Attend Summer Meeting in Europe

Mrs. Alice N. Sweeney, official court reporter to Circuit Judge William D. Page of the 23rd Judicial Circuit, Huntsville, will present a paper to the Intersteno Congress in Sofia, Bulgaria, in July.

"Mrs. Sweeney will be an excellent representative to the Congress," said Harry Foster of the National Shorthand Reporters Association. "She is a pen writer, and all parliamentary reporters in Europe are pen writers," he said.

Managers Train To Identify Problem Drinkers

Level II DUI Court Referral Program managers met recently in Montgomery in a training program designed to study court procedures for identifying problem drinkers.

The managers compared various evaluation instruments aimed at determining which DUI offenders have serious problems of alcohol involvement, with particular emphasis on the Mortimer-Filkins instrument, which was designed under a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration project for use in a courtroom setting.

Alabama law currently provides that all first offenders must complete a DUI court referral program approved by the Administrative Office of Courts.

Many Have Problems

Statistics indicate that a large percentage of drunk drivers have problems of alcohol involvement.

The training program is part of an increasing effort to distinguish problem drinkers from social drinkers and to refer each to the appropriate education and/or treatment program.

Instructing the course were Larry Nelson, Coordinator of Community Alcohol Programs, and Jim Crumrine,



Shown, left to right: Kelley Price, Anniston; Laura Murdock, Montgomery; Jim Crumrine, Huntsville; Larry Nelson, Huntsville; Jim Edwards, Anniston; Bob Simpson, AOC; George Ferqueron, Ozark; David Holmes, Birmingham; Sue Irvin, Mobile. Not shown: Ed Sherer, Valley; Wallace Dorning, Huntsville; Angelo Trimble, AOC.

Municipal Court Probation Officer, CAC, of the Huntsville Municipal Court.

Nationally Certified

They are two of 12 people in the United States recently certified by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to teach the use of the evaluation instrument.

The training program was funded by NHTSA, partly through a grant to the American Probation and Parole Association and partly through a grant to the Administrative Office of Courts by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, Division of Highway and Traffic Safety.

(Continued from Page 2) Changes Made

(3) Paragraph IV(3)(a)(3) regarding overnight stays has been amended to state that the distance from "home base" must be 40 miles or more; this requirement is waived for Judicial College functions, or when an overnight stay is required due to late meetings, etc. In the case of the latter, prior approval is required.

If you have any questions regarding the above changes to the in-state travel procedures, please call Oliver Gilmore at the Administrative Office of Courts.

April 29 - May 3
Law and Court Observance
Week

WORKING IN ST. CLAIR COURTHOUSE CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO THE HEALTH

St. Clair County Courthouse employees are getting tired of life in the fast lane.

It's hard to keep your mind on your work while your eyes are on the traffic--especially traffic that may be coming through the door at you.

The Courthouse Square is located at a three-way intersection. Narrow, hard-to-manage turns in the roads make this section of busy U.S. 231 hazardous for truckers--and for courthouse employees!

A circuit court employee Jean Browning looked up from her desk recently and saw a huge truck roaring right for the courthouse. She escaped without injury, but her car did not.

It, along with eight other vehicles, fell victim to the runaway, brakeless 26,000-pound 18-wheeler, as did a 45-year-old magnolia tree on the courthouse lawn.

The truck driver had two choices when his brakes failed--hit a gasoline tanker truck in front of him or hit the courthouse. He chose

the latter. No one, including the driver and his wife, who was his passenger, was hurt.

This was not the case several years ago when a car rammed through the courthouse door killing two of its occupants.

The county commission has appointed a committee to study the traffic hazards of Courthouse Square. Meanwhile, St. Clair County taxpayers have little worry about county employees staying wide awake and alert on the job.

Change of Duties Announced For Staff Attorneys

Myra Baker, Staff Attorney with the Administrative Office of Courts, has been assigned to work with the Municipal Court Operations Division. She assumed the duties previously performed by Lynda Flynt.

Lynda will be assisting the Director of the Legal Division with matters relating to the state courts.

"I enjoyed working with the municipal judges, clerks, and magistrates, and, while I am looking forward to

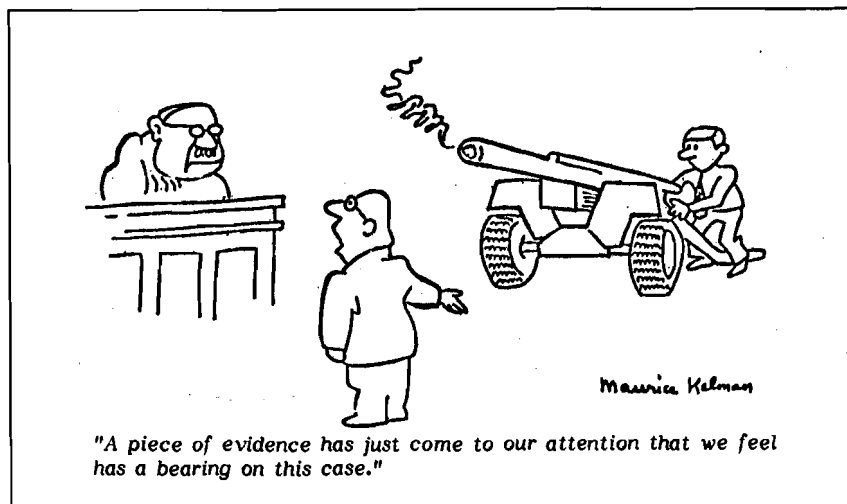
my new duties, I will certainly miss my association with the municipal courts," Lynda said.

Other changes are also in store for Myra. In April, she will become Mrs. Keith Sabel.

Judge Edwin Sanford

Retired Elmore County District Judge Edwin Sanford died March 16, 1985, following an extended illness.

Judge Sanford, who is survived by his wife, retired from the bench on December 31, 1982.



Uncashed Checks Upset Balancing Act

So you think **you** have a tough job balancing your checking account!

Don't look for sympathy from Cheryle Thomas in the Administrative Office of Court's fiscal department. Cheryle's job is to balance the state's grand juror and state juror bank accounts each month.

Think of it! How would you like to have to balance accounts with some 5,500 checks each month?

Checks are written to jurors in each circuit clerk's office in the state. The clerks send Cheryle the listing of checks issued each month. The listing shows the number of days each juror has served, the check number, and the amount of the check. Cheryle enters this data, by county, into the computer

New accounts must be opened for both state jurors and grand jurors at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Never, since the accounts were first opened in 1977, has anyone been able to close them out because there has never been a year during which all of the checks issued have cleared the bank. At least a few people who received checks for jury duty or as witnesses failed to cash or deposit their checks each year.

Even with ten accounts to keep straight, things

are better than they were when state and grand jury witnesses were also paid in this manner, and checks were written to some of them for as little as 75 cents.



The 5,500 cancelled checks Cheryle Thomas has to deal with each month are not the problem. It's those that have never been cashed or deposited by jurors and witnesses that keep accounts from being closed out.

Cheryle receives statements of all ten state and grand juror accounts from the bank each month, along with a computer tape of all the month's transactions.

By computer, she checks the items issued against the items cleared, producing a matched check report. It is in this report that any errors that may have occurred are revealed. And, like in your personal checking account, this is where the "fun" begins, only on a larger scale.

Cheryle manually tracks down some 30 to 40 errors a month--lost checks, mismatched amounts, bank errors, data entry errors, reporting errors, etc.

"Then, if I can get up the courage, I go home and balance my **own** statement," she said.

Help Wanted

Your Court News is making a number of changes--changes we believe will make your UJS family paper more attractive and more informative.

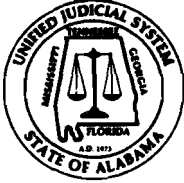
You'll see more pictures, larger headlines, and a new three-column format. Look for even more changes in the months ahead.

Court News is now a monthly publication. We want to keep you informed of events within the Alabama court system on a more timely basis.

We're counting on **you** to help us make Court News a better, more comprehensive publication by sharing with us the plans, programs, and events going on in **your** office.

You don't have to **write** the story--we'll do that. All you have to do is let us know what's going on. Give us the details, and we'll do the rest. We can use your photos, too. Simple black and white prints (even Polaroid) will do.

When you have articles or suggestions for news or feature stories for Court News, contact Ann Henn, Administrative Office of Courts, 1-800-392-8077.



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Newsletter of the Alabama Judicial System

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POLLY CONRADI, President

Alabama Association of Clerks and Registers

ERWIN G. SCOTT, President

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PATSY DUNIVANT, President

Alabama Circuit Judges' Secretaries Association

CHERYL J. HAWKINS, President

Alabama District Judges' Secretaries Association



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