

Full Court Press

Mohave County Courts



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Judge Weiss Receives Award

On March 20, 2017, the Kingman Daily Miner reported that Superior Court Judge Richard Weiss was honored with the Sue Gilbertson Leadership Award for his leadership in coordinating a court team aimed at improving outcomes for young children in foster care.

CEO Dick Geasland said Weiss was honored for his leadership in the development of the Parent Support Now pilot program that began in 2015 in Kingman.

He said the program has not only been successful in obtaining permanency for many zero to three-year-olds removed by the Department of Child Safety but is serving as a model for similar efforts across the state.

Read the full article at <http://kdmminer.com/news/2017/mar/20/mohave-superior-courts-judge-richard-weiss-wins-aw/>



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, ILENE DODE, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT MIKID BOARD, JUDGE RICHARD WEISS, SUE GILBERTSON, MIKID FOUNDER, AND CURRENT BOARD MEMBER DICK GEASLAND, CEO MIKID.

Presiding Judge Charles W. Gurtler, Jr. Assigned to Serve on a Supreme Court Case

Submitted by Kip Anderson, Superior Court

The Honorable Charles W. Gurtler Jr. was recently appointed to serve on a case pending before the Supreme Court of Arizona. One of the newly appointed Justice's has a conflict with a pending case and Judge Gurtler was willing to serve and has been appointed to sit in place of the Justice to hear the matter. While hearing this matter he will have the same powers and duties of a Justice of the Supreme Court. This assignment recognizes the skill and respect Judge Gurtler has acquired and highlights the fact he is uniquely qualified to assist the Court in this matter. Oral arguments on the case are scheduled to be held on May 9, 2017, at the Supreme Court.

This assignment is in addition to his regular duties as the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Arizona, County of Mohave. Judge Gurtler looks forward to the opportunity to serve the citizens of Arizona in this capacity.

Governor Doug Ducey Announces Recruitment for Judicial Vacancy in Mohave County

On April 4, 2017, Governor Doug Ducey announced he has begun accepting applications to fill the upcoming vacancy for the Mohave County Superior Court. The vacancy will be created when the Honorable Steven F. Conn, Presiding Criminal Judge for the Superior Court retires in June.

Applications are being accepted until 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 4, 2017. A copy of the application and instructions for applying can be downloaded at www.bc.azgovernor.gov.

Applicants must be at least 30 years and less than 65 years of age, of good moral character, admitted to the practice of law in Arizona, a resident of Arizona for five years prior to taking office, and a resident of Mohave County for at least one year prior to taking office.

Court of Appeals Oral Arguments

Submitted by Kip Anderson, Superior Court

On March 2, 2017, the Arizona Court of Appeals, Division One, held oral arguments at the Lake Havasu City High School. Students from the school along with local judicial officers, attorneys, and court staff were in attendance. Chief Judge Michael J. Brown opened the event with general remarks about the Appeals Court process and gave a brief introduction of the case that was to be heard by three members of the Court of Appeals.

Following the oral arguments, Judge Lawrence F. Winthrop from the Court of Appeals along with Superior Court Judges Derek Carlisle and Doug Camacho, Justice of the Peace Jill Davis and Lake Havasu City Magistrate Mitch Kalauli and the attorneys who participated in the case answered questions from the students in attendance.

Following the question and answer forum, the school provided a lunch for the judges and staff who were in attendance. The luncheon provided a group of students an opportunity to visit further with the judges and ask questions from the case and learn more about the judicial process. School officials noted that the event provided students with a wonderful insight into the Arizona Judicial process.

Employee Spotlight Officer Bowen

Submitted by Natalie Eggers, Probation



Joe Bowen was recently promoted from Juvenile Detention Officer I to Deputy Probation Officer I. Joe started with Mohave County as a Juvenile Detention Officer Recruit in June of 2012. During his time at detention, he reported his favorite place to work was in Control. Joe enjoyed collecting incoming information and learning more about the juveniles. Since his promotion to DPOI, Joe reported that his favorite part of the job so far is, *"Getting to*

know the kids and working with them on the outs." The Juvenile Unit is happy to welcome Joe as a new member of our team and appreciate his "go-getter" attitude. Joe reports to everyone he meets, *"I'm going to be here for the next 19 years"* and we sure hope so!

2nd Annual Superhero 5k Run/Walk and Kids Dash

Submitted by Kim Chappelle, Superior Court

Our 2nd Annual Superhero 5K and Kids Dash was held on April 15 with beautiful spring like weather! There were close to 200 people who registered and many dressed in their favorite superhero costumes like Wonder Woman, Superman, Batman, and The Hulk. The Kids Dash kicked off the event with 40 children ranging in ages 1 to 12 running to the finish line to earn their Superhero Medallion! In the 5K run/walk course, 122 completed the race. Runners came from Arizona, Utah, and California this year. Two awards were given at the end for best costume along with several trophies for the 5K winners.



This year our biggest sponsors included Kingman Regional Medical Center, Atia and Dr. Khan, and Pizza Hut. Our 5K was held the day before Easter Sunday. The Easter Bunny surprised the kids and spent time at our event taking pictures and hopping around! He was dressed as his favorite Superhero, a Police Officer. We give special thanks to the Kingman Police Department, Mohave Community College Teachers of Tomorrow Club who volunteered their time and crafted superhero masks with any child who wanted to make one, Floyd and Company Wood Fired Pizza for donating cases of water, our very own Brian Kelly who took photos throughout the morning, and everyone else who participated and volunteered their time to make this another wonderful event for our community and children of Mohave County!

The proceeds from this event will go to the CASA Council of Mohave County. The Council is the fundraising arm of the CASA Organization which advocates in court for our children in foster care. Our children have many needs which the State can no longer afford such as Boys and Girls Club, Parks and Rec Programs, Summer Camps, Equine Therapy, athletic fees, electronic devices for developmentally delayed children, etc. These are just some of the many requests the Council helps provide for the kids.

We look forward to our 3rd Annual Superhero 5K and Kids Dash in April 2018.

New Judicial Employees

Denise Andrade, Clerk of Superior Court

Lisa Brooks, Bullhead Justice Court

April Corona, Probation

Andrew Dixon, Clerk of Superior Court

Travis Howze, Probation

Makayla Jenkins, Probation

Sarah Lunt, Probation

Ashlee Lutgen, Superior Court

Valerie Medina, Clerk of Superior Court

Matthew SeLegue, Probation

Andrew Sgroi, Probation

Alexis Timm, Kingman Municipal Court

Jeanette Trotta, Superior Court

Riley Tutas, Probation

Clifton 'Shane' Whalen, Probation

Save the Date!

- ◆ The Annual Summer COJET Conference is scheduled for June 21-23, 2017, in Bullhead, Kingman, and Lake Havasu.
- ◆ The Mohave County Annual COJET Court and Probation Conference is scheduled for January 10-12, 2018, in Kingman.

REMEMBER! All regular status employees are required to complete an Ethics class and a Computer Security class each calendar year.

Judicial Years of Service

January-April

Thank you for your service to the Mohave County Courts!

Superior Court

Rita Flores 1 year
Kathy Lawless 2 years
Hon. Billy K. Sipe, Jr. 2 years
Renal Fawson 3 years
Jewell Martin 4 years
Jeannie Murk 4 years
Deborah Pitts 4 years
Theresa Salsberry 4 years
Amber Hurley 7 years
Wendy Perkins 8 years
Hon. Rick Williams 8 years
Hon. Lee F. Jantzen 10 years
Hon. Richard D. Lambert 13 years
Kip Anderson 14 years
Hon. Charles W. Gurtler, Jr. 14 years
Kathy Sperando 14 years
Linda Cantrell 22 years
Clerk of Superior Court
Christopher Carter 1 year
Cassandra Oberlin 1 year
Amber Ott 1 year
Lacie Robbins 1 year
Kit Kudukis 2 years
Jessica Hipes 4 years
Toni Semler 4 years
Susan Terrill 5 years

Debra Cobb 10 years

Sue Seeley 10 years

Karen Seckler 15 years

Virlynn Tinnell 19 years

Probation

Lisa Ruokis 1 year

Eileen Ponce 1 year

Nicole Aragon, 2 years

Matthew Wokas 2 years

Rhonda Mayo 3 years

Jacob Story 3 years

Bradley Martin 4 years

Amanda Simmons 4 years

DeShae Fangmeyer 5 years

Emily Snay 5 years

Julianna Starkey 5 years

Neal Maples 5 years

Eric Russell 5 years

Susan Davidson 6 years

Phillip Shannon 6 years

Nancy Tharpe 6 years

Cindy Wolford 6 years

Dorothy Exley 10 years

Elaine Maestas 18 years

Shaleen Bracken 19 years

Nancy Diann Albert 28 years

Peer Recognition in the Kingman Juvenile Unit

Submitted by Natalie Eggers, Probation

A new way for staff to recognize their peers began in the Kingman Juvenile Unit on February 1. Under the leadership of supervisors Eggers and Colbert, employees in that unit are encouraged to fill out a short nomination form for a deserving co-worker. Each winner is displayed on the unit bulletin board and given a small gift certificate. So far the unit has featured three employees as "**Employee of the Month**". Each individual was chosen by a co-worker for their willingness to take on additional work, train one another, and continue to do their work with a positive and approachable attitude!

The winners so far are:



February: Emily Snay



March: Dale Herren



April: Julianna Starkey

Congratulations!

- ◆ To Judge Brown, North Canyon Consolidated Court, on her appointment to Arizona Supreme Court Committee on Judicial Education and Training.
- ◆ To Kip Anderson, Superior Court, on his appointment to the First Things First State Board as a Member-At-Large on the LaPaz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council.
- ◆ To Judy Beneze, Bullhead Justice Court, for receiving the "peer appreciation" award for the last quarter of 2016.
- ◆ To Joey Arias, Bullhead Justice Court, promoted to Court Services Assistant.

Changes in the Clerk' Office

Submitted by Heather Muhle, Clerk of Superior Court

"Change is inevitable--except from a vending machine." - Robert C. Gallagher

Many staffing changes have recently occurred in the Clerk's Office. After 18 years with the Clerk's Office, Dawn Ramos, Court Services Supervisor, retired in February which prompted other position changes to follow.

Court Services Supervisor, Christina Spurlock, who previously supervised our back office staff has moved and will now supervise our front office staff. Courtroom Clerk Senior, Jessica Hipes, was promoted to Court Services Supervisor and is now supervising our back office staff.

As a result of Jessica's promotion, Courtroom Clerk, Tracy Doggett, was promoted to the position of Courtroom Clerk Senior and outside candidate, Denise Andrade, was hired to fill the vacant courtroom clerk position.

In addition, our Administrative Program Specialist, Frederick Shade, accepted the Caseflow Manager position with the Superior Court and vacated his position in the Clerk's Office on March 13. Outside candidate, Andrew Dixon, was hired to fill this vacancy and started with us on April 17. Andrew previously served in the US Army as an Automated Tactical Data System Specialist where he received an Army Achievement Medal for his duty in Iraq. His most recent position was in Data Management with the company Actionet out of Norco, California.

Please join me in congratulating all on their new positions.

Justice Court Solar Project Dedicated

Submitted by Paul LaVoie, Mohave Electric Cooperative



The Mohave County Bullhead Justice Court solar project was partially funded by Mohave Electric Cooperative's Solar Initiative for the Community. This program is part of MEC's renewable energy plan which is funded by a surcharge on member bills that is mandated by the Arizona Corporation Commission. MEC's Solar Initiative for the Community program funds solar projects that reduce costs for facilities operated primarily from collected taxes, which benefits all members as taxpayers.

Pictured at the Bullhead Justice Court dedication event on Tuesday, April 11 are (L-R) John Nelssen, MEC Board Director District 1; Judge Charles Gurtler; John Mieding, Mohave County Public Works Facilities Division; Carlos Tejada, MEC Board Director District 2; Ken Devault of Devault Electric; Steven Latoski, Mohave County Public Works Director; Greg Branson, Mohave County Public Works Facilities Division.

6th Annual Northwest Arizona Infant/Toddler Mental Health Symposium

Submitted by Kimberly Chappellear, Superior Court



Motivational speaker Chadwick Sapenter working the crowd.

The Mohave County Superior Court Team hosted their 6th Annual Northwest Arizona Infant and Toddler Mental Health Symposium on April 4-5, 2017. Over 230 professionals from across Arizona gathered at the London Bridge Resort in Lake Havasu City for two days of various workshops, networking and learning from one another.

There were two notable keynote presenters: Chadwick Sapenter, author, motivational speaker and a survivor of childhood abuse. He opened the conference and had everyone out of the chairs clapping as seen in the picture. Victor Rivas Rivers, author of the book *A Private Family Matter*, motivational speaker, survivor of childhood abuse and actor closed our conference. After his heart wrenching and inspirational

speech there was a book signing for attendees and pictures taken with Victor. Both Chadwick and Victor spoke of their personal journey enduring child abuse and their triumph in overcoming and helping others achieve success. In addition to the keynotes, there were fifteen different workshops to choose from with nationally and state recognized presenters.

The event was free to all attendees and funded by Arizona's First Things First. Stay tuned for the date and location for our 7th Annual event!

Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup



It was a cold gray day outside, the perfect weather for Grilled Cheese Sandwiches and Tomato Soup. The Clerk's Office treated the staff to made to order grilled cheese sandwiches cooked by Chris Carter and Laura Townsley as well as tomato soup provided by Laura Townsley and Virlynn Tinnell.

Pictured left to right, Chris Carter and Laura Townsley, Courtroom Clerks and talented cooks with the Clerk of the Superior Court.

High Five Recognition

Nicole Aragon, Probation, on short notice, compiled information for a division head. Nicole is very cooperative in assisting the people she works with.

Chris Davis, Bullhead Justice Court, received recognition from a member of the public for providing outstanding customer service.

Jamie King, Superior Court, received thanks from an applicant for her patience and kindness while the applicant was testing.

Kyle Rimel, Superior Court, for his willingness to test a new online package for the AOC which resulted in the package being implemented.

Doreen Ruggles-Grogan, Clerk of Superior Court, for her assistance with Criminal Court Commissioner Court when the judicial assistant is out of the office.

Valerie Winters, Superior Court, for assisting Probation in updating the hiring information to meet new State requirements.

Grave Yard Shift: John Myers, Brenda Ellis, Adrian Marroquin, and Jana Chastain, Probation, for helping to assist with the coverage of duties on the day shift due to staff shortages. Their team spirit is greatly appreciated.

Reasons to Give High 5 Recognition!

Any employee or supervisor can be nominated for High 5 recognition by any employee or supervisor. Look around you...what are people doing that deserves some recognition? We are all working harder, taking on more responsibility and doing more with less. A High 5 can be for one of the following:

Customer Service: Someone who consistently gives their best service, making people feel special by giving their utmost attention and assistance. A customer can be a member of the public or a coworker.

Helping Hands: Someone who is available whenever the need arises, with an attitude of giving, caring about others and willing to lend a hand.

Team Player: Someone who considers the team above themselves, who supports and inspires others so that more can be accomplished by cooperation and collaboration.

Leadership: Someone who is willing to lead the way, set the example, motivate others, and takes it upon themselves to demonstrate leadership, whether or not they are a supervisor.

Great Job: Someone who works hard, gets things done and does them right, always with outstanding results, reaching above and beyond.

We can never appreciate or encourage each other too much, so why not give someone a High 5 today?

Back to Basics: Appropriate Use of Electronic Communications

The world of technology has exploded with new ways to communicate and network. Social sites such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Blogs, etc. make it challenging for some of us to keep up with the new ways to communicate. For the courts, new technologies provide valuable tools for improving the way we do business. However, it can also raise ethical, security and privacy concerns for the courts and its employees.

We can look to the [Arizona Supreme Court Judicial Ethics Advisory Committee Opinion 14-01, Use of Social and Electronic Media by Judge and Judicial Employees](#), [Section 1-303 'Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees'](#) and to [Section 1-503 'Electronic Communications'](#) of the Arizona Code of Judicial Administration for guidance as to appropriate conduct in the use of electronic communications.

As judicial employees, we also need to be mindful about how we present ourselves in online social networks, where the lines between public and private, personal and professional, become blurred. We must always give high priority to our ethical obligations as judicial employees even when we engage in social media use in our personal capacities. For example, we must not disclose confidential information we obtained by reason of our job with the court. We must refrain from participating in any social media that relates to a matter likely to result in litigation or to any organization that frequently litigates in court. Here are a few common sense recommendations to keep in mind in the use of social media:

Think before you post- Internet postings –whether they be text, photos, videos, or audio – remain accessible long after they are forgotten by the user. Beyond that, remember that nothing is “private” on the Internet despite an individual’s best efforts to keep things private. Do not post anything on the Internet that you would not want to read on the front page of your local newspaper.

Speak for yourself, not for the Court – On social networking sites, many individuals list their occupations and/or places of employment. Considering the sensitive nature of the work that we do, Court employees should carefully evaluate whether the listing of their place of employment on a social networking site poses a security risk. Also, remember that you are a representative of the Court and should conduct your-

self in a way that avoids bringing embarrassment upon yourself and/or the Court. In the age of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, many do not think through the implications of what they post. Users often believe that their postings are private because of a social networking website’s privacy features or that their comments are untraceable because they were made under a screen name, but this information may not be private and could cause damage to your reputation and the Court’s if it becomes public. As such, judicial employees should abide by a simple rule: if you are not speaking to someone directly or over a secure land-line, you must assume that anything you say or write is available for public consumption. Any commentary you post that could reveal an association with the Court must contain an explicit disclaimer that states: “These are my personal views and not those of my employer.” Again, remember that even harmless remarks could be misconstrued by litigants unfamiliar with court processes (such as pro-se litigants).

Keep secrets secret – Make sure to abide by all of the Court’s confidentiality and disclosure provisions. Judicial employees handle confidential and sensitive information and the restrictions that employees normally observe in the performance of their day-to-day duties should also apply to their use of social media. Just as court employees are prohibited from disclosing sensitive, non-public information to the general public in person or over the phone, the same applies to social media. Judicial employees should also refrain from discussing any of the Court’s internal processes and procedures, whether they are a non-confidential or confidential nature.

Always Remember the Code of Conduct – Any public postings are governed by the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees. As such, we are expected to act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary and we shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in our activities.

¹*Excerpt from Resource Packet for Developing Guidelines on Use of Social Media by Judicial Employees, Judicial Conference Committee on Codes of Conduct, April 2010*

AZCourtHelp.org

On February 2017, Lori Linn, Law Librarian for the Superior Court, announced the availability of a new online resource for the public AZCourtHelp.org. This website features self-help resources such as a case finder, video tutorials, law library information and workshop calendars. The Form Finder can assist in finding forms for various cases. Find My Court will find courts based on jurisdiction and geographic location. There is also a Frequently Asked Questions section with information on court accessibility, topic information, and a legal glossary.

“ Our attitude is our personal boomerang to the world...whatever we throw out will come back to us.” From the book-*Getting the BEST from Yourself and Others*.



Mohave County Benefits Open Enrollment

It is that time again! Mohave County Benefits open enrollment will be held April 24-May 12, 2017. If you wish to make changes to your medical, dental or vision insurance please be sure to complete an enrollment form with your updated information.

A calendar of on-site meetings will also be made available.

REMEMBER! Any changes you make during open enrollment will take effect on July 1, 2017, and will be reflected on your first June paycheck.

Juvenile PSA Unit Created

Submitted by Natalie Eggers and Sara Colbert, Probation

What do you do when you have three highly skilled, highly trained and dedicated women with a combined 25 + years of experience?

When it's Julianna Starkey, JoAnn Gordon, and Dotty Exley, you put them together to cross-train one another, support one another and expand their job knowledge. Late last year, Director Elaine Maestas recognized that if any one of these three staff members were to go on leave, probation would be confronted with a severe deficiency in that staff's area of expertise. Starting in December 2016, the three positions began to cross-train one another on their job duties, while still maintaining their current workload. On January 3, 2017, each staff began their new positions. These positions encompassed Victim Rights' Services, Intake/Supervision/JIPS Services, and Treatment Support Services.

What made this particularly challenging for each of them is that the juvenile division transitioned to a new data information system at the same time. Throughout Arizona, all juvenile staff is learning JOLTSaz, learning a new way of entering data, entering more data than ever before and becoming familiar with new screens. These ladies are working tirelessly to support the work of our officers. As one probation officer commented, *"They're doing a wonderful job. It's been neat to watch them come together as a team."*



From left to right Dotty Exley, Juliann Starkey and JoAnn Gorton.

Focus on Canon 1 of the Code of Conduct for Judicial Employees: 'Judicial Employees Shall Uphold and Promote the Independence, Integrity, & Impartiality of the Judiciary and Shall Avoid Impropriety and the Appearance of Impropriety.'

Rule 1.2 'Promoting Confidence in the Judiciary,' tell us that as judicial employees we shall act at all times in a manner that promotes public confidence in the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judiciary. It also tells us that we shall avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in our professional and personal lives.

The fundamental attitudes and work habits of individual judicial employees reflect on the integrity and independence of the judiciary and are of vital importance in maintaining the public's trust and confidence in the judiciary. Public confidence in the judiciary is eroded by improper conduct and conduct that creates the appearance of impropriety. As judicial employees, we should expect to be the subject of public scrutiny that might be viewed as burdensome if applied to other citizens, and we must accept the restrictions imposed by the code.

Rule 1.3 'Abuse of Position' states that as employees of the judiciary, we shall not use or attempt to use our positions for personal gain or to secure special privileges or exemptions for ourselves or for someone else. For example, it would be improper for a judicial employee to seek or provide special consideration regarding traffic citations or parking violations or to provide special treatment to certain parties or matter for personal reasons. Another example is that it would be improper for a judicial employee to use court letterhead to gain an advantage in conducting his or her personal business. This rule does allow a judicial employee to provide a personal reference or recommendation for an individual based upon personal knowledge and the employee may use court letterhead if there is no likelihood that the use of the letterhead would reasonably be perceived as an attempt to exert pressure by reason of the court employment.

This rule also states that it is improper for a judicial employee to use or disclose confidential information or records to others for personal purposes. Abuse of confidential information by a current or a former employee may be a class 6 felony under A.R.S. §38-504(B). Additionally, accepting, agreeing to accept, giving or requesting a gift or favor with an understanding that any court business or proceeding would be influenced may be bribery, a class 4 felony under A.R.S. §13-6202(A)(2) and §13-2606.

If you have any questions about the application of the Code of Conduct to specific situations, check with your supervisor, Judge/Division Head and/or Superior Court Human Resources.

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