



# 57<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT COURT

State of Michigan

113 Chestnut Street, Allegan County Building, Allegan, MI 49010



## **District Court Clerk's Office, Judicial Staff and Probation**

**Left to right, first row:** Magistrate Kirby J. Goodwin, Michael Finn, Judge Joseph S. Skocelas, Linda Lenahan, Judge William A. Baillargeon;

**Left to right, second row:** Jeff Hansen, Carole Carr, Chris Gates-Edson, Nashell O'Patik, Mark Ponitz, Kevin Christensen, Renee Nast, Donna Herwarth, Deb Wolters, Candy Mock, Michelle Carpenter, Sarah Henry, Kathy Miller, Kathy Evans;

**Left to right, third row:** Cindy Cook, Roberta Engelking, Heather MacKenzie, Nancy Oppenhuizen, Mary Richards, Kelly Miklusicak, Aimee Kragt;

*Not pictured: Jackie Hicks*

*Digital photos by Ken Devries, ACSD*

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The Work of the Court  
January 1 – December 31, 2010

# ANNUAL REPORT

57<sup>th</sup> DISTRICT COURT

113 Chestnut Street, Allegan, MI 49010

(269) 673-0400 phone

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# A Message from the Chief Judge

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2010 was a year of transition for the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court. Allegan County offered an early retirement/separation package for employees and two of our employees accepted the offer. Karen Barnes, our Chief Deputy Clerk, who had been employed with the Court since 1979, and Pam Ulrich, a Deputy Clerk in the Traffic-Criminal Division, since 1999 both retired from the Court in 2010.

When they left, these long-term employees took a total of 42 years of court experience with them. Fortunately we were able to internally promote two other experienced court employees.

Our new Chief Deputy Clerk is Christine Gates-Edson, who has been employed with the Court since 1998. Replacing Ms. Gates-Edson as Assistant to the Chief Deputy Clerk, is Nashell O’Patik, who has been with the Court since 2001.

However, we now have two fewer employees this year, and due to county budget constraints, no new hiring to replace them is anticipated at this time.

Despite the reduction in staff numbers, no Court programs were discontinued during 2010. The Court still has diversion programs in place as allowed by law for first time offenders of Domestic Violence, Drug Possession/Use, and Minor in Possession of Alcohol offenses. Also during 2010, in cooperation with the Allegan County Jail, the Allegan County Prosecutor’s Office, and all Allegan County police agencies, procedures were put in place to more swiftly be able to issue arrest warrants and set bail during the night and on weekends and holidays for persons who are held in custody in the Allegan County Jail. In addition, our Probation Department began the transition in 2010 to using the SCRAM alcohol monitoring system for probationers, which is the state of art device for monitoring of alcohol offenders in lieu of incarceration. Finally, the Mental Health Treatment Court of the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court actually expanded during 2010 when it received authority from the State Court Administrative Office of the Michigan Supreme Court to begin handling felony cases during 2011.

Your Court employees have maintained and even expanded the services they provide to you with fewer staff and have taken this all in stride. They are truly doing “more with less” and are doing an excellent job during this transition period of providing seamless services to you, the citizens of Allegan County.



*Chief Judge*  
**JOSEPH S. SKOCELAS**

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Joseph S. Skocelas". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Joseph S. Skocelas**  
Chief District Court Judge



## HISTORY, LOCATION AND OVERVIEW

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The 57th District Court is located in the County Building at 113 Chestnut Street, Allegan, Michigan. The geographic jurisdiction of the Court includes all of the County of Allegan, except that part of the City of Holland lying within Allegan County.

The District Court was established by the Michigan Legislature in 1968 pursuant to constitutional mandate. Citizens have more contact with the district court than any other court in the state. District Court has exclusive jurisdiction of all civil litigation up to \$25,000 and handles garnishments, eviction proceedings, landlord-tenant and land contract summary proceedings. In the criminal field, the district court handles all misdemeanors where punishment does not exceed one year and relevant proceedings including arraignment, setting and acceptance of bail, trial, and sentencing. It also conducts preliminary examinations in felony cases.

The district court includes a small claims division for civil cases up to \$3,000. In these cases, litigants agree to waive their right to a trial by jury. They also agree to waive rules of evidence, representation by a lawyer, and the right to appeal from the district judge's decision. If either party objects, the case will be heard in the general civil division of the district court.

By statute, the district judges have authority to appoint magistrates. Magistrates may 1) set bail and accept bond in criminal matters, 2) accept guilty pleas, and 3) sentence for traffic, motor carrier, snowmobile, dog, game, and marine law violations. The magistrate may also issue arrest and search warrants authorized by the prosecutor or local municipal attorney. Attorney magistrates may conduct small claims hearings. Magistrates may, at the direction of the chief judge, perform other duties allowed by statute.

District judges are elected for six-year terms on nonpartisan ballots, under the same requirements as circuit judges. The Legislature sets the salary for district judges.

# ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW



## District Court Administrative Team

**Left to right, first row:** Honorable Joseph S. Skocelas, Honorable William A. Baillargeon  
**Left to right, back row:** Michael Finn, Chief Probation Officer; Chris Gates-Edson, Chief Deputy District Court Clerk; Magistrate Kirby J. Goodwin; Linda Lenahan, Court Administrator;  
*Digital photos by Ken Devries, ACSD*

The 57th District Court has two Judges elected to six-year terms of office. The Chief Judge acts as director of administration of the Court. Each Judge is assisted by a Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary who is responsible to record proceedings, prepare verbatim transcripts as required by law or by request of parties, and perform secretarial duties. The Judges are also assisted by Bailiff/Magistrates who are responsible for transporting prisoners to and from the jail, assisting in and securing the courtrooms, assisting the public and jurors, and performing limited magisterial duties.

The District Court Administrator is appointed by the Chief Judge, and together they create an executive leadership team necessary to manage the operation of the District Court. The District Court Administrator oversees all aspects of Court operations and administration including, but not limited to, case flow management, jury utilization, human resource management, fiscal administration, intergovernmental liaison, and technology management, and is authorized to perform magisterial duties.

The Attorney Magistrate is appointed by the Chief Judge and performs certain quasi-judicial functions impacting litigants, the Court, and the out-county cities it serves. Some of the responsibilities include, but are not limited to, informal hearings, authorizing search and arrest warrants, conducting arraignments, performing legal research, accepting guilty pleas and sentencing, establishing bonds, resolving small claims matters, and performing weddings.

The Chief Probation Officer, under the supervision of the District Court Administrator, performs a variety of duties in supervising the activities and daily operations of probation officers and support staff as well as performing the duties of a probation officer on a regular basis.

The Chief Deputy Clerk, under the supervision of the District Court Administrator, serves as a team leader supervising, training and assisting staff; monitoring work loads; and overseeing daily operations in the Clerk's Office.

# ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The Public

HONORABLE JOSEPH S. SKOCELAS  
*Chief Judge*

HONORABLE WILLIAM A. BAILLARGEON  
*Judge Pro Tempore*

LINDA L. LENAHAN  
*Court Administrator*

Kirby J. Goodwin,  
*Attorney  
Magistrate*

Aimee Kragt, *Chief Account  
Clerk/Admin. Assistant*

Kevin Christensen, *Bailiff*  
Jeff Hansen, *Bailiff*

Carole Carr, *Recorder*  
Donna Herwarth, *Recorder*

*Administrative & Judicial  
Staff*

Michael E. Finn,  
*Chief Probation Officer*

Heather MacKenzie  
Kathy Miller  
Mark Ponitz  
*Probation Officers*

Candy Mock,  
*Senior Probation Secretary*

Cindy Cook, *Secretary*

Karen A. Barnes and  
Chris Gates-Edson  
*Chief Deputy Clerk*

Chris Gates-Edson and  
Nashell O'Patik  
*Assistant to Chief Deputy Clerk*

Nancy Oppenhuizen,  
*Senior Civil Clerk*

Michelle Carpenter  
Roberta Engelking  
Kathy Evans  
Sarah Henry  
Jackie Hicks  
Kelly Miklusicak  
Renee Nast  
Nashell O'Patik  
Mary Richards  
Pam Ulrich  
Deb Wolters  
*Deputy Clerks*

# JUDICIAL STAFF



## District Court Judicial Staff

*Left to right, first row: Judge William A. Baillargeon, Judge Joseph S. Skocelas, Magistrate Kirby J. Goodwin;  
Left to right, back row: Jeff Hansen, Aimee Kragt, Donna Herwarth,  
Carole Carr, Linda Lenahan, Kevin Christensen  
Digital photos by Ken Devries, ACSD*

**HONORABLE JOSEPH S. SKOCELAS**, Chief District Court Judge was appointed by Governor Jennifer Granholm on April 26, 2006 to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of the Honorable Gary Stewart. Judge Skocelas was subsequently elected in November 2006 to complete Judge Stewart's term through 2008, then again in November of 2008 for a full six-year term.

**HONORABLE WILLIAM A. BAILLARGEON**, District Court Judge Pro-tempore was appointed by Governor Jennifer Granholm on March 5, 2009 to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of the Honorable Stephen Sheridan. Prior to this appointment, Judge Baillargeon served as Circuit Judge for Allegan County's 48<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court from 2007-2009. Judge Baillargeon was re-elected in November 2010 to complete Judge Sheridan's term.

**LINDA L. LENAHAN**, District Court Administrator was appointed in February 2002. Prior to her appointment, Linda worked for the State Court Administrative Office of the Michigan Supreme Court for 20 years.

**KIRBY J. GOODWIN**, Attorney Magistrate has been with the District Court since June 1984.

**CAROLE A. CARR**, Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary for the Honorable William A. Baillargeon has been with the District Court since April 1991.

**KEVIN M. CHRISTENSEN**, Bailiff/Magistrate for the Honorable Joseph S. Skocelas has been with the District Court since June 4, 2007.

**JEFFERY L. HANSEN**, Bailiff/Magistrate for the Honorable William A. Baillargeon has been with the District Court since February 2004.

**DONNA L. HERWARTH**, Court Recorder/Judicial Secretary for the Honorable Joseph Skocelas has been with the District Court since November 1995.

**AIMEE L. KRAGT**, Chief Account Clerk/Administrative Assistant has been with the District Court since January 1988.

# CLERK'S OFFICE STAFF



## District Court Clerk's Office

*Left to right, first row: Nancy Oppenhuizen, Nashell O'Patik, Chris Gates-Edson, Roberta Engelking, Kelly Miklusicak*

*Left to right, back row: Michelle Carpenter, Renee Nast, Mary Richards, Deb Wolters, Kathy Evans, Sarah Henry,*

*Not pictured: Jackie Hicks*

*Digital photos by Ken Devries, ACSD*

**KAREN BARNES**, Chief Deputy Clerk, was employed with the District Court since October 1979. Karen accepted the early retirement/separation offer from Allegan County effective August 13, 2010.

**MICHELLE CARPENTER**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since January 1998.

**ROBERTA ENGELKING**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since January 2005.

**KATHLEEN EVANS**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since January 1999.

**CHRISTINE GATES-EDSON**, Assistant to the Chief Deputy Court Clerk has been employed with the District Court since September 1998. Effective September 2010 Christine was promoted to Chief Deputy District Court Clerk.

**SARAH HENRY**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since October 1998.

**JACQUELINE HICKS**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Collections Division has been employed with the District Court since February 2004.

**KELLY MIKLUSICAK**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since February 2004.

**RENEE NAST**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Civil Division has been employed with the District Court since April 9, 2007.

**NASHELL O'PATIK**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division been employed with the District Court since June 2001. Effective November 2010 Nashell was promoted to the Assistant to the Chief Deputy District Court Clerk.

**NANCY OPPENHUIZEN**, Senior Civil Clerk has been employed with the District Court since December 1997.

**MARY RICHARDS**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Civil Division has been employed with the District Court since July 2001.

**PAMELA ULRICH**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division was employed with the District Court since November 1999. Pam accepted the early retirement/separation offer from Allegan County effective August 13, 2010.

**DEBORAH WOLTERS**, Deputy Court Clerk in the Traffic/Criminal Division has been employed with the District Court since April 2004.

# PROBATION DEPARTMENT STAFF



## District Court Probation Staff

*Left to right, front row: Cindy Cook, Candy Mock, Kathy Miller  
Left to right, back row: Michael Finn, Heather MacKenzie, Mark Ponitz;  
Digital photos by Ken Devries, ACSD*

**MICHAEL E. FINN**, Chief Probation Officer has been employed with the District Court since March 1975.

**CINDY COOK**, Secretary has been employed with the District Court since October 2006.

**HEATHER MACKENZIE**, Probation Officer has been employed with the District Court since June 1998.

**KATHLEEN MILLER**, Probation Officer has been employed with the District Court since January 2000.

**CANDICE MOCK**, Senior Probation Secretary has been employed with the District Court since January 1995.

**MARK PONITZ**, Probation Officer has been employed with the District Court since May 2006.

# JURISDICTION

DIVISIONS	JURISDICTION	FACTS TO KNOW
<b>CIVIL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil suits up to \$25,000</li> <li>• Small claim suits up to \$3,000</li> <li>• Landlord tenant disputes, garnishments, and land contract summary proceedings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil suits can be filed by either an individual or a business</li> <li>• Parties must represent themselves in small claims cases – attorneys may not be involved</li> </ul>
<b>CRIMINAL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michigan statute violations</li> <li>• City/village/township ordinances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All felony cases such as murder and criminal sexual conduct are heard by a district judge through the preliminary hearing stage only</li> <li>• Domestic violence, retail fraud, disturbing the peace are examples of misdemeanor violations</li> </ul>
<b>TRAFFIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michigan statute violations</li> <li>• City/village/township ordinances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operating while intoxicated, reckless driving, expired operator’s license are examples of misdemeanor traffic offenses</li> <li>• Speeding, careless driving, no safety belt are examples of civil infraction violations</li> </ul>

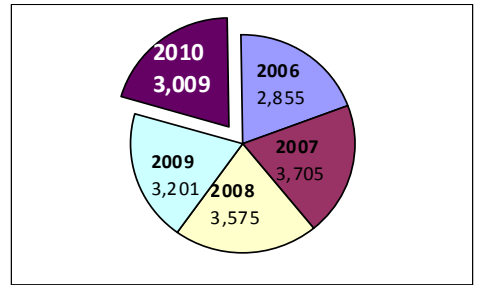
# COURT DIVISIONS

## CIVIL DIVISION

The *Civil Division* consists of the following sub-divisions:

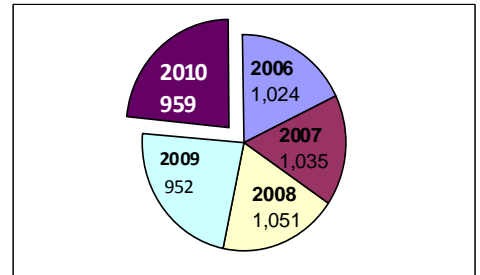
The *General Civil Division* processes all civil cases under the \$25,000 jurisdictional limit; limited claim and delivery civil actions; limited writ of attachment and garnishment; and forfeiture or seizure of certain property.

The pie chart reflects the five-year trend in general civil filings. Case filings over the five-year trend increased 5% from 2006 to 2010. New case filings decreased 192 cases from 2009 to 2010.



The *Summary Proceeding Division* processes cases generally brought by a landlord to recover possession of a dwelling when a tenant fails to pay the rent or when the landlord or owner wishes to regain possession of his/her property. Summary proceedings include land contract forfeitures arising when a purchaser does not pay the amount agreed upon in a contract. A landlord may obtain an Order of Eviction to evict a tenant, or land contract vendee.

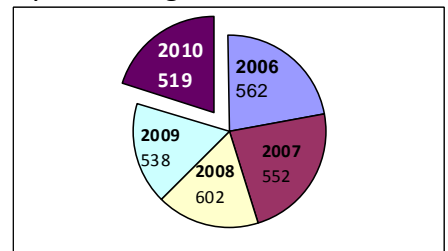
The pie chart reflects the five-year trend in summary proceeding filings. New filings over the five-year trend decreased 65 cases from 2006 to 2010. New case filings increased 7 cases from 2009 to 2010.



The *Small Claims Division* processes cases with recoverable maximum monies up to \$3,000. Small claims litigants have the right to remove a case to the General Civil Division or to remove a case from magisterial jurisdiction. Actions are filed in the county in which the cause of action arose, or in which the defendant is established or resides or is employed. Small claims litigants waive their right to a jury trial and cannot be represented by an attorney.

Small claims cases are heard by the Attorney Magistrate. Sessions are held at the Court located in the City of Allegan and at the satellite courts located in Wayland, Saugatuck, Plainwell, and Otsego.

The pie chart reflects the five-year year trend in small claim filings. Case filings over the five-year trend decreased 43 cases from 2006 to 2010. New case filings decreased 19 cases from 2009 to 2010.

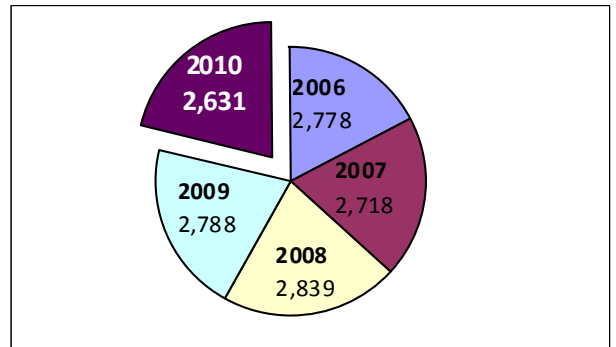


# CRIMINAL DIVISION

The *Criminal Division (including Felony Traffic violations)* adjudicates cases involving violations of Michigan statute as well as violations of local ordinance. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Michigan Attorney General's Office, local police agencies, and ordinance city/township/village attorneys file felony and misdemeanor cases with the Court. District Court Judges preside over felony cases through the preliminary examination hearing stages only.

In 2010, the criminal division handled 2,631 new case filings. The Court conducted felony preliminary exam hearings and waiver hearings and bound over 421 cases to the Circuit Court. This number includes traffic division bind overs, as well. The criminal division disposed of 3,930 cases.

The pie chart reflects the five-year trend in criminal division filings. Case filings over the five-year trend decreased 147 cases from 2006 to 2010. New case filings decreased 157 cases from 2009 to 2010.

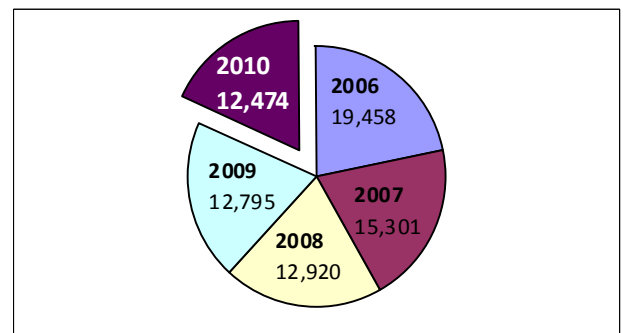


# TRAFFIC DIVISION

The *Traffic Division (including non-traffic civil infractions)* adjudicates cases involving Michigan statute violations, the motor vehicle code and local ordinances.

In 2010, the traffic division handled 12,474 new case filings. The traffic division disposed of 13,100 cases through various dispositions, i.e., guilty plea, admission of responsibility, default, dismissal, warrant, and trial/hearing verdict. In 2010, the Judges disposed of 15 cases by jury verdict and 468 cases by bench trial, formal or informal hearing for all case types.

The pie chart reflects the five-year trend in traffic division filings. Case filings decreased by 6,984 cases from 2006 to 2010. New case filings decreased 321 cases from 2009 to 2010.



# STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

## TOTAL NEW CASE FILINGS



Each year, the District Court prepares and files with the State Court Administrative Office, a caseload report of all new cases filed, re-opened cases, warrants, and dispositions in categories of Traffic, Criminal and Civil cases. The Court uploads these numbers to the State Court Administrative Office's web site.

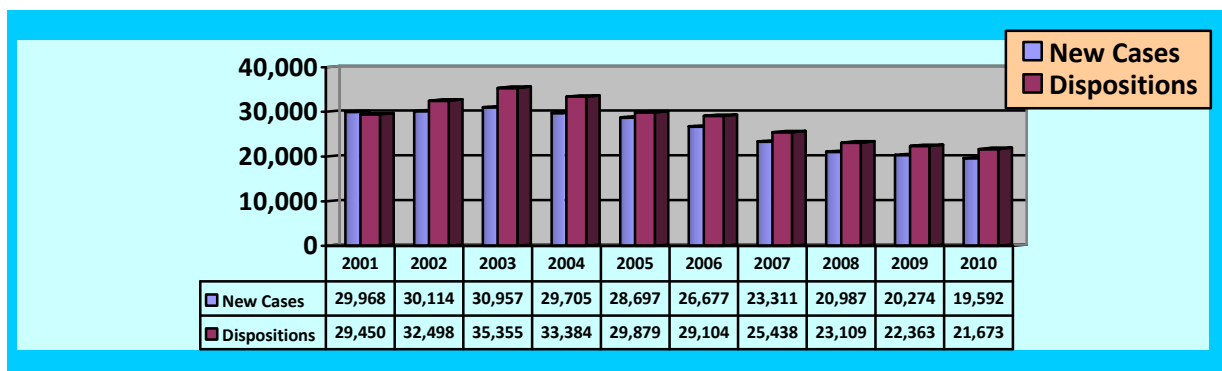
In 2002, the State Court Administrative Office significantly changed the methodology of counting cases in the District Court. The Court went from tracking 16 different case type classifications to 21 different classifications.

Previously, a multi-count criminal case was given a separate case file for each charge filed. Now, the Prosecutor's Office is placing multiple counts on **one** Complaint and Warrant and the Court counts that as **one** case filed. This revised method of counting will cause the number of cases filed to appear to decline when other factors remain constant.

### TOTAL NEW CASES FILED

Traffic cases filed	12,474
Criminal cases filed	2,631
Civil cases filed	<u>4,487</u>
<b>Total new cases filed</b>	<b>19,592</b>

A comparison of total new case filings and dispositions from 2001 through 2010 are reflected in the graph below. The ten-year bar graph reflects that the Court experienced a decrease of 10,376 new cases filings from 2001 through 2010. The one-year trend reflects that the Court experienced a decrease of 682 new case filings from 2009 to 2010.



# STATISTICAL ANALYSIS



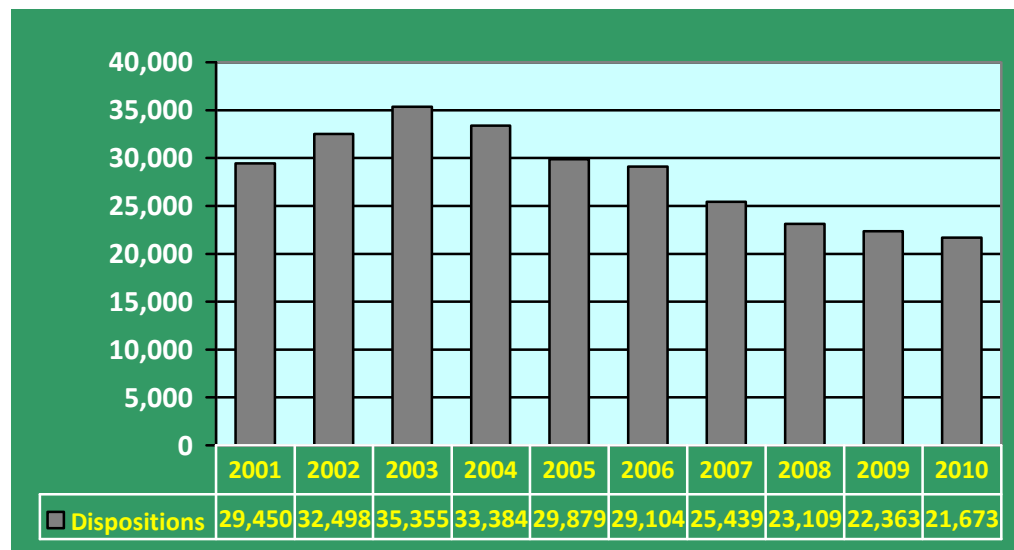
## TOTAL DISPOSITIONS

The District Court submits the number of dispositions annually to the State Court Administrative Office. Dispositions include Jury Verdicts, Bench Verdicts, Pleas, Dismissals, Defaults, Warrants Issued, and Circuit Court Felony Bindovers, etc. The Court uploads these totals into the State Court Administrative Office's web site.

### TOTAL DISPOSITIONS

Traffic cases	13,100
Criminal cases	3,930
Civil cases	<u>4,643</u>
<b>Total dispositions</b>	<b>21,673</b>

Total dispositions for all divisions from 2001 through 2010 are reflected in the graph below. The ten-year bar graph reflects that the Court experienced a decrease of 7,777 case dispositions from 2001 through 2010. The one-year trend reflects that the Court experienced a decrease of 690 case dispositions from 2009 to 2010.



# STATISTICAL ANALYSIS



## TOTAL RE-OPENED CASES

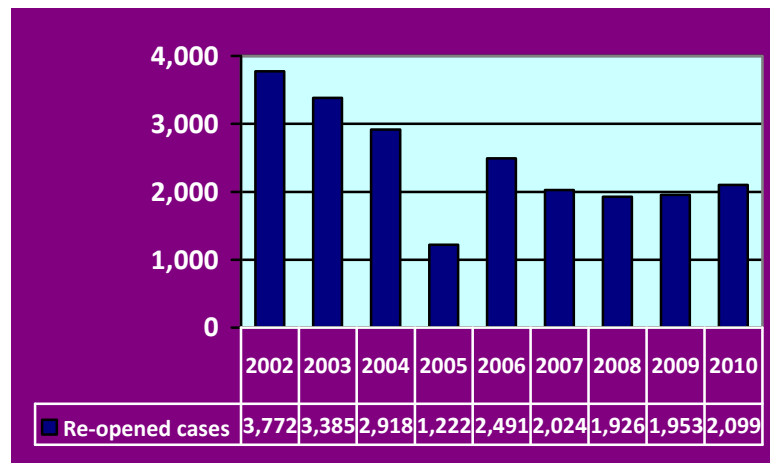
Cases are counted as re-opened when a defendant is arrested and arraigned on a warrant, a new trial is ordered by an appellate court, or a plea or judgment is set aside. The Court uploads these numbers to the State Court Administrative Office's web site. The number of re-opened cases was not tracked prior to 2002 by the State or the Court.



### TOTAL RE-OPENED CASES FILED

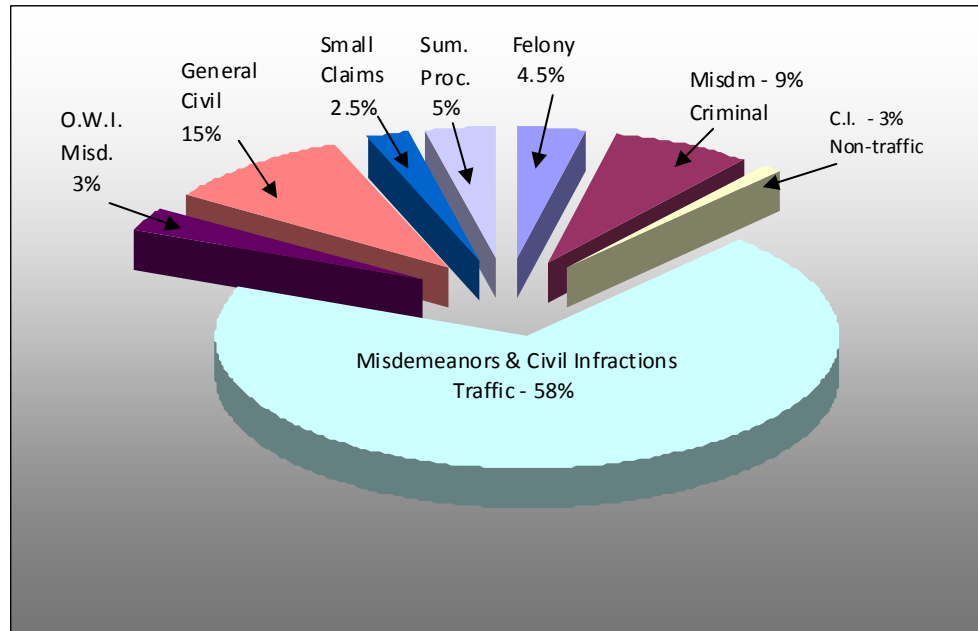
Traffic cases re-opened	676
Criminal cases re-opened	1315
Civil cases filed re-opened	<u>108</u>
<b>Total cases re-opened</b>	<b>2,099</b>

Total re-opened cases for all divisions from 2002 through 2010 are reflected in the graph below. The nine-year bar graph reflects that the Court experienced a decrease of 1,673 re-opened cases from 2002 through 2010. The one-year trend reflects that the Court experienced an increase of 146 cases from 2009 to 2010.



# CASELOAD MIX

The pie chart reflects both the total number of cases filed and the percentages by divisions.



# RATIO OF DISPOSITIONS TO NEW CASE FILING

The ratio of dispositions to new case filings are reflected below.

New Case Filings	19,592
Dispositions	21,673
Ratio	111%

# PROBATION DEPARTMENT

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The functions of the *Probation Department* are to assist the Judges in determining an appropriate sentence and to supervise probationers ensuring that they comply with the terms and conditions of the orders of the Court. Probation Officers are responsible to refer probationers to qualified treatment personnel and to introduce them to vocational or educational resources.

The total number of defendants placed on probation during 2010 was 972. The total number of probationers being supervised by the Probation Officers for the period ending December 2010 was 906 including diversion programs.

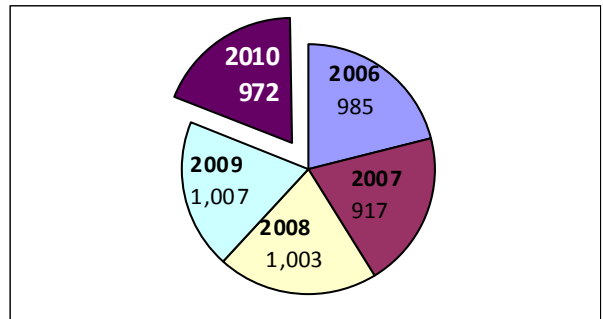
The difference between the total number placed on probation (972) and supervised 906 reflects the number of probationers who completed their terms and conditions of probation and were released. The time span of probation can range from a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of two years. Consequently, probationers are continually being released and new probationers added.

The table below reflects the number of probationers placed on probation during the year.

## DEFENDANTS PLACED ON PROBATION

Judge	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	TOTALS
SKOCELAS	34	32	43	37	37	36	35	47	51	25	36	35	<b>448</b>
BAILLARGEON	39	36	54	53	41	37	60	60	32	41	36	35	<b>524</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>972</b>

The pie chart reflects the total number of cases or individuals that were placed on probation from 2006 through 2010. For the period of 2006 through 2010, the caseload decreased 13 cases. Caseload decreased by 35 cases between 2009 and 2010.



## PROBATION OFFENSE CHARGE STATISTICS

The table below reflects statistics on various offenses handled by the probation department.

### OFFENSE REPORT

<b>OFFENSES</b>	<b>Jan.</b>	<b>Feb.</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Aug.</b>	<b>Sept.</b>	<b>Oct.</b>	<b>Nov.</b>	<b>Dec.</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Operate while Intoxicated	11	12	20	18	13	9	19	21	13	12	12	16	<b>176</b>
Impaired Driving	28	26	31	29	22	23	33	46	31	21	28	14	<b>332</b>
Assault & Battery	4	8	2	4	2	1	0	4	7	4	4	9	<b>49</b>
Domestic Violence	14	6	14	7	8	9	14	12	8	7	7	8	<b>114</b>
Malicious Destruction of Property	0	0	0	0	2	3	1	1	2	1	0	1	<b>11</b>
Larceny	1	1	3	1	1	0	3	1	2	3	0	1	<b>17</b>
Drug Offenses	8	7	12	13	8	14	16	9	5	5	7	8	<b>112</b>
Stalking	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	<b>7</b>
CSC – Attempted 4 <sup>th</sup> Degree/ Accosting	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	<b>6</b>
All Other Charges	5	8	14	17	21	13	7	11	15	12	13	12	<b>148</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>972</b>

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIVERSION PROGRAM**

The Domestic Violence Diversion Program was implemented in September 1998 by the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court in cooperation with, and with the support of, the Allegan County Coordinating Council on Domestic Violence, the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office, and the Allegan County Board of Commissioners.

### **FUNDING**

In April of 1998, the Board of Commissioners approved funding for this program. A fourth probation officer was hired in June of 1998. Assessing the probationer a supervision/oversight cost generates funding for the program. In February 2006, the cost was increased from \$200 to \$300. It was increased again on April 1, 2009 to \$350 concurrent with an increase to state minimum costs.

### **PURPOSES AND ADVANTAGES OF THE DIVERSION PROGRAM**

This program offers a defendant the opportunity to avoid a criminal record upon successful completion of counseling, with the goal to improve family relationships and avoid repeat offenses. It eliminates the adversary relationship between the defendant and family member victim and/or between the victim and the court, the prosecutor, and the police. It promotes an atmosphere of "working together" through counseling, rather than "tearing apart" through trials and court hearings. The program reduces court, prosecutor, and police time by avoiding unnecessary trials and allows cases to be adjudicated more quickly.

The program is designed for qualified first time offenders charged with Domestic Violence. It allows a defendant to plead guilty and be placed on voluntary probation status for a period of 9 - 12 months, provided the victim consents. During this time, the defendant is required to attend Domestic Violence counseling sessions scheduled over a period of 26 weeks. If the defendant successfully completes the probation and required counseling, he/she is discharged from probation and the original charge of Domestic Violence is dismissed under MCL 769.4a. If a defendant fails to complete the counseling, or for any other reason violates the probation, he/she is required to immediately appear in Court and is sentenced.

### **COUNSELING**

The Court meets with various counselors and counseling agencies to review the techniques used in their programs. The effectiveness of the programs depends on the quality and content of the counseling services offered. The programs must be appropriate and consistent with accepted national standards.

Each defendant who successfully completes the program is required to complete a brief questionnaire that evaluates their counseling services.

## COMPLIANCE

If the Court finds that all supervision/oversight costs have been paid and all counseling has been completed, the defendant is discharged from probation without hearing.

## STATISTICS

The following statistics reflect twelve years of the Domestic Violence Diversion Program under MCL 769.4a. Statistics are gathered, compiled and reported for the period of September 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year. The statistics include all domestic violence cases charged under MCLA 750.81(2), (3), or (4).

	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
New charges filed	371	401	404	504	514	421	395	429	427	472	485	467
Cases pled under program	144	119	122	176	130	134	115	88	112	124	135	128
Cases successfully completing program	21	118	92	91	112	92	102	77	68	74	80	108
Cases not completing program	-	6	15	34	29	27	31	32	24	40	46	52
Pled guilty to DV but not under program	60	-	62	104	132	97	122	116	128	133	132	101
Dismissed or nolle prosequi filed	-	97	68	131	118	110	97	114	94	96	102	97
Bound over to Circuit Court	-	10	11	18	19	34	20	29	32	28	35	24
Reduced from DV III to miscellaneous charges	-	-	5	12	3	1	1	1	3	3	2	5
Reduced from DV III to DV II	-	4	1	8	9	3	8	0	3	4	8	17
Reduced from DV II to DV I	-	12	10	15	14	5	14	17	11	6	7	38
Reduced from DV Aggravated to DV Program	-	-	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reduced from DV to Disorderly Person	7	12	7	18	17	15	26	17	15	12	40	38
Reduced from DV to Assault & Battery	10	5	5	7	14	11	6	14	22	23	15	8
Reduced to misc. charges not included above	-	2	3	16	3	3	4	4	8	4	1	8
Guilty as charged after bench trial	2	-	3	1	4	0	1	0	1	6	0	0
Guilty of other offense after bench trial	-	-	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guilty as charged after jury trial	1	-	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0
Not guilty/dismissed after bench trial	-	2	3	2	2	1	3	1	0	3	2	0
Not guilty after jury trial	2	1	2	4	2	0	2	3	3	3	5	4
Mental Health Court	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Recharged after successful completion of the program	-	11	1	4	14	8	15	8	16	9	12	*13

\*Of the 13 new cases recharged with domestic violence after successfully completing the program in the past, 6 pled guilty to the new charges. Two had their charges reduced/amended to disturbing the peace; two were reduced to assault & battery; 3 were reduced to DV-1st.

## 7411 DIVERSION PROGRAM FIRST TIME DRUG OFFENDERS

On October 12, 2006, the Court began imposing a sentencing alternative to first time drug offenders under MCL 333.7411. This statute allows the Court to order a deferral of judgment for first time drug offenders. When an individual has not previously been convicted of a drug offense or participated in a prior 7411 diversion, with the consent of the accused, the Judge may defer further proceedings and place the individual on probation. If the person fulfills the terms and conditions of probation, they will be discharged from probation and the matter will be dismissed. A nonpublic record will be created for this arrest. Individuals may only use this deferral once in their lifetime. If an individual violates probation, the court will remove them from the deferral program and enter a conviction in its place. The Department of State is then notified of the conviction and licensing sanctions are ordered.

Currently, each probationer is placed on diversion for 6 months through probation. A \$500 supervision/oversight cost must be paid prior to discharge from probation.

### 7411 DEFERRALS

2010	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
TOTAL	12	7	12	9	11	11	6	7	11	11	4	7	108

## MINOR IN POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL DEFERRAL PROGRAM FOR FIRST TIME OFFENDERS

Effective September 1, 2004, Public Act 63 allows the Court to order a deferral of judgment for first time offenders of Minor in Possession of Alcohol under MCL 436.1703. When an individual has not previously been convicted of Minor in Possession or participated in a prior MIP diversion, the Court, with the consent of the accused, may defer further proceedings and place the individual on probation. While proceedings are deferred and the individual is on probation, the court shall maintain a nonpublic record of the matter. The Court abstracts the deferred status to the Department of State (DOS) which keeps the record nonpublic. If the person fulfills the terms and conditions of probation, they are discharged from probation and the matter is dismissed. A nonpublic record will be retained for this arrest. Individuals may only use this deferral once in their lifetime. If an individual violates probation, the court will remove them from the deferral program and enter a conviction in its place. The case becomes public and Department of State is notified of the conviction.

Currently, each probationer is placed on diversion for 6 months. A \$300 supervision/oversight cost must be paid and the probationer must attend a Victim Impact Panel meeting as ordered.

### MINOR IN POSSESSION DEFERRALS

2010	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
TOTAL	11	5	4	7	3	9	8	1	5	3	6	1	63

## ALCOHOL ASSESSMENTS

On April 15, 1996, the Probation Officers began conducting alcohol assessment evaluations. A total of 577 assessments were completed during 2010. The assessment fee increased from \$65 to \$75 on October 1, 2009. The evaluations will generate total revenues of \$43,275.00. Revenues collected for 2010 were \$44,330.34.

### ASSESSMENTS

2010	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>577</b>

## PROBATION SUPERVISION AND OVERSIGHT COSTS

On May 4, 1998, the Court began assessing oversight costs to all defendants placed on probation. For those placed on probation up to one year, \$100.00 is assessed. If the probation term is one year or greater, \$200.00 is assessed. On October 1, 2009, the costs increased to \$200.00 for less than 1 year and \$300.00 for a year or greater. Revenues collected in 2010 were \$266,652.45.

## ELECTRONIC HOME MONITORING PROGRAM

On June 1, 1996, the department implemented the use of the Electronic Home Monitoring Program provided by Midstate Security Company. This program, which is an alternative to physical incarceration, provides a visual contact and positive visual identification of the probationer, and allows for breath alcohol level testing for probationers with alcohol-related problems. During 2010, 30 probationers utilized this program. In 2011, the Court will fully migrate to **SCRAM** alcohol monitoring systems, a state of the art system.

### HOME MONITORING PROGRAM

Judge	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	TOTAL
SKOCELAS	2	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	11
BAILLARGEON	0	3	1	1	5	1	2	1	3	0	0	2	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>

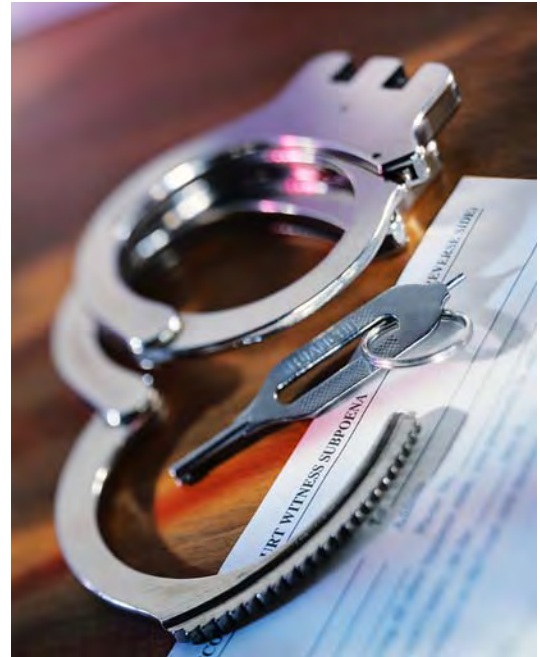
# LEIN ENTRY

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The District Court implemented warrant entry in late June 2002. Since its implementation, the Clerk's Office has entered approximately 30,151 new warrants and cancelled another 30,383 warrants. In 2010 alone, 2,798 warrants were entered and 3,107 were cancelled. Prior to going paperless, all warrant transactions were entered by staff at Allegan County Central Dispatch and various Michigan State Police Posts.

In December 2002, the District Court Clerk's Office and District Court Probation Department began entering dispositions on-line to Michigan State Police Criminal Records Division. This allows for immediate entry and modification of a defendant's criminal history record. As of December 31, 2010, the Court has entered 28,719 criminal history transactions (3,072 in 2010). All criminal justice agencies currently are required to report electronically.

In early 2008, the Court began a collaborative effort with the Allegan County Sheriff's Department enforcing District Court arrest and bench warrants immediately upon entry into LEIN. Weekly, the Court provides the ACSD with all warrants issued the prior week for Allegan County residents. The report is separated by zip code to conduct efficient enforcement of these orders. Furthermore, if the warrant is for failing to pay fine and costs, the deputy is authorized to cancel the bench warrant after collecting the full payment on the road without transporting and lodging the defendant. The Court's order is enforced swiftly sending a message to all defendants that judicial orders are promptly enforced in Allegan County.



# COURT IN SESSION AT AREA HIGH SCHOOLS

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**FENNVILLE HIGH SCHOOL – March 25, 2010**

**HOPKINS HIGH SCHOOL – May 14, 2010**

**PLAINWELL HIGH SCHOOL – October 21, 2010**



During 2010, three high schools were visited by the District Court Judges to conduct live criminal sentencings in their school's auditoriums. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, Judge Skocelas conducted proceedings at Hopkins High School. On March 25<sup>th</sup> and October 21<sup>st</sup>, Judge Baillargeon conducted proceedings at Fennville High School and Plainwell High School respectively. The *Court in Schools* program, which was approved by the Michigan Supreme Court, was spearheaded in 2007 by Judge Skocelas to educate students about the court system.

Holding *Court in the Schools* is a proactive approach to solving several of the more serious problems facing teenagers in our community: drinking and driving, underage drinking, drug use, shoplifting and other crimes committed by young people. The students have the opportunity to see first hand that there are serious consequences when you break the law.

The defendants, who had already pleaded guilty at the District Court in Allegan, agreed to have their sentencings conducted at the high schools. The hearings held did not include any student or graduate of each individual high school.

This program has representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, local defense attorneys, probation officers, school security, and Judge's staff. At the conclusion of the court proceeding, a video involving teenage drinking is played followed by a question and answer session with students. With the State's approval of these local administrative orders, the school auditoriums become, legally, the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court of Allegan County those days. Court hearings must, by law, be open to the public. A court bailiff and a school public safety officer provide security.

Judge Skocelas was accompanied by his court recorder Donna Herwarth and bailiff Kevin Christensen. Judge Baillargeon was accompanied by his court recorder Carole Carr and bailiff Jeff Hansen. Due to the success of this program, additional "*Court in School*" locations are planned for 2011/2012 in area high schools.

# COMMUNITY SERVICE IN LIEU OF FINE AND COSTS

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With the current economic conditions we are all facing, the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court embarked on a new project to offer an alternative to paying fine and costs to the Court. Many courts in Michigan have implemented a community service program managed through their Court for indigent defendants. The Court carries an insurance policy to cover accidental injury while volunteers perform community service.

Each volunteer will be responsible for contacting a non-profit agency, traveling to and from work sites, and following the directions of that organization. With the financial cut-backs to the non-profit agencies, it is a beneficial situation for everyone involved.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the program is to offer an alternative sentence for defendants who are unable to pay their court ordered fine and costs. While state fees and restitution cannot be waived, the court fine and costs can be worked off with community service.

## **RULES**

The program will be monitored by the Probation Department. The Probation Department will provide defendants with a listing of pre-approved community service non-profit agencies in Allegan County. Any non-profit agency may be used to perform community service – although agencies not on the listing must be pre-approved by the Probation Department prior to scheduling the work.

Each defendant must make the initial contact with the non-profit agency, have them complete various forms and keep the probation department abreast of each person's progress.

Community service may be performed for fine and costs only. Restitution, Driver License Reinstatement Fee, Crime Victim Fee and State Costs may not be worked off through community service.

One (1) hour of community service will work off \$10.00 of fine and costs.

# MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT COURT

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On **September 14, 2009**, Judge Skocelas and the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court, teamed with representatives of the Allegan County Sheriff's Department, Allegan City Police, Allegan County Prosecutor's Office, Allegan County Community Mental Health, Michigan State Police, local defense attorneys, and local substance abuse providers (OAR) to create a Mental Health Treatment Court in Allegan County. This treatment court is funded with federal dollars donated by the Allegan County Sheriff's Department and Allegan City Police.

As of December 31, 2010, there were **16** participants in the program. Since its inception, **seven** participants have successfully completed the program; **eight** have been unsuccessfully discharged; **one** participant died in a motorcycle accident while on the program.

## SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION TO MENTAL HEALTH COURTS

The judicial problem-solving methodology that originated with drug courts has been tailored to address other serious problems associated with large numbers of persons in the criminal caseload. One of the most challenging uses of this treatment-oriented judicial approach, the mental health court, has focused on the mentally ill and disabled in the criminal justice population. The pressures that have led to the development of the mental health court strategy include crises in community mental health care (the long-term effects of deinstitutionalization), the drug epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s, the dramatic increase in homelessness over the last two decades, and widespread jail overcrowding. In Allegan, we are responding to the problems faced by the mentally ill in already overcrowded jails, and the relatively common co-occurrence of mental illness among the large numbers of substance abusers in the criminal justice population. Local jails, which have been struggling for decades, to deal with chronic overcrowding, have been particularly challenged by the need to care for the large numbers of mentally ill persons found in their charge. Jails and court populations have increasingly included mentally ill and disabled individuals who have extensive histories of involvement with the justice system and who have not been successfully engaged by community mental health treatment agencies. These courts are voluntary; the defendant must consent to participation before he/she can be placed into the court program. The mental health courts share the objective of preventing the jailing of the mentally ill and/or of securing their release from jail to appropriate services and support in the community. In addition, each court gives a high priority to concerns for public safety when arranging for the care of mentally ill offenders.

**Mental Health Treatment Court** is a two-phase program designed for adult offenders charged with one or more criminal offenses and who are having difficulty with mental health issues, are developmentally disabled, or mentally ill defendants with co-occurring disorders (mental health/substance abuse).

**Mental Health Treatment Court** involves frequent court appearances and active participation by the participant towards their recovery. It may also include random drug/alcohol screens if necessary. The court may provide incentives for progress and sanctions for negative behaviors. If the participant fails to follow certain rules, they may be required to report more often to the Court, spend time in jail, or face serious sanctions such as termination from the Mental Health Treatment Court.

# REVENUES & EXPENSES

Revenue is generated as a by-product of the fines, costs, and fees imposed by the Judges and Attorney Magistrate. State Constitution and statutes determine how the money is distributed.

The Court maintains and monitors two expense and revenue budgets: the District Court budget and the District Court Probation Department budget. Revenues collected from the District Court Probation Department for alcohol assessments and supervision/oversight costs are combined with the District Court's general fund revenues that are deposited on a monthly basis with the County Treasurer.

## REVENUES

AGENCY OR FUND	AMOUNT
Drug Case Reimbursement Fund	\$ 1,304.25
Drunk Driving Reimbursement Fund	\$ 45,021.73
Court Costs	\$ 816,010.36
Court Appointed Attorney Fees	\$ 134,586.23
Bond Costs	\$ 1,105.00
Crime Victims' Rights Fund	\$ 10,471.78
Civil Filing Fees	\$ 215,873.00
Miscellaneous Fees	\$ 14,556.50
Driver's License Reinstatement Fees	\$ 19,321.45
Motion Fees	\$ 11,630.00
NSF Fees	\$ 325.00
Bond Forfeitures	\$ 29,231.00
Ordinance Fine and Costs	\$ 118,972.46
Local Ordinance Fines – Parks	\$ 0.00
Jury Reimbursement	\$ 5530.00
Insurance Fee	\$ 10,190.00
Probation Alcohol Assessments	\$ 44,330.34
Probation Oversight Costs	\$ 266,652.45
Cities, Townships, Villages	\$ 53,467.02
State Treasury – Trust and Agencies	\$ 809,115.14
Secretary of State	\$ 19,357.80
Libraries	\$ 544,323.86
Interest Earned	\$ 443.48
Cash Over/Short	\$ (-44.25)
Credit Card Fees	\$ (-3,054.02)

## EXPENSES

EXPENDITURE	DISTRICT COURT	PROBATION DEPT.
Salary and wages	\$968,217.67	\$291,008.30
Employee benefits	351,323.40	124,665.56
Office supplies	11,104.42	1,340.35
Printing and binding	10,227.87	745.22
Books and maps	14,828.46	0
Consultants	0	0
Probation Assessment Fees	0	2,700.00
Jury	10,379.65	0
Witnesses	296.10	0
Interpreter fees	5,794.45	0
Court appointed attorney fees	100,199.84	0
Memberships and subscriptions	3,116.92	140.00
Other Contractual Services	3,401.09	0
Telephone	238.53	0
Travel Expense – routine	691.00	0
Education – miscellaneous	594.81	1,599.21
Education – travel	706.20	764.90
Education – registration	125.00	320.00
Travel – visiting judge	97.50	0
Repairs and maintenance	7,003.84	56.10
Software lease	38,214.28	0
Equipment	843.83	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,527,404.86</b>	<b>\$423,339.64</b>

## CUMULATIVE TOTALS

### REVENUES

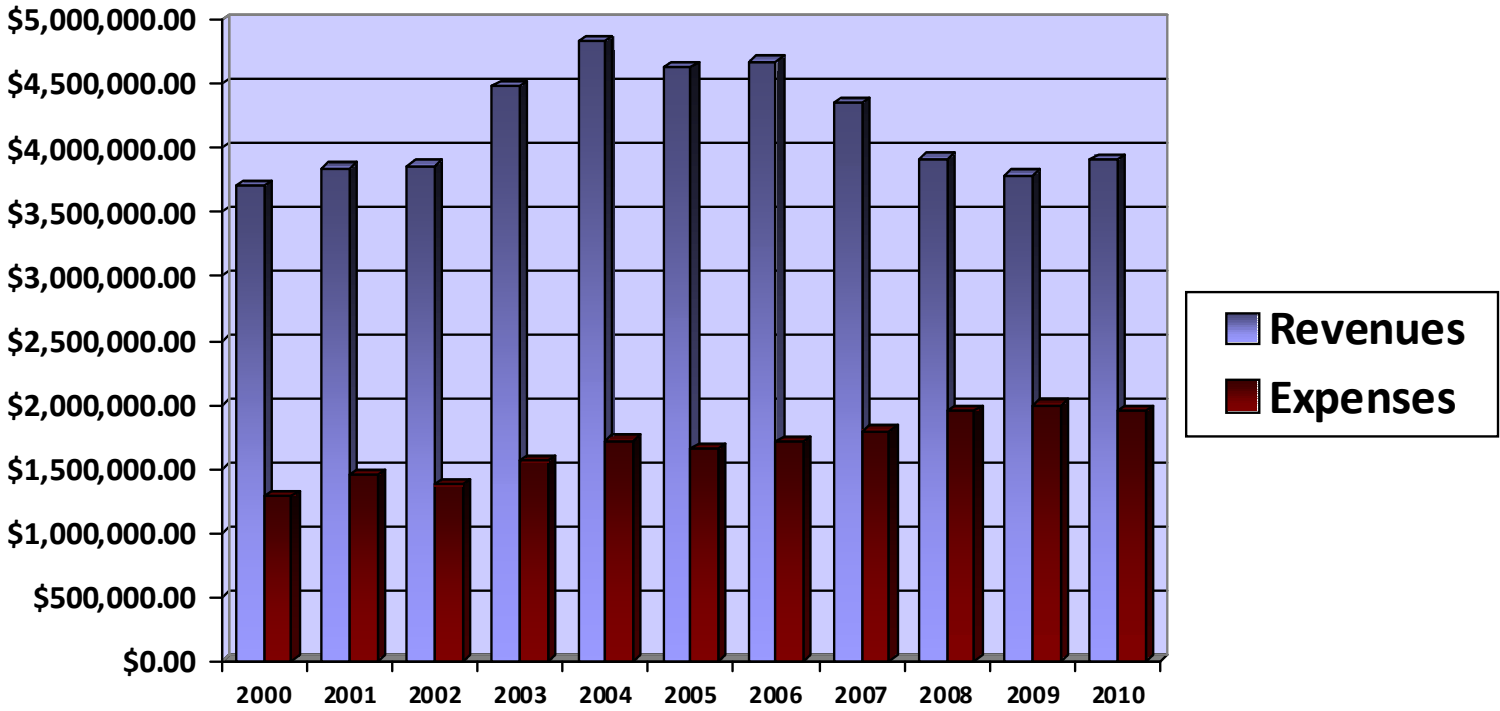
General fund	\$1,739,581.55	
Jury Reimbursement	5,530.00	
Interest	443.48	
Credit Card Fees/Cash over/short	(-3,098.27)	
Trust and Agencies	881,939.96	
Libraries	544,323.86	
Restitution	117,628.55	
Bonds Payable	<u>629,645.17</u>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,915,994.30</b>

### EXPENDITURES

Court	\$ 1,527,404.86	
Probation	<u>423,339.64</u>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,950,744.50</b>

# HISTORICAL REVIEW

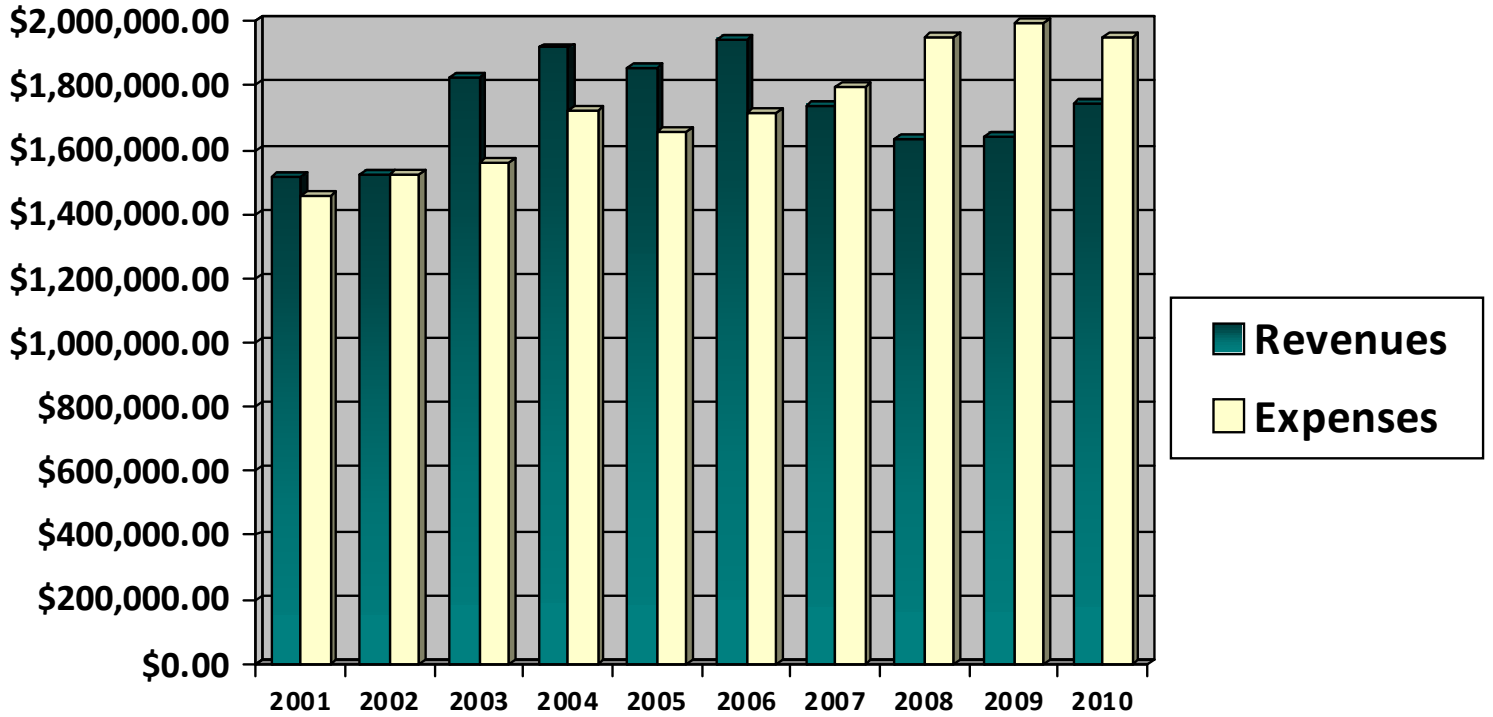
## TOTAL REVENUES AND EXPENSES



YEAR	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>REVENUES</b>	\$3,843,970	\$3,868,505	\$4,486,489	\$4,835,797	\$4,631,724	\$4,818,825	\$4,350,209
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	\$1,456,570	\$1,372,754	\$1,380,201	\$1,719,009	\$1,657,204	\$1,711,667	\$1,796,847

YEAR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>REVENUES</b>	\$3,920,655	\$3,790,152	3,915,994				
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	\$1,950,950	\$1,994,908	1,950,744				

# HISTORICAL REVIEW GENERAL FUND REVENUES & EXPENSES



YEAR	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>REVENUES</b>	\$1,514,719	\$1,525,631	\$1,826,551	\$1,917,322	\$1,853,541	\$1,945,736	\$1,737,558
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	\$1,456,570	\$1,372,754	\$1,380,201	\$1,719,009	\$1,657,204	\$1,711,667	\$1,796,847

YEAR	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>REVENUES</b>	\$1,636,257	\$1,642,388	1,742,456				
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	\$1,950,950	\$1,994,908	1,950,744				

# OUTSTANDING RECEIVABLES

## Outstanding Receivables as of December 31, 2010

Probation	Non-Probation	TOTAL
\$660,391.41	\$1,391,983.19	2,052,374.60

AGE	Probation	Non-Probation	TOTAL
1-15 days	\$14,770.00	\$36,107.00	\$50,877.00
16-30 days	43,958.24	47,516.22	91,474.46
31-60 days	72,728.53	97,791.53	170,520.06
61-90 days	56,232.12	52,691.07	108,923.19
91-180 days	167,443.75	143,862.09	311,305.84
181-360 days	124,034.84	178,887.28	302,922.12
361-540 days	55,826.80	129,783.70	185,610.50
541-720 days	11,718.55	158,768.32	170,486.87
Over 720 days	113,678.58	546,575.98	660,254.56
<b>COURT TOTALS</b>	<b>\$660,391.41</b>	<b>\$1,391,983.19</b>	<b>\$2,052,374.60</b>

# STATE REIMBURSED FUNDS

## DRUNK DRIVING FUNDS

1991 PA 98 (MCL 257.625h) created the drunk driving case flow assistance fund for the express purpose of defraying costs associated with the processing of drunk driving cases charged as violations under MCL 257.625 or 257.625m, 324.80176, 324.81134, 324.81135, or 324.82127 or substantially corresponding local ordinances. This Act requires the State Court Administrative Office to distribute a portion of these funds to every District Court. The funds are not intended for any other general fund purpose and are not intended to supplant any portion of the District Court's current appropriation. For the year 2010, the District Court received reimbursement funds in the amount of \$45,021.73.

## DRUG CASE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FUND

The Drug Case Information Management Fund [MCL 257.323d; MSA 9.2023(4)] was created to promote the timely disposition and reporting of cases in which the defendant is charged with a violation of 333.7401 through 333.7461, and 333.17766a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or a local ordinance substantially corresponding to those sections. The State Court Administrative Office is responsible for disbursement of the funds collected under this Act. For the year 2010, the District Court received reimbursement funds in the amount of \$1,304.25.

## COURT EQUITY FUNDS

The Court Equity Fund, established by 1996 PA 374, MCL 600.151b, is a state fund created to provide funding to trial court funding units. The fund creation was effective with the state fiscal year beginning October 1, 1996, and funds are distributed to county trial court funding units. The formula for distribution is primarily based on caseload, but includes a county's portion of statewide judgeships as a factor. For the state fiscal year 2010, the Allegan County Funding Unit received a total of \$442,188.58. Trends in this funding for Allegan County are listed below.

FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
\$606,834	\$623,293	\$660,831	\$625,993	\$586,087	\$542,717	\$512,357	\$468,647	\$442,188

## JURY REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS

The Jury Reimbursement Fund, [MCL 600.151e] was established to reimburse the funding unit the added expense of the October 1, 2003 implementation of MCL 600.1344 which increased juror fees. With this new legislation, jurors are now compensated \$25.00 for their first day (\$12.50 for a half day) of jury service and \$40 for each subsequent day (\$20 for a half day) of jury service. The reimbursement is semi-annual covering the periods October 1 – March 31 and April 1 – September 30. The first year also included an extra 14% reimbursement for the expenses incurred with implementation costs.

FY 2003/2004	FY 2004/2005	FY 2005/2006	FY 2006/2007	FY 2007/2008	FY 2008/2009	FY 2009/2010
10/1/03- 9/30/04	10/1/04- 9/30/05	10/1/05 – 9/30/06	10/1/06 – 9/30/07	10/1/07- 9/30/08	10/1/08- 9/30/09	10/1/09 – 9/30/10
\$13,273	\$5,950	\$7712.50	\$6535	\$5530	\$5,822.50	\$5,530

# COLLECTIONS

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Pursuant to MCR 1.110 adopted January 1, 2002, fines, costs and other financial obligations imposed by the Court must be paid at the time of assessment, except when the Court allows otherwise, for good cause shown. The implementation of this court rule along with a desire to collect the Court's outstanding receivables helped the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court implement a Collections Policy. Under the Court's policy, notices of non-payment, bench warrants, and orders to show cause will be promptly generated by the Collections Clerk in cases where fines remain past due for more than 60 days.

In hardship cases, upon showing of good cause, the Collections Clerk may arrange a payment schedule with the defendant. The need for additional time, however, will have to be documented with proof of employment and financial records provided to the Clerk. The Court now spends a significant amount of time updating current addresses, verifying financial records, and tracking down defendants who are delinquent in their payments.

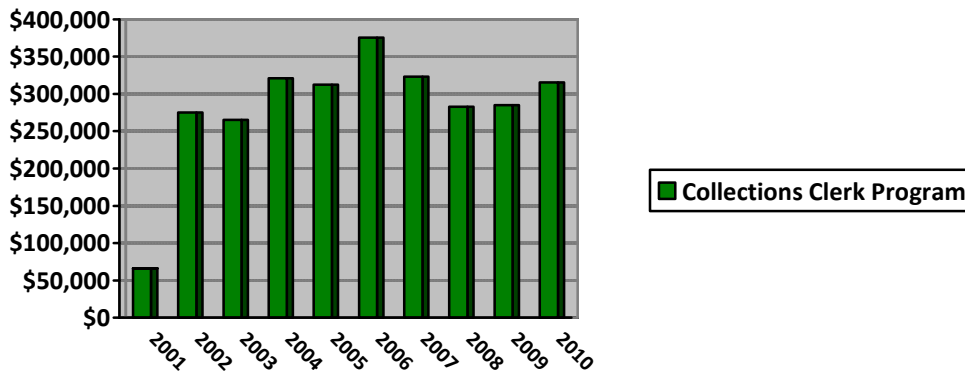
In 1997, the District Court purchased a software package that works in conjunction with the primary court case management software (supplied by the Supreme Court) to assist in tracking outstanding receivables at the District Court. The package was only fully implemented in September 2001. Since its implementation, the Court has been successful in bringing in revenues of \$2,820,384.40. In 2010 alone, the collections program was responsible for \$315,308.17 of the District Court revenues. Our Collections Clerk is assigned the responsibility of monitoring outstanding receivables and payment plans within the Court. Initially, the monthly results were very lucrative to the Court. Collections have maintained a steady pace at the Court. As of December 31, 2010, outstanding receivables amounted to \$2,052,374.60. Of this amount, \$1,148,380.85 is less than 2-years old while \$649,715.57 is between 2 – 7 years old.

## COLLECTIONS HISTORY

<b>2001</b>	<b>\$66,049.12</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>275,013.02</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>265,121.93</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>321,049.15</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>312,206.41</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>375,230.98</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>322,899.69</b>
<b>2008</b>	<b>282,599.76</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>284,906.20</b>

## COLLECTIONS TOTAL FOR 2010

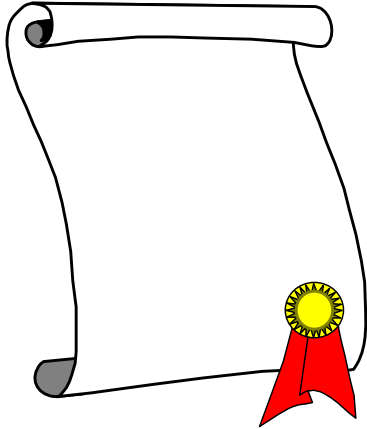
JANUARY	\$25,894.66
FEBRUARY	33,366.24
MARCH	41,101.17
APRIL	29,497.24
MAY	17,892.00
JUNE	25,648.20
JULY	21,465.24
AUGUST	30,018.18
SEPTEMBER	24,268.05
OCTOBER	22,787.59
NOVEMBER	21,724.50
DECEMBER	21,645.10
<b>YEAR END TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$315,308.17</b>



# AWARDS, PROGRAMS, PANELS

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## EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR



In the fall of 1998, the District Court Management Team developed an Employee of the Year program. Only full time Court employees are eligible to vote and receive the award. The Judges, Court Administrator, Supervisors, and Attorney Magistrate do not vote and are not eligible for the award. Employees are not eligible to receive the award two years in succession. Two separate divisions are recognized, the Clerk's Office is one division, and the Judicial and Probation Department are the combined second division.

Criteria for the award are competence in job performance, attendance, self motivation, positive attitude, courteous and helpful to public and co-workers, team worker, accurate, dependable and punctual.

The Employees of the Year are recognized at an end of the year staff meeting and are presented with individual awards. A plaque with the names of the Employees of the Year was purchased in 1999 and is on public display near the Clerk's Office.

The Employee of the Year for 2010 from the Judicial and Probation Departments was Aimee Kragt. The Employee of the Year from the Clerk's Office was Michelle Carpenter.

Both names were added to the name plaque displayed in the public hallway near the Clerk's Office.

## SATELLITE COURTS

The Attorney Magistrate holds sessions in Wayland, Saugatuck, Plainwell and Otsego, as well as in Allegan. The Attorney Magistrate conducts informal hearings and small claim hearings, and performs marriage ceremonies in each of the satellite locations. Hearings are scheduled in each location at least once a month.

## COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS

The right to assistance of counsel to any person charged with a crime is a fundamental right made applicable to State Court proceedings by the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution.

At the time of arraignment on the warrant or complaint, the Court advises the defendant of entitlement to an attorney's assistance at all subsequent Court proceedings. The Court will appoint an attorney at public expense after completion of a written financial statement completed by the defendant indicating that the defendant is financially unable to retain an attorney.

The 57th District Court utilizes a contract method of appointing attorneys in criminal misdemeanor and felony cases. Heidi L. Wolf and Matthew Antkoviak are the attorneys appointed to represent misdemeanor cases. Fred R. Hunter III, James Mikel McEwen, Patrick Burson, Robert Champion, Paul Klein and Matthew Antkoviak are the attorneys appointed to represent felony cases.

## VICTIM IMPACT PANEL

Allegan County's first Victim Impact Panel Meeting held in April of 1992, was a coordinated effort by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the Allegan County Prosecutor's Office, and the Judges of the 57th District Court. The Victim Impact Panel is a creative sentencing option available to Judges for persons convicted of alcohol/drug driving offenses as well as MIP deferred sentences. The panel resulted from a dedicated effort between Mothers Against Drunk Driving and District Courts, and originated in the northwestern United States several years ago. Victim Impact Panels are intended to be mutually beneficial to the panelists as well as the offenders. Monthly Victim Impact Panel meetings are held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at the Griswold Auditorium. In 2010, 516 defendants attended a Victim Impact session as ordered.

Moderators for the panel were Allegan County Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Margaret Bakker, Roberts Kengis, Myrene Koch, Steven Lanting, Daniel Norbeck and Judy Hughes Astle. Emelda Calanchi-Pope, Victim Coordinator-Prosecutor's Office; Linda Lenahan, District Court Administrator; Michael Finn, Mark Ponitz and Kathy Miller, Heather MacKenzie, District Court Probation Officers, volunteered their time to check in those ordered to attend the panel, hand out information, and review comments made by attendees. Bill Sorenson, Bart Shaw and Leslie Freund were citizens participating in the panel. Various reserve officers donate their time ensuring security during every session.

## MARRIAGES

The Attorney Magistrate and Bailiff/Magistrates perform marriage ceremonies every Friday. In 2010, 164 happy couples were united. The marriages are performed in one of the available courtrooms or the hearing room.

# HIGHLIGHTS

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF CHANGES 1995 - 2010

### 1995 Brief Highlights

- The Court reorganized administrative positions in the fall of 1995.

### 1996 Brief Highlights

- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Report for the year of 1995 completed and distributed.
- 4/15/96 - Probation Department began conducting alcohol assessment evaluations.
- 6/1/96 - Probation Department implemented the use of the Electronic Home Monitoring Program that is an alternative to physical incarceration.
- 9/6/96 - State Court Administrative Office Management Study completed.
- 10/1/96 - Court implemented mandatory jury settlement conferences.
- 10/1/96 - Changed Clerk Office public hours to 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Throughout the year, implemented several State Court Administrative Office Management Report recommendations.

### 1997 Brief Highlights

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report for the year of 1996 completed and distributed.
- 8/97 - State Financial Audit conducted. Majority of recommendations implemented within six months of audit.
- 9/18/97 - LEIN field service audit conducted.
- Two terminals were placed in the hallway for public access to records.
- Continued implementing State Court Administrative Office Management Report recommendations suggested in 1996.

### 1998 Brief Highlights

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report for the year 1997 completed and distributed.
- 5/4/98 - Court began assessing probation oversight costs.
- 7/13/98 - Jail Community Service Program developed and implemented.
- 9/98 - Domestic Violence Diversion Program developed and implemented.
- 10/15/98 - Installed and implemented closed circuit TV jail arraignments.
- 7/24/98 - Implemented Friday Casual Dress Day Program.
- 10/98 - District Court Management Team developed and implemented an Employee of the Year Program. In December, Candice Mock and Carole Carr were recognized and presented with individual awards.
- 10/98 - District Court Management Team developed and implemented an Attendance Award Program. In December, Jane Rolfe was recognized and presented with an award.

### 1999 Brief Highlights

- Continued implementing State Court Administrative Office Management Report recommendations suggested in 1996.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 1998 completed and distributed.
- 1/99 – By end of month, conducted and completed physical inventory of all departments.
- 5/99 - Implemented Team and Flex Hour Program.
- 7/99 - Began project to utilize clerks in courtrooms for noticing and dispositions.
- 9/99 – 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and presented.
- 10/99 - Implemented mandatory changes of 1998 PA 340-359, Repeat Offender Legislation.
- 12/99 - Recognized Employees of the Year – Aimee Waanders and Sandra Smith.
- 12/99 - Recognized Attendance Award - Kathleen Evans.

### 2000 Brief Highlights

- 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 1999 completed and distributed.
- 1/00 - Within first two weeks, conducted and completed physical inventory of all departments.
- 3/00 – Implemented project placing clerks in courtrooms for notices and dispositions.
- 4/00 - Prepare and utilize three part computer generated judgments for informal hearings.
- 4/00 - 8/00 – Drafted, reviewed and concluded State Court Job Classification Study.
- 7/00 - Fingerprinting for driving on suspended first offense no longer required.
- 7/00 - Implemented computer generated check processing system.
- 7/00 - Implemented case flow changes – all files placed on probation status are processed by probation department staff.
- 8/00 - Utilize pre-drilled two hole punch paper in all departments.
- 8/00 - Purchased and installed new printers in courtrooms, hearing room, recorders' offices.
- 9/00 - Began drafting employee policies and procedures manual.
- 10/00 - Began record retention project – completed civil division by year-end.
- 10/00 - Implemented direct line connection with Secretary of State allowing staff to clear suspended licenses immediately.
- 11/00 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- 12/00 - Recognized Employees of the Year – Christine Curtis, Kathleen Evans, Candice Mock.
- 12/00 - Recognized Attendance Award – Kathleen Duchesneau.
- Throughout year - continued cross training in all divisions.

### 2001 Brief Highlights

- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2000 completed and distributed.
- 1/01 – Implemented use of various computer generated forms in Clerk's Office.
- 1/01 – Financial audit performed by State Treasury Audit Department.
- 1/01 – Conducted and completed physical inventory of Clerk's and Probation Departments by second week in January.
- 2/01 – Implemented use of computer generated labels in Clerk's Office.
- 1/01 – Continued record retention project – began traffic division in January.
- 3/01 – Ratified hourly employees three year contract and adopted State Court Job Descriptions and Study.
- 3/01 – Board authorized three additional court staff.
- 4/01 – Becky Gorton leaves the court
- 5/01 – Dawn Roberts Probation leaves the court
- 6/01 – Hired three additional clerk staff (currently have 4 vacancies – 3 new and Becky's)
- 6/01 – MSP Criminal History Record Info audit done by John McCarthy – 98% accuracy, completeness and timeliness will be evaluated at his office, began 6/5/01, completed 6/8/01 – 300 random files from 1997 – 1998

## 2001 Brief Highlights-continued

- 7/01 – Hired one last clerk for clerk’s office and secretary for Probation Department
- 8/1/01 – Web Site on line
- 9/6-9/9/01 – Completed redesign of Clerk’s office and judicial area
- 9/1/01 – Collections clerk began sending overdue notices and collection program implemented
- Oct & Nov – completed record retention
- 11/15/01 – meeting with LEIN, MSP, local police, court staff, prosecutor’s office, SCAO, JIS regarding warrant entry
- 11/01 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed
- 11/20/01 – Kathleen Tripp leaves the Probation Department
- 12/01 - Recognized Employees of the Year – Aimee Kragt and Nancy Oppenhuizen
- 12/01 - Recognized Attendance Award – Sandy Smith
- 12/01 – Carol Barnhardt resigns to take court administrator position in Colorado.

## 2002 Brief Highlights

- 1/02 – Court begins to implement extensive changes to the caseload report requirements as mandated by the Michigan Supreme Court and SCAO in Lansing.
- 1/02 – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department the second week of January.
- 1/02 – Continued record retention project – began traffic division in January.
- 2/20/02 – Linda Lenahan begins her job as the new Court Administrator.
- 3/1/02 – Legislation passed requiring an increase to the fine schedule on all traffic civil infractions for Secondary Road Patrol fee and Jail Reimbursement fee.
- 3/02 – Implemented requirements to order a DNA sample on defendants convicted of chosen sex offenses.
- 4/02 – 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2001 completed and distributed.
- 3/27 - 3/29/02 – Auditor General’s Office performs audit of all Allegan County Courts. District Court audit consists of 50 random criminal files from 2000 and 2001 with guilty convictions reported to MSP Criminal History Records. Successful results received from the Auditor General.
- 6/02 – started producing civil judgment reports for various credit bureaus to eliminate a personal visit.
- 6/20/02 – **Clerk’s Office begins entering new warrants into LEIN.**
- 7/19/02 – Aubrey Heusser resigns from Clerk’s Office.
- 7/29/02 – Jackie Straub hired as District Court Clerk.
- 8/16/02 – Rachel Steanburg leaves her position as a co-op student to attend college.
- 9/3/02 – Elton Thomas appointed as an independent contractor to perform civil service of Orders to Seize Property.
- 9/6/02 – Heather Penalzoza resigns from the Clerk’s Office to attend college.
- 9/9/02 – Kari Giles hired as District Court Clerk.
- 9/28/02 – **begin the process of converting and returning the old warrants to the District Court. Project completed October 26, 2002.** Six-terminals assigned for LEIN entry and inquiry.
- 11/02 – 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed
- 12/02 – Court increases fine and costs on mandatory court cases.
- 12/02 – Court implements a \$10.00 late fee on civil infractions that result in a default judgment.
- 12/02 – Court implements \$25.00 fee for writing a NSF check to the Court.
- 12/02 – begin electronically sending dispositions to Michigan State Police Central Records Division on misdemeanor ( $\geq$  93 days) and felonies.
- 12/02 – Recognized Employees of the Year – Jane Rolfe and Pamela Cassetto
- 12/02 – Recognized Attendance Award – Mary Richards
- 12/02 – Probation Department implemented the use of a Vehicle Interlock Device as a sentencing alternative.

## 2003 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- January – March; completed record retention project on all court files and records.
- March – begin working with Sheriff’s Department, Prosecutor’s Office, and Information Services on live scan project (electronic fingerprinting).
- April – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2002 completed and distributed.
- April – Staff attends MJJ training: **How to Read a Driving Record** and **Small Claims 101**.
- March – April; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court System.
- April – District Court and Probation employees vote for new representatives of the Court Hourly Bargaining Group. The existing contract expires December 31, 2003.
- May – Management Partners begin working as a consultant for the County.
- June – Grizzell and Associates are appointed by the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court to provide service of process of Orders to Seize Property.
- August - Jennifer Cook leaves her position as a co-op student to attend college.
- September – Stacie Damber, a junior at Fennville High School begins as a co-op student.
- September 30, 2003 – Mary Joan Lutz retires after 23 years with the District Court.
- October – 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed
- October 1, 2003 – Court implements major changes to distribution of funds to the State of Michigan as well as new filing fee structure in the Civil Division. Legislation requiring increase of jury fee reimbursement is implemented.
- October 1, 2003 – Court increases fine and costs on all traffic and criminal violations in conjunction with the distribution changes required by the State of Michigan.
- November – Court provides information to potential litigants of services provided by Community Dispute Resolution as an alternative to filing civil lawsuits.
- December 12, 2003 – Jackie Straub retires from the District Court Clerks Office.
- December – Recognized Employees of the Year – Wendy Rozema and Wendy Dopp
- December – Recognized Attendance Award – Kari Giles

## 2004 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- January – March; completed record retention project on all court files and records.
- February 9, 2004 – Jacqueline Hicks and Kelly Miklusicak are hired as Deputy Court Clerks.
- February 9, 2004 – Jeffery Hansen begins a job-share position as bailiff/magistrate for the Honorable Stephen E. Sheridan.
- March; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- Spring and Summer 2004 – Judge Sheridan and Linda Lenahan participate in the Criminal Justice Project Committee to review options for the County Jail.
- April – 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2003 completed and distributed.
- April 9, 2004 – Kari Giles resigns to enter the Army.
- April 26, 2004 – Deb Wolters was hired as a Deputy Court Clerk.
- May 2004 – Ratified hourly and salaried employee contract for three years: 2004/05/and 06.
- Summer 2004 – went live with “live scan” fingerprinting at the jail.
- September – Stacie Damber, continues her senior year as a Fennville High School co-op student.
- Fall 2004 – began using Westlaw *People* internet search to track down collections payments.
- Fall 2004 – State Court Administrative Office provides us with Dell PC’s for all of our Courtrooms and Service Counters as part of a grant.

## **2004 Brief Highlights – continued**

- Fall 2004 – County implements Eden Software for payroll and invoices in the District Court and other county departments.
- October – 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- December – Recognized Employees of the Year – Jacqueline Hicks and Candice Mock.
- December – Recognized Attendance Award – Kelly Miklusicak

## **2005 Brief Highlights**

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk's Office and Probation Department.
- January – April; completed record retention project on all court files and records.
- January 17, 2005 – Stacie Damber leaves her co-op position.
- January 18, 2005 – Roberta Quiroz is hired as a co-op student from Fennville High School.
- February 14, 2005 – Kelly Miklusicak returns from maternity leave.
- February 16, 2005 – Sandy Aguirre from Secretary of State's Office visits the Court and reviews reporting procedures.
- March 29, 2005 – 65A District Court, Clinton County-St. Johns, visits Court for assistance on case processing and warrant entry.
- March 30, 2005 – 54B District Court, City of East Lansing, is the recipient of telephone training on the collections efforts of our Court.
- March; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- April – 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2004 completed and distributed.
- April 14, 2005 – Linda Lenahan participants in Senate Committee on Local, Urban and State Affairs at Western Michigan University.
- Jane Rolfe retires from the District Court Probation Department after 22 years of service.
- May 2, 2005 – Court trains Heidi Snow from MSP Criminal Information Systems on warrant entry by District Courts in Michigan.
- July 25, 2005 – District Court installs a credit card machine in the Clerk's Office. Court will accept all VISA and MasterCard payments.
- August 18, 2005 – District Court acquires an additional storage vault in the basement of the County Building. The vault was formerly used by the Finance Department prior to its move to the Dumont complex.
- October 16, 2005 – Court's case management software is merged onto the same AS400 as the Sheriff's Department case management software.
- October 17, 2005 – Linda Lenahan is named to the Michigan Supreme Court's Collection Advisory Committee.
- October 26, 2005 – Berrien County Trial Court visits Court for assistance on financial processing.
- October – 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- October 2005 – Judge Gary Stewart announces his retirement effective January 17, 2006.
- December 1, 2005 – District Court contracts with GPS Government Payment Services to accept credit card payments for fine and costs by phone and through the internet.
- December 9, 2005 – Recognized Employees of the Year – Pam Cassetto and Kathy Miller.
- December 12, 2005 – Private retirement party held for Judge Stewart at Cheshire Hills Golf Course.
- December 22, 2005 – Judge Gary Stewart retires effective January 17, 2006 after nearly 32 years with the District Court. His last work day is Thursday, December 22, 2005. A county-wide retirement party is held.

## 2006 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- January – April; completed record retention project on all court files and records.
- January 16, 2006 – Judge Gary Stewart’s official retirement from the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court.
- January 17, 2006 – Judge John Fields, retired from Berrien County Trial Court begins a contractual visiting judgeship with the Court. Judge Fields handles the Courtroom A docket until the Governor appoints a new district judge in late April.
- January-February 2006- Probation Staff attend Sex Offender Registration Training in Lansing.
- February 14, 2006 – New phones are installed in the District Court allowing for additional features including caller ID.
- February 24, 2006 – Sandy Smith retires from the Clerks Office with over 8 years of service.
- March; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- April – 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2005 completed and distributed.
- March 13, 2006 – Court staff are recertified as LEIN entry operators.
- March 2006 – Civil staff are sent to civil clerk training sponsored by Michigan Judicial Institute.
- March 31, 2006 – Wendy Rozema resigns from the Clerks Office to move with her family to the Detroit metropolitan area.
- April 3, 2006 – Roberta Quiroz is hired as a District Court Clerk. Roberta previously served as a co-op student from Fennville High School.
- April 26, 2006 – Governor Granholm appoints Joseph Skocelas as District Court Judge.
- May 8, 2006 – Mark Ponitz is hired as a District Court Probation Officer. Mark transferred from the 48<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Family Division as a Probation Officer.
- June 2006 – Negotiations begin between County and Court Hourly Bargaining Unit on new contract. Current contract expires 12/31/06.
- October 2006 – All the Allegan County Courts are nominated to participate in a weighted caseload study to assist the State Court Administrative Office.
- Fall 2006 – Courts begin the evaluation/selection process for new court recording technology for all the Courtrooms.
- September 1, 2006 – Wendy Dopp resigns from District Court Probation to transfer to the Probate Court.
- October – 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- October 12, 2006 – Court begins 7411 Drug Diversion Program.
- October 16, 2006 – Cindy Cook is hired as Probation Secretary.
- November 7, 2006 – Judge Skocelas is elected to fill the remainder of the term left vacant by Judge Stewart’s retirement.
- December 8, 2006 – Recognized Employees of the Year – Deb Wolters and Jeff Hansen.

## 2007 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- January – November; completed extensive revised record retention project on all court files. and records. In November 2006, Schedule 16 was amended to allow District Courts to destroy files after six years instead of ten years.
- February 5, 2007 – Allegan County Courts in conjunction with the Information Services Department selects BIS-Business Information Systems, Inc. for court recording equipment and software in all the County Courtrooms. Courtroom B (Judge Sheridan’s Courtroom) in District Court begins a three month test period of the product.

### **2007 Brief Highlights – continued**

- February 23 –March 23; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- March 7, 2007 – Sandy Aguirre from Secretary of State visits District and Circuit Court to conduct training.
- March – 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2006 completed and distributed.
- March 9, 2007 – Linda Lenahan selected as a committee member of the Judicial Data Warehouse user group.
- March 28, 2007 – Berrien County Trial Court shadows our Court to review bond and trust processing.
- April 3, 2007 – Courtroom A (Judge Skocelas' Courtroom) and the Magistrate's Hearing Room has BIS court recording system installed after test period in Courtroom B.
- April 9, 2007 – Renee Nast begins in the Civil Division of the Clerks Office. Renee transferred from the 48<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Clerks Office.
- May 31, 2007 – Jay Goswick retires from the Court after 4 years of service.
- June 4, 2007 – Kevin Christensen, retired Plainwell Public Safety Officer, is hired as Judge Skocelas' magistrate/bailiff.
- July 2, 2007 – Heather MacKenzie returns to work after having a baby girl.
- August 2007 – All Courts and Prosecutors Office switch from Lexis Nexis to Westlaw for its legal services.
- October 23, 2007 – Roberta Quiroz from the Clerks Office is sworn in as a U.S. citizen at the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids.
- October – 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- November 19, 2007 – Judge Skocelas conducts Court in the Plainwell High School in a pilot project.
- Fall 2007 – Court worked with Information Services to update their website.
- December 14, 2007 – Recognized Employees of the Year – Roberta Quiroz and Kathy Miller.

### **2008 Brief Highlights**

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk's Office and Probation Department.
- January 2008 – 57<sup>th</sup> District Court and Allegan County representatives were selected by the U.S. Department of Justice to participate in the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) FY 2008 Adult Drug Court Planning Initiative (DCPI) in Los Angeles. Unfortunately, funds were not available to send participants to the conference.
- February 2008 – collective bargaining agreement for the court hourly and salaried employees is ratified for 2007/2008/2009.
- March 21 – April 25; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- March 7, 2007 – Sandy Aguirre from Secretary of State visits District and Circuit Court to conduct training.
- March – 13<sup>h</sup> Annual Report for the year 2007 completed and distributed.
- March 24, 2008 – 7<sup>th</sup> District Court Van Buren County visits for training on proper court financial procedures.
- March 24, 2008 – Court in School conducted in Wayland High School.
- April 29, 2008 – Staff attends conference in Lansing on Criminal Process and Procedure.
- May 6, 2008 – Trooper Ray Hoffman from MSP Post 69 here to conduct staff training on infectious disease petitions filed in District Court.
- May 15, 2008 – Karen Barnes, Craig Sewell and Molly Radke attend an informational meeting on the new Legal Assistance Center in Berrien County Trial Courts.
- May 19, 2008 – Court in School conducted in Hamilton High School.
- June 9, 2008 – Judge Sheridan announces his retirement effective January 30, 2009.

## 2008 Brief Highlights – continued

- Summer – Fall - Jackie Hicks assists the State Court Administrative Office in providing regional training to district, circuit and probate courts on collection procedures.
- July 1, 2008 – Court implements community service program in lieu of payment of fine and costs.
- Fall 2008 – ACSD and Jail installs PC-based New World software.
- October – 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- November 12, 2008 – Karen Barnes and Linda Lenahan attend e-tickets demonstration in Kalamazoo.
- December 12, 2008 – Employee Recognition Luncheon - recognized Employees of the Year: Kelly Miklusicak and Cindy Cook.

## 2009 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- January 2009 – court completes project placing framed photographs in the public hallway of all the previous Judges of the 57<sup>th</sup> District Court since its inception in 1969.
- January 19, 2009 – Judge Skocelas speaks to local boy scout troops in his Courtroom.
- February – March 2009 – Honorable Quinn Benson, retired Judge of the 8<sup>th</sup> District Court, assists the Court with caseload during the Sheridan judicial vacancy.
- Completed records retention and disposal of Michigan trial court records pursuant to Schedule 16.
- January 30, 2009 – Judge Stephen E. Sheridan retires after 17 years on the bench as an Allegan County 57th District Court Judge.
- February 24, 2009 – Sandy Aguirre from SOS visits District and Circuit Court to conduct training.
- March 9, 2009 – Judge William A. Baillargeon appointed by Governor Jennifer Granholm to succeed Judge Sheridan who retired January 30, 2009.
- March 21 – April 25; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- March – 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2008 completed and distributed.
- April 1, 2009 – Minimum state costs increased from \$40 and \$45 to \$48 and \$53 on misdemeanor convictions/diversions.
- April 9, 2009 – Judge Skocelas and Linda Lenahan made annual “*State of the Court*” presentation to Board of Commissioners.
- May 11, 2009 – Court in School conducted at Allegan High School by Judge Skocelas.
- May 12, 2009 – 57<sup>th</sup> District Court honored by Michigan Secretary of State’s Office for 100% compliance in record accuracy and timeliness for the 2008 calendar year.
- May 13, 2009 – Otsego High School here observing Courtroom B and the county jail.
- June 25, 2009 – Court attends Indian Country Training in preparation for the Gun Lake Casino.
- September 14, 2009 – Judge Skocelas conducts first day of Mental Health Treatment Court.
- September 24, 2009 – Court in School conducted in Saugatuck High School by Judge Baillargeon.
- October 1, 2009 – 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- October 1, 2009 – In conjunction with a county fee study, the probation oversight costs and alcohol assessment fees were increased from \$100/\$200 to \$200/\$300 and \$65 to \$75 respectively.
- October 2009 – court begins using the *Specialty Court Case Management System* (SCCM) from the State Court Administrator’s Office for data entry of Mental Health Court participants.
- October 2009 – court begins ordering participation in substance abuse testing and monitoring program for defendants released on methamphetamine charges.
- November 2, 2009 – Completed final installations in BIS court recording project – placed monitors in each bailiffs, Magistrate, and Court Administrator’s office; placed monitor in the jury assembly room.
- December 17, 2009 – Court in School conducted in Otsego High School by Judge Baillargeon.
- December 18, 2009 – Employee Recognition Luncheon - Employees of the Year: Carole Carr and Nashell O’Patik.

## 2010 Brief Highlights

- January – Conducted and completed a physical inventory of case files in the Clerk’s Office and Probation Department.
- Spring 2010 - Completed records retention and disposal of Michigan trial court records pursuant to Schedule 16.
- February 24, 2010 – Sandy Aguirre from SOS visits District and Circuit Court to conduct training.
- February-March 2010 – District Court Clerks assisted Circuit Court Clerks with researching names and addresses for unclaimed restitution recipients.
- March – 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Report for the year 2009 completed and distributed.
- March 25, 2010 – Court in School conducted at Fennville High School by Judge Baillargeon.
- April 8, 2010 – Judge Skocelas and Linda Lenahan made annual “*State of the Court*” presentation to Board of Commissioners.
- April 16 – May 7; 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Plainwell Public Schools visit and learn about the District Court, Prosecutors Office, and Allegan County Jail.
- Spring/Summer – collective bargaining agreement for the court hourly and salaried employees is ratified for 2010/2011/2012.
- May 14, 2010 – Court in School conducted at Hopkins High School by Judge Skocelas.
- May 14, 2010 – 57<sup>th</sup> District Court honored by Michigan Secretary of State’s Office for 100% compliance in record accuracy and timeliness for the 2009 calendar year.
- June 22, 24, 2010 – Linda Lenahan and Chris Gates-Edson conduct training with ACSO booking staff.
- July 1, 2010 – updated interim bond policy – held training session on new procedures regarding felony and domestic violence arrests.
- Summer 2010 – Court begins to supply *Allegan News* with information on “wanted persons” monthly.
- August 13, 2010 – Karen Barnes retires after 31 years of service with the County.
- August 13, 2010 – Pam Ulrich retires
- September 14, 2010 – Judge Skocelas has 1-year anniversary for the Mental Health Treatment Court.
- September 24, 2009 – Court in School conducted in Saugatuck High School by Judge Baillargeon.
- September 2010 – Chris Gates-Edson promoted to Chief Deputy District Court Clerk.
- Fall 2010 – District Court reduces Clerks Office by two court clerks through attrition. Reduction is prompted by budget cuts for 2011.
- Fall 2010 – Linda Lenahan selected to participate on two standing Supreme Court committees: *Technology and Enhanced Sentencing*.
- October 1, 2010 – 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Domestic Violence Diversion Report prepared and distributed.
- October 1 - 31 2010 – All Judges and Magistrate record on-line statistics for statewide Judicial Resource Reporting through the National Center for State Courts.
- October 21, 2010 – Court in School conducted in Plainwell High School by Judge Baillargeon.
- October 22, 2010 – began meeting with Gary Secor of the State Court Administrator’s Office on the creation of a Drug Court in Allegan County.
- November 2010 – Nashell O’Patik promoted to Assistant to Chief Deputy District Court Clerk.
- November 16, 2010 – Full LEIN Audit of Court and Probation by LEIN auditor Cyndie Miller. Results of audit were very good.
- December 10, 2010 – Employee Recognition Luncheon - recognized Employees of the Year: Aimee Kragt and Michelle Carpenter.
- December 2010 – Probation Department began the conversion to a new state of the art alcohol monitoring system SCRAM.
- December 2010 – Legislation passed to increase the crime victim assessment fee effective immediately. Court implemented statute fully on January 1, 2011. Crime victim fee increased from \$50 to \$75 on misdemeanors and to \$130 on felony charges reduced to a misdemeanor.