

FAREWELLS and HELLOS:



Court Executive Officer **Jeanne Millsaps** retired in December, 2003, after a successful 30 year career with the courts. Her first job was as a Deputy Clerk I, typing courtesy notices for traffic citations. After two years maternity leave, Millsaps then worked her way up through parking, traffic, civil/small claims, accounting, arbitration, master calendar clerk, and then assistant court administrator and assistant county clerk (at the same time!) Millsaps was appointed CEO of the Superior Court in 1990. When the courts unified in 1997, she assumed CEO responsibilities over the unified courts.

As a fitting capstone to her career, in December Millsaps received one of the highest honors in the state court system: the 2003 Judicial Council Distinguished Service Award. The annual award recognizes significant and positive contributions to court administration, professional leadership, and extraordinary dedication to the highest principles of the administration of justice.

Thank you, Jeanne, for a job well done.



The Judges unanimously selected **Rosa Junqueiro** to replace Millsaps. Junqueiro has been the Assistant CEO for the past six years. Before that, she served five years as the Clerk/Administrator of the Manteca-Ripon-Escalon-Tracy Municipal Court. Junqueiro began her court career at the Tracy court as a student intern in 1979, and has since served in various capacities including courtroom clerk, manager, and even as a Spanish interpreter.

Junqueiro brings special strength and expertise in the area

of finance. As chief financial officer, she has had the responsibility for preparing, maintaining, and monitoring the court's \$22 million dollar budget since 1998, and has been instrumental in budget preparation for the court since 1986.

She is also active with statewide service in the justice system, including an appointment to the Judicial Council of California's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee, the Regional Court Interpreter Employer Relations Committee, and the Administrative Office of the Court's Trial Court Financial Policy Review Team.

Locally, Junqueiro is an active member of the Community Focused Planning team which develops the court's strategic plan, and the court's Facilities Committee charged with overseeing future building and improvement projects.



Annette Kirby, Deputy Court Executive Officer, was honored with a retirement party last July. Annette provided 30 years of exemplary service to the court, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC,) and the Judicial Council.

In August, friends and co-workers joined together for a reception to say farewell to Judge **Rolleen McIlwrath**, who retired after 20 years on the bench. Judge McIlwrath is perhaps best known for her pioneering work in Drug Court.

Judge **Michael Garrigan** retired in November, 2003. He was appointed to the Superior Court in 1983, and presided with distinction over virtually every type of case in the Superior Court for 20 years.

NEW JUDGE:



Governor Gray Davis appointed **Linda L. Lofthus** to fill the vacancy created by Judge McIlwrath's retirement. From 1980 to 1986, she worked as a Deputy Public Defender in Stockton, representing indigent defendants in criminal cases. She then joined the Stockton firm of Rishwain, Hakeem, Ellis, LaBeouf and Ganzer as an associate, where she handled civil litigation, personal injury, business cases, criminal defense, real estate transactions, and banking law. Ms. Lofthus opened her own law office in 1990, handling mostly family law matters as a Bar Certified Family Law Specialist.

FAMILY LAW:

The court has appointed **Kathleen Amos** as the Family Law Facilitator. She has a B.A. in education and a JD from McGeorge. She was in private practice in Galt from '84-'97 (primarily family and juvenile law,) served as Judge Pro Tem in Sacramento, then worked for Child Support Services in Solano County.



Amos now supervises the Family Law Pro Per Clinic which is staffed by an attorney and part-time paralegals. They provide answers to general legal questions, assist with legal documents, make referrals to community resources, and offer workshops on topics such as "How to Start Your Dissolution/ Separation/Nullity Action".

The number of self-represented litigants asking for assistance continues to rise. Lately, the Clinic has been serving more than 50 customers each day. The Clinic is open in the Stockton Courthouse from 8:30am – Noon in Room 405, and from Noon to 3:30 in Room 355.

GRANT FUNDING:

...is only a tiny portion of the yearly budget, but it represents an important element of the Court's income, funding activities and projects that would otherwise be impossible. For example, a \$486,000 federal grant is funding the creation of the Mental Health Drug Court, which initially will serve 46 participants through March 2005.

And San Joaquin is one of only 6 courts to receive an AOC grant to establish a model Unified Family Court. \$454,000 will fund the project for three years, which coordinates and monitors cases for greater efficiency to the court and better service to families.

Thanks to an AOC collaborative grant, the court created 4 educational videos which have been distributed to all 58 courts in California, the law library, local branch public libraries, and schools. The videos run 8-12 minutes each, offering introductory information for self-represented litigants on the following topics:

- "The Basics of Small Claims Court"
- "The Basics of DUIs – What to Expect"
- "The Basics of Domestic Violence Restraining Orders"
- "The Basics of Child Support"

SMALL CLAIMS CLINIC:

An AOC grant is funding a series of "Small Claims Clinics" in Stockton – the vision of Commissioner **Barbara Kronlund**. Specially trained senior legal students and supervising attorneys offer free advice to unrepresented litigants. The first three clinics in October, November and December served well over a hundred people, with El Concilio providing Spanish translation. Clinics are on the third Thursday of each month at 5pm in Department #32.

COURT COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & LIAISON ACADEMY:

The Academy is in its 4th year, with the biggest class yet – 30 participants. Community-based organizations represented include the Center for Employment Opportunity, Ministers & Community, Concilio, NAACP, Coalition United for Families, Southeast Asian Community Project, Community Partnership for Families, United Cambodian Families, The Color Pages, Lao Khmu Association and the Tracy African American Association.



The Academy received national attention recently – the focus of a 3-page article in the American Bar Association's *Judges' Journal*. The program was also featured last fall in an AOC satellite broadcast on successful community activities.



32 enthusiastic teens from 15 local high schools earned 2 units of college credit at court this past summer. They were part of the 4th annual Youth Leadership Academy, a 5-week course that includes classes, courtroom observation, mentoring, and field trips – this one to the 3rd District Court of Appeal. Chief Justice Arthur Scotland was their host (front row, third from right.)

COURT FACILITIES:

This photo was taken nearly 50 years ago when the 1890 courthouse was demolished to make way for the current courthouse in downtown Stockton. New and remodeled courthouses are again in the wind for San Joaquin County.

The State Task Force on Court Facilities completed a state-wide study in 2000. They rated every court facility as “adequate”, “marginal”, or “deficient” based on functional and safety factors. Of the 30 courtrooms in San Joaquin County, 9 were rated “marginal” and 11 were rated “deficient”. The legislature adopted the Task Force recommendations for a transition of funding from county to state for new facilities.



The Superior Court contracted with national architectural firm Hellmuth, Obata, Kassalbaum (HOK) to prepare a 20 year master plan. That plan was completed and adopted by the bench in 2003. It calls for an expansion of courts in Lodi, a new South county regional government center combining Tracy and Manteca courts and housing county services, and a new courthouse in downtown Stockton,

adjacent to the current site.

The county and the court agreed to be one of three pilot courts for negotiating the first agreements to accomplish transition of existing court facilities to the state. Those meetings are currently underway and are expected to produce a transfer of county facilities after July, 2005.

Manteca

The City of Manteca is designing a new police facility to be constructed on a site on South Main Street. The plans include two courtrooms that would replace the two courtrooms at the current location, one of which is in a trailer. There is room at the new site for additional courtrooms in the future.

Tracy

The Tracy courthouse site currently has two courtrooms, one of which is also in a trailer. The courthouse is currently planned for expansion to construct a full-size permanent courtroom and staff space to replace the trailer.

Lodi

The City of Lodi has constructed a new police facility across the street from the old one. The county has agreed to lease space on the second floor and build a courtroom and offices in space that is for future expansion of the police department. The county has hired HOK to complete the tenant improvement plans.

Stockton

Once the transfer agreements are made between the court and the state on court facilities in our county, the court will seek funds to hire an architectural firm to design a downtown Stockton courthouse.

The Future

The speed at which these plans come to fruition is largely dependent upon the economic recovery of the State of California. Various funding mechanisms were put in place by the legislation that transferred facilities funding responsibility from the county to the state, including the possibility of a state-wide bond issue in 2006 or thereafter. Our court is committed to make every effort to get facilities

planning and design complete, or at least in process, so that when funds become available, we will be in the best position to begin the needed facility construction.

ADOPTION SATURDAY:

It was the biggest and most successful, so far. On Saturday, November 22, almost 200 people crowded into two courtrooms to celebrate the official adoptions of 28 children into 17 families. A single dad in Stockton adopted 4 children that day.



Judge **Robin Appel** and Judge **F. Clark Sueyres** presided. The annual event is designed to inspire other families to adopt children – especially those who have experienced abuse and neglect. In 2002/2003, there were 306 children available for adoption in San Joaquin County. For information, call Child Protective Services at (209) 468-1333.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Judge **William J. Murray Jr.**, named to the Judicial Council of California, the governing body for the courts. The panel is responsible for ensuring the consistent, independent, impartial and accessible administration of justice.

Presiding Judge **George Abdallah** appointed Chair of the Judicial Council Center for Judicial Education and Research Advisory Committee.

Rosa Junqueiro, Court Executive Officer, appointed to the Judicial Council's Access and Fairness Advisory Committee.

Judge **John Parker**, selected by the community to receive the 16th annual “Action on Behalf of Children” award for his outstanding work on establishing a CASA program (Court Appointed Special Advocates for children.)



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