

# Circuit Courier

October-December 2017

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Deputy  
LaFlamme

Side Photo  
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LaFlamme

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Palm Beach County was awarded a \$2 million dollar grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The grant was awarded as part of the MacArthur Foundation’s Safety and Justice Challenge, a \$100 million national grant campaign focused on reducing over-incarceration in local jails.

Judge Jeffrey Colbath, as the Court’s representative, is a member of the County Committee responsible for obtaining the grant. The Committee, which is still active, is focused on the County’s incarceration rate. While the incarceration rate is 58% below the national average, Palm Beach County leaders hope to reduce that by 17% over the next few years.



L to r: Criminal Justice Commission Vice Chair Lee Waring, Palm Beach County Commissioner David Kerner, and Judge Jeffrey Colbath.



### Honorable Thomas Barkdull, III Retires

The Honorable Thomas Barkdull, III, retired on December 31, 2017, after serving the citizens of Palm Beach County for twenty-one years. Before his appointment to the Circuit Bench, Judge Barkdull began his career at the Attorney General's Office in Tallahassee. After which, he clerked for U.S. District Court Judge James L. King, Miami, Florida.

In 1996, Governor Lawton Chiles appointed Judge Barkdull, III to the Circuit Bench. Over his career, Judge Barkdull served in many divisions of the Court and was involved in the legal and local community. He was the Vice Chair of the Florida Bar Real Property Litigation Committee; and participated with the West Palm Beach's Renaissance Program.



Hon. Thomas Barkdull, III

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### Honorable Richard Oftedal Retires

The Honorable Richard Oftedal retired December 31, 2017, after serving the citizens of Palm Beach County for twenty-nine years. Before his appointment to the Circuit Bench, Judge Oftedal began his career with the private practice firms of Jackson and Jackson in Palm Beach, and Haines and Rossow. In 1980, he became a personnel attorney for the Palm Beach County School Board. He was then promoted to the First General Counsel for the school board in 1983.

In 1988, Governor Bob Martinez appointed Judge Oftedal to the Circuit Bench where he served with distinction. On bi-annual surveys of judges' performance conducted by the Palm Beach County Bar Association, he received top scores for his judicial demeanor, knowledge of the law, impartiality, and common sense. Over his long career, Judge Oftedal served in almost every division of the Court.



Hon. Richard Oftedal

### Hon. Kathleen Kroll Receives “Life Achievement Award”

On November 2, 2017, the South Palm Beach County Florida Association of Women Lawyers and the National Conference of the Women’s Bar Association recognized Judge Kroll’s contributions and commitment to justice with the “Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Judge Kroll has served as a Judge in Palm Beach County since 1985. She was first elected to the County Bench in 1984 then appointed to the Circuit bench by Governor Lawton Chiles in 1994. From 2005 to 2009, Judge Kroll served as the Chief Judge of the Circuit. She has also served as Administrative Judge in County Court and as the Administrative Judge of the Juvenile Division. She presently serves in the North County Courthouse in the Family, Probate, and Guardianship Divisions.

In addition to all of her time on the bench, Judge Kroll is very active in the community and in judicial education. She is a board member of the Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, and the Children Services Council. She previously served on the local Boards of the Mental Health Association and American Red Cross. Judge Kroll is also a member of the Florida Supreme Court Steering Committee on Children and Families and served as Assistant Dean in the Florida College of Advanced Judicial Studies. She is a faculty member of the Florida Judicial College.



Hon. Kathleen Kroll

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### Hon. Ted Booras Honored

Governor Rick Scott presented Judge Booras with a Service Award on October 23, 2017. This is the Governor’s special award for those who served in the military.



Governor Rick Scott and Judge Ted Booras.



### Janet Leach-Ruth Retires

After serving as the Court's Finance Director for ten years, Ms. Janet-Leach Ruth retired in December 2017. This was Ms. Leach-Ruth's second retirement as she worked in the Finance Office of the State of Washington, Employment Security Department, for almost 35 years. During her time with the Circuit, Ms. Leach Ruth, hired by then Chief Judge Kathleen Kroll and newly appointed Trial Court Administrator, Barbara Dawicke, turned around a struggling department and created a fiscally responsible one with procedures aimed at creating efficiencies, controls, and sound budget management. Moreover, Ms. Leach-Ruth was an effective leader and mentor for her staff. Under her supervision, she emphasized the cross-training of the finance staff, with all aspects of the State and County budget, so as to keep the Circuit operating seamlessly in times of absences or retirements.

The office of the Chief Judge and Court Administrator sincerely thank Ms. Leach-Ruth for her dedication, diligence, and leadership. We are hopeful that she enjoys many years of a healthy and happy retirement.



Finance Director Janet Leach-Ruth and Trial Court Administrator Barbara Dawicke.



# NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

Adoptive families, adoption supporters, government officials, volunteers, and child advocates joined to celebrate National Adoption Day in Palm Beach County on November 17, 2017. More than twenty children in foster care were adopted into permanent loving families. This annual fun filled day featured lunch, clowns, face painting, balloon creations, caricaturists, a magic show followed by an awards ceremony, and keynote speakers.

Opening ceremonies included a warm welcome from Chief Judge Krista Marx and comments from keynote speakers Larry Rein and Rebecca Wagner. Additionally, Jim Sackett presented the annual Jim Sackett Adoption Advocate Award to the Francene Adderley. At the end of the ceremony, the Juvenile Judges finalized several adoptions for joyous parents and children.

The event was hosted by Court Administration and coordinated by community representatives from the following agencies: Children's Home Society of Florida, ChildNet Inc., Florida Department of Children and Families, Friends of Foster Children, Guardian ad Litem Program, Place of Hope, and the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County.

A special thank you to the following Juvenile Judges for finalizing the adoptions of these forever now families: Hon. James Martz, Hon. Gregory M. Keyser, Hon. Luis Delgado, Hon. Kirk C. Volker, and Hon. Daliah H. Weiss.



L to r: Hon. Gregory M. Keyser, Chief Judge Krista Marx, Hon. James Martz, and Hon. Luis Delgado.



Hon. Luis Delgado and an Adoption Day Family.



Hon. Daliah H. Weiss and an Adoption Day Family.



## NEW ATTORNEY BREAKFAST

On November 2, 2017, the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, in conjunction with the Palm Beach County Bar Association's Professionalism Committee, held its seventh annual New Attorney Breakfast. This program, launched in May 2012 by General Counsel Amy Borman, reaches out to newly admitted attorneys practicing in Palm Beach County to help demystify the legal practice in this Circuit and provide an overview of all that the Palm Beach County legal community has to offer.

The morning started with a breakfast attended by new attorneys, judges, and members of the various voluntary bar associations in Palm Beach County.

After the formal program, the new attorneys met with fifteen local bar associations, toured the courthouse and clerk's office, and viewed an e-filing demonstration.

The fifteen local bar associations that participated were: American Board of Trial Advocates; Christian Legal Society; Craig S. Barnard American Inn of Court; F. Malcolm Cunningham Bar Association; Federal Bar Association; Florida Association Women Lawyers—Palm Beach County Chapter; Florida Association Women Lawyers—South Palm Beach County Chapter; Florida Guild of Catholic Lawyers; Hispanic Bar Association; Muslim Bar Association; Palm Beach Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; Palm Beach County Bar Association; Palm Beach County Justice Association; South Palm Beach County Bar Association; and the Susan Greenberg Family Law American Inn of Court.

The 2017 New Attorney Breakfast broke attendance records with one hundred new attorneys in attendance, twenty-five judges, and fifteen voluntary bar associations. The next New Attorney Breakfast is planned for the Fall of 2018.



L to r: Denise Mutamba, Peter Hunt, Olivia Liggio, Jack Rice, Hon. Daliah Weiss, Hon. Cymonie Rowe, Hon. Peter Blanc, Hon. Richard Oftedal, and Hon. Sheree Cunningham.



Legal Aid Society.



Various local bar associations wait to talk with new attorneys.

## AROUND THE CIRCUIT

### Diversity Training Workshop

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit hosted a diversity training workshop for members of the judiciary and court staff on December 1, 2017. The event was facilitated by Judith A. Scully, a Stetson University College of Law Professor.

The full day program addressed key points about diversity issues, and implicit and explicit bias. Afterwards, court staff participated in an exercise called, “The Privilege Walk.” The purpose of this activity was to assist participants in recognizing how power and privilege affects our lives even when we are not aware it is happening.

The afternoon session consisted of a panel discussion by various members of local bar associations: Senior U.S. District Court Judge Daniel T.K. Hurley; John Foley, Esq., Attorney with Legal Aid Society; Yasir Billoo, Esq., Past President of The Florida Muslim Bar Association; Lindsay K. Demmery, Esq., Past President of the Palm Beach County Florida Association of Women Lawyers; Masimba Mutamba, Esq., Secretary of the F. Malcolm Cunningham Bar Association; and Nancy Brodzki, Esq., Member of SAVE.

Fairness and Diversity training is a Supreme Court initiative and is mandatory for all judges, magistrates, and court personnel. Additional sessions will be offered next fiscal year.



Professor Judith A. Scully, Stetson University College of Law.



L to r: Lindsay K. Demmery, Yasir Billoo, Hon. Daniel T.K. Hurley, John Foley, Nancy Brodzki, Masimba Mutamba.

Not pictured: Nelson Baez.



### Lunch-n-Learn: Great Parks = Great Communities

On October 10, 2017, Donald Campbell and Steven Bergkamp from Palm Beach County Parks & Recreation, presented information about various Palm Beach County parks.

Palm Beach County Parks hold a variety of events and programs throughout the year. The park system offers residents sports fields, therapeutic recreation areas, dog parks, equestrian trails, fishing, exhibits, golfing, and summer camps for children.



From L to r: Steve Bergkamp, Donald Campbell, and William Hutchings.

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### Columbus Day Staff Training

The Sixth Annual Columbus Day in-house training for court staff was held on October 9, 2017. Trial Court Administrator, Barbara Dawicke, assembled a training session called “Mindfulness in the Workplace” presented by Chris Callahan.

This session focused on self-care and holistic practices to increase wellness and in turn help improve team building, communication, and overall health. After a short discussion, Chris introduced yoga and meditation practices to staff. The yoga and meditation techniques can be used at any time to increase mindfulness.



L to r: Chris Callahan and Johannah Birney.

### Delinquency Drug Court Graduation

At graduation ceremonies held on November 8 and December 20, 2017, Judge James Martz honored graduates who successfully completed the requirements of the Delinquency Drug Court Program.

Participants, family members, advocates, Drug Court Team members, stakeholders, and community members were present to recognize the participants' accomplishments. Judge James Martz provided the Court attendees with an overview of each graduate's life and presented the graduate with a certificate of completion.



From L to r: Juvenile Court Case Manager Brandon Richardson, Program Graduate, and Rebakah Wilson.



Program Graduate and Juvenile Court Case Manager Brandon Richardson.

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### Lunch-n-Learn: How to Save a Life

On November 14, 2017, Chief John Meskiel and Officer Keershaw Tennant of the West Palm Beach Fire & Rescue Department presented CPR techniques to court staff.

Attendees learned how to use an Automated External Defibrillator and how to perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation.



L to r: Chief John Meskiel and Officer Keershaw Tennant.



### Excellence Awards

Congratulations to those persons nominated for the Judicial Assistant (JA) Recognition Award for the Third Quarter of 2017:

- Jennifer Bernier
- Yashica Morris
- Millie Noonan

Congratulations, also, to those persons nominated for the Court Administration employee of the Third Quarter of 2017:

- Sue Ling Curtis
- Rosa Diaz
- Shawn Garland
- Celia Munoz
- Daniel Svec

The presentation ceremony was held on December 16, 2017 where the winners for the Third Quarter of 2017, as selected by the Committee, were announced.

In the Judicial Assistant category, the winner was **Jennifer Bernier**, Judicial Assistant to Judge Edward Garrison. In the Court Administration employee category the winner was **Sue Ling Curtis**, Administrative Assistant to Trial Court Administrator Barbara Dawicke.

Each of the winners received a plaque, a paid Administrative leave day, a photo in this newsletter, and four weeks of parking in the Judicial Parking garage. Congratulations to our winners.



L to r: Chief Judge Krista Marx, Judicial Assistant Jennifer Bernier, and Judge Edward Garrison.



L-r: Trial Court Administrator Barbara Dawicke, Sue Ling Curtis, and Chief Judge Krista Marx.

### Judicial Assistant Association of Palm Beach County

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit's Judicial Assistants took time out to celebrate and share good times with one another at work, after hours, and in the community. Events included: a holiday party, laying wreaths at the South Florida National Cemetery during National Wreaths Across America Day, the JAAF Conference, and AT&T's Homes for Heroes event.



### North County Law Library Open House

On October 25, 2017, an open house was held for a branch of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Law Library at the North County Courthouse.

Members of the Judiciary and Court Staff were able to view the new law library and learn about the services offered. Throughout the week, library staff provided assistance to patrons and demonstrated the process for e-filing court documents.

The Library features legal resources, CLE CD rentals, Westlaw access, a lounge space, ideal for attorney/client meetings, and workstations with WI-FI connections.



L to r: Aidan Skipper, Holly Satterwhite, Tara Kranz, Hon. Rosemarie Scher, Magistrate Diane Kirigin, Hon. Karen M. Miller, Tammy Anton, and Stephanie Patty.



## COURT ADMINISTRATION HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

On December 14, 2017, Court Administration hosted an annual holiday luncheon for members of the judiciary and court staff.

A wide variety of delicious entrees, sides, and desserts were made by employees. The Palm Beach County Clerk of Court Choir provided some musical entertainment. Court employee and professional singer, Stephanie Patty also sang some holiday favorites.

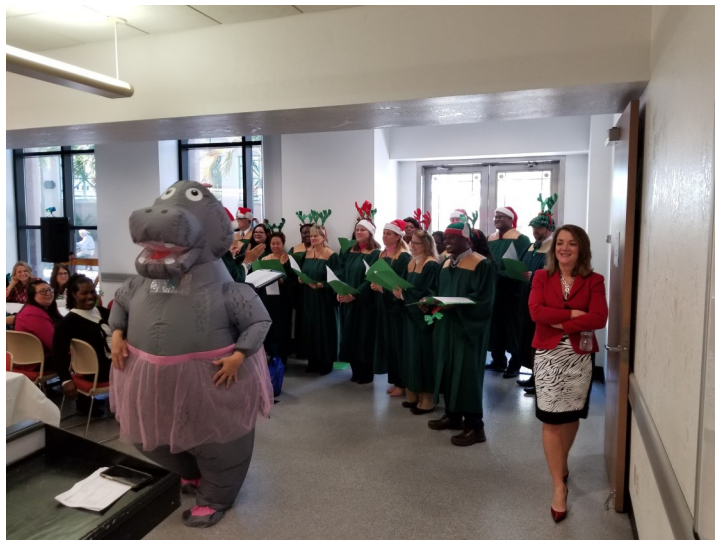
Various holiday games were enjoyed by the attendees and it was a wonderful way for everyone to spend time with co-workers.



Ugly Sweater Contest Participants: Erin Kenny, William Hutchings, Paulina Pasquarelli, and Michelle Spangenberg.



Starting from left: Nadine Singh, Amy Borman, Joseph Meyer, Zade Shamsi-Basha, Judge Richard Oftedal, Judge Jeffrey Colbath, Michele Lenoff, Sara Blumberg, Rhoda Jones, Steven Toner, Stuart Hartstone, Joleen East, Jennifer Fleming Printz, Sarah Papadelias, and Kelly Rowley.



Chief Judge Krista Marx with Palm Beach Clerk of Court Choir and dancing hippo.



L to r: Lorainne Pratts, Janet Leach-Ruth, Barbara Dawicke, and Mirna Hernandez Winn.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS

Administrative Orders amended October 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017 are:

Administrative Order 5.309-10/17 IN RE: RECALL OF CERTAIN DOR CHILD SUPPORT WRITS OF BODILY ATTACHMENT

Administrative Order 11.105- Judicial Rotation Policy

Administrative Order 6.106-10/17 IN RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF MAIN COURTHOUSE PROBATE/GUARDIANSHIP DIVISIONS “IC” AND “ID” AND ASSOCIATING DOMESTIC RELATIONS DIVISIONS

Administrative Order 4.909-10/17 IN RE: DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED COURT (DUS)

Administrative Order 11.109-11/17 Duty Judge Roster

Admin. Order 4.411 -11/17 Alternative Sanctions Program for Felony Offenders

Admin Order 11.201-12/17 (Amended) Senior Judges

Admin Order 3.316- 12/17 Disbursement of Foreclosure Sale Proceeds

Admin Order 5.208-12/17 (Amended) Family Mediation

Admin Order 3.304-12/17 (Amended) Foreclosure Judgments

For updates to the latest Administrative Orders (AOs) for the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit, please see our website at:  
<http://15thcircuit.co.palm-beach.fl.us/web/guest/ao>.

## WELCOME TO THE CIRCUIT

Tasha Hyppolite	Family Court Case Manager
Nicole Tinari	Judicial Assistant
Darlene Whitty	Advocate Coordinator
Marjorie Timmerman	Administrative Secretary
Ramiro Vidal	Senior Programmer
Stephanie Miele	Digital Court Reporter
Nicholas Fricke	Drug Court Manager
Rivkah Kranz	Senior Secretary



Circuit Directors hosted a “Thanks for Giving” dessert party at the end of the Circuit Food Drive. L to r: Melissa Sotillo, Barbara Dawicke, Mary Quinlan, Rhoda Jones, Amy Borman, Devon Mugridge, Tammy Anton, and Debra Oats.

