



In Chambers

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS CENTER FOR THE JUDICIARY

SPRING 2018

Law in Afghanistan
Stories from the Bench
Judicial Security
Plus more inside!



In Chambers

The official publication of the Texas Center for the Judiciary

SPRING 2018

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This is the the official publication of Texas Center for the Judiciary. The magazine is funded in part by a grant from the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. In Chambers strives to provide the most current information about national and local judicial educational issues and course opportunities available for Texas judges. We keep the Texas Center's mission of "Judicial Excellence Through Education" as our guiding premise. Readers are encouraged to write letters and submit questions, comments, or story ideas for In Chambers. To do so, please contact Courtney Gilason, Curriculum Director, at 512.482.8986 or toll free at 888.785.8986, or via email at courtneyg@yourthonor.com. Articles subject to editing for clarity or space availability. Layout and design by Christie Smith. The Texas Center for the Judiciary is located at 1210 San Antonio Street, Suite 800, Austin, TX 78701.



Cover photo by: Hon. Bert Richardson

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

This past December, I traveled to Kabul, Afghanistan on a fifteen day trip. I had been invited to assist with an international rule of law development project. Specifically, I was to prepare a strategic training plan for that nation's court system personnel, to be presented to the Supreme Court of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. I arranged to use vacation days in order to make the journey and was sent many documents to review in advance of traveling, including Afghan, US, and other international reports.

I completed the required travel documents, obtained my Afghanistan visa, and arranged my travel itinerary. My flights took me to Dubai, where I transferred to a regional airline. The flight to Kabul traversed up the border of Iraq and Iran, before



traveling east across Iran and the mountains of western Afghanistan, then descending into Kabul. Kabul is situated in a mountain valley, 5,800 feet above sea level, and the mountains surrounding the valley were covered in snow.

Having arrived in Kabul and exiting the terminal, I proceeded to a waiting vehicle, which was heavily armored. On the floor was body armor – that was to be quickly donned if the need arose enroute to our destination. A Brit security officer briefed me on how to respond if certain events transpired along the way. An Afghan soldier in full gear and armed with



an AK-47, got into the car, and we departed.

The drive from the airport to our destination in mid-Kabul was something I could not have foreseen. Along the way, I saw endless entrances into businesses and offices fortified with concrete, barbed wire, and sandbags, guarded by Afghan troops at the ready. Military trucks carried armed soldiers, either in the back with handheld weapons, or atop them with mounted guns, mixed with the civilian traffic. The closer we got to central Kabul, the more the roadside featured taller and taller concrete “t-walls,” so named because they are shaped like upside-down “t”s, designed to withstand bomb blasts. The streets in the area that included government ministries, foreign embassies, and the offices of non-governmental organizations, were lined with eight-meter (24-foot) tall t-walls.

My living compound was heavily fortified with multiple eight-ton steel sliding doors operating in series like locks, with armed and alert soldiers standing guard as the vehicle entered. The underside of the vehicle was examined by a mirror on a rod, searching for magnetic bombs. Once inside the gates and walls, I was able to exit the vehicle. Body armor and helmet came with my room, there to remain, on the floor by the door for the duration of my trip.

Every day that I was there, I and a team composed of Afghans and other internationals worked together to determine what would be helpful in creating a strategic plan for training court system personnel. We traveled to the Supreme Court twice — which was no easy trip, due to traffic and security precautions — to discuss and ascertain wants and needs. My time was spent meeting with local professionals, reading and re-reading documents, developing ideas in my mind, and attempt-



ing to compose a report that would contain a strategic training plan.

The needs of, and capacity to accomplish, such training, varied based upon geography, population size, access to technology, etc. The several major urban areas have resources unavailable to many rural areas. In addition, while urban areas use a system of law that is a combination of Islamic, Common, and Civil Law, most rural justice needs are handled by tribal elders. It was said that the rural legal action was often more swift and effective in resolving disputes than that relied upon in the cities. My goal was to develop an overall long-term strategy, with detail to be developed by a British-educated Indian lawyer with whom I was paired. Once he and I had returned to our homes, we communicated regarding our project by email and FaceTime.

In addition to referring to the reports I had received while writing my plan, I also incorporated many of the practices we use training judges and court personnel

in Texas. While admitting that most of this would be considered aspirational, I felt that it could provide a potential vision for the long term. Resources I used and gave attribution to, included those of the Texas Center for the Judiciary, the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, the Justice Training Institute, and the Texas Association of Counties. Other text and resources, provided upon my request, came from the Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture at Texas A&M, which had worked with National Guard soldiers prior to deployment to Afghanistan, and Ben Giannantonio, Applied Technology Specialist for the Harris County Courts at Law.

I completed and submitted my work, which totaled about 80 pages of text and attachments, and it was well-received. Hopefully, I have helped in some fashion. I thank the board and our members for allowing me to take the time away from my CEO duties to do this work. I believe I learned even more about our own operations and why we do the things the way we do in the process.

This was an experience I will never forget, including the city of 4,000,000 just trying to get to work and

back, daily, hoping their families remain safe. The photos I've included were selected because they tell stories, especially the murals painted on the t-walls. The irony of painting messages of peace and heroism on walls erected to protect the people from death or injury by truck bombs struck me. It was quite an unusual journey, full of the unexpected. As we drove away, snow began to fall. We took streets I had not seen, many in bad repair, some not paved, as we weaved our way toward the airport. I walked the last several hundred yards, proceeding through security point after security point, frisked each time. The snow turned to a blizzard causing my flight to be delayed into the night. When the snowfall subsided, the plane was de-iced and allowed to take off, heading out over the mountains of western Afghanistan. I don't know if my suggestions will end up being of help to the courts of that developing nation in the long run, but I feel very lucky to have been allowed to participate in this rule of law project.



Judge Mark D. Atkinson JD, CEO, CAE



Photo below: An anti-domestic violence message, with a poem about protecting those in society who may be physically weaker.

Photo opposite, top: The message on the left thanks de-miners, and refers to them as heroes. The message on the right depicts children who have lost limbs to land mines. They are told that they still will be able to go back to school.

Photo opposite, bottom: Ahmad Shah Massoud, former commander of the Northern Alliance, fought the Soviets and later the Taliban. He was assassinated by al-Qaeda two days before 9/11, and was later declared a national hero.





UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Civil Justice Conference

March 26-27, 2018
Sheraton Capitol, Austin

Spring Regional A Conference

(Regions 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11)
April 16-17, 2018
San Luis, Galveston

Spring Regional B Conference

(Regions 1, 3, 4, 8, 10)
May 10-11, 2018
San Luis, Galveston

Professional Development Program

June 10-15, 2018
Embassy Suites, San Marcos

Impaired Driving Symposium

August 2-3, 2018
Horseshoe Bay Resort

Annual Judicial Education Conference

September 4-7, 2018
Marriott Marquis, Houston

College for New Judges

December 9-13, 2018
Sheraton Capitol, Austin

Child Welfare Conference

November 12-14, 2018
Sheraton Georgetown

Family Justice Conference

January 14-15, 2019
Sheraton Capitol, Austin

DWI Court Team Basic Training and Advanced Conference

January 28-February 1, 2019
Sheraton Georgetown

Criminal Justice Conference

February 25-26, 2019
Sheraton Georgetown

CONFERENCE APP

Download the conference app from the Apple App or Google Play stores by searching “Texas Center for the Judiciary.” Use your e-mail address as your username and the password “tcj1210” to log in to the app. Using the app you can:

- View the conference schedule
- See who else is attending
- Download conference materials
- Fill out session evaluations
- Fill out the overall evaluation
- Ask a question of the presenter during sessions!



NEW Judges

as of 2/16/18

Hon. James Blacklock

Supreme Court of Texas
Justice

Hon. Estela Chavez Vasquez

Cameron County Court at Law No. 5
Judge

Hon. J. Phillip Hays

Lubbock County Court at Law No. 3
Judge

Hon. Dustin Howell

459th District Court
Judge

Hon. Mary Ann Morton

CSC #19, Travis County
Associate Judge

feature

Humorous Moments from the Bench: Brought to You by the Texas Judges That Survived Them

Editor's Note: We recently asked Texas judges to send us their most humorous moments in the courtroom and they certainly answered the call. While the staff of the Texas Center shared many laughs reading through them all, we could only include as many as the page constraints allowed. We hope to have a Part Two in the future.

During *voir dire* in a dope case, the DA asked the panel who thought marijuana and methamphetamine should be legalized, and the defendant raised her hand. Later, when the DA asked the panel who knew what a gram of meth looked like, the defendant again raised her hand. To top it all off, the DA later told the jury panel the maximum punishment for the offense, at which the defendant said audibly, "If I'd known that I wouldn't have had so much."

Hon. Ralph Walton
355th District Court, Granbury

At a felony jail run in Judge Don Leonard's court in Tarrant County, the clerk was having trouble locating a defendant's file on the courtroom computer. She asked the inmate "Do you have an A.K.A.?" To which he replied "[Heck], Lady, I don't even have a car!"

Hon. Robert Mayfield
County Court at Law No. 1, Cleburne

In a recent civil trial, the medical examiner was testifying regarding trauma to the internal organs noted in the autopsy. She mentioned damage to the decedent's spleen, then commented quite seriously,



“The spleen just doesn’t get any respect.”

Hon. Gena Slaughter
191st District Court, Dallas

Testimony from a car accident trial:

Defense attorney (questioning Plaintiff): So, you saw the car coming behind you in your rearview mirror with your **own two eyes**, correct?

Plaintiff: No.

Defense attorney: Why is that not correct?

Plaintiff: Because I am blind in one eye.

(our mid-morning break was taken right after we all stopped laughing.)

Hon. Mike Engelhart
151st District Court, Houston

Back in the days before trial judges had computers on the bench, we had to find other ways to satisfy our need to fidget while listening to long bench trials. I had a divorce trial that went on for days longer than was necessary and I was desperate for ways to relieve the tedium. I found a rubber band and started circling it around my index fingers. To my complete surprise, the rubber band spontaneously shot off my fingers, flew across the courtroom and hit the wife, who was a party in the divorce, right between the eyes. The look on her face was one I have not forgotten. I had to lay my head down on the desk to try to hide the laughter that came after the initial shock. I assure you that I did not do it on purpose because if I had, I might have hit one of the attorneys instead.

Hon. Lee Gabriel
2nd Court of Appeals, Fort Worth

During one of my years as judge of the 48th District Court, a presiding juror sent out a note which read “Do we deliberate and then reach a verdict, or reach a verdict and then deliberate?”

Hon. Bob McCoy
Tarrant County Criminal Court No. 3, Fort Worth

Testimony during a juvenile hearing about a child who had just gotten a new tattoo in violation of his conditions of probation:

ADA: Was this child prohibited from getting any new tattoos by his conditions of probation?

Juvenile Probation Officer: Yes

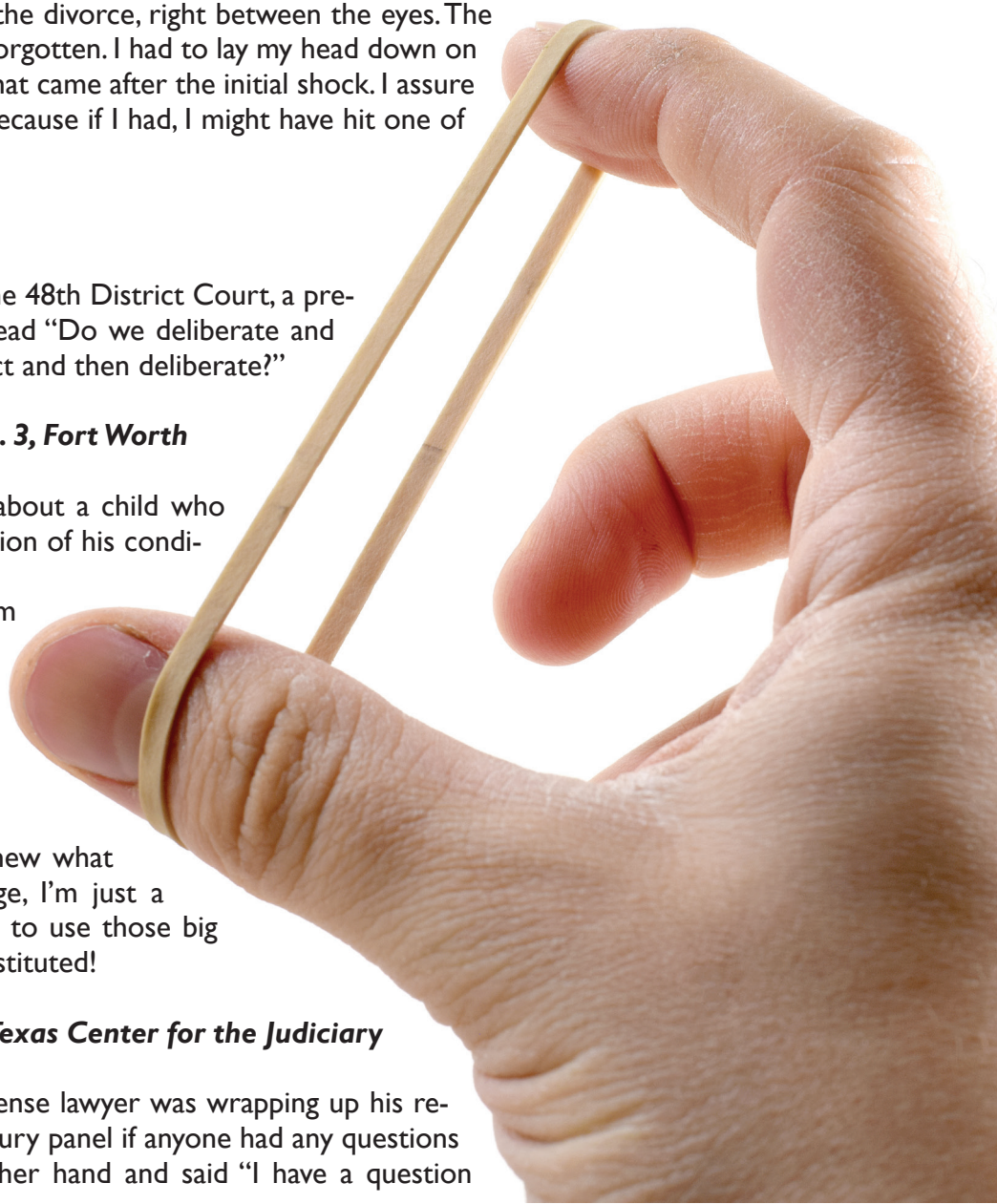
ADA: And yet there is a new tattoo right there on his epidermis

JPO: Well, no - it’s on his forearm

After court, I asked the JPO if he knew what “epidermis” was. His response: “Judge, I’m just a country boy. I told that attorney not to use those big words.” Word of the Day was then instituted!

Hon. Laura Weiser
TxDOT Judicial Resource Liasion, Texas Center for the Judiciary

Last year, in jury selection, as the defense lawyer was wrapping up his remarks, he asked the members of the jury panel if anyone had any questions before he sat down. A juror raised her hand and said “I have a question



for the judge.” The lawyer said “That’s up to the judge if he wants to answer it.” I told her “Yes ma’am, what is your question?” She asked, “Judge is your hair a toupee?” After a few seconds of thinking about how to answer the question, I just got up and walked out into the courtroom to the juror and bent over so my hair could be pulled by her and said “You tell me.” I got a huge ovation from the jury panel.

Hon. George Gallagher
396th District Court, Fort Worth

While on the county court bench, I took a plea in a prostitution case. At the completion of the plea, her lawyer asked me if she could have work release.

Hon. Karen Crouch
Bexar County Court at Law No. 10

I had a case where a senior citizen filed repeated Applications for a Protective Order alleging that his girlfriend was continuing to put a “hex” on him. After denying his third request, I issued a *sua sponte* Order that he could no longer file *pro se* applications, but instead must go through the District Attorney’s Office. That was the last we heard of him. Maybe the “hex” worked, but hopefully he just found another girlfriend.

Hon. Robert Kern
Senior District Judge, Sugar Land

Early in my career I was a County Court at Law judge in Cameron County. I was hearing arraignments and they brought before me a man charged with sitting naked on the International Bridge to Matamoros. Ignoring the rule I had learned as a young lawyer not to ask a question unless I was sure of the answer, I inquired why he was “sitting naked” on the bridge. He responded that he was too tired to stand.

Hon. Menton Murray
Retired District Judge, Harlingen

In connection with a child support contempt matter on my docket, both attorneys appeared and announced ready at docket call. A hearing was held and the respondent’s attorney did a credible job, certainly above average, in representing his client during the hearing. Nevertheless, I found the respondent in contempt. In addressing the issue of attorney fees, I asked the movant’s attorney how long he had negotiated with opposing counsel while awaiting the hearing. At that point, respondent’s attorney looked at me in confusion and asked, “Attorneys’ fees? I am not an attorney.” He revealed that he was just the respondent’s transmission repair mechanic and volunteered to come with him as he was nervous about going to court by himself. The mechanic had participated throughout the entire hearing. I was not pleased about having to reset and re-try the contempt. The movant’s attorney was embarrassed into silence. The end result was that the only person ultimately found in contempt that day was the mechanic. He was fined \$500 for direct contempt, which he paid.

Hon. Doug Warne
Senior District Judge, Houston

Hon. Doug Warne
Senior District Judge, Houston





Aren't you going to be our new District Judge?"

While cross-examining a police officer about field sobriety test results of his client, the large, mid-50s, defense attorney approached the witness

Attorney: So, you think a sober person could perform these tests?

Officer: Yes

Attorney (standing on one foot and wobbling): I can't even do these tests.

Officer: You're just standing there and wobbling on one foot.

Attorney: Do you think I'm in good shape?

Officer: I don't know.

Attorney: Do you think I could do a backward flip and land on my feet?

Officer: I doubt...

At which time, without warning, the attorney leapt into the air, did a complete backward flip, and landed standing up. Everyone was speechless — the jurors and the witness appeared stunned. After some silence, I said, "Maybe, now would be a good time for our afternoon break."

Hon. Mark D. Atkinson

CEO, Texas Center for the Judiciary

Defendant was scheduled for an open plea with a punishment hearing. He was a large man with baggy jeans. He had numerous prior felony convictions, so I sentenced him to 15 years. At the end of the morning, he and his attorney approached, and I began telling the Defendant that he had a right to appeal the sentence and that it was important for him to be aware of the timeline, etc. I then told him that I was appointing an attorney because I did not want this case to slip "through the cracks." My bailiff tried to hold it in, the attorneys all started laughing, the clerk looked down and began shaking...I could not figure out what had happened. The poor guy's pants had slipped down, they had not been able to assist him in pulling them up, and when I said the work "crack" they almost fell over.

Hon. Lisa Michalk

221st District Court, Conroe

I was trying a long case with very experienced litigators. One of the parties was a business entity from South America and apparently the executives felt as if the trial was not going well for them. One morning, two or three weeks into trial, the opposing attorneys asked to approach the bench, and one of them dropped what appeared to be a bloody doll with large pins stuck in it on my desk. Apparently, several of the upper executives of his corporate client (whom I believe were English) had received the dolls overnight by Fedex. The attorney for the South American company was genuinely surprised and had no idea where this had come from, but upon deeper investigation she learned that the mother of one of her clients was a Santeria and had placed curses on the English executives and their families. Of course, I was asked to enter an injunction prohibiting the pronouncements of curses upon the litigants and their families, which I was happy to do.

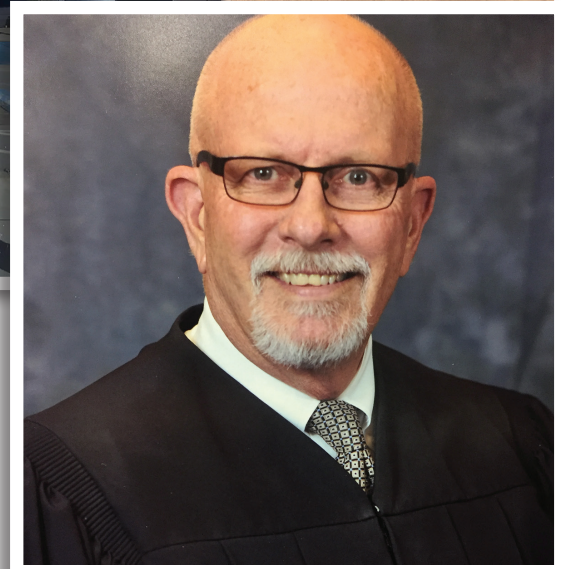
Judge Elizabeth Ray

Senior Judge, Houston

I was selected to serve on a criminal jury a few months prior to taking the bench. My fellow jurors recognized me as being the newly elected judge and named me the foreman. The court's charging instructions require the verdict to be based solely on the evidence presented during trial — not on outside influence, expertise or special knowledge. During deliberations, fellow jurors kept asking me questions about the case and I would respond "I can't answer that" over and over. Finally, a petite older lady at the end of the table with a very disconcerted look on her face raised her hand to ask me a question. "Aren't you going to be our new District Judge?" she asked. I responded "Yes, ma'am, I am" to which she replied, "Aren't you supposed to *know* this stuff?" Needless to say, everyone cracked up laughing and after the laughter subsided I told her I wasn't *allowed* to answer with any personal knowledge I had as an attorney. She responded "Oh, I feel so much better...I voted for you!"

Hon. Jeff Fletcher

402nd District Court, Quitman



Wichita County Names Juvenile Courtroom after Judge Robert P. Brotherton

Judge Bob Brotherton has spent almost three decades on the bench dedicated to the improvement of juvenile justice in Wichita County. When Judge Brotherton announced his retirement, Kirk Wolfe, the county's chief juvenile probation officer, began the process of naming the juvenile court in his honor. Wolfe presented the idea to County Commissioners in October and it was unanimously approved. County officials held a ceremony on January 31st and nearly 100 people crowded inside the courtroom at the Juvenile Justice Center.

During his judicial career, Judge Brotherton has been deeply dedicated to the children within the juvenile justice system. In addition to his district court duties, he served as the Juvenile Court Judge and as chairman of the Juvenile Board on numerous occasions. In 1995, he was appointed Vice Chairman of the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. He was appointed Chairman of this commission in 1998, and served as chairman until 2005.

feature



Implementing SB 42: The Judge Julie Kocurek Judicial and Courthouse Security Act

By Hector Gomez and Megan LaVoie

In his 2017 State of the Judiciary address to the 85th Texas Legislature, Texas Supreme Court Chief Justice, Nathan Hecht called on the legislature to make courthouse security a priority. The call for action followed the attack on Travis County District Judge Julie Kocurek in November of 2015. Judge Kocurek was shot in her driveway by a former defendant in her courtroom. She sustained dozens of surgeries before being released from the hospital and triumphantly returning to the bench.

In his address, Chief Justice Hecht said, “The attack on Judge Kocurek highlights the need for statewide improvements in judicial and courthouse security. Judges are not the only ones at risk; courthouses must be safe for staff, parties, lawyers, and jurors. Every threat must be taken seriously.” The Legislature answered the call to action and passed sweeping reforms in **SB 42** by Senator Judith Zaffirini entitled the *Judge Julie Kocurek Judicial and Courthouse Security Act of 2017*. Highlights of the Act include:

Creation of a Statewide Court Security Director: The Act requires the creation of a Statewide Court Security Director within the Office of Court Administration (OCA). Hector Gomez was hired in December 2017 as the state’s first Court Security Director. Mr. Gomez was raised in Lockhart, Texas and comes to OCA with more than 30 years of experience with the US Marshals Service. In his new position, he is available to provide training and to assist judges, law enforcement officials, and county officials in the development, coordination, and implementation of security policies and continuity of operations plans. Contact Mr. Gomez at 512-463-1679 or Hector.Gomez@txcourts.gov.

Privacy Protections for Judges: One of the Act’s key features is the protection it affords to judges and their spouses relating to public access to their personal information. The law places restrictions on public access to the residence address of a judge or judge’s spouse that may be maintained in records of the Texas Ethics Commission, a county registrar, and a county appraisal



district. The law also allows a judge and judge's spouse to replace their home address on their driver's license with the address of the courthouse in which the judge serves. The protections apply to all municipal, county, district, appellate, and federal judges in the state. Information about how to secure these privacy benefits is available from OCA Court Security Director Hector Gomez.

Establishing Court Security Committees: In addition, the Act requires courthouse security committees to be established by the presiding judge of a municipality or the local administrative district judge in each county, respectively. OCA is available to provide training and technical assistance in establishing these committees.

Reporting Security Incidents: The Act transfers responsibility for [reporting security incidents](#) to OCA from the local administrative judge, to the law enforcement official responsible for providing court security. The Act establishes a 3-day reporting requirement, along with the requirement that a copy of the report be provided to the presiding judge of the court in which the incident occurred. OCA has provided a web-based format found in the Court Security tab at: <http://www.txcourts.gov/programs-services/court-security/> to serve as the platform for reporting security related incidents.

Additional Components of the Act

- Requires county clerks, upon the written request of a judge, to omit or redact personal information from an online database that is made public;
- Establishes a \$5 filing fee on any civil action or proceeding requiring a filing fee to generate revenue to support judicial and court personnel training;
- Requires any person providing security to hold a court security certification issued by a training program approved by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement; and
- Authorizes any commissioned peace officer in the state to provide personal security to a judge, regardless of the location of the law enforcement agency that employs or commissions the peace officer.

Resources and additional information regarding implementation of the Act and OCA's Court Security Division are available at: <http://www.txcourts.gov/programs-services/court-security/>.

Judge Dean Rucker Honored with the Tom Garner Distinguished Service Award

On February 23, the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) awarded the Honorable Dean Rucker, Presiding Judge of the Seventh Administrative Judicial Region, with a special recognition during its annual induction ceremony. He was presented with the Tom Garner Distinguished Service Award for his volunteer service work with TBLS. Judge Rucker was instrumental in creating the new TBLS specialty area of Child Welfare Law and serving as a charter member for the Child Welfare Law Advisory Commission. The award is dedicated in the memory of Tom Garner, who served two three-year terms on TBLS and as Chair for two years.

In addition to presiding over the Seventh Administrative Judicial Region, Judge Rucker is Senior Judge of the 318th Family District Court and sitting by assignment. He is board certified in family law. He is the 2015 recipient of the Judge Sam Emison Award given by the Texas Academy of Family Lawyers and the 2014 recipient of the Samuel Pessarra Outstanding Jurist Award given by the Texas Bar Foundation. Judge Rucker is also the 2014 recipient of the Harriett Herd Founders Award from Centers for Children and Families of Midland. In 2006, he was awarded the Chair's Award of Excellence by the Texas Center for the Judiciary. Judge Rucker was also honored as the 2005 Jurist of the Year by the Texas Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. In 1997, Texas CASA recognized Judge Rucker as the Clayton E. Evans Judge of the Year.



feature



Five Ways Judges Can Improve Well-Being

Reprinted with permission of the Judicature Magazine.¹

By Bree Buchanan²

While judicial stressors are legion, resources to help judges combat stress are slim. Fortunately, social science research now touts a host of evidence-based practices that can help judges learn to boost resilience and enhance overall well-being.

In a nutshell, the term resilience is defined by these researchers as one's ability to bounce back and, ideally, grow from adversity. Many common challenges faced by judges, including extreme stress and burnout, are undoubtedly the result of the demands of the bench.

The following five tips are proven ways to increase resilience and healthfully cope with the daily stressors of life on the bench.

(1) Practice Gratitude. Studies have shown that being mindful of life's blessings is one of the most effective character strengths of people who lead flourishing lives. The practice of keeping a gratitude journal several days a week, logging a short list of the things for which you are most grateful, has been shown to increase a person's happiness by 25 percent over ten weeks. Studies also show that practicing gratitude benefits us physically, resulting in more energy, healthier bodies, better sleep, and increased life span.

(2) Practice Mindfulness. The mind is an instrument that too often becomes the master. Breathing exercises, meditation, and mindfulness practices have proven highly effective for those in cerebral professions who need to relax and "quiet the mind." Meditation can increase focus, reduce negative effect, decrease depressive symptoms, and decrease rumination — all of which benefit judges and lawyers. Meditation also increases memory and recall function in high-stress situations.

Meditation, or mindfulness, is not as "out there" as you might think. It simply means paying attention to the present moment with intention and without judgment. Practicing mindfulness is often done by focusing on the breath or on a phrase; many instructional exercises exist online or on apps. One excellent resource can be accessed for free through the UCLA Mindfulness Awareness Research Center.

(3) Volunteer to Help Others. Studies have shown that doing volunteer service work, or helping others, can lead to an enhanced sense of well-being and an overall improvement in mental health and happiness. In one major study, people employed in high-stress jobs had a 43-percent-higher rate of death over a ten-year period; however, a related study of people in high-stress jobs



found those who regularly performed service work for others in need had a normal rate of death.

(4) Practice Self-Compassion. Essentially, self-compassion is sensitivity to the experience of your own suffering and a deep desire to alleviate that suffering. Self-compassion practices can deactivate the nervous system’s “fight-or-flight” reaction to stress, returning the body to a self-soothing system associated with secure attachment and safety. This practice also has been shown to substantially improve motivation, coping abilities, and interpersonal relationships. How do you do it? When dealing harshly with yourself ask, “How would I talk to a friend about this?” Reframe self-critical thoughts as they arise so that they are fair and kind. And each time a critical thought arises, balance it with a complimentary one. Find additional self-compassion practices online.

(5) Cultivate Your Sense of Humor. Having a sense of humor has been shown to directly relate to reduced stress, better psychological well-being, improved coping ability, better perspective, stronger social support, better temperament, and better physical health. A 2014 study

found that a good sense of humor may in fact be one of the most important ingredients to resilience because it creates a behavioral tendency to engage in acts that promote happiness while stabilizing a positive attitude.

Perhaps these practices seem time-consuming. But they are likely easier than repairing the damage done by stress and lack of self-care. A judge’s work can be particularly lonely, challenging, and emotionally draining. But it doesn’t have to rob you of your well-being. Taking time to take care of yourself helps you manage your stress, improve your health, and be a better judge.

(Endnotes)

1. Bree Buchanan, *Five Ways Judges Can Improve Well-Being*, 101 JUDICATURE 80 (2017), available at <https://judicialstudies.duke.edu/editions/winter-2017/>.

2. Bree Buchanan is a lawyer and director of the Texas Lawyers Assistance Program, which hosts the ABA’s National Helpline for Judges Helping Judges (1-800-219-6474). The Helpline assists judges seeking help for issues related to substance use and mental health disorders. She is also chair of the ABA’s Commission on Lawyers Assistance Programs and co-chair of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being. Find sources for this article at judicialstudies.duke.edu/judicature and additional resources on judicial wellness in the spring 2017 edition of *Judicature*.

SUPPORT

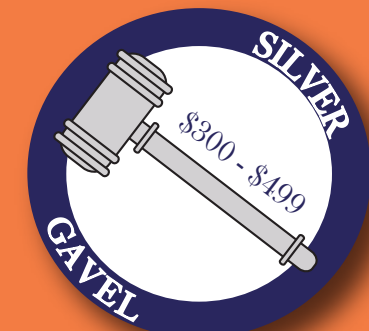
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Hon. James Morgan

In Memory of my good friend and colleague, Hon. Bascom Bently

Hon. Gladys Oakley

In Memory of Hon. June Jackson

Hon. Steve Smith

In Honor of Hon. Bascom Bentley III

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as of 2/16/18

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Survey on Legal Reasoning in Commercial Disputes – Your Input is Requested

Dear Judge,

Those with experience serving as judges or arbitrators in national or international commercial disputes are invited to complete an anonymous electronic survey that is part of an international empirical research project entitled “Survey on Legal Reasoning in Commercial Disputes” (IRB #2010449C). The survey is being conducted by Professor S.I. Strong, a specialist in international and comparative dispute resolution and a senior faculty member at the Center for the Study of Dispute Resolution at the University of Missouri School of Law (see <http://law.missouri.edu/faculty/directory/strong.html>).

The research is the first large-scale, international empirical study to focus on the process of legal reasoning and is intended to improve our understanding of how judges and arbitrators resolve complex commercial disputes in both national and international settings by exploring potential differences between (1) judicial and arbitral decision-making; (2) national and international decision-making; and (3) common law and civil law decision-making. The study will not only help parties make more informed choices about where and how to resolve their legal disputes, it will also assist judges and arbitrators in carrying out their duties by improving counsel’s understanding about how best to craft and present legal arguments and submissions.

If you have experience as a judge or arbitrator in commercial disputes and would like to participate in this survey, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/commercial-dispute-strong>. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and participation is entirely anonymous. The survey will remain open until 11:59 p.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT) May 1, 2018.

If you have any questions about this project, you can contact Professor Strong at 573.882.2465 or strongsi@missouri.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you can call the University of Missouri Campus Institutional Review Board at 573.882.9585.

ONLINE
SURVEY

In Memory...

Hon. Calvin Ashley
30th District Court
Wichita Falls

Hon. Bascom Bentley
369th District Court
Palestine

Hon. Neil Caldwell
23rd District Court
Angleton

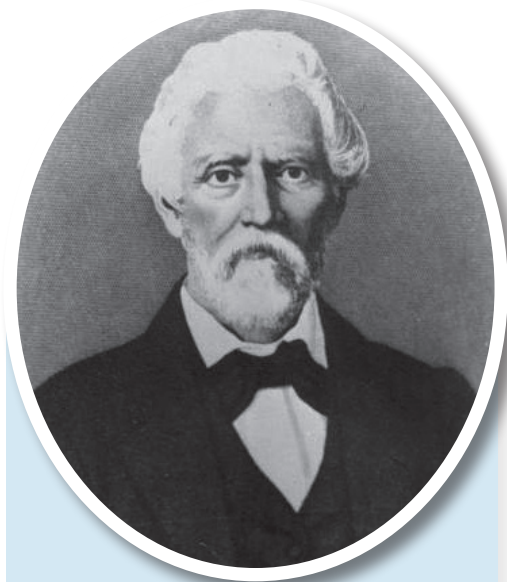
Hon. Charles Campbell
Court of Criminal Appeals
Austin

Hon. Adele Hedges
14th Court of Appeals
Houston



Fun

Facts



The term “maverick” is derived from the name Samuel A. Maverick (1803-1870), an early Texas lawyer and pioneer.² He was a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and a mayor of San Antonio.

1. <https://www.factretriever.com/texas-facts>
2. *Id. (Ital.)*
3. *Id. (Ital.)*
4. <http://kxrb.com/luckenbach-texas-was-a-big-song/>

Camels were imported into Texas twice in the 1850s by the US War Department in the belief that they would be handy animals to use during the Indian Wars. They could be seen roaming Texas hills and deserts well into the 1920s.¹



After the popularity of the song “Luckenbach, Texas,” so many road signs were stolen that the government stopped making them.³

And speaking of Luckenbach, did you know that Waylon Jennings later told audiences that he hated the song he and Willie Nelson sang, and said that the guys who actually wrote the song had never even been to Luckenbach - nor had he! Someone or something must have persuaded him to relent a bit, because Waylon eventually played one show in Luckenbach on July 4, 1997.⁴

