



TEXAS ASSOCIATION for COURT ADMINISTRATION

JOURNAL

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12th Annual TACA Conference A Success

More than 125 court administrators, coordinators, managers, and other court professionals from throughout Texas attended the 12th Annual Education Conference and TACA Business Meeting. In addition, an exhibition featuring the products of 12 companies provided attendees with a direct, hands-on look at the latest in technological developments relating to the courts.

The conference began Tuesday evening with a reception hosted by Apple Computer, Inc.

The education portion of the conference featured Michael D. Cheney, founder and director of "The Key Group," conducting an exciting, motivating, and interesting session entitled "Dealing with Personalities." Each participant was given a test to fill out Tuesday evening, to be turned in and graded by Cheney that evening. The next day the participants were grouped

together depending on their personality style. Cheney proceeded to describe each personality style and gave others insight into understanding those styles and dealing with those individuals. Cheney was fantastic and someone we want to remember to have again.

Wednesday evening, Nixdorf Computers hosted a wine and cheese reception, followed by our Annual Banquet and Awards Presentation. Our special guest was John A. Clarke, President of the National Association for Court Management, who spoke to us briefly on the future of court management and NACM's goals. Certificates of completion were given to those completing Phase II and III of the professional development program. Carolyn Dycus was awarded the coveted Charles W. Barrow award in recognition for her contributions in promoting court administration. Our keynote address was

given by Judge Frances J. Maloney of the Criminal District Court #4 in Dallas.

Thursday morning was devoted to mini-workshops, featuring judges and coordinators leading informal discussions and problem solving, followed by some management workshops and a presentation by Dianna Heiner on her recent trip to China as a representative of the "People to People Court Management Delegation."

Thursday afternoon, Steven Jennings and Eve Nordyke from Harris County Data Services presented effective methods of procuring and justifying equipment. Those attending received a special certificate of completion.

Concluding our education seminar, Teri Williams led an interesting, thought provoking discussion on Women's issues.

Friday morning featured TACA's 12th Annual Business Meeting, details of which are featured in a separate article. ■

New Board Members and Chairperson Elected

Cathie Paterson and Jenna Sprouse were elected to the TACA Board of Directors at the 12th Annual Meeting of the Texas Association for Court Administration in Austin, October 21, 1988. Teri Williams was elected Chairperson for TACA.

TACA member, Ernie Davis, was awarded an honorary TACA membership for years of service to the organization. Davis is the only active TACA member to receive this recognition. Other recipients of honorary memberships include Dr. Charles Friel, Director of the Criminal Justice Center, Sam Houston State University; former Supreme Court Justice

Robert M. Campbell; and former Supreme Court Chief Justice Charles Barrow.

Yearbook chairperson Mitizi Brotherton was unable to attend and Linda Burleson presented the 1988 TACA yearbook with dedication to Randy Kitchen, honoring him as a long-time friend and active contributor to TACA.

Scholarships awarded were: three Judge Paul Ferguson scholarships presented to Cathie Paterson, Mitizi Brotherton, and Dollie Williams; two Jack Dillard scholarships presented to Elsie Pfeiffer and Estela Medina. All scholarship recipients will receive \$500 toward tuition and/or expenses to attend

any ICM program being offered in 1989 or selected conferences previously sanctioned by TACA for scholarship application.

Outgoing TACA Chairman Randy Kitchen announced that next year's conference will be held the third week in October at the Driskill Hotel in Austin.

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A Letter from the Chair by Teri Williams

At the TACA 12th Annual Conference Business Meeting in Austin, I was honored to be elected as Chair for our organization. I would like to thank the membership-at-large for their vote of confidence. I am most anxious to make this year one of TACA's most successful. Randy's act will be a tough one to follow. He along with our previous chairs have set a precedent for leadership and guidance that has made TACA a model professional organization of which we can be proud.

In order to maintain that standard of professionalism, our membership has elected a very capable and diligent board. In addition to the incumbents Carolyn Dycus, Wayne Bowling, Martin Allen and myself, I would like to welcome Jenna Sprouse and Cathy Grimshaw-Paterson to our Board of Directors. The new board has already been busy developing and approving an Action Plan for 1989. At the last Board Meeting in Austin on December 1st, the Board also reviewed the 12th Annual Conference, began planning of the 13th Annual Conference, reviewed finances and discussed plans for "The Book" of Court Administration. Many new projects were considered and imple-

mented such as a "Past Chair" committee, development of a written history of TACA as an organization, and scheduling a meeting with our Judicial Advisory Board.

The new Board would like to thank those of you who filled out a Committee Preference Sheet. If you have not been called upon to work on a committee, we may yet need your assistance with some of the above mentioned projects some time in the future. We do welcome and appreciate the input of all the membership. If you have any suggestions, ideas or projects in mind for our organization, please call or write any of the Board of Directors or Committee Chairs.

In a further effort to involve our membership, the Board will also ask that all scholarship recipients send us a brief synopsis of the seminar that they attend. We look forward to this outside stimulus benefiting TACA as a whole in the form of ideas for mini-workshops or even articles for the *Journal*.

We are also looking forward to our 13th Annual Conference scheduled to take place at the Driskill. We are very excited about this site and hope the membership will share in our enthusiasm. Jenna

Sprouse, Sheila Greenup and the Education Committee are already hard at work planning an excellent agenda for that Conference.

For those of you who were unable to attend this past conference, it was great! I believe all the participants would agree that Dr. Cheney's workshop on "Dealing with Personalities" was wonderful. A personality profile determined whether we were *dominants* (that's me), *expressives*, *analyticals*, or *amiabls*. We then learned how to deal with the various types. It was a very stimulating and enlightening experience. Hats off to Debra Montagne and the Education Committee for an interesting and informative Conference.

TACA's next Professional Development Seminar is already in the works. The Professional Development Committee chaired by Bob Wessels has begun work on the Texas Trial Court Seminar, Phases I, II and III, held every June at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville. We anticipate a record number of participants this year and I look forward to seeing many of you then. ■

A Step Back in Time . . . *The History of our Association*

The following is an excerpt from the 1977-79 TACA yearbook. The article's author was not named, but the yearbook chairperson was Dianna Heiner. This is the first in what is hoped will be continuing series of articles on the history of the Texas Association for Court Administration.

A series of Court Administration seminars, sponsored by the Texas Center for the Judiciary, was the first step in creating an interest in establishing a professional organization.

James Dunlap, seminar director, suggested at the October 1976 meeting that interested coordinators form a committee to establish a statewide organization for court administration. The committee members who took on the task of organizing a professional organization were Professor Richard Jackson of West Texas

State University at Canyon; Charlie Nay, Corpus Christi; Shirley Cluck, Dumas; Joyce Fewell, Lubbock; Ida Johnson, Fort Worth; Ed Blackwood, Houston; and Pat Revill, Dallas.

The committee conducted a statewide survey of court administrators and court coordinators to determine if there was sufficient interest in the formation of an organization. The desire for continuing education and professionalism was unanimous. As a result of the survey a committee was charged with the responsibility of drafting a constitution. Thus, the Texas Association for Court Administration (TACA) became a reality on November 19, 1976. Approximately fifty court coordinators signed the preamble to the organization's constitution.

The TACA Constitution was written

and approved by participants at the November 17-20, 1976, Court Administration Seminar, subject to the final adoption by Association members at the first annual meeting . . .

1776 *The Constitution* 1976

November 20th, 1976

We the People of the Republic of the Great State of Texas in order to form a more perfect court management system, establish management in the Judicial Branch, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common good, promote the development of general goals, and secure the blessings of the judiciary to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Texas Association for Court Administration. (Thus began the Texas Association for Court Administration.) ■

Technical Assistance Survey Update

By Wayne Bowling

By the end of the 12th annual conference, almost one hundred questionnaires had been turned in. We finally have a sufficient sampling to tabulate the results. A great deal of data must be tabulated and cross tabulated to provide any useful information to TACA.

We must keep in mind that data comparisons take certain variables into account; for example, a salary comparison between two counties of the same size might tell us which county has a higher pay scale for coordinators, but that would not tell us anything else if that is all that was compared. In retrieving data for salary comparisons, it is necessary to look at duties, responsibilities, and training/ experience levels as well.

Lastly, it will not be useful to attempt creation of an overall "average" coordina-

tor profile with the data available, considering that the urban areas may have submitted more questionnaires than the rural and medium sized counties. "Averages" can best be determined by geographical areas and/or other "like" variables within a group.

It is hoped that the information eventually gleaned from what you have provided will be useful for further planning to make Texas coordinators the best trained, most professionally prepared among their colleagues nationwide.

*Editor's Note:
Wayne Bowling currently serves as
Chair of the Technical Assistance
Committee for the organization.*

Editor's Corner

by Debbie Andrews

In future editions of the *Journal*, we hope to continue our series on the history of TACA, feature stories about successful problem solving experiences of TACA members, and continue to keep our membership informed about the workings of our organization. In order to be successful, we need your help. Please send news items and articles to:

Debbie Andrews, Administrator
101st District Court
Dallas County Government Center
Dallas, Texas 75202

The *Journal* is your newsletter, and we want it to address your concerns. Be a contributor!!!

Thank You, TACA, For the Scholarship

San Diego, August 8-10, 1988...I'll never forget my time there attending ICM's Designing and Delivering Effective Presentations for Courts, thanks to my TACA scholarship and the little bit of funds left in our court's travel budget.

To save money on my airline ticket, I left for San Diego a day early (meeting my roommate Cathie Paterson in El Paso so we could travel together) which gave us a wonderful opportunity to see some southern California sights, including the famous San Diego Zoo. Another TACA friend, Marsha Edwards from Dallas, joined us that day, so we were real tourists for a day and a half and ready to learn when our conference began early Monday morning.

Dr. Gordon Zimmerman, Associate Professor, University of Nevada, was our trainer, and he was ably assisted by Mary Brittain, Senior Staff Associate of the Institute for Court Management. We began by learning project objectives, identifying our primary training task, discussing our typical constraints and problems and the principles of adult learning. Next was Dr. Zimmerman's presentation on developing an adult training program, learning objectives, and preparation of content and structure. Then he showed us a variety of instructional methods and how to design assessment methods.

Monday afternoon we were assigned our task: develop a 15-20 minute course segment to demonstrate on the second day. We were given time to work with the trainer and staff in preparing our visual materials, hand-outs, and other teaching aids for demonstration.

Tuesday was spent presenting our course segments with everyong presenting one session and everyone assigned to do at least one critical assessment of a session. We finished our presentations Wednesday morning (there were thirty of us making presentations), and then we evaluated the overall program and learned some special strategies for presentations and conferences to wrap up our learning experiences for the week.

Speaking for myself, as one who finds it hard to stand up in front of a group to speak, the conference opened a new world for me. I learned skills which gave me confidence, and for that I am grateful. Hopefully, I can repay TACA (and Taylor County) by being a better prepared and more skilled speaker and presenter--a special need for my work in TACA's Professional Development Program. Thanks TACA for giving me this opportunity.

Carolyn Dycus

Settlement Week: An Extraordinary Effort *by Debbie Andrews*

The court administrator/coordinator must serve in many capacities to perform effectively. Sometimes an extraordinary commitment of time and energy is demanded. Sue Bennett, Administrator of the 95th District Court in Dallas, learned all about extraordinary effort when she served on a committee that developed and implemented Dallas County Settlement Week.

A committee was organized initially by the Texas Trial Lawyers Association to investigate the possibility of holding a settlement week in Dallas because the efforts in Tarrant County had been so successful. Sue Bennett was drafted to serve on the committee and began her service by witnessing the second Tarrant County Settlement Week in April, 1988. During the following months, the committee, composed of members of the Bar, representatives of insurance companies, and Sue, formed subcommittees for case selection, mediator selection and training, docketing, and public relations.

Working through the data services department, the committee obtained mailing labels for approximately 4,000 lawyers who were attorneys of record in cases filed during the 18 months immediately preceding the mailing. Packages were prepared which included a letter explaining the week, an order signed by all civil district judges, a case selection request, and a mediator volunteer request. Lawyers were urged to volunteer as mediators and submit any case which might benefit from mediation.

350 cases were selected for mediation out of approximately 1,000 submitted. Criteria used for selection included cases (1) without multiple parties; (2) with discovery essentially complete; (3) that had been set for trial several times; and (4) in which the parties were not far apart on their offers. The thought was that if cases were carefully chosen a high percentage would settle, thereby encouraging participation in subsequent settlement weeks.

The mediator selection and training subcommittee drafted 125 mediators to work the week of September 26, 1988, which was the week of the Judicial Section Annual

Conference. It was essential that a majority of the courts not be in session so that space could be found for conducting the mediations, and so that the lawyers involved as mediators and litigators would be available. The public relations subcommittee contacted Bar groups and insurance groups to encourage active involvement.

Being the only committee member employed in the court system, Sue Bennett was assigned to the docketing subcommittee. The first step in docketing was assigning mediators to the cases. Sounds easy, but imagine having 350 cases for assignment to 125 mediators when many of the mediators either had cases to be mediated themselves or had partners or associates with cases to be mediated. The committee developed a color coding/numerical system for cross checking assignments.

Having overcome the mediator assignment hurdle, the next step was assigning space and time for each case. Other administrators were asked to indicate spaces and times available in their courts. Some courts were able to allot courtroom, jury room, conference room and judge's chambers for the entire week while other courts had limited space and time available. The assignments were tentatively completed, and the next phase began.

Sue had been trained on a Lotus PC program furnished by Texas General Insurance which was used for the docketing printouts. Mediation settings were also entered in the Dallas County computer system which generated orders assigning the cases to mediation with copies to the attorneys of record. Court administrators were asked to get the orders signed, type envelopes for cases on which the attorneys had not provided envelopes, and return orders and envelopes to Sue for final checking and mailing.

She then had three days of relative quiet (other than handling the backlog of work for her court) before the deluge began. Calls ranged from problems with timing and previous appointments to angry lawyers trying to find out why their lawsuit had been singled out for mediation. (A

case was chosen for mediation after one lawyer recommended it, with or without the agreement or knowledge of the other parties involved.) The four weeks between the mailing of orders assigning cases to mediation and the week of mediation seemed unending. Sue became an expert juggler.

Somehow, everything came together and settlement week began. All parties had been instructed to meet in the Central Jury Room where posters specified mediation sites. Committee members worked in the jury room all week answering questions, directing, organizing, and keeping track of the progress. At the end of the week, when all the forms had been turned in, tallied, and distributed to the courts, the results were analyzed. Of the 350 cases set for mediation, 161 settled before or during mediation. In other cases, issues were narrowed and differences resolved that will lead to shorter trial time or eventual settlement without trial. The week was a resounding success.

And what about Sue? Next time, she hopes others will take the lead in the court system. Now that the first settlement week committee has proven the concept works, perhaps there will be more support from other judges and administrators so the burden can be more evenly distributed. To improve the system, Sue believes that more time is needed to organize and to provide advance notification of room assignments. Also, the forms should provide space for lawyers and mediators to indicate times they are available to prevent some of the last minute docketing changes. When asked if it was worth it considering the amount of work involved, Sue said, "On my good days, yes. It exposed attorneys to the concept of ADR, and in the long run it will pay off."

Editor's Note: Sue Bennett has been a member of TACA since 1982 and holds certificates in court administration and court coordination. She was Administrator of the 134th District Court from 1983-1988 and has recently become Administrator of the 95th District Court.

Long-Time TACA Friend Dies

Jack Dillard, 71, of Austin, died December 4, 1988. As director of the Texas Center for the Judiciary from 1973 to 1985, he was instrumental in TACA's establishment and continuing growth. TACA awards a scholarship annually in his honor.

Survivors include his wife, Dorothy of Austin, three children, Jack Dillard, Diane Dillard and Donald Dillard, all of Houston. A Jack Dillard Law Scholarship has been set up at Baylor University, c/o Law School, Baylor University, Waco, Texas 76798, or memorials may be made to the Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones, Austin, Texas 78731. ■

Editor's Note:

By Carolyn Dycus

It was my pleasure to meet Jack Dillard on my first trip to Huntsville to attend Phase I of the Professional Development Program for Court Administration. His interest in our group of coordinators/administrators was evident as he was with us from morning 'til night and always expressed a personal interest in the individuals he met. If it were not for Jack, I never would have visited the Sam Houston Museum and the wonderful historical park with the Houston's homes restored on view... he was a professional in his field, he was well educated in whatever subject we discussed (knew all about Sam Houston!) and, above all, he was a gentleman. Despite numerous health problems, Jack always seemed to enjoy attending TACA's annual Awards Banquet after his retirement, and we loved having him with us. He was with us this past October and it made it seem a little like "old times"... it won't be the same next year.

God bless you, Jack, and may there be some Baylor green in your heavenly landscape... You will be missed. ■

Please note the dates for upcoming conferences—see the Judicial Calendar on page 6.

TACA Committees

Education

(Annual Conference)

Sheil Cayson-Greenup, El Paso-Chair
Ruth Grimaldo, Brownsville
Stacy Schulle, Levelland
Pam Tackett-Jewkes, El Paso
Joan Taliaferro, Houston

Professional Development

(Huntsville)

Bob Wessels, Houston-Chair
Martin Allen, New Braunfels
Mitizi Brotherton, Wichita Falls
Wayne Bowling, Houston
Carolyn Dycus, Abilene
Marsha Edwards, Dallas
Danielle Eubanks, Dallas
Sonya Flora, Dallas
Randy Kitchen, Beaumont
Debra Montagne, Orange
Cathie Paterson, El Paso
Jenna Sprouse, Bryan
Margaret White, Abilene
Teri Williams, Ozona

Membership

Carrie Thomas, Dumas-Chair
Carolyn Frazier, Weatherford
Sandra Reagan, Houston
Joyce Strauss, Hallettsville

Publication

(TACA Journal)

Debbie Andrews, Dallas-Chair
Mitizi Brotherton, Wichita Falls
Carolyn Frazier, Weatherford
Diane Gannaway, Seguin
Charlotte Jones, Angleton
Bobbie Jo White, Abilene

Publication

(Yearbook)

Tina Teetz, Palestine-Chair
Martha Banales, El Paso
Carolina Becerra, El Paso
Sharon Peterson, Palestine

Technical Assistance

Wayne Bowling, Houston

Vendors

Ernie Davis, Houston

Past Chairs

(Nominating)

Randy Kitchen, Beaumont
Bob Wessels, Houston
Ernie Davis, Houston
Martin Allen, New Braunfels

NACM to Host Annual Conference in Colorado

There are few prettier places than the Colorado mountains in the summertime. This year the National Association for Court Management will hold its 1989 Annual Education Conference at the Grand Butte Hotel, Mt. Crested Butte, Colorado, July 9-14, 1989. You will not only have a myriad of summer activities to participate in (golf, horseback riding, hiking, tennis, white-water rafting, fishing, hot air ballooning, etc.), but you will also have an opportunity to attend an excellent conference with many superb speakers on the program, as well as the opportunity to meet with other
(continued on page 6)

National Center for State Courts Recognizes TACA

Recently TACA donated \$500 to the National Center for State Courts' Associates membership program. The National Center for State Courts has as its mission assisting "the state courts in modernizing their operations and in improving the quality of justice in our nation.: TACA is the first state association to make such a contribution.

We made this gift in recognition of the continuing participation that Dr. Geoff Gallas, Director of Research and Special Services at the National Center, has had in our Professional Development Program. We are most fortunate to have Dr. Gallas' support. ■

JUDICIAL CALENDAR

Southeast Texas Judicial Conference
February 8-10, 1989
University Hotel, Huntsville

South Texas Judicial Conference
March 1-3, 1989
Sheraton Hotel, South Padre Island

Central Texas Judicial Conference
March 15-17, 1989
Marriott Airport Hotel, Austin

✓ **Northeast Texas Judicial Conference**
March 29-31, 1989
Tanglewood on Lake Texhoma,
Pottsboro

West Texas Judicial Conference
April 12-14, 1989
Westin Paso Del Norte, El Paso

Criminal Justice Conference
May 10-12, 1989
University Hotel, Huntsville

Trial Court Management Seminar
June 12-16, 1989
University Hotel, Huntsville

Judicial Section Annual Conference
September 19-22, 1989
Sheraton Park Central, Dallas

Texas Association for Court Administration
October 17-20, 1989
Driskill Hotel, Austin

Juvenile Justice Seminar
November 1-3, 1989
Hotel to be announced,
Austin

Texas College for New Judges
December 3-8, 1989
University Hotel,
Huntsville

TACA TALK...

Carrie Thomas, membership committee chair, asks that members contact prospective members...let's all help build TACA.

Tina Teetz, yearbook committee chair, would like all TACA members to send any interesting and informative court-related news items to her or any members of her committee.

TACA members extend their sympathy to **Maryonna McFerrin** of Weatherford whose husband passed away in December.

NACM

(continued from page 5)

court managers, administrators, and coordinators from all over the country.

Make plans! Put this conference on your calendar now! Become a member of NACM for only \$50 and participate in the activities of the only national organization for court support personnel. For more information write the National Center for State Courts, 300 Newport Avenue, Williamsburg, Virginia 23187-8798. Phone: 804/253-2000. ■

Position Available

Court Manager for Criminal District Court of Dallas. Salary \$40,200. Bachelor Degree and 7 years relevant experience in judicial administration. Send resume to:

**Court Manager's Office
500 Commerce, Room 680
Dallas, Texas 75202
Attn: Sandra Jones**

**Texas Association
for
Court Administration**

Journal

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Martin Allen, New Braunfels
Wayne Bowling, Houston
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