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September 1999

COORDINATING THE **UNCOORDINATABLE**  
**Ricky B. Smith, District Attorney, 106th Judicial District, Lamesa, Texas**

### Court Coordinators

The role of the court coordinator in the administration of justice is critical if the system is to function with any degree of efficiency. However, all too often the participants in the system do not appreciate the need for efficiency. And when you look at the various participants, the lawyers, the bondsmen, the clerks, the bailiffs, jurors, law enforcement personnel, and the judges, you readily see the almost insurmountable task of the court coordinator in coordinating the uncoordinatable.

### Coordinating Lawyers

Lawyers don't like to be coordinated, especially by someone outside their office. They would much rather tend to their business without interference from anyone, especially someone who is trying to get them to move their cases. Just look at a typical law suit. On one side you have the moving party, be it the plaintiff in civil cases, or the state on the criminal side of the docket, and on the other side you have the defense lawyer. The plaintiff's lawyer may not want the case to move rapidly because he hasn't finished discovery or he hasn't been paid or he has other cases ahead of it that demand his immediate attention. The state's attorney may have other more pressing matters to deal with. The defense lawyer will have similar problems with getting paid, getting discovery and a host of other problems, not the least of which is that delay might be the best defense. Even if both sides want a trial in the case, there is the problem of finding a time when they can both appear before the court.

### Coordinating Clerks, Bondsman, Bailiffs, Law Enforcement Personnel, and other Court Personnel

The problem of court coordinating is complicated by the sheer number of different personalities involved in the task. Bondsmen resist having their clients appear in court before the bond fee has been paid, not to mention the fact that often they can't find their client. Law Enforcement Personnel complain that they don't have time to drop what they are doing to produce defendants before the court or to serve the volume of civil papers that flows through their office. Clerks have child support to collect and disperse, passports to issue, papers to file--getting a jury in is a major inconvenience as is having to appear in court to perform their various duties.

### Coordinating Judges

Here I'm reminded of a group of prosecutors who annually went bird hunting. Each year they called upon their outfitter to provide them with a particularly skilled dog that they had named Prosecutor. He worked hard and always provided them with ample opportunity to fill their bag limit. One year when they asked for Prosecutor, the outfitter was sorry to report that he had leased the famous hunting dog out to a group of judges and they changed his name to Judge and that now all the dog wanted to do was sit on his rear and bark out orders.

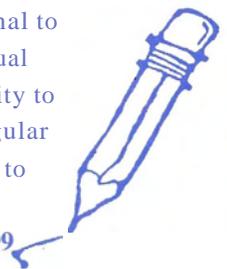
The task of coordinating a judge is formidable if he resists. And there is that natural tendency to resist, especially for older judges who have seen the same type of cases over and over and over. Even a judge fresh on the bench will find himself covered up by the volume of paper work coming his way. The more time he spends dealing with collateral issues, the less time he has to deal with the docket.

### The Key To Coordinating

The key to successful court coordination is respect for and appreciation of the coordinator. That respect and appreciation should flow freely from all parties involved in the court process, especially if the goal is to have a court system that works for the benefit of the citizens who support it with their hard-earned money. However, in a not-so-perfect world, respect and appreciation are rare commodities. It, therefore, is incumbent upon the judge to make sure that his court coordinator is respected and appreciated by all who desire to do business in his court (including the judge himself). (It goes without saying that to be the recipient of respect and appreciation, one must be worthy of same.)

Can't.. on pg. 2

TACA offers Proxy Ballot in this Journal to enable those unable to attend the Annual Conference in November an opportunity to vote for the board of Directors. All regular members in good standing are eligible to vote. Ballots must be postmarked or FAXED no later than October 22, 1999.



**FOR COURT**

**the**

It is the responsibility of the judge to make sure that his court is efficiently handling the business that comes before it. Perhaps nothing is more important in accomplishing this goal than case scheduling.

Successful coordination requires that the parties desiring to do business with the court have access to the court. It is also critical that they schedule through the coordinator, not through the clerk, and not through the judge. Scheduling is critical. A well-organized appointment-type calendar will relieve pressure on the court's time and avoid frustration on the part of the other participants in the process. A scheduling process that allocates court time based upon representations by the parties involved; that gives the parties a set time to appear for their hearing; and that requires the parties, including the judge, to adhere to the schedule will result in an orderly and efficient system that has the respect of all involved.

With regard to the matter of ORDER, it has been written: "The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre, ob-

serve degree, priority and place, insistance, course, proportion, season, form, office, and custom, in all line of order." - Shakespeare

And as best stated by Tryon Edwards:

"Have a time and place for everything, and do everything in its time and place, and you will not only accomplish more, but have far more leisure than those who are always hurrying, as if vainly attempting to overtake time that had been lost."

Therefore,

**LET THERE BE ORDER IN THE COURT.**

*\*Footnote: Uncoordinatable, a word unknown to Daniel Webster, is a term used to describe an individual who lacks order in his life and is easily recognized by those whose responsibility it is to put things (and people) into order.*

**APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL (NOW VISITING) JUDGES IN CONSTITUTIONAL COUNTY COURTS**

During the last legislative session, the Texas Legislature attempted to clarify and simplify the laws and procedures relating to the appointment of "special" judges by constitutional county judges or courts. The attempt did little more than continue the confusion and conflict.

The laws applicable to such appointments are located in Chapter 26 of the Texas Government Code. With the exception of Section 26.028, the 1999 Texas Legislature amended all of the sections in that chapter relating to such appointments. Specifically, those amended sections are 26.003, 26.011, 26.012, 26.015, 26.016, 26.022, 26.023, 26.024, 26.026, and 26.027.

Section 26.003 was amended to substitute the word "visiting" for "special." That particular section is useless and archaic and should have been repealed long ago. It seems somewhat presumptuous that the legislature in this day and time would allow that a sheriff or constable to be granted judicial functions.

Section 26.011 was amended, as well, to provide that the word "Visiting" be substituted for "special." Additionally, that section was amended to provide that if a county judge is absent, incapacitated or disqualified, in a civil or criminal case, the "presiding judge" shall appoint a "visiting judge" in accordance with Subchapter C, Chapter 74 (which apparently refers to the Government Code Section 74.054 and related sections.)

Actually, it would have simplified the judge appointment process or procedure if section 26.011 had been amended to take care of all appointments of judges in the constitutional county courts instead of just a civil or criminal case. What about a juvenile, probate and mental case?

Instead, the legislature merely amended the remaining sections in Chapter 26 of the Government Code to substitute "visiting" for "special," (except Section 26.028 for some odd reason.

Interestingly, however, Section 26.012 of the Code now provides if a county judge is absent, incapacitated, or disqualified to act in a probate, guardianship or mental health matter, a "visiting judge" shall be assigned (not appointed?) in accordance with Section 25.022(i) (of the Government Code. I suppose). That section of the code has very minimal or of no use since in counties (like Cooke County, Texas) in which there is no statutory probate court or courts, there are no "presiding" judges. Additionally, in counties with statutory probate courts, the constitutional county court likely has no probate jurisdiction.

Fortunately, the 1999 legislature did finally repeal the old Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 30.03, 30.04, 30.05, and 30.06. The space for this paper is too limited to print out all of the conflicts left in the laws applicable to the appointment (or assignment?) of "visiting" (now "special" until September 1,

1999) judges in constitutional county courts. The legislature had an excellent opportunity to clarify and resolve several conflicts in this area of the law. However, it appears it "dropped the ball."

You are urged to read the old laws and compare them to the revisions made by the 1999 Legislature.

*(Written by Sharon Tate under the advice of her Judge, who is Belvin Harris, County Judge of Cooke County, Texas.)*

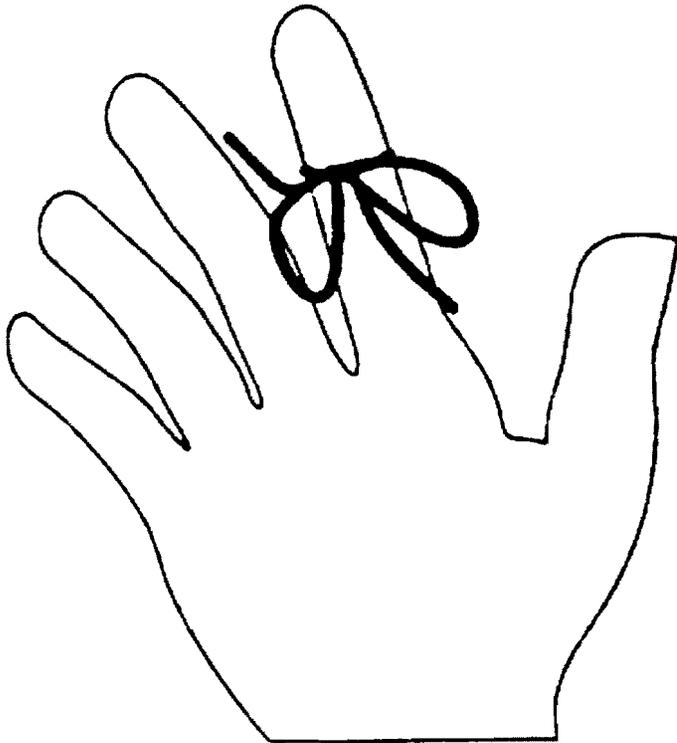
**WHAT IS A CONSTITUTIONAL COUNTY COURT:**

In 21.009 of the Government Code best describes a Constitutional County Court such as Cooke County, to be a Court created by Article V, Section 15, of the Texas Constitution. The basis for the office of County Judge comes this section of the constitution also. This means we do not have a Court at Law established by the legislature and the County Judge handles judicial and administrative procedures as well. The County Judge handles mental, juvenile, civil, and criminal cases. The administrative duties of our Judge covers anything from being the presiding officer of the Commissioners Court to head of civil defense and disaster relief.

**PEOPLE WITH GREAT MINDS TALK ABOUT  
IDEAS**

**PEOPLE WITH AVERAGE MINDS TALK ABOUT  
EVENTS**

**PEOPLE WITH SMALL MINDS TALK ABOUT  
OTHER PEOPLE**



**"Enhancing Your Path  
into Y2K"**

**23rd Annual  
Education Conference  
November 8 - 10, 1999  
Omni Sollthpark,  
Austin, TX**

## RURAL ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION

### OFFICERS

Joyce Strauss, President

Caroline Mazoch, Vice President

Martin Allen, Secretary-Treasurer



March 12, 1999 Left to right - President Joyce Strauss, Court Coordinator of the 2nd 25th District Court, The Honorable B.B. Schraub, Presiding Judge of the 3rd Administrative Region with his wife, Estella.

At a recent meeting of the Rural Association for Court Administration (RACA) on March 12, 1999, the Honorable RB. Schraub, Presiding Judge of the Third Administrative Region, was honored with a certificate of appreciation for his continuing support to our association. He was presented with the RACA Court Coordinator's and Court Administrator's Handbook, which was dedicated to him and is presently in its second printing. It is support like his that helps us succeed in our mission statement to strive to be a growing, productive, and educational organization. We thank him again. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of the handbook, can call Martin Allen at (830) 620-5562.

We would also like to report a successful Second Annual Education Conference, Spring Up and Go Forward with Court Administration, this past April 22nd and 23rd, 1999, in historic Fredericksburg, Texas. We accomplished 9 hours toward our CE hours with 34 participants who re-

sponded very favorably to our program of speakers which ranged from the Kids First program; what the Justice of the Peace and probation officers actually do; to handling Republic of Texas and Patriot Movement cases. So, naturally, we are now in the process of working on next year's millennium conference with a site committee diligently looking for another great location for the conference presently scheduled for SPRING 2000. So mark your calendars NOW and plan on attending. Anyone interested in being on the conference committee in any aspect or have any ideas for speakers should contact Conference Chair, Linda Wallace at (512) 393-7704 or RACA President Joyce Strauss at (361) 798-2607.

Our next RACA meeting is scheduled for September 17, 1999, at 10:00 a.m. at the Justice Center in San Marcos. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Martin Allen at (830) 620-5562 for an application. Everyone is always welcome.

*Article Contributed by Susan York, Court Administrator, 25th Judicial District Court.*



April 22, 1999 At the Conference

## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Hi! Hope everyone has had a wonderful summer and a great vacation. This has been a very busy time for me and I'm sure for most of you. There have been so many changes and things to worry about: legislative changes, Y2K, bigger dockets, so many new judges, conferences and our own families, not to mention our own personal health and relaxation time. The world seems to be going at a much faster rate than ever. My mom says that happens with age. I guess I am still in denial.

I spent most of the month of June in Williamsburg, VA at Phase II, in my CEDP class. This is the second part of the ICM program that Aurora outlined in her wonderful scholarship brochure. I hope that everyone in TACA has considered taking advantage of these courses. The knowledge and information you receive from these courses is invaluable. So please apply for these scholarships. It is truly an experience you will not only benefit from professionally but also personally. It was a life changing experience.

The NACM conference in San Jose, CA was another wonderful experience. The speakers there were so inspirational and full of information that as I write this letter. Hopefully, we can bring some of these speakers to TACA in the year 2000. We are already working on that as I write this letter.

Becky Burk and Martha Newsome have done a wonderful job putting together this year's conference. The speakers and materials are something you will not want to miss. Everyone can benefit from attendance at the 1999 Annual Education Conference in Austin. I hope you will mark your calendar for November 7-11 to be in attendance.

In closing, I would like to address a sensitive subject. I know that last year at the business meeting, many toes were stepped on and feelings were hurt; however, TACA is an organization in transition as we move forward into the new millennium. Many changes still need to be made, and many are being made. It is only with your love and support of this organization that it becomes the organization that it should be. This is our organization, and I encourage each of you to take a part. It is only through trial and experience that we learn to be the best that we can be. So please decide in your mind to make this organization better than it has to be. I look forward to seeing each and every one of you at the education conference. We need you and your input. I have learned through life there are not many things that actually need my voice, but trust me, TACA needs you!

*Mikah*



By Becky Burk

Well, it's that time again. Time to reflect on PDP and time to think about the convention November 8-10, 1999 at the Omni SouthPark in Austin. Once again the annual education November seminar will be filled with sessions of interest and information. Denise and I look forward to seeing you all there.

Scholarship applications were due on August 1. Good luck to all who applied. We feel that *THE SCHOLAR* publication was a good idea. It was mailed early and was chock full of good info.

For the past three years Denise and I have tried to "perk" up the journal with tid bits' and "good" gossip and recipes along with a laugh or two or three. We have provided you with serious articles relating to our profession, committee reports, candidate bios, photos, clip-art, the article on the New Rules of Civil Discovery by Paul Swacina ( Brin & Brin in Corpus Christi)(many of you thanked us.)»

We have *bugged, begged and pestered* you for your committee articles to be submitted on time; we were successful most of the time! Then, if you "missed" the deadline... we didn't fuss; your committee just had no representation in the TACA Journal. We filled your space with our "fillers."

At this time after much thought, we have decided to pass the *plume*. We have enjoyed working with publications...and maybe someday we will pick it up again. It is time to move on, and offer this job to others!

Take a look at the *new member* list! Isn't it wonderful! Good Work!!

Cee ya in Austin...and until then, remember...



Dodee and Denise

The co-chairs of your Education Committee are hard at work putting together a conference which will meet the mandated education requirement for 1999-2000 and provide some unique ideas to improve, if and where needed, the performance of your court. The theme of the 23rd Annual Education Conference is Enhancing Your Path into Y 2 K.

The direction for the conference focuses on specialized instruction for each of the individual court jurisdictions, providing what is needed for that demography of citizens using our courts. The divisions are by the following jurisdictions: felony, misdemeanor, juvenile, civil, probate/guardianship/mental health and family. The agenda includes a wonderful array of speakers, judges, attorneys, administrators and other qualified court staff who will be imparting vast experience and knowledge. You can expect workshops on pertinent topics such as caseflow management, pro se litigation and technology in the courtroom that have been customized for your jurisdiction.

The opening keynote speaker, Geoff Gallas, is a gentleman from Philadelphia who will be addressing "Planning for the Future." Geoff comes highly recommended and is often a speaker at NACM conferences and other seminars on court management.

On Tuesday morning, our keynote address is TEAM BUILDING with Leslie Farias Vonderheide. Leslie spoke to us a couple of years ago when our conference was in San Antonio and assisted us with understanding personality types. Leslie is a dynamic speaker and will definitely be a asset to our conference.

Tuesday night is planned for a lot of fun, food, dance and visiting. Participants will board buses to go just a short way to the Silver Dollar Dance Hall for a fajita dinner, followed by a karaoke and dance evening. Needless to say, no sequins will be necessary for this event. The pool tables will be available for those who want to play, or the covered patio for those who want to visit. Buses will be available for the return trip to the hotel with the final bus departing at 11 :45 p.m.

On Wednesday morning, the schedule includes an interactive program moderated by Judge Kristin Wade, presiding judge of the County Criminal Court of Appeals No. 1 of Dallas County. This is a fun program which will enrich our understanding of the term crisis. We've all seen a variety of emergencies. You will learn how to better manage your next crisis without losing control of the situation.

Our closing keynote speaker is a gentleman who has been active in law enforcement for some twenty-eight years, has his bachelors degree in Sociology and his masters in Public Administration. Eric Jackson served as Chief of Police at the University of North Texas from 1986 until his retirement last December. His training includes administration, management, policy development, community development and many other topics. Currently, Mr Jackson is President and Chief Operating Officer of Pathways Life Management Seminars, a training company which provides seminars designed to identify ways to manage your life, identify your goals and make your goals your reality. Think we could use some of those things in our profession as well?

These summaries are just a small portion of the programs planned for the 23rd Annual TACA Education Conference to be held November 8-10, 1999 at the OMNI SouthPark hotel in Austin, Texas. Your registration packets will be mailed at the end of August or first of September. Look for them in your mail as the deadline for the hotel and registration fee is clearly marked in the materials.

*Mark your calendar and plan to join us for an exciting three days of leamin', funnin' and networkin'.*

**NEW MEMBERS NOTE:**

I am a relatively new member to TACA. I attended the 1997 TACA Conference in San Antonio. I had every intention of going to the 1998 TACA Conference in Austin last November. I was approached by my very good friend, Tracey Wood, who is also a member of TACA, for help on a subject for an article to submit to the TACA newsletter. My friend, Tracey, and I consider ourselves inexperienced members of TACA, so therefore, we had no idea of what kind of article to write. So, as a result, I h've decided to share with all of you what I have learned this year so far.

As I stated earlier, I did not attend the TACA Conference last year because I had a death in my family. My future brother in law passed away at the age of 34 while jogging. This was my fiancee's only sibling. I have spent the past year trying to help my fiance come to terms with this tremendous loss. It's a hard job to comfort somebody when I don't understand why this happened myself. I had the pleasure of knowing my future brother inlaw for almost two years before his death and I consider myself lucky for that brief time.

This month has been particularly hard on my fiancee because of the death of JFK, JR. We knew him as being the son of a president, but that is all we knew of him. Someone dying this suddenly, unexpectedly and tragically has made him relive his own nightmare of 8 months ago.

In light of this current event, it is impossible not to pick up a newspaper or magazine without reading something about JFK, Jr. Because of this past year and the recent reading I have done, I have learned so much on a very deep level. I am quoting Roger Rosenblatt from TIME magazine. He wrote an article called "The Measure of a Life" that puts a lot of things in perspective for me. An excerpt is as follows:

"When a man dies, a civilization dies with him. Whatever constituted his being his gait, manners, tone of voice, political opinions, appearance, his particular use of language, philosophy, sense of beauty, sense of style, his personal history, ambitions, his smile all go. Everything dies but the reverberation of his works in the lives of others; and so, while an individual civilization dies, the greater one profits. We call such deaths tragedies because the force of the life has been of great magnitude; yet tragedy from the point of view of the audience is high art, and one is filled with as much admiration as grief."

My brother in law's goodness touched so many, including his brother. Then it touched me, my daughter will get it, and so on. I have always known, now it is reinforced to me, how important it is to conduct yourself professionally, gracefully and admirably in all aspects of your life.

On a much lighter note, this philosophy can be applied to your everyday work. Everyone knows that walking into a courthouse is not going to be a pleasant experience for most anyone. When somebody walks into my office for the first time, I want that person to remember our conversation as a nice one and the visit as pleasant as possible. And I want the people who see me and talk to me everyday to know that it will always be a pleasant experience. As a professional, that is the very least I can do for someone. Going out of your way to help just reinforce it. Maybe you'll touch somebody one day, and that person will touch someone and so on and so on.

Carla Braden  
Court Coordinator  
County Court at Law No. 1  
Tarrant County

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS  
AS OF JANUARY 1, 1999**



Vickie Oliver  
Betty Campbell  
Betty Magee  
Laurel Phipps  
Irma Rivera  
Orfa Reyes  
Cornelius Jennings

Judge Daryl Coffey	Connie Telles-Odom
Judge David Gibson	Chris Glasgow
Laurie Morse	Kristin Wade
Laura Barr	Annette Griffin
Janice Cox	Barbara Smith
Paula McDonald	Shirley Chowritmootoo
Rene Bohlmann	Jeanie Wallen
Debra Coffey	Grace Herrera
Al Aguilar	Linda Burdell
Aleida Castillo	Lois Rogers
Donna Wheeler	Sharon Silva
Rose Little	Mary Noel
Lorie Novak	Tinabeth Keasling
Vickie Edgerly	Sidney Scott
Gayle Maoran	Jennifer Watson
Terri Welch	Lea Ann Hansard
Betsy Wall	Kethleen Townzen
Alex Garibay	Janey Harrelson
Melissa Barcia	Sandy Rose
Laura Fautleroy	Debra Worley
Vivkie Villarreal	Don Franke
Cindy Deeton	Madeleine Clifton
Marion Trammel	Carina Ramos
Ann Garcia	Mario Salazar
Zoe Smith	Debra Griffin
Monica Nuney	Suzanne Fisher

OF THE COURT COORDINATOR: A JUDGE'S PERSPECTIVE

The court coordinator is on the front line of contact and communication for the Judge with both the legal system and the public. Thus, the coordinator can be a great asset to the judge and court.

THE VARIOUS ROLES OF THE COURT COORDINATOR

1. As Administrative/Executive Assistant to the Judge. The court coordinator should be the Judge's buffer, the keeper of the door, controlling who has access to the Judge and under what circumstances.

a. With staff. The coordinator should know and convey the Judge's policies and communications to other court staff. This saves the Judge from having to deal with all staff members individually and in a detailed manner concerning personnel and procedural problems.

b. With attorneys. Where the court is required to appoint numerous attorneys, the coordinator can minimize personal contact and possible appearance of impropriety between the judge and attorneys.

c. With the public. The coordinator should instruct other court staff on the need to screen calls and contacts, and when appropriate, to personally screen calls and contacts from people wanting to speak to or see the Judge. This will avoid ex parte problems for the Judge, and guard against interlopers who appear unannounced and wish to see the Judge. The coordinator should also schedule appearances, speeches, and appointments, and remind the Judge of these.

2. As docket manager. By proper scheduling, the coordinator should arrange dockets that are manageable, but expedite the timely flow of cases through the court. By being completely familiar with the number and type of pending cases, the coordinator can insure that the daily docket will accommodate new cases coming into the system, and dispose of cases that have been pending too long, or which need to be dismissed for want of prosecution. Thus, the coordinator can do much to carry out the public's business and the Judge's responsibilities. The coordinator should be informed and able to keep the judge informed on the condition of the court's docket.

THE PERSONAL QUALITIES NEEDED FOR A SUCCESSFUL COURT COORDINATOR

1. Intelligence. There is much to learn and to understand.
2. Work ethic. There is much to do.
3. People skills. By treating people in an appropriate way the coordinator can cause the court's business to proceed efficiently and without unnecessary problems.
4. Common sense. To distinguish between the truly significant and inconsequential. To understand what is appropriate and what is not.
5. Personal habits, appearance, mannerisms. Make a good impression for the court.
6. Good communication skills.

Kent Ellis, Judge  
315th District Court  
Harris County, TX

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AT WORK

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- Honorable Manny Alvarez
- Honorable James A. Baker
- Honorable David Hodges
- Honorable Cynthia Kent
- Honorable Mike McCormick
- Honorable Lamar McCorkle
- Honorable Pat McDowell
- Honorable Neel Richardson
- Honorable Suzanne Stovall
- Honorable Mike Westergren
- Honorable Sharon Wood

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bob Wessels - Houston

COMMITTEES

- Education - Becky Burk, Martha Newsome
- Membership - Sylvia Noriega
- Community Relations - Dayner Roberts
- Publications - Denise Carothers, Dodee Rehler
- Scholarships - Vanessa Williams

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TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION

Conference Registration Form -1999 TACA Education Conference

November 8-10,1999 - OMNI SOUTHPARK • Austin, Texas

(Please print the information exactly the way you would like it to appear on the list of conference attendees)

Name :
Title: Court/Company:
Address City ZIP
County E-Mail Address
Phone Fax

Please print name you would prefer on your nametag, if different than above

Each participant is responsible for his/her hotel reservations. Call OMNI SOUTHPARK at (512) 448-2222 or 1 (800) the-omni and identify that you are with the Texas Association for Court Administration. The deadline for reservations at the \$77.00 single / \$109.00 double per night rate is October 15, 1999.

Arrival Departure

Please indicate any physical or dietary need that requires special attention

- TACA MEMBER \$150 registration fee; 5185 if postmarked after 10/15/99
Non-TACA Member 5200 registration fee: \$235 if postmarked after 10/15/99

Payment method:
Make payment to Texas Association for Court Administration
Enclosed is check number payable in the amount of \$
OR
Enclosed is Purchase Order No. payable in the amount of \$

(Cancellations must be in writing. Full refunds will be made on cancellations postmarked by October 15, 1999. A \$35.00 fee will be assessed for any cancellations received after October 5, 1999)

To assist us in preparing the training rooms for these sessions, please indicate your preference of study from the list below:

- A. CRIMINAL FELONY
B. CRIMINAL MISDEMEANOR
C. CIVIL
D. FAMILY
E. PROBATE/ GUARDIANSHIP/ MENTAL HEALTH
F. JUVENILE
G. GENERAL Jurisdiction

Forward the application and payment by October 15, 1999 to:

Texas Association for Court Administration
c/o Martha Newsome, Coordinator
58th District Court, 1001 Pearl. Beaumont, TX 77701
Telephone (409) 835-8434 FAX (409) 835-8552
E-mail: MRN58@AOL.com.

(For administrative use only)
Payment Received
Check Number
Maker of Check

**COURT**

*ENLIGHTENING YOUR JOURNEY INTO Y 2 K*

Sunday, November 7, 1999

5:00 -7:00 p.m. Registration and Opening Reception - Ballroom NB/C

Monday, November 8, 1999

7:45 a.m. Late Registration in Vendors area. (Ballroom A/B)

8:20 a.m. Welcome address from Mikah Mitchell, Chair of the Board Ballroom C/D  
Housekeeping (Becky Burk and Martha Newsome, Education Co-Chairs)

8:30 a.m. Planning for the Future - Geoff Gallas - Ballroom C/D

10:00 a.m. Break - Ballroom A & B (*Beverage & Snack*)

10:15 a.m. Break-outs into Jurisdictions:

A & B & F- Criminal Felony/Misdemeanor/Juvenile SweetWater Room  
*Ethics (StovaUyLegislative Update(Hodges)*

C & D & E - Civil- Family - Probate/Guardianship/Mental Health BallRoom EIF  
*Managing Interpreters - (Barbara Baruch)*

11 :00 a.m. A B & F- Criminal Felony/Misdemeanor/Juvenile - SweetWater Room  
*Professionalism (Wood)*

C D & E - Civil- Family - Probate/Guardianship/Mental Health- BallRoom EIF  
*Technology in Courtroom (Bobby Bell)*

11 :45 a.m. - 1: 20 p.m. Scholarship & PDP Luncheon - Ballroom CM

1:30 p.m. A B & F- Criminal Felony/Misdemeanor/Juvenile - SweetWater Room  
*Managing Interpreters (Barbara Baruch)*

C D & E - Civil- Family - Probate/Guardianship/Mental Health - BallRoom E/F  
*Ethics (StovallyLegislative Update(Hodges)*

2:15 p.m. A B & F- Criminal Felony/Misdemeanor/Juvenile - SweetWater Room  
*Technology in the Courtroom (Bobby Bell)*

C D & E - Civil- Family - Probate/Guardianship/Mental Health - BallRoom EIF  
*Professionalism (Wood)*

3:00 p.m. Break - Ballroom A1B (*Beverage and Snack*)

3:15 p.m. *Caseflow Management*

A - *Felony* - Marilee Roberts - Conference Center

B - *Misdemeanor* - Mikah Mitchell - Ballroom EIF

C - *Civil* - Dottie McDonald - SweetWater

D - *Family* - Joan Green - SouthPark

E - *Probate/Mental* - Jerome Coleman - Room 104

F - *Juvenile* - Vanessa Williams - Room 102

4:00 p.m. *Family Violence/Resolution Management* - Judge Motheral- Ballroom CM

Dinner on your own - Enjoy Austin!!!!

Tuesday, November 9, 1999

8:30 a.m. *TeamBuilding* (Leslie Farias Vanderheide)- Ballroom C/D

10:00 a.m. A B & F- *Victims Compensation* [JoAnn Scott -A.G.'s Office] - SweetWater  
C & D & E - *Confidentiality Issues* ( Deborah Green) - BallRoom EIF

10:45 a.m. Break - Ballroom A1B (*Beverage & Snack*)

- 11:00 a.m. A B & F - *Repeat Offender Programs* (Barker/ Vanderwood SweetWater Room  
C D & E - Attorney General *Property Seizure* (Don Clemmer, Div Chief,  
Financial Crimes, AG's Office) - BallRoom EIF
- 11:45 a.m. TACA Business Meeting - Committee Reports - Election of Board Members  
BALLROOM C/D
- 1:30 p.m. A B & F - Judge/Administrator teams addressing *Pro-Se Litigants* - SweetWater Room  
Moderated by Kim Hendricks - Panel includes Judge Mike Westergren & Marilee Roberts: Judge  
Weldon Copeland & Tricey Eubanks; Judge Susan Lowery & Annie Jaloma; Judge Phil Barker  
and Mikah Mitchell
- CD & E - Judge/Administrator teams addressing *Pro-Se Litigants* - BallRoom EIF  
Moderated by Sara Garcia - Panel includes Judge Don Windle & Jerome Coleman; Judge  
Peter Sakai & Mary Calvert; Judge James Mehaffy & Martha Newsome; and Judge Jerri Lee  
Mills & Nancy Little
- 2:30 p.m. A- *Duties of the Coordinator in High Profile Cases* (Judge Alvarez) - Conference Center  
B & F *Enforcing Judgments* (Judge Copeland) BallRoom A1B  
C- *Mass Tort Litigation* (Kathy Snapka) Ballroom EIF  
D- *Monitoring progress of TMC Cases* (Judge Sakai) SouthPark  
E- *Rules/Responsibilities of the Guardian* (Judge Windle) Room 104  
O- *Personal Contract for Success* (Leslie Farias Vanderheide) Room 102
- 3:15 p.m. Break - (*Beverage & Snack*)
- 3:30 p.m. A & B *Security issues* (Lt. J. D. Kaelin, Sr., Safety Ed Service, DPS) Ballroom A1B  
C & D *Post Judgment Process* (Judge McDowell) BallRoom EIF  
F *Innovative Juvenile Programs* (Peggy Fox & Matt Marick, Denton County) Room 102  
E *Purpose of an Audit* (Jana Cotton, Travis County Probate Auditor) Room 104
- 4:15 p.m. *Electronic Filing* - Judge Mehaffey - Ballroom C/O
- 7:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m. Gala at Silver Dollar Dance Hall (Casual Dress) (Transportation provided)  
Barbecue Dinner (Alcoholic Beverages at your own expense)  
Karaoke until 11:30 p.m. Line dances - lots of fun  
Drawing for prizes - One ticket per attendee issued at the door

## Wednesday, November 10, 1999

- 8:15 a.m. Continental Breakfast - Ballroom C/O
- 8:45 a.m. *Dealing with Crisis as it arises* - Moderator Judge Kristin Wade Ballroom C/O  
five to seven scenarios of crisis presented to the TACA Board Members  
who are the coordinator of the day for this segment.  
Discussion regarding reaction - appropriate or not etc.
- 10:00 a.m. Stretch Break
- 10:15 a.m. *Managing Change in YOUR Life* - Ballroom C/O  
(Eric Jackson, President, Pathways Life Management Seminars)
- 11:45 a.m. Closing Statements - Announcement of next year's conference location
- 12:00 Noon End of 1999 Conference

Keys to Segments: A = Felony Criminal; B = Misdemeanor Criminal; C = General Civil; D = Family; E = Probate/Mental  
Health; F = Juvenile; O = Other

PROXY BALLOT

TACA offers a proxy ballot to enable those unable to attend the Annual Conference in November the opportunity to vote for the Board of Directors. All regular members in good standing are eligible to vote. Ballots MUST be postmarked or faxed no later than October 22, 1999.

Eligible candidates for the three board positions are:

- Becky Burk
- Cynthia Dejean
- Sara Garcia
- Sylvia Noriega
- Vanessa Williams

Those eligible for the position of chair are:

- Cynthia Dejean (if elected)
- Mikah Mitchell
- Marilee Roberts

(A person who wishes to run for chair MUST have served a minimum of one year on the Board of Directors.)

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**TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR COURT ADMINISTRATION**  
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I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby assign my proxy to the Secretary rreasurer of TACA to vote for the election of officers. Specifically, I submit my proxy vote for the following individuals as board members:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

I also cast my proxy vote for the following person to be elected chair

I hereby certify that I am a regular TACA member of good standing and am unable to attend the 1999 Annual Meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of voting member.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Martin Allen, Secretaryrreasurer  
Comal County Courthouse  
150 N. Seguin, Suite 317  
New Braunfels, TX 78130  
Fax (830) 608-2030

Ballot must be postmarked or faxed no later than October 22, 1999.

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## TACA BOARD CANDIDATES

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The following biographical sketches represent the five candidates to fill three positions on TACA'S Board of Directors.

Candidates are:

Becky Burk  
Cynthia Dejean  
Sara Garcia  
Sylvia Noriega  
Vanessa Williams

Candidates for the position of chair are:

Cynthia Dejean: current Board Member (if elected)  
Mikah Mitchell  
Marilee Roberts

(A person who wishes to run for chair MUST have served a minimum of one year on the Board of Directors.)

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### **Becky Burk**



My interest in TACA came early in my association with the Judicial System in Denton County, I served in the Budget Office for over a year prior to accepting the position as Probate Auditor/ Law Clerk in the then County Court at Law No.3 of Denton county, serving with the Honorable Don R. Windle, Judge. I joined TACA in 1993 even though I did not attend PDP until 1995. It was through the Court Budgeting course offered by the Institute of Court Management in Austin, Texas in November of 1993 that I began actively working with TACA. Since that time I have been working toward becoming a Fellow of the Institute of Court Managers. I have completed all requirements for Phase I with the exception of the Trial Courts Performance Standards course. Funds for that course have been the roadblock on that journey.

During my association with the Texas Association for Court Administration, I have completed all three phases of the PDP program, co-chaired the Annual Education Conference for three consecutive years (1997, 1998 and 1999), become a member of the National Association for Court Managers and serve as Executive Secretary to the Texas Association of County Court at Law Judges since 1995. I have also served on several county committees such as the county picnic and newsletter committees.

I am offering my services as a Board Member for the Texas Association for Court Administration because of the privilege I have had to be a part of the development and forecasting of trends in our judicial system at the county level. It is my belief that I have experiences and skills which can diminish this burden for others. I am offering my talents and insight to all who seek avenues to grow professionally. The judicial system is undergoing constant changes and I see myself as continuing as an integral part of streamlining, training, and such continued improvements in the administration of justice.

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### **Cynthia S. Dejean**

Cynthia S. Dejean is the Court Coordinator of the 133rd Civil District Court and has been in the court system since 1977. First, as a deputy clerk in the Harris County District Clerk's Office and then was assigned to the 133rd Civil District Court in 1987 as the clerk. In 1991, she became the Court Coordinator for the 133rd Civil District Court. Cynthia became a member of TACA in 1986 and has served on numerous committees. In 1994 she served as chair of TACA Membership Committee and served on the Education Committee for many years. She is on the faculty of the Professional Development Program.

She has attended the University of Houston and is a graduate of Massey Business College in Houston. She is also a graduate of the Texas Association for Court Administration's (TACA) Program and is a Graduate Fellow of the Institute for Court Management (ICM) of the National Center for State Courts.

Cynthia was the 1996 recipient of the Chief Justice Thomas R. Phillips scholarship from TACA, as well as, the 1996 recipient of the Tricia Stringer Hall, 1994 Jack Dillard, Honorable Larry Gist Award 1997 & 1998 and the Texas Bar Foundation scholarships. She has also received a scholarship from the Houston Bar Association.

Cynthia presently serves on the Board as liaison for the TACA Journal. She has stated that "TACA has given me the opportunities to grow and achieve many of my goals as a coordinator. I would like to continue in assisting TACA with its goals of encouraging and providing opportunities for individual growth and continuing education for its members."

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**Sara Garcia**  
8704 McFall Drive  
El Paso, Texas 79925

**PERSONAL DATA** Life long resident of El Paso. Married to Manuel Garcia, two children, Gabriela and Gonzalo Garcia

**EDUCATION**

Graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School, class of 1965. Graduate of Southwest Institute, AAA, 1985  
Graduate of Southwest Institute, AAS, 1986 Certificate of Completion on Human Relations/Supervisory  
Development I; Train/Supervisory Development I, II. & III; Organization and Administration Seminars  
Phase I Trial Court Coordination, Huntsville, TX. 1997 Phase II Trial Court Coordination, Huntsville, TX. 1999

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

District Clerk's Office 1987-1988 Position: Court Clerk  
Jail Magistrate Court 1988-1994 Position: Court Coordinator  
Family Law Court II 1995-present Position: Court Coordinator

**PROFESSIONAL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Selected by US Aid in Washington, D.C. as Expert Consultant in Court Administration to serve as a short term specialist for the Judicial Reform Project II for El Salvador, C.A.. Provided training and technical assistance in the development of a complete analysis of the new Judicial reform system, 1995  
Member, committee chair and panelist for the Texas Association for Court Administration, 1989-present  
Member of the El Paso Association for Court Administration, 1996-present  
Amigo Airsho volunteer and chairperson for the Childrens Playground & Trade Show 1989-1996  
Graduate of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), 1996  
Asociacion de Lideres Mexico/Americanos (ALMA), Member 1996- present; Board Member, 1997-98; President. 1999  
United Way, member allocation panel, 1998-present  
Member of the Hispanic Womenfs Network of Texas. 1996-1998  
Board member of Central Police Association, 1999



**Sylvia Noriega**

My career began in 1986 in the legal field as a paralegal for the Sutton County District Attorney's Office. In 1988 I became a Deputy Clerk for the Tom Green County District Clerk, and in 1989, I began as a District Court Administrator for the 51 st, I 19th and 340th District Court. The 51 st and the I 19th District Courts are multi-county and general jurisdiction.

I have been a member of TACA since 1994 and am currently serving my third term as the Chair of the Membership Committee and have served on the Membership and Education Committee for four years. I have enjoyed serving as Chair and meeting all the new members that have joined our Association.

I have completed courses in Angelo State University and have graduated from American Commercial College. I have also completed the three stages of Professional Development Program sponsored by the Texas Center for the judiciary.

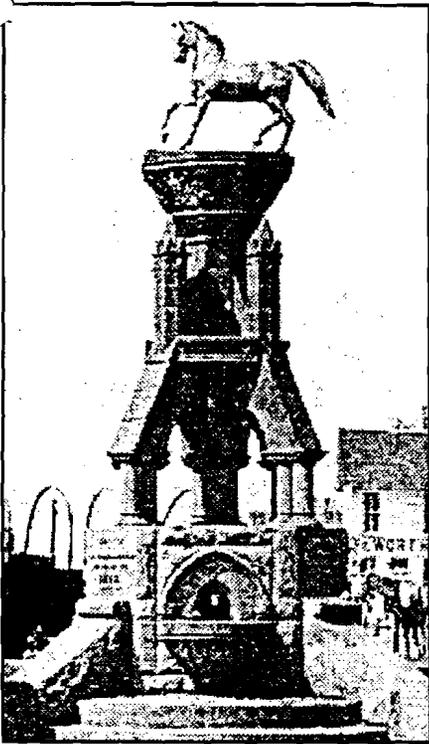
I have been married to Eddie for 19 years and have three wonderful children: Alexis 14, Frank II and Barry 7.

I would like to serve TACA as a member of the Board of Directors. I pledge to continue serving this organization to the utmost of my abilities. I will listen to the needs of all TACA members and work with the other members of the Board of Directors to continue the educational needs of its membership.

**Vanessa Williams**

Bio Unavailable

## THE HORSE FOUNTAIN ON THE TARRANT COUNTY COURTHOUSE SQUARE



This watering trough, located on the southeast corner of the Tarrant County Courthouse lawn at Weatherford and Commerce, actually predates the current Courthouse by three years. It was erected in 1892 and was furnished by the Womens Humane Association (forerunner of the present Humane Society). Horses, rather than automobiles were then the only means of transport (other than walking or, possibly, bicycling). As Fort Worth and Tarrant County grew, so did the horse population. Although a number of wagon yards were in the vicinity of the courthouse square, such as Duganis in the 200 block of West Weatherford, people with courthouse business often tied their horses at the steel railing surrounding the square. Because livery stables charged for watering horses, many individuals without enough cash were hard pressed to find a

source of fresh water for their animals after a long ride into Fort Worth.

Other watering troughs throughout the city included the following locations: West Seventh Street near Trinity Park. Magnolia and Jenning Avenues, Arnold Park; Magnolia and Eighth Avenues, the Peter Smith Triangle (across from the Fort Worth City Hall), North Main and Central, and at the Al Hayne Monument at Main and Lancaster. But the fountain on the courthouse square was the grandest of them all. With a base of Mineral Wells limestone and an octagonal shaft of red Pecos sandstone imported from Mexico, the fountain boasted three water troughs for animals and a drinking fountain for two-legged visitors. Water was piped in and flowed into the horses' troughs from three grotesque heads. The fountain was later topped by a former lawn ornament of a horse painted bronze with black mane and tail. The horse became affectionately known as "Old Dobbin". On the northeast face of the fountain, a dedicatory inscription reads: Erected by the Womens Humane Association, Mrs. Drew Pruitt, President. 1892.

On its southeast side, an inscription rendered in the broad Scots dialect and often attributed to the poet Robert Burns, expresses affection and respect for the horse, an essential part of nineteenth century life.

*"Guide Masters a' his weel-earned due  
ye humble beastie gie;  
Justice and mercy's blessings jlow  
nae less for him than yeo"*

Neighborhood boys were hired by the judges at twenty-five cents a day to keep the fountain clean. As progress brought automobiles and a diminished need for horse troughs, the statue and water trough fell a victim to the times. The building materials chosen for the fountain proved unenduring, and only fifty years later, Old Dobbin and sandstone arches were removed and the base alone preserved. The horse statue was later installed as an ornament over a private stable, but blew down in a storm and shattered. Fortunately, it was briefly re-assembled so that an aluminum casting could be made.

From the time of the Tarrant County Courthouse restoration in the early 1980s, a horse fountain fund was begun and ongoing efforts made to restore the fountain: schoolchildren saved and contributed pennies; books describing the courthouse restoration were sold to provide funding; applications were made for government grants for restoration; donations were made by television and motion picture production companies to the horse fountain restoration fund when programs such as *Walker, Texas Ranger* used the courthouse for a filming location. Finally, after a substantial donation by Mrs. W. K. Gordon, Jr., whose ancestors were early attorneys in Tarrant County, an authentic replica of the horse fountain, complete with Old Dobbin, will again remind all who see it of the vital relationship between man and horse in early Tarrant County.

*by Judge Steve M. King*

Ms. Margo D. Wells  
Court Administrator  
County Crim. Ct., of Appeals #1  
133 N. Industrial Blvd., LB #9  
Dallas, Texas 75207

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## LOOKING AHEAD: JUDICIAL CONFERENCE CALENDAR 2000

### SOUTHEAST TEXAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

TBD  
February 7 - 9, 2000 or  
February 9 - 11, 2000

### SOUTH TEXAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

March 1 - 3, 2000  
New Braunfels

### CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

March 15 - 17, 2000  
Arlington

### WEST TEXAS REGIONAL CONFERENCE

April 17 - 19, 2000  
Midland

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

June 12 - 16, 2000  
Criminal Justice Center  
Huntsville

### JUDICIAL SECTION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

September 24 - 27, 2000  
Hyatt at Reunion Arena  
Dallas

### COLLEGE FOR NEW JUDGES 2000

December 3 - 8, 2000  
Crowne Plaza Suites  
Dallas