

Judicial Branch News



FEATURES

- 3 National Adoption Day Recap
- 4 Service Awards (30 years)
- 5 CASA: Make a Difference Day
- 6 Photo Highlights
- 8 Employee Anniversaries



Judicial Branch News

The *Judicial Branch News* is an online newsletter published by the Media Relations Department.

If you wish to contribute to this newsletter, please send articles, news items, photos or other correspondence to:
karra@superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.

Contributing Writers

Cathy Wyse
Karen Arra
Gary Bridget
Debbie Gilliland
Cindy Reid
Jackie Traher
Justine Grabowsky
Tracy Randall

Contributing Editors

Presiding Judge Norman Davis
Tanya Luther
Kelly Vail
Johnny Tse
Vincent Funari



Produced by the Media Relations Department

Media Relations Department
Old Courthouse 4th Floor
125 W. Jefferson
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Court Shatters Adoption Day Record

For the fifth straight year, National Adoption Day in Maricopa County was the largest adoption day event in the United States.

“The Maricopa County Juvenile Court was thrilled to be part of the widespread joy that accompanies National Adoption Day. This year, 336 children officially become part of permanent, loving homes,” Juvenile Presiding Judge Eddward Ballinger said.

The event, held at the Durango Juvenile Court Center in Phoenix on November 17th, surpassed last year’s national, record-breaking total of 320. More than 3,200 attended this year’s event.

National Adoption Day helps raise public awareness about the plight of children without families. Each child and family has an amazing story. The children, who range in age from toddlers to teenagers, are victims of abandonment, neglect or abuse. Some have not been mistreated, but have been given up for adoption because of circumstances that made adoption the child’s best possible option for a happy life.

“The numbers of foster children in Arizona has spiked over the last few years. Right now there are more than 13,000 children in the foster care system in Arizona,” said Kathryn Pidgeon, co-chair of the Maricopa County National Adoption Day Foundation. “Of those children, 4,000 kids are eligible for adoption, waiting for homes.”

The festive atmosphere of Maricopa County’s National Adoption Day event was heightened by a visit from the Phoenix Suns Gorilla mascot; games and activities for kids; photos of the newly created families and cake and ice cream.

“National Adoption Day makes the other 364 days of being a judge worthwhile,” said Superior Court Judge Aimee Anderson.

Court staff, members of the public and 42 judicial officers volunteered their Saturday to help with the event.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the 100,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. Maricopa County has participated in each and every National Adoption Day since its inception in 2000.



Employees Celebrate 30 Years of Service



Frank Groenewold, Juvenile Probation, 30 Years



Lydia Estrada-Gray, Superior Court, 30 Years



Frankie Hernandez, Superior Court, 30 Years



Meri Anderson, Superior Court, 30 Years



CASA: Make a Difference Day

On October 27, CASA of Maricopa County staff and volunteers participated in Make a Difference Day, the nation's largest day of community service.

CASA volunteers donated their time at various locations throughout the Valley. Dozens of people signed up to volunteer at the central Phoenix location of Arizonans for Children, a non-profit organization that serves foster children. Called the "Visitation Center Clean Up Day", volunteers found themselves sprucing up the Center by cleaning windows, organizing toys and working on the landscape surrounding a playground.

"We feel very privileged to have worked with an organization that provides a safe, home-like atmosphere where supervised family visitations and bonding time can take place between foster children and their families," said Laurie Laughlin, Director of CASA of Maricopa County. "We're ecstatic to do our small part; giving back to children in our community."

CASA volunteers also donated time at the Touchstone Behavioral Health 10th Annual Family Fun Day. Advocates staffed carnival game booths, helped children at the fun house, distributed prizes and handled parking lot duties.

"Just thinking about the smiles on the kids' faces today as they waited in line for the rock wall — that's what it's all about," said CASA Volunteer Judith Wagner.

Make a Difference Day was created by USA Weekend Magazine and is held in partnership with Points of Light on the fourth Saturday of each October. An estimated three million volunteers spent the 22nd Make a Difference Day helping their communities.

As advocates for abused and neglected children, CASA of Maricopa County is inspired every day by the tremendous impact volunteer work has on vulnerable children's lives.

Photo Highlights



Arizona Supreme Court Vice Chief Justice Scott Bales delivers the oath of office to Judge David Cunanan at his investiture ceremony in Phoenix.



Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Rebecca White Berch delivers the oath of office to Judge Joan Sinclair at her investiture ceremony in Phoenix.



The Education and Training Department hired Dan Sitzler as its new Instructional Developer.

Sitzler previously worked in Adult Probation, serving as their Adult Education Instructor and Technology Specialist.

In his new role, Sitzler will be assisting in the delivery and improvement of eLearning, computer based and virtual training, to the Judicial Branch.



Volunteers, judges and court staff hold a vinyl chain that represents every child adopted on National Adoption Day. Each link has a child's name written on it. The chain is 12 years old and contains more than 2,000 names.

APD Receives Two Grants

Adult Probation was recently awarded two federal grants from the US Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs.

APD was awarded a \$250,000 Justice and Mental Health Collaboration grant to support a two-year project to improve the effective supervision and treatment of female offenders with serious mental illness (SMI) and/or co-occurring disorders.

The project will provide: 1) information dissemination and training for criminal justice and behavioral health staff to deliver gender responsive, criminogenic responsive, and trauma-informed services; 2) a jail re-entry program for females with SMI and/or co-occurring disorders; and 3) enhancement of the collaboration among agencies and organizations involved with the target population.

The other grant is for \$225,000 that allows APD to participate in a replication study of the Sex Offender Treatment Intervention and Progress Scale (SOTIPS). The results of the study will be used to help with sex offender treatment and supervision plans.

Payroll Welcomes Employees

The Judicial Branch Payroll Department added two new employees to their team: Jimmi Larkins Robertson and Elizabeth Campos.

Jimmi Larkins Robertson came to the Judicial Branch from the Clerk of the Court. She has 10-plus years of payroll experience as well as other administrative experience.

“Jimmi has learned the intricacies of the Judicial Branch groups and the Merit Rules very quickly. We expect great things from Jimmi and are happy to have her as part of the team,” Administrative Supervisor Tracy Randall said.

Liz Campos joined the Judicial Branch Payroll department in October 2012. She comes from the Clerk of the Court with more than six years of payroll experience.

“Liz has already proven to be a great addition to the team. She is very efficient and is dedicated to ensuring that tasks are completed correctly the first time,” Randall said.

Dispensing Emergency Medication at Work

To protect employees during a declared public health emergency and to help minimize the impact of a public health emergency on County operations, the Maricopa County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) has developed a Closed POD (Point of Dispensing) program to provide government agencies and businesses with an opportunity to provide life-saving medications, free of charge, directly to employees and their families in the event of a public health emergency declared by the Governor. The Judicial Branch has agreed to participate in the Closed POD program.

The Closed POD partnership between MCDPH and the Judicial Branch will allow MCDPH to identify the number of medications the Court will need for employees and their families and identify delivery and dispensing locations in the workplace. In a public health emergency, the Judicial Branch would receive medications from MCDPH and dispense all medication to employees within 48 hours. The Closed POD will eliminate the need for employees or family members to wait in line at public Open PODs, which would be activated at 103 public school sites throughout the valley.

In a public health emergency such as a bioterrorist attack, trained employee volunteers will be authorized by the Governor to dispense oral medications via Closed PODs at pre-determined locations. The Judicial Branch Closed POD will be responsible for dispensing the pre-packaged medications to employees and their families based on simple protocols provided by MCDPH. The MCDPH is currently providing pre-event training to the employees that have volunteered to handle the dispensing. During a public health emergency, MCDPH will provide support for dispensing questions or issues as they arise. On March 1, 2013, the Judicial Branch will participate in a MCDPH Closed POD exercise limited to the downtown court complex in order to test the plans for dispensing medication in a quick and accurate manner.

Please watch your e-mail messages and future editions of *The Judicial Branch News* for more information and training opportunities for our Closed POD. Please contact Gary Bridget at 602-506-8568, should you have further questions.

5 Years

Krista Foster, Judicial Clerk Associate
Jacki Ireland, Court Commissioner
Acheme Amali, Adult Probation Officer
Chad Beeman, Adult Probation Officer
Rochelle Harlin, Adult Probation Officer
Misa Yanagisawa, Social Worker Supv
Debra Garcia, Judicial Clerk Associate
Vanessa Lopez, Judicial Clerk
Ronald Pitts, Trades Generalist
Robert Prieto, Judicial Clerk
Alyssa Bryner, Presentence Screener
Sonia Hernandez, Judicial Clerk Associate
Jo Glover, Administrative Assistant
Maribel Gutierrez, Security Officer II
Lance Putz, Court Investigator
Amanda Varner, Office Assistant Specialized
Martin Zamora, Court Security Deputy Marshal

10 Years

Christine Davis, Surveillance Officer
Monica Pimentel, Case Administrator
Fred Dell'Ergo, Judicial Specialist
April Escobedo, Court Reporter
Carlos Rivera, Judicial Clerk Supervisor
Dorothy Morse, Help Desk Coordinator
John Biship, Adult Probation Officer
Elaine Fernandez, Adult Probation Officer
Kimberly Moran, Adult Probation Officer
Michael Wechselberger, Adult Probation Officer
Bartolo Careaga, Juvenile Detention Officer
Frederick Witte, Bailiff

15 Years

Tammi Dew, Juvenile Probation Officer
Roderick Pete, Juvenile Detention Officer
Carol Piskoty, Juvenile Probation Officer
Arliss Cook, Adult Probation Officer
Adrian Burns, Juvenile Detention Officer
Rebecca Gonzales, Judicial Clerk Senior

20 Years

Nona Quevedo, Judicial Clerk Senior
Mary Byrnes, Management Analyst
Elvia Davis, Program Coordinator
Avalon Peevy, Judicial Clerk Associate

30 Years

Cathy Santos, Management Analyst
Lisa Vitoff, Court Reporter

37 Years

Mary Farmer, Judicial Assistant