

THE 15TH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA

CIRCUIT COURIER

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024

Judge Ted Booras Retires; Division “VA” Named In His Honor



On October 16, the judges of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit gave their formal farewell to the Honorable Ted Booras. Judge Booras' almost 20-year tenure as a County Court Judge began in 2007, after being elected in 2006. During his career, he presided over civil and criminal county divisions, serving the last several years at the Gun Club facility.

On December 12 through Administrative Order No. 4.905-12/24*, Chief Judge Glenn Kelley announced Division "VA", which will be known as the "Judge Ted Booras Veterans' Court." The honor is in recognition of Judge Booras' tireless dedication to Veterans' Court, where he presided over since its inception in 2010.

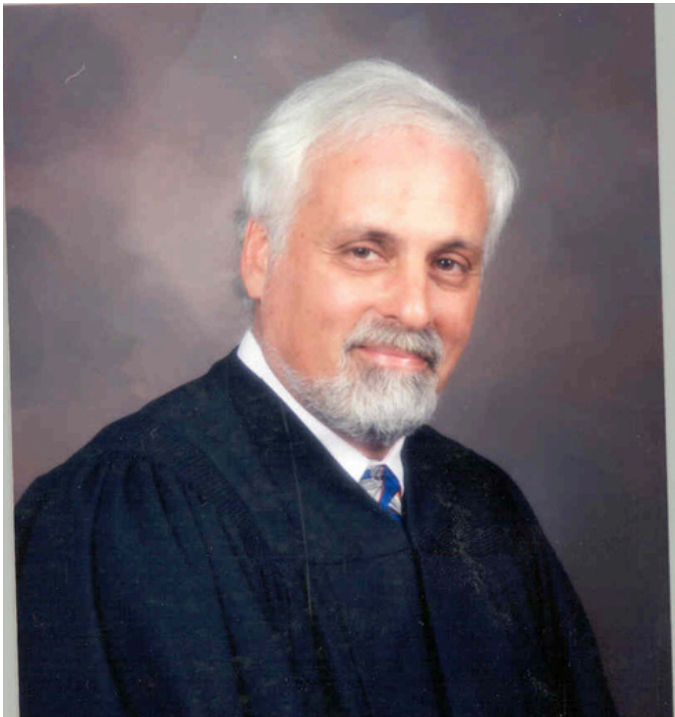
Judge Booras will be remembered for his longtime commitment to public service and exceptional dedication and service to the Veterans' Court. The naming honors not only Judge Booras' remarkable career with the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit but also his enduring legacy in ensuring justice and support for those served by Veterans' Court.



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The 15th Circuit Remembers the Hon. Barry Cohen



On November 3, 2024, the Honorable Barry Cohen passed away. A native of New York, Judge Cohen moved to Florida where he graduated from the University of Miami School of Law. After graduating, he worked for the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office in 1971 before moving to the Public Defender's Office in 1978. In 1980, Judge Cohen went into private practice until 1990 when he ran unopposed for a County Court judgeship and took the bench in January 1991.

During his time with the Fifteenth Circuit, Judge Cohen was assigned to criminal divisions and assisted with the civil divisions. He retired from the bench on June 30, 2016. After his retirement and a short pause, Judge Cohen returned to the bench to serve as a senior judge. In that role, he frequently presided over both County and Circuit criminal trials and hearings. He retired from senior judge work in the summer of 2024.

Judge Cohen will be remembered for his unwavering commitment to judicial fairness and integrity. As a longtime member of the Circuit, he will be greatly missed by his colleagues, Judicial Assistants, and Court Administration staff of the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit.

Investiture of the Hon. Katherine Mullinax



On October 25, the Circuit held the investiture ceremony for the Hon. Katherine Mullinax, who was appointed to the County Court bench by Governor DeSantis, filling the judicial vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Robert Panse. The investiture ceremony included the presence of many of the Circuit's judges, court administration staff, trial attorneys and members of the local legal community. Remarks were made by Judge April Bristow (who also served as General Counsel before being appointed to the bench), Judge Mullinax's mother Nancy, Judge Paige Kilbane and Chief Judge Glenn Kelley.

Judge Cymonie Rowe Named ABOTA Jurist of the Year



Pictured above is ABOTA PBC Chapter President David Prather, Judge Cymonie Rowe and Judge James Nutt.

The Hon. Cymonie Rowe was named Jurist of the Year by the Palm Beach County chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA), during the organization’s annual Judicial Recognition Dinner held on November 7. The award recognizes her significant contributions towards justice, the rule of law and support for our jury system.

Women on the Bench



On October 23, the Women’s Foundation of Florida hosted the “Women on the Bench” event which included a series of speed mentoring sessions with 15th Circuit Judges including (l to r) Judges Sarah Willis, Lisa Small, Ori Silver, Samantha Schosberg Feuer, Sarah Shullman, and Carolyn Bell.

Reading & Robes Program



On October 25, Judge Scott Suskauer, Judge Reid Scott II, Judge Samantha Schosberg Feuer, Magistrate Ilana Marcus, Administrative Magistrate Maxine Williams, Judge Daliah Weiss, Judge Sarah Willis, Judge Lauren Burke, and Judge Santo DiGangi participated in the “Reading and Robes” event at Jupiter Elementary School, reading with and speaking to two 5th grade classes. The event is organized by the Palm Beach County Bar Association’s Judicial Relations and Lawyers for Literacy Committee.

Hon. Laura Burkhart Administers New Attorney Oath



Judge Laura Burkhart administered the new attorney oath to Jonathan Resnick in November 2024.

Bench & Barrister Tennis Bash



The South Palm Beach County Bar Association hosted its 15th annual Bench & Barrister Tennis Bash event on November 16. A mix of current and retired judges, as well as attorneys, were in attendance. The “Bash”, while full of fierce competition, offered camaraderie amongst the County’s legal community.

Government Day at Greenacres Elementary School



Judges Lauren Burke and Samantha Schosberg Feuer participated in the 3rd Annual Government in Action event at Greenacres Elementary School on November 21, speaking to students about their role as a judge and career journeys.

Employee Appreciation Week

The Fifteenth Judicial Circuit celebrated Employee Appreciation Week October 14-18. The week celebrated the contributions of our staff. On October 14, staff were provided a continental breakfast, a “years of service” ceremony, and fun activities. The remainder of the week included therapy dogs, food trucks, and relaxing events during the lunch hour such as a Zen Room, painting, and adult coloring. Afternoon breaks included popcorn and cookie stands.

The Circuit appreciates the employees’ dedication to assisting with the provision of justice for the citizens of Palm Beach County.



Group photo of 15th Circuit employees



Court Administration staff serve up some fresh popcorn to Circuit employees



Circuit employees enjoying some adult coloring



Circuit employees display their creativity with the acrylic painting activity

“Thanks for Giving” Pie Party & Holiday Food Drive



From late October to November 15, the Circuit held its annual food drive for those less fortunate in our community. To celebrate the successful food drive and to thank the Court staff and Judicial Assistants for their work in the Circuit, the TCA and Circuit Directors held the “Thanks for Giving” Pie Party. 2024 marked the 11th year of this joyful tradition. We were very pleased to have several judges from the County Bench, as well as a Circuit Judge, join in on the fun.

South County Thanksgiving Luncheon

On November 20, judges, JAs and members of court administration staff located at the South County Courthouse held a Thanksgiving luncheon. Attendees were able to come together and socialize, while enjoying delicious food, beverages and desserts.



National Adoption Day Event

The Fifteenth Circuit held its annual National Adoption Day on November 8, 2024. During the celebration, ten families, with children ranging in age from sixteen months to thirteen years were formally united with a “forever home” via adoption proceedings. The children and families were supported by family members, friends, community advocates, judges and court administration staff.

Chief Judge Glenn Kelley welcomed the attendees. The Hon. Kathleen Kroll, Administrative Judge of Juvenile, provided opening remarks and the presentation of the 2024 Jim Sackett Adoption Advocate Award. This year’s recipients and key note speakers were adoptive parents Heather and Jeffrey Albert.

The Circuit sends a special thank you to the presiding judges and court partners for making this event a special day for everyone. Congratulations go out to the children and families on this momentous day.



Court Administration Directors Present at E-Courts Conference

During the eCourts Conference in Las Vegas, Chief Information Officer Noel Chessman and Civil Operations Manager Robin Shevock presented, along with Parik Chokshi, Palm Beach County Clerk IT Director. The session was titled “Court and Clerk Collaboration: Inside an AI Ecosystem.”



Judicial Assistants Hold Annual Holiday Party



On December 19, the judicial assistants celebrated the holiday season with their annual holiday luncheon, enjoying an array of delicious food, prizes and camaraderie.

New Employee Orientation

Several new Court employees attended the Circuit’s employee orientation course in the fall of 2024. During the course, the employees were introduced to the Circuit’s Mission and Vision, the Circuit’s Core Competencies, the structure of the judicial branch, and their role as officers of the Court.



HR Lunch & Learn Events



November 2024: On November 6, Court Interpreters Rody Barthelemy and Daniel Fontilien led a presentation called “Debunking Haitian Creole.”

HR Lunch & Learn Events Continued

December 2024: On December 16, Violeta Woxberg, Judicial Assistant, hosted a holiday arts and crafts event. Attendees were able to design their own ornaments and decorative ribbons.



HR Staff Attend Suits for Seniors Career Fair



On November 2, William Hutchings, Jr., Chief of Personnel Services and Iman De Abreu, Administrative Assistant II - HR, attended the Suits for Seniors Career Fair held at the Palm Beach State University Palm Beach Gardens campus, providing information about the 15th Circuit and internship and employment opportunities. Suits for Seniors is a program for local high school seniors to assist in college prep and workforce development.

Main Courthouse Tours



On October 17, Judge Kerner and Judge Willis hosted students from Baldwin Prep School.

On October 30, students from North Broward Preparatory School visited the courtrooms of Circuit Court Judges Cymonie Rowe and Sarah Willis, as well as County Court Judge Stephanie Tew. The students were able to observe two jury trials, speak with the judges and court staff, and get an inside look at the criminal justice system, which they have been studying this semester in their Criminal Law class.



Main Courthouse Tours Continued



On November 5, Judge Sherman and Judge Suskauer hosted students from Judah Christian Academy.



On November 13, Judge Tew and Judge Bristow hosted residents from The Watermark at West Palm Beach community.



On December 11, Judge Cheesman hosted students from Katz Yeshiva High School.

New Hires | Employees On the Move

Welcome to the Circuit's newest employees:

October 2024

Julie Jones, Administrative Assistant II, HR
Rebecca Mintzer, Digital Court Reporter

November 2024

Mia Williams, Trial Court Staff Attorney

December 2024

Isabella Valencia, Drug Court Case Manager

Employees on the Move/Position Reclassified

October 2024

Stephanie Rizzolo, Supervising Trial Court Staff Attorney

December 2024

Alessandra Valdes, Court Program Specialist II, Juvenile
Emma Soler, Court Program Specialist II, Civil

Administrative Orders

The following AOs were updated or entered October - December 2024 (most recent to oldest):

12-30-2024	11.203	Appointment of Magistrates
12-30-2024	5.104	UFC Magistrates
12-27-2024	3.110	Adoption and Implementation of Civil Differentiated Case Management
12-12-2024	4.905	Palm Beach County Veterans' Docket and Creation of "VA" Division
10-31-2024	2.314	Election Procedures
10-08-2024	12.706	Reset of Foreclosure Sales Cancelled Due To Hurricane Milton on October 8, 2024
10-02-2024	11.603	Law Clerks/Internal Operating Procedure



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