

NCBC Impact Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 1

February 1, 2010

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President's Message by Mark Hatcher

The NCBC 2010 membership drive is in full swing and on behalf of the Board, I thank you for your continued support and encourage you to become even more actively involved in the organization. Over the past year and one-half, the Board has strived to create opportunities for greater involvement. One such effort was to broaden participation in the *Impact* newsletter by shifting from a single editor to a team of editors and correspondents. A more recent effort has been the establishment of circuit and district liaisons (See Ken Hirz' article below) to help promote communications throughout the organization. These two efforts alone now have dozens more people directly involved in the operations which only serves to make the organization better and more vital. The next major effort involves service on the Board.

NCBC is beginning its 30th year and for the continued prosperity of the organization, it's imperative that committed people step up to serve as Officers and members of the Board of Governors. Several positions on the board will be open for election this year and the period for accepting nominations will be between February 15 - March 15. (An email announcement of the nomination period will be sent from NCBC Secretary Trisha Harrington.) For those of you who are looking for a challenge and ways to develop or apply your leadership skills, I strongly encourage you to run for one of the open positions. It's a great way to make a difference for bankruptcy employees and the bankruptcy system overall. The commitment is significant yet so are the rewards. For those who may not want to be involved in NCBC in any official role, you can still play an important part by simply being active and sharing your good ideas and opinions, and I encourage you to do so.

Best regards, Mark

New members will be able to access MemberClicks as of February 1st to join NCBC.
<http://ncbcimpact.org/membership.html>

Membership Committee Update by Ken Hirz

The NCBC Membership Campaign officially launched on January 15, 2010! Current members received the annual notification from Treasurer, John Ginocchetti, announcing the launching of MemberClicks for membership renewals. New members will be able to access MemberClicks as of February 1st to join NCBC. Membership renewal is made easy by accessing MemberClicks through the NCBC website at <http://ncbcimpact.org/membership.html> and follow the on-line instructions. Payment can be made electronically through PayPal using Visa or Mastercard as the means of payment, or by printing the membership application and sending your application and check to Celia Strickler, the NCBC Business Manager at the address provided. Membership dues are payable by March 1st, according to the by-laws.

Welcome Circuit Liaisons and Local Representatives!

In this article, I'd like to take the opportunity to announce the Circuit Liaisons for 2010.

Circuit	Name	Phone	E-mail
1 st	Linda Spaight (RI)	401-626-3121	linda_spaight@rib.uscourts.gov
2 nd	Becky Collette (VT)	802-776-2014	becky_collette@vtb.uscourts.gov
3 rd	David Bird (DE)	302-252-2943	david_bird@deb.uscourts.gov
4 th	Laura Whitehead (NC-E)	252-206-5164	laura_whitehead@nceb.uscourts.gov
5 th	Debbie Duke (TX-E)	903-590-3223	debbie_duke@txeb.uscourts.gov
6 th	Michelle Pierce (KY-W)	502-627-5793	michelle_pierce@kywb.uscourts.gov
7 th	Ron Hayward (IL-C)	217-492-5023	ronald_hayward@ilcb.uscourts.gov
8 th	Beth Wilbanks (IA-S)	515-284-6193	beth_wilbanks@iasb.uscourts.gov
9 th	Eddy Emmonds (CA-N)	415-268-2395	edward_emmonds@canb.uscourts.gov
9 th	Theola Ross (WA-W)	206-370-5217	theola_ross@wawb.uscourts.gov
10 th	Angie Martin (OK-W)	405-609-5734	angie_martin@okwb.uscourts.gov
11 th	Tracey Couling (AL-S)	251-436-5426	tracey_couling@alsb.uscourts.gov

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**The Benefits Committee wants to know..
what's on your mind?**



Have a question about your federal benefits? Send it to us and we'll research it, ask the experts, and provide an answer in a future issue of the IMPACT.

- Q:** I'm thinking about enrolling in long term care. Can I do that even though we are not in "open season"? Is there any tax break for long term care premiums?
- A:** Newly-hired employees and newly-appointed judges may enroll in the Federal Judiciary Long Term Care Insurance Program on a "guaranteed issue" basis during the first 60 days after receipt of an enrollment kit. Guaranteed issue means that you will be issued a policy regardless of your health. If your eligibility period has passed, you may still apply for long term care but you will be required to answer medical questions and provide evidence of insurability. The J-Net offers point-by-point plan comparison charts and enrollment details as well as a toll-free number to speak with a benefits counselor. Go to J-Net - Benefits - Long Term Care Insurance. Your parents, parents-in-law, grandparents and grandparents-in-law may be able to obtain long term care coverage through this program as well, but not on a guaranteed issue basis. Premiums for long term care insurance paid through any tax-qualified long term care program, such as the Federal Judiciary program, may be deductible from your federal income taxes as medical care expenses. Depending on the state in which you reside, you may be eligible for a state income tax credit. Be sure to check with a tax advisor or the taxing authority in your state to be sure.

NCBC Benefits Committee
WIWBML_NCBC_Benefits

30 years ago When NCBC first began 1980 trivia

- World Series Champions: Philadelphia Phillies
 Superbowl XIV Champions: Pittsburgh Steelers
 Nerd News: Computer modem invented.
 The Habit: Pac-Man, Centipede (arcade)
 Popular Christmas gifts: Rubik's Cube, Magna doodle



2010 NCBC Conference *by Janet Hunger, Western District of Pennsylvania*

The Bankruptcy Court staff in the Western District of Pennsylvania, along with Clerk of Court John Horner and Chief Deputy Clerk Mike Rhodes, invite you to attend the 2010 annual conference of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks. This year's conference will be in scenic Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in the heart of Downtown's Golden Triangle, which, by the way, is the triangular hub of the city where the Three Rivers (the Monongahela, the Allegheny and the Ohio) meet at the Point. Conference events will begin the evening of Tuesday, June 29, with the President's Reception and culminate on Friday, July 2. MSU programs will be delivered on June 29 during the day. The conference promises to be a special time for all NCBC members, as it will mark the NCBC's thirty years of promoting leadership, advocacy and education among the ranks of Bankruptcy Court staff nationwide. We also think it will be a special time, because it gives our court the opportunity to show off our hometown. Our conference plans are well underway, and the conference agenda and registration period will be announced in the next few months.

You'll know that your interest is sparked in attending the conference, when you begin to refer to Pittsburgh the way Pittsburghers do. Many of us have a nickname, but Pittsburgh has many—so feel free to refer to any of them! You can call us The Burgh for short. But you also can call us the Steel City or Steel Town or Iron City, because of our prominence within American history in the steel and iron industry dating all the way from the Industrial Revolution until today.



You can also call us the City of Bridges for all the bridges, many of them historic, that you'll want to traverse to view our town from the North Shore (along the Allegheny River) or the "Sousside" (Pittsburgh's South Side along the Monongahela River) or from an overlook high atop Mount Washington on Grandview Avenue (the name is no accident), where you can see all three rivers for miles. But please don't refer to us as the Smoky City by which we were once known, when the riverside steel mills were more numerous. Over the last four decades, Pittsburgh has been transformed—we call it our Renaissance—and the area's air and waterways have been revived, and the city has established itself as a world-class leader in innovative healthcare and technology and has risen to notable prominence in the education and corporate sectors.



Just as the city itself has figuratively bridged its past industrial heritage in many ways to allow it to move forward into the future with success, our court invites you to join us at the 2010 conference where we will be building yet another bridge, this one leading us into the future for the Bankruptcy Courts.

America's Most Livable City

Steel City or Steel Town because of its prominent steel industry for more than a century

City of Bridges – appropriate for our being flanked by the Monongahela River and the Allegheny River, which feed into the Ohio River – which really glisten in the summer sun.

City of Champions – hard-core fans of Pittsburgh sports teams

NCBC 2010 — Continued on Page Four

2010 NCBC Conference *by Janet Hunger, Western District of Pennsylvania (continued from Page Three)*

When you visit Pittsburgh, you will be visiting a bit of history that has touched all of us.



My mother grew up in Pittsburgh. I remember hearing many tales from her life there in the early 1900's. One story I heard many times, was of her father leaving for work each morning wearing a clean, white shirt only to return home in the evening with the shirt gray from coal dust. She told of riding the trolley through Pittsburgh and seeing the buildings and streets covered with black coal dust, the insipid remnants of a burgeoning industry that became the foundation for the spectacular growth of the steel industry.

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In the 1800's a rich seam of coal was discovered near what is now Pittsburgh. It was conveniently located near three rivers that would provide the perfect source of transportation to carry these new found riches to other parts of the country. Economic development began in earnest. John A. Roebling, an engineer, designed the first wire rope bridge and then the first suspension bridge that made it possible for Pittsburgh's iron factories to supply the union army with military supplies during the Civil War. The demand for warships and armor plate and more fueled the growth of this new industry.

Pittsburgh has been called the "The Steel City" ever since the first steel mill was opened in Pittsburgh by Andrew Carnegie in 1873 and from then on the steel industry fueled the economy of this city until the 1980's. Even though the city is no longer supported by the steel industry but by health care, education, technology and financial services, steel will always be a part of its fabric and history. The remnants of the history of this great city can be seen today from the Pittsburgh "Steelers" football team to the many historic remnants found through the city.

This wonderful city is no longer black with coal dust but it was that coal dust that made the city the shining example of economic growth that it has become today.

It is only natural that Pittsburgh should be nicknamed the "Steel City" and be located in the center of the manufacturing "Rust Belt." After all, the history of Pittsburgh is also the history of steel production in the United States.

For as long as Pittsburgh has existed, it has been dominated by its manufacturing industry. As far back as the American Revolution, the city's entrepreneurs were building the boats which would open up the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes to trade and settlement, and to the massive iron deposits of Minnesota. When the War of 1812 closed off British trade, the fledgling domestic steel industry began to develop new trade routes to ship this iron to the fledgling ports of Chicago, Detroit, and Buffalo. Not far to the southeast, coal, the other essential component of steel, was plentiful in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia. The iron and coal arrived on ships and steel rails, and fed new railroads in turn. Pittsburgh was ideally located to bring together these two raw materials, make them into steel and steel products, and ship them off to the great cities of the Eastern Seaboard.

The Civil War marked an explosive jump in demand for armaments and other steel products. After the 1831 Merthyr Tydfil riots in Wales, many skilled Welsh steelworkers and coal miners had migrated to the United States. The coal miners went to West Virginia and Kentucky, the steelworkers ended up in Pittsburgh. They would provide the labor for Andrew Carnegie to found the J. Edgar Thompson Steel Works in 1875, which later became the Carnegie Steel Company. Other major steel companies included Alcoa, Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel, and U.S. Steel. By the time World War II broke out half a century later, Pittsburgh was producing nearly half of America's steel.

The development of plastics after World War II spelled the beginning of the end of the great steel empires. At first decline was slow, but in the 1970s stagflation combined with the oil embargo encouraged the automobile industry and others to stop using steel frames and find lighter plastic alternatives. Factories and mills closed, briefly giving Pittsburgh one of the highest unemployment rates in the United States until it managed to diversify into other industries. At the same time, Pittsburgh's Renaissance and Renaissance II projects focused on cleaning up the air and civic environment and restoring neighborhoods, until in 2007 Places Rated Almanac named Pittsburgh "America's Most Livable City," and Forbes counted it among America's ten cleanest cities.

Today, the steel industry is still important in Pittsburgh, reflected in the team name of the NFL Pittsburgh Steelers and the U.S. Steel Tower, still the tallest building in the city. However, it now takes second place to new growth industries such as health care and nuclear engineering, which owe their evolution to the steel industry. Coal and the byproducts of steel production are hazardous to work with. When consumed without care for air quality, they also create the haze and heavy killer smogs for which Pittsburgh had become notorious, which in turn created the basis for modern industrial health care.

Mission and Vision Statements – What Do They Really Mean?

By: Laura Whitehead

Most courts have a mission and vision statement proclaiming our purpose and our goals for the future. Norman Meyer, Clerk of Court, District of New Mexico took this concept a step further. In order to explain the fundamental values that underpin the mission and vision of the court, he developed a values graphic and three questions and answers to pull all of this information together.

What do we stand for?

Fair and impartial justice
Integrity
An accessible court providing excellent public service

What is required?

Competent employees
Quality work

What are we striving to achieve?

Effective communication
Teamwork and cooperation
Innovative practices
Accountability
Diversity



Each of the ten values has full-page narrative explanations, detailing what they mean to court staff. All of this material formed the basis for staff training and stakeholder outreach, and is available on the New Mexico court's website at: <http://www.nmcourt.fed.us/usbc/employment-values>

Over the next several issues, we will feature articles on how courts are promoting their mission and vision. What does your court stand for? How do you help court employees understand the mission and vision of your court? If your court has gone above and beyond writing and posting a mission and vision statement, we want to hear from you. Please e-mail the Impact editor and let us know how you are promoting the mission and vision of your court. We will share your ideas with the bankruptcy community in future articles.

Membership Committee Update (continued from page 1)

The Circuit Liaisons are currently distributing membership information and assisting the board in launching the 2010 membership campaign. There are currently 54 Local Representative positions filled, accounting for 60% of the districts. Our goal is to have 100% representation. We are also currently looking for a Local Representative in the following districts: MA, PR, CT, NY-W, NY-N, PA-M, NC-M, NC-W, WV-N, WV-S, LA-M, LA-W, TX-S, IN-N, AR, IA-S, MN, MO-W, ND, SD, AK, AZ, CA-E, CA-C, CA-S, Guam, HI, ID, MT, NMI, NV, WA-E, KS, AL-N, AL-M, GA-N, GA-M & GA-S. If you are interested in participating as a Local Representative, please contact your Circuit Liaison. A complete list of all Local Representatives will be posted in the next edition of the IMPACT. The Circuit Liaisons will be meeting together with members of the NCBC Board as part of the upcoming Annual Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In addition to the membership campaign, we look forward to their suggestions and recommendations into other areas including contributing articles to the IMPACT newsletter.

Membership is the backbone of any organization and NCBC prides itself on membership and participation. About half of the members attend the NCBC Annual Conference and we look forward to once again being with them at our upcoming conference in Pittsburgh. This event marks our 30th anniversary of NCBC and is certainly cause for celebration. NCBC will be inviting all past Presidents and preparing other events to commemorate our 30 years as an organization. We hope you will plan to attend. Additional information will be forthcoming in subsequent IMPACT articles. Registration will be facilitated by the use of the MemberClicks program.



Day of Caring in Oklahoma City

By Carol Thompson and Angie Martin

Signing up as United Way Day of Caring volunteers turned into a “very physical” day for seven NCBC members from the Western District of Oklahoma as they tangled with solidly entrenched monkey grass and trees that needed a trim.

The designated work site was the Boy Scouts of America headquarters in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. “The guys trimmed trees and shrubs, and took down a couple of trees blocking the view of a parking lot area,” said Angie Martin, administrative analyst for the court. “There were huge piles of brush, shrub clippings and limbs. It was amazing the amount of work they did!”

The girls’ project was to remove monkey grass and load it into a pickup for use in another area, a “physical and messy project,” said Angie. With some of the clumps weighing in at 70+ pounds, three employees of the Federal Aviation Administration teamed up to help load the monkey grass. “We made some good friends,” said Angie.

Though the day was cool and rainy, the projects were completed. Participating employees used their annual leave and donated manpower, tools and clean-up supplies to finish the job.

The group enjoyed lunch and snacks, including snickerdoodles baked by Angie using her grandmother’s recipe.

This was Oklahoma Western’s first year to participate in Day of Caring. Next year they hope to see even more people become involved in these worthwhile projects, said Angie. Though they jokingly said that they would choose “making dental packets” as next year’s project, all agreed that “it’s always good to help out.”

Front left to right: Michael Bowers from IT and Don Dage from Administration. Back left to right: Angie Martin; Jan Donaldson, case administration; Tony Sossamon, administration; and Denise Calvert, courtroom deputy. Also participating but not in the photo was Ronn Folk from IT.



If your court employees participate in the United Way’s Day of Caring or other community efforts, send the details and a picture so your news can be featured in IMPACT.



Send us your favorite recipes and we’ll randomly feature them in the IMPACT.

SNICKERDOODLE COOKIES RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 3/4 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 teaspoons cinnamon



Directions

- 1 Preheat oven to 350°F.
- 2 Mix butter, 1 1/2 cups sugar and eggs thoroughly in a large bowl.
- 3 Combine flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt in a separate bowl.
- 4 Blend dry ingredients into butter mixture.
- 5 Chill dough, and chill an ungreased cookie sheet for about 10-15 minutes in the fridge.
- 6 Meanwhile, mix 3 tablespoons sugar, and 3 teaspoons cinnamon in a small bowl.
- 7 Scoop 1 inch globs of dough into the sugar/cinnamon mixture.
- 8 Coat by gently rolling balls of dough in the sugar mixture.
- 9 Place on chilled ungreased cookie sheet, and bake 10 minutes.
- 10 Remove from pan immediately.



Editor's Note: I hope that you have enjoyed this newsletter and that it has proven to be resourceful to you as a member of the NCBC. I would be grateful to receive your comments on the newsletter, both on its content as well as on its structure, and ways to improve it further. We are also welcoming ideas on how to improve membership. All suggestions are welcome. Happy reading!

Yvonne Cherokee

(919) 856-4752 ext. 125

yvonne_cherokee@nceb.uscourts.gov



Correspondents:



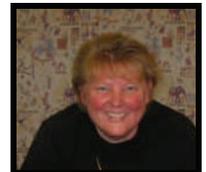
Alyson Johnson



Carol Thompson



Laura Whitehead



Leslie Taylor

All newsletter requests should be submitted to the editor.

Ask The Editorial Committee

The new NCBC Impact Editorial Committee is here to serve you. Additionally, this is our 'always open' invitation to share your questions, comments, and suggestions for articles that will provide helpful information to NCBC members. Material should be emailed to Yvonne_cherokee@nceb.uscourts.gov.

This is your newsletter -- let your voice be heard!

When submitting material for publication, please include your name, work telephone number, and email address. All publication material is based on the decision of the Editorial Committee. All accepted material may undergo editorial revision to conform to the standards of the newsletter and/or improve clarity.