



NCBC IMPACT

Dedicated to the professional development of its members

[Archived Articles](#)

March 9, 2012

Volume 12, Issue 2

President's Message by Ken Hirz



Welcome to the spring edition of the Impact. While winter in the mid-west has been unseasonably pleasant, as we find ourselves once again looking forward to warmer temperatures and new beginnings. Of course, it feels like a new day given the change in our funding landscape where we saw the budget cut thaw from a 13.4% reduction to 10%. The final allotments were received last month and by all accounts, the local court budgets breathed a sigh of relief. I really never thought I'd be happy receiving a 10% budget cut. With that good news, I hope that everyone is looking forward to joining us at the 2012 Annual Conference scheduled for August 7-10, 2012. Gloria Franklin, Clerk, Eddy Emmons, Chief Deputy Clerk, and the entire staff of CA-N have been busy planning for the conference this year. The Education Committee, being the heart and soul of the conference planning, has so far planned for two plenary sessions, the peer to peer breakout, information sharing and more than 30 individual training sessions on a variety of topics that will appeal to a wide range of deputy clerks. The AO and Federal Judicial Center are once again integrally involved in the planning of the educational program and we're excited at the different offerings in store for this conference.

Continued on Page 2

President's Message	1
Emeritus Members	2
Information Sharing	2
Board Corner	3
Membership Committee Update	3
Awards Nominations	4
Court Developed Programs	5
FJC - Structured Writing Course	8
Cost Effective Training	10
Circuit News	11
Editorial Staff	13

2012 IMPACT Publication Dates

January 6

March 9

May 4

July 6

August 3

September 7

November 2

President's Message

Continued from page 1

More on this in the next edition of the Impact. The host court will be posting a link to the conference website in early April that will include a draft program of course offerings.

It is important to encourage active participation in YOUR trade association, the National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerks, and consider putting your name in nomination for one of the four open positions on the board. Those positions include President-Elect, Treasurer, and Board of Governors (2). Candidate statements are due **Monday, March 12th** by 4:00 PM PCT, to:

Kathy Bernart, Secretary, at kathy_bernart@canb.uscourts.gov.

For more information on the terms and responsibilities of these positions, refer to the by-laws, found at our website, <http://ncbc.memberclicks.net>.

Emeritus Members

Membership for Emeritus members is open for retirees from federal service according to NCBC by-laws. What many Emeritus members may not know is that they are encouraged to maintain their active status in NCBC by not only continuing membership and staying in contact with news in the bankruptcy community, but attending the annual conferences has been made very affordable. In March 2009, the Board approved the waiver of the registration fee for Emeritus Members and to allow attendance at the president's reception and continental breakfasts. Other events would be payable on an a la carte basis. Please pass this along to any retirees from your court. And of course, if you are nearing retirement, we hope you will take advantage of this policy and continue to retain membership and keep abreast of conference activities.

Wanna Be a Part of the Information Sharing Session in San Francisco?

Aside from the wonderful educational experience, the culture, and all the sightseeing you'll want to get in while in San Francisco, have you considered participating in the Information Sharing session at this year's conference? San Francisco is a beautiful city, but it is so much more enjoyable if you are sharing your court's technology with others! The Information Sharing session this year will be held on Thursday afternoon, immediately after the business luncheon.

If you would like to participate, please send Joshua Wiker an email at:

(joshua_wiker@txnb.uscourts.gov) to get on the list. Space is limited, so sign up now!

Board Corner

.The NCBC Board held its mid-year meeting on March 4th in San Francisco. Host Court Clerk Gloria Franklin joined the meeting to discuss planning for the annual conference scheduled for August 7-10, 2012. Two of our current board members, Eddy Emmons and Kathy Bernart, are from CA-N and assisted in the hotel tour as we viewed the main ballroom and breakout rooms that appear quite suitable to our educational program. During the meeting a number of initiatives were discussed including offering scholarships to members, kicking off a pilot of the soon to be released mentoring program and increasing our benefits offerings to include pet insurance. The board will be following these issues over the next 30 days and should have further information in the next edition of the Impact.

The Board approved site locations for the 2014 & 2015 Annual Conferences. The 2014 Annual Conference will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, co-hosted by MO-E Clerk, Dana McWay, and IL-S Clerk Donna Beyersdorfer. The previously selected site of Indianapolis was deferred to 2016 due to contract issues with local hotels. The 2015 Annual Conference will be held in Nashville, Tennessee. Many thanks to Matt Loughney, Clerk, and all the clerks office staff in the above locations who will be preparing for our future conferences in their home cities. As previously reported, the conference next year will be held August 12-15, 2013, in Baltimore, Maryland.

Membership Committee Update

By John Horner and Teresa Underwood

Membership Drive Continues – The membership campaign is continuing into March. If you have not already done so, please renew your NCBC membership or become a new member today. The NCBC serves as an independent voice for its members. If you would like to know more about the benefits of membership, please speak with your Local Representative. Circuit Liaisons and Local Representatives are listed in this edition of the Impact.

Membership Drive Visual Aid - The Membership Committee with guidance from the Circuit Liaisons has prepared a revised PowerPoint presentation for Local Representatives to use as part of local membership drives in 2012. The presentation discusses the NCBC and the benefits of membership. Local Representatives may contact their Circuit Liaison for the presentation if they have not already received it.

Join NCBC Today!



Awards Committee Needs Your Nominations !



By Eileen Garrity and Kris Botts

The National Conference of Bankruptcy Clerk's Award Committee is inviting nominations to recognize Judiciary employees whose efforts have benefitted the

courts and/or the NCBC. The NCBC will be honoring both individuals and groups at the conference in San Francisco, CA. We need your nominations so that these awards can truly and accurately reflect those efforts of your fellow co-workers.

Your nominations are sought for the following awards:

Outstanding Service Award: This award represents service provided to NCBC and/or the courts by an individual that goes beyond a single task or assignment. The award is usually presented for longer term efforts.

Outstanding Achievement Award: This award represents an achievement by a group that results in savings or changes which benefitted the court system as a whole.

Special Service Award: Represents service performed that is more limited in nature; this award tends to recognize one time efforts or assignments on behalf of NCBC or the courts.

Administrative Excellence Award: An award for accomplishments that is more administrative in nature.

Outstanding Public Service Award: Represents service provided to the public that had a positive effect on a community by an individual or group.

Distinguished Service: An award to recognize retiring NCBC members and those individuals who are retiring who have had a long history with the NCBC and/or federal service that has had a positive impact on or made substantial contribution to the bankruptcy community.

Co-Chairs of the Awards Committee: Eileen Garrity and Kris Botts

Committee members: Daniel Paez - TXWB, Timothy Evans - CANB, Sharon Gardner - ILCB, Cheri Sorensen - NEB, Paula Luce - FLMB, Shirley Jenkins - NYEB, Tracey Matthews - MD, Mary Isenhower - IASB

Nominations must be received by May 25, 2012

New this year is an online nomination form within the NCBC's web site. Here's the link to the form:

<http://ncbc.memberclicks.net/awards>

Thank you for taking the time to submit your nominations!



Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

Electronic Access to Sales Information

By: Craig Koziell

The United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania has developed the Electronic Access to Sales Information (EASI) system. This is a Web based system designed to allow attorneys and trustees to enter information, photos and supporting documents related to bankruptcy sales into a database that can then be searched by visitors to the Court's web site. The goal of the EASI system is to inform the public of bankruptcy sale items to increase the quality of bids.

The EASI system consists of two primary components the entry page and the search page. The entry page is accessed through the CM/ECF system using the same login information that an attorney or trustee would use for other docket activities. The search page is accessed without a login, making it accessible to the general public.

The EASI system pages are designed to be easy to use while collecting and presenting useful information about the bankruptcy sale.

The entry page allows images and PDF files to be uploaded so the sale items can be seen and explained in appropriate detail. Date validation ensures that the listing will be displayed properly when searched.

The data collected by the entry page is stored in a database to ensure that the search process is quick, flexible, and efficient.

The search page of the EASI system resides on the Court's public Web site and allows visitors to quickly see bankruptcy sale items or to filter their results to specific items with minimal effort. Visitors can filter by item type and sub type, price, physical location of the sale item and many other options. Sorting of the results is provided in a variety of ways so the visitor can tailor the results to their needs.

To ensure that the search page returns current results, sale items are automatically removed from the search and display process when the sale date has passed. The current EASI data is also available as a .csv (comma separated values) formatted file for use in computer applications. This file format was chosen because it is commonly supported on most computer systems.

You can view sales information for cases pending In the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania on line at <http://www.pawb.uscourts.gov/easi.htm>. Instruction manuals are available for attorneys entering information into the system as well as members of the public reviewing the sales information.

For more information about the EASI system developed by the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, please contact Craig Koziell at craig_koziell@pawb.uscourts.gov.



Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

Calendaring with CHAP An AO Endorsed National Calendaring Program

By: David Sime, Clerk of Court, Utah

CHAP (Chambers Automation Program) version 5 is currently deployed in 29 courts with approximately 90 judges using it in their Chambers. This represents nearly 1/3 of the bankruptcy judges in the Judiciary. With the upcoming release of CHAP 6.0, the CHAP Support team anticipates several additional courts implementing CHAP.

CHAP provides courts with an efficient way of managing their calendar to streamline their processes during our current budget crisis. Originally designed as a calendaring and matter-tracking program for judges and their staff, CHAP has evolved into an integrated solution for Chambers and courtroom operations. CHAP provides Chambers with complete management and control of their calendars and courtrooms. CHAP requires no special hardware or software and because it is court developed, there are no costs for implementation.

Valuable and consistent feedback from CHAP users keeps CHAP in sync with the evolving nature of technology, increased workloads, and changes to case management techniques. From “paperless” to “paper only,” CHAP is adaptable to the differing judicial work styles found in the courts today. The goal of the CHAP Support team is to align CHAP with the current versions of CM/ECF, while keeping our eye on the future.

The Next Gen Calendaring committee has identified 107 calendaring tasks, 67 of which are already in the current version of CHAP with several additional tasks being added to CHAP 6.0. CHAP 6.0 was recently released for Beta testing and comes with significant changes:

CHAP 6.0 Client – The CHAP 6.0 Client removes the need for a Middle Tier server to access the CM/ECF database. The Middle Tier has been replaced with a J2EE Enterprise web-based Tomcat hosted service. The Tomcat service is currently part of the CM/ECF database. The removal of the Middle Tier eliminates the need for additional hardware and provides CHAP users with improved system performance and stability.

CHAP 6.0 Admin - The CHAP 6.0 Admin is written in a Java-based User Interface. CHAP Admin now offers an interface with a stateless web-based application. CHAP Admin has a new look and feel, making it more user friendly with additional tools. The adaptation of CHAP to a Java-based User Interface will continue with future CHAP releases and will keep CHAP in sync with the direction of the Next Gen project.

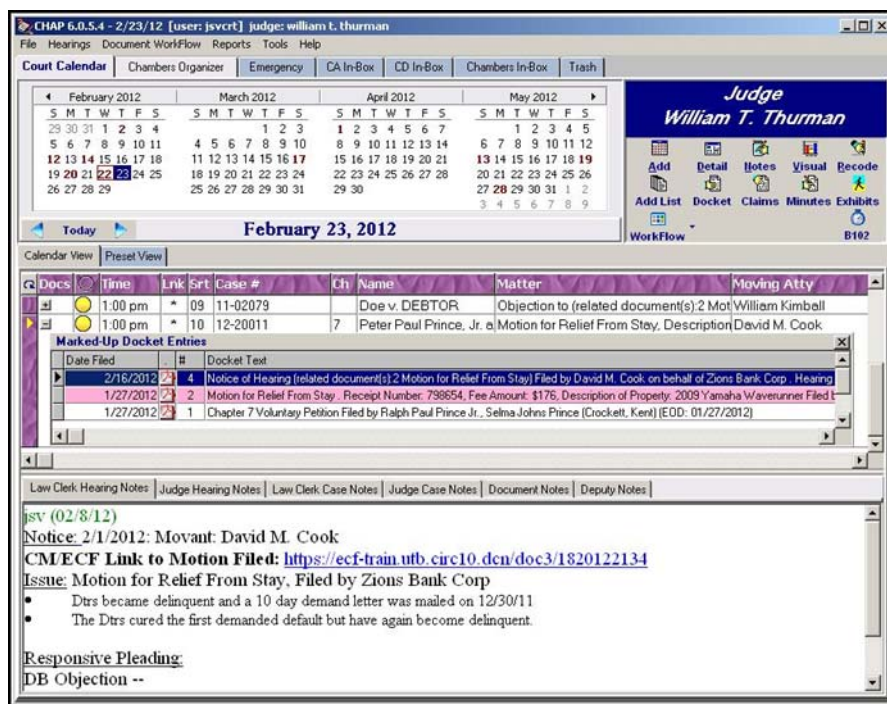
[Continued on page 7](#)

Calendaring with CHAP

Continued from page 6

CHAP provides many features that allow courts to manage and control their calendars including:

- Integration with CM/ECF
- Hearings set in CM/ECF populate the CHAP calendar
- Presets allow Chambers to set self-calendaring dates for attorneys to select
- Extensive note-taking capabilities for judges, law clerks, and courtroom deputies
- Docket markup allows users to filter out unrelated docket entries
- Mobile Access allows judges to access CHAP from a Blackberry, iPhone, iPad or other device
- Court configurable scheduling
- Document tracking with notes
- Minute Entry docketing
- Replication with the CM/ECF Server
- Exhibit tracking
- Java Admin Interface (CHAP 6)
- Control of colors on the Court Calendar (CHAP 6)



Example: CHAP 6.0 Court Calendar with a marked Docket and the Judge Hearing Notes displayed.

For more information, please contact CHAP Support at (801) 524-6677, Chap_Support@utb.uscourts.gov, or visit the All Things CHAP Website at <http://chap.utb.circ10.dcn>.

Has your court developed a program that could be of help to other courts?

If yes, please submit information on the program and it will be spotlighted in the next issue of the IMPACT.



FJC Offers Structured Writing Course

By: Esther Devries

The FJC's one-day, in-district Structured Writing course teaches a reader-focused approach to writing. It explains how to analyze, organize, and present information for ready comprehension in training materials, memos, and other documents. Courts requesting the course must have a computer training room available. The course can be delivered by FJC-trained facilitators.

The essence of the Structured Writing course can be described in just a few words: Same content. Different format. Improved results.

Same content: A lot of important information is disseminated in the courts through different types of documents. Court employees may need to read documents to keep informed of the latest policies and updates, or perhaps they're responsible for creating and distributing the documents to staff. In either case, the content and format of these documents can have a significant impact on their effectiveness.

Different format: The structured writing format organizes and presents text so that it can be quickly read and understood. For example, a few basic principles of structured writing are chunking, labeling, and sequencing content to enhance comprehension.

Improved results: Research has shown that written materials that incorporate structured writing techniques have many benefits for the reader, including the following:

- Information is located faster.
- Instructions are easier to follow.
- Content is more easily understood.

[Continued on page 9](#)

What's in it for Bankruptcy?:

- Bankruptcy practice changes frequently due to changes in law, regulations, and forms. A well structured document is easier to update in response to these frequent changes.
- Documentation of bankruptcy procedures typically involves having a group of people work on varying topics. Alternately, it can be done by a smaller group over a longer period of time. In either case, using the structured writing principles and tools brings consistency of format to documents created at different times by different people.
- Since bankruptcy cases involve both debtors and creditors who likely will have no other Federal court experience, it is very important to information to be structured towards the needs of the public.
- Bankruptcy cases typically follow a faster timeline than district court cases. Structured writing focusses on the key points for litigants.

Next steps: If you have questions about the Structured Writing course or would like to schedule a class in your court unit, contact Esther DeVries at the FJC at edevries@fjc.gov or 202-502-4195.

Cost Effective Training

Henrietta Foster, HR Manager
Alabama Middle Bankruptcy Court

Alabama Middle Bankruptcy Court strives to find cost effective training programs which require little or no funding. Some proven resources we've utilized include the Federal Judicial Center (FJC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Judiciary Online University (JOU), webinars, and the use of in-house trainers.

In addition, we also prepare a training calendar each fiscal year. We ask that each department (i.e. Operations, IT, Budget, HR) select a topic of interest from their department and present a thirty minute presentation to staff. Topics range from new local rules and procedures to refresher courses on using government issued credit cards. Once each department decides on a topic and presenter the topic is then added to the training calendar.

We've also utilized local agencies such as the Social Security Administration and the Consumer Credit Counseling Bureau to provide free training programs to staff. Other great resources include the court trainers exchange, court operations exchange and automation trainers' community. Also, our judges have been willing to provide substantive bankruptcy law training to our staff.



**Have you developed
cost effective
training in
your court?**

**Please share your
ideas with our
readers.**

**Submit your article
to the Impact editor.**



From the Circuits

7th Circuit Liaison News

By: Sharon Gardner



Four employees recently retired in the Central District of Illinois. The retirees included: Bill Davis, Director of Finance, who had been with the court for 35 years of service; Jan Standridge, case administrator, retired with 35 years of service; Julie Suchomski, case administrator, retired with 25 years of service; and Rose Roberts, intake clerk, retired with 22 years of service.

With Bill, Jan, and Julie retiring, I am one of a few staff members with 25+ years of service. I remember when I started I never thought I would be with the court this long. I have seen a number of changes throughout the years, such as: using typewriters, typing index cards, xeroxing notices, stuffing envelopes and mailing the notices to the BNC doing the noticing, NIBS, paper files, no computers to the dumb terminals for Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) commonly referred to as BANCAP to computers on everyone's desk, AutoCop, and the paperless world of Case Management/Electronic Case Filing System (CM/ECF). I could not envision a world without a typewriter or paper files. Now, I cannot imagine a world without my computer; attorneys uploading their own files; and creditors uploading their own proof of claim.

While our court changed, so did NCBC's website. The new website address is ncbc.memberclicks.net. I proudly served on the Website Redesign Committee along with Lee Ann Bennett, Clerk of Court, Florida Middle, Ken Gardner, Clerk of Court, Illinois Northern, Richard Arendt, Florida Middle, Martin Sanche, Illinois Northern, and Erick Jones, Ohio Northern. The goal of the committee was to make the website more inviting, user friendly, and very informational. We hope you enjoy the website.

Information on NCBC's website includes the 31st Anniversary of the NCBC Conference held June 14-17, 2011 in New Orleans. The opening plenary speaker, Jon Petz, author of *Boring Meetings Suck*, set the tone/bar of the conference. His engaging, empowering, motivating, inspiring as well as entertaining speech challenged each one of us to not only think outside the box, but to step outside the box. When answering the phone, don't think of yourself as just a case administrator, IT person, finance person, law clerk, etc., and to make a difference when talking with a customer (internal and external) as this is **your** SHOWTIME! With everyone's high level of enthusiasm from Mr. Petz's speech, attendees disembarked to their educational and training sessions, such as Stress Management, Civility in the Work Place, Memory Skills to Enhance Productivity, 110% Leadership and Teamwork from the World of Sports, Peer-to-Peer ending with the closing plenary speaker Michael Gold and the Jazz Impact Ensemble which continued with the program with the high level of enthusiasm. They were engaging, inspiring, empowering as well as entertaining to all 630 attendees or 45% of NCBC's 2011 membership.

[Continued on page 12](#)

Mr. Gold and the Jazz Impact Ensemble correlated a jazz band to the operations of the court as the drummer/ clerk of court sets the standard, tone, and pace of the jazz band/court. Also, the bass player, pianist, and singer/clerk's staff must work as a team, not individually. Every part of the ensemble/court is a critical part, and one part cannot make it without the other. In addition, Gloria Franklin, Clerk of Court, California Northern and team San Francisco gave us a very enthusiastic and entertaining sampling as to why you should attend the 2012 NCBC Annual Conference in San Francisco August 7 -10. Remember the annual conference is for **ALL** NCBC members (IT, finance, chambers, operations, human resource, training, ECRO, etc.).

I would like to encourage all NCBC members to recommend to your co-workers who are not a member of NCBC to (re) join. The cost for deputy clerks is only \$15 which equals only \$.58 per pay period, \$.29 per week, or \$.04 per day. Less than a Venti White Chocolate Mocha Frappuccino and with *way* more benefits. A lifetime membership is \$150. Please direct the co-worker to NCBC's website ncbc.memberclicks.net, your local NCBC District Representative, your NCBC Circuit Liaison, or have them email me at Sharon_Gardner@ilcb.uscourts.gov. Hope to see everyone in San Francisco!

News From The Third Circuit

Middle District of Pennsylvania and Delaware Enter Into MOU/MOA for Shared Services

PAMB and DEB have entered into to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and implementing Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the provision of programming and web support services. The MOU and MOA are a further implementation of the Third Circuit Horizontal Sharing of Services Pilot that was initiated in June 2011 in response to projected budget tightening and continued demand for services. Under this MOA, DEB will purchase programming and web support services from PAMB which will obviate the necessity for DEB to employ full time staff for these purposes. It will also allow DEB to re-allocate IT staff time previously spent on these services to other projects and possibly furnish those project services to other courts. One area that DEB is currently looking at for this type of project service is Voice/IP. DEB is a fully operational VO/IP court participant in the National IPT Program. The MOU and the MOA have been posted on Connection Site: Horizontal Sharing of Services Among Bankruptcy courts in the Third Circuit:

<https://connections.ao.dcn/communities/service/html/communityview?communityUuid=5cb44624-3da4-464f-9842-bdd8870dcb13>

For additional information contact: stacey_manley@deb.uscourts.gov

Tim McGrath Appointed to the Budget and Finance Advisory Council

AOUSC Director Judge Thomas F. Hogan has appointed Tim McGrath, Clerk of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to a two year term on the BFAC.

The Mission of the BFAC is to provide advice, guidance and assistance to the Administrative Office concerning budget and financial matters, including budget decentralization, procurement, allotment formulas, budget execution strategies, cost containment, economies and efficiencies, and issues which impact the Judiciary budget. In addition, the Council will provide advice and guidance on significant financial policy issues and, when necessary, members may be asked to provide input on issues relating to other program areas.

Editorial Committee

Editor's Note: Thank you for reading this edition of the IMPACT. This publication is designed to keep NCBC members informed with the latest information that impacts the courts and its employees. We want to hear from you. Please call or email me your comments, questions or suggestions for future publications at:

Laura Whitehead (252) 206-5164 or laura_whitehead@nceb.uscourts.gov



2012 Editorial Staff:

- Gidget Armstrong—Ohio Southern
- Yvonne Cherokee—North Carolina Eastern
- Kyle Crockett—Utah
- Laurie Moison—Delaware
- Melissa Nadeau—Florida Middle
- Jonathan Silva—Massachusetts
- Gina Zadra Walton—Washington Western



Articles should be submitted to the editor by the 25th day of the month in which the IMPACT is to be published.

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 to improve clarity.