



NCBC IMPACT

Dedicated to the professional development of its members

Issue #4

November 2014

In This Issue

President's Message

New Board Members

IMPACT Editorial Committee Needs You!

Membership Committee News

One Star Linking Two World's Fairs

NCBC & MSU Partnership Still Going Strong

Tools to Help Plan for Retirement

How Much Cash Is Too Much?

Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

Editors Note

President's Message

Lee Ann Bennett, NCBC President



Three months since our annual conference in St. Louis and ten months to our annual conference in Atlanta.

The Education Committee is already underway planning our 35th annual conference in Atlanta. The Committee is co-chaired by Eileen Garrity and Kris Botts. They are supported by members Eddy Emmons, Barry Lander, Sandi Brask, Ann Iannarelli, Joshua Wiker, Kristen Mahoney, Rich Marshall, Jeffrey Allstead and host court members Regina Thomas and Jason LeFevers. We look forward to updates on the upcoming conference soon.

I also wanted to share that Regina Thomas and I were honored to accompany 11 NCBJ judges on their September visit to various Senators, Members of Congress, and their staff. They also co-hosted with the Federal Judges Association and the Magistrate Judges Association, a reception to honor Members of Congress, Senators, and their respective staff. The purpose of the meetings was to share appreciation for the recent judiciary budgets and to reinforce relationships. I am very proud of this effort of our judges.

Besides our visit to Washington, Regina and I were also invited to attend the NCBJ Annual Conference in Chicago. While there, numerous judges stopped to express their thanks to NCBC and its members. Our relationship with NCBJ has strengthened over the years and I look forward to a continuing excellent working relationship with their organization. Judge Harwood (NH) shared an article he posted in the NCBJ newsletter about the two World's Fairs held in Chicago I thought you might find interesting. I've asked Laura to include in our newsletter.

And speaking of Laura Whitehead, I share with you this is her last Impact as Editor. Laura has served as Editor for the last 3 years and on behalf of NCBC, I wish to thank her for her dedication and service to our organization. I also welcome and congratulate Jan Zari as our new Impact Editor.

2015 Publication Dates

To Be Announced

Articles are due to the editor by the 15th of the month preceding publication



New NCBC Board Members

Mona Sparks - Board of Governors

Mona Sparks, Chief Deputy for the Eastern District of Kentucky, was elected to the Board of Governors earlier this summer. In her new role on the board, Mona has begun working with two NCBC committees facilitating the NCBC's scholarship program and the mentorship program.

An overview about the mentorship program is available on the NCBC Member Clicks website. If you are new to your position or new to the Judiciary, you may want to consider whether the mentorship program could benefit you. NCBC is always seeking experienced members who could commit time to be a mentor for a colleague. Mentorship is a worthwhile program that past participants have found to be very valuable.

The scholarship program provides tuition assistance to NCBC members. Past scholarship recipients have been awarded funds to assist their attendance at the annual NCBC convention or provide tuition costs related to continuing education. Guidelines for the scholarship program application process are available on the Member Clicks website.

Mona is excited to serve the NCBC in her roles on both the scholarship and mentorship programs.

Sabrina Garcia - Board of Governors

I am very grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to serve on the Board of Governors of the NCBC! I have been heavily involved with NCBC since becoming employed at the California Central Bankruptcy Court in August 2009. I came on board as part of a two-year career intern program. After completing the program, I applied for the position of Operations Specialist detailed to pro se work and was recently promoted to Self- Help Desk Team Leader of the district's five self-help clinics.

I fell in love with NCBC and its mission after attending my first conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 2010. I immediately became the Local Representative at our court serving two terms followed by one term as the Ninth Circuit Liaison in addition to being involved with membership, scholarship and awards committee. In the interim, I took advantage of NCBC's MSU partnership and obtained the Judicial Administration Certificate and am I recent graduate of the Federal Court Leadership Program.

As you can tell, I'm zealous, ambitious and dedicated when it comes to the Court and NCBC. I've been tasked with chairing the Membership Committee, which is of outmost importance to any organization. I cannot wait to share my enthusiasm with the rest of the NCBC board members and membership. Should you have any suggestions, questions, or concerns you would like me to bring to the attention of the board, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at: Sabrina_Palacio-Garcia@cacb.uscourts.gov.



Meet the new NCBC staff members in the next issue of IMPACT.

The IMPACT Editorial Committee Needs You!

By: Jan Zari

As the newly appointed IMPACT Editor, I need a team of dedicated and enthusiastic NCBC members who would like to serve on the IMPACT Editorial Committee starting in January 2015. As a committee, we will be responsible for gathering, reviewing, and writing articles in the quarterly IMPACT newsletter and upcoming NCBC Live! Blog.

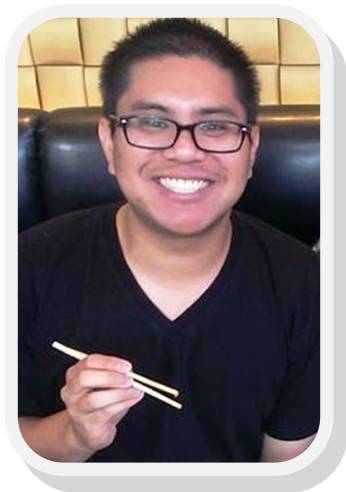
The committee will meet quarterly via teleconference to discuss the contents of each upcoming issue and will keep in touch via email and Lotus Connections as needed.

If you are interested in joining the Editorial Committee, please contact me via email by **December 15, 2014** so we can have a committee ready by the start of the new year!

The email should include a statement as to what you feel you can contribute as a part of the committee and should also detail any prior experience you have had in newsletter editing for NCBC or for your local Court. Current Editorial Committee members are welcomed and encouraged to apply.

Looking forward to working with you!

Jan Zari
IMPACT Editor 2015-2017
jan_zari@cacb.uscourts.gov



Membership Committee News

By: Sabrina Garcia

Membership Drive and 2nd Member Appreciation Week

Your NCBC Membership Committee is already hard at work on the 2015 membership drive. Next year's drive will be held in conjunction with our 2nd Member Appreciation Week (MAW) which will take place the week of **February 9th 2015**. Please be on the lookout for articles in the months ahead for additional information regarding the 2015 membership drive and MAW week.

Important Change to Membership Renewal

This summer the Board recommended and the membership approved a change to the by-laws with respect to the term of the membership year. **Section 9.1 ANNUAL DUES** now reads:

The annual dues for the membership commencing January 1 and ending December 31 of each year shall be determined by the Board of Governors for each category of membership established by the Board. The categories and amount of dues shall be periodically published in the conference newsletter, The Impact, and on the application for membership forms. The membership period shall run January 1 to December 31 for the number of years included in the dues payment. A statement of membership renewal and dues payment will be emailed to the member at least 30 days prior to the expiration of each member's membership period.

What does this mean to you? Renewal notices are currently not being sent to NCBC members. In December 2014, all members will receive a renewal notice for the 2015 membership year – unless you are a lifetime member. Additionally, if you renewed your membership August 1, 2014 or later, your member records will be updated to show you are paid through December 31, 2015. Any questions regarding membership renewals can be directed to Sabrina Palacio-Garcia, Membership Chair via email at: Sabrina-Palacio-Garcia@cacb.uscourts.gov.

Continued on Page 5

Membership Committee News

By: Sabrina Garcia

Local Representative and Circuit Liaison Vacancies

If you're interested in being a part of the Membership Committee and NCBCs 2nd Member Appreciation Week, consider applying to be a Local Representative or Circuit Liaison. The committee is currently looking to fill the following positions:

CIRCUIT LIAISON

1st Circuit

7th Circuit

9th Circuit – 1 of 2

LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

1st Circuit 2nd Circuit 5th Circuit

Massachusetts New York Southern Mississippi Northern
Maine New York Western Texas Southern
Rhode Island Vermont
Puerto Rico

6th Circuit 7th Circuit 8th Circuit

Kentucky Eastern Illinois Southern Iowa Northern
Michigan Eastern Indiana Northern Minnesota
Tennessee Eastern Missouri Western
Tennessee Western North Dakota
South Dakota

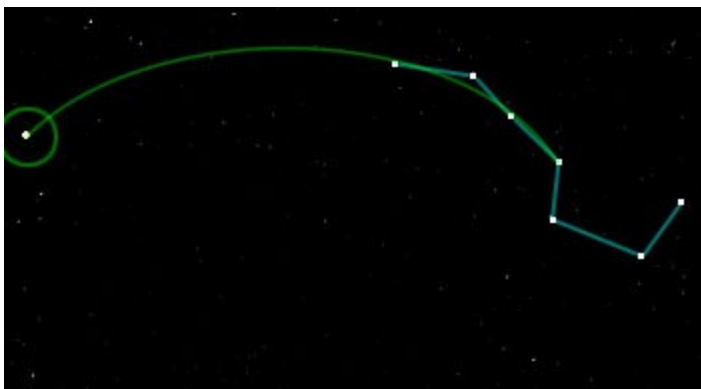
9th Circuit 10th Circuit

Alaska Colorado
California Eastern – 1 of 2 Kansas
California Central – 2 Oklahoma Western
Guam Wyoming
Idaho

If you're interested in a Local Representative or Circuit Liaison position, please submit a completed application to Sabrina Palacio-Garcia via email to [Sabrina_Palacio-Garcia@cacb.uscourts.gov](mailto: Sabrina_Palacio-Garcia@cacb.uscourts.gov). Applications are available on the NCBC website.

ONE STAR LINKING TWO WORLD'S FAIRS: ARCTURUS AND THE CHICAGO CONNECTION

As the NCBJ annual meeting prepares to descend upon Chicago this October, the bright yellowish star Arcturus will be setting in the western sky shortly after sunset each night. It's easier to spot in the summer, when it's higher in the sky. It's about 115 times brighter than our Sun, though only about four times as dense. And although it's a part of the constellation Bootes (the Herdsman), I usually find it by extending an imaginary arc off the curved end of the Big Dipper's handle:



It's easy to remember: "follow the arc to Arcturus." The name "Arcturus" comes from the Greek words for "bear watcher," reinforcing the star's relationship to the Big Dipper, which itself is really part of the constellation Ursa Major—the Great Bear. But you may not know that Arcturus also has a very special connection to the City of Chicago, so this is a fitting story to tell in this newsletter.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Chicago hosted two world's fairs: the 1893 "World's Columbian Exposition," and the 1933 "Century of Progress." The 1893 Fair—Chicago's first of that size and scope—celebrated both the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the New World, and Chicago's considerably more recent resurrection from the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which destroyed much of the central portion of the city. The 1893 Fair was a showcase for architecture and urban planning, featuring grand buildings and parks designed by Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted, among others. It was a huge success, drawing over 700,000 visitors.

Only 40 years later, eager to build on the success of the Columbian Exposition, Chicago made plans to stage a second world's fair, both to show off the city and, this time, to celebrate advances in science and technology over the previous century. The Century of Progress organizers sought symbolic ways to link the two fairs together. One idea came from Edwin Frost, who at the time was the retired director of the famous Yerkes Observatory in Williams Bay, Wisconsin. The Yerkes Observatory, which was affiliated with the University of Chicago, was home to what was then and still is the world's largest refracting telescope, with a lens measuring 40 inches in diameter mounted in a 63-foot long tube. (Refractors are prized for their pinpoint razor-sharp images, due to the fact that they use lenses, not mirrors; their principal limitation is the size and cost of their lenses.)

Frost's idea was simple and brilliant. Astronomers measure great distances in terms of light years, i.e. the distance that a beam of light travels in one year—roughly 5.88 trillion miles. Why not find a star that was approximately 40 light years from Earth, and use it somehow to link the two fairs together? In the 1930s, Arcturus was believed to be 40 light years from Earth (it's actually "only" 37). So the light that left Arcturus when the Columbian Exposition opened in 1893 would just about be arriving at Earth when the 1933 fair opened.

ONE STAR LINKING TWO WORLD'S FAIRS: ARCTURUS AND THE CHICAGO CONNECTION

By: The Honorable Bruce A. Harwood - New Hampshire Bankruptcy

Continued From Page 6

But how to use that starlight? The answer lay in another technological innovation of the era: the photovoltaic cell, which when exposed to light generates an electric current. Frost proposed to aim the Yerkes refractor at Arcturus, and use its light to activate a photovoltaic cell that, in turn, would switch on the exterior lighting at the fair's opening ceremonies. His idea was accepted. To account for the possibility of overcast skies, three other observatories (Harvard College Observatory, the University of Illinois Observatory at Urbana, and Allegheny Observatory in Pittsburgh) were enlisted as co-participants. Each observatory was equipped with photovoltaic cells at the end of powerful telescopes, and the ability to transmit the resulting electric current over Western Union telegraph lines to the Chicago fairgrounds.

And so, on May 27, 1933, at 9:15 p.m., it came to pass. The four observatories pointed their telescopes at Arcturus, unmasked the photovoltaic cells upon which the telescopes' light was focused, and sent their current to the Fair's opening ceremonies, tripping a switch that illuminated the exterior lighting on many of the buildings, as well as a brilliant searchlight on top of the Hall of Science that swept across the night sky.

I grew up in Chicago, but never knew the iconography of the official flag of the City of Chicago until I started researching this story. The flag is a fitting commemoration of the importance of both World's Fairs. It consists of four red six-pointed stars on a white background, between blue horizontal bars:



The three white stripes represent the North, South and West sides of the city (top to bottom; since the city developed along the western shore of Lake Michigan, it doesn't really have an "East side"). The two blue stripes represent Chicago's most prominent bodies of water: Lake Michigan (which would otherwise be the East side), and the Chicago River (including the Great Canal). The first star represents Fort Dearborn, the city's original settlement. The second star represents the Chicago Fire. And yes, the third and fourth stars represent the 1893 and 1933 World's Fairs, in that order.

But the real star of the show, if not the flag, is Arcturus. See if you can "follow the arc to Arcturus" some night. You'll never look at that star the same way again.

NCBC and MSU: Partnership Going Strong!

by Maureen E. Conner

The 2014 NCBC Conference was the site of the *Decade of Partnership* celebration acknowledging the promise and reality of what a professional association and a university can do together to bring educational opportunities to professionals seeking to advance their education and careers.

The celebration began at the first conference plenary with President Lee Ann Bennett praising the partnership and the leaders from MSU and NCBC for continually offering the MSU Judicial Administration Certificate Program to NCBC members. Each past president from the inception of the partnership was named and applauded for their leadership in building and sustaining the NCBC/MSU partnership - receiving special acclaim was Barry Lander who has been the NCBC liaison to MSU since the partnership began in 2003. Students were recognized for their education achievement and encouraged to continue with their commitment to their profession and to the purpose of bankruptcy courts - economic justice. The reception closed by recognizing the 2014 graduates: Lynn Baldwin Bergmeyer (OHNB), Megan Moore (CASB), Cheryl Rapp (AKB), and Susan Thurston (RIB).

The commitment of NCBC and MSU to the advancement of bankruptcy court professionals remains strong and enduring. With the 2014 conference, NCBC and MSU began the third, five-year sequence of Judicial Administration Certificate courses approved by the NCBC Board. If you missed the 2014 conference but want to begin taking courses toward completing the certificate, the [online course schedule](#) is a flexible alternative. The courses are available for self-study or through facilitated on-line learning taught by Jeffrey Allsteadt. We look forward to seeing you again at next year's NCBC Conference in Atlanta!

For more information about joining the [MSU Judicial Administration Program](#), please contact: Cathy White, Barry Lander, or any MSU graduate.

Tools to help plan for retirement

Order your *free* federal benefits report

NCBC members can still take advantage of a *free* federal benefits report.

This report shows:

The amount of income you can expect to receive from FERS, Social Security and TSP when you retire.

The expense associated with FEGLI, FEHB, and Survivor Benefits now and into retirement.

The ability to create "what if" scenarios with your retirement

Shows the impact of COLA on retirement

The report is ideal for both short and long range planning, so all working NCBC members can benefit regardless of age or years of service to use

To request your questionnaire please contact James De La Torre at: jdelatorre@fedadvantge.com

How Much Cash Is Too Much?

By James De La Torre, CRPC

As you close in on retirement it's crucial to minimize the risk of big losses in your investment portfolio. Given how expensive traditional safe haven investments, such as blue chip stocks and high-quality bonds have become, that can be tricky to do today. So for many pre-retirees, their go to solution is more cash.

While you do need a cash reserve in retirement, you can, in the name of safety, go overboard. So, how much cash is enough? Many savers seem to believe that today's high market valuations call for a huge stash of cash. According to a recent study by State Street – the average investor has 36% in cash, up from 26% in 2012 and the percentage is even higher for boomers (41%), who are approaching retirement – or, are already there.

That may be too much cash. Granted, as you start to withdrawal money from your TSP or other retirement savings, having cash on hand is essential. But if you are counting on your portfolio to support you over two or more decades in retirement, it will need to grow. Stashing nearly half in a zero – returning investment won't get you to your goals.

To strike the right balance between safety and growth, focus on your actual retirement needs, not market conditions. Here's how:

Safeguard your income. You have a pension with FERS along with Social Security, and if it covers your essential household expenses, you probably don't need a large cash reserve. What you need to protect is the money you're counting on from TSP and other retirement savings accounts for income. Therefore, calculate your annual withdrawals from these savings and investment accounts with the idea of keeping two to three years' worth split between cash (G Fund) and short-term bonds (F Fund), that lets you ride out the market downturns without having to sell stocks (C,S, & I Funds), giving your investments time to recover.

This strategy is especially crucial early-on in your retirement. As a study by T. Rowe Price found, those who retired between 2000 and 2010 – a decade that saw two major declines (bear markets) in the markets – would have had to reduce their withdrawals by 25% for three years after each drop to maintain their odds of retirement success.

Budget for unknowns. You may be able to anticipate some extra costs, such as replacing an aging car. Other bills may be totally unexpected – say your adult child moves back in. Many people tend to forget to plan for and build in a reserve for unplanned costs.

In addition to a two-to three year spending account, you will need to build and keep an emergency or rainy-day fund with three to six months cash reserves.

Shift Gradually. For pre-retirees, the question is not just how much in cash; but how to get there. Don't suddenly sell stocks in year one of retirement. Instead, five to 10 years out, invest new savings in cash and other fixed-income assets to build your reserves. Then keep a healthy allocation in stocks – that's your best shot at earning the returns you'll need, and you can replenish your cash account from those gains.

James De La Torre has conducted federal benefit and financial planning seminars across the country. He is a key note speaker at federal conferences and works with federal professional organizations on ways to improve the communication of federal benefits to their membership. Jim has appeared as a guest on "Fed Talk" on the Federal News Radio network, discussing the gaps in federal benefits and the financial impacts employees face. Jim holds a Charter Retirement Planning Counselor's (CRPC) designation from the College of Financial Planning and is a member of the Financial Planning Association. Please direct questions or comments directly to James at: jdeltorre@fedadvantage.com

Spotlight on Court Developed Programs

By: Erwin Ruiz - Florida Southern Bankruptcy

Notice of Deposit of (Unclaimed) Funds Process

In 2012, the Florida Southern Bankruptcy Court embarked on a project to automate the process by which case trustees submit the Notice of Deposit of (Unclaimed) Funds (including Small Dividends) to the Clerk's office.

The goals of this project included these four objectives:

- 1) Eliminate the work involved in having trustees submit the Notice of Deposit of (Unclaimed) Funds to the Clerk's office over the counter, and eliminate making deposits using check(s)
- 2) Reduce the workload of the Clerk's office staff, who up until now had to ring up these checks at the front counter using the court's cash register PC's, followed by scanning the paper notices into PDF files, then docketing these notices in CM/ECF.
- 3) Reduce the workload of the court's financial administrators, who up until now had to manually enter each morning into JFinSys the following information relating to these deposits: the claimant's name, the claimant's address, and the dollar amount deposited for the claimant.
- 4) Limit as much as possible the number of modifications that would have to be made to the AO's CM/ECF program files, and to the CM/ECF Informix database tables.

This project resulted in the development a new CM/ECF event: **Notice of Deposit of Funds with USBC Clerk**, to allow trustees to enter unclaimed funds information directly into CM/ECF, and submit these deposits to the court using the Bank Account Debit (or ACH) feature of Pay.gov. Custom software developed by the court's IT staff collects the claimant data which is entered through this event, converts it into a format which is compatible with the court's JFinSys software, and submits this data for loading into JFinSys.

Florida Southern Bankruptcy Court went live with the unclaimed funds event in March 2014. Since then, the trustees have filed approximately 660 Notices of Deposit of Funds. This process has resulted in considerable time savings when processing these Notice of Deposit of Funds transactions. If you would like more information, you can download all of the software and documentation, along with a Captivate video describing how the process works, from the following court Intranet web page: <http://flsbnet.flsb.circ11.dcn/cmecf/unclaimed-funds>.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

I can't believe it has already been three years since I was selected to serve as editor of the newsletter. It has been an honor to serve in this capacity. Jan Zari has been selected to serve as the new editor. Jan has some exciting plans to take the newsletter to new heights. We can look forward to a new look for the newsletter next year.

Getting this issue out has proved to be a challenge. Since I have retired, I had to dust off my personal laptop which turned out to have some major issues. Please show your IT staff your appreciation. You will miss them when you retire!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the NCBC board and everyone who has served on the IMPACT Editorial Committee over the past three years for their support and dedication to making the newsletter a professional publication our membership can be proud of

This is the final edition of IMPACT for 2014. I hope each of you have a wonderful holiday season!

Laura Whitehead, Editor

2014 editorial committee members: Dailin Pena (FLSB); Heather Aslett (UTB); John Kohler (CACB); Leslie Murin (DEB) and Pat Borokhovich (OHNB).

