

First Judicial District 1999 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1999

Significant Events

Juvenile Celebrates

On October 7, judges and staff celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the American Juvenile Court. A breakfast for the entire staff was followed by the 1999 Family Court Employee Awards Ceremony. Awards were presented to dozens of Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court employees for outstanding performance, years of service, and perfect attendance. Later, many Court staff and others enjoyed programs about the history of the Philadelphia Family Court with presentations by the last five Administrative Judges of the Family Division. A children's choir provided entertainment following the historical presentations. Awards were then presented to a number of juveniles for their accomplishments. To top off the gala, a reception was held in the Courthouse foyer.



Above: Award winner Carla Villone (left) with co-workers Gina Cole and Donna Checchio.



Left: The Northwest Probation District held open house for visitors to the Centennial Celebration.



Municipal Court 1999 Employee of the Year Carole Copes

Municipal Court hosted an awards luncheon recognizing outstanding employees at the Doubletree Hotel on May 19. Certificate of Service Awards went to **Gail Arno** and **Willie L. Blue** for their service of 25 years, and to **Eric Klein** and Eleanor V. Scipione for having achieved 20 years of service.

The Supportive Service Award, usually presented to an FJD employee from another Court or Division of the District, went to **Carl L. Divens**, Senior Staff Advisor from the Office of the Court Administrator, for his valuable contributions to the implementation of an automated civil case management system in Municipal Court. Former MC President Judge **Joseph R. Glancy** was presented with the Kevin R. Murray Spirit Award, identifying him as an individual who exemplifies the energy and commitment of the late MC Court administrator. The highlight of the event was the acceptance of the Employee of the Year Award by **Carole D. Copes**, who earnestly expressed her appreciation for the award.

Employee Awards

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Elizabeth Jackson, Esquire, Chief of Custody and Support Masters for Family Court, was named President of the Barristers' Association of Philadelphia Incorporated — the local affiliate of the National Bar Association.

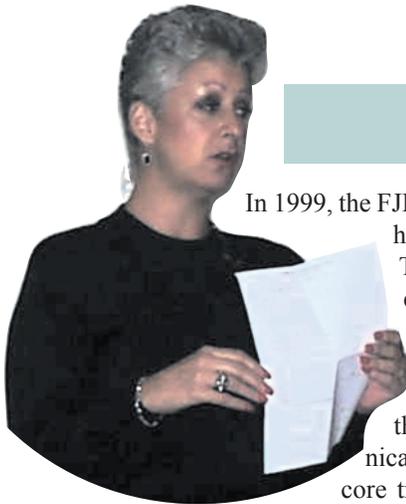
Appointments & Honors



Juvenile Probation Supervisor **Gerald Schress** was selected as the 1999 Juvenile Probation Supervisor of the Year by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.



The Citizens' Crime Commission of the Delaware Valley announced the appointment of **Judge Georganne V. Daher** as Trustee, in recognition of her record of excellence in the area of criminal justice.



Core trainer Kathleen Fitzpatrick

Training

In 1999, the FJD instituted a comprehensive "Train the Trainers" program for continuous quality in-house and new-hire training, data system upgrades, and the formation of technical help desks. Four core trainers from the MIS staff led a four-month course in WordPerfect, Lotus, Windows98, and

Beyond Mail for fifteen computer-savvy employees, enabling them to provide technical support and mentorship to their peers, and to redefine and set high standards necessary for quality-oriented service.

The Courterly

Points of Interest

- Dedicated employees reach milestones 2, 4
- DR employee named Barristers' President 2
- MC 1998 Employee of the Year 2
- Judge Levin and Clerks are front-runners — literally 3
- Lend a hand, FJD ... 3
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- The impressive FJD Law Library is reopened 5
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Technology at Your Door - Train the Trainers

The Train the Trainer (TTT) program identifies as trainers employees assigned to each of the FJD Court sites. Courses include multi-level WordPerfect, Lotus and Windows training. The undertaking capitalizes on trainers' skills, local system and program knowledge, employee familiarity, and dedication. This helps the Court, the employees, and the interests of justice. All told, over 1,000 FJD employees have already benefitted from in-house training programs.

Municipal Court Honors Employees

Municipal Court hosted an awards luncheon recognizing outstanding employees at the Doubletree Hotel on May 19. Presiding over the afternoon's events was Municipal Court President Judge Louis C. Presenza. Also featured were remarks by Administrative Judge Robert S. Hiazzi, and a moving invocation by Judge Ronald Merriweather. Together with the President Judge, they noted that Municipal Court embodies the spirit of a family whose members keep one another's interests at heart while working together as a team to achieve common goals. Indeed, that sense of loyalty and dedication were evident throughout the day. Following the opening remarks, attention turned to the afternoon's main focus: recognizing the dedication and hard work of the First Judicial District's Municipal Court employees. Before naming the Municipal Court Employee of the Year, other honorees received special awards and acknowledgment. Certificate of Service Awards went to Gail Aron and Willie L. Blue for their service of 25 years, and to Eric Klein and Eleanor V. Neplewice for having achieved 20 years of service. The Supportive Service Award, usually presented to an FJD employee from another Court or Division of the District,

MC Employee of the Year Nominees: James F. Malke, Esq., Arnel Coleman, Charlotte Agrino, Carole Cooper, Claire Holloway, and Joseph A. McDermott, Jr.

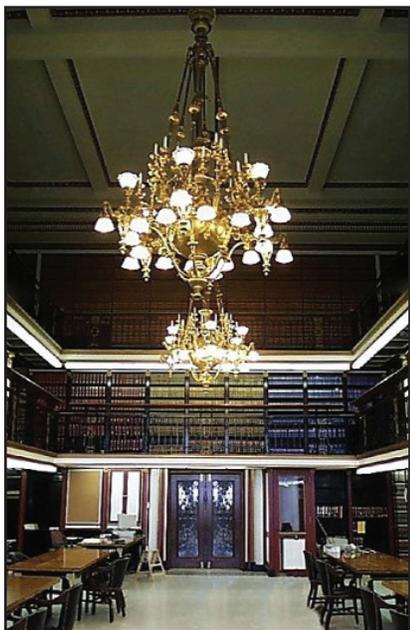
For its second anniversary, the FJD newsletter *The Courterly*, got a new look as a result of redesign, formatting improvements, and the introduction of color photographs and graphics.

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Under the direction of Manager **John A. Guerrero**, the FJD Space and Facilities Unit undertook several major City Hall renovation projects, including the Judgement Index Unit, (Room 262, pictured below right) and the Law Library (Room 600 below left). Original turn-of-the-century ceramic tiled walls, terrazzo and glass flooring, spiral staircases, chandeliers, and furniture were painstakingly restored to their former brilliance. The renovation work served to create professional modern work areas, including state-of-the-art computers, while preserving the craftsmanship and history of the past.

Renovations



Helping Hands

Charitable causes benefitted from the help of FJD employees who gave their time and effort. Along with **Kelly Harvey** from CJC Coding (photo, top right) 29 volunteer coaches met with students from the Thomas Durham Elementary School for weekly reading sessions as part of the Philadelphia Reads program. Judge **Stephen E. Levin** and several law clerks participated in the 20th Philadelphia Bar Association 10K and 2-Mile Charity Run (bottom right). Civil Administration's **Debbie Dailey** (right) joined other employees in collecting donated toys for the "Toys for Tots" program.



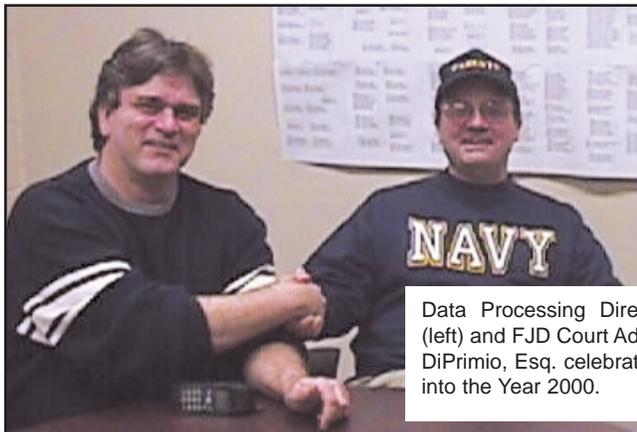
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Notes

Domestic Relations staff completed the transition to a new state-mandated automated data system — PACSES. Employees put in hours of extra work to accomplish the necessary extensive computer programming, data clean-up and verification and training while maintaining operations and a high level of customer service.

Honorable **Louis J. Presenza** was sworn in as President Judge of the Municipal Court in January 1999. Judge Presenza served on the Municipal Court bench since 1982 and presided over the criminal division as supervising Judge since 1996. He implemented Pennsylvania's first Drug Treatment Court in 1997.

The FJD became the country's first court system to go on-line with internet access to details of lawsuits contained in civil dockets. The on-line database contains over 17 million docket entries representing more than 1.7 million Philadelphia civil cases. For attorneys and litigants access to docket information is quick and easy.



Data Processing Director George Hutton (left) and FJD Court Administrator Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq. celebrate a smooth entrance into the Year 2000.



FJD team members, including Roy Caraan, remained cheerful despite long hours put in trying to track the Y2K bug.

The FJD Y2K compliance effort, begun in 1996 shortly after the appointment of **Joseph J. DiPrimio, Esq.**, as FJD Court Administrator, culminated over the New Year's weekend by welcoming in Year 2000 on a high note. The seamless transition into 2000 was the result of years of work on the part of Court leaders and employees from literally every constituent FJD Court, Division, and subdivision. Over the course of the last several years, many meetings, consultations with expert employee users, IS vendors, allied branches of government and outside connected agencies bred a reliable product that came through by killing the Y2K bug. The teamed approach

Y2K

led to a comprehensive plan backed up with well-orchestrated performances by hundreds of individuals. FJD administrative and technology leaders, on a high state of alert as 1999 drew to a close, were networked by home phones, cell phones, offices, pagers, and by being there and being prepared were the need to arise. Employees worked unselfishly over the New Year's holiday weekend to ensure the success of the enterprise.