



THE DOCKET



Winter Issue
2024

ASSOCIATION OF CLERKS OF THE DISTRICT COURTS OF VIRGINIA

Please Join us for the 2024 Annual Spring Conference and Business Meeting!

Resilience, Renewal, and Community

Two Day Conference - April 22 - 23 2024



Step One: * NEW PROCESS on the JLC* ENROLL in Conference to initiate registration on the [Judicial Learning Center \(JLC\)](#). Note: enrollment does not guarantee your registration, payment is required to be registered for the conference. [Full Conference Registration](#) OR [Partial Conference Registration \(One day only\)](#)



Step Two: PAYMENT - Open JLC Enrollment Confirmation e-mail and click on link [CONFERENCE REGISTRATION – Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia \(vadistrictclerks.com\)](#) for payment to complete registration for Conference. Remember to select the appropriate payment option if attending one or both conference days. (\$75 per day).



Step Three: BOOK HOTEL ROOM using the booking link (provided in the registration confirmation e-mail and association website).

See pages 2-6 for full conference details!

See you at the conference!

Clerks Association Leadership

Officers

President	Laura Hatch
President-Elect	Kelly Wiggins
Past President	Kimberly McKittrick
Vice President	Lauren Jones
Secretary/Treas.	Amy Burnham

Regional Representatives

Region 1	Pamela Pringle
Region 2	Jill Hall
Region 3	Laura Kosinski
Region 4	Julie Dobson
Region 5	Linda Moore
Region 6	Shanna Henry
Region 7	Darcie Dunn
Region 8	Ginger Webb
Region 9	Nikki King
Region 10	J. Karen Allison

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~A Poem of Thanks~	

- *Congratulations to the very talented Jessica Stackhouse, Deputy Clerk from Fairfax City GDC for publishing her first book! She also assisted with skillfully putting together this issue of The Docket. Congratulations Jess! See pages 10,11. for details.*
- *News from around the state is outstanding and inspiring in this issue. Thank you for all of your submissions and for sharing all of the wonderful ways you celebrate working together! Check out pages 8-23.*
- *Employee Appreciation. ~ A Poem of Thanks ~ From the Honorable Judges of the 19th Judicial District to the courthouse staff in Fairfax. See pages 24,25*

Inside this Issue

Judicial Learning Center

Sign up for the Association Spring Conference and check out other great topics/courses in the course catalogue.

jlc.vacourts.gov

- Get control of e-mail and outlook
- Human Resources
- Professional Development

SAVE THE DATE

NEXT ASSOCIATION VIRTUAL MEETING

DATE: 3/1/2024 TIME: 1:30

NEW PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT!

DUAL MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT

To assist court managers with their professional development and provide added value to current and future members of the Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia (ACDCV) and the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management (MAACM), each association has agreed to the membership discounts outlined below. Members joining or renewing with both associations will receive a dues discount. Individuals who are members of ACDCV qualify for a discounted MAACM membership rate. Visit [Home - Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management \(maacm.org\)](#) and [Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia \(vadistrictclerks.com\)](#) for more details.



	<u>Without Discount:</u>	<u>Discounted:</u>
MAACM Regular Membership:	\$ 40.00	\$ 35.00
ACDCV Regular Membership:	\$ 25.00	\$ 20.00
Total Membership Dues:	\$ 65.00	\$ 55.00



Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia
2024 Spring Conference Announcement
 Monday April 22 and Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Attend both days
and earn 9 CLE's!

*Open to all grades,
titles and positions
in the court. 4 CLE's
for attending Tues only

2024 Conference and Business Meeting

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

8:00 a.m – 4:00 p.m.

Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump



HILTON RICHMOND HOTEL & SPA/SHORT PUMP
 12042 West Broad Street | Richmond VA 23233 | USA
Hiltonrichmond.com

Distance From:	Miles (approx.)
Charlottesville	56
Richmond	15
Washington, DC	109
Williamsburg	65
Virginia Beach	119

Check-In: 3:00 p.m.

Check-Out: 12:00 p.m.

Smoking: Hotel is 100% Non-Smoking

Parking: Self parking - \$10.00/night (Fee Waived for our event per hotel contract.)

Pets: Service animals only

12042 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23233

Just off the Interstate 64, our hotel sits 15 miles west of downtown Richmond. We're a 10-minute walk to the shops of Short Pump Town Center, and within a 20-minute drive of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Enjoy our indoor pool, outdoor patio and on-site spa that offers massages, skin treatments, manicures and pedicures.

Cost \$75 Per day (2-day conference)

Breakfast and Lunch are included in the price.

Conference Registration Deadline March 25, 2024

*There will be no restriction as to title, grade, or position within the courts for attendance to this portion. Clerks are encouraged to register Deputy Clerks and Supervisors who participate in the hiring process in your court, as well as those Deputy Clerks for whom you desire to provide supervisory training as part of their career development.

Meals: There will be a continental breakfast provided on Tuesday. A buffet lunch is included in the registration fee however, if you plan to do lunch on your own, there are no discounts.

The Association of Clerks Recognition Program is Tuesday April 23 during Lunch– Noon to 1:30.

Step 1 Conference Registration Enrollment: *NEW* Register on the Judicial Learning Center (JLC). This will ensure you receive CLE's! Click on enroll to get started!

[Full Conference Registration](#) OR

[Partial Conference Registration \(One day only\)](#)

Step 2 Conference Registration Payment: Payments can be made through the website [CONFERENCE REGISTRATION – Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia \(vadistrictclerks.com\)](#) using a credit card OR [To pay traditionally by check click on this link for the registration form.](#) Checks need to be mailed to: " Association of Clerks c/o Amy Burnham, Treasurer P.O. Box 56405 Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-9405

Step 3 Hotel Reservations: Deadline to reserve a room is **March 21, 2024** *New Location* [12042 West Broad Street Richmond, Virginia 23233 USA](#) (If overnight stay is needed and local funds available/authorized in your court budget or planning to self pay).

Hotel reservations may be made online: [Booking Link - Association of Clerks of the District Courts of VA Spring Conference](#) The Association has a block of rooms at the special rate of \$145 per night, plus taxes and fees. The deadline for hotel room reservations at the conference rate is March 21, 2024. Register early so you don't miss out on our block of rooms! After March 21, rooms may still be available but not at the conference rate.



**Association of Clerks of the District
Courts of Virginia
2024 Spring Conference Program Agenda**

**Resilience, Renewal,
and Community
April 22-23 2024**

Tuesday, April 23, 2024 DAY 2

08:00 AM - 09:00 AM	Registration/Breakfast/Vendor Visits
09:00 AM - 09:30 AM	Welcome - Karl Hade and Laura Hatch (Ballroom) Executive Secretary and Association President (<i>respectively</i>) Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) Supreme Court of Virginia Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia
09:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Breakouts
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Wellness/Mental Health in the Courts- Hetal Challa, Wellness Coordinator Department of Educational Services, OES (Ballroom) HR Doctor is in (by appointment only, scheduled in advance) HR Team members - Department of Human Resources, OES
10:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Break/Vendor Visits
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Onboarding 101 - Laura Griffin (Ballroom) Chief Deputy Clerk of Court, United States District Court, <i>Eastern District of Virginia</i> Onboarding is not a one-time event. Onboarding begins with the vacancy announcement and is a continual process until your “new hire” is fully trained. Successful onboarding focuses not only on first impressions, but “courts” employees through the first year of employment. Good leaders know that successful onboarding maximizes retention which ultimately reduces the stress of the “revolving door.” This session will discuss what good onboarding looks like, the importance of building it into your court culture, and how to avoid some common pitfalls.
	Breakout (By Appointment Only)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> HR Doctor is in (scheduled in advance) HR Team members - Department of Human Resources, OES
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Lunch/Annual Meeting/Clerk Awards Recognition Program /Vendor Visits
01:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Power BI & CPAC-Court Performance Advisory Committee - Norma Gates, OES Court Performance and Statistical Services Division (Ballroom)
	Breakout (By Appointment Only)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> HR Doctor is in (scheduled in advance) HR Team members - Department of Human Resources, OES
02:30 PM - 02:45 PM	Break
02:45 PM - 03:45 PM	Motivational Speaker - Lt. Deuntay Diggs, Stafford Sheriff’s Office (Ballroom) Deuntay Diggs is known by the world as the “Dancing Deputy.” He has had two dance videos to Beyonce’s Formation go viral; reaching an estimated 90 million people and counting. He has made numerous appearances on TV, on shows such as America’s Got Talent, Good Morning America, and the T.D. Jakes Show. He has also had articles written about him appearing in multiple publications such as Time Magazine, Buzz Feed, Inside Edition, Outclique 9/17 edition, and Business Insider. Deuntay is a dynamic motivational speaker who presents a fresh dialogue on issues of race, sexuality, and diversity within our communities. He provides insight and shares his own personal and unique cultural experiences as a roadmap on how to achieve change and acceptance. He transcended from poverty, and has earned a master's degree from Liberty University and a bachelor's degree from the Virginia Military Institute. In addition to being a motivational speaker, Deuntay is now a lieutenant with the Stafford County Sheriff’s Office.
03:45 PM - 04:00 PM	Raffle baskets/End Agenda is subject to change



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in the court. 5 CLE's
for attending Mon only

Additional Training Opportunity

Monday, April 22, 2024

9:00 a.m – 4:30 p.m.

Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump



April 22-23, 2024



HILTON RICHMOND HOTEL & SPA/SHORT PUMP
 12042 West Broad Street | Richmond VA 23233 | USA
 Hiltonrichmond.com

Distance From:	Miles (approx.)
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Smoking: Hotel is 100% Non-Smoking

Parking: Self parking - \$10.00/night (**Fee Waived for our event per hotel contract.**)

Pets: Service animals only

12042 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23233

Just off the Interstate 64, our hotel sits 15 miles west of downtown Richmond. We're a 10-minute walk to the shops of Short Pump Town Center, and within a 20-minute drive of the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Enjoy our indoor pool, outdoor patio and on-site spa that offers massages, skin treatments, manicures and pedicures.

Cost \$75 Per day (2-day conference)

Lunch is included in the price.

Conference Registration Deadline March 25, 2024

The Association of Clerks for the District Courts of Virginia will be hosting an additional full day of training on April 22, 2024. This a completely separate opportunity from the Annual Conference and agenda sessions. Due to the cost of speakers and the additional space requirements to hold this session, there will be an additional \$75 registration fee. This training will earn 5 CLE credits. The registration fee can be paid by your locality using local budgeted training funds, or by tuition reimbursement from OES. Those requesting tuition reimbursement should follow the guidelines in the E-Education Tuition Reimbursement Request (e-Form) using the following link:

<https://educ.apps.courts.state.va.us/edrequest/loginn.jsp>

Training provided by: Henrico Mental Health & Developmental Services (AM session), OES HR and DJS Team (PM session)

Training Description:

(AM) 5 Bridges to Wellness- A holistic and systematic approach to your wellness. This workshop provides a set of ideas, tools, and activities designed to help you make sense of your overall health and learn how to thrive through the process. The framework will help you start developing your wellness plan.

(PM) Human Resources Management Tools for Clerks/Supervisors*, Customer Service for Deputy Clerks and a Teambuilding workshop facilitated by the Clerks Association.

*There will be no restriction as to title, grade, or position within the courts for attendance to this portion. Clerks are encouraged to register Deputy Clerks and Supervisors who participate in the hiring process in your court, as well as those Deputy Clerks for whom you desire to provide supervisory training as part of their career development.

Meals: A buffet lunch is included in the registration fee however, if you plan to do lunch on your own, there are no discounts.

Don't forget to contribute to the region baskets! Contact your Association region rep for details! (See page 26 for region contacts)





**Association of Clerks of the District
Courts of Virginia
2024 Spring Conference Program Agenda**

**Resilience, Renewal,
and Community
April 22-23 2024**

Monday, April 22, 2024 – DAY 1

09:00 AM -10:00 AM	Registration/Vendor Visits <i>Agenda is subject to change</i>
10:00 AM -12:00 PM	5 Bridges to Wellness- Henrico Mental Health & Developmental Services (Ballroom) A holistic and systematic approach to your wellness. This workshop provides a set of ideas, tools, and activities designed to help you make sense of your overall health and learn how to thrive through the process. The framework will help you start developing your wellness plan.
	<i>Breakout (By Appointment Only)</i>
	1. HR Doctor is in (by appointment only, scheduled in advance)- HR Team members - Department of Human Resources, OES
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	Lunch/Vendor Visits
01:00 PM - 2:15 PM	Breakouts
	1. Human Resources Management Tools for Clerks/Supervisors (Ballroom) HR Team, Department of Human Resources, OES 2. Customer Service for Deputy Clerks Sherri Lester, Court Management Analyst, OES
02:15 PM - 02:30 PM	Break/Vendor Visits
02:30 PM - 02:45 PM	Intro to the afternoon Teambuilding Workshop (Ballroom) Attendees will be working together with other courts to discuss topics related to employee morale and engagement. This workshop offers a unique opportunity to network with colleagues from across the state.
02:45 PM - 04:00 PM	Breakouts
	1. Teambuilding, Employee Morale and Engagement Workshop (Ballroom) Clerks Association Facilitators 2. HR Doctor is in (by appointment only, scheduled in advance) HR Team members - Department of Human Resources, OES
04:00 PM - 04:30 PM	Workshop Report out/End (Ballroom) Clerks Association Facilitators
04:00 PM–5:30 PM	Registration/Vendor Visits Upon registration, you will receive your conference lanyard and (1) drink ticket for the 5-7 PM Monday night Networking Social Event (See details below).
05:00 PM -07:00 PM	Networking Social Event/Vendor Reception (Hotel Restaurant) Light refreshments and drinks will be served.



DON'T MISS THIS NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY! Mon April 22, 2024
5:00 - 7:00 PM Catch up, make new contacts and possibly new friends at our **Networking Social and Vendor Reception**. Light refreshments will be served. **Must show conference lanyard (received at registration table) for entry.** Each attendee can use their (1) free drink ticket for beer or wine— this event only. A full cash bar is also available.

FAQ'S ASSOCIATION OF DISTRICT COURT CLERKS CONFERENCE 2024

- 1** **3 Step process to register for the conference and book your hotel room:**
Step One:* NEW PROCESS on the JLC* **ENROLL** in Conference to Initiate registration on the Judicial Learning Center (JLC). Note: enrollment does not guarantee your registration, payment is required to be registered for the conference.
- 2** **Step Two: PAYMENT** - Open JLC Enrollment Confirmation e-mail and click on link (to the Clerks Association website conference registration page) for payment to complete registration for Conference. Remember to select the appropriate payment option if attending one or both conference days. (\$75 per day).
- 3** **Step Three: BOOK HOTEL ROOM** using the booking link (provided in the registration confirmation e-mail and association website).

What are the dates for the conference?

April 22nd and 23rd, 2024

Where is the conference held this year?

Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa/Short Pump,
12042 West Broad St., Richmond, VA 23233

Who can attend? *The Association's Conference is open to Clerks, Supervising Deputy Clerks and Deputy Clerks with permission from your supervisor.*

What is the cost? *The cost is \$75.00 per person, per day.*

Can I attend only one day of the conference? *You certainly can but we have some great speakers in store for you, so we recommend you attend both days.*

How do I pay? *If registering online you can pay by credit card, [CONFERENCE REGISTRATION – Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia \(vadistrictclerks.com\)](#)*

Checks, along with a completed registration form can be made payable and mailed to:

Virginia Clerks Association
C/O Amy Burnham, Treasurer
P.O. Box 56405
Virginia Beach, VA 23456-9405.

(To pay traditionally by check click on this [link for the registration form.](#))

Can I be reimbursed for this cost?

Yes! As long as the state has funds available, you may apply to use tuition reimbursement through eEducation, [Education Login \(state.va.us\)](#). Reimbursement in this manner covers the attendance fee and mileage only.

Local funds may be available to reimburse you for the costs associated with attendance, mileage, and lodging, provided the funds are available and approved through your locality.

In the past, clerks have also combined these two options (eEducation reimbursement for mileage and conference costs, hotel reimbursed by locality.)

Please reach out to a board member if you need assistance with this process.

Will I receive any CLE's for attending? *If you attend both days, you will receive 9 CLE credits. 4 CLE credits have been approved for Tuesday, April 23, 2024. An additional 5 CLE credits have been approved for those attending Monday, April 22, 2024.*

Because CLE credits are required annually for Grades 10 and above, the Committee on District Courts will grant conference leave for Clerks and Supervisors who attend and apply for credit. For all others, the type of leave required will depend on approval of local management. Note: All Grades 10 and above are required to earn 12.0 CLE credits per calendar year. You must complete the two part registration process to receive credit.

What is the last day to sign up? March 25, 2024

If you sign up and are unable to attend, can you receive a refund? The Association can only refund registration fees for extreme circumstances. The cutoff date to apply for a refund is March 15, 2024. To request a refund, you must email your request with reasons to aburnham@vacourts.gov. If a request is made after March 15, 2024, then a majority of the elected officers must approve the refund. Hotel Reservations are your responsibility and will need to follow the hotels cancellation policy.

Are meals provided? *Lunch will be provided on Monday and breakfast and lunch will be provided on Tuesday.*

How do I book the hotel and what is the cost?

The Association has a block of rooms at the special rate of \$145 per night, plus taxes and fees. The deadline for hotel room reservations at the conference rate is March 21, 2024. Register early so you don't miss out on our block of rooms! After March 21, rooms may still be available but not at the conference rate.

You can book your room here: [Booking Link - Association of Clerks of the District Courts of VA Spring Conference](#)



Association of Clerks of the District Courts of Virginia

Spotlight on President Laura Hatch

How long have you been Clerk in Fredericksburg GDC, and what is your favorite part of being a court administrator?

I have been in my current role as a clerk for 6 years and with the Judicial system for 21 years.

My favorite part of being a court administrator is the variety of work and challenge of solving unique issues each day. My team is very talented, and I feel fortunate to have such a great group of folks to work with each day (inside and outside of my office walls). We have an impressive group of employees across the state of Virginia, and I am so grateful for them all.

What have your largest accomplishments been since joining the Judicial branch?

In 2018, I graduated from the National Center for State Courts Institute for Court Management Fellows Program. (I highly recommend the program please feel free to reach out if you are unsure about it. Hard work but so worth it). The Clerk's Association honored me with a plaque for Outstanding Leadership in 2019. My wonderful staff all contributed, and my chief deputy compiled it all into one letter for the nomination. I was overwhelmed and touched by my staff and by the Association for the award. Most recently, Julie, the clerk of Fredericksburg JDR, and I obtained a salary supplement for our most deserving staff effective July 1, 2023. We were both elated to be able to give a small token to those who work so hard with/for us.

What has been the most rewarding part of your service to the Clerks Association?

The comradery, idea sharing, learning from others, and the feeling of making a measurable difference. I always believe in giving your all and leaving things better than you found them. Exactly what I was looking for and needed from the Association.

Why would you urge a district court employee to serve in the Association?

The Association is a wonderful community where you can share ideas, seek solutions and work to improve your day-to-day lives. You will learn so much and make long meaningful connections with others across the state that you otherwise may not cross paths with. Interested in hearing more? Just ask. The Association's Executive Council and I are happy to share our experience and answer any questions you may have.

If you were a legislator for a day, what would you "fix" about the judicial system (court procedure/process or something else)?

I would focus on fair compensation that addresses the ongoing challenges of compression, cost of living increases, including performance-based raises that encourage and reward strong work ethics and performance for our hard-working Judiciary.

What would you like the Association's legacy to be?

I envision an association with a lively and empowered membership that knows together they have a voice and community to lean on for support. A solution focused platform that celebrates service, leadership, and giving back to others.



Welcome to the Family

Arlington JDR

Clerk **Ronikka Lartey** welcomes **Armoni Howard** to the team.

Culpeper GDC

Clerk **Cheryl Phillips** welcomes **Asthon Beard** to the team.

Giles GDC

Clerk **Yvette Pennington** welcomes **Santanna Rhodes** to the team.

Roanoke City JDR

Clerk **Michelle Esparagoza** welcomes **Chelsea Wall** to the team.

York County GDC

Clerk **Brooke Reed** welcomes the two newest members, **Shaneta Braxton** and **Courtney Brown**, to the team.

Welcome to All!

Years of Service

Arlington County JDR

Arlington County JDR would like recognize **Jennifer Castro**, **Lydia Miles**, and **Ashia Ramirez** for their one year of service.

Culpeper GDC

Culpeper GDC recognizes **Rebecca Squeglie** for 26 years of service as of November 2023.

Tazewell JDR

Tazewell JDR is celebrating **Lisa Hess**, Deputy Clerk and Backup Bookkeeper for 10 years of service, as well as Clerk of Court **Karen Allison** for 25 years with the courts!

Virginia Beach GDC

Clerk **Pamela J. Pringle** congratulates **Susan Heafner**, seen here with her plaque, for 35 years of service.

Waynesboro JDR

Waynesboro JDR would like to congratulate **Rachel Richards** on one year of service.

York County GDC

York has a lot of dedication to celebrate! Clerk **Brooke Reed** would like to congratulate **Septivia Wallace** for 25 years of service as of August 2023, **Jerylyne Phillips** for 10 years of service as of August also, and **Alani Wilson** for completing her first year of service.



Special Recognition

Culpeper GDC

Clerk Cheryl Phillips would like to applaud **Heather Smith-Brown** for stepping up and taking over the Civil Clerk role for the Culpeper GDC. Way to go!

Fairfax City GDC

Deputy Clerk **Jess Stackhouse** was presented with a special award from a local law firm "In Recognition and Appreciation of Extraordinary Service, Commitment and Dedication to the Citizens of the Fairfax Community."
(picture at left with the Honorable Judge Moliken)



Newport News GDC

Denise Kellum wanted to share that everyone is so happy to have **Danielle Trotman** as the new Clerk of Court for Newport News GDC. She is diligently working to reorganize the court and promote teamwork throughout the courthouse. Thank You Danielle!



New Virginians

Tazewell JDR

Karen Allison added a grandbaby girl to her family tree this year. Congratulations!

Warren County JDR

Jessica Smoot gave birth to a 5lb 6oz, happy healthy baby girl in October. Congratulations Mama!

Farewell and Thank You

Fairfax City GDC

Patricia Berry retired in December of 2023 after more than 30 years in the court system, serving Fairfax County JDR and Fairfax City GDC.

Roanoke City JDR

Faye Hurst will be retiring as of April 1, 2024. Faye has been a full-time Deputy Clerk for Roanoke City JDR for 20 years. Her Court family would like to thank Faye for her service and wish her a wonderful retirement.

York/Poquoson JDR

Melody Earman retired on January 31st, 2024 with 34 years of service in the courts, the last 15 of which was with the York/Poquoson JDR Division.

Congratulations and Thank You All!

Thank You for Your Service!



An Honorable Farewell

Botetourt and Craig County Courts

The Botetourt and Craig County Courts had a party for Judge Cleaveland's retirement. The honorable judge will be sorely missed by all. Local Attorney Kelly Boyer made a specialty cake for the occasion, the state police joined with court bailiffs to present him with plaques, and the clerks presented him with a compass clock that was personally engraved. There were many judges, lawyers, clerks and community members in attendance, and Donna Boothe shared these pictures of everyone having a wonderful time!





TORTOISE V. HARE

A Children's Book on Tort Law

A thoughtfully written and beautifully illustrated new children's book which introduces learners of all ages to the legal system through the charming civil case of Tortoise v. Hare.

FEATURING

- ✔ Over 60 Original Illustrations
- ✔ Dictionary with simplified definitions of legal terms.
- ✔ Independent Reading level Grades 6-8. Perfect for reading to younger children.



Meet the Characters at
www.stackslawlibrary.com



~ *Welcome to Snee County Courthouse* ~

When Thomas T. Tortoise goes for his weekly grocery trip, he slips on a sticky puddle of strawberry juice and lands in a stickier pile of medical bills. After reaching out to the shop owner, Henrietta Hare, to ask for assistance with his financial fate, Thomas realizes that he will have to head to the local courthouse to have their situation resolved. This brand-new book by Jessica Barnhart Stackhouse is one-of-a-kind in that it joins real legal scenarios and terminology with an engaging writing style and beautiful, watercolor-style illustrations that were imagined and designed by Mrs. Stackhouse as well.

Here is a Note from Deputy Clerk, Jess Stackhouse on the inspiration for Tortoise v. Hare:

“My daughter is 4 years old now, and we have a baby boy due in March of this year. I strive to keep my children’s library stocked with wonderful works of fact as well as fiction. We have books on the solar system, anatomy, deep sea creatures, and beyond. But in all of my searching, however, I could not find a quality book about the law, the judicial system, and what exactly *happens* inside a courtroom. I wanted something with a storyline that would entertain and engage without being afraid to use some of the actual lingo one might encounter in a real-life court of law. After searching around to no avail, I decided to make one myself.

I am passionate about the law and the judicial process. I am *most* passionate about how the law and judicial process effect the daily lives of the community. Our General District and JDR Courts are the busiest courthouses, but they are also the most accessible to the general public. We as clerks are the first point of contact for most people - and as I watch members of my community interact with our office, I realize that many people might not confidently understand what the court *is* and how it *works*. This is where I hope the Snee County Courthouse and trial of Tortoise v. Hare can help!”

Find It On
[Amazon](#)

Click Above or use the QR Code Below



Leave a Review?

~*Thank You*~

Amazon Reviews are the lifeblood of an independent author. The more reviews a book has, the more Amazon’s algorithm will offer it as a suggestion to shoppers!

Cecelia Cephalopod, Clerk of Court for Snee County Courthouse, appreciates any and all support the community chooses



Richmond City Courts



~ Public Service Week ~

Richmond City GDC hosted a painting event during their Public Service week last year. Clerk of Court Cecelia shared pictures of the event as well as the inspiration behind the event: “Painting helps to release anxiety, strengthen memory, improve overall mental health, and nurture creative growth. Working in the court, we must handle all levels of stress so during Public Service Week, the staff demonstrated their creative talents” by indulging in the artistic event.



~ Family Appreciation Day ~

We're Always Better Together

Cecelia also shared some pictures of some weekend activities the Richmond GDC enjoyed throughout last year. As Cecelia wrote in: “For the second year Richmond GDC and JDR celebrated staff and family appreciation day. United for this event, we played kickball, tug of war, dances, laughed, sang, talked, and ate more than anyone cares to admit.”



Richmond City Courts (continued)

~ Making Strides Against Cancer Walk ~

As summer turned to fall, the GDC also participated in the “Making Strides Against Cancer Walk” for the second year in a row. The walk truly is personal for our court. “Our walk was in support of finding a cure for cancer, celebrating survivors, honoring the caregivers, and recognizing those we have lost.” Thank you to Cecelia and the Richmond City courts for sharing their wonderful adventures from '23!



Have News or Ideas you would like to share?! We would love to hear all about it. Don't miss out on the next issue!

E-mail: lhatch@vacourts.gov
and jstackhouse@vacourts.gov

Special Events

Danville JDR

~ Clerk's Nite Out ~

Danville JDR began hosting a monthly 'Clerk's Nite Out' in June of 2023. It's a great opportunity for clerks to network with one another and members of the community, as the invitation extends to the GDC, CC, Commonwealth Attorney's office, Public Defender's office and local members of the bar! Thank you, Clerk **Tammy White**, for sharing the picture from the September Bowling Alley 'Nite'.



Russell County Combined Court

~ Movin' On Up ~

Russell County Combined Court moved into their new courthouse addition in December 2023. With a little bit of teamwork and elbow grease, everything fell into place for a great start to the new year. Way to go team!

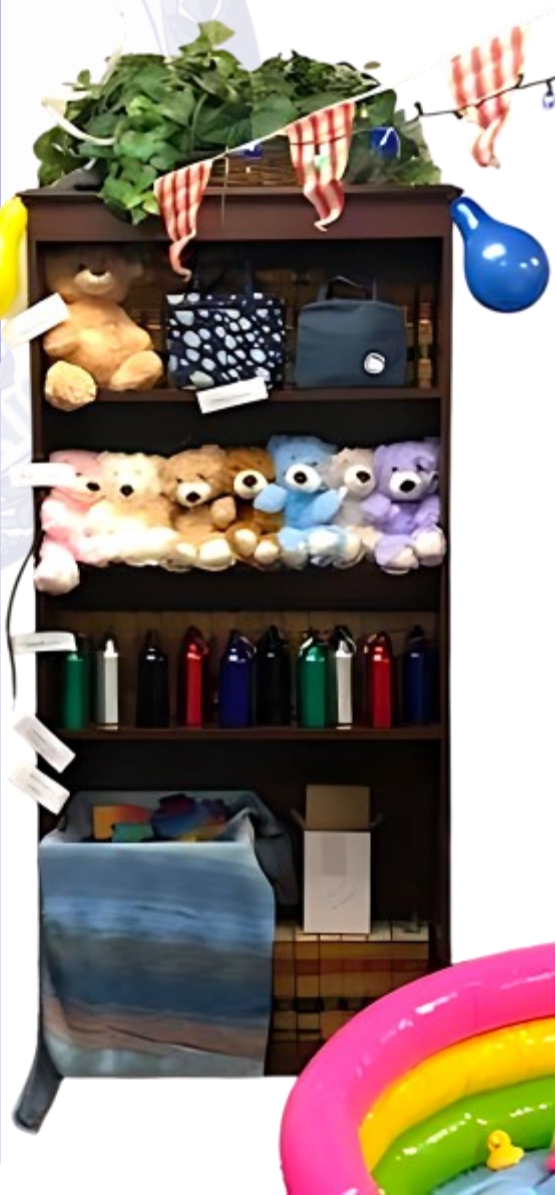


Special Events

Henrico GDC

~ Fall Festival ~

Henrico GDC's Civil Division had a wonderful Fall Carnival, complete with games, prizes, candy apples, popcorn and snow cones! Thank you to **Tracey Carper** for sharing this great idea and awesome pictures!



Fairfax City GDC

~ Employee Ice Cream Social ~

Fairfax City had a lot of celebrate around Employee Appreciation last year—So they started the first annual All-Employee Ice Cream Social open to the court, judges, city prosecutor's office, court appointed attorneys, city police, and city hall employees! It was a so nice to say hello and share sweets with folks rolling through from 12-2.



Spooky Sea-



Chesterfield GDC



Campbell County GDC



Dickenson Combined Co



Arlington County JDR

Henrico GDC's Spice Girls





Fairfax City GDC



Russell County Combined Court
(Not an actual Chick fil e)



Wayne County GDC



Staunton/Augusta JDR



Pulaski GDC



Harrisonburg/Rockingham JDR



Harrisonburg/Rockingham

~ Rock Paper Pumpkin ~

In the JDR, there was a pumpkin prize board with sweet and other treats inside. Play a round of Rock, Paper, Scissors to Poke the Pumpkin and get your prize!



~ Season's Spotlight ~

Tazewell: Toy Story is a Story of Service

Tazewell won the courthouse Halloween costume contest for the 3rd year and the money raised by the contest went to help Project Lifesaver. As was reported in the *Blue Daily Telegraph*: "The Tazewell County Sheriff's Office now offers the Project Lifesaver

Program, which is designed for children with autism or cognitive disorders and adults with Alzheimer's and other medical problems that may cause them to wander off, said Sheriff Brian Heatt. Participants wear a bracelet that allows searchers to track them if they wander away and become lost." – Thank you for sharing your amazing costumes and wonderful cause with the state!



Tazewell JDR



'Tis the Season

Virginia Beach GDC

Clerk Pamela J. Pringle Sent in the picture reel you'll find running down the left side of this page. As Pamela shares: "This is our annual holiday event. Our chief judge, **Judge Laquinto** and **Judge Menago** think of a theme each year and then divide us up into teams. Once divided into teams, we work together and make the best product for the theme chosen." This year's theme? You guessed it: Igloos! Great job everybody—they all look wonderful!



~ Grinchy Christmas in Brunswick and Fairfax ~



'Tis the Season



Roanoke City Celebrations

Clerk **Michelle Esparagoza** wrote in to share pictures from the Roanoke City Christmas potluck and Holiday Party which was hosted by the judges. The party was held in the courthouse atrium on a Saturday afternoon. Family members were invited to join in the fun, allowing the team to show off their work area. Friends and family played games, shared good food and laughs, and created memories that will be remembered for years to come. It was a wonderful way to end the year on a positive, warm note! Thanks for sharing~

'Tis the Season

Frederick/Winchester JDR

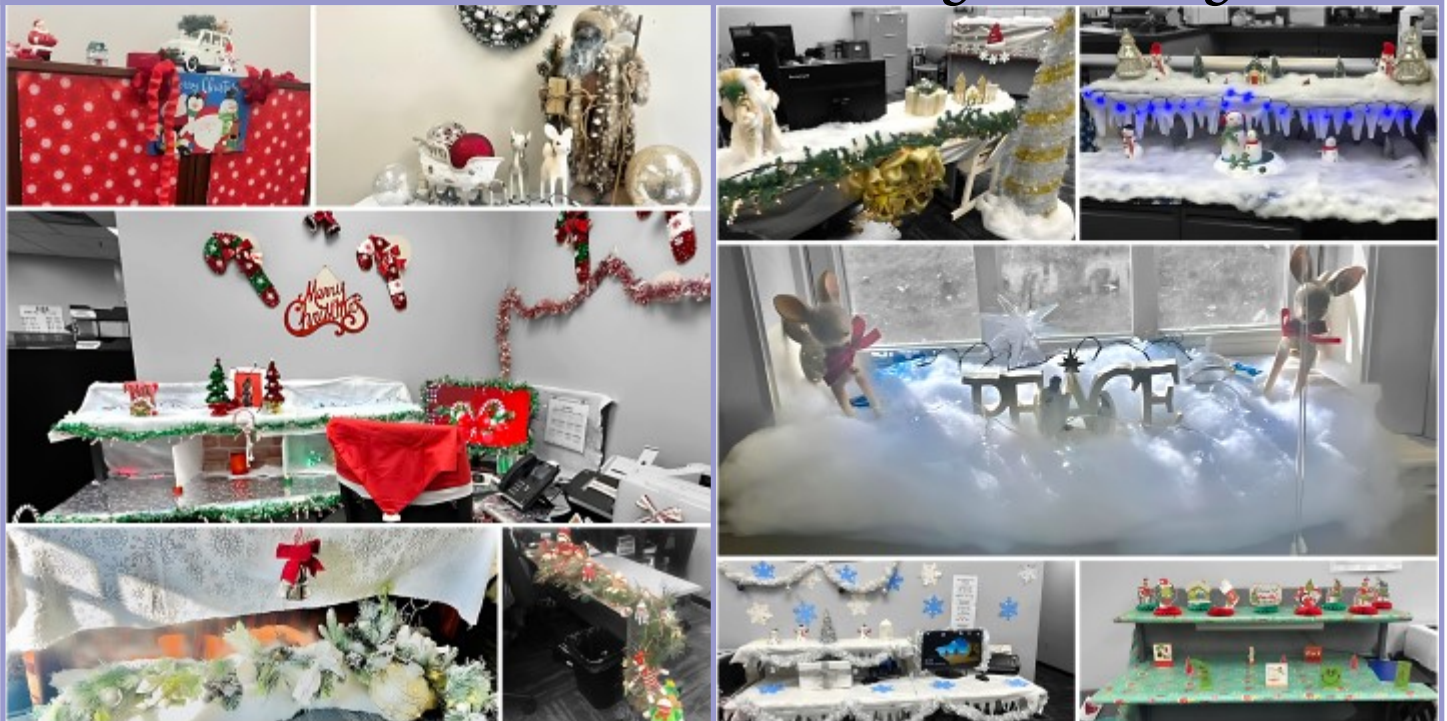
Christmas Dinner & Gift Exchange



Pulaski GDC



~ Sussex Combined Court Decorating Extravaganza ~





The Many Season's Greetings of

~ Culpeper JDR ~

Martha Jenkins out of Culpeper JDR shared their year-round tree of cheer with us. As we have seen in this issue of the docket, courts across the state enjoy putting up decorations and putting on as much cheer as we are able. There are many reasons we do this, from team morale to community building. Martha put it quite well when she shared, about Culpeper's 'All Occasion' Tree, that

"We decorate for any special occasion or holiday. It makes our office happy and it really builds morale. We enjoy being creative and coming up with new ideas. We are a family court, and court can be scary for children and often adults as well, so we feel that if people come to the window and see something happy, it might help."

- Martha Jenkins, Deputy Clerk Culpeper JDR

Check out Culpeper JDR's year of trees below, and keep up the wonderful celebrations in your own offices. Thank you to everyone who shared something joyful, team building, or impactful with us for this edition of the docket. We look forward to seeing what you all have to share next time!



'Tis the Season



Merry Christmas
from
Staunton/Augusta
JDR

~ *A Poem of Thanks* ~

From the Honorable Judges of the 19th Judicial District

With Employee Appreciation Day right around the corner (First Friday in March), Fairfax wanted to share a poem that last year's Chief Judge Mayne, along with Judges Earman and current Chief Judge Holleran, created and read for the courthouse staff at last year's employee appreciation event. All across the state, clerks of all grades and years of service dedicate themselves each day to understanding and aiding their fellow citizens in whatever small or large way is possible. We know how hard we work, and this poem shows that our many nuanced efforts are not overlooked or forgotten. Enjoy~

If

A poem by Rudyard Kipling

As modified by Judge Holleran, Judge Earman, and Judge Mayne

If you can keep your head
 when parties all around you are losing theirs
 and blaming it on you,
 If you can trust yourself when attorneys doubt you,
 But make allowance for their doubting too
 If you can answer that same question one more time
 And not lose patience in doing so
 Or stand being lied about (*the Clerk told me to do it*)
 Or after getting yelled at, be the better person and not yell back

If you can pass the garn cart and know you will get through it
 Or think Small Claims; this too shall pass
 If you can predict Protective Order outcomes
 But treat each applier like they should prevail



If you can hear speed cameras, they are a coming
 And smile at the stories you will soon tell
 And when you hear my car won't go that fast
 You keep your head down and do not laugh

If you can wait and not be tired of waiting
 For video connection to the jail to work
 If you arrive for arraignments on a Monday
 And think 50-some will be a cinch

If you think SRP will be a failure
 But keep your hope up nonetheless
 And know that among the many slip-ups,
 Successes are why we do all we do

If you deal in the unexpected each and every day
 And adapt at a moment's notice
 If you can persevere throughout the docket
 Knowing justice is at stake,

Then you are an unsung hero
 The clerks and staff who are the BEST of the best
 The ones who call this Fairfax Court their home
 And known that with your selfless service
 We all know you are the soul of this place!

*One Last
 ~ Thank You ~*

For all you've shared
 for this amazing
 issue and all you do
 every day!
 Hope to see you at
 the conference~

**Looking for a gift
 for your staff?**

A treat for yourself?

Check out Clerk's Association
 merchandise on our website
www.vadistrictclerks.com.

Checks and credit cards accepted for
 all orders placed.



**Have ideas for merchandise you
 would like?** E-mail Shanna Henry
 at shenry@vacourts.gov.



Thank you to our Association volunteers!

thank you

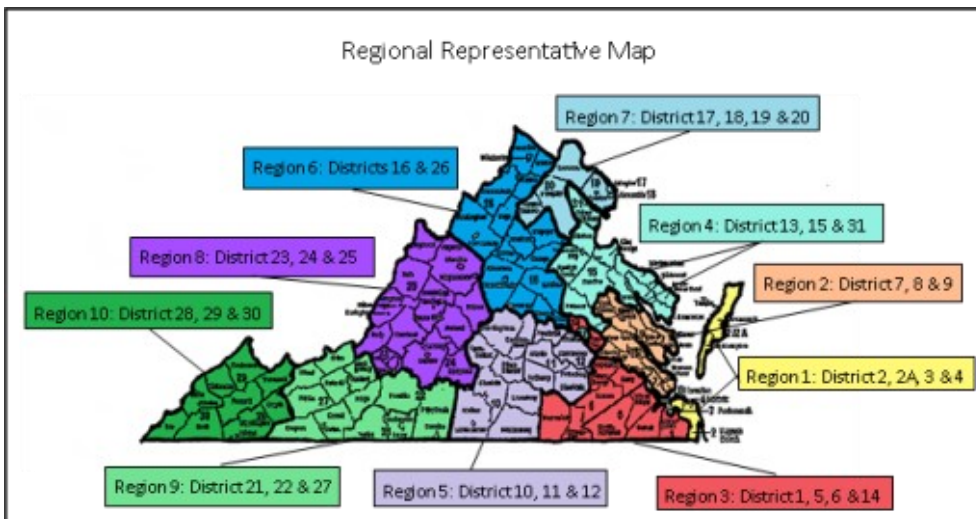
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Clerks' Association Mission

- ◆ To foster a closer relationship among the district courts of Virginia
- ◆ To improve proficiency and professionalism of court personnel
- ◆ To promote uniformity of procedure
- ◆ To recommend improved techniques and procedures to more efficiently perform the duties of the Clerk's Office
- ◆ To provide educational and training opportunities for all district court employees
- ◆ To foster cooperation and understanding between court personnel, judges, the legal community, and others involved with or interested in courts.



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[Regions.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#)

WE NEED YOUR HELP

For News and Current Events, please see our website. If you have interest in joining any of our committees, please contact your Regional Representative! Our organization is entirely volunteer-led and requires the participation of any district court employee! Please consider lending your time to your Association!



Please visit our webpage at www.vadistrictclerks.com