

The Year in Review: A Message from the Society President

As last year slips into memory, it is time to reflect on the new history that was made by the Michigan Supreme Court and the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society in 2009.

Special Events

The year began when Justice Diane Hathaway became the 104th justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, and the first justice whose investiture ceremony was held at the Hall of Justice, construction of which was completed in 2002.

The election of Justice Hathaway was historically significant in another way as well: it created the second female majority court in Michigan Supreme Court history. The first female majority court occurred in 1998 and consisted of Chief Justice Dorothy Comstock Riley and Justices Patricia Boyle, Elizabeth Weaver, and Marilyn Kelly.

The election of Marilyn Kelly to Chief Justice last year brings the number of women who have served the Michigan Supreme Court in this capacity to five. This number seems slight when viewed against the backdrop of 150 years; however, women have served as Chief Justice half of the two decades since the Society was created in 1988.

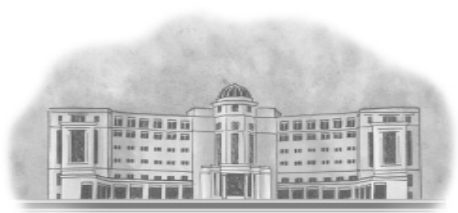
Recognizing the accomplishments of these remarkable women, and the march of equality, was the focus of our 2009 Coleman intern and is part of our plan for the coming year. To read more about the new exhibit that the Society has planned, read the executive director’s report further on in this newsletter.

Besides the investiture ceremony and reception for Justice Hathaway, other special events in which the Society was involved in 2009 included our Annual Membership Luncheon on April 30th and the third annual Advocates Guild Dinner in October.

Many of you joined us at the Detroit Athletic Club for our Annual Membership Luncheon last year, which featured an entertaining and informative presentation by Professor Otto Stockmeyer on the infamous “cow case” *Sherwood v. Walker*. Professor Stockmeyer’s presentation demonstrated that things are not always what they seem.

The Advocates Guild Dinner in October was the third time that attorneys who have argued before the Michigan Supreme Court have met here informally. It was also the largest such gathering the Guild has hosted. In fact, many of you are joining the Society for the enhanced benefit of Advocates Guild membership, and we thank you for it.

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Research

In 2009 the Board of Directors commissioned research on the way judicial elections are conducted in our state. As you know, candidates for the Supreme Court are nominated by political party but appear on the non-partisan ballot. Legal historian and professor Mark Hurwitz of Western Michigan University will present his findings on this topic at the Midwest Political Science Association’s conference in April.

Law Student Prizes

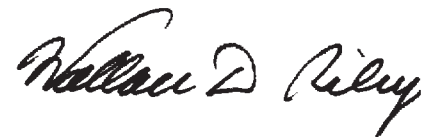
In my commencement address to the 2009 graduates of Cooley Law School, I said that there can never be enough lawyers because an education in the law provides a solid base for any career. Former Attorney General and Society Board member Frank Kelley said something very similar when he presented the *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society Law Student Prize* at Michigan State University College of Law in November. In 2009, the Society presented three \$500 prizes to worthy law school students at MSU, the University of Detroit Mercy, and Cooley. It is part of our initiative to reach out to a younger audience and make history come alive for them.

Board of Directors

The board of directors of the Society met three times in 2009 as is our custom. In April, we elected two new members of the board who have a strong connection to the Court and the Society: John P. Jacobs and former Justice Patricia Boyle. Charles R. Rutherford, who has been on the board since 1991, was selected as Vice President. He replaces Frederick Buesser, III, who left the board upon his retirement from the practice of law.

As always, I am grateful to our board of directors for their vision and volunteerism. I extend a special thanks to them for their continued dedication to the Society’s mission and goals.

I also thank each of you, our dedicated individual and corporate members, for your continued support without which we could not continue to fulfill our mission.



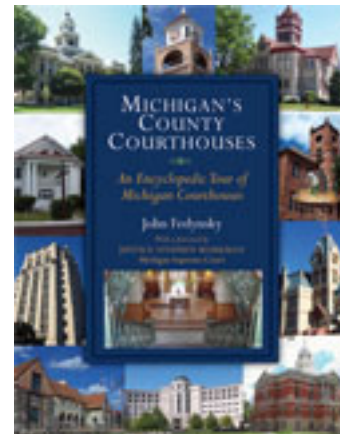
Save the Date!

Please join the justices of the Michigan Supreme Court and fellow Society members for the

Annual Membership Luncheon

Thursday, April 29, 2010
11:30 a.m.

The Detroit Athletic Club
241 Madison Street
Detroit, Michigan



The luncheon program will feature John Fedynsky, author of the new book *Michigan’s County Courthouses: An Encyclopedic Tour of Michigan’s Courthouses*, including an 84th chapter on the historic homes of the Michigan Supreme Court.

Watch the mail in March for your invitation to the Annual Membership Luncheon. Information for law firms wishing to purchase a table will also be available on our website after March 1st.

Goals for the Year Ahead

Executive Director's Report

The year 2010 is projecting many good things for the Society. As you will see from my report, much has been planned for this coming year.

Coleman Internship

Jacob Yaeger, a junior at Michigan State University, has been selected by the Coleman Internship Committee to work with the Society for 2010. Mr. Yaeger is a multi-disciplinary humanities major. He was chosen for the position based on his excellent writing and research skills. His project will include updating Society publications including the *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide* and the student lesson plans.

Annual Membership Luncheon

The Annual Membership Luncheon will be held Thursday, April 29, at the Detroit Athletic Club. The legal vignette will be on Michigan's courthouses with a presentation by John Fedynsky who has just finished an encyclopedic look at all 83 Michigan county courthouses. The 84th chapter is on the historical homes of the Michigan Supreme Court including its new home in the Hall of Justice. Invitations to the luncheon will be mailed to current members in March.

Publications and Website

The *Michigan Supreme Court Historical Reference Guide* was first published in 1998. It's time for an update! The project of our 2010 Coleman intern is to uncover new stories and facts about the 100 justices who appeared in the first edition. The new book is not slated to be complete until after the 2010 election and will include biographies of the justices on the current court. Additionally, many of the former justices did not have official portraits done until after 1998. The new edition will include images of the official court portrait for every justice.

Although our mission is to preserve history, that doesn't mean we ignore technology. If you have never visited the Society's website, I encourage you to do so now. It is a great source for both researchers

and the merely curious. Among the many interesting features on the website are: a court composition chart, appointment and election information, transcripts of the Special Sessions of the Court, and links to the oral histories of the justices. The oral histories provide a fascinating glimpse into the lives of the justices who recorded them. You can either read the transcription of the oral histories or download them to an iPod or other mp3 player.

The other significant development is that the Society is now on Facebook. Become a fan and stay up-to-date on the latest news from the Society.

Women on the Court Exhibit

The research portion of the Women on the Court exhibit is complete and now we are ready to put it all together in an exhibit that can be viewed by students from all over the state. The Society will work with the Hall of Justice Learning Center to produce an exhibit that highlights the two female majority courts and the five women who have served as Chief Justice. It is an inspiring story for all the women who have come before them and for the young ladies who will follow.

As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote, "A goal without a plan is just a wish." Without the dedication of our Board of Directors and the encouragement of our membership, the plans I have expressed would be nothing more than a wish. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve the Society and thank you for your continued support. Your support of our work is more important than ever.



The Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center



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MSCHS Treasurer Larry Nolan spoke to students from Lansing's Wexford Montessori last year on Law Day.

The Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center introduces the judicial branch of government to visitors of all ages. In addition to tours of the gallery, the following special projects are in progress:

***Tours for Third Grade Students** – As a result of curriculum changes implemented by numerous school districts, more third grade classes have begun to visit the Learning Center. In response, staff and volunteers worked with elementary teachers to create a new style of tour for our youngest group visitors. Themes include common good, roles in the courtroom, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

***New Exhibit on Access and Fairness** – At the request of Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly, Lorraine Weber, the Director of Access and Fairness for the Court, is working with the Learning Center to design a new long-term exhibit about the subject.

***Law Day** – On May 3, the Learning Center will celebrate Law Day with special tours and activities. The theme for 2010 is Law in the 21st Century: Enduring Traditions, Emerging Challenges.

***Exploring Careers in the Law** – Now in their fifth year, these popular summer sessions will introduce middle school and high school students to careers in the legal field. Applications will be available March 1.

For more information about tours, programs, and activities, visit the Learning Center's website at <http://courts.mi.gov/plc> or contact Learning Center Coordinator Rachael L. Drenovsky by phone at (517) 373-5027 or by e-mail drenovskyr@courts.mi.gov.

Society Offers Lesson Plans to Middle School and High School Teachers

In 2001 the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society developed two-week lesson plans for middle school and high school teachers. These lesson plans have been updated and re-packaged for 2010! The free lesson plans make it easier for history and civics teachers to educate students on this critical unit of government. Lesson plans include units on Michigan history, the Michigan constitution, the Big Four justices, and our court system. Hard copies of the lesson plans may be ordered from the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society by calling (517) 373-7589 or emailing cpickett@micourthistory.org. The lesson plans are also available online at www.micourthistory.org/education.php.

2009 Membership Roster

The Society groups its individual members into two categories: *Life Members*, which includes Benefactors, Major Sponsors, and Sponsors, and *Annual Members*, which includes Contributing, Sustaining, Patron, and Student members. The year listed after each member's name indicates the year that he/she joined the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society.

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 John M. Wright, 1988
 Gilbert L. Ziegler, 1994
 Eileen D. Zielesch, 2003

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(\$500-\$999)

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 Carl L. Gromek, 2004
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 Jeffrey G. Heuer, 2001
 Donald A. Hines, 2004
 Kenneth N. Hylton, Sr., 2003
 Ronald D. Keefe, 2002
 Phillip J. Kessler, 2004
 Richard Kitch, 2004

2010 Membership Dues

Membership dues statements will begin mailing next week, or you may use this slip. For your convenience, the Society accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and PayPal. Visit our website to make a payment online; call (517) 373-7589; or mail this slip to MSCHS attn: Carrie Pickett; 1st Floor Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48915. Contributions are tax-deductible.

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 Bridget Brown Powers, 2007
 Ronald Reynolds, 2007
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 Maureen Rudel, 2007
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 George T. Sinas, 2009
 Stuart Sklar, 2009
 Noreen Slank, 2008
 Webb A. Smith, 2008
 Trisha Stein, 2009
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 Jeffery V. Stuckey, 2009
 June Summers Haas, 2007
 Judy Susskind, 2009
 Todd Tennis, 2009
 Victoria A. Valentine, 2008
 James Waters, 2009
 Jill M. Wheaton, 2007

Congratulations to:
 Lawrence Charfoos, Carl Herstein,
 Daniel King, Stephen Mazurak,
 Elizabeth Pezzetti, Theodore St. Antoine,
 and Janet Welch
who became life members in 2009.

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(\$250-\$499)

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 Joseph T. Barberi, 2007
 Timothy A. Baughman, 2007
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 Marla R. McCowan, 2007
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 Mayer Morganroth, 2007
 Mary T. Nemeth, 2006
 Kristen Netschke, 2007
 Margaret Nichols, 2007

Contributing

(\$100-\$249)

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 Rachael Amber, 2009
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 Thomas H. Blaske, 2009
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 Mark H. Cousens, 2008
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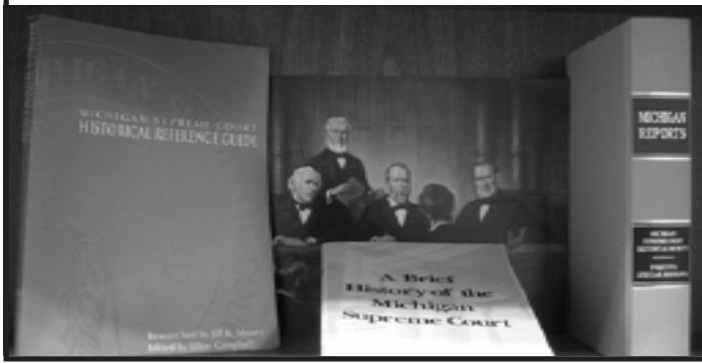
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For information on how your firm can become a corporate member of the Society and receive recognition in the *Society Update* and at our Annual Membership Luncheon, please call Executive Director Carrie Pickett at (517) 373-7589 or email cpickett@micourthistory.org.

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Mission Statement

The Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, collects, preserves, and displays documents, records, and memorabilia relating to the Michigan Supreme Court and the other Courts of Michigan, promotes the study of the history of Michigan’s courts, and seeks to increase public awareness of Michigan’s legal heritage. The Society sponsors and conducts historical research, provides speakers and educational materials for students, and sponsors and provides publications, portraits and memorials, special events, and projects consistent with its mission.

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Dorothy Comstock Riley

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Society Update is published quarterly by the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society. Writing submissions, article ideas, news, and announcements are encouraged. Contact the Society at: 1st Floor Hall of Justice, 925 W. Ottawa Street, Lansing, MI 48915 Phone: (517) 373-7589 Fax: (517) 373-7592

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