A ceremony was held in Shreveport officially renaming the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeal building the Pike Hall, Jr. Courthouse to commemorate the judicial service of the man who was a judge on the 2nd Circuit Court from 1971 to 1990, a justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court from 1990 until his retirement in 1994, and under whose leadership the 2nd Circuit was the first appellate court to be housed in a state building financed and erected exclusively for a court of appeal.

Second Circuit Chief Judge William Norris, III, presided over the ceremony which welcomed Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr., who spoke at the ceremony, and Justice Jeffrey P. Victory, who unveiled a plaque commissioned in the memory of Justice Hall. Also in attendance at the ceremony were Retired Justice Walter F. Marcus, Justice Harry T. Lemmon, Justice Catherine D. “Kitty” Kimball, Justice Chet D. Traylor, and Justice Jeannette T. Knoll. Justices Calogero, Marcus and Lemmon had all served together with Justice Hall on the Supreme Court bench.

“It is my hope that upon seeing the name Pike Hall, Jr. etched onto the front of this building that lawyers who enter will reflect on the significant contributions made by Justice Hall to Louisiana law, the administration of justice, and our State judiciary. Perhaps upon seeing his name, the attorneys and jurists who pass through the doors may even attempt to emulate him. There is no finer role model for a judge or attorney,” Chief Justice Calogero, Jr. said.

Justice Hall received his law degree from Louisiana State University (LSU) School of Law in 1953. He practiced law in Shreveport for 17 years and was a partner in the firm of Wilkinson, Woods, Carmody & Hall. He served as Assistant City Attorney for the City of Shreveport from 1954 to 1958 and was an elected member of the Caddo Parish School Board from 1964 to 1970. In 1970, Hall was elected to the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeal and in 1984 he was re-elected without opposition. He was the Chief Judge of the 2nd Circuit Court until his election to the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1990.

Hall was active in the American Bar Association's Judicial Administration Division. He also served on the Board of Governors and in the House of Delegates of the Louisiana State Bar Association, and he was a member of the Board of Governors and Vice-Chairman of the Louisiana Judicial College for several years. In 1988, he was inducted as an honorary member of the Order of the Coif at the LSU Law Center, and in 1996, the Justice Pike Hall, Jr. Law Professorship was established in his honor by the LSU Board of Supervisors with donations from the Justice Pike Hall Campaign Committee.

Justice Hall died in 1999 at the age of 68 and is survived by his wife Anne, his daughter Brevard and son Pike Hall, III and 5 grandchildren.

In his closing remarks Chief Justice Calogero added, “I can truly say the Louisiana judiciary is better today because Pike Hall served in it for almost a quarter century.”
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law on July 26, 1990. Over the past decade, courts across the country have focused on ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal access to all areas and programs of the judicial system. Louisiana state courts are no exception. In fact, the Human Resources Department of the Louisiana Supreme Court Judicial Administrator's Office has recently authored a reference handbook designed to guide district and appellate courts in complying with the statutory requirements of the Act. The handbook, Equal Access to Justice, was distributed to state court judges and court administrators providing them with accessibility checklists and self-evaluation work sheets. The checklists contain many suggested possible modifications which will make courts more accessible to persons with various disabilities.

At the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Human Resources Department surveyed our facility and programs to improve accessibility. A step taken was Disability Awareness training for court staff. The Clerk of Court's Office and The Law Library of Louisiana also implemented measures to improve accessibility. The Clerk's Office now regularly includes "need for accommodation" language on all notices to the public and parties to legal proceedings. The Law Library has prominently placed "need for accommodation" signage, appointed an ADA ombudsman, and has installed TDD telephones for incoming and outgoing calls.

The Human Resources Department serves as a valuable and knowledgeable resource for courts and I would encourage contacting them at (504) 568-5747 for further information.

Supreme Court Initiates Campaign Reform

On Thursday, November 16, the Louisiana Supreme Court's 21-member Ad Hoc Committee to Study the Creation of a Permanent Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee held a public hearing in the courtroom at the Louisiana Supreme Court. The committee, co-chaired by Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr. and Retired Judge Graydon K. Kitchens, Jr., sought to gather information from the public on the establishment of a permanent Judicial Campaign Oversight Committee to be created to serve as a resource for judicial candidates and to help facilitate ethical campaigning in Louisiana for judicial office.

Seven other states, Alabama, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma and South Dakota have such a committee, placing Louisiana among the national leaders in the establishment of judicial campaign reform.

"I like the prospect of a permanent committee being established," said Chief Justice Calogero. "I have found nothing during the meetings we've had to discourage my original sentiment, which is that it's a good thing. I think it's worked best where there's been no enforcement authority or no judicial sanction of any kind, but rather has served as a public relations and educational resource for candidates to upgrade their campaign conduct along ethical lines."

Among the questions being considered by the committee are:

- Should the permanent committee include judges, lawyers and citizens, or should citizens be excluded;
- What should the size of the permanent committee be;
- Will the permanent committee have the authority to review and comment on campaign advertisements or issue advisory opinions;
- Will the permanent committee be autonomous or should it be affiliated with the Louisiana Judiciary Commission, which investigates complaints of judicial misconduct and recommends judicial discipline;
- What will the terms of office of committee members be;
- What will the enforcement authority of the committee be;
- Will complaints about unethical conduct be made public;
- Will justices of the peace also fall under the committee's realm?

The appointed members of the Ad Hoc Committee are: Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr., Co-Chair; Retired Judge Graydon K. Kitchens, Jr., Co-Chair; Retired Judge Melvin A. Shortess; Judge Anne Lennan Simon; Judge Wilson R. Ramshur; Judge Eugene W. Bryson, Jr.; Judge Jimmy N. Dimos; Judge Ronald D. Cox; Judge Ernestine S. Gray; Senator Jay Dardenne; Harry S. Hardin, III; John S. Keller; John B. Scofield; Representative Arthur A. Morrell; Professor T. Wayne Parent; Barry Irwin; James C. Brandt; Sibal S. Holt and E. Phelps Gay.

Judiciary Commission of Louisiana Reunion Dinner

20th Judicial District Court Judge Wilson R. Ramshur (left), who is the 2000 Chair of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana, former Louisiana Supreme Court Judicial Administrator Richard “Dick” Knight, Esq. (center) and Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr. (right), pause during the Commission’s 2000 reunion dinner.
Louisiana Judge on Governmental Tour of China

As part of the People to People Ambassador Program, Shreveport City Court Judge LaLeshia Walker Alford was part of a 40-person delegation on a 15-day interactive tour of the inner workings of the criminal justice system of the People's Republic of China. The delegates, culled from 19 states, worked with members of the Supreme People's Court of China, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (China's legislative body), the Law School of Beijing University, staff from the Xi'an Women's Prison, and Xin Cheng District Court to cultivate an understanding of the cultural differences enjoyed by each, as well as the differences in the judicial systems, procedures, and methodologies.

While visiting Xin Cheng District Court, the delegation learned the court was divided into sections that handle civil, criminal and economic cases, a mediation center, and an adjudication section. The court handles 350 criminal, 700 economic, and 2800 civil cases per year. The group discussed the functions of court officers, training and selection of judges, authority of the court to enforce judgements and sentences, use of mediation to resolve cases and the appeals process.

New Iberia Parish Establishes Family Focus Juvenile Drug Court

The 16th Judicial District Court in Iberia Parish, working with Fairview Outpatient Treatment Center, has established a Family-Focused Juvenile Drug Court. 16th JDC Judge Gerard B. Wattigny will preside over the juvenile drug court, which bases its treatment model on Family Intensive Realistically Structured Therapy (F.I.R.S.T.), developed by Fairview Treatment Services.

Home to a successful drug court for adult offenders, Iberia Parish identified the need for a juvenile court which would recognize the unique needs of the juvenile offender and their families. The program is based on a four phase plan: Phase I – Assessment and Goal Setting; Phase II – Structural and Behavioral Change; Phase III – Application of Learned Techniques; and Phase IV – Transition. The combined phases encompass a structured goal-oriented program which emphasizes the involvement of the family in the treatment program and includes intensive counseling, communication and coping skills, relapse prevention techniques and long-term goals development. For more information on the program, visit www.drugcourt.com.

Pointe Coupee Parish Archiving Efforts

Pointe Coupee Parish Clerk of Court Lanell Swindler Landry has become a record collector, although not the typical variety. Landry, elected as Clerk of Court in July, 2000, inherited a records collection dating back to 1771, encompassing a variety of material, including criminal records, docket books, judicial proceedings, minute books, marriage licenses, old suit books, civil and probate records, legal and conventional mortgage books, naturalization records and succession books.

“We need to preserve these valuable documents and make them available as they are part of our area's collective history,” said Landry.

The records, most of which are written in French, but include some in Spanish, are the remaining volumes following a 1992 fire which claimed many original records of similar historic value. Currently the documents are undergoing a preservation process recommended by the Library of Congress that includes deacidification, encapsulation, and rebinding. The documents are also being digitally scanned for archiving on CD-ROM, which includes filtration, cleaning of gutter haze and straightening of the documents.
Courts Begin Self-Assessment and Self-Improvement

In December 1999, the Louisiana Supreme Court adopted strategic plans for the state's appellate courts, trial courts and the Louisiana Supreme Court. The plans were developed in accordance with provisions of the Judicial Budget and Performance Accountability Act of 1999, a cooperative effort by the legislature and the judiciary, designed to achieve continuous self-improvement of the courts.

Judicial organizations such as the National Center for State Courts and the American Judicature Society have long advocated court strategic planning. The Louisiana court system strategic plan was designed as an “organic document” intended to grow and evolve. The respective court plans are based on national court performance standards as revised by the Louisiana Appellate Court Performance Standards Commission and the Louisiana Trial Courts Performance Standards Commission and adopted by the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1997.

The goals of the strategic plans of the Louisiana courts are:

- to provide assistance and guidance to all courts within Louisiana for continuous improvement
- to serve as tools for public accountability by demonstrating to the public the judiciary's values, goals, objectives and strategies for the future, as well as its unwavering commitment to the improvement of court performance
- to establish a stronger framework for dialogue between the judiciary, the executive, and legislative branches on budgetary and other needs of the courts and on court performance.

What Has Been Done

In 2000, the Human Resources Department of the Louisiana Supreme Court published and distributed to every court a handbook entitled Equal Access to Justice which outlines the many facets involved in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance.

Additionally, 15 trial courts conducted audits to measure compliance with ADA standards. The trial courts not included in the audit were provided with the ADA performance audit checklist along with a letter from Chief Justice Pascal F. Calogero, Jr. urging them to use the checklist for self-assessing compliance.

Finally, at the request of the Trial Court Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, the Louisiana Association of Court Administrators created a subcommittee to assist courts in developing practical approaches for ADA compliance.

Also in accordance with the Act, the Louisiana Supreme Court published and distributed Justice At Work - The State of Judicial Performance in Louisiana which provides a statewide overview of court performance in 1999. Justice At Work will continue to be an annual publication of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

What is Ahead

In 2001, 15 courts having juvenile jurisdiction will be measured for compliance with Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) standards. In May 2001, the Supreme Court, the courts of appeal and the trial courts will be surveyed to determine the progress being made in implementing each strategic plan. Throughout the coming year, Court Column will continue to highlight the steps that Louisiana courts are taking to meet strategic plan goals. This issue takes a closer look at the court improvement efforts of the trial courts.

Requirements of the Judicial Budget and Performance Accountability Act of 1999

Under the Act Louisiana courts must:

1. Develop a 5 year strategic plan for the Supreme Court, courts of appeal and district courts by December of 1999

2. Develop a strategic plan for courts of limited jurisdiction by 2002

3. Develop organizational definitions and performance indicators for inclusion in the annual judicial appropriations bill

4. Develop an operational plan, attached to the judicial appropriations bill, that would define and justify any strategies that would either require new funding from the legislature or a 50% increase in the funding of an existing strategy from the previous year

5. Develop an annual performance report that would indicate the progress made in implementing each strategic plan

6. Develop one or more performance audits, conducted each year to ensure courts are in compliance with certain specified laws or rules - i.e. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA).
Trial Courts of Louisiana Implement Strategic Plan

As a first step in the planning process, the Trial Court Implementation Committee was established to assist trial courts in their efforts to reach strategic plan goals. Below is an overview of some of the court improvement initiatives adopted in compliance with the strategic plan of the trial courts:

Civil District Court
- Formed committees to address judicial policies, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and human resources management
- Enhanced web site www.orleanscdc.gov to include duty judge schedules, filing fees, local rules of court, rule dates, court building floor plan and jury information
- Provided telephone etiquette training for court employees
- Hired a Public Information Officer to establish a court newsletter, education programs and community outreach initiatives
- In 2001, the court will move forward with finalizing ADA compliance and implementing periodic surveys on security and accessibility

40th Judicial District Court
- Had U.S. Marshal Service inspector conduct court security survey of courthouse physical plant, including: public areas, judicial chambers, offices, courtrooms, and gas and electric systems
- Initiated outreach efforts to area civic groups on jury duty
- Held Law Day ceremony for students and the public at courthouse

26th Judicial District Court
- With the assistance of the Louisiana Supreme Court Human Resource Department, conducted an ADA compliance “walk-through” of the Bossier Parish Courthouse using the checklist provided by the Supreme Court
- Created a Bossier/Webster Facilitation Team to address Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) issues and develop the goals, concepts and strategies needed for compliance

15th Judicial District Court
- Conducted safety and security survey of the Lafayette Courthouse with the assistance of local and state Fire Marshals and members of city/parish Safety and Security offices
- Developed an Emergency Planning Committee of court representatives, law enforcement officials, and emergency preparedness personnel to study and recommend effective means of evacuation and communication
- Participated in ADA Performance Audit and is scheduled to participate in ASFA Performance Audit in February 2001
- Approved the collection of a $3.00 civil filing fee to generate funds for pro bono services provided by Lafayette lawyers to the financially disadvantaged

1st Judicial District Court
- Launched a web site, www.firstjdcla.org, providing courthouse information, calendars, frequently asked questions for jurors, local rules, e-mail addresses and child support/paternity hearing officer information
- Installed 24-hour telephone answering system on jury service questions and court related information
- Installed additional assistive listening devices for jurors and litigants
- Certified court reporter for real time reporting
- Installed TTY/TDD public telephones (text telephones)
- Began implementation of community and school outreach programs – moot court competition and courthouse tours

TRIAL COURTS IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Judge Robert H. Morrison, III
Chair
Chief Judge, 21st Judicial District Court

Judge Michael G. Bagneris
Chief Judge, Orleans Parish
Civil District Court

Judge Mary Hotard Becnel
Chief Judge, 40th Judicial District Court

Judge Durwood Conque
15th Judicial District Court

Orleans Criminal District Court
- Updated jury notices to include ADA “need for accommodation” language
- Improved accessibility of courthouse public areas with ADA compliant elevators, hand rails and expanded parking arrangements
- Increased public outreach efforts by appearing at civic organization meetings and on television and radio to improve understanding of the court system and to discuss alternatives to incarceration
- Established the state’s only specialized Domestic Violence Monitoring Court
- Applied recently for State Justice Institute Technical Assistance Grant for internal electronic case management system
Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Program

When East Baton Rouge Parish Juvenile Court Judge Pamela Taylor Johnson recently faced a courtroom filled to capacity, it was without the usual juvenile offenders waiting to appear before her. It was, instead, a graduation ceremony to honor the most recent set of graduates from the Juvenile Court's Drug Court treatment program.

Judge Johnson first organized a Juvenile Justice Community Task Force in May of 1996 to seek alternative solutions to truancy and juvenile crime in East Baton Rouge Parish. The program evolved into the current treatment program which recently hosted its third graduating class, bringing the total of juveniles who have completed the course to 11, which includes four who have gone on to earn their GED, one who has returned to middle school, and three who have entered college or a trade/technical school.

“I’ll tell you, I am so proud of these children. I generally refer to them as ‘my children’ and I generally feel as they are after what we’ve gone through during our time facing each other in court,” said Judge Johnson. “These children were out of school at the time they entered the program, but as is evidenced, a number of them have earned their GED and are set to attend college in the fall.”

The program, which consists of four phases of educational seminars, group therapy, individual counseling, random drug screenings, regular status hearings before the presiding judge and strict attendance requirements, also requires a supervised probationary period as well as enrollment in either a traditional or vocational school and/or be working to obtain a GED or diploma. For more information about the East Baton Rouge Juvenile Drug Court contact Judge Pamela Taylor Johnson’s office at (225) 354-1250.

Saints Off The Field

Saints Tackle William Roaf (above) and Defensive Tackle Norman H and visited the Supreme Court to cheer for the United Way.

CommunitY PartnershipS

Hedges Hosts Russian Officials

22nd Judicial District Court Judge Patricia T. Hedges hosted a group of Russian government officials visiting St. Tammany Parish, and invited them to observe the court in session. The Russian delegation, part of The Russian Leadership Program, a program of the U.S. Congress and Library of Congress, also visited St. Tammany Parish Jail and received background information on the American judicial system and law enforcement procedures.

Judge Ledet at Reading Day

Orleans Civil District Court Judge Rose Ledet (center) reads “Marshall, The Courthouse Mouse” to sixth-grade students on Celebrity Reading Day at Thomy Lafon Elementary School, located in the C.J. Peete Housing Development. Orleans Civil District Court Judge Ethel Simms Julien was a celebrity reader to fourth grade students at the school earlier in the day.

Photo by Walt Pierce
The Young Lawyers Section of the Louisiana Bar Association celebrated Law Day 2000 by introducing area high school and elementary students to Orleans-area courts.

**Orleans Parish Civil District Court** Judge Lloyd J. Medley, Jr., hosted students from Alfred Lawless High School and presided over the mock trial where the jury was made up of Lawless High School students. Following the trial, the students visited Orleans Parish Juvenile Court where **Chief Judge Ernestine S. Gray** spoke to the students on her experiences as a juvenile court judge and about teenager rights and duties to the community.

Law Day in Orleans Parish Criminal District Court found **Judge Leon A. Cannizzaro** presiding over a criminal trial where students from Live Oak Middle School were able to attend and take part in as mock jurors. Judge Cannizzaro, the Assistant District Attorneys and defense counsel helped make the day meaningful by providing explanations during the trial to help students better understand the rules and procedures of a criminal trial.

**Teen Courts Held to Deter Recidivism**

Teen Courts across the United States are aimed at preventing juveniles who are first time, non-violent, misdemeanor offenders from committing more serious crimes. Several Teen Courts have recently been organized in Louisiana.

In Ouachita Parish, **Monroe City Court Judge Scott Leehy** is the President of the Board of Directors for the area Teen Court, a non-profit community partnership which has been in existence for 14 years and serves the entire parish. Leehy feels that participation in Teen Court allows students, volunteers and defendants the opportunity to participate in the judicial system and be part of a system of peers, whether they are doing the sentencing or being sentenced. “It relieves our docket,” said Leehy. “The program has been extremely successful. The recidivism rate among teen court offenders has been extremely low.”

Orleans Parish Teen Court was first organized in January 1997 through a partnership with the Junior League of New Orleans, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, the Mayor and City Council. **Juvenile Court Judges Mark Doherty and Anita Ganucheau** are active in the local program.

The first step in Orleans Parish prior to Teen Court is for the juvenile offender to have admitted guilt for their action. “Once in Teen Court, many times the teenagers in the jury often return with much harsher sentences than are recommended,” said Eric Houie, Orleans Parish Teen Court director. Sentences include community service hours, Teen Court jury duties, educational sessions, written assignments in the form of either an apology or an essay and curfew. A strong emphasis is also placed on parental involvement.

Natchitoches Parish recently established its own Teen Court through a federal grant and matching funds from the area District Attorney’s Office and Natchitoches City Court. “The long-term strategic goal is to decrease juvenile crime. The immediate goal is to stop first time offenders from becoming repeat offenders,” said 10th Judicial District Court Judge Monty Doggett.

Added 10th JDC Judge Rick Harrington, “National studies have shown that teen courts are effective in reducing the number of repeat offenders. Teens tend to see a decision of their peers as more valid than a judgement by an adult, whether the adult is a school principal, police officer or juvenile court judge. Teen jurors are more familiar with the environment in which the offense occurred and they are more likely to correctly assess the validity of the excuses offered by the offenders.”
**IPSO FACTO... Judge Sings for More than Supper**

24th Judicial District Court Judge Walter Rothschild is no stranger to people staring at him.

Elected to the 24th JDC in Gretna in 1995, Judge Rothschild has been face to face with a number of people, sometimes eagerly, sometimes not, who are interested in what he has to say about a particular case. However, it is when Judge Rothschild opens his mouth to sing that he frequently gets the most attention.

Rothschild has been singing since high school and often performs at weddings or other special events. A tenor with a resonating voice, he is regularly called upon to sing a favorite request “Ave Maria.” Although Rothschild has admitted to nervousness when he sings, he calms himself by additional preparation. “Voice is sort of like law,” said Rothschild. “The better prepared you are, the better you’re going to sing.”

**IT’S A FACT:**

With the sound of music in his heart, Judge Rothschild earned a music scholarship to Southeastern Louisiana University, but left the program to join the Marines and later earned degrees in psychology and law.

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- Justice Bernette J. Johnson and Retired 4th Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Moon Landrieu were recipients of the Mayor’s Medal of Honor, given annually by New Orleans Mayor to individuals or organizations working for positive change in the local community.

- The University of Louisiana-Lafayette has established a chair, The Judge Kaliste J. Saloom, Jr. Eminent Scholar Endowed Chair in Political Science, honoring Judge Saloom, who was first elected to Monroee City Court Division A in 1953 and served there until his retirement in 1993.

- Retired Judge Walter I. Lanier, Jr. received the 2000 Monote M. Lemann Award, presented annually by the Louisiana Civil Service League to individuals outside the classified civil service system who have made the greatest contribution to the advancement of the merit system of public employment.

- 4th JDC Judge D. Milton Moore III attended the Seventeenth National College on Judicial Conduct and Ethics through a partial scholarship from the State Justice Institute. In 2001, Moore will serve as Vice-Chair of the Judiciary Commission of Louisiana.

- 4th Circuit Court of Appeal Judge Joan Bernard Armstrong received the Ernest N. Morial Judicial Pacesetter Award from the New Orleans chapter of the Louis A. Martine Society.

- 16th JDC Judge John E. Conery completed Constitutional Criminal Procedures, Managing Trials Effectively and History and Theory of Jurisprudence courses held in Reno, Nevada through the National Judicial College and the University of Nevada, Reno. Judge Conery has also completed over half the course work required for a Master’s Degree in Judicial Studies.

- 24th JDC Judge Patricia T. Hedges completed a course and served as a discussion leader on Great Issues in Law as Reflected in Literature which was presented by National Judicial College. The course used works of literature to explore the roles and functions of judges.

- Hammond City Court Clerk of Court Guy Recotta, Jr. has been named as one of four national recipients of the National Daily Points of Light Award, given by The Points of Light Foundation, Knights of Columbus and the Corporation for National Service.

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This public document was published at a total cost of $2374.00. 5000 copies of this document were published by the Louisiana Supreme Court Judicial Administrator’s Office, 301 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana as the quarterly newsletter of the judiciary of the State of Louisiana under the authority of the Judicial Budgetary Control Board.