

# RECORD TIMES

The eMagazine

June  
2021

Vol. 27 / No. 6

A monthly magazine for employees of the Clerk of the Superior Court's Office



Virtual Assistant  
Online Payments  
Online Exhibits Portal  
Civil Case Initiation for eFiling  
Juvenile Cases eFile Expansion

Award-Winning Programs!

## A national high FIVE for Office

**Five Clerk of the Court programs receive national honors**

It may be 2021, but after the news the Office received this month, it is more like 202WON! The reason being is that the Office WON five national achievement awards from the National Association of Counties (NACo). NACo, which represents the nation's county governments in Washington, D.C., presented the Office with the Achievement Awards for developing innovative programs that enhance county services.

The five awards is the second-highest the Office has ever received in one year. The record was six NACo awards in 1992.

These five awards bring to a total of **46 NACo awards** the Office has received over the past 33 years. This year's award-winning programs are: **Civil Case Initiation for eFiling; Online Exhibits Portal; Online Payments; Juvenile Case eFile Expansion; and Virtual Assistant.**

A brief description of each program is provided on [page 2](#).

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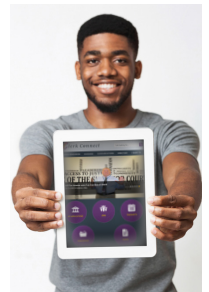
## New Intranet is unveiled this month

This month in the Office there was an unmasking that was a **new sight** to many and an unveiling that provided a **new site** to many. The unmasking was the lifting of the requirement of wearing a mask in certain office areas after nearly a year. The unveiling was of the new Office intranet site called **Clerk Connect** that had been planned for nearly a year.

Clerk Connect made its first appearance on June 2. It replaces the COCWEB which has been the Office's internal website for many years. Clerk Connect provides a new modern site, with an enhanced design and improved organization to obtain information, view upcoming events/photos, locate office resources, find policies, procedures and applications, and simply learn more about the Office.

A big round of applause goes to the Clerk Connect Team who created the site – **Task Group: Rich McHattie, Tiarra EarlsHaas, Brad Ottley, Lori Fiscus, Chris Driscoll, Kevin Hart, Scott Hensel, Aaron Judy, Oscar Garcia, Len Keso, Brian Turner;** and the **Testing & Application Support - Don Pemberton, Steve Lauer, Nikki Swiss, Kristin Venable, Stephanie Motzer, Appachu Ballachanda, Ravi Goud, and Mark Savin.**

"After a year of planning and development, we're proud of the new Clerk Connect! We hope all employees enjoy it and take full advantage of all of its features and capabilities," Project Lead **Tiarra EarlsHaas** said.





# CLERK CONNECTION

## An overview of the award-winning programs (from page 1)

Following are brief descriptions of the Office's five recent national award-winning programs.

**Civil Case for eFiling** – This project expanded eFiling capabilities in the Civil case type to allow the initiation of new cases through the existing eFiling system. The Clerk's Office was receiving post-initiation documents into its system from the AOC's eFiling portal, but was not able to receive new cases. The expansion was immediately successful as the Office now receives **84% of new civil cases** via eFile rather than on paper. Actual processing time for the Clerk's Office has been **cut by nearly 50%**, the number of employees touching each case throughout the process has been **reduced by 75%**, and overall cycle time (time from customer submission to complete entry in the public record) has been reduced from **36 hours to 4 hours**.

**Juvenile Case eFiling Expansion** - This project expanded eFiling to the Juvenile case type. The primary objective was to implement eFiling of official court documents for the five highest volume case types to provide all stakeholders with the convenience of online service, 24/7, while improving access to the Court for all stakeholders. In the first three months of the expansion, there was nearly a **90% increase** in the number of filings submitted and a **97% increase** in the number of orders electronically signed by Judicial Officers.

**Online Exhibits Portal** - This program created an automated electronic method for the submission and processing of exhibit files for Maricopa County court cases. Limiting in person contact as much as possible was of the highest priority for the Office as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As court hearings and trials moved to remote video conferencing rather than in person, the Clerk's Office needed a solution for litigants to submit exhibits electronically to avoid traveling in person to one of our filing counters. Additionally, having the exhibit files in an electronic format enabled better collaboration and viewing of the exhibit files remotely. The Online Exhibits Portal went live in September 2020. Since then, more than **4,500 exhibits forms** and more than **65,000 electronic exhibit files** have been accepted via the portal.

**Online Payments** - This project provided an online method for customers to make payments on their accounts for criminal fines, fees, reimbursement, and restitution; deferred filing fees; and non-criminal court ordered fees. Previously, customers mailed money orders to the Clerk's Office or had to visit a filing counter at the Clerk's Office in one of several courthouses or one of eight adult probation offices to make a payment in person with cash or money order. In the first five months, over **16,600 payments** totaling nearly \$2.9 million were paid via the online payment portal.

**Virtual Assistant** - The Virtual Assistants program provided: **1)** the public access to have virtual conversations with Office anytime, anywhere, on any device, through their preferred method of communication; **2)** the employees with better access to information for assisting the public and for improved access to their benefits as county employees. The Virtual Assistant interacts with users through website chat, text message, and voice first technologies. The public virtual agent averages over **2,300 conversations** per month and the internal virtual agent has averaged **1.5 employee conversations** per day.





# CLERK CONNECTION

## The return of Saturday Service Days at the CSC

The Clerk’s Office has many acronyms and one well known one for the Downtown employees is CSC ... which stands for the Customer Service Center. However, for the past couple of years on a few certain days that acronym takes on a little different meaning. In these instances during the year when this happens, the CSC could very well stand for the “Customer **Saturday** Center” because the Office has opened up for business to serve customers on select Saturdays. This year, the Saturdays of June 26, July 17, 24, and 31 will be the times when the “Customer Saturday Center” is open to provide customers an extension of service.

In previous years of this initiative, the Office has provided customers the opportunity to obtain a marriage license and/or process their passport applications. This year, because the Passport service was temporarily suspended during the pandemic, the selected Saturdays Service days will be for passport customers.



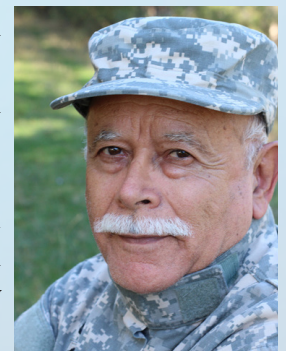
### Total Passport Applications Processed on Saturday Service Days

- 2020 - Service Not Available
- 2019 - **390**
- 2018 - **463**
- 2017 - **355**



## A salute to the Stand Down efforts of CFO

The **Criminal Financial Obligations Unit (CFO)** reported that it assisted with a total of **113 veteran cases** during this year’s Stand Down event. Stand Down is a national event of various agencies/governments who come together to focus on veteran services. Over the past several years, (usually at the beginning of the year), the Clerk’s Office and Superior Court have participated in Stand Down by setting up remote courtrooms at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum to hear cases involving veterans. In addition, staff from Criminal Financial Obligations and the filing counter have provided their services. This year, due to COVID, the Stand Down event was managed differently from being an in-person/weekend event to a virtual/month-long event in the Spring.



## Training provides conference of courses for Court Clerks

Being a courtroom clerk is a very demanding job and it is one that is not easy to take time off to view/attend the required COJET classes. In an effort to provide the more than **200 courtroom clerks** in the Office an opportunity to meet their professional development requirement, each year during the Summer judicial recess, the Training Department offers what is called the “Clerk’s Conference.” The Conference is three days long and offers the court clerks many class options. This year, the Conference is more condensed due to being all virtual courses. It will be held **June 23 - 25** during which **15 different classes** (webinars) are being offered.

# AND THE AWARD GOES TO...

Photos of recent C.A.S.E Award winners  
with the Clerk of the Court Jeff Fine



EXCELLENCE  
AWARD

Dorothy King



OTHER  
AWARD  
WINNERS  
NOT PICTURED:



EXCELLENCE  
AWARD

Jennifer  
Escarcega

LEADERSHIP  
AWARD

Naomi Maruffo  
and  
Sandy Seeley



CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
AWARD  
Anita  
Hernandez

LEADERSHIP  
AWARD

Alex  
Mittelstaedt-Chavez



CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
AWARD  
Vanessa  
Garcia



CUSTOMER  
SERVICE  
AWARD

Shantel Tavares  
and  
Wendy  
Thompson



More awards will be presented throughout the summer

# The Clerk's Summer Olym-Picks

**Fastest** (Fast in getting things done) / **Highest** (Going above and beyond) / **Longest** (Going to great lengths in being helpful/thorough) / **Shortest** (Finding easier solutions) / **Strongest** (Being able to take on a lot of tasks/projects) / **Gold Medal Service** (Providing the best service) / **Silver Lining** (Seeing the positive) / **Bronzed** (An achievement that should be made into an award) / **Record-setter** (Accomplishing something never done before) / **Gymnast** (Being very flexible in work)

Using the above Olympics-related words, some Clerk employees sent in their picks of employees who fit the word descriptions in an effort to provide some positive recognition for staff members.

## GOLD MEDAL SERVICE

**Beverly Powell** - She has covered for me while I am out and always goes above and beyond to cover hearings and complete the paperwork generated in the Division. She is friendly and upbeat and takes extra initiative to find out if other clerks need assistance. Thank you, Beverly! - *from Patricia Noell*

**April Cannon** - April gets things done! She always give 100 percent in whatever she does and provides our team strong and steady support. - *from Monica Skaff*



## STRONGEST

**Northwest Operations** - The Northwest Operations Staff continues to be a strong work unit who comes together and takes on multiple tasks in order to get the job done. They are: **Julie Garcia, Aurora Avina, Jessica Bernal, Lisa Jackson, Evelyn Laborin, Jackie Ortiz, Savanna Sharp, and Joshua Thill.** - *from Michelle Wolf*

**Fernando Castillo** - Fernando handles so many different tasks in the Administrative Office and does a fantastic job in all of them. He is a heavy-lifter and keeps us all going strong. - *from Len Keso*

**Lisa Smith** - She effortlessly takes on many tasks and projects and still has time to check in on her trainees and former trainees to make sure they are doing well and to let them know she is there if assistance is needed. Thank you, Lisa!" - *from Patricia Noell*



**Sig Perez** - Sig takes on a lot of tasks and projects and does so with grace and dedication. She is always approachable, professional, and provides excellence to our team. - *from Monica Skaff*

**Beverly Powell** - As a Family Court Floating Clerk with both Judges & Commissioners, Beverly Powell not only tackles a vast range of Calendar types, but puts the "ability" in "reliability." As if that wasn't enough, stop by Central Court Building to try some of the treats she always generously brings to the Floater Pool! - *from Tristan Aird*



## GYMNAST

**Northwest Courtroom Clerks** - The Northwest Courtroom Clerks are all very flexible in being willing to cover when a co-worker is out of the office and they assist other locations as well when needed. They are: **Diane Berkland, Tiffany Nosker, Tammy Schnurr, Valerie Stevens, and Katie Summers.** - *from Michelle Wolf*

*...continued on next page*

# The Clerk's Summer Olym-Picks

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## GYMNAST

**April Covarrubio** - April was an excellent and patient guide as a Courtroom Clerk Lead. Now as a Courtroom Clerk Supervisor, she uses her guidance skills to help build and grow our team towards excellence.

- from **Monica Skaff**



## SILVER-LINING

**Mitzi Moore** - Mitzi was recently trained as a courtroom clerk and transitioned into being in a courtroom very quick. She always has a positive attitude about whatever task she is going to encounter and gets the job done. She is fun and a pleasure to work with. - from **Tiffany Galindo**

**Susan Morris** - Susan is a very positive and caring person. She has an attentive quality about her that makes you feel like you're the most important person in the room. She is cheery and celebrates our accomplishments whether they are big or small. - from **Monica Skaff**

## HIGHEST

**Betty Lopez-Mori** - "She cheerfully helps me with all of my exhibit issues, going above and beyond to help and teach me when I need assistance. Thank you, Betty!" - from **Patricia Noell**

**Leslie Wilkins** - Leslie is very kind and approachable, and at the same time, tirelessly dedicated and supportive to our team. She is an integral part of improving processes and seeing the big picture, which helps the team strive to be more efficient and competent. - from **Monica Skaff**

## LONGEST

**Tristan Aird** - Tristan finds opportunities to provide assistance to others, such as, but not limited to, delivering exhibits to co-workers or offering to process rulings. In addition, he assists new clerks and shows them the ropes because there's a lot to learn when starting out. - from **Monica Skaff**



## SHORTEST

**Linda Berger** - Linda is very supportive and dedicated to finding efficient methods to make our jobs easier and continually improving our current processes. Way to go, Linda! - from **Monica Skaff**

# Clerk Work

*Work within the Clerk of the Court's Office*

## Providing an educational opportunity for customers

This month, an average of **35 people** attended the Office's part II of its public webinar called the **Media Academy - Viewing Court Exhibits**. The in-depth webinar was targeted for a specific audience whose interests were directed to the topic of exhibits - the laws related to them and how to view the exhibits. The panelists from the Office conducting the webinar were **Jessica Fotinos**, Legal Counsel/Public Information Officer and **Tina Barrett**, Court Operations Supervisor, Courtroom Services Manager **Donna Courtemanche**, and Supervisor **Carrie Montoya**.



## Court Clerk's work being displayed throughout Office



At the end of last year, the Employee Recognition and Engagement Work Group sponsored a contest for employees to design a poster that displayed the Office's Mission, Vision, and Values. In January, Courtroom Clerk **Stephanie Motzer's** entry was selected as the winner. Her entry has now been produced into posters and flyers and is being displayed throughout the Office. Look for one in your area. **Thank you Stephanie for your effort to create this for the Office!**

## Every picture tells a story...here's how to tell yours

Photos are an important part of the *Record Times* and you have two fun opportunities to have your own photos published in the monthly publication. Your photos are needed for two ongoing features. They are - **1)** photos with the newsletter itself while traveling; **2)** photos with the new cutout character Flat Stamp-Ley. [See page 12](#) for details on both opportunities.



## Some Office history for the month of June



**June 2000** - The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Customer Service Center was held.

**June 2004** - An agreement was made to transfer the Office's Expedited Services Unit over to Superior Court. The decision was made in an effort to improve coordination of family court programs. Expedited Service's purpose was to enforce the court's order for child support and visitation. Twenty-eight employees were a part of the transfer.

**June 2008** - The Office's function of processing Notary Bonds was transferred to the Arizona Secretary of State's Office. The change occurred as a result of legislation that was passed to streamline the application and certification process to become a Notary Public.

**June 2019** - The Old Courthouse celebrated its 90th anniversary.

# WE GOT SPIRIT!

Photos from the recent Hawaiian Shirt/Dress Spirit Day

## Staff says "Aloha" to Hawaiian Spirit Day on June 9



Left to right, Front Row: Tracy McMillian, Shannon Stulz, Greg Grantham, Tristan Aird 2nd row: Susan Morris, Sig Perez, Margaret Brickman, April Cannon, Taylor Sachse, Christina Mai, Katie Treftz, Monica Skaff 3rd row: Beverly Powell, Leslie Wilkins, Stephanie Howlett, Rhonda Sheppard, and Lora Gilbert



Tamara Hight



Patricia McKinley



April Covarubbio



Arelly Ayala and Cleo



Shoni Boling and Betty Lopez-Mori



From left - Gloria Oviedo, Janneth Damian, Blanca Diaz, Annette Young, and Flor Rivas



Keleigh Cabral



Sheryl Brown



Angela Romero, Chris O'Neill, and Aida Plascencia



Front row, left to right - Megan Johnston, Jessica Folts, Angela Orrala, Gozal Atabaeva-Coy. Back row, left to right - Gladys Alonso, Nikki Swiss, Leticia Gutierrez, Shannon LaSpaluto, Jennifer Lovill-Taylor



Lorraine Brown



Stephanie Motzer



David Wolff, Frances Horst, and Erin Ruffin



# Employee Spotlight

## This Month: Shannon LaSpaluto

**Title:** Court Operations Supervisor, Southeast Adult

**Years with Office:** 10 years

**Something You Enjoy About Your Job:** I enjoy lots of things about my job. I like to problem-solve and tinker. Helping others come to a resolution for out of the ordinary situations is so satisfying. I am thankful for the people I work with. I have met and worked with so many wonderful humans in the last 10 years. I also enjoy stamps...I know it sounds silly, but if you told 7-year old Shannon that she would grow up and use stamps all day at her job, she would be over the moon.

**What Are Some Of Your Job Responsibilities:** Stamping things, being awesome. I cover a lot of areas. I help at the File Counter, MLPP, RCC/EDC, CV eFile initiations, and occasionally docketing.

**Your First Job:** Assistant Caregiver at a Childcare Center

**Hometown:** Gilbert, AZ

**Something Memorable You Have Done:** Having my children. They changed my life for the better. They make me proud every day and I can't wait to see what they grow up to become.

**A Hobby/Favorite Activity:** I love to color with colored pencils. There's something very soothing about it.

**Best Vacation Spot:** I love visiting my parents in Oregon and going to Cannon Beach. // **Where Would You Like**

**To Travel To Next:** I am happy at any beach. I would love to travel the coasts to be at a new beach every day.

**Favorite Meal:** I'll NEVER refuse a peanut butter and jelly sandwich // **Favorite Place To Eat Out:** Texas Roadhouse

**Favorite Sports Team:** Phoenix Suns // **Someone You Would Like To Meet:** Christopher Wehkamp

**Favorite TV Show or Movie:** *Supernatural* // **Favorite TV Show Growing Up:** I loved watching cartoons as a kid. My favorites were *Rainbow Brite* and *Thundercats*. In my teens, I loved *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

**What Would You Like To Be For A Day:** If I could download the years of college like in the *Matrix* (whoa...I know astrophysics), I would love to be involved with NASA. Researching our solar system and the vast universe beyond sounds thrilling. // **Something On Your Bucket List:** I would love to go to Ireland.

**Nobody Would Believe It If They Knew:** I used to swing dance regularly.

**An Unusual or Interesting Job You Have Had:** I worked for the Sheriff's Office for eight years collecting delinquent personal property taxes.

**Favorite Quote:** "It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live."

**What Do You Like To Do In Your Spare Time:** I like to watch anime with my oldest daughter.

**An Ability You Wish You Had:** To travel back and forth through time.

**Your Dream Car:** '67 Chevy Impala...black, of course.

**Favorite Animal:** I love elephants.

**Favorite Vegetable/Fruit and/or Least Favorite:** Favorite fruit is strawberry. Least favorite would be dates.

**Who Would You Like To See In Concert:** Muse and/or 30 Seconds to Mars.

**Pet Peeve:** CHEWING SOUNDS. Mouth sounds in general.

**Any Hidden Talents:** The thumb on my left hand is double-jointed at the first/top knuckle. I can bend it back independently (without forcing it) further than most people are comfortable seeing.



# The County Lines

News items from Maricopa County and the National Association of Counties

## County dishes out new cookbook made by employees



Maricopa County Wellness Works Program has just the right recipe for employees to eat healthier...they actually have 43 recipes to be specific. The Wellness Program recently released its first cookbook filled with 43 recipes for items such as Appetizers, Breakfast, Main Dishes, Side Dishes, and Desserts. The recipes come from county employees themselves who work in the various departments throughout the Valley.

The recipes come with how many servings it provides, how long it takes to make, the ingredients, easy to follow instructions, and a photo of the completed food item. You may view the [cookbook here](#).

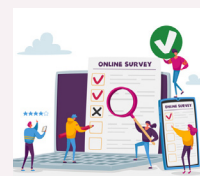
## The occupations projected to grow during this decade

The National Association of Counties (NACo) released the following chart (from the Department of Labor) that shows the projected percent growth of occupational groups from 2019 through 2029:

Healthcare support occupations	22.6%
Community and social service occupations	12.5%
Computer and mathematical occupations	12.1%
Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	9.1%
Personal care and service occupations	7.7%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	7.3%
Business and financial operations occupations	5.3%
Total, all occupations	3.7%

## Share your thoughts about the impact of the pandemic

Maricopa County Manager Joy Rich invited all county employees to participate in a County Department of Public Health COVID-19 Community Impact Survey. Public Health hopes to better understand how the pandemic impacted the community health and how they can help with recovery efforts. The survey is anonymous. The survey takes less than 15 minutes and ends on June 30. If you are interested, you may take the [survey here](#).



## Flood Control pours out the information about rain



The Maricopa County Flood Control District maintains more than 357 automated precipitation gauges throughout Maricopa County and surrounding counties, which measure the amount and timing of rainfall in real-time. You can go to their page and view the precipitation data for your area and get other weather information by visiting their [website here](#).

# The Inside Track

## on Employee News

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### OFFICE ANNIVERSARIES

The following Clerk of Court employees celebrate milestone anniversaries with the Office in June:

#### 20 YEARS

**Melanie Fay** and **Anna Valenzuela**

#### 15 YEARS

**Ken Lindler**

Thank you for your service!

#### 10 YEARS

**Veronica Morales** and **Shannon LaSpaluto**

### NEW EMPLOYEES

The Clerk of the Superior Court's Office welcomes the following new employees:

- **Courtroom Clerks - April Garrett, Hollice O'Shaughnessy, Greg Grantham, Lindsay Mortenson, and Lora Gilbert**
- **Family Support Services - Nancy Romero**
- **Northeast Operations - Courtney Francis**

### EMPLOYEE MOVES

- Congratulations to **April Covarrubio**, who was promoted to Courtroom Services Supervisor after serving as a Courtroom Services Lead.
- Congratulations to **Shannon LaSpaluto**, who was promoted to Court Operations Supervisor at Southeast Adult after serving as a specialist.

### PHOENIX SUNS CASUAL DAYS

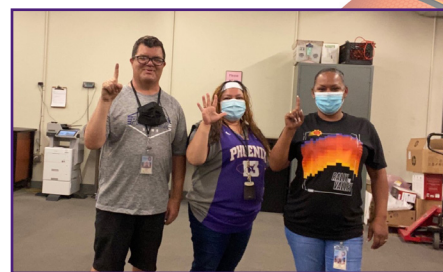


Laura Martinez

During the Phoenix Suns play-off run, Clerk employees are allowed to wear their Suns apparel on the days of their games. Following are staff members who have participated.



Vanessa Martinez, Sara Barba, and Shannon LaSpaluto



Dominic Navarro, Frances Horst, and Desiree Macias



# Special Features



## Where in the world has the Record Times been?



### The Record Times appears in Northern AZ

Each month, employees are invited to submit photos of themselves with the newsletter at different destinations. Last month, the newsletter was seen with an employee who was inside of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Illinois. This month, the newsletter appears in the great outdoors.

Pictured in this photo to the left is Court Operations Lead **Kathryn Folk**, who works in the Grand Jury Transcripts & Discovery and Confidential Department. She said it was a windy moment with the newsletter at Vermillion Cliffs in Northern Arizona.

**You may submit a photo** with the *Record Times* at any time. To submit a photo: **1)** Print the newsletter front page; **2)** Take a photo(s) with the page during

your outing (in the community, state, or out-of-state); **3)** Email the photo to Len Keso with your name, department, and a photo description, along with any other interesting details of the photo/vacation. Anyone who submits a photo will receive a Maricopa County lapel pin (pictured here).



## Where in the world has the Record Times' Flat Stamp-Ley been?



### Flat Stamp-Ley live "streams"

In January, the *Record Times* introduced a new photo feature called **Flat Stamp-Ley (FS)**. FS is a character print-out for employees to either send to a family member/friend to take a photo of it somewhere interesting, or for the employee to take a photo of it somewhere interesting. Here's the details of this month's Flat Stamp-Ley appearance:

**Photo Submitted By:** Len Keso

**Where is FS:** Natural Bridge Park, Alabama

**Description:** The photo of FS is taken while it rests between tree trunks by a scenic stream that runs through the park which features a natural rock bridge.

To submit a photo of Flat Stamp-Ley:

- 1)** Print it ([available here](#));
- 2)** Then either **a)** send FS to a family member/friend to take a photo of it somewhere in the world; or **b)** take a photo yourself of FS somewhere interesting;
- 3)** send the photo to Len Keso with your name, department, who FS is with, where FS is located, and any other interesting note about the photo.

# The Statistic Cupboard



## A Dish of Trivia

*The Domestic Relations/Family  
Court filings the Office received:*

1971 - **10,578**

1981 - **20,459**

1991 - *unavailable*

2001 - **32,833**

2011 - **35,408**

Last Year - **31,795**

1971 & 1981 are calendar year / 2001 - 2020 are fiscal year



## A Cup of News

*In the last 10 years of the Office's  
Annual Holiday Drive that is held  
in November in December through  
donation boxes set up in the  
Breakrooms, Clerk of the Court  
employees have donated a total of:*

**1,868** pairs of socks for the homeless

**1,479** new toys for children



## A Scoop of Information

*The Office averages  
**208** filings a day  
through its internal  
and external Filing  
Depository boxes.  
The boxes are an  
alternative to the  
filing counters.*

The background features a stylized American flag with red, white, and blue stripes and a blue field with white stars. The bottom half of the image is filled with a dark blue background featuring bright, white, starburst-like fireworks or light trails radiating upwards.

**Have a safe  
and enjoyable  
Independence Day  
holiday weekend!**

**From:**  
**Jeff Fine, Clerk of the Court**  
**Nancy Rodriguez, Chief Deputy**  
**Valerie Clark and Mike Nimitz, Deputy Directors**  
**Rich McHattie, Chief Innovation and Technology Officer**