

Advocates for Children



Dependent Children's Services Division, Administrative Office of the Courts
Arizona Supreme Court
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Judge C. Kimball Rose Remembered

J.W. Brown, Media Relations Director, Judicial Branch in Maricopa County

Judge C. Kimball Rose, who in his 24-year judicial career served as Presiding Judge of Superior Court in Maricopa County (1990-1995) and 11 years as Presiding Juvenile Court Judge (1978-1989), passed away on Tuesday, Nov. 28. Services were held at the First Baptist Church in Scottsdale.

"Believing he was helping the young people with whom he worked, Kim felt he had found his niche in juvenile court," said his wife of 46 years, Carol. During his years in juvenile court, he worked to improve the lives of the children who came to the court because of alleged criminal misdeeds or because they were victims of abuse, neglect or abandonment. To that end, he was key in creating an association of volunteers who worked with children in the "system," to be sure their rights were protected and their needs fulfilled.

"He activated and organized the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program in the state of Arizona," Carol Rose explained. In 1989 he was the first recipient of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association's Judge of the Year Award. He accepted the award at the organization's national conference in San Diego. When he received the award, the then Arizona CASA Director referred to Judge Rose as the "father" of the CASA program that was launched in Superior Court in Maricopa County in 1985 as a pilot program sponsored by the Arizona Supreme Court. Judge Rose also was later recognized as the driving force behind the expansion of the program to other counties around the state.

Judge Rose also is credited for the creation of a program to assist individuals representing themselves in family law matters. The court's Self Service Center, which opened on Oct. 5, 1995, is recognized as one of the first and most innovative programs in the nation that in its 10 years has served as the model for similar

centers created by courts around the country. He was specially recognized at the Self-Service Center's 10th anniversary on Oct. 5, 2005.

Judge Rose was a 1957 graduate from Arizona State College (now ASU) with a bachelor of arts degree in secondary education who went on to study law and receive his law degree at the University of Arizona College of Law in 1962. He worked in private practice in the Valley until his appointment to the bench in 1972.

Perhaps the reason Judge Rose particularly enjoyed his work in Juvenile Court was because for him, his family was a most important aspect of his life.

As his family talks about his life, they point out that he loved being a judge, but "as a husband and father, he shone."

He made sure he attended his children's (two daughters, one son) special events, even when it meant sitting in a parked car in the summer, doing his paperwork, while keeping an eye on their athletic competitions. He'd leap from the car, to catch the action and give a cheer.

Judge Rose is survived by his wife, Carol; daughter Laura Kathleen Smith of Colorado and son Grant Kimball Rose of Phoenix. His daughter Linda Ann White died suddenly in 2002. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Rainbow Acres, P.O. Box 1326, Camp Verde, Arizona 86322.

Jackie Flowers Resigns Her CASA Post after 21 years

Laurie Laughlin, Program Manager, Maricopa County CASA Program

Jacquelyn Flowers, a CASA with the Maricopa County CASA Program, decided to step down after 21 years of service. Jackie began with CASA in 1986, advocated for eight children and mentored hundreds of CASAs. She has been active in the community for foster children, human rights and other issues for many, many years. She attended the 1986 charter orientation training class at the Supreme Court when Jan Lindsey was the state CASA Program Manager. Her CASA volunteer file has letters of thanks from different Judicial Officers, court staff, the National CASA Association and others in the child welfare community. Jackie has been active with the League of Women Voters, is a former recipient of the Hon Kachina Award, the top honor for community volunteers and was nominated more than once for the National CASA of the year, just for starters.

Jackie's service far exceeded anyone's expectations. Maricopa County Superior Court Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, Eileen S. Willett, and CASA Program staff, past and present, gathered together on Thursday, Nov. 16th, to honor Jackie with special recognition for service to the court and the community. Jackie was presented with a plaque to commemorate her contributions, a framed certificate of thanks and a CASA memory book, filled with congratulations and fond remembrances.

Jackie is a mother, grandmother and great grandmother. She worked as an educator and school nurse. When she retired, Jackie joined the CASA Program. Al Flowers, her husband, was also actively involved on the Arizona Council for CASA Inc. non-profit board for many years. They continue to work with the Arizonans for Children Board, having been one of the founders of that organization which continues to serve our foster youth.

Jackie's contributions are immeasurable, her value to our foster youth invaluable and her legacy incalculable. We cannot say thank you enough. Nor can we adequately express how much she means to this program, having been the heart and soul for so many years. The Arizona Republic and the Capitol Times will both ran articles about Jackie Flowers' retirement.

FCRB Honors Volunteers

Volunteers Ellen Leibow of Phoenix and Mark Beehler of Gilbert have been selected to receive the Foster Care Review Board's quarterly Exemplary Service Award for their service on behalf of Arizona's foster children. Ellen has served on the Foster Care Review Board for nearly 7 years and is also a member of the FCRB's State Board. Ellen's impact has been very beneficial for all who have crossed paths with her as she shares her in depth knowledge of the Arizona Early Intervention Program (AZEIP). She routinely assists with the training of new Board members and is always prepared for her monthly reviews.

Mark has served on the Foster Care Review Board for almost 11 years. As his local Board's Chair, Mark is extremely helpful to his fellow board members. Mark insists on ensuring that the utmost respect is afforded to all interested parties attending reviews. Mark's positive demeanor is contagious to all who come in contact with him. The FCRB is grateful for Ellen's and Mark's dedication and service.

Sibling Reunion Day

Fourth Annual Event a Success

Karen Brown, Arizona Friends of Foster Children Foundation (AFFCF)

The 4th Annual Sibling Reunion Day event was held on Saturday, October 14th in Central Phoenix. Hosted by AFFCF, the event provided an opportunity for nearly 70 children to come together from across the Valley to visit with their brothers and sisters for a day of fun, games, and food. AFFCF organizers worked with the Foster Care Review Board, the Court Appointed Special Advocate program, and Child Protective Services to identify sibling groups who are placed in separate foster care facilities and therefore have limited chances to spend time together. Twenty-nine family groups were represented at the event.

Although the picnic was scheduled to take place at Margaret T. Hance Park, heavy rain prompted implementation of the rainy day backup plan. First Congressional United Church of Christ located at 1407 North Second Street generously opened their doors so the children would not be disappointed. The 66 volunteers for the event made the best out of the situation. Luckily the sun came out by early afternoon so many children chose to move out to the open air courtyard to play. It so happened that the Church had a pet blessing scheduled for the courtyard, so it was quite a busy scene! The children were especially entertained by a 32-year old desert tortoise father and his small daughter tortoise who received a blessing. Another hit was the surprise arrival of an ice-cream truck, sponsored by Paul and Amy Blavin. The children could select any item they wanted. What a treat!

Each child left with a goody bag and a portrait of their family taken in the courtyard, printed and placed in a paper frame which they could decorate. Disposable cameras distributed to each family group were collected. A set of prints were placed in a small photo album and mailed to each child. These items will be a reminder of the cherished memories the families were able to share.

Congratulations and Thank You, Kirk!

Please join the CASA Program in congratulating Kirk Grugel, the Superior Court Employee of the Year and CASA Coordinator in Navajo County. "This is a great recognition, and I am deeply grateful and honored." Kirk said in an interview. Kirk has doubled the size of the Navajo County CASA Program in less than two years. This is no small feat. His persistence and commitment to advocating for the best interests of foster children in Navajo County and the White Mountains is unparalleled. The Superior Court Employee of the Year Award is a significant recognition of his heartfelt dedication.

The CASA Program would also like to recognize Kirk for his outstanding work for the CASA Program statewide. Kirk spent four hours on the morning of Dec. 13 recording nearly forty radio public service announcements at the studio of Majik 101.7 FM in Show Low.

Thank you, Kirk, for your enthusiasm and efforts. We also thank Chris Stevens of Majik 101.7 for his support of the CASA Program and work on producing the PSAs. Your hard work is much appreciated.

Coconino County CASA Program Turns 20

Nearly five hundred children have been served by Court Appointed Special Advocates in Coconino County since October 1, 1986. Judge Margaret McCullough praised the program and the Advocates at a CASA appreciation luncheon on Dec. 14. "CASAs are the ones that help me understand a child's case. Their court reports are the first piece I

review because I know their reports will link all the pieces of the puzzle together. Without CASAs, my job would be much more difficult.”

Judge McCullough and other judicial officers and representatives from the Arizona State CASA Program also recognized CASA Mary Robertson and Coconino County CASA Coordinator, Kathy Meadows. Both have been with the program for 20 years. Mary was honored with a token of appreciation and kind words from her fellow CASAs. In turn, Bonnie Marcus, Program Manager for the Arizona State CASA Program, gave accolades to Kathy who began her career with CASA as support staff.

Upon the retirement of the first program coordinator, Kathy was promoted to the county program’s top position. With grace, she thanked all who have supported her along the way, “I can’t believe it’s been 20 years! Thank you all so much for your support, but most importantly, CASAs, thank you. You are the reason my job means so much.”

National Adoption Day

A Reflection

Working in the “system” can desensitize you to the stories of child abuse or neglect you hear. Each day about twenty children enter the foster care system in Arizona; these become twenty more stories of failed parenting, drugs, and abuse. The entry into the system is the first step in a long journey through a complicated judicial and social services system. What is somewhat comforting, though, is that for a few lucky children, the system delivers them hope: adoption.

On November 18, 2006, I had the privilege to witness nearly 200 children arrive on National Adoption Day for their day in court. This day was atypical of what you may think of when you hear the word court. For these children, it meant the end to two or more years in the system. Someone had stepped forward to provide a child, or in some cases children, with the hope of a “forever home.”

One little girl in particular I remember well. This two-year-old was getting adopted by two extraordinary parents. As they approached the courtroom where the judge would officially declare them the adoptive parents, their anticipation grew. The princess played and smiled, I suspect not fully understanding the totality of what was happening. The entire proceeding was completed in about fifteen minutes, and it was official: the little princess was now a part of a “forever home.”

The heart cannot seal itself from such an experience. As an insider to the system and as an outsider to the family, I could not help but be touched. Many children do not get this lucky, but at least for this little girl, the system worked. Now she will have a home in which to flourish and become whoever she wants to be for the seed of love was planted.

Pima County Celebrates 10 Years as a Dependency Model Court

Chris Swenson-Smith, M.S.W.

Division Director, Children & Family Services, Pima County Juvenile Court

On the evening of October 27th, nearly 150 “stakeholders” gathered at Pima County Juvenile Court’s training center to celebrate 10 years of collaboration as one of the first dependency Model Courts in the country. Judges, attorneys, CPS managers, CASA staff, and court staff – old and new – were treated to a Mexican food buffet, an awards ceremony, and best of all a chance to meet or catch up with some of the founding fathers and mothers of Tucson’s Model Court Project.

If you have worked in the dependency system in Arizona for more than 10 years, you will likely remember when it took three weeks for the first court hearing in a dependency case (and even then it was perfunctory), or when court wards spent more than three years in foster care on average, or when a third of dependent children left the system by “aging out” when they turned 18, and when families appeared before 5 or 6 judges during the life of the case. But if you’re a newcomer, you might take for granted such things as a Preliminary Protective Hearing, or the “One family/one judge” concept, or even knowing the date of your next court hearing at the end of the last one.

These are all practice improvements that were proposed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ Permanency Planning for Children Department, outlined in the *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases*, published in 1995. The Council sought out courts around the U.S. who were willing to take on the responsibility of overseeing child welfare reforms within their own jurisdictions, and admit that the system was “broken.” Under the leadership of Judge Nanette Warner, Tucson stepped forward. It began with a collaboration – now known as the Dependency Model Court Working Committee – that has met at least monthly for ten years: judges, CPS administrators, behavioral health administrators, court staff, CASA staff, attorneys and others who have an interest in ongoing system evaluation and change. The Pre-Hearing Conference and Preliminary Protective Hearings were tried as a pilot in one CPS unit, with a few judges, and then expanded to the whole District II.

It wasn’t long before Judge Warner was speaking to the Arizona legislature about the benefits of getting families into court early, having just one judge oversee their cases, and even assigning legal counsel to parents and children right away. Soon, “Model Court” principles turned into state legislation, and juvenile courts around the state began to change their approach to dependency cases.

Ten years later, Pima County has seen profound changes in outcomes for children and families:

	<u>1996</u>	<u>2005</u>
1 st hearing:	21 days	5-7 days
1 st meaningful hearing:	30-90 days	5-7 days
Services in place:	30-90 days	5-7 days
Avg time in care:	3.3 years	2.1 years
Reunification:	31% of cases	44% of cases
Children “aging out”:	33% of cases	10% of cases

So there was indeed occasion to celebrate on October 27th, as well as to honor the “pioneers” who first took on the challenge of collaborating for dependency system reform. Many of these stakeholders remain active in Pima County, participating in working committee meetings and serving on sub-committees to implement goals set annually. This year, the Tucson Model Court hopes to achieve these three goals:

- Improve educational outcomes for dependent children
- Increase the successful provision of timely and effective substance abuse services to parents; and
- Provide better and more effective ways for the child’s voice to be heard in all aspects of dependency hearings.

There are now 32 dependency Model Court sites in the U.S., including large cities like New York and Los Angeles. Each is assigned a liaison through NCJFCJ for technical assistance and support. As one of the first, Tucson frequently hosts site visits from newer or prospective Model Courts around the country. A team of stakeholders from Pima County attends a national All-Sites Model Court conference annually to compare initiatives, learn, and, well....brag.

And the Tucson Model Court stakeholders had much to brag about. As Presiding Judge Pat Escher stated at the 10th anniversary celebration:

“The most important accomplishment of this project has been to operationalize an oxymoron: we have institutionalized change.”

Chief Justice Ruth V. McGregor Launches “Law for Seniors” Initiative

In October 2006, Chief Justice Ruth V. McGregor announced the publication of a newspaper type brochure and web site that specifically address legal concerns faced by Arizona seniors and those who care for them.

“The ‘Law for Seniors’ brochure and web site will help seniors and their families protect and prepare themselves legally, physically, and financially for challenges posed by aging,” said Chief Justice McGregor.

The “Law for Seniors” Brochure will be available at:

- Every state court facility in Arizona; including JP, municipal, superior and appellate courts; and
- Walgreens Pharmacy locations across the state.

The Area Agency on Aging will also distribute the brochures to Senior Centers.

The Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education, lead by Dr. Kevin Ruegg, created the *www.lawforseniors.org* web site. Dr. Ruegg said, “The web site will empower our seniors by putting answers right within their reach. Whether facing eviction, emergency medical situations, elder abuse, or unscrupulous predatory lenders, knowing one’s rights is the first line of defense. Thanks to the Arizona Supreme Court, the seniors have a resource that empowers them.”

The new brochure and web site are just two parts of a “Senior Toolkit” created by the Arizona Supreme Court in recent years to help seniors and those who care for them. Other significant parts of the “Senior Toolkit” include:

- Providing an “Elder Law Hotline” at 800-231-5441, where those over the age of sixty can speak with an attorney and ask actual legal questions.
- Establishing a committee, chaired by Vice Chief Justice Rebecca White Berch, to standardize and simplify probate procedures throughout Arizona.
- Licensing and monitoring fiduciaries, who manage the financial and personal matters of those who are unable to do so themselves. By licensing fiduciaries, the Administrative Office of the Courts assures that those fiduciaries are qualified, competent, and that they comply with the law.

Training Corner

Jeff Harrison, CASA Training Specialist

Last issue we discussed changing the frequency of the CASA orientations to eleven per year alternating between Phoenix and Tucson. This idea came about during a meeting of the CASA Training Focus Group. This focus group consists of staff from the state CASA office and CASA coordinators from various counties. Another idea was to align the presentations during the two-day orientation to create a flow that would help new CASAs achieve a better understanding of the process. The first day is focused on the processes, laws, and players of the dependency system along with the basics of what a CASA should know prior to starting a case. The second day concentrates on family dynamics and issues that could affect the cases they will be working with.

Another training in the works is the creation of a one-day refresher training for experienced CASAs. Planning is in the preliminary stages, but we feel that this will be something that CASAs can benefit from. There will be more information regarding this as we come closer to implementing the training.

Also, the format of the online training tools has been updated at www.azcasa.org. We are reviewing the content of the online training forums in an ongoing effort to provide the most current information for volunteers and staff. We welcome suggestions for content and updates.

The Foster Care Review Board has also been working hard to improve training for new board members. We have been reviewing our curriculum and looking for ways to more adequately address issues and concerns members face. Our trainings have been full with over 25 new board members joining us at our November New Board Member Orientation in Tucson. Our next orientation is scheduled in Phoenix for Feb. 23-24.

Welcome to Our New Staff

Transition is defined as the passage from one state, stage, subject, or place to another. Nothing is more constant than transition. The Dependent Children's Services Division is no different. Several staffing changes have occurred since the last issue of "Advocates for Children." Please join us in welcoming our new friends and saying "all the best" to our 'old' friends.

CASA

Joined Us:

Debby Bess, Support Staff, Yavapai County
Josie Castillo, Support Staff, Gila County
Maria Chairez, Support Staff, Yuma County
Margie Fish, Coordinator, Santa Cruz County
Jessica Harvey, Support Staff, Maricopa County
Sue Hutcheson, Coordinator, Maricopa County

Resigned:

Charlotte Farr, Gila County

Laurie Laughlin, former Program Manager of Maricopa County CASA Program

Ramona Lopez, former Coordinator of Santa Cruz County CASA Program

Grace Nabor, former Coordinator in Maricopa County is the new Justice of Peace in

Greenlee County!

Eileen Smith, former support staff in Yavapai County

FCRB

Joined Us:

Erica Baker will join FCRB on Jan. 15, 2007 as a Program Specialist.

Angelica Neal joined the FCRB family on Nov. 6 as a Program Specialist.

Tracy Fish came on board Dec. 4 as a Program Specialist.

Resigned:

Meghan Firchau was a Program Specialist for a year and half. Meghan left us Oct. 27 and is now pursuing a graduate degree at Arizona State University.

Steve Wiesenthal was FCRB's Training Specialist until Dec. 8. Steve now works in the tech industry designing websites.

As each person transitions either into the Division or into new pursuits, we wish each success. Thank you to everyone who makes the Division a great place to work! ☺

Upcoming Events

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

The CASA Program proudly presents 'Hope Floats' Lantern Lighting Ceremony at Tempe Town Lake, Thursday, March 22, 2007.

Join us in lighting hope for all abused, neglected, and abandoned children in Arizona and around the world by floating a lantern on Tempe Town Lake.

The origins of the lantern dates back to ancient Japan. The floating lantern is a way of paying respect to those who have gone before. For us, this means the children who have been victimized by abuse and neglect have carried a burden they do not deserve. These children remind us that we must continue to educate about the horrors of child abuse and that there is hope for them to have permanent, nurturing homes.

Please join us on March 22nd to remember the children for whom we light a candle in hope and remembrance.