

JUDICIARY TIMES

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Spring 2012

Justice Long Retires

Jurist Leaves a Legacy of Work That Shaped the Lives of New Jersey Residents

By Mike Mathis

Judiciary Times Editor

Retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Virginia Long has ruled on some of the state's landmark legal cases in the past two decades, but she's quick to emphasize that every court case is important.

Matrimonial and property rights cases are just as significant as those involving affordable housing, school funding and same sex marriage, even though those cases get the most attention.

"We may take a case to establish a legal principle going forward, but every one of these cases involves somebody's life, somebody's child, somebody's injury, somebody going to jail," Long said in an interview prior to her March 1 retirement. "Every case was a person's life, spread out on a piece of paper."

Long retired after a career on the bench that lasted more than three decades, including 12 years on the New Jersey Supreme Court.

She said she didn't want to step down, but had to because she reached the mandatory retirement age of 70.

"I'd die with my proverbial judge boots on if I could," said Long, adding that she still maintains the mental stamina to sustain the grueling hours and 7-day workweeks of a Supreme Court justice.

Chief Justice Stuart Rabner called Long "one of the finest individuals ever to have served as a member of the Judiciary."

"To spend just a few minutes with her is to know her towering intellect and the depth of knowledge she possesses on all subjects," the chief justice said during Long's last session on the bench in February. "When she says at conference she's thought a bit about an issue, that's the understatement of the day."

"Having written more than 3,000 judicial opinions, there are few issues that she hasn't mastered or taught so many of us about," he said.

During her tenure as a judge and justice, Long mentored 67 law clerks, who learned by her example to treat everyone with respect and kindness, no matter their standing in life.

"The life lessons learned from the justice are too legion to catalog," said Jessica Gomperts, who clerked for Long from 1998 to 1999, Long's last year in the Appellate Division, and from 1999 to 2000 on the Supreme Court.



Justice Virginia Long spent more than three decades on the bench, first as a trial court judge, then as an appellate judge, before Gov. Christine Todd Whitman nominated her to the Supreme Court in 1999.

Three Vicinages Selected for Pilot Jury Questionnaire Program

By Tom Jindracek

Operations Division Manager

Passaic Vicinage

Passaic Vicinage has been selected as one of three vicinages to pilot a program designed to increase the number of online responses to the jury questionnaire.

Jurors currently receive the questionnaire in the mail, and more than 80 percent respond by mail, even though they can do so from their computers by logging on to www.njcourts.com/juror.

Beginning in May, prospective jurors in the pilot vicinages – Passaic, Monmouth and Somerset - will receive a letter advising them they have been selected as a potential juror, with directions explaining how to respond online.

If jurors do not respond, they will be mailed a questionnaire. It is hoped that this process will encourage more online responses.

Responding online provides the following advantages:

- Jurors will save the cost of postage
- Jurors will receive an immediate response about whether or not they are qualified to serve

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Passaic Delegation Visits Illinois To Examine JDAI in Action

By Melanie Zajackowski

Family Division Manager
Passaic Vicinage

Representatives from Passaic Vicinage and the Passaic County Human Services Department visited Cook County, Ill. in the fall to observe the positive impact of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) on the Cook County juvenile population.

JDAI joins state and county government with community based treatment service providers to reduce the number of juveniles placed in secure detention. Passaic Vicinage began implementing JDAI in August 2010.

After visiting an evening reporting center used by the Cook County JDAI and speaking with several juveniles participants who explained the program and its impact on them, Passaic began offering therapeutic, tutoring and life

skills programs at its evening center.

Passaic also proceeded with its Probation Detention Alternative Program, which is an alternative to detention for juveniles who would typically be detained on warrants for failure to appear and to promote appearance at court hearings.

It provides juveniles on probation with life skills training, GED classes, bus passes to and from the probation division and specialized incentives to foster and encourage participation in the program and prevent unnecessary detention.

Cook County was one of the first in the United States to implement JDAI. Prior to this initiative, Cook County was housing more than 600 juveniles a day in detention.

Today that number is fewer than 300.

With JDAI innovations, Cook County has been able to expand the number of detention alternatives available to judges, providing more options than secure detention.

Family Presiding Judge Ernest M. Caposela and Trial Court Administrator Marie Faber led the Passaic contingent.

The team included Family Division Manager Melanie Zajackowski; Assistant Chief of Probation Dawn Moody; Court Services Supervisor

II Sonia Valentin; Court Services Supervisor II Danny Kenny; Assistant Deputy Public Defender Larry Alvarez; Director of Youth Services Commission John Givens; Director of the Bridges Program; Le'Var Starr and Juvenile Justice Commission representatives Elaine Chernin and Troy Alexander.

The team visited the Cook County Juvenile Court Complex and received information about probation services, family court resources and community programs during two intensive seminars.

Through the JDAI, Cook County provides programs ranging from art therapy and animal therapy to shelter placements.

While a family could appear at Cook County Family Court because of a juvenile delinquency complaint, they could leave receiving in-home services or educational assistance.

The uniqueness of this initiative is that the majority of services are located at the court complex.

The team also visited a shelter for juveniles who were unable to return home but who should not be held in secure detention.

The facility was innovative, and the staff was caring and motivated to assist juveniles to improve their lives.

Judiciary Times is published by the Office of Communications and Community Relations, the Administrative Office of the Courts, for employees of the Judiciary, volunteers who work with the court system and the public.

The chief justice is Stuart Rabner. The acting administrative director of the courts is Judge Glenn A. Grant.

Please send short news articles, photos and suggestions to Mike Mathis, Editor, *Judiciary Times*, Office of Communications and Community Relations, PO Box 037, Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex, Trenton NJ 08625-0037 or to Mike.Mathis@judiciary.state.nj.us Submissions are subject to editing, and not all can be published.

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Betty Agin; Virginia Ceceres; Ralph Esposito; Giuseppe Fazari; Tom Jindrcek; Tammy Kendig; Donna L. Mazzanti; Brandy McDougald; Melanie Zajackowski and the AOC Print Shop.



Second graders at the Howard R. Yocum Elementary School in Maple Shade gather around Judge Philip E. Haines as he reads *Marshall, the Courthouse Mouse: A Tail of the U.S. Supreme Court* by Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw Barnes as part of the Distinguished Readers Program. Several Burlington Vicinage judges participated in the program.

Justice Virginia Long Retires After More Than 30 Years on Bench

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"I am so fortunate to have started my legal career as a law clerk to Justice Long, a brilliant role model and mentor whose quick wit and big heart engenders the best in everyone around her," said Holly Barbera Freed, supervising staff attorney to the Supreme Court who clerked from 2001 to 2002.

"Justice Long teaches by example the many ways to achieve the most just results: encourage and be open to the expression of diverging viewpoints; maintain a healthy intellectual curiosity, be thoughtful and creative, and test and fine-tune ideas and theories through collaboration with others; and always be guided by a firm foundational sense of integrity and fairness," Freed said.

A native of Elizabeth, Long decided to become a lawyer while she was a student at Dunbarton College of the Holy Cross in Washington, D.C.

She was one of only four women in her class of 125 when she graduated from Rutgers School of Law-Newark in 1966.

"That was pretty unusual in those days," Long said of women who enrolled in law school at that time. "The class ahead of me had one and the class before that had one or none."

Long began her legal career as a deputy attorney general and worked in private practice before she returned to government service in 1975 as director of the Division of Consumer Affairs.

Long also served as director of the Department of Insurance from 1977 until 1978, when Gov. Brendan T. Byrne appointed her to the Superior Court.

Long sat in the civil, criminal and family divisions in Union Vicinage, the civil division in Middlesex Vicinage, the family division in Monmouth Vicinage and was the general equity judge in what was then the Mercer/Somerset/Hunterdon Vicinage.

"At the time I had little children, so there was a level of anxiety," recalled Long, the mother of three and grandmother of four. "It also was a wonderful experience because I got



Justice Virginia Long

to meet a huge number of lawyers and judges I would not have had the opportunity to know if I just sat in one vicinage."

Long said it was sometimes tricky balancing her judicial responsibilities with raising her children, but she did it.

She watched her son compete in many middle and high school track meets and her daughter played ice hockey, which required her to be at practice at 4:30 a.m.

"You need to have a lot of mental and physical energy to do everything," Long said. "But I was so happy I was able to do both things. I had two great lives going at the same time."

In 1984, then-Chief Justice Robert N. Wilentz elevated Long to the Appellate Division, where she served for 15 years and authored 2,000 opinions.

Long said she most enjoyed serving in the Appellate Division because she was able to consider a variety of cases, but she admitted that she felt a little isolated on the fifth floor of the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton at first.

"It was pretty lonely. We were just sitting there all day long, my law clerk and my secretary and me," Long said. "I was used to lawyers who were not appearing before me dropping in."

"But I loved the work so much it made up for it," she said. "I missed

the fray very much, but I love writing opinions, so it wasn't like I was giving up something I loved for something I didn't love."

Long said she would have been happy to remain in the Appellate Division until retirement, but Gov. Christine Todd Whitman nominated her to the Supreme Court in 1999. Gov. Jon Corzine nominated Long for a second term and tenure in 2006.

"No one can ever expect a nomination to the Supreme Court," Long said. "It comes out of the blue and that's the only way it comes. There's no way to make it happen. I had the greatest life as a lawyer and a judge in the trial court and the Appellate Division."

Long's term on the Supreme Court coincided with the court's hearing of cases involving the death penalty, civil unions, affordable housing and school funding.

She chaired and served as a member of numerous Supreme Court committees during her tenure, including Extrajudicial Activities and Judicial Performance.

"Throughout her career, she has been dedicated to enhancing our profession," Rabner said. "In all that she did, she not only exemplified but encouraged others to live up to the very highest of ethical standards."

Long now practices law at Fox Rothchild's Princeton office, where she assists clients with ethics and appellate matters, corporate governance and governmental integrity investigations.

She also serves as a mediator and arbitrator, providing dispute resolution alternatives and heads the firm's pro bono efforts in New Jersey.

Long said she'd like to lecture, teach and go to the movies more often, although she said the frenetic pace of a Supreme Court justice's work could be difficult from which to disengage, even in a busy retirement.

"I start to read a novel at night and I'm gone after a page or two," she said. "I'm terrified and exhilarated (about retirement). "Things are going to change and that's always an adrenaline provider."

Intensive Supervision Program Records Best Month in Five Years

By Virginia Ceceres

Probation Services

Administrative Office of the Courts

February 2012 was an extraordinary month for collections in the New Jersey Intensive Supervision Program (ISP). ISP collected an unprecedented \$320,849 in restitution to victims of crime in New Jersey, the highest collections for ISP in a month since 2007.

ISP has refunded more than \$14 million in restitution to victims of crime since its inception in 1983.

"ISP is a critical component of the Judiciary's overall commitment to New Jersey's victims of crimes," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts. "The new record is a hallmark of effective collection procedures."

ISP Director Harvey M. Goldstein attributed the collections success to the dedication of the judges who serve on the ISP Resentencing Panel to make victims whole and the commitment of ISP's staff to enforce court orders.

ISP focuses on restorative justice and making the victim whole.

Restitution is paid to a variety of victims, including businesses, government agencies and individuals.

ISP participants must pay restitution in full before they can be discharged from the program.

ISP was designed to test whether an intermediate form of punishment for non-violent offenders, one that would be less costly than prison, but more onerous and restrictive than traditional probation, would achieve the criminal justice objective of deterrence and rehabilitation.

Development of a work ethic is a focal point of ISP. All participants must be employed full-time, unless physically unable to do so.

Additional mandates include adherence to a nightly curfew, submission to frequent alcohol and drug testing, performance of community service, verified attendance at treatment meetings, and other

requirements.

ISP has achieved remarkable results in collecting court-ordered restitution, fines and financial assessments, and has monitored thousands of hours of free service to the community.

Those sentenced to state prison can be eligible for ISP consideration. Candidates cannot have been convicted of homicide, a sex offense, a crime of the first degree, robbery, organized criminal activity, or certain gun offenses.

Those who are serving a prison term with a period of parole ineligibility are eligible for program consideration at the completion of that period.

Participants are required to live in New Jersey.

Applicants who meet the initial eligibility requirements are interviewed by the ISP Screening Board, which consists of citizen members appointed by the chief justice, representatives of the New Jersey Department of Corrections and a designated ISP representative.

A final decision on an applicant's eligibility and status is made at the hearing by the ISP Resentencing Panel. The panel also reviews the case progress of each participant every 90 days and makes program violation, revocation and graduation determinations.

ISP has received numerous awards and national recognition as one of the nation's most effective prison reentry programs.

The program has been recognized by such organizations as the Council on State Governments, the American Parole and Probation Association (APPA) and the Council on Compulsive Gambling in New Jersey.

ISP is an advocate for victim's rights through restitution collections. The APPA recently bestowed the Joe Kegans Award for Victim Services in Probation and Parole on ISP for its collection efforts.



Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, congratulates Kirsy Altigracia Hoagland, a native of the Dominican Republic who works in the civil division in the Burlington Vicinage, as she receives her naturalization certificate during Law Day ceremonies at the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton on May 4. Hoagland was one of 50 new citizens to whom Grant administered the Oath of Allegiance. Other Law Day festivities included a mock trial and the presentation of awards to youth who won the YouTube Video Contest, which was sponsored by the young lawyer's division of the New Jersey State Bar Association. Information about Law Day festivities across New Jersey will be published in the summer edition of the *Judiciary Times*.

New Jersey Ranks High in Backlog Reduction, Traffic Cases

By **Giuseppe Fazari**

Assistant Trial Court Administrator
Essex Vicinage

Since the New Jersey constitution was amended in 1947 to create a unified judicial branch, the Judiciary has collected data on a wide range of court measures.

Chief among them is the number of cases in backlog status.

The number of backlog cases has dropped more than 60 percent since 1992, when there were 76,002 cases in backlog – the highest backlog since standards were established.

Although the Judiciary has experienced a slight increase in backlog during the last several years, there has been a dramatic reduction in backlog when taken in historical context.

The New Jersey Judiciary has had remarkable success in reducing its backlog during the last two decades, but how does New Jersey's performance compare to the rest of the nation's state courts?

The court has fared very well, particularly when comparing factors such as number of judges per 100,000 population and caseload volume per judge, which rated New Jersey above the median for both non-traffic and traffic/violations filings.

An estimated 95 percent of all legal matters in the United States are filed in the state courts.

Differences in court structure, jurisdiction, and caseload, among other things, make comparisons an arduous task for administrators who seek a clearer assessment of the third branch of government.

Difficult as it may be, such is the objective of the Court Statistics Project. The project is sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), National Center for State Courts (NCSC), Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA), and National Association for Court Management (NACM).

The NCSC staffs the project and its publication is directed and reviewed by

the Court Statistics Committee. The advisory group is composed of state court administrators, faculty, and court administrators, including the Essex Vicinage Trial Court Administrator (TCA), Collins Ijoma.

"The work of the Court Statistics Committee is of great value to court administrators from the local to the state level," said Ijoma, who has been member of the committee since 2005. "Without these reports we would have to undertake our own ad hoc survey to glean comparative information from other states.

"The reports are a convenient source to make the case for resources and funding, to demonstrate to the public the scope of judiciary activity, and to chronicle trends in the various case types that come to the courts," Ijoma said.

The committee meets twice a year and is charged with drawing parallels among the states' distinct caseloads.

The annual report is the culmination of a gargantuan undertaking that includes a cooperative effort from state court administrators, who provide data from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Data analysis is provided by the National Center for State Courts. The project that now spans more than three decades in collecting and interpreting state court data is the premier and authoritative analysis of the judiciaries' output.

New Jersey has a rate of nearly

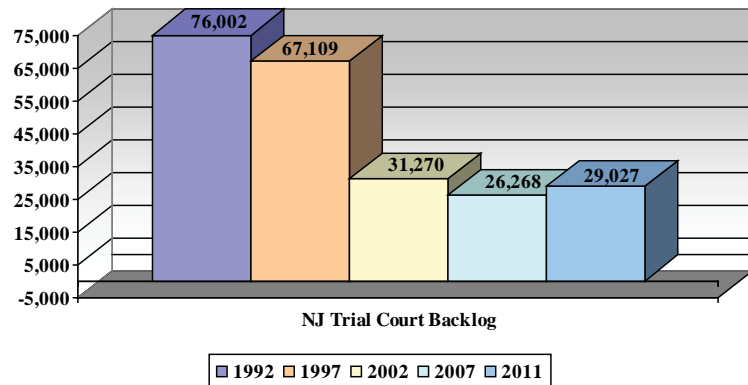
65,000 traffic/violations cases per 100,000 individuals – the highest rate among the states surveyed.

In fact, the state with the next highest rate, Hawaii, recorded only about half of New Jersey's volume, with 33,171 traffic/violations per 100,000.

The research noted several factors impacting the significant volume in New Jersey, including population density, a well-established statewide traffic case management system, the number of large cities relative to other states, and the heavily-traveled highway corridors that run through the state such as the Garden State Parkway and Interstate 95.

Apart from collecting and analyzing the work of the nation's courts, articles are authored "by practitioners, for practitioners" on a variety of timely issues impacting the states.

Recent articles can be found on the project's website, www.courtstatistics.org.



Did You Know?

The Judiciary uses Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to communicate the work of the courts to the public and court staff?

The Judiciary uses RSS feeds and SMS text alerts to inform users about court news, closings and Supreme Court decisions.

To sign up for these services, go to nj-courts.com and look for the icons on the right side.

Middlesex Vicinage Holds First Justice Academy for Youth

By **Betty Agin**

Middlesex Vicinage

The Middlesex Vicinage held its first Justice Academy in April.

The event, which was co-sponsored by the Middlesex County Bar Foundation, was developed by Family Court Judge Alberto Rivas to teach high school students about career opportunities in the Judiciary.

The vicinage hosted 20 students from Perth Amboy High School who participated during their school's spring break.

"The Judiciary has an enduring commitment to educate the public and in so doing, interface with county schools in order to familiarize their students with how the New Jersey court

system functions as well as potential vocational opportunities," Middlesex Vicinage Assignment Judge Travis L. Francis said. "It is our mission to provide each student with a varied and detailed look at the court system."

The students learned about the court-related career opportunities during presentations given by division managers. They observed cases in the criminal, civil, special civil, family and drug courts.

"We care about each of our students and want to maximize learning about the justice system," Judge Rivas said.

Among the agencies that participated in the program were the Middlesex County Sheriff's Department, the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office, the Middlesex County Public

Defender's Office and the Middlesex Vicinage probation division. Staff from Rutgers University also gave presentations.

Registration Kiosk Adds to Proficiency in Monmouth Probation

By **Ralph Esposito**

Assistant Chief Probation Officer
Monmouth Vicinage

Monmouth Vicinage has implemented a computerized sign-in procedure for probation's adult supervision unit.

Modeled after a system used at wireless communication stores, clients are able to sign in via a touch screen located at a kiosk in the probation office lobby.

Officers are now notified electronically on their PC when their client signs in at the kiosk.

In the past, clients wrote their name on a clipboard and sat in the waiting area.

Officers had to leave their work stations periodically to check on the arrival of clients.

The new system greatly reduces unnecessary trips to the waiting area and allows supervisors and managers to monitor clients' waiting time.

The equipment also is programmed to highlight any client who has been waiting longer than a pre-determined amount of time.

The supervisor can then make a determination on whether assistance is needed.

Reports also can be generated to capture data on client volume and the average time spent per visit.

Additional reports can be developed as required. The kiosk was designed as a collaborative effort between the information technology and probation divisions.

Burlington Vicinage Hosts Graduation Ceremony for Sex-Specific Probationers

By **Brandy McDougald**

Senior Probation Officer
Sex Offender Unit
Burlington Vicinage

Four probationers graduated from the Burlington Vicinage probation division's first counseling group specifically for sex offenders on Feb. 21.

The probation division, in conjunction with Lifepsych Corp., started the program in January 2010.

The groups, which comprise probationers and parolees, meet on Wednesday nights at the probation division in Mount Holly. A second night was added due to the overwhelming need. A total of 18 people are enrolled in three groups.

The crimes the defendants committed include endangering the welfare of a child, criminal sexual contact, aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, failure to register as a sex offender and child abuse.

A probation officer can recommend counseling based on evaluations and/or details that are obtained from the presentence report.

Under the guidance of psychologist

Gabriel Levin, defendants are required to talk openly about their victims and the charges against them; possess an understanding of their behavior, including what triggers it and its consequences, and develop or improve their empathy toward others.

Before they were discharged from counseling, the defendants had to disclose the details of their crimes to a therapist and a friend or relative who accompanied them. They also had to tell their probation officers.

Lifepsych Corp., which is based in Cherry Hill, provides individual, family and group counseling as well as evaluations and assessments.

Editor's Note

The deadline for the summer 2012 edition of the *Judiciary Times* is Friday, June 8.

Story ideas and submissions can be sent to Mike.Mathis@judiciary.state.nj.us.

Central Office Employees Bring Their Children To Justice Complex



More than 100 children of employees of the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts visited the Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex in Trenton on April 26 for Take Our Children to Work Day.

The children played Judicial Jeopardy with Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, shadowed their parents on the job, saw a K-9 demonstration, participated in a mock trial and worked an art project.

New Jersey Judiciary Recognizes Jurors' Contributions to Justice During Law Week

By Tammy Kendig

Administrative Office of the Courts

As part of its Law Week events, the New Jersey Judiciary recognized the contributions to justice made by New Jersey citizens who serve as jurors.

Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts, said, "Our Law Day theme for 2012, 'Courts, Justice, Freedom' provides an ideal context in which to express our gratitude to the thousands of jurors whose service is vital to the work of the courts and the delivery of justice to the people of New Jersey.

"The Judiciary recognizes the extraordinary service that jurors provide and we endeavor to make juror service convenient, to operate efficiently, and to provide an experience that demonstrates the fairness of the justice system in New Jersey," he said.

The Judiciary's website, njcourts.com, featured jurors' own statements about their juror experience.

The comments were part of routine surveying that Judiciary jury managers conduct statewide. Sample juror comments, in addition to those that were posted daily online, included the following:

"I felt very proud to participate in the

truly best system of justice anywhere in the world and felt good to be an American" (Salem grand juror)

About 200,000 trial jurors and 11,000 grand jurors serve in New Jersey each year.

In addition to implementing a process by which jurors can respond online to their juror qualification questionnaire, Judiciary jury managers also post information on the Judiciary website for jurors to review the evening before their reporting date so that they can be advised about any late changes that affect the need for jurors to report to the courthouse.

Passaic, Two Other Vicinages Pilot Jury Program

Continued from page 1

- Jurors can request to reschedule their date of service
- The environment will benefit by eliminating the need to print and retain paper records.
- Jury staff will have to process less mail, freeing them to provide better customer service when jurors call the office or report for jury service.

Burlington Honors Employees for Excellent Customer Service

By Donna L. Mazzanti

Administrative Supervisor 4
Burlington Vicinage

The Burlington Vicinage celebrated National Employee Appreciation Day on March 6.

The recognition event was sponsored by the vicinage Quality Service Committee, chaired by Ombudsman Heshim "Chip" Thomas and Finance Division Manager Colleen Brooks.

Employees were greeted in the morning with a computer "pop up" message expressing gratitude for their efforts to help the vicinage accomplish its mission to provide access to a fair administration of justice.

Staff also was treated to personality styles training offered by Training Coordinator Frank Carr.

The highlight of the recognition event was a ceremony held for 43 employees who were nominated for their quality service to customers.

Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder and Trial Court Administrator Jude Del Preore presented each employee with a certificate and a chocolate gavel.

Burlington Vicinage Cleans Up and Walks for Earth Day

By Donna L. Mazzanti

Administrative Supervisor 4
Burlington Vicinage

The Burlington Vicinage Green Committee sponsored weeklong activities in observance of Earth Day 2012.

The activities were designed to increase environmental awareness and have staff contribute toward a greener, more efficient work environment.

Throughout April, members collected almost 6,000 plastic shopping bags to donate to Goodwill for recycling.

The celebration culminated on April 20, with vicinage staff encouraged to wear their "green" and walk to lunch instead of drive.

The Green Committee is chaired by Criminal Presiding Judge Jeanne T. Covert and Civil Division Manager Nina Thomas.



Members of the Burlington Vicinage Green Committee (left to right) Pam Nielsen, Kathy McCrink, Alicia Cairns, Kirsy Hoagland, Marianne Shimer and co-chair Nina Thomas pose with some of the 6,000 bags the committee collected as part of its Earth Day observation.

Searchable Index of Civil Judgments Now Available Online

By Tammy Kendig

Administrative Office of the Courts

A searchable index of civil judgments is now available on the Judiciary website, njcourts.com.

The index is located on the left side of the page under the heading "Online Resources."

"The online judgment index is one more way the courts are improving customer service," said Judge Glenn A. Grant, acting administrative director of the courts.

"Before, court users had to travel to the court house or to the Superior Court Clerk's Office in Trenton to search the index," Judge Grant said. "Now the information is available online to anyone, anywhere, at any time."

The index allows anyone to find statewide judgment liens filed in New Jersey. It includes liens resulting from

civil, criminal, and family cases, administrative agency judgments, defaulted child support payments, Motor Vehicles Commission surcharge debts, certificates of indebtedness from the office of the Public Defender, and unpaid probation fines.

One of the most common uses of the civil judgment database to search liens against real property before it is sold. The availability of the database online will make this process easier and will give buyers and sellers of real property the ability to find judgments in advance of their intended transactions.

Court users are encouraged to look themselves up on the system to confirm its accuracy regarding their open and closed statewide judgment liens. Users can call 609-421-6100 if they have questions or problems with the system.



Mission Statement of the New Jersey Courts

We are an independent branch of government constitutionally entrusted with the fair and just resolution of disputes in order to preserve the rule of law and to protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States and this State.