

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES COURTS IN THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT, 2003

President: **Honorable Richard G. Kopf**

At the board of directors meeting on July 17, 2003, the 2001-2003 officers were reelected for the 2003-2005 term: President Judge Richard G. Kopf, Vice President Frances Ross, and Secretary-Treasurer Ann Fessenden.

In 2003, the executive committee undertook a review of the Society's parent/branch structure to determine if some other structure would better fit the needs of the Society. To this end, the committee conducted two surveys on funding and structure: one to the other circuits to find out how they handle historical programs and one to the branches to find out how each is operating. In response to the findings, the board approved a resolution at its July 17 meeting encouraging each court to annually contribute from its attorney admission fee fund such sums as may be deemed appropriate by the court to support the historical preservation efforts of the local branch. Also at the meeting, the board approved an amended and restated set of bylaws which modernized board operations. During the year, the Society's website was expanded to include the articles of incorporation, bylaws, proposed resolutions and surveys.

The Historical Society sponsored an exhibit area at the 2003 Judicial Conference in Minneapolis. The exhibit, coordinated by the Minnesota branch, featured contributions from several branches as well as displays honoring Minnesota District Judge Earl R. Larson and U.S. Court of Appeals Judge William H. Webster. The Society's ninth newsletter was distributed at the Conference.

At the Society's request, Chief Judge James B. Loken wrote Eighth Circuit federal judges a letter reminding them of the importance of preserving their chambers papers and donating them to an archival institution for historical purposes.

Court of Appeals

The branch continued work on its primary project, a written history of the Eighth Circuit. Author Jeffrey Morris submitted a newly shortened manuscript constituting a seventh draft. When the draft is finalized, the branch will have the history published by a university press. Some funding for this project has been approved from the attorney admission fee fund, and the branch is also engaging in private fund raising. The fourth annual John F. Dillon essay contest at the University of Iowa College of Law, co-sponsored by the Appeals branch and the John F. Dillon Inn of Court of Davenport, Iowa, was awarded to Aracely Munoz Contreras for her paper, *The Maquiladora Murders: Eradicating Child Labor Beyond the Factory Walls*.

Arkansas Eastern and Western

The Eastern and Western Districts of Arkansas have as an ongoing project the collection of biographical essays on Eastern and Western District judges from 1836-1960. Sixteen of the 17 essays have been completed. When all essays have been received, they will be

submitted for publication. The Western District of Arkansas has also been instrumental in having display boxes installed and judges' portraits hung in the Fayetteville courthouse.

Iowa Southern

The branch held its annual meeting on June 20, 2003. District Judge Charles R. Wolle's retirement video was completed, and Bankruptcy Judge Russell J. Hill's retirement video is being planned. Arrangements have been made to have judges' portraits reframed and hung together in display cases in the courthouse. In order to raise funds, the branch also commissioned the creation of a poster depicting Eighth Circuit courthouses.

Minnesota

The branch met several times. Most meetings included book report segments and guest speakers reporting on current issues or cases with great historical potential. Branch activities included a judicial papers preservation project, expanding the history page on the district court's external website, and planning the development of an historical display of Judge Earl Larson to be exhibited at the Judicial Conference and the Minneapolis courthouse. In addition, District Judge John Tunheim conducted an historical trial as part of the Landmark Center's Centennial Legal Series.

Missouri Eastern

On April 30, 2003, the branch met to form subcommittees to focus on specific projects such as video interviews with senior judges, a written history of the district, development of the Learning Center at the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse, and projects focusing on famous personalities, notable cases, and the architecture of courthouses in the Eastern District.

Missouri Western

The branch is planning a part-interactive/part-traditional museum to be established in a large ceremonial room on the second public floor of the courthouse. Several proposed architectural renderings have been completed, and the branch has formed two fund-raising committees. The branch hopes preliminary work can begin in early 2004, but it will depend on the success of fund-raising efforts.

Nebraska

Branch projects include a history of the district, 1863-1971, being prepared by Professor John R. Wunder, and videotaped interviews of Nebraska senior federal judges. In 2003, the branch expanded the reach of the Van Pelt History Prize to include high school students participating in the state finals of "Nebraska History Day," as well as college and law students. The 2003 award went to high schooler Megan Berg for her video documentary, *Sterilization in America*, concerning a Nebraska case.

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