

A Message from the Presiding Judge

Trying to Do More with Less

2010 was the year of unpaid furloughs for all Superior Court staff. Superior Court had already lost a Law Clerk/Bailiff position in September 2009. Faced with additional budget cuts coming in 2010, the court would either have to eliminate yet another position or implement unpaid furloughs for all staff.

Trying to maintain the same level of service to the public, the judges decided to mandate unpaid furloughs for all staff including our Court Commissioner, who chose to continue to work full-time

despite a 10% reduction in pay.

We managed to survive the year, but the loss of staff time resulting from the furloughs left many litigants waiting for routine court services, judges trying to work through caseloads without assistance at times, and attorneys waiting extra days to schedule hearings.

Consequently, at the beginning of 2011, the judges decided to eliminate unpaid furloughs. However, the only way to do so was to lay off yet another staff person, one



of our three court reporters. Since September, 2009, we have now lost 25% of our Superior Court staff due to budget cuts!

~Lesley A. Allan
Presiding Judge

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“ETHICS AND EQUITY AND
THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE
DO NOT CHANGE WITH THE
CALENDAR.

~DAVID HERBERT
LAWRENCE

The Trend Continues

For the second year in a row, there was a decrease in overall number of court filings: from 3762 in 2009 to 3603 in 2010. However, there was a slight increase in the number of court hearings: from 13,255 in 2009 to 13,316 in 2010.

The only type of case that saw an increase in filings were civil cases (exclusive of domestic violence cases). Domestic violence filings decreased slightly going from 199 to 183.

Adult criminal filings continued down to 605 in 2010. We

have not seen this low number of criminal cases since 2000. Given the fact that juvenile offender filings are down again, we anticipate that 2011 will see a further decrease in the number of adult criminal filings.

The number of criminal hearings increased slightly from 6214 to 6897. We believe this increase, despite the decrease in new case filings, is due to an increase in the number of probation violations filed by the clerk's collection officer.

The Case of the Disappearing Juvenile Offenders...

500
 478
 468
 289
 234

In 2010 we continued to see a decrease in the amount of juvenile offender filings. While the number of these filings has decreased throughout most of the state, Chelan County saw an even steeper drop in filings.

The number of juvenile offender filings went from 289 to 234. The average number of filings for the seven years from 2000 through 2006 was 533! In 2007 juvenile offender filings dropped to 478, then 468 in 2008, then 289 in 2009.

Incredibly, no one can explain this decrease. We do not know whether it is due to an actual reduction in criminal activity. Law enforce-

ment and school personnel anecdotally report they do not feel the juvenile crime rate is any lower than in years past. Prosecutors indicate they are filing the same percentage of cases reported to them by law enforcement.

We would like to credit our truancy court's effectiveness in keeping potential offenders in school at a higher rate than in the past, but

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"JUSTICE IS JUSTLY REPRESENTED BLIND, BECAUSE SHE SEES NO DIFFERENCE IN THE PARTIES CONCERNED. SHE HAS BUT ONE SCALE AND WEIGHT, FOR RICH AND POOR, GREAT AND SMALL."
 ~WILLIAM PENN



Twenty Years and Counting!

Attorney Bill Hochberg presented Judge John E. Bridges and Judge T.W. Small each with the Washington State Association for Justice (formerly Washington State Trial Lawyers Association) 20-Year Judicial Service Award.

Judge Bridges and Judge Small were both originally appointed to the Chelan-Douglas Counties joint judicial district bench in 1989 and 1991, respectively. Since the dissolution of the joint judicial district in 1999 Judge Bridges and Judge Small have continued to serve the citizens of Chelan County.



Left to right, Atty. Bill Hochberg, Judge John E. Bridges, Judge T.W. Small

Disappearing, cont.

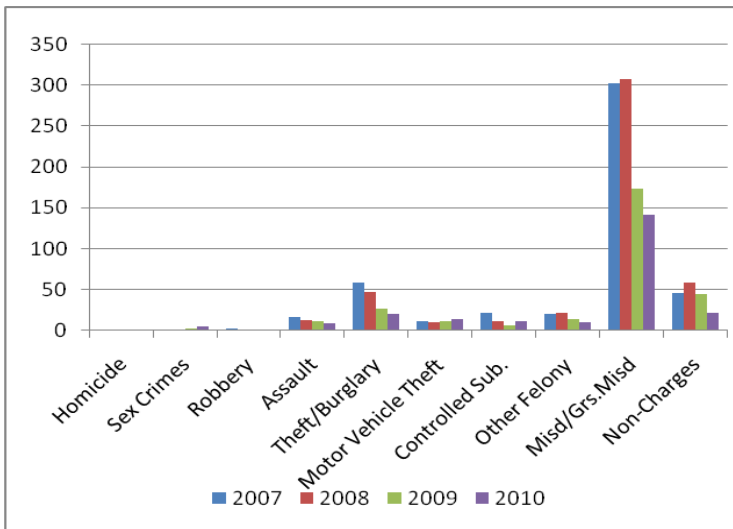
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that would be speculation at best or wishful thinking. As a result of this lower caseload, the number of juvenile offender hearings has dropped from a high of 3,442 in 2002 to just 1,788 in 2010. Consequently, our full-time court commissioner is now able to handle many of

the calendars that the judges handled after we discontinued the use of regular part-time court commissioners due to prior budget cuts. Now the judges will have more time on their calendars to schedule trials and other hearings.

“VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE TIME; THEY JUST HAVE THE HEART.

~SHERRY ANDERSON



Juvenile Offender filings	
2007	478
2008	468
2009	289
2010	234

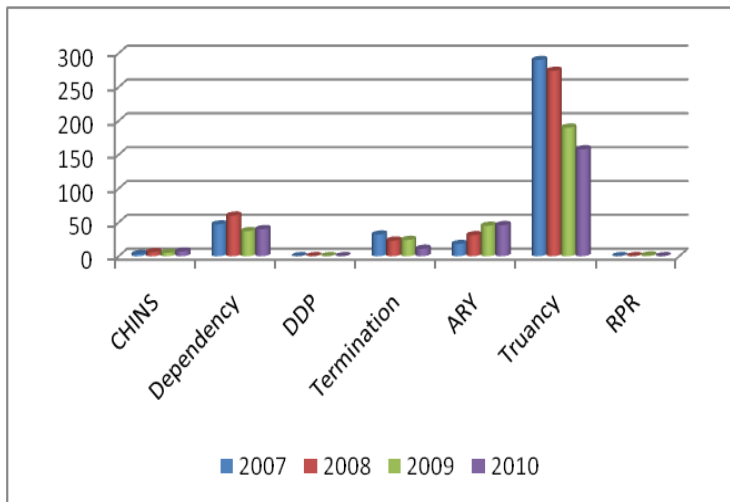
Hooray for Volunteers!

In the fall of 2009, the court had to eliminate mandatory arbitration for cases involving less than \$50,000. We simply did not have the money to pay the arbitrators, despite the fact that the State pays half of their fee.

However, in early 2010, the Chelan Douglas Counties Bar Association provided the court with enough experienced attorneys willing to work for free as **volunteer arbitrators**, to allow the court to offer mandatory arbitration in 2010 and 2011.

Since September of 2009, we continue to be blessed with a number of volunteer lawyers and law students filling in as law clerks for the court. Hundreds of hours of work without pay has helped the court survive the loss of one of our law clerks. Thank you to all of those volunteer attorneys and law clerks.

Juvenile Dependency filings	
2007	390
2008	394
2009	302



“IF YOU WANT PEACE WORK FOR JUSTICE.” ~POPE PAUL VI

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 JUDGE LESLEY A. ALLAN

DEPARTMENT 2
 JUDGE T.W. SMALL

DEPARTMENT 3
 JUDGE JOHN E. BRIDGES

COURT COMMISSIONER
 L. BART VANDEGRIFT

Case Filings and Hearings Held 2000-2010

Cases Filed											
(Types of Case)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Adoptions/Paternities	123	165	156	123	90	103	88	98	117	125	121
Domestic Relations	566	545	594	579	543	698	689	635	585	671	647
Domestic Violence	263	216	229	245	201	209	194	178	203	199	183
Juvenile Offender	578	623	592	539	458	446	500	478	468	289	234
Juvenile Dependency	228	217	282	219	347	443	215	390	394	302	262
Civil **	889	1023	1210	1444	1220	1171	1080	1090	1313	1245	1285
Criminal	552	640	683	766	779	680	773	783	719	630	605
Probate/Guardianship	244	228	226	251	223	249	215	256	317	292	261
Mental Health	93	75	86	116	100	94	56	11	4	9	5
Total	3536	3732	4058	4282	3961	4093	3810	3919	4120	3762	3603
Hearings Held											
(Types of Case)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Adoptions/Paternities	669	690	745	732	740	664	258	180	206	220	178
Domestic Relations	2133	1989	1902	2180	2161	2406	2696	2565	2263	2231	2212
Domestic Violence	334	283	271	270	279	237	249	225	282	267	257
Juvenile Offender	3007	3149	3442	3156	2711	2742	2963	2831	2871	2174	1788
Juvenile Dependency	914	816	917	669	936	1007	1255	1276	1313	1298	1208
Civil **	609	610	799	856	684	528	516	554	862	567	609
Criminal	5052	5110	5112	5818	5708	5823	6410	6960	7065	6314	6897
Probate/Guardianship	131	168	107	116	277	230	186	210	199	180	167
Mental Health	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	4	0
Total	12849	12815	13295	13797	13496	13637	14533	14804	15063	13255	13316

** exclusive of domestic violence cases and hearings.



Quick Facts:

- The 5th Floor security station processed 55,718 visitors in 2010 and Juvenile court processed 4392!
- The Chelan County Regional Justice Center Mechanical and Electrical Building System upgrade—which included complete HVAC replacements in judges chambers and all three of our courtrooms—is in its final stages. This project began in 2008 and to date the total costs are \$7,653,446.
- The sound system in the two courtrooms and the hearing room have recently been upgraded to include ADA compliant assistive listening devices—including a receiver that works directly with hearings aids equipped with at T-coil.

Final Thoughts

“THE ADMINISTRATION
 OF JUSTICE IS THE
 FIRMEST PILLAR OF
 GOVERNMENT.”

~GEORGE
 WASHINGTON



Recently, we hear about how the state legislature has reduced the number of employees by 7% the last two years.

Chelan County Superior Court has lost 25% of its support

staff since September, 2009. Thanks to the numerous volunteers, we have been able to withstand these cuts for now. The decrease in filings has also helped us weather the storm. But, it is doubtful the court can continue to operate at its present level of service if further budget cuts are made.