PICO News Memo

April 2003

Public Information and Community Outreach Committee for the Ninth Circuit

Message from the Chair

Judge Alicemarie H. Stotler

Welcome to the first issue of the PICO Committee *News Memo*, which highlights efforts to improve the public's understanding of and confidence in the federal judiciary through outreach to the community and media.

Here in the Ninth Circuit, we have much to report. Many of our courts sponsor or participate in organized outreach projects and programs. Many of our judges, clerks and other court staff also engage in informal outreach, such as speaking to service clubs and civic groups, or visiting schools to talk with students.

The *News Memo* is a way to get the word out about this important, but often overlooked work. It will

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Media Outreach Planned in 2003

The PICO Committee ended 2002 with a highly successful media outreach program in Seattle. The Nov. 15 event brought together judges and court staff from Washington's two district courts and journalists from leading print and electronic media in the Seattle area. The result was a lively and enlightening discussion of issues involved in media coverage of the courts.

Plans are being made for similar events in 2003 and beyond. Chief Judge Schroeder has asked the committee to consider sponsoring media workshops in each judicial district. These workshops would allow judges to meet and interact with local journalists. The committee would help facilitate discussion by sharing its knowledge of media practices in other districts, and by providing speakers, resource materials and exhibits.

Media outreach programs also are being planned for the May 2003 meeting of the Conference of Chief Bankruptcy Judges and the August 2003 meeting of the Conference of Chief District Judges. For these events, invitations will be extended to journalists from nationally-known media outlets along with reporters from local publications.

Seattle event attendees included Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder and Circuit Judge Richard C. Tallman, above. Judge Robert S. Lasnik moderates a luncheon panel discussion, left.

Visit the PICO Web Site

www.ce9.uscourts.gov/pico

Programs of Note

Idaho's Citizens Law Academy, a civic education program involving judges of the U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho, is recognized in the January-February 2003 edition of the ABA's *Bar/Leader* magazine. Chief District Judge B. Lynn Winmill was interviewed for the article about educational outreach to schools and citizens groups. The story also noted the participation of Circuit Judge Stephen

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Tell Us What You're Doing

The PICO Committee wants to hear from you. We know many judges and court staff are involved in community outreach. Why not share your experiences? Email us at:

pico@ce9.uscourts.gov

Briefly describe the outreach activity, and tell us who to call for more information. We'll take it from there.

From the Chair *cont.*

be published periodically and distributed to judges, clerks and officers in various court units. It also will be available online at:

www.ce9.uscourts.gov/pico

I hope you enjoy reading about friends and colleagues involved in outreach efforts. To share your own experiences, please send email to *pico@ce9.uscourts.gov* or contact one of the PICO Committee members listed below.

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Students filled the ceremonial courtroom of the Sandra Day O'Connor U.S. Courthouse in Phoenix for last fall's Open Doors to Federal Courts program. The AO-sponsored program focused on jury service. A number of district courts in the Ninth Circuit participated.

Programs of Note cont.

Trott, who maintains chambers in Boise, in the academy.

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LOS ANGELES – Judges and officials from the Russian Federation visited the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California last month. The group spent four days, March 24-28, at the Spring Street Courthouse and Roybal Federal Building and Courthouse, attending meetings and seminars, observing court proceedings, touring facilities, and engaging in discussions with judges and staff. Chief District Judge Consuelo Marshall and Judge Ronald S. W. Lew served as official hosts. The visit was arranged under the Rule of Law project organized by the Library of Congress.

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PHOENIX – During a tour of the western United States last year, Russian journalists were welcomed to the Sandra Day O'Connor United States Courthouse here for a panel presentation on the federal judicial system. Arranged by Chief District Judge Stephen M. McNamee, who also moderated the presentation, the panel included representatives of the FBI, DEA, U.S. Attorney's Office, and the Office of the Circuit Executive.

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ANCHORAGE– The U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska is developing an information kiosk to assist visitors to the courthouse in Anchorage. The kiosk will provide general information relating to the court, including daily calendars for court proceedings. The district also is developing a Voice Case Information System (VCIS) that will provide civil and criminal case information over the telephone. Callers can find out when a case was opened or closed, which judge was assigned the case, and the disposition.

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BILLINGS – Judges, probation staff, the U.S. Attorney and the community defender for the District of Montana were interviewed for a recent series of articles in the *Billings Gazette*. Over five days, Feb. 16-20, the newspaper published 10 articles on illegal drug dealing and the long prison sentences resulting from mandatory minimum sentences under federal drug laws. The series included a story on the Montana Project started by Chief District Judge Donald W. Molloy to educate teen-agers about the stiff federal drug penalties.

Send your item to pico@ce9.uscourts.gov