

FROM THE DESK OF: CHIEF JUDGE JOHN T. PHILLIPS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF JUDGE

The word tradition has a number of definitions. It is the passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation, a mode of thought or behavior followed by people - that is a custom or usage or a time honored practice or set of such practices.

The traditions of the 19th Judicial Circuit are to serve the public by striving to achieve the highest standards of excellence in the areas of access to justice, expedition and timeliness, equality, fairness, integrity, independence, accountability, public trust and confidence. As the Chief Judge of the 19th Judicial Circuit, since January 6, 2014, I am pleased to introduce a new tradition - our Virtual Report.

Our judicial system is working every day to preserve our freedoms and individual rights granted to us by our Constitution. It is in our courts that people seeking justice come to every day. Those of us who work in the 19th Judicial Circuit take our role of serving the public and access to justice very seriously.

Every day citizens participate in our system of justice by serving as jurors. We bring in over 8,000 people to serve on the over 200 jury trials conducted each year. Jury trials are the cornerstone of our justice system and the jurors who serve make a substantial contribution to the stability and perpetuation of an institution which must be preserved if freedom under a democratic government is to endure. We in the 19th Judicial Circuit believe it is important to acknowledge the commitment, responsibility and service of the people called for jury service; and so every year the second week of October is recognized as Juror Appreciation Week in honor of all jurors who have served.

Also annually in October, the Circuit Court of Lake County, in partnership with the Regional Office of Education and the College of Lake County, hold a Red Ribbon Rally for the purpose of educating our young people on the dangers of drugs and encourage them to make a commitment to a drug free lifestyle.

Another tradition of the 19th Judicial Circuit is the continuing education of the public about our justice system. One of the programs we present is Senior Law Day, geared toward the over 55-year old age group. Citizens of Lake County 55 years of age and up are invited to the courthouse and offered the opportunity to take a tour of the jail and attend discussions on topics that include the role of a judge, identity theft, healthcare, living wills and probate matters.

It is the combination of the traditions and the hard work of all who work in the 19th Judicial Circuit which continues to set the standard of excellence we hold.

And, now, to learn more about the Circuit Court of Lake County, please enjoy viewing our virtual "Report of the Judiciary" at www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us.

Thank you,

John T. Phillips
Chief Judge