

Court Review

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue is focused on judicial independence. On the next page, Mike McAdam, the president of the American Judges Association, explains how it developed that a National Forum on Judicial Independence would be a part of this year's AJA annual conference. We're pleased to present this special issue of *Court Review*, which is intended to stimulate discussion at the conference and to bring the members who couldn't attend into the process.

Minneapolis judge Kevin Burke leads off the issue with an overview of judicial independence concepts in today's courts. He has worked in his own court to make sure that accountability to the public is provided; his lead discussion emphasizes the connection between accountability and independence. Kevin has my great gratitude for also agreeing to write an additional article considering the challenges to judicial independence that may arise in a problem-solving court.

John Russonello, a partner in a public opinion research firm, presents suggestions for bolstering public appreciation of the judicial system, based on years of survey research, focus groups, and other work. Michael Buenger, the state court administrator in Missouri, reviews the challenges of getting appropriate funds for the courts.

The nitty-gritty challenges to judicial independence often arise in two forums: judicial elections and municipal courts. Miami judge Jeff Rosinek provides an overview of the most recent judicial elections in Florida. Larry Myers, the court administrator in Joplin, Missouri, reports on a statewide survey he did this August of municipal court clerks in Missouri. The survey respondents answered honestly about concerns in their court over the need to raise revenue for their cities—and the problems that arise when court staff are supervised by nonjudicial personnel.

Professor Roy Schotland has compiled a useful set of resource materials on judicial independence. Through it and the articles found in this issue, we hope to stimulate your thinking about this important topic. And we have a Resource Page focus section on judicial independence on page 63, with additional resources you might find of interest.

I'm pleased that our authors include leaders of the American Judges Association as well as academics. Jeff Rosinek is a past president of the AJA; Kevin Burke is on the AJA Board of Governors. In addition, Mike Buenger is past president of the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA); Larry Myers is past president of the National Association for Court Management (NACM). The discussion in San Francisco promises to provide an excellent interchange between judges and others who work daily in the courts and academics who take time to think seriously about the problems—and opportunities—we have in front of us. We will share the highlights of the conference in a future issue.—SL



Court Review, the quarterly journal of the American Judges Association, invites the submission of unsolicited, original articles, essays, and book reviews. *Court Review* seeks to provide practical, useful information to the working judges of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. In each issue, we hope to provide information that will be of use to judges in their everyday work, whether in highlighting new procedures or methods of trial, court, or case management, providing substantive information regarding an area of law likely to be encountered by many judges, or by providing background information (such as psychology or other social science research) that can be used by judges in their work. Guidelines for the submission of manuscripts for *Court Review* are set forth on page 47 of this issue. *Court Review* reserves the right to edit, condense, or reject material submitted for publication.

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Letters to the Editor, intended for publication, are welcome. Please send such letters to *Court Review*'s editor: Judge Steve Leben, 100 North Kansas Avenue, Olathe, Kansas 66061, e-mail address: sleben@ix.netcom.com. Comments and suggestions for the publication, not intended for publication, also are welcome.

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