

# AJA Benchmark

*A Publication of the American Judges Association*



*Colorado's State Capitol Building  
(photo by Matt Inden/Weaver Multimedia Group)*

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## President's Message

*Judge James McKay*



As I wind up my last few weeks as the president of the AJA I have had time to recollect about this past year. Time flies, they say, when you're having fun, and I must have had a lot of fun because it seems like just yesterday when I was sworn-in in Las Vegas. One of the reasons why my tenure seemed to fly by was the extremely organized and competent executive board that I had the privilege to serve with. When any problem arose, I was getting much-needed recommendations from my board. While we did not solve our membership problems over this past year, I can truthfully say that we weathered the storm. Many of our states are experiencing economic chaos, and quite naturally, court funding for organizational membership and travel has been directly affected.

While our membership is only down less than 100 from last year's total, our conference attendance in Denver will have almost doubled because of our co-opting with Colorado judges in cosponsoring this event. We will wind up with over 200 judges from all over the United States and Canada, and we will receive all revenue from the registrations. We are planning a similar event in New Orleans in 2012 in conjunction with the Louisiana Fall Conference in the first week of October in that year. I think we should keep these types of strategies in mind when we plan future conference events and try to minimize our expenditures and at the same time maximize our profits. We have a great deal to discuss in Denver, where I will be turning over the presidency to our president-elect, Judge Mary Celeste. Hope to see you there in October.

God bless all.

## Election Law Subject of Online Video Series

The [Election Law Program](#), a joint venture of the National Center for State Courts and the College of William & Mary School of Law, has produced a [series of videos](#) designed to educate not only judges but also journalists and the general public about important aspects of election law and litigation. These videos examine three topics:

- *Election Law Controversies: The Basics of Election Litigation*
- *A View from the Trenches: Advice for Judges Handling Election-Related Lawsuits*
- *Redistricting Litigation: What Every Judge Should Know*

These video lectures may be viewed online using Windows Media Player or Adobe Flash Player. They are also available on DVD.

### **Judicial Election Campaigns Turn to the Internet**

The National Center for State Courts has created a YouTube channel to document the use of the Internet as a judicial campaign tool: [Judicial Campaign Ads](#).

As part of its clearinghouse function, NCSC is collecting information on the use of the Internet in state supreme court elections. Any online material that involves ads, debates, speeches, and news stories is being collected and posted on this channel.

NCSC does not support or endorse any comments, positions, or candidates posted.

### **Latest Judicial Salary Survey Charts Steady Decline in Salary Increases**

The salaries of state judges at all levels and state court administrators nationwide increased by an average of .78 percent in 2009, thus maintaining a steady decline since 2006, according to the [National Center for State Courts' Survey of Judicial Salaries](#) (vol. 35, no. 1). This *Survey*, which is compiled by NCSC's Knowledge and Information Service with the help of state administrative offices of the courts twice each year, reports judicial salaries as of January 1, 2010.

The new *Survey* also provides a look at "Mandatory Retirement Ages for Judges." This special section reports maximum retirement ages by state (if applicable) and whether such requirements are determined by state constitution or statute.



### **AJA Invites You to Beautiful Hilton Head Island for the 2011 Midyear Meeting**

Come to the [Westin Hilton Head Island Resort and Spa](#) for the 2011 Midyear Meeting of the American Judges Association, April 14-16. AJA's Midyear Meeting will include an afternoon of educational programming plus business meetings for the Executive Committee and Board of Governors. You'll have a chance to receive some CLE credit, meet your colleagues from across the U.S. and Canada, and relax in a lovely setting.

Information will be available on the AJA website in the next month or so. If you have questions now, you can contact us at [aja@ncsc.dni.us](mailto:aja@ncsc.dni.us) or call 1-800-616-6165. We hope to see you on Hilton Head next spring!

## **AJA Future Conferences**

**2011 Midyear Meeting:** Westin Hilton Head Island, Hilton Head, South Carolina, April 14-16  
\$209 single/double

**2011 Annual Conference:** Westin Gaslamp, San Diego, California, September 11-16  
\$199 single/double

**2012 Midyear Meeting:** Doubletree Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee, May 17-19  
\$129 single/double

**2012 Annual Conference:** New Orleans, Louisiana  
Dates and hotel to be determined

**2013 Annual Conference:** The Fairmont Orchid, Kohala Coast, Hawaii, September 22-27  
\$219 single/double

## **American Judges Association**

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