

## Recognizing The Importance Of Illinois Circuit Court Clerks Throughout The State Of Illinois

By Marcia M. Meis, Director, Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Last week, I had the honor of speaking at the Spring Meeting of the Illinois Association of Court Clerks in Springfield. While circuit clerks may not be the most visible or familiar public servant in the courthouse, their role is indispensable.

In addition to the constitutional and statutory role as official keeper of the court record, circuit clerks and their staff are often the first interaction that filers, litigants, witnesses and other court users have at their local courthouse. I have heard this referred to as the "counter encounter" – and a positive exchange there can set the tone for an individual's entire experience with the court system. In this way, circuit clerks also serve as major ambassadors of our judicial system.

And of these constitutional officers, much is asked.

Circuit clerks are elected officials serving four-year terms. Their duties are defined by state statutes, including the Clerks of Courts Act (705 ILCS 105), as well as Illinois Supreme Court rules, administrative orders, local court rules, and county ordinances. Although our 102 circuit clerks are elected at the county level, circuit clerks are state judicial branch officers. Their primary responsibility is to attend court proceedings and maintain a complete, accurate, and permanent record of all court activities, including filings, orders, judgments, evidence, and case outcomes across 28 case types – ranging from criminal and civil matters to traffic, family, and juvenile cases.

Beyond recordkeeping, the Circuit Clerk's Office plays a central role in managing the flow of cases through the court system. This includes assigning case numbers, scheduling hearings, maintaining court dockets, tracking case progress, and processing appeals. Careful adherence to these responsibilities ensures that cases move efficiently and that due process is upheld.

Circuit clerks also serve as a critical data and reporting hub for the State of Illinois, providing court records, statistics, and outcomes to agencies such as the Secretary of State, State Police, Department of Corrections, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, and the State Disbursement Unit. As such, their work supports statewide implementation of critical policies involving public safety and child support payments, among many other things.

Financial management is another major function of the office. Circuit clerks are responsible for the collection, accounting, and disbursement of court-related funds, including filing fees, fines, and payments tied to court orders. Across Illinois, this represents hundreds of millions of dollars annually, underscoring the office's significant fiduciary responsibility and the need for accuracy and accountability.

In addition, the clerk's office issues and maintains official court documents, such as summons, subpoenas, warrants, and judgments, giving legal effect to the actions of the court. Clerks also provide public access to court records and services, offering both in-person and online tools that allow individuals, attorneys, and agencies to search case information, make payments,

and interact with the court system.

The Circuit Clerk's Office further provides direct administrative support to judges and court staff, including courtroom preparation, docket management, and implementation of technology systems that improve efficiency and access to justice.

Beyond their statutory duties, circuit clerks are active contributors to the broader judicial system, serving on Illinois Supreme Court committees and commissions, participating in statewide initiatives such as access to justice and technology improvements, assisting with judicial education through the Illinois Judicial College, and engaging in legislative and policy development.

Illinois circuit court clerks are essential to the functioning of the judicial system. They ensure the integrity of the court record, the smooth progression of cases, the proper handling of public funds, and meaningful access to justice. Their work connects courtrooms across all 102 counties into a unified, accountable, and transparent statewide judicial system.

On behalf of the AOIC, I express my gratitude to the Illinois circuit clerks for their collective commitment to education, collaboration and transparency the many ways they help to keep the justice system trains running.

## May Is Poppy Month For American Legion

The wearing of a poppy means "honor the dead and help the living" The poppy as the memorial flower for the American war dead is a tradition, which began in the years following the First World War. Veterans remembered the bright red, wild poppies which grew and bloomed on the battle fields and graves of those men buried in the sacred plots of French Soil, which was Flanders' Fields.

Soldiers of all nations came to look upon this flower as a living symbol of their dead comrades' sacrifice and a sign of hope and renewal for those who lived to remember.

Hospitalized veterans quickly learned to assemble poppies while growing well again. Through the winter months, cut materials are delivered to those veterans in V.A. hospitals or nursing homes and soon boxes of bright red poppies are ready for a big distribution in May.

When payday arrives, what a thrill to receive their pay for a job well done. What a joy it is to wear a poppy made by a hospitalized veteran, when you know the money it brought him filled a desperate need.

All money received during the distribution of these poppies is returned to the veterans through service programs of the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary.

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**FOR SALE:** 2008 Glendale Titanium 5th wheel, 30-ft. long - \$8,500. Phone (630) 433-0269. 21-4p

## MISC.

**WANTED TO BUY:** Antiques, collectibles, furniture, toys, post cards, hunting and fishing items, decoys, duck calls, fishing lures, coins, etc. Call Greg at 815-303-6173. 4-52c

## HELP WANTED

**PART-TIME** Office Assistant for Senior Citizen Housing Projects needed. Computer and people skills a must. Flexible hours to work with your schedule. 10-15 hours per week and located in Henry. For further details call 309-356-1112, or email resume to hha.itha.jenny@gmail.com 17-tfc

## GARAGE SALES

**38TH ANNUAL LAKE THUNDERBIRD GARAGE SALES AND EVENTS**  
Friday and Saturday,  
May 22nd and May 23rd, 2026  
**Garage Sales 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.**  
Maps Available at the Clubhouse and Lake Entrances

**ADDITIONAL EVENTS AT THE CLUBHOUSE**  
**Friday, Bake Sale at 8 a.m. and Hot Dog Lunch**  
**Saturday, Bake Sale 8am - 1 p.m. and Breakfast 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.**  
\$12/adult, \$5 children under 10 2c

**GARAGE SALE:** Friday and Saturday, May 22 and 23 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Also shed full of tools, outside etc. Garage has household, Terry Redlin pictures, Precious Moments, kids, vintage stuff, shoes and canning jars. 1150 CR 1300E, Henry. 5 Miles north of Sparland on Route 29. 1p

## Thank You

The family of Harriet Sue McGrath wants to thank everyone for their calls, cards and donations to the ARK and the Alzheimer's Association given in memory of our mother and sister.

Cliff & Suzanne McGrath & family  
Regan McClellan & family 1c

(ANSWERS ON PAGE 4)

## King Crossword

### ACROSS

- 1 Detox center  
6 Gives up  
12 Swiss metropolis  
13 Unexpected  
14 Ingratiate  
15 Stahl of "60 Minutes"  
16 Disposition  
17 "La — Bonita"  
19 Casual shirt  
20 Third son  
22 Capote nick-name  
24 Canine greeting  
27 Furnace fuel  
29 Branches  
32 President of South Africa, 1994-1999  
35 Pronto  
36 Monumental  
37 Half dozen  
38 Fannie —  
40 Former Laker Lamar  
42 Sashimi fish  
44 Neatnik's nightmare  
46 Jazzy James  
50 Legislative group  
52 Camelot king  
54 Aerie newborn  
55 Organize an art show

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### DOWN

- 9 Birds of prey  
10 Duel tool  
11 Ocular woe  
12 Tiara jewel  
18 Rug cleaner  
21 — friendly  
23 "Awesome, dude!"  
24 Navarro of "The View"  
25 Scale members  
26 Pink wading bird  
28 Relaxed  
30 Roman 1051  
31 Coltrane's instrument  
33 Aromatherapy spot  
34 Sgt., e.g.  
39 Lauder of cosmetics  
41 Paris subway  
42 Cruising  
43 Lettuce unit  
45 Reply to "Shall we?"  
47 Spring melt-down  
48 Mild rebukes  
49 "How — you?"  
51 Cleric's tunic  
53 Scamper

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