

Full Court Press

Newsletter of the District of Columbia Courts

Open To All, Trusted By All, Justice For All

November 2003

Volume XV Number 4

SWORNING IN CEREMONY FOR JUDGE MACALUSO

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Chief Judge Rufus King presided over the investiture of Magistrate Judge Judith Macaluso as the first new Associate Judge of the Family Court as provided in the Family Court Act of 2001. Judge Macaluso's friends and family joined her for the ceremony at the courthouse on Friday, September 5th. Margaret Jane Mahoney from the Civil Division of the United States Department of Justice spoke about her friend and former colleague's new endeavor as Associate Judge. Judge Macaluso is "poised and ready to assume the challenges of her new position," said Mahoney. "She will serve in Family Court with informed dignity and respect."

Ms. Mahoney said Judge Macaluso is a "remarkable woman" who is a great litigator, well-trained actress, competitive athlete, and world traveler. She described the new judge as a modern day renaissance woman who handles complex legal cases while playing softball and soccer regularly and traveling around the world. In addition, she is a classically



Senior Federal Judge William B. Bryant administers the oath of office to Judge Judith Macaluso as her husband, Vince, holds the Bible.

trained actress, a skill that assisted her when she litigated.

Prior to her service at Superior Court, Judge Macaluso served at the U.S. Department of Justice where she specialized in mental health issues and was designated a Civil Division resource for other attorneys to consult on psychiatric, psychological, and neuropsychological issues. She has maintained a concentration in

this area at the Superior Court, serving on task forces and committees to improve the Court's handling of mentally ill defendants. In 1997, she was appointed Hearing Commissioner, now Magistrate Judge, of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. In her 5-1/2 years in this position, she has served in three divisions of the Court: Civil,

Continued on page 2.

JUDGE SADDLER'S SWEARING IN CEREMONY

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

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Judge Fern Flanagan Saddler took the oath of office on Friday, September 12th as the newest Associate Judge in the Superior Court. Chief Judge Rufus King presided over the ceremony, which began with remarks from Judge Saddler's brother. He offered words of advice to his little sister. Presiding Magistrate Judge Dennis Doyle spoke next and advised Judge Saddler to "rule wisely." The most moving comments came from Judge Saddler's husband, the Reverend Paul Harvey Saddler, who spoke highly of his wife's ability as a judge and her compassion as a person. He told members of the Court that they "couldn't have picked a better person" for the position of Associate Judge.

Upon graduation from law school, Judge Saddler was an attorney at the law firm of Mitchell, Shorter and Gartrell, where she was involved in trial and appellate work in local and federal courts. In 1984, Judge Saddler became an Assistant Bar



Judge Fern Saddler's husband holds the Bible as Judge Kaye K. Christian administers the oath of office. Chief Judge King looks on.

Continued on page 2.

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY AND THE COURTS TEAM UP TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE DISTRICT

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

The Courts have partnered with Georgetown University to establish a top-notch training program for all involved in the Family Court. Beginning in spring 2002, representatives from the D.C. Superior Court joined the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (GUCCHD) and the Council for Court Excellence to explore opportunities for collaboration related to implementing the Family Court Act of 2001.

The partnership is providing professional development, technical assistance, consultation and continuing education for judges, lawyers, social workers and other personnel involved in the Family Court. The program focuses on fine-tuning the skills of judges and mediators who work with individuals with mental retardation or mental illness and children in the abuse and neglect, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems. These activities are designed to support the Family Court in its overall reform efforts.

The Courts have established an Interdisciplinary

Training Planning Committee that will link the Courts and GUCCHD in their efforts. All appropriate District agencies, the Council for Court Excellence and local legal service providers have sent representatives to the committee to develop training programs. In addition, monthly professional development sessions are held at the D.C. Courts on topics such as child development, assessment and evaluation, cultural and linguistic competence, and developmental disabilities. The first annual Family Court Training Institute on November 22, 2002, *Partnerships for Change: Integrating Family Court and Service Systems*, was attended by more than 340 stakeholders involved in the Family Court system in the District of Columbia. On November 7, 2003, the 2nd Annual Family Court Training Institute was held. Through these efforts, the Courts and GUCCHD have developed guides and tools to assist court personnel to increase awareness of various screening, diagnostic and assessment instruments for children and youth.

REMINDER:

**TSP Open Season
October 15 to December 31**

Call the Human Resources Division for more information. x2-0496

Macaluso, cont. from page 1.

Criminal and Family (now Family Court).

At the ceremony, Mr. Renard Rhinehart sang "Everyday People" by Sly and the Family Stone. Senior Judge William Bryant of the United States District Court of the District of Columbia delivered the oath of office. Judge Macaluso's husband Vincent held the Bible and children Corrine, Adam, and Joel assisted in the robing ceremony. Judge Macaluso thanked her guests and expressed her excitement about her new position in the Superior Court's Family Court.

Saddler, cont. from page 1.

Counsel for the District of Columbia Office of Bar Counsel, where she investigated and prosecuted complaints of attorney misconduct. In 1988, Judge Saddler served as a Senior Staff Attorney for the District of Columbia Court of Appeals where she supervised staff attorneys and law clerks. From July 1990 through January 1991 she was the Acting Chief Deputy Clerk of the D.C. Court of Appeals. Since 1991, Judge Saddler has served as a Magistrate Judge (formerly known as Hearing Commissioner) of the D.C. Superior Court where she has presided over thousands of matters in the Criminal, Civil, and Family Divisions of the Court.

At the ceremony, Judge Kaye Christian administered the oath of office and Judge Saddler's husband held the Bible. The Superior Court's second newest member, Judge Judith Macaluso, escorted Judge Saddler to her place among her colleagues.

The Full Court Press is published by the District of Columbia Courts to provide information pertaining to court operations. Inquiries should be submitted to Room 1500.

Leah Gurowitz, Editor

STRATEGIC PLAN EMPHASIZES VALUES

By David Bell, Assistant to the Strategic Planning Director, Executive Office

This is part of a continuing series updating and informing Court employees about the Strategic Plan.

We have previously discussed the Mission and Vision of the District of Columbia Courts and the role they play in the Strategic Plan and everyone's daily work. Mission and Vision statements help an organization focus on what is truly important and serve as a framework for developing goals and strategies. To recap, the Courts' Mission is "to protect rights and liberties, uphold and interpret the law, and resolve disputes peacefully, fairly and effectively in the Nation's Capital." This statement describes why the Courts exist. Our Vision statement, on the other hand, describes the type of organization we want to be in the future: a court system that is "open to all, trusted by all, (and provides) justice for all."

Mission and Vision statements reflect an organiza-

tion's core values, which determine the behaviors and attitudes expected from all employees as they do their work. Just as individuals have values which influence their choices, behavior, and personal goals, organizations have values that reflect their members' expectations for how work gets accomplished and how people interact with one another. For example, an organization which values *diversity* makes it a priority to hire staff from different backgrounds and cultures. Values influence what activities people will do with care and what activities they will do casually and without concern.

The Courts' values are identified in the Strategic Plan as a series of statements which form the acronym "SERVICE," as shown below.

We Are Honored to Be in Public **S**ervice

We Are Committed to **E**xcellence in the Administration of Justice

We Are Responsive and **R**espectful to Others

We Seek to Make a **V**aluable Contribution Each Day

We Act with **I**ntegrity and Impartiality

We Embrace **C**hange for Its Potential to Make Us Better

We Strive to **E**xceed Expectations at All Times

The Courts' first value is "public service," as reflected in the statement "We are honored to be in public service." Our judges and employees have chosen to work at the Courts because we believe that public service is an honorable and worthwhile career choice. We place a high priority on serving others, and so we have chosen to work in an institution that exists to serve our community. The Courts also value "excellence," as in "We are committed to excellence in the administration of justice." Our next value expresses how we expect people to treat each other: "We are responsive and respectful to others." Another value emphasizes "contribution," reflecting our belief that every person in our organization has a valuable contribution to make each day. Essential to accomplishing our Vision of being "trusted by all" is the value statement "We act with integrity and impartiality." Finally, honoring our commitment to public service requires that "We embrace change for its potential to make us better" and that "We strive to exceed expectations at all times." Collectively, these values highlight how the Courts will strive to achieve our Mission and Vision. If each of us embraces the value of serving others as we go about our daily activities, we will surely be successful!

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS CEREMONY -- SEPTEMBER 2003

COURTS RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES FOR SPECIAL ACHEIVEMENTS

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

On Wednesday, September 24, 2003, the Courts held the 22nd Annual Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony. The event was an excellent opportunity for the Courts to recognize employees for their dedication, professionalism and exemplary work performance. The Marine Corps Color Guard opened the program with the Presentation of Colors, and Taimiko Jackson of the Court

of Appeals sang the National Anthem. Chief Judge Annice Wagner and Chief Judge Rufus King welcomed the awardees and their families and friends to the ceremony to recognize the special achievements of the guests of honor. This year's Outstanding Achievement Award winners were Sherman Bunch, Toni Gore, Edward James, Stephanie Minor-Harper and Evelyn Stephens. In addition, Special Employee Awards were given to

THE CHIEF JUDGES CONGRATULATE THE OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS WINNERS ...



Stephanie Minor-Harper



Evelyn Stephens



Sherman Bunch



Edward James



Toni Gore

CEREMONY PATRONS

Dr. Cheryl Bailey	Clifton Grandy	Joanne Pozzo
J. John Bayly	Leah Gurowitz	J. Hiram Puig-Lugo
J. Anna Blackburne-Rigsby	Fred Horowitz	Anthony Rainey
Carroll Boswell	James Holland	J. Judith Retchin
J. Franklin Burgess	J. Ramsey Johnson	J. Richard Ringell
J. Russell Canan	J. Ann Keary	Marie Robertson
Valentine Cawood	Dianne King	J. Maurice Ross
Joy Chapper	C.J. Rufus King	Joseph Sanchez
Dan Cipullo	J. Neal Kravitz	Constance Starks
J. Linda Davis	J. Noel Kramer	Willard Stephens
Duane Delaney	J. Lynn Leibovitz	Deborah Taylor-Godwin
Christopher Dix	Fillmore Lucas	Jeanette Togans
J. Herbert Dixon	J. Judith Macaluso	J. Linda Turner
J. Frederick Dorsey	Moses McAllister	CJ. Annice Wagner
John Dyson	David Michael	J. Frederick Weisberg
Darlene Ellis	J. Thomas Motley	Anne Wicks
J. Michael Farrell	J. Theodore Newman	Denise Williams Coates
Kenneth Foor	Frank Nowicki	J. Susan Winfield
Dana Friend	Cassandra Penn Lucas	J. Melvin Wright
J. Wendell Gardner	Jon Peterson	J. Patricia Wynn
J. Steffen Graae	Garland Pinkston	Roy Wynn
	Gregg Poss	

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS CEREMONY -- SEPTEMBER 2003 *cont.*

Ave Brodie, Denise Robinson, Veda McCormick and the Information Intake Center of the Court of Appeals. Executive Officer Anne Wicks, Court of Appeals Clerk of the Court Garland Pinkston and Superior Court Clerk of the Court Duane Delaney presented the 30-year, 20-year, and 10-year Length of Service Awards. Highlights of the ceremony included songs performed by Debra Swingon-Stokes of the Executive Office and Brenda

Young from the Human Resources Division. At the conclusion of the ceremony, guests joined the honorees in the atrium for a reception. Special thanks to the Employee Awards and Recognition Ceremony Committee, chaired by Willard Stephens (pictured in our last issue, circa 1975), and congratulations to all the honorees!

SPECIAL EMPLOYEE AWARD WINNERS



Ave Brodie displays her Unsung Hero Award with Chief Judge Wagner and Chief Judge King.



Information Intake Center of the Court of Appeals accepts the Public Service Award (office) from Chief Judge Wagner and Chief Judge King.



Management Achievement Award recipient Denise Robinson with Chief Judge Wagner and Chief Judge King after receiving her award.



Chief Judge Wagner, Chief Judge King, Ms. Wicks, and Mr. Delaney listen as Taimiko Jackson delivers a moving rendition of the national anthem.



Veda McCormick poses with Chief Judge Wagner and Chief Judge King after receiving the Public Service Award (individual).

PROFILE: GARY FARRIS — DEPUTY CLERK IN JUROR'S OFFICE

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

A native Washingtonian, Gary Farris is quite familiar with the D.C. community. After attending both grammar and high school in the District, Mr. Farris enrolled at Georgetown University and continued his studies there. Prior to obtaining his position the Superior Court, Gary worked at the police department and volunteered in the Court of Appeals.

Currently, Gary works in the Jurors' Office as Deputy Clerk. He deals with all potential jurors in the Courthouse, making the experience the best possible. With his easy-going,



Gary Farris

friendly disposition, he is popular among the jurors. Gary says, "What I love most about this job is the people."

Gary started his career at the Courts in September 2001.

Although he has only been with the Jurors' Office a short while, he is indeed comfortable with his job, as demonstrated by his excellence in the position. Gary brings to the Courts an exceptional attitude that makes jury duty a more enjoyable experience for District residents.

Jurors who encounter him praise his

pleasant attitude as he assists them. Gary's co-workers also speak highly of his professionalism. In fact, many people have submitted letters to our Rave Reviews section praising Gary's friendly disposition and excellence in his capacity as Deputy Clerk.

Gary possesses a genuine passion for his job. He truly enjoys working with people. He says that it is important for employees of the Court to be approachable and pleasant because it allows the Court better to serve the community. Furthermore, this positive and professional attitude fosters a higher level of respect for the Court. Gary attributes his success to his positive attitude and organization skills.

PROFILE: Freda Emerson, Courtroom Clerk, 6D Community Court

By Jenn Pastore, Executive Office Intern

Ms. Freda Emerson, a native Washingtonian, attended St. Francis Xavier Catholic School from first to eighth grade. In 1976, she graduated from Lareine High School located in Suitland, Maryland. Freda studied Nursing at the University of Maryland and attended Gallaudet University, where she received her Certification of American Sign Language in 1991.

Freda began her career with the Courts in 1980 in the Criminal Division as a runner. She later held the positions of Bailiff, Motions Clerk, and Docket Clerk. She served as a Criminal Division courtroom clerk for 12 years before taking on the new role of courtroom clerk for the East of the River Community Court in September 2002.

Freda has been involved with more aspects of the 6D Community Court than simply the courtroom proceedings. She was a panel participant at this year's Judicial Conference, talking about the success achieved by defendants in the Community Court in its first year of operation. Freda has participated in sev-



Freda Emerson

eral community meetings with Judge Noel Kramer, presiding judge of the Criminal Division *and* presiding judge of the 6D Community Court. The East of the River Community Court concept has a lot of professional and personal meaning for Freda because she is from Washington and grew up in the community the Court serves.

Freda has become well acquainted with some of the people on the calendar and smiles as she speaks of being able to watch their progress from being out on the streets to turning their lives around. Some of them actually come back to visit Freda and Judge Kramer to report on their progress. The Community Court offers drug treatment programs, employment counseling, and vocational training. "Most of the people that come through the calendar are not bad people, they are just troubled people who need help, need someone to care about them," Freda said.

Freda has a son, Curtis, and a daughter, Erin.

**Open season for health insurance and flexible spending plans is
November 10 to December 8, 2003.**

Editor's note:
We apologize to Ms. Boyd for not including her name with this letter in the last issue of FCP.

Western Presbyterian Church

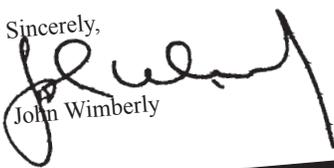
Dear Judge Gardner,

I want to commend highly the work your Clerk (**Pam Boyd**) did while you were interviewing jurors on January 13-14 in Courtroom 1111. Since we serve 200 homeless people breakfast daily, I have a lot of experience with severely mentally ill individuals. It was quickly clear that we had several very mentally ill people in our jury panel as well as one person who appeared to be inebriated. Your clerk very gently and compassionately pulled (the individuals out from the larger group and got them into you so they could be dismissed. The rest of the panelists were delighted because the individuals had been very agitated. I was delighted because your Clerk showed tremendous respect and kindness to the individuals.

Civil servants take a lot of abuse. As a result, you definitely deserve praise when, something is done correctly. And your Clerk did everything right She didn't get confrontative, raise her voice or do any of the other things that can set off an agitated person.

Please pass this letter along with my gratitude.

Sincerely,


John Wimberly

From: Sonya Flanagan
Date: 8/15/2003 1:16:24 PM
To: Mayor Williams
Fwd: DC Courts

What prompted me to write this note was the excellent service I received from the DC Court staff. Earlier this week I made a mistake entering a jury deferral date on the touch-tone system. I left a message on the general mailbox and in less that two hours received a call back from **Donna Little** who was extremely courteous and changed the date of service for me without any problem.

I am truly bowled over by the new standard of service in DC.

Thank you very much.

Dear Judge Coburn:

I wanted to take a moment to personally thank you and your clerk (**Gloria Stewart**) for the courtesies shown to my office on July 9, 2003.

... I wanted to sincerely acknowledge the courtesies shown when our attorney was late in appearing before you. Not only did Gloria call on at least two separate occasions, but she also talked with one of our paralegals who called her as well. Again, many thanks for the high "degree of professionalism exhibited by you and your staff."



OFFICE OF THE
COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY
FOR ARLINGTON COUNTY
COURTHOUSE
1425 NORTH COURTHOUSE ROAD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22201
(703) 228-4410
FAX (703) 228-7116



Re: Joyce Jenkins

Dear Mr. Cipullo:

I am a prosecutor for Arlington County. The purpose of this letter is to direct your attention to the wonderful assistance **Joyce Jenkins** provides our office on a regular basis.

As you probably know, Virginia's jury sentencing scheme makes it necessary for us to obtain criminal defendants' prior convictions for presentation at trial. Because many of our defendants have convictions from the District, we rely heavily upon your Office to provide us certified copies of these critical pieces of evidence. Reesa Spurrier does an excellent job as our paralegal responsible for collecting the certified convictions. However, neither Reesa nor we prosecutors could do as effective a job without the courteous aid of **Joyce Jenkins**.

On several occasions, Reesa has sung Ms. Jenkins' praises, explaining that she always returns phone calls without delay, often prepares convictions for us on short notice, and even accommodates us when we need to use a courier service. For these things we are extremely grateful. Ms. Jenkins' kind assistance to us is a credit to your Office.

Very truly yours,


Jason L. McCandless
Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney

September 16, 2003

Ms. Sherry Coppet
Child Support Enforcement Branch, Room 4335 Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Re: Ms. Michelle Shams

Dear Ms. Coppet:

This letter is to advise you of the outstanding service provided to us by **Ms. Michelle Shams**. We represent a client who has had a child and spousal support matter pending with the DC Superior Court since 1996. Ms. Shams has been a valuable resource of information throughout the entire case.

Recently, our client encountered difficulty After exhausting all other possibilities, and without an appointment, we came to the courthouse and requested a meeting with Ms. Shams. Ms. Shams assisted us for approximately an hour and a half, and straightened out a number of complex problems. Ms. Shams demonstrated initiative and perseverance to detect and resolve the issues. In addition, she was knowledgeable, professional, and friendly. Ultimately, Ms. Shams ... and took steps to ensure that the problem would not recur.

We would like to thank your office and Ms. Shams personally for her kind and able assistance.

BURKA AND ENGLE, P.L.L.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
SUITE 900 SOUTH
601 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004
(202) 574-0400

SHARON L. BURKA (DC & MD BARS)
THOMAS D. ENGLE (DC & VA BARS)
QUINN O'CONNELL, JR. (DC BAR)

July 2, 2003

Leah Gurowitz
Director of Public Relations and
Governmental Affairs
D.C. Superior Court
500 Indiana Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

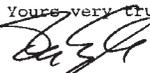
Re: Full Court Press

Dear Ms. Gurowitz:

I am writing to suggest that "Full Court Press" highlight the contribution of **Freda Emerson**, who is the courtroom clerk for the new Community Court program in the Criminal Division. Not only has Ms. Emerson helped establish the courtroom procedures for this new court, she has also traveled into the community with Judge Kramer and attended numerous meetings with residents of the areas served by the new court. In addition, on June 27, 2003, Ms. Emerson spoke on a panel before hundreds of lawyers and judges at the Judicial Conference regarding her experiences in Community Court.

I hope you will consider recognizing Ms. Emerson's invaluable contribution to the Community Court program in a future edition of "Full Court Press."

Yours very truly,


Thomas D. Engle

Editor's note:
We're one step ahead of you Mr. Engle.
see page 6. But we really appreciate your
suggestion and hope you'll continue to
give input. LHG

Alice Neff Lucan
Washington, D.C.

Monday, October 20, 2003

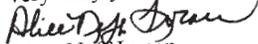
Roy Wynn, Jr.
Director, Special Operations
D.C. Superior Court

Dear Mr. Wynn:

This letter is long overdue.

I don't know how long I have been responding to jury duty notices at the D.C. Superior Court, but each time I have noticed the courteous service from all of your staff, **Suzanne Bailey-Jones** and **Gary Farris** in particular. No one is crazy about having to hang around the courthouse waiting to be called, but I think you probably have made the system as painless as it is possible to do. But more than that, the courtesy and responsiveness from Ms. Bailey-Jones and Mr. Farris are really quite remarkable and reflect well on the D.C. Superior Court and its operations.

Very truly yours,


Alice Neff Lucan

cc: The Honorable Rufus G. King, III

Editor's note:
See page 6 for a profile of
Gary Farris. LHG

Date: 10/28/2003 3:18:37 PM

To: mayor@dc.gov

Subject: Comment to Mayor from DC Homepage

Today, I needed to call the DC Superior Court and I did about 10 minutes ago. The number I dialed was 202-879-1010. Then I was transferred to criminal information.

I spoke with a woman named **Robin Holmes**.

First, I am calling to say that I almost choked when someone actually answered the phone. Then I choked when she answered on the second ring. I just didn't expect this to happen. If that wasn't a good thing, I asked Robin a question and she answered it in less than a minute.

That's not all. I decided to press my luck and call back with another question. Robin answered the phone again on the second (maybe even first) ring. And she answered my second question.

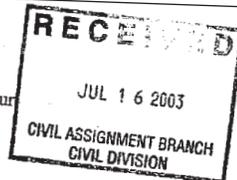
My experiences with DC Government is getting better but today's experience was probably the best. I've been putting off doing what I need to do just because I didn't feel like dealing with the customer service environment--which is quite frankly, rough at times.

In any event, please thank **Robin** for me and I hope you value her service.

Very respectfully,

Kevin Taylor
Reston, VA

Branch Chief Michael Stanley
Civil Assignment Branch
District of Columbia Superior Court
500 Indiana Avenue NW
Washington DC 20001



July 10, 2003

Dear Mr. Stanley,

I am writing to compliment your staff and especially the work of **Ms. Evelyn Smith**, the courtroom clerk to Judge Boasberg.

This week, I reported for jury duty on Monday, July 7. It was early in the morning after a vacation weekend. It was terrifically hot outside and most of us reporting that day would have liked to be elsewhere. There were plenty of reasons for bad moods.

But the staff members I encountered changed the atmosphere. Those I encountered were, to a person, helpful, courteous and cheerful. Their knowledge and expertise at explaining the rules to us new to the process not only expedited a complicated process, it also soothed many frayed nerves.

I was later chosen to serve on a case before Judge Boasberg, which is how I met Ms. Smith. She began by explaining the process clearly and answering each question slowly and professionally. Over the next four days, Ms. Smith greeted our group warmly -always with a pleasant smile and a few friendly words.

At one point, I witnessed as another juror confront her angrily about a decision to dismiss us when we were on the verge of finishing deliberations. Ms. Smith did not get ruffled at all. With a smile, she calmly explained the decision and proceeded to hear the juror out. Her calm friendliness finally wore the fellow out and I think he even left with a smile. I know I did.

I have never before written a fan letter like this, but I was so impressed with Ms. Smith I decided to let you know. Please pass on my compliments to Judge Boasberg and to all others lucky enough to benefit from her services.