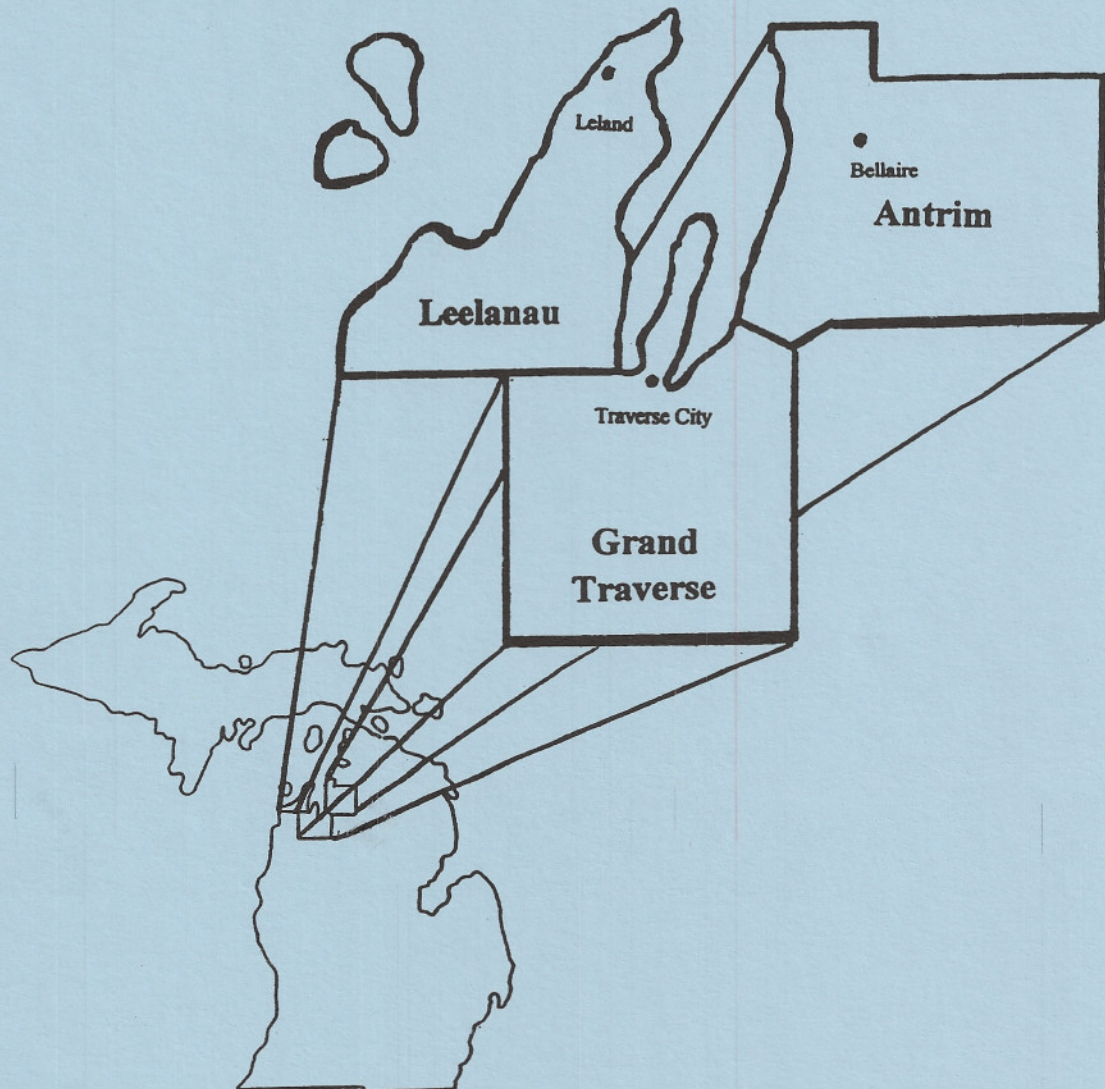


The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court 1998 Annual Report



Grand Traverse, Leelanau and Antrim Counties

INTRODUCTION

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court serves the citizens of Antrim, Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties. It is a trial court of general jurisdiction which hears cases involving civil disputes in matters involving damages or loss of \$25,000 or more, matters in equity, domestic relations matters, appellate review of lower courts and tribunals, and criminal felony cases.

Civil cases which involve damages under \$25,000 fall within the District Court's jurisdiction, as do misdemeanor criminal cases, traffic offenses and small claims court.

Probate Court is responsible for the processing of wills and estates and guardianships and competency hearings regarding adults. Under Public Act 388 of 1996, which became effective January 1, 1998, the Probate Court no longer has jurisdiction over criminal cases involving minors, child abuse and neglect, guardianships of juveniles, and adoption proceedings. Jurisdiction over these matters as well as domestic relations matters is now vested in the Family Division of the Circuit Court.

The Circuit Court Judges of the Thirteenth Circuit still "ride the circuit;" that is, court is held in Leland and Bellaire on regularly scheduled motion days and on dates scheduled for trials in Leelanau and Antrim Counties, respectively. Grand Traverse County cases are heard in Traverse City, which houses the administrative offices of the Court.

Each of the county seats within the Circuit has an independent County Clerk/Circuit Court Records Office which is responsible for filing and maintenance of the Court's records. This office also manages the process of identifying and notifying potential jurors for all Circuit Court Trials.

This Report, the Court's second, is part of an ongoing effort to provide taxpayers, litigants, counsel and fellow governmental officials with current information regarding the Court's operations. Where relevant, new legislation and its impact on administrative functions is discussed. Also, an effort is made to introduce the people who staff the Court and without whom the Court could not function.

THREE COUNTY OPERATING AGREEMENT

The Thirteenth Circuit is a multiple-county circuit. The Court and its three constituent counties operate under an Operating Agreement which describes the authority and responsibilities of each branch of government and their obligations in relation to each other.

This agreement establishes an equitable formula by which each county shares the expenses of financing the Court. Such expenses include payments to counsel for indigent defendants, juror compensation, staff salaries and insurance benefits, computer equipment, office furniture, facilities, office supplies, and any other miscellaneous services or equipment required in the performance of the Court's day-to-day operation. It also provides an orderly process for establishing and monitoring the Court's budget and resolving any financial disputes.

The agreement establishes Grand Traverse County as the "fiscal agent" for the counties with the responsibility for the bookkeeping operations associated with meeting the Court's payroll and also for the preparation of an annual accounting to be provided to the Court and Antrim and Leelanau Counties. The fiscal agent also bears the responsibility for maintaining the Court's personnel records and administration of the Court employees' health and benefit packages.

The agreement may be modified by mutual consent of the parties; and, should any disputes arise, the agreement sets forth procedures through which they may be resolved.

The Court is pleased that it was able to achieve such an agreement with its funding units, as it provides a forum for discussion and exchange of information between county officials and judges and perpetuates regional cooperation.

FAMILY DIVISION PLAN

By legislation signed September 30, 1996, the legislators and Governor of the State of Michigan reorganized the State's Circuit and Probate Courts. This legislation created a Family Division within each Circuit, with the Family Division incorporating much of the jurisdiction and services previously provided by the Probate Courts. This legislation became effective on January 1, 1998.

The Judges of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit and the Probate Judges of Antrim, Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties met and discussed the proposed guidelines and requirements promulgated for implementation of a plan for the operation of the Family Division. They worked together to propose a plan for the Thirteenth Circuit Court Family Division which they felt complies with the law, satisfies the guidelines and requirements, and allows the flexibility necessary to accommodate the differences which are inherent to the Court's multiple-county location, population

and growing case load. The plan for operation of the Family Division was submitted to the Supreme Court for its review.

Under the Thirteenth Circuit Court Family Division Plan, the Chief Judge of the Circuit is responsible for the supervision of the Family Division. Each of the three County Probate Judges is the Presiding Judge of the Family Division within their county of election for a term ending December 31, 1999. Each Presiding Judge has day-to-day responsibility for Family Division staff.

The Family Division Judges utilize the procedures already established in the Thirteenth Circuit Caseflow Management Plan for the consistent delivery of domestic relations services throughout the Circuit. The Circuit Court Administrator assists all judges exercising Circuit Court jurisdiction by relieving their administrative burden.

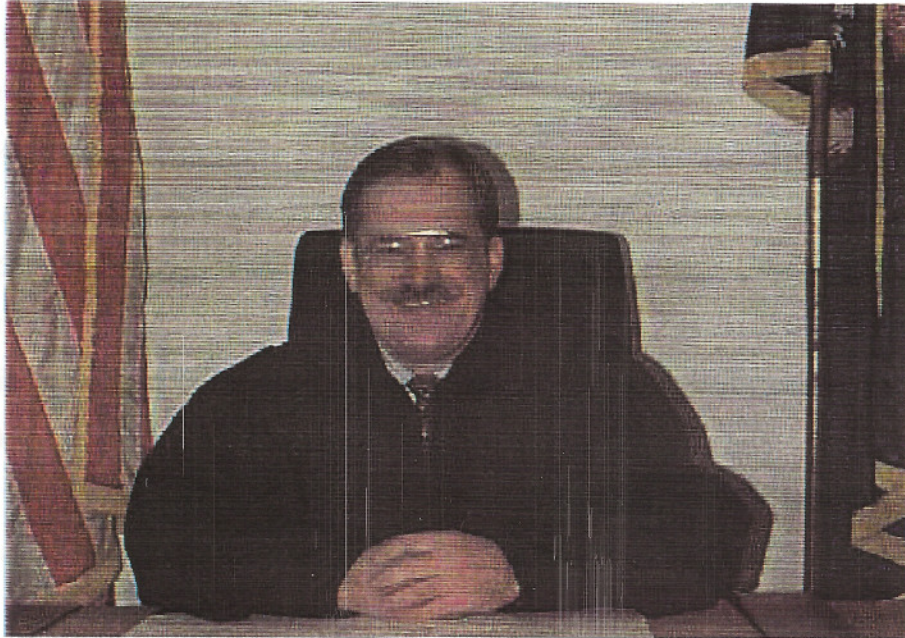
The Family Division utilizes the Circuit Court Domestic Relations Referee as each Family Division Judge deems appropriate to review and hear matters involving custody, support and visitation. The Friend of the Court office remains housed within the Grand Traverse County Courthouse. Friend of the Court staff continue to provide the same assistance to all Family Division Judges as was previously provided to the Circuit Court Judges; i.e., initial interview and recommendation in new divorce matters, reviews and recommendations in support, parenting time and custody matters and mediation services. Case managers have been specifically assigned to each county and hold regular office hours within their respective counties.

JUDGES OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT

Circuit Court Judges Philip E. Rodgers, Jr. and Thomas G. Power serve their constituents as Circuit Court Judges in all three counties and also serve the Family Division by presiding over all Grand Traverse County cases encompassed within the jurisdiction of the Family Division that do not involve minor children.

Judicial assignments to the two Circuit Court Judges are made by a random, alternating case selection process so that each judge is assured an equal assignment of cases by case type; for example, domestic relations cases not involving minor children, civil matters, auto negligence, criminal felonies, and so on.

PHILIP E. RODGERS, JR.



Judge Rodgers was first elected to the bench in 1990, and was re-elected without opposition in 1996. Judge Rodgers served as Chief Judge from 1992 through 1997. Prior to assuming the bench, the Judge was a partner and trial attorney in the law firm of Menmuir, Zimmerman, Rollert and Kuhn.

Judge Rodgers graduated in 1978 from the University of Michigan Law School. He had previously obtained his undergraduate degree from the University. He also received a Masters of Public Policy Degree from the University in 1977.

As a college student, the Judge was a Rotary International Graduate Fellow and spent a year in England studying public finance economics. Later, the Judge joined the Traverse City Rotary Club and served for six years on the Board of Directors of Rotary Charities.

Judge Rodgers has served his community through participation on the City Commission for four years, and was Mayor of the City of Traverse City in 1989. The Judge continues to be a trustee of the National Cherry Festival.

The Judge is married and has four children.



Judge Power is a native of Traverse City. He was elected to the bench in 1992. He began serving his second term on the bench January 1, 1999, after running for election as an unopposed incumbent.

Prior to his election, Judge Power served with distinction in the Michigan State Legislature for ten years. Among the Judge's important committee assignments was the House Judiciary Committee. Before election to the legislature, the Judge practiced law in Traverse City with the law firm of Elhart and Power. His was a general civil practice in the areas of business and estate planning and commercial litigation.

The Judge graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1974, having first obtained his undergraduate degree from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. Judge Power later obtained a Masters Degree in taxation from New York University in 1978.

Judge Power is a member of the Traverse City Rotary Club, a past Traverse City School Board member and past member of the Grand Traverse/Leelanau Mental Health Board.

The Judge is married and has two children.

JUDGES OF THE FAMILY DIVISION

JOHN D. FORESMAN



Judge Foresman serves his constituents as Probate Judge presiding over all litigation involving estates, guardianships, conservatorships and mental health commitments. Effective January 1, 1998, Judge Foresman also serves the Family Division by presiding over all Grand Traverse County cases encompassed within the jurisdiction of the Family Division which involve minor children.

Judge Foresman was first elected Grand Traverse County Probate Judge in 1988 and began serving in that capacity on January 1, 1989. He was successfully re-elected in 1994.

Prior to taking the bench, Judge Foresman was the Prosecuting Attorney for Grand Traverse County. Judge Foresman moved to Traverse City after practicing as an assistant prosecuting attorney for Wayne County.

Judge Foresman received his law degree from the Detroit College of Law after obtaining his undergraduate degree from Michigan State University.

The Judge is married and has three children.

JOHN W. UNGER



Judge Unger serves his constituents as Probate Judge presiding over all litigation involving estates, guardianships, conservatorships and mental health commitments. Effective January 1, 1998, Judge Unger also serves the Family Division by presiding over all Antrim County cases encompassed within the jurisdiction of the Family Division.

Judge Unger graduated from Bellaire High School. He received his undergraduate degree from Dartmouth College and his law degree from the University of Michigan.

Prior to his election to the bench in 1976, Judge Unger had a private law practice in Bellaire. Initially Probate Judge in Antrim Court was a part-time position. When Antrim County became entitled to a full time judge, Judge Unger became that judge. He is the only person to ever fill this position. He has been successfully re-elected on three occasions.

Judge Unger is married and has two children.

JOSEPH E. DEEGAN



Judge Deegan serves his constituents as Probate Judge presiding over all litigation involving estates, guardianships, conservatorships and mental health commitments. Effective January 1, 1998, Judge Deegan also serves the Family Division by presiding over all Antrim County cases encompassed within the jurisdiction of the Family Division.

Judge Deegan was first elected Probate Judge for Leelanau County in 1988. He took office on January 1, 1989 and was re-elected to a second term in November of 1994. Prior to taking the bench, Judge Deegan was Leelanau County Prosecuting Attorney for two terms from 1981 to 1988.

Judge Deegan earned his law degree from the University of Detroit Law School in 1963 after obtaining his undergraduate degree from Sacred Heart Seminary College in Detroit.

Judge Deegan is married and has seven children.

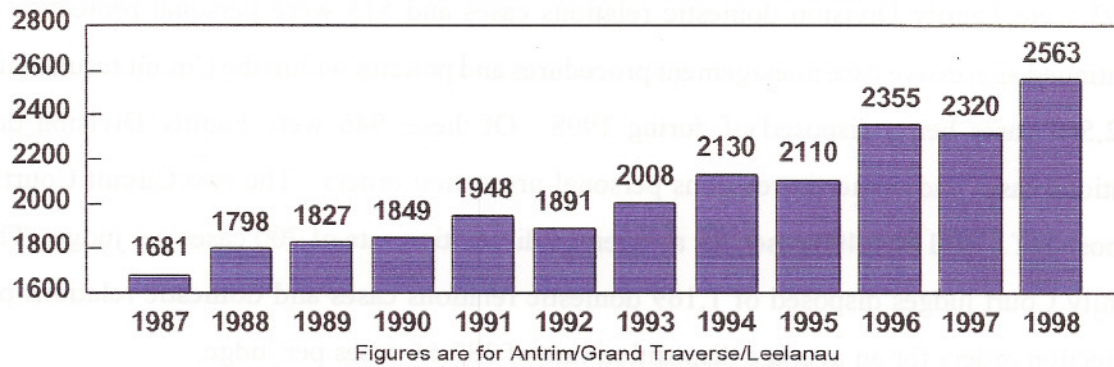
CIRCUIT COURT CASE LOAD

The Thirteenth Circuit is one of the busiest in the state. In 1998, there were 2,563 new filings in the Circuit. This is 243 more new cases than were filed in 1997. Of these new filings, 1,093 were Family Division domestic relations cases and 515 were personal protection orders. Continued aggressive case management procedures and policies within the Circuit resulted in a total of 2,569 cases being disposed of during 1998. Of these, 946 were Family Division domestic relations cases and domestic relations personal protection orders. The two Circuit Court Judges disposed of a total of 1,400 cases for an average disposition rate of 700 cases per judge. The three Family Court judges disposed of 1,169 domestic relations cases and domestic relations personal protection orders for an average disposition rate of 389.66 cases per judge.

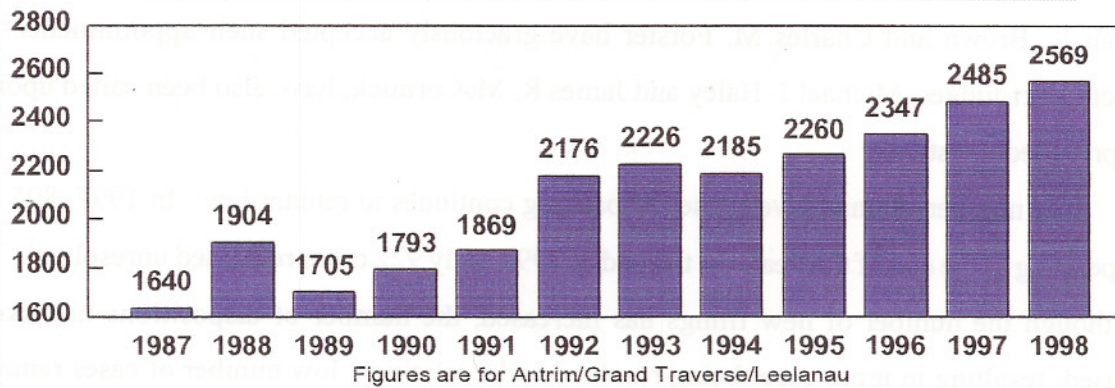
The Court continues to reduce its docket by having visiting judges preside over criminal and civil trials which would otherwise have to be adjourned due to scheduling conflicts. Retired Judges William R. Brown and Charles M. Forster have graciously accepted such appointments. The District Court Judges, Michael J. Haley and James R. McCormick, have also been called upon and have provided assistance.

The number of unresolved cases or backlog continues to remain low. In 1997, 895 cases were pending at the end of the year. At the end of 1998, only 922 cases remained unresolved. Thus, even though the number of new filings has increased, the number of dispositions has likewise increased, resulting in more cases being resolved and a relatively low number of cases remaining unresolved. At the end of 1998, only four of the unresolved cases were older than 18 months. The Court has not had any case pending for as long as two years for many years.

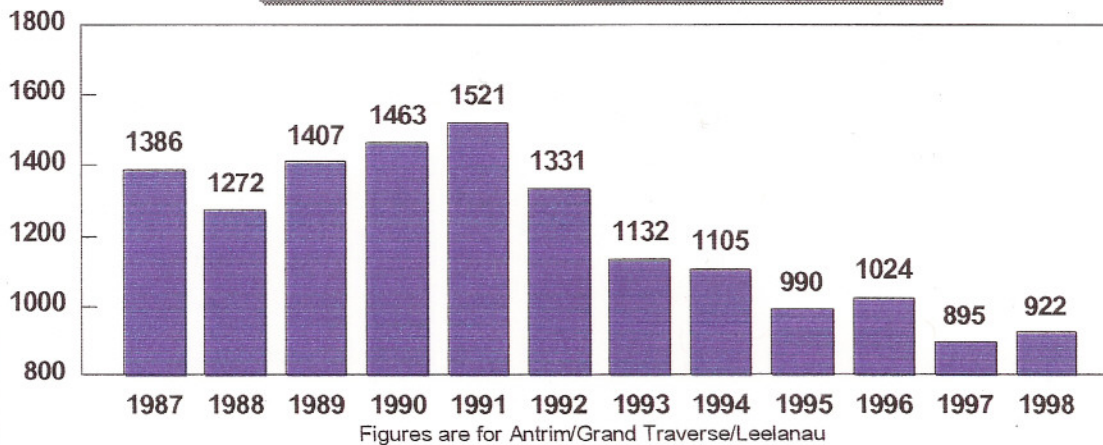
Trends in New 13th Circuit Court Case Filings



13th Circuit Court Case Disposition Trends



13th Circuit Court Cases Pending

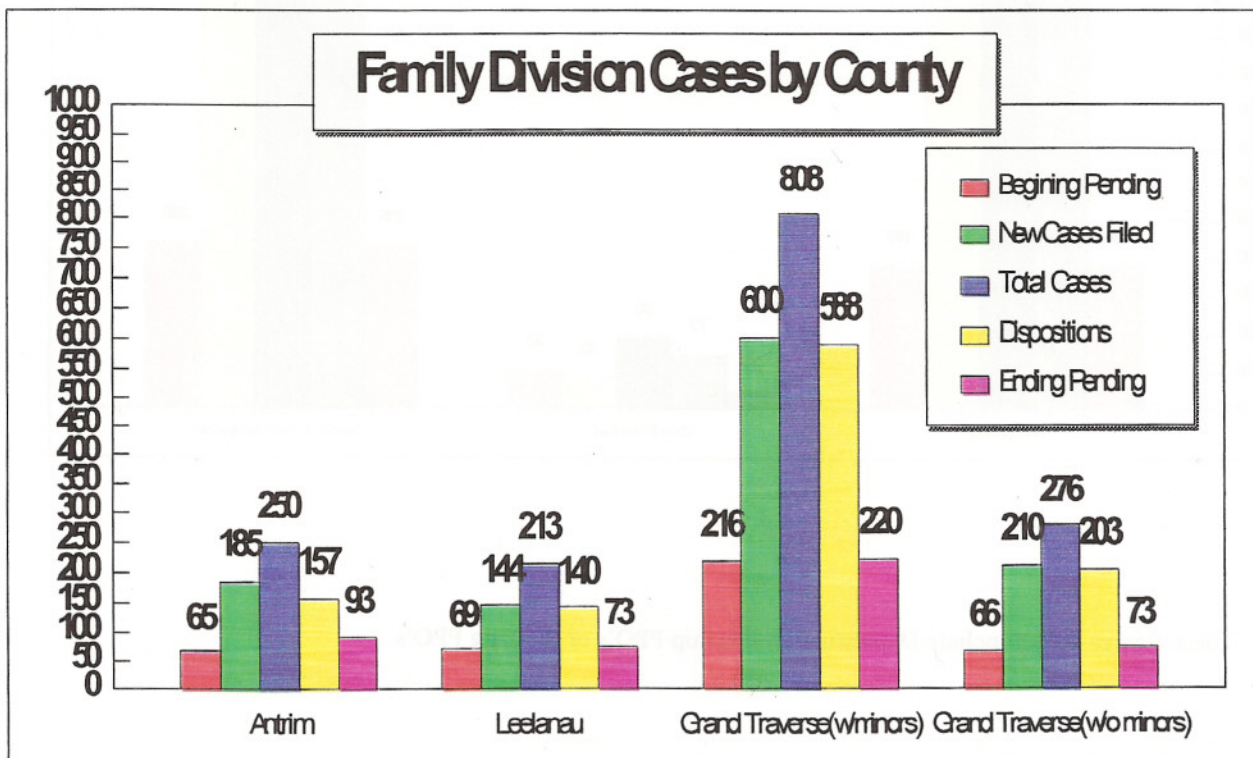


FAMILY DIVISION

With the creation of the Family Division, jurisdiction over criminal cases involving minors, child abuse and neglect, guardianships of juveniles, adoption proceedings, and all domestic relations matters in Leelanau and Antrim Counties were transferred to the Family Division of the Circuit Court. The currently serving Probate Judges took on added responsibility as Family Division Judges.

In Leelanau County, 69 pending domestic relations cases were transferred to the Family Division, 144 new domestic relations cases were filed and 140 domestic relations cases were disposed of in 1998. In Antrim County, 65 pending domestic relations cases were transferred to the Family Division, 185 new domestic relations cases were filed and 157 were disposed of in 1998.

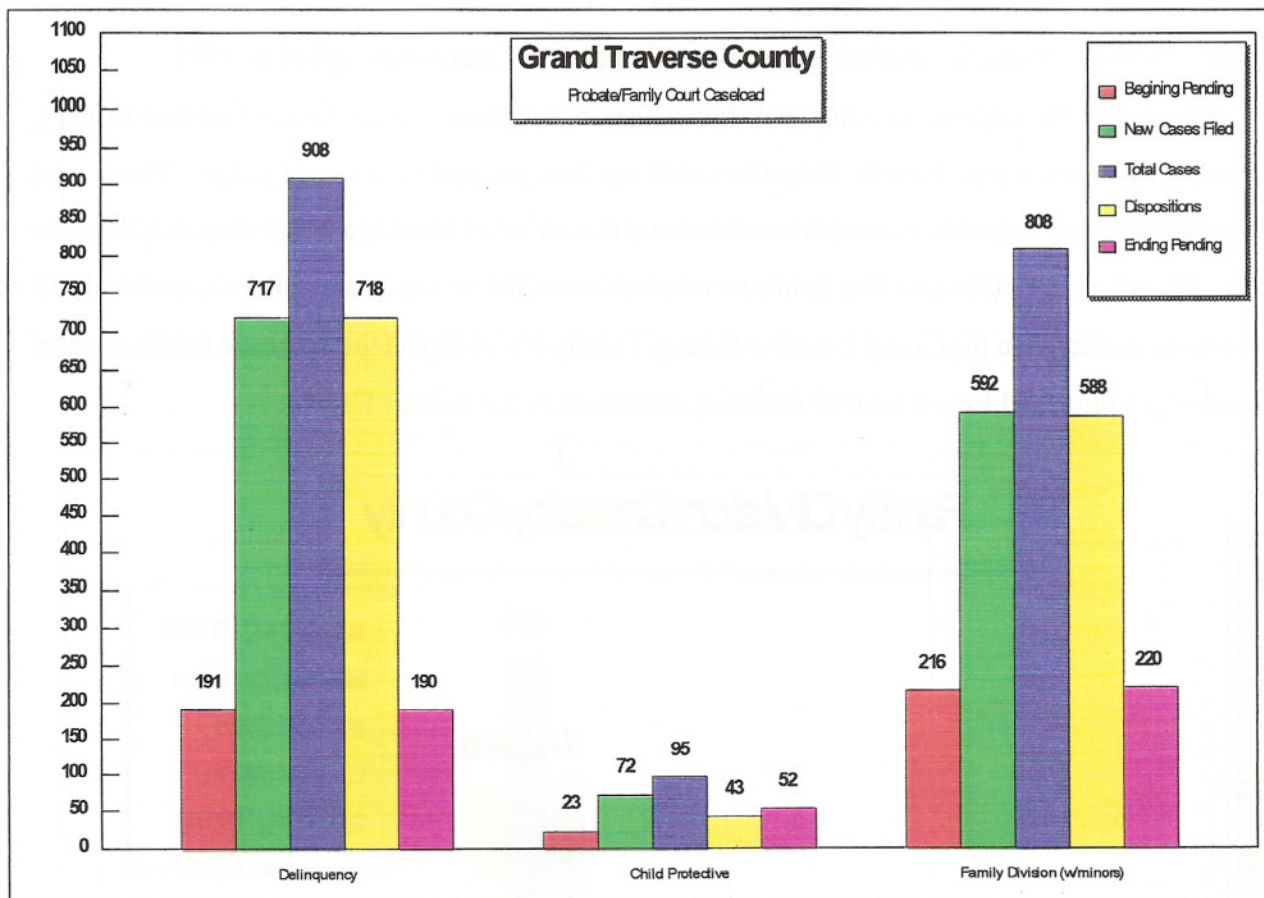
Because of the significant volume of domestic relations cases within Grand Traverse County, the Grand Traverse County Family Division could not be operated by a single judge. There was, however, insufficient case flow to support a second exclusive Family Division Judge in Grand Traverse County. Therefore, all of the pending domestic relations cases involving minor children, a total of 216 cases, were transferred to the Grand Traverse County Family Division and the domestic relations cases not involving minor children, a total of 66 cases, remained in the Circuit Court.



NOTE: These figures do not include Domestic Relationship PPO's or Stalking PPO's.

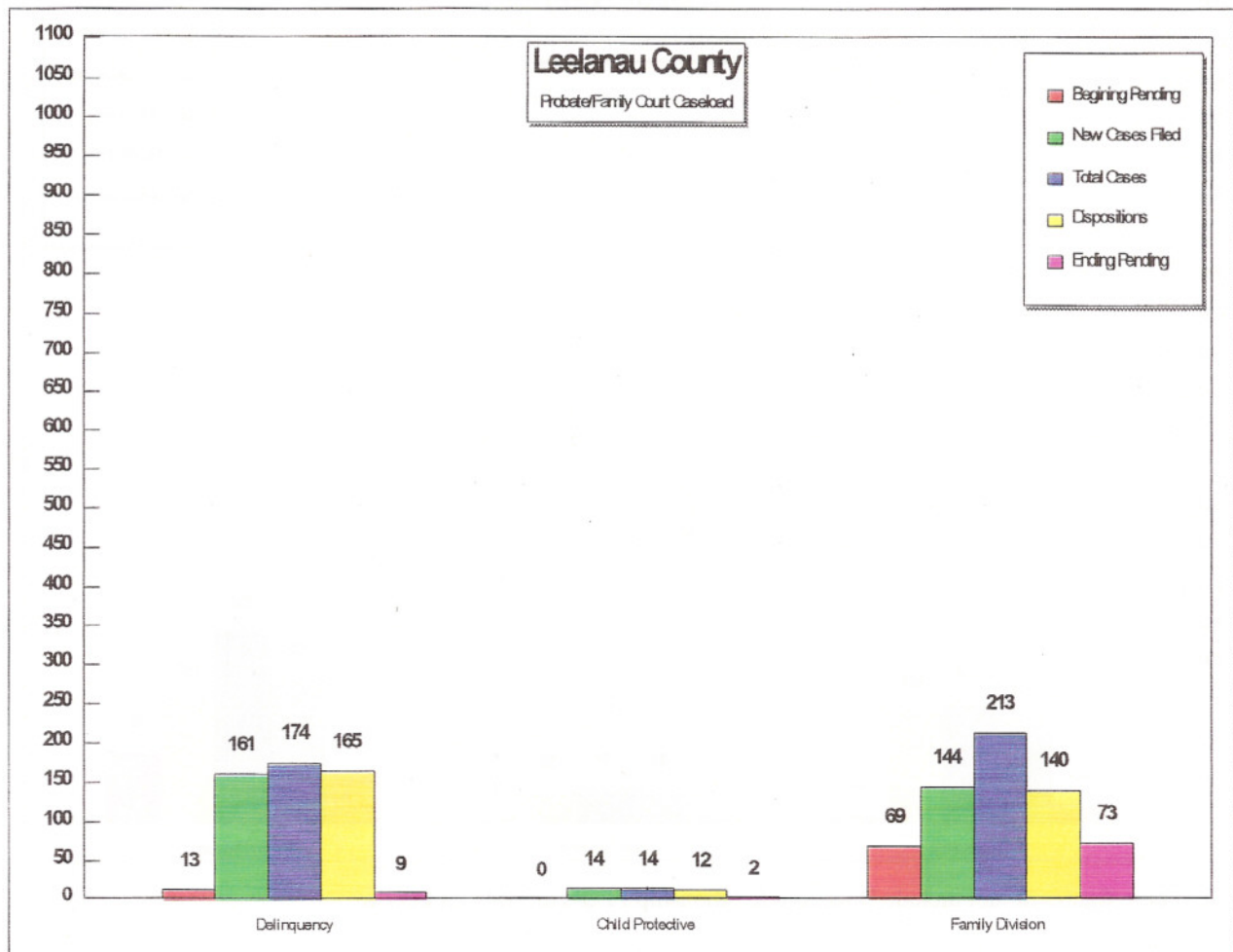
It is evident from these statistics that the creation of the Family Division significantly increased the case load of the Probate/Family Division Judges. By the creation of the Family Division the Grand Traverse County Probate/Family Division Judge's case load more than doubled. Similarly, in Antrim and Leelanau Counties, the Family Division cases account for the vast majority of the Probate/Family Division Judge's total case load.

In Grand Traverse County, the combined Probate and Family Division case load for 1998 was as follows:



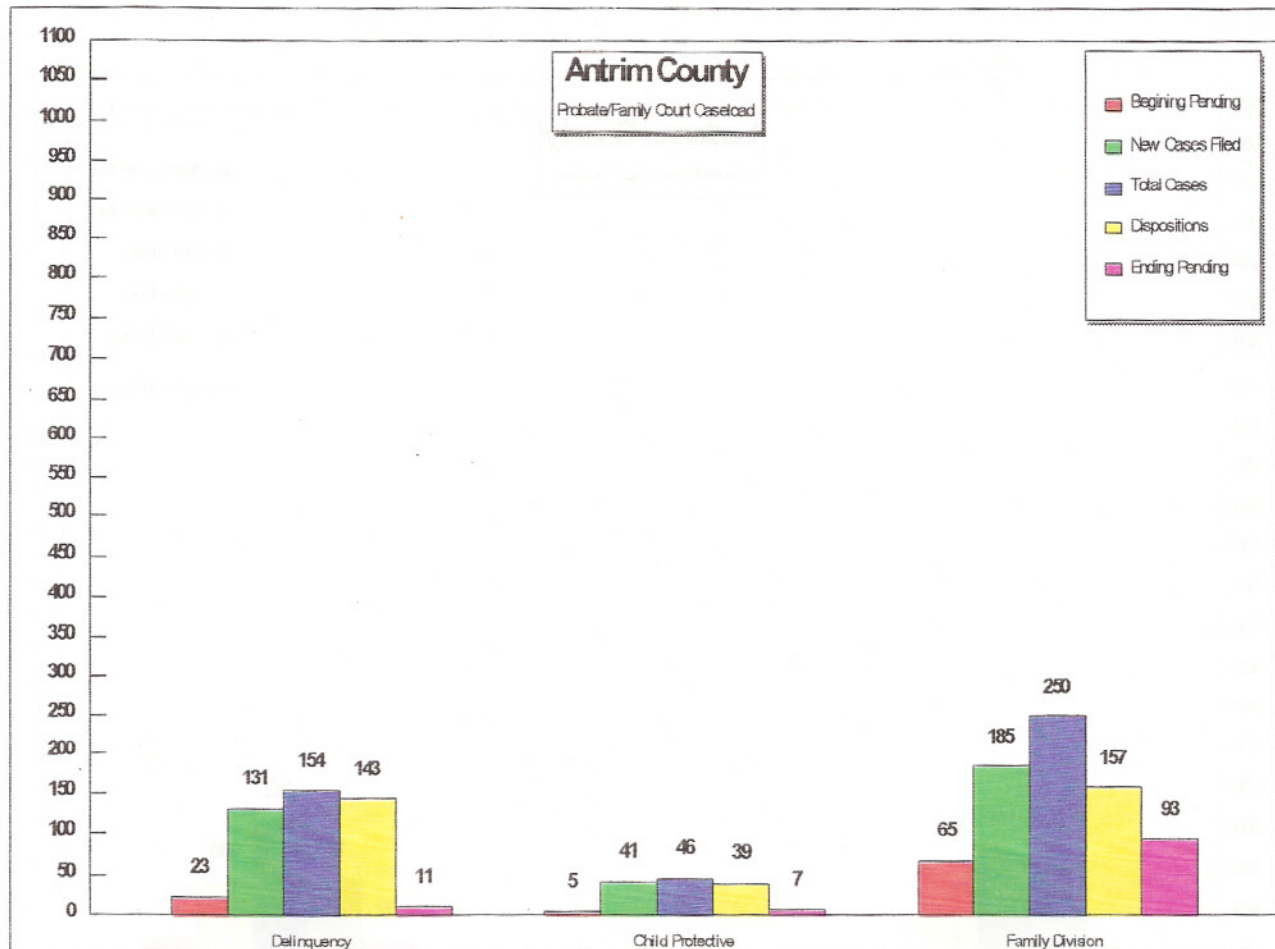
NOTE: These figures do not include Domestic Relationship PPO's or Stalking PPO's.

In Leelanau County, the combined Probate and Family Division case load for 1998 was as follows:



NOTE: These figures do not include Domestic Relationship PPO's or Stalking PPO's.

In Antrim County, the combined Probate and Family Division case load for 1998 was as follows:



NOTE: These figures do not include Domestic Relationship PPO's or Stalking PPO's.

The assignment of all domestic relations cases, and the scheduling within those cases, originates in the Circuit Court Administrator's Office in Traverse City. The assignment of all other Family Division cases and the scheduling within those cases originates in the relevant local office of the Family Division. Each county maintains a local office of the Family Division which is staffed with an administrator. In Antrim County, the Family Division Administrator is William Hefferan. In Leelanau County, the Family Division Administrator is Betsy Fisher. In Grand Traverse County, the Family Division Administrator is Ann Mapes. Family Division records are maintained in the County Clerk's Office for each respective County.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS REFEREE



Dennis Mikko is the Court's Domestic Relations Referee. Dennis provides assistance within the Family Division. He hears all cases involving disputes involving minor children, whether in a divorce case, paternity file or support matter. He expedites hearings devoted to child custody, child support and visitation. Having a Referee enables the parties to obtain hearing dates more quickly for these critical matters. The result is greater certainty and stability for

children, lower costs to litigants and prompt resolution of disputes by the Court.

The Referee also reviews requests for personal protection orders to determine if they contain sufficient information, both to enable the judges to sign them, and for law enforcement agencies to enter them into LEIN and enforce them. This preliminary review saves the Court an inestimable amount of time in processing and reviewing these orders.

The Referee conducted over 800 hearings in 1998 in custody and parenting time disputes and over 600 show cause hearings regarding support. Objections to child care contributions and to medical reimbursement demands are also being set before the Referee.

In order to continue to efficiently handle the volume of cases pending in the Probate/Family Division, the Court will be adding a second full time Referee position in early 1999.

FRIEND OF THE COURT

Dawn M. Rogers is the Friend of the Court. Dawn is a licensed attorney who, prior to assuming the responsibilities of her current position, practiced law with the local firm of Murchie, Calcutt and Boynton.

The Friend of the Court Office ("FOC") is responsible for representing the best interests of the children in those cases which come before the Circuit Court Family Division because of divorce, custody, child support, visitation or paternity disputes. The FOC case managers conduct interviews, gather financial information, mediate with parties and prepare written proposals offering their recommendations for review by the Family Division judges as to what would be the best resolution possible for the children. Whenever the Court enters an order regarding custody, child support, visitation or paternity issues, the FOC is responsible for enforcing that order.



Jennifer Overton, Paul Lezon, Linda McGuire
Jayne Arnold, Terri Andresen, Dawn Willman, Sandy Sinclair, Nan Courson, Sandy Schaub
Jeremy Hogue, Dawn Rogers, Lynne Stockwell, Al Crocker

As of December, 1998, the FOC Office had a total case load of 5,701, including non-charging as well as charging cases. This represents a substantial increase in the total number of cases being handled by the FOC Office. It is important to remember that the FOC Office keeps a case active until the youngest child in the family graduates from high school or turns 19 ½ years of age. Long after the divorce is over, FOC case managers continue to work with the parents and their children.

	1993	1996	1997	1998
TOTAL CASELOAD	4,498	5,176	5,394	5,701

During 1998, 287 cases were closed while 694 new cases were added to the caseload. Of those that were added to the caseload, 423 or 61% were divorce cases involving minor children. Another 109 or 16% were paternity actions and 97 or 14% were family support cases. Many of the family support cases are cases where the child is born out of wedlock, but paternity was acknowledged by the father, so the action was not one to establish paternity. Thus, approximately one-third of the new cases filed in 1998 were in the nature of paternity actions. The remainder of the new cases that were added to the case load were cases transferred from other jurisdictions. Each of the seven case managers of the FOC Office handles an average of 814 cases.

The total revenues for the FOC Office for 1998 were \$1,014,709.99 which included \$116,148.50 from Grand Traverse County. The total expenditures were \$909,665.56 which included \$73,214.00 in Grand Traverse County direct costs.

The 13th Circuit Court has the best average collections per expenditures of all the circuits sampled in the State according to a study conducted by the DMG Maximus of Bay City. The FOC Office averages a 90% collection ratio on spousal support. In 1998, nearly \$600,000 more was charged in child support than was charged in 1997. The child support current charges totaled \$14,844,551.86 and of those charges, \$11,308,186.44 was collected for a current charges to current collections ratio of 77%. The total collections for 1998 was \$14,842,699.52. The overall collections ratio was 99%.

In addition to the focus on prompt payment of child support, there has been ongoing efforts by the judges to inject stability in divorce proceedings. The FOC staff accomplishes this with early meetings between divorcing couples and their case managers to discuss and resolve child-related issues. The FOC case managers act as mediators and produce interim orders within three to four weeks

of the filing of a typical complaint. The combination of effective access to a case manager to resolve co-parenting issues and insure the prompt payment of support works to lessen the emotional stress which many parents otherwise suffer as they move through the divorce process.

Some of the initiatives and projects which the FOC supports and promotes are the supervised parenting time program, the warrants project, development of a comprehensive policies and procedures manual, technology upgrade, and family mediation training. The supervised parenting time program is funded by a State Court Administrator's Office ("SCAO") grant for access and visitation. In partnership with Child and Family Services of Northwestern Michigan, the FOC is able to assist families that require visits with the children to be supervised, but who have no one available to supervise the visits. Under this program, the FOC can make a referral of the family to Child and Family Services who will provide staff and facilities for supervised visits as well as feedback to the case manager concerning the visits.

The warrants project consisted of a thorough review of all of the outstanding FOC warrants. The FOC was able to recall over fifty warrants and have old warrants updated. This made FOC records more up-to-date and helped law enforcement clean up their records.

The FOC Office undertook the preparation of an extensive training manual concerning its policies and procedures. Work on this project is on-going, but much was accomplished in 1998 and, when completed, the new manual will be a valuable tool for new employees.

The technology of the FOC case manager assistants, who are primarily responsible for parent location and interstate enforcement, has been upgraded to provide Internet access.

FOC staff members made presentations during 1998 to Rotary, the Traverse City Area Public School principals, Leadership Grand Traverse, and the Legal Secretaries Association. Staff members have also participated in the development of a community marriage policy, support groups for children of divorce and the Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties Strong Families/Safe Children Initiative.

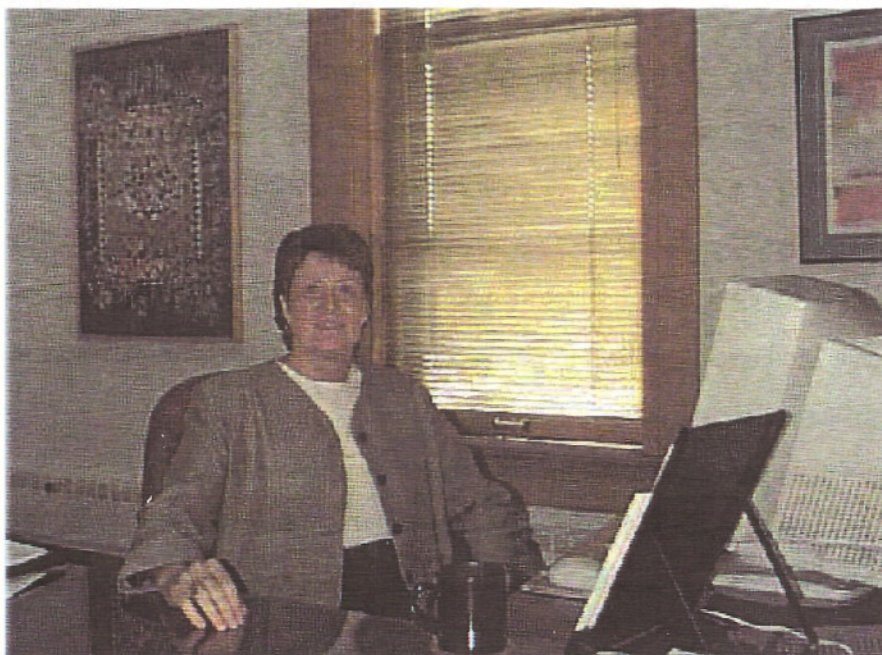
Start Making It Liveable for Everyone or SMILE is presented locally six times each year. SMILE is an educational program designed to help divorcing parents help their children to cope and adjust. In the 13th Circuit, participation in this program is mandatory.

The FOC Office maintains a list of qualified family counselors and, in cases of indigence, provides financial assistance for counseling services. The case managers also provide formal and informal mediation services.

COURT ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

The Administrator's Office is fully computerized. The Court can access its civil, domestic relations and criminal docket in all three counties through individual terminals in the Traverse City administrator's office. The Court has the ability to prepare computer-generated notices of hearing and trial which are then automatically entered into a case-tracking and informational record. In addition, the Court's civil and domestic relations court mediation scheduling, records and forms are programmed into the system. Every member of the Administrator's Office staff is cross-trained and can perform the duties and responsibilities of other staff members when needed.

Court Administrator



MaryAnne Macy, replaced long-time Court Administrator Laila Olson who retired after more than twenty years of exemplary service to the Circuit Court.

From 1993 until 1998, MaryAnne served as Judicial Assistant to Judge Rodgers. In addition to performing the usual duties and responsibilities of a

Judicial Assistant, MaryAnne was instrumental in developing the Court's facilitative mediation processes and resources. She is a certified mediator and mediation trainer. In 1998, she served as a member of the Michigan Supreme Court Dispute Resolution Task Force and was actively involved in the development and maintenance of quality mediation resources for the local Conflict Resolution Service.

As Circuit Court Administrator, MaryAnne acts as the Court's chief executive officer. She is responsible for facilities management, caseload management, personnel and budgeting. She also

acts as an administrative assistant to the judges implementing policies and procedures which they propose.

Assistant Court Administrator and Mediation Clerk

Karen Schaub is Assistant to the Court Administrator and Mediation Clerk. As Assistant to the Court Administrator, Karen aids the Administrator with payroll functions and caseflow management. She also provides assistance to the judges when the Administrator is unavailable and is responsible for the direction of the other staff members in the Administrator's absence.

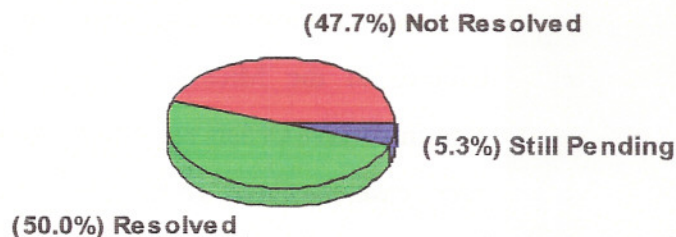
As Mediation Clerk, Karen is responsible for monitoring all civil and domestic relations cases after they are ordered into court rules and/or facilitative mediation. She also generates statistical reports which assist the court in tracking the rate of acceptance achieved by the members of its mediation panels as well as the overall success in achieving resolution of cases.

There are thirteen (13) Court-approved facilitative mediators in the Thirteenth Circuit. Public Act 286 defines "mediator" as an impartial, neutral person who assists parties in voluntarily reaching their own settlement of issues in a dispute and who has no authoritative decision-making power. Individuals providing Facilitative Mediation services to parties referred by the Court must have, at a minimum, the following qualifications:

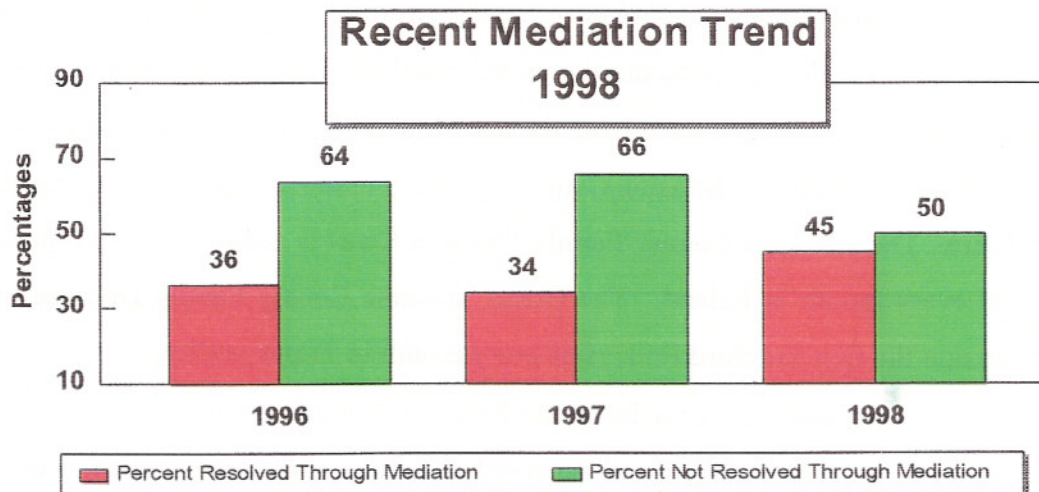
- 1) Completion of forty (40) hours of SCAO approved training as a mediator; and
- 2) Fifty (50) hours of service as a mediator in an organization which operates in full compliance with Public Act 286, MCL 691.1552 et seq; MSA 27.15(52) et seq., documentation to be provided to the Court; or
- 3) Completion of forty (40) hours of non-SCAO training as a mediator, syllabus of the training and completion certificate to be provided to the Court, and 4) Fifty (50) hours of service as a mediator in an organization approved by SPIDR, or another nationally recognized professional ADR organization, documentation to be provided to the Court.

In 1998, 117 cases were ordered into facilitative mediation. Of those, 41 were settled or otherwise resolved prior to mediation. Of the 76 cases which were mediated, 34 cases or 45% were resolved and 38 cases or 50% were not settled, and 4 cases or 5% were still pending as of December 31, 1998.

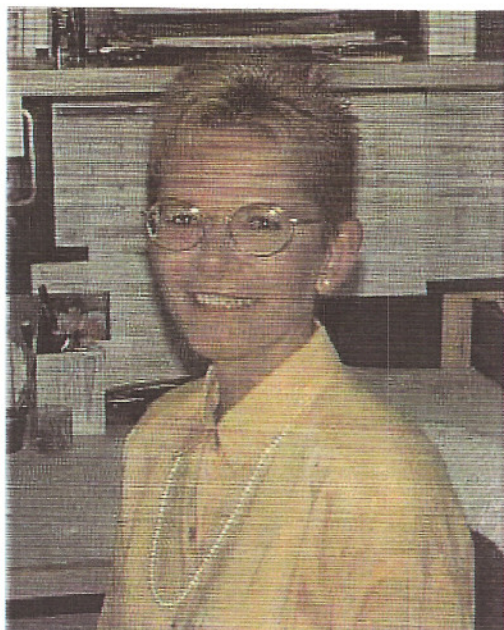
Facilitative Mediation Disposition Rate 1998



In summary, 95% of those cases ordered to mediation were resolved prior to a final settlement conference with the Court. The benefits of prompt, certain results to litigants and the cost savings, to taxpayers who support the Courts, continue to make mediation an effective case management tool.



Caseflow Management



All Court scheduling for the two Circuit Court Judges, the three Family Division Judges and the Domestic Relations Referee is managed by Carol Devantier. Matters included within the scheduling process are motion hearings, status conferences, settlement conferences and trials in both civil and criminal cases. The Thirteenth Circuit strictly adheres to the Michigan Court Rules time lines and Administrative Orders regarding case flow management. In every case, the Court's Scheduling Order sets forth the time line for the disposition of the case consistent with the time lines set by SCAO. Sample calendars and motion day listings are available from the Administrator's Office.

According to the Court's weekly calendar, Mondays are motion days with one of the two Circuit Court Judges hearing motions in Grand Traverse County and the other hearing motions in either Leelanau or Antrim County. Trials are scheduled for Tuesdays through Thursdays for all the counties. On Fridays, one Circuit Court Judge conducts Grand Traverse County criminal day and the other has settlement conferences in civil cases. After every motion and criminal day, Carol follows up on the status of the case.

Mediation and final settlement conferences result in the resolution of a large number of cases, thereby reducing taxpayer cost by reducing the overall need for jurors, compensation for lay and expert witnesses in criminal cases and delaying the need for additional judges and courtrooms.

The Antrim County Family Division Court is generally in session the first Thursday of every month in Bellaire. The Leelanau County Family Division Court is generally in session the third Wednesday of every month in Leland. The Grand Traverse County Family Division Court is generally in session the first and third Fridays of every month in Traverse City.

Hearings are scheduled before the Domestic Relations Referee in whichever county the case is pending whenever an Order Referring to Referee has been prepared and mailed to counsel of record.

The Referee typically hears matters pending in Grand Traverse County on the first and third Wednesdays and Thursdays of every month, in Leelanau County on the second Wednesday of every month, and in Antrim County on the fourth Wednesday of every month.



Judicial Secretary

Julie Arends is the Judicial Secretary in the Administrator's Office. She transcribes and types all judicial decisions, orders and correspondence. In addition, she reviews divorce cases that are pending in the Circuit Court prior to their hearing dates to determine whether the parties are in compliance as to service, notice and preparation of judgment. This information is referred to the judges prior to their motion days. Julie also prepares pre-trial worksheets and final settlement conference worksheets for the Court. Julie is cross-trained to function as Receptionist and Mediation Clerk.

Receptionist

Norma Sandelius is the Court's Receptionist. She is responsible for answering the telephones, greeting litigants and their counsel, scheduling all uncontested divorces, preparing and posting the daily dockets, and

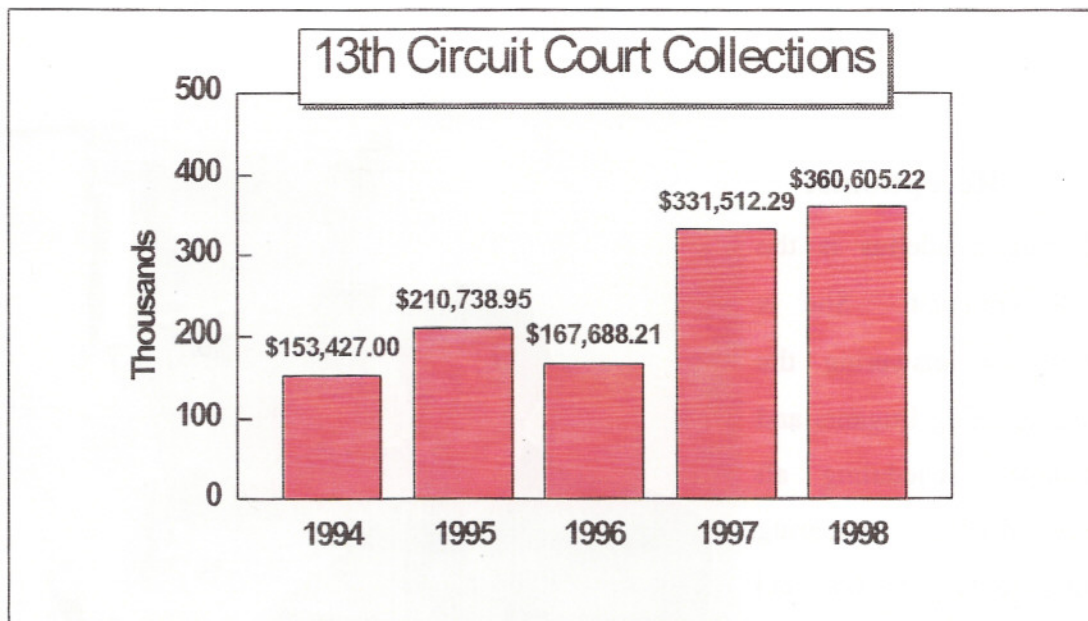


reviewing and distributing incoming mail, including motions and personal protection orders. Norma fulfills a vital role in case management. Among other things, she keeps the judges' calendars updated, follows up on judgments and dismissals when due, and manages courtroom and court reporter assignments.



Collections

Teri Quinn is responsible for the collection of fines, costs, attorney fees and restitution from convicted felons. Teri's position provides backup assistance to the Court's full-time Receptionist and oversees the Court's crime victim fund. Teri has been instrumental in developing the new criminal computer program relating to receipting of money due and reconciling those receipts against collections' records of amounts owed.



COURT FINANCES

Grand Traverse County is the designated fiscal agent for the Thirteenth Circuit Court. Grand Traverse County is responsible for the processing, audit, verification, and payment of all operating expenses and for maintaining the Circuit Court Operating Fund. The expenses of operating the Court are divided into "cost-shared" and "cost-direct" expenses. Cost-shared expenses include such items as salaries and fringe benefits, office space, computer data processing, office supplies, and other capital expenditures. These expenses are paid for out of the Operating Fund. On a monthly basis, each county pays into the Fund its pro-rata share of actual expenses incurred. The pro-rata share of each county is the same proportion as the number of cases entered and commenced in that county.

Cost-direct expenses include such items as Court appointed attorney fees, jury fees, witness fees, transcript fees, and courthouse security costs. These expenses are paid directly by each individual county.

In 1998, Antrim County transferred \$168,244.00 into the Operating Fund. Leelanau County transferred \$104,151.00. Grand Traverse County transferred \$796,720.00. The Local Crime Victims Fund accounted for \$9,245.00 in revenue. The Court's total revenue was \$1,078,360.00. Some of this revenue comes from the State. Some of it is generated through filing fees, fines and court costs assessed by the County Clerks' Offices. Some of it is generated through collection efforts to recoup costs, fines, appointed attorney fees, restitution, and crime victim payments in criminal cases. In this latter category, Antrim County collected \$70,081.00, Leelanau County collected \$26,383.00 and Grand Traverse County collected \$264,141.00 in 1998.

Expenditures for 1998 totaled \$1,085,536.00 and included:

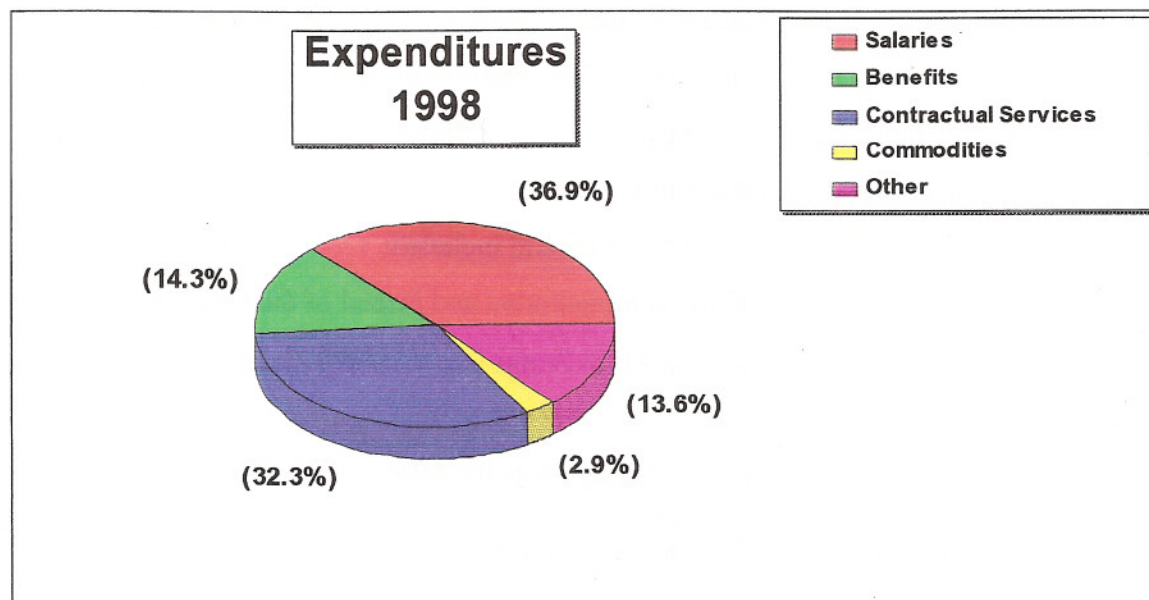
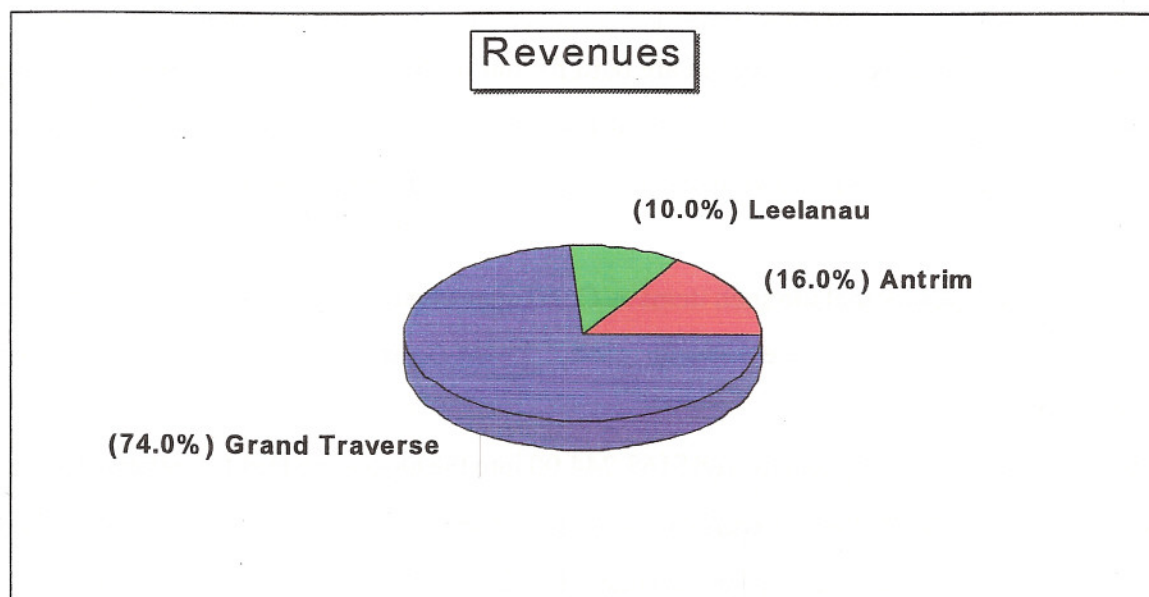
\$400,702.00 in Salaries for judicial, administrative and Friend of the Court staff.

\$155,465.00 (including FICA of \$24,641) in Fringe Benefits for judicial, administrative and Friend of the Court staff.

\$350,814.00 in Contractual Services for payments for defense counsel and mediators, juror payments and mileage, equipment, furniture, travel, conferences, professional services, case-related payments, and other items central to administration and operation of the court.

\$31,158.00 in Commodities primarily for postage and office supplies.

\$147,397.00 in Other Expenses for non-controllable costs borne by the Court for such items as computer services, equipment rental, printing, utilities, and liability insurance.



OTHER MEMBERS OF THE COURT STAFF

Judicial Assistants

Each of the Circuit Court Judges employs a full time Judicial Assistant who assists the Court through legal research, memoranda and draft opinion writing, and fulfilling jury bailiff responsibilities during jury trials. Each Assistant works with the Judge in the preparation of the Court's civil scheduling conference order, so that realistic time frames are established for the progress of litigation through discovery, mediation, arbitration, settlement conference, and trial.

The Judicial Assistants may work directly with the litigants and their attorneys during the settlement conferences to facilitate the resolution of cases before trial. The Judicial Assistants are available to answer the questions of counsel regarding the Court's local policies and procedures.

Mike Rader is Judge Power's Judicial Assistant. Mike has been with the Court for more than 13 years.





Barbara Budros replaced MaryAnne Macy as Judge Rodgers' Judicial Assistant in September. Barbara is a licensed attorney with a background in both criminal prosecution and civil litigation.

Court Reporters

The Court employs two full time Court Reporters. They are Chris Sherwin and Mike Miller. They are assigned by the Receptionist to cover the official proceedings of the Court. Like the Circuit Court Judges, the Court Reporters "ride the circuit," reporting proceedings in each of the three counties as needed.



JURY BOARD

Each of the three counties within the Thirteenth Circuit has its own three member Jury Board. The members of the Jury Boards are appointed by the Governor for six-year terms. The members of the Grand Traverse County Jury Board are Nancy Muha, Amanda Pouzar, and Virginia Watson. The members of the Leelanau Jury Board are Al Porter, Inez Kirt, and Emma Grindstuen. The members of the Antrim County Jury Board are Cathleen Beal, Maxine Ouvey, and Margaret VanLooy.

Each Jury Board obtains the names of prospective jurors from Lansing and is responsible for sending out the original juror questionnaires for their respective county. After the original questionnaire is returned, the Jury Boards pull the names of the jurors for their Circuit Court, District Court and Probate/Family Court.

The County Clerk's Office in each county is responsible for actually summoning the jurors for a particular court panel. The County Clerk's Office is also responsible for following up with any jurors who fail to return their initial questionnaire or who fail to appear when summoned.

In December, a deputy clerk, Rosemary Worley, was hired as an Office Specialist for the Grand Traverse County Jury Board. Her position is designed to accommodate several needs and to cover duties that have been spread over several offices. Rosie provides clerical support and maintains accurate and timely minutes for the Board. Rosie generates and coordinates all the juries for the Grand Traverse County Circuit Court while coordinating the creation of separate jury pools for both the 86th District Court and the Grand Traverse County



Probate/Family Court. It is anticipated that she will eventually provide the same closely monitored jury notice system currently used for the Grand Traverse Circuit Court for the Grand Traverse District and Probate/Family Courts.

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Probation officers who assist the Circuit Court are employees of the Michigan Department of Corrections. There are probation officers for each of the three counties and they are located in an office in their respective county.



Billie Cooper, Chuck Welsh, Tom Chapman, Linda Lautner, Nancy Bogart-Thorpe

The probation officers are responsible for preparing pre-sentence investigation reports. They interview and obtain statements from defendants convicted of felonies and high court misdemeanors. They research the defendant's background for information as to family, education, physical characteristics and previous criminal history. They use this information to prepare a written report which the Court utilizes in sentencing. In 1998, an average of 28 pre-sentence investigation reports were completed per month. An average of 455.33 clients were being supervised per month by the department. The average number of probation violations initiated per month was 10.92.

The following is a list of crimes for which pre-sentence investigation reports were completed in 1998 for Grand Traverse and Leelanau Counties along with a tally for each type of crime.

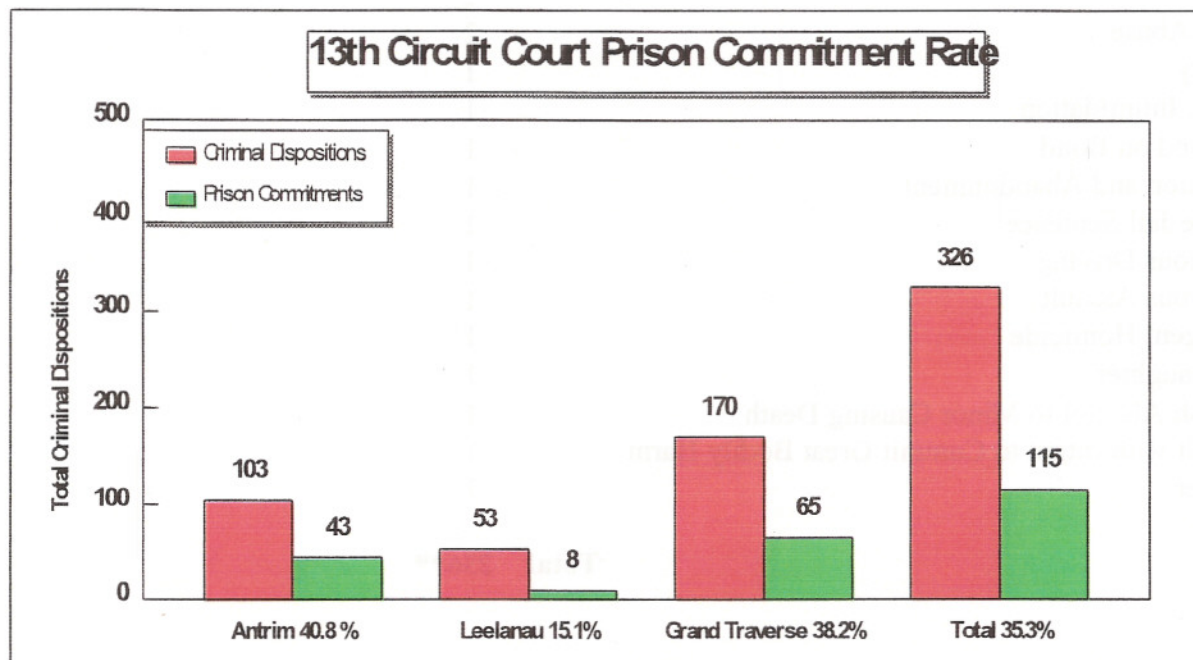
Crime Group	Total
Controlled Substance	43
Fraud	43
OUIL	35*
Larceny	31
Criminal Sexual Conduct	27
Breaking and Entering	23
Carrying Concealed Weapon	9
Receiving & Concealing Stolen Property	8
Armed and Unarmed Robbery	6
Assault with a Dangerous Weapon	5
Resisting and Obstructing a Police Officer	5
Malicious Destruction of Property	3
Animal Cruelty	2
Arson	2
Child Abuse	2
Perjury	1
Ethnic Intimidation	1
Abscond on Bond	1
Desertion and Abandonment	1
Escape Jail Sentence	1
Felonious Driving	1
Felonious Assault	1
Negligent Homicide	1
Manslaughter	1
Furnish Alcohol to Minor Causing Death	1
Assault with Intent to Commit Great Bodily Harm	1
Murder	1
Total	256**

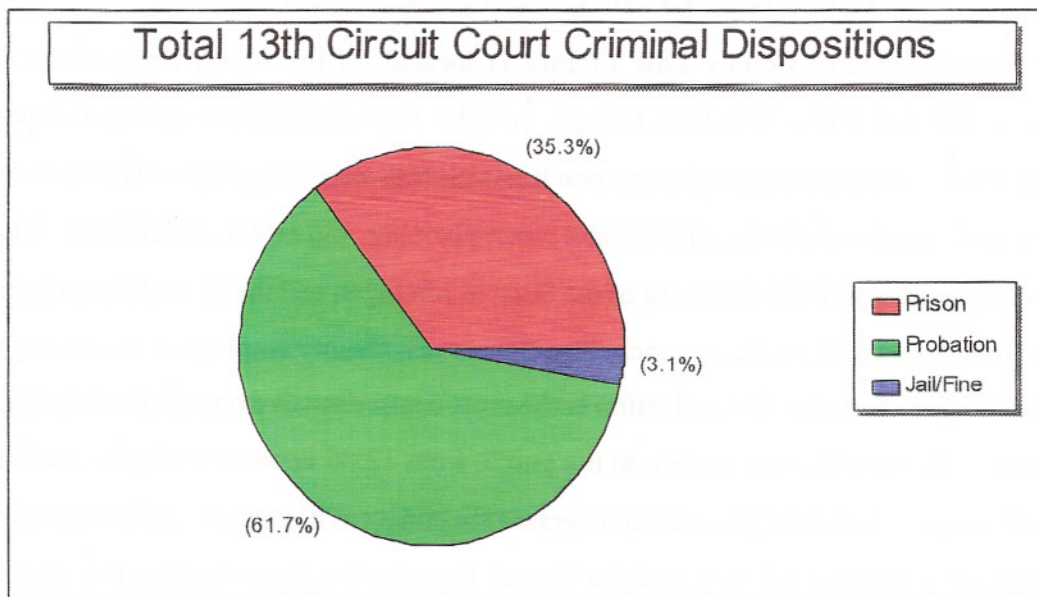
* Of the 47 total OUIL 3rd dispositions, 11 were sent to prison, for a commitment rate of 23.4%. Twenty-six others were sentenced to nine months or one year in the county jail and placed on probationary supervision for the maximum allowable period of 5 years. Ten others were sentenced to straight probation. During the probationary period of supervision, comprehensive substance abuse therapy is provided and the offender is required to maintain employment and repay court-imposed financial obligations. Regular drug and alcohol testing are also required.

** If there were multiple convictions on same individual, only the most severe case was counted.

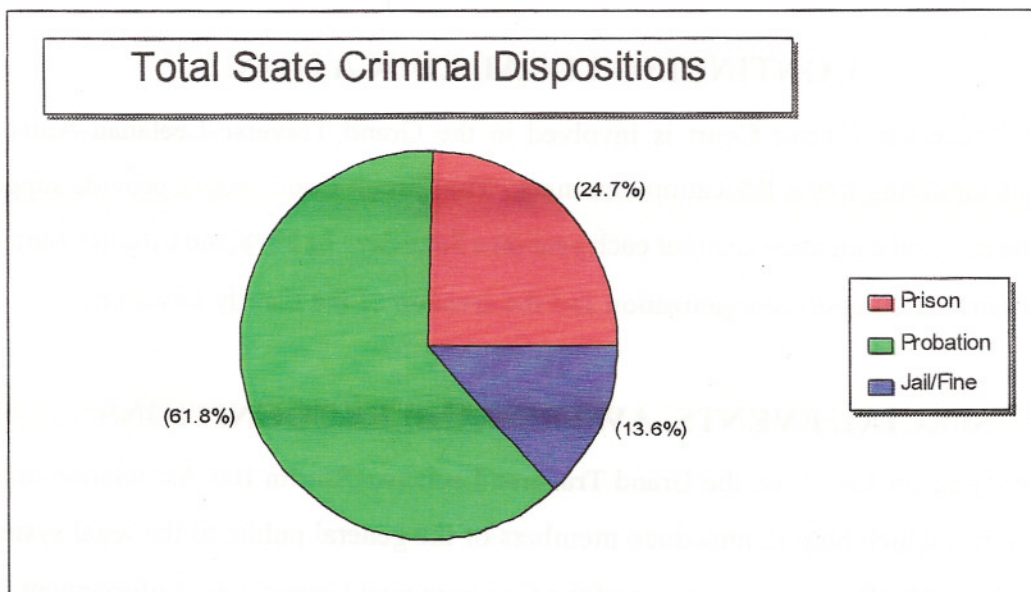
The Probation Department assists the Collections Clerk to recover costs and restitution. The Department works closely with the Office of Community Corrections to relieve the stress on the county jail and to begin the rehabilitative steps needed by setting up and supervising clients on early release programs, including voice tether or substance abuse treatment. For the 97-98 fiscal year, 18,221 jail bed days were saved by these programs.

As illustrated by the graph below and the charts on the next page, the 1998 prison commitment rate was 40.8% in Antrim County, 15.1% in Leelanau County, and 38.2% in Grand Traverse County, for an overall commitment rate of 35.3% for the Thirteenth Circuit, which accounts for .8% of the total criminal dispositions in the State.





By comparison, the prison commitment rate for the entire State was 24.6%. The higher commitment rate within the 13th Circuit reflects the judges' and the community's philosophy that serious crime receive meaningful and proportionate punishment.



GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

The Grand Traverse County Law Library is located on the fourth floor of the County Courthouse in Traverse City. The Law Library includes modern computer research capabilities including three computer terminals and many practical volumes on common subjects such as criminal law, divorce, real estate and zoning, probate and estate planning, and motor vehicle laws. The laws, statutes, court rules, and judicial decisions of the State of Michigan and the United States are all part of the collection. Users of the Library - including Court staff, County employees, attorneys, and the general public - appreciate that this collection is the most comprehensive one north of the Saginaw-Bay City Area. The Law Library is open to the public from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. weekdays.

The Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court oversees the budget as it relates to the library collection. The Traverse Area District Library and the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association provide staffing for the Library. The Library houses the Bar Association's Traverse Attorney Referral Service.

Judge Rodgers, his Judicial Assistant and the County Law Librarian serve on the Advisory Board for the Northwestern Michigan College Paralegal Program. The NMC Paralegal Program legal research class meets in the Law Library during the fall semester and the students' laboratory fees are used to purchase additional resources for the library.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

The Thirteenth Circuit Court is involved in the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association Continuing Legal Education Seminars. The Circuit Court judges provide support for a special interest legal education seminar each year on a Saturday. In 1998, the Circuit Court Judges presented a seminar on court reorganization and the creation of the Family Division.

SPECIAL EVENTS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Every year on Law Day, the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association organizes various activities which help to introduce members of the general public to the legal system and legal profession. The Bar organizes tours of the Governmental Center, Law Enforcement Center,

Courthouse, and County Law Library. The Bar staffs an "Ask the Lawyer" forum at the local mall and a panel to meet with senior citizens to answer their law-related questions.

Every year a member of the community is honored as the recipient of the Liberty Bell Award. This award is presented to a non-lawyer for his/her contribution to the community and to the legal system. In 1998, Sue Ellen Jensen, Director of the local Conflict Resolution Service, was the recipient of this award. Sue Ellen has overseen the activities of the five-county Conflict Resolution Service since its inception. The Conflict Resolution Service was started by the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association in 1990 with funding from a SCAO grant. In 1992, it received its 501(C)(3) status and began to function independent of the Bar.

CRS volunteers mediate disputes among neighbors, landlords and tenants, property owners, merchants and customers, employees and employers, and a variety of other cases that might otherwise clog the courts. Sue Ellen works with volunteers by training, scheduling and overseeing all aspects of the mediation service. The award recognizes that it is through her efforts that CRS has succeeded and grown far beyond expectations.

The Circuit Court has historically referred cases to CRS for mediation services where it has felt that the litigants could benefit from the process. Through the local Bar Association's Alternative Dispute Resolution committee, the Court has worked closely with the Bar and CRS to establish viable alternatives to litigation.

RETIREMENTS

Laila Olson

Laila began her employment with the 13th Circuit Court on July 26, 1976. She retired with 22 years of service on July 31, 1998. She was this Circuit's first Court Administrator and began her employment with the Hon. William R. Brown and Hon. Charles M. Forster. Upon their retirement, she began working with the Hon. Thomas G. Power and Hon. Philip E. Rodgers, Jr. With the creation of the Family Division, in which she played an instrumental role, Laila began an active working relationship with the Probate Judges John D. Foresman, John W. Unger and Joseph E. Deegan.

Over the years, Laila had a number of administrative accomplishments. She oversaw the

development of the Court's first Court Rules Mediation program and the office's computerization. She assisted in the development of the Court's Personnel Policies and Procedures, Case Flow Management Plan, and the Family Division Plan. Laila was also of assistance in the development of the Court's Three-County Operating Agreement.

Throughout Laila's employment, she could always be counted on for courtesy, professionalism, hard work and absolute loyalty to the Court and discretion and confidentiality regarding the matters which passed through it. The Judges and Court staff were saddened at her retirement but excited that she realized her long-term goal of never seeing snow again.

Steve Woodrow

Steve began his employment with the 13th Circuit Court on March 20, 1979. He retired as Friend of the Court on April 17, 1998 with over 19 years of service. During Steve's many years of service with the Court, the Friend of the Court Office underwent significant change. Steve was at the forefront of computerization and assembled an effective team of case managers and support staff who developed a record for service that was the envy of other Judges throughout the state.

The small staff that Steve began with grew over the years to encompass 18 employees handling 5,394 cases by the end of Steve's last full year of employment. During Steve's tenure, the 13th Circuit Friend of the Court's Office became one of the most successful and cost effective in the collection of support in Michigan.