



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

LAW DAY OBSERVANCE AT THE COURTHOUSE

The magnetometer lines at the courthouse were kept a little busier than usual this morning as over 300 students planned to spend their morning at the courthouse learning more about the rule of law.

Today is Law Day and it is observed annually on May 1st in the United States for Americans to appreciate and reflect on "our great heritage of liberty, justice, and equality under law."

Circuit Judge Margaret Mullen welcomed the students as they arrived and gave a brief orientation about Law Day before they were escorted by assistant state's attorneys and assistant public defenders to other locations throughout the court complex. The presentations included:

- A trial involving a purse snatching that takes place in open court in front of an unsuspecting audience of high school students. The students are then asked to participate as jurors and witnesses in the mock trial involving the alleged thief and victim. Judge Michael Fusz served as the moderator/facilitator while Judge John Hughes conducted the trial. Assistant State's Attorney Marykay Foy played the role of the victim and Assistant State's Attorney Kevin Berrill acted the part of the defense attorney. Timothy MacArthur, Assistant Public Defender, was the defendant, while Thomas Meyers, Assistant Public Defender, played the role of the prosecutor. Deputy Jakub Klatka was the arresting officer.
- County Clerk Willard Helander and her staff did a presentation on eligibility to vote. Voting booths were set up for the students to vote a sample ballot which was then processed through an optical scanner to tabulate the results. The students also had the opportunity to register to vote.

- A reenactment of a sentencing hearing was conducted by Judge John T. Phillips involving a defendant who was found guilty of multiple counts of reckless homicide causing the deaths of a mother and three sixteen year old high school students.
- Dean Kharasch from State's Attorney Michael Waller's office addressed the topics of cyber crimes and identity theft.
- Deputies from Coroner Dr. Richard Keller's office gave a tour of the coroner's facilities.
- A tour of the Lake County jail was led by staff of Sheriff Mark Curran.

The schools participating in this year's event included Grant, North Chicago, Stevenson, Wauconda, Waukegan, and Zion-Benton.

At 12:30 p.m. the finalists of the Law Day coloring, poster, essays and photo competitions were announced. This year's Law Day theme was "Lincoln's Dream: Government of the People, by the People, for the People" in honor of the 200th Anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln's birth. (A list of the finalists' names is attached.)

Judge Mullen, Chair of the Court's Public Relations Committee, welcomed and thanked all the winners and their families for their participation in the Law Day competitions and also thanked the teachers for their continued support. Chief Judge James Booras then explained the importance of Law Day and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Judge George Strickland who sits in the Family Division presented the awards to the kindergarten through third grade winners of the coloring contests and the fourth through sixth grade poster contests; Judge Jorge Ortiz, Presiding Judge of the Family Division, selected the finalists of the seventh grade essay contest; Judge Valerie Boettle Ceckowski, Presiding Judge of Probate, Arbitration, and the Juvenile Division chose the eighth grade essay winners; and Judge Christopher Stride, who sits in the Felony Division, announced the high school finalists of the photo competition.

Light refreshments were served.

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<http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us>