

# MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN JANUARY 2014

## MEET THE NEWEST MEDINA JUVENILE COURT MAGISTRATE, DENNIS E. PAUL



Magistrate Dennis Paul is a Medina County native, graduating from Highland High School in 1967. In 1971, he graduated from Ohio

University earning his Bachelors of Science in Journalism. He planned to follow his father's footsteps and work in broadcast, but his path changed after graduation.

After college, Paul was drafted into the Army. When he returned home, he didn't seek a broadcasting career. His father had been let go from the radio station and opened a truck stop, where Paul began working. It wasn't just because his father was no longer in the business that he changed his plans of becoming a journalist, though. Paul wanted a career that would make a

greater impact.

"I was angry I could be drafted when I was 18, but I wasn't allowed to vote until I was 21," he said. "I wondered who made these laws. So ultimately, I decided to change my career and become a lawyer to try to make a difference."

Paul attended Ohio Northern University for law school. For the first two years, he clerked for the law director in the City of Cleveland and later worked with the Cleveland City Prosecutor.

After graduation in 1975, he returned to Medina to find a job. "All my contacts were in Cleveland," he said. "I didn't have any roots here so I had to pound on doors to try to find connections."

By 1978, Paul became City Prosecutor. Although he was working five days a week, the position was considered part-time, so he also worked as an associate for Gilbert and Parish. In 1980, he became partner.

During the mid 80's, Paul decided to leave Medina for Wadsworth and became part of Palecek, McIlvaine, Paul

and Hoffman, working as managing partner for his last 12 years there.

Twenty years later, he decided it was time to return to Medina where he has remained since.

"I never left any office on bad terms or severed any ties," he said. "I'm still very close with all of my partners and regularly spend time with them."

Paul said once he heard about the open magistrate position in Juvenile Court, he knew it would be an opportunity for him to "wind down."

Paul is now closing his practice on North Court Street and transitioning his clients to alternative lawyers. On February 3, 2014, he was sworn in as the newest Juvenile Court magistrate, a court he's worked with plenty in the past.

"I remember Judge Dannley's bailiff used to tell kids, 'You only have one chance with your reputation. Once it's gone, it's gone forever, but you're the one who controls it,'" he said. "I think I might use that in my courtroom."

Magistrate Paul will begin hearing cases the week of February 10.

## DETENTION CENTER OFFICER GETS PROMOTED TO CORPORAL

Medina County Juvenile Detention Center Officer Dee Arndt, who began working in the facility in August 2011, earned her promotion to the rank of corporal earlier this month.

Arndt had gone through the process and tested for the position in 2013, but it wasn't until January 24, 2014 when JDC Superintendent Ron Stollar told her she officially earned the spot as the third corporal on staff.

"She is really eager to learn and does a



great job," Stollar said. "She follows policy and is a role model for the kids in here."

Arndt will continue to interact with juveniles in the facility on a daily basis and will also assist in the training of new officers and act as a liaison between the correction officers and sergeant.

"I strive for a challenge and to better myself every day,"

Arndt said. "Knowing that my superiors see that and trust my abilities is rewarding."

## Medina Juvenile and Probate Court Events

**Feb.14** Judge Dunn will be officiating Courthouse Weddings for Valentine's Day.

**Feb.17** Court will be closed for President's Day. Court will resume February 18 at 8:00 a.m.

**Feb.18** Judge Dunn will join United Way of Medina County to speak to local high school students at the e4 Youth Summit.



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## COUNTY COURTHOUSE HOSTS ANNUAL DISTRICT MOCK TRIAL

Six teams of high school students from Buckeye High School, Cloverleaf High School and Lake Ridge Academy in North Ridgeville competed in the annual Mock Trial



Judge Jennifer Hensal, Judge Kevin Dunn and Jack Arnold listen to the cross-examination during the mock trial.

District Competition January 31, 2014.

The students argued both sides of the unscripted *Phillips School District v. Jesse Springfield, et al.* case twice throughout the day. Once as plaintiff and once as defense. Each trial involved two teams of nine students and was scored by a panel of three judges. In Juvenile and Probate Judge Kevin Dunn's courtroom, the Judge was assisted by Ninth District Court of Appeals Judge Jennifer Hensal and Jack Arnold, aviation law professor at Kent State University. Juvenile Magistrate Susana Lewis also participated as a presiding judge in another courtroom.

"It's important for the students to get a look at our constitutional rights firsthand," she said. "Kids that chose to participate in mock trial are presented with complicated legal issues. Not only does the actual participation benefit them, but their review of the material to learn the facts of the case and the application of law is equally as important."

The mock trial district competition, coordinated by attorney Andrew M. Parker, Esq., is sponsored by the Medina County Bar Association.

The goal of the Ohio Mock Trial program, created by the

Ohio Center for Law-Related Education, is to better inform students about their constitutional rights and responsibilities and to fill the void in law-related education. The program also assists students in developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

The statewide competition is now the largest non-athletic competition in Ohio and among the largest in the country, according to OCLRE.org.

"I'm impressed," Judge Dunn told the students after the trial. "I can tell there was a lot of preparation for this."

The Judge said the students knew the facts and did a good job of tying in case law. He also provided a few style pointers.

"Don't be meek," Judge Dunn said. "You all did a good job with body language but don't step back unless the judge looks like he's ready to hit you with the gavel. Stay strong and close your argument with vigor."

State finals for qualifying teams will be held in the Ohio Statehouse March 6-8, 2014, with the winning team advancing to the national competition.

## INAGURAL E4 YOUTH SUMMIT



One of United Way of Medina County's latest projects involves asking teens to share their life stories, challenges, and visions for the future at the E4 Youth Summit February 18-19, 2014.

E4, short for Equip, Educate, Empower and Engage, will host 250 Medina County high school students, ages 12-18, during the two-day summit at the Blair Center in Westfield Center. The goal is to encourage students to be a voice for the community, share their visions for Medina County, and explore possibilities for change.

Judge Kevin Dunn will kickoff the event as the first keynote speaker.

"It's important to collaborate and work with others who are as invested in our community as we are in Juvenile and Probate Court," Judge Dunn said.

Seth Kujat, Executive Director for United Way of Medina County, said the Judge's commitment to Medina County was important when choosing him as a speaker.

"We have to create a community environment for our kids," Kujat said. "We want the right people to help engage our youth and make them passionate about something."

For more information about the e4 Youth Summit, visit [www.UnitedWayMedina.org](http://www.UnitedWayMedina.org)

### ***Phillips School District v. Jesse Springfield, et al.***

In this original case written by attorneys, Phillips High School agrees to license naming rights of its field to a large corporation. Not all students agree with this decision however, so the students begin to organize protests in school and on the field.

In response, the school installs more security cameras, searches the lockers of students involved, and files a lawsuit seeking an order authorizing the school to remove students from the field. The students argue this action is a violation of their First and Fourth Amendment rights.