

MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN DECEMBER 2014

JUDGE DUNN AND COURT STAFF DELIVER BEARS TO CHILDREN FOR THE HOLIDAY



Judge Kevin Dunn and members of the Juvenile and Probate Court staff surprised 140 young children with stuff teddy bears at the Medina County Achievement Center December 3, and at the Help Me Grow Christmas Party December 16.

This was the second year Judge Dunn has participated in the Build-A-Bear program, which began in 2007.

"This year was even cooler than the last because I went in with the expectation knowing how wonderful it is to see the kids' reactions," Judge Dunn said. "It's just a lot of fun."

The Judge sat on the floor and at tiny tables with the children at the Achievement Center as he handed out bears to four classrooms in the morning and three afternoon classes.

Later in the month, Court staff stopped by the Help Me Grow Christmas Party to assist Santa with another bear delivery day. In addition to receiving bears and cookies, the children also received a crochet blanket made by Cyndy Rogers, who frequently donates child-size blankets to Help Me Grow.

Jayne McCourt, administrative assistant for Medina County Help Me Grow, said the children continued to hug and play with their bears all afternoon.

McCourt said she can't thank Judge Dunn enough for choosing Help Me Grow to receive bears again this year. The Achievement Center students also thanked the Judge with a handmade snowman card.

Above: Judge Dunn sits with an Achievement Center student to open her gift.

Top Right: Zoey and her little sister Kyley receive their stuffed bears from Santa Claus at the Help Me Grow Christmas Party.

Bottom Right: Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court Network Administrator Mike Stiles gives another Achievement Center student his new bear.



Volunteer Guardianship Program Wards Also Receive Stuffed Bears

Thirteen wards involved with the Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program were also surprised with a stuffed Build-A-Bear teddy bear just before the holiday. The bears were taken to wards living in group homes for developmental disabilities, Medina County Home and nursing homes.

"Many of these wards have very little family to celebrate the holidays with," said Volunteer Guardianship Coordinator Nicki Shook. "The VGP Board voted to include them in this year's delivery. Giving them a surprise is always great, but it's so nice that it's a soft gift that they can cuddle with to provide comfort."

Additional photos of Medina County wards with their new bears can be found on the back of this month's newsletter.

**Medina County Juvenile & Probate Court will be closed
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday, January 19, 2015**

MEDINA COUNTY JUVENILE AND PROBATE COURT NEWSLETTER

JUDGE KEVIN W. DUNN DECEMBER 2014

MEDINA COUNTY PROBATE AND JUVENILE COURT PLACES TOP THREE FOR JUSTI AWARD

The Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court earned third place in the CourtView User Conference for a Justi Award, an award honoring innovation and excellence in the development of justice-related programs, practices, and technology initiatives.

Approximately one year ago, the Court's Fiscal HR Manager Lynn Stover suggested the idea of storing financial reports electronically in an effort to reduce the amount of paper printing, a process she has practiced for her own information storage since 2008. Karen Sliwinski, Medina County Probate Court clerk responsible for maintaining Probate Court's financial filings, took the lead to implement this new initiative. This new process uses all existing equipment with no new costs.

Sliwinski says the electronic bookkeeping process not only reduces the use of paper, but also reduces shredding costs, eliminates the need to purchase replacement binders and dividers and frees valuable shelf space in the Court vault.

The initiative also provides an unexpected benefit—assistance correcting financial anomalies. Sliwinski recalls an error last summer when CourtView was able to access the Court's entire

monthly report records digitally and found the problem.

"I felt our move to a nearly paperless process for the daily, monthly and yearly bookkeeping was something we should applaud," Sliwinski said. "It's difficult to be 'green' in our day to day operations at the Court, especially since we do not accept electronic filings, but this was an area where we could be."

Not only did the process of switching to electronic storage save paper and shelf space, but it also reduces time for annual auditing by at least 25 percent, Sliwinski says.

"The Medina County Courts proved that positive changes—ones that truly save time, cost, and resources while improving flow, access, and procedures—are indeed possible without major funding or years of preparation," said Sue Humphreys, Director of Industry Solutions with CourtView Justice Solutions. "We love that the Court just saw a way to modernize and improve access to and storage of financial records and banded together to make it happen."

Medina County Juvenile and Probate Court placed third out of nine other initiatives nominated across the country for this year's Justi Award.

SURPRISE DELIVERY TO MEDINA COUNTY WARDS



Volunteer Guardian Mary Keller stopped by Probate Court to pick up a special cowboy bear for her ward, Leonard.

Keller delivered the bear to Leonard, an avid John Wayne fan, whom she has been assisting for nearly seven years through the Volunteer Guardianship Program. Keller said she would surprise him with the bear during their annual Christmas dinner together.



PROBATE, JUVENILE JUDGE KEVIN DUNN SWORN IN



Judge Kevin Dunn with wife, Lisa Dunn, sworn into office by retired Judge John Lohn Dec. 30.

Judge, a position he was appointed to by Governor John Kasich in August 2013.

"I have the greatest job," Judge Dunn said.

"I'm fortunate enough to

Retired Judge John Lohn conducted the swearing-in ceremony for Judge Kevin Dunn Tuesday, December 30 at Williams On The Lake in Medina. Judge Dunn won the November 4 election to retain the seat as Medina County Probate and Juvenile Court

work with a lot of motivated people and the pressure, for me, was to keep my job so they could keep theirs."

His hard work campaigning paid off, earning him 25,537 votes.

Judge Dunn's six-year term will officially begin February 8, 2014.