



Janis L. Sammartino, District Judge

A Word from the Chair

The Courts and Community Committee has gotten off to a fast start in the new year. The 2019 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest began on January 2 with the launch of the official

contest website at <http://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>. The theme for this year's essay and video competition for high school students is "The 4th Amendment in the 21st Century: What Is an 'Unreasonable Search and Seizure' in the Digital Age?" The contest is in its sixth year and 2019 will be the fourth circuit-wide competition. All Ninth Circuit courts are again participating. I cannot thank enough all the chief judges and clerks of court for their ongoing support.

The Courts and Community Committee also is hard at work organizing the Ninth Circuit's first full-fledged Civics Education Coordinator Conference, which will bring together judges and court staff from around the circuit who are involved in civics education and community outreach. Entitled "Civics Education: Successful Programs and Best Practices in the Ninth Circuit," the conference will be held February 27-March 1, 2019, at The Justice Anthony M. Kennedy Library and Learning Center in Sacramento, California.

The conference will allow judges and court staff to meet and share information about the many wonderful civics education and community outreach programs now sponsored by federal courts here in the circuit and elsewhere. The Courts and Community Committee, the Kennedy Learning Center and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California are sponsoring the conference.

(continued on page 4)



Young members of new Girl Scout Troop 1085 proudly display a banner they made to help sell cookies.

Homeless, Not Hopeless: Girl Scouts Vow 'Never Give Up'



Committee member Sandra R. Klein is a bankruptcy judge in Los Angeles

Inspired by an article about a Girl Scout troop for girls living in a New York shelter, Loyola Law School Professor Laurie Levenson and I set out to start a similar troop in Los Angeles, the Girl Scout Troop 1085.

Girl Scout Troop 1085 is a troop for homeless girls in Los Angeles who are living at The Salvation Army Westwood Transitional Village (Village), a 40-unit residential housing facility that provides support services for homeless families with children, including veterans with families. The Village was started by the late Ninth Circuit Judge Harry Pregerson, who worked tirelessly to help build homeless shelters in some of the city's neediest areas.

Five girls, ages 9 to 17, participated in Troop 1085's first meeting, creating a new bond with their peers and making a Girl Scout Promise to live by the Girl Scout Law:

Girl Scout Promise: "On My Honor, I will try: to serve God and my country, to help people at all times, and to live by the Girl Scout Law."

(continued on page 2)

Also in This Issue:

Middle Schoolers Mull Privacy
AO Freshens Up 'Court Shorts'

Page 3
Page 4

NEVER GIVE UP *continued from page 1*

Girl Scout Law: “I will do my best to be honest and fair, friendly and helpful, considerate and caring, courageous and strong, and responsible for what I say and do, and to respect myself and others, respect authority, use resources wisely, make the world a better place, and be a sister to every Girl Scout.”

This was the first time that I had heard the Girl Scout Promise and Girl Scout Law, because I had not participated in Girl Scouts when I was young. As we recited these poignant words, I realized that if everyone abided by them, the world would be a much better place.

Our first activity, “indoor s’mores,” was a hit. No singed eyebrows or burnt marshmallows with these spreadable chocolate and marshmallow crème on graham crackers. The girls then decorated cloth bags with their name, Troop number, and beautiful pictures, designs, and shapes using colorful markers. We hope that the girls will use the bags to store items that are dear to them and to remember the fun we had during our first meeting.

We asked the girls what they would like to be when they grow up. We had a budding pediatrician, psychologist, and fashion designer, and several of the girls wanted to be singers and actresses. (Most of the girls were interested in multiple careers). The girls expressed interest in selling Girl Scout cookies, which made it at the top of the list in addition to going to the beach, taking a hike, camping, virtual reality, getting manicures/pedicures, learning how to apply makeup, and visiting the nearby Veteran’s Administration hospital.

We asked the girls how they would like to use the money the Troop makes from cookie sales. A nine-year old suggested that we use half of the money for “fun things” and that we donate the other half. It was remarkable to realize that someone so young, who has probably faced a number of challenges in her life, was not just focused on herself but instead was interested in helping others. When asked about what they would like Troop 1085’s slogan to be, they unanimously agreed to “Never Give Up!” And that really says it all.

One of the girls’ final activities was creating a banner for selling Girl Scout cookies. The girls were very creative and included the price of cookies, the Troop number, and pictures of flowers, a wallet, and a cellphone with texts about Girl Scout cookies. Before the meeting ended, Laurie gave each girl three yo-yos.



The scouts agreed that “indoor s’mores” was a good way to start the meeting. Laurie Levenson demonstrated use of an elastic bandage. Troop members also practiced erecting a tent.



She said that one of the yo-yos was for the girls to enjoy and the others were for them to give to someone who might be having a bad day or might need cheering up.

The meeting ended with us gathered in a circle, our arms extended so that they met in the middle, and chanted Troop 1085!

If anyone is interested in starting a Girl or Boy Scout Troop for homeless youth in their area, please email or call me. □

What's in Your Trash? Middle Schoolers Mull Privacy Protections

The United States District Court for the Central District of California welcomed 140 energetic and curious middle school students from South Los Angeles to the First Street U.S. Courthouse for a morning of learning about the Bill of Rights and the role courts play in our democracy. The program, held October 1, 2018, is a partnership between the district court and Constitutional Rights Foundation, which is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to creating active and informed citizens.

The students began their morning in the large ceremonial courtroom with welcoming remarks by District Judge John Kronstadt and Q&A sessions with Senior District Judge Terry Hatter, Jr., a federal public defender, an assistant U.S. attorney, and a deputy U.S. marshal. The students asked good questions about what it is like to be a lawyer and were fascinated with the U.S. marshal's gear, including the medical backpack, handcuffs, and bullet proof vest among other things. After the Q&A session, the students visited four separate courtrooms where they were welcomed by District Judge André Birotte, Magistrate Judge Suzanne Segal, as well as Judges Hatter and Kronstadt.

While in the courtroom, volunteer attorneys led the students through a PowerPoint presentation, provided by CRF, on the Constitution and Bill of Rights and introduced them to a real Supreme Court case, California v. Greenwood. The case concerns whether a person has a constitutional right to privacy in the contents of trash containers left for pick up on the curb outside a residence. At the outset, the students were only shown what had happened in the district court and court of appeals. Students were excited to hear they were going to be divided into



At the federal courthouse in Los Angeles, students assumed the roles of U.S. Supreme Court justices and legal counsel for the petitioner and respondent in a privacy case.

three groups and play the roles of counsel for the petitioner, counsel for the respondent, and U.S. Supreme Court justices. With the help of federal judges and their clerks, as well as attorneys from the Office of the Federal Public Defender, attorneys from the Office of the U.S. Attorney, and CRF board members, students quickly began preparing for the case. It didn't take long before the student-attorneys were ready to argue each side, and for the student-justices to be ready to question those attorneys. When the Supreme Court was called to order, each student-attorney confidently stood up and argued whether Greenwood had the right to privacy in his trash, and the student-justices asked challenging questions from the bench.

At the end of the arguments, the student-justices made their rulings. Students walked away from the experience with a better understanding of the Bill of Rights and our judicial system, and all had an opportunity to interact positively with role models from the legal community.

Survey results show students benefited from their visit to the court:

- 97 percent reported the visit “helped me learn more about the legal system.”
- 93 percent shared the visit “opened my mind to legal career paths.”
- 100 percent reported the visit “made me feel more positive about the legal system.”

Students also shared:

- “The best part of the visit was being a Supreme Court Justice!”
- “I liked how we got to meet judges and attorneys and learn about different careers.”

(continued on page 4)

WORD *continued from page 1*



While the program is still being finalized, likely topics will be teacher institutes; courthouse tours and docent programs; mock trials and moot courts; contests and scholarship competitions; and collaboration with public, non-profit and private partners. Staff from the Office of the Circuit Executive will provide how-to information about creative writing, photography, videography, and graphics.

Dr. Kari Kelso, the circuit's public education and community outreach administrator, is organizing the conference with assistance from district representatives. If you are interested in attending or need more information, contact Dr. Kelso at (916) 930-4157 / kkelso@ce9.uscourts.gov.

Last, this edition of the Courts and Community Committee newsletter includes an article contributed by Laura Wesley, associate program director for the Constitutional Rights Foundation in Los Angeles. The article describes a program Laura worked on with one of our committee members, District Judge John A. Kronstadt of the Central District. We also are making note of a new video offering from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

Thanks for reading and best wishes for the new year. □

PRIVACY *continued from page 3*

- “The best part about the visit was being in a real courtroom and seeing what happens in a courtroom.”
- “You have been thanking us all day for coming. I would like to thank you for having us.”

Special thanks to CRF board members, Judge Kronstadt and Kimberly Dunne from Sidley Austin LLP, and Pamela Gamble Jackson, who were instrumental in making the visit possible.

The U.S. District Court and the Constitutional Rights Foundation look forward to partnering again in the spring to have another “Classroom-to-Courtroom” session at the courthouse when a different — yet equally exciting — Supreme Court case will be presented. □



AO Freshens Up ‘Court Shorts’ Video Series

The United States Courts publishes the first installment in the refresh of Court Shorts video series on courts and the Constitution. Federal judges offer insights into the separation of powers and how the three branches of government, working together, stabilize our democracy.

The video, “Court Shorts: Separation of Powers,” was released in conjunction with Bill of Rights Day, December 15, 1971. The 5-minute video illustrates how all three branches preserve constitutional liberties.

The video helps teens and adults understand current events through the lens of the Constitution's framework for how Congress, the presidency, and the judiciary are designed to relate to each other.

The judges give an example of how separation of powers protects First Amendment freedoms, referencing the flag-burning case Texas v. Johnson and how a law banning flag desecration set off a controversy that all three branches grappled with in the 1980s.

The video is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fVrb5mHFyvg>. Future Court Shorts video installments will cover rule of law, judicial independence, and jury service, among others. □



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