

# GSCCCA Update

Vol. 9, No. 1  
March 2005

An update on the activities of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority

## Board of Directors

### Chairman:

Tom Lawler  
Clerk of Superior Court  
Gwinnett County

### Vice Chairman:

F. Barry Wilkes  
Clerk of Superior Court  
Liberty County

### Secretary/Treasurer:

Jean H. Rogers  
Clerk of Superior Court  
Crisp County

Woodson Daniel  
Hawkinsville, Georgia

Linda A. Klein  
Managing Partner  
Gambrell & Stolz, LLP

Cindy Mason  
Clerk of Superior Court  
Columbia County

Quintus W. Sibley  
Director of Legal Affairs  
Georgia College &  
State University

Hugh W. Stone  
Chief Judge  
Superior Courts  
Enotah Judicial Circuit

Rhett Walker  
Clerk of Superior Court  
Dodge County

Dave S. Wills, Jr.  
Chairman  
Webster County  
Commission



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## Lawler elected chairman

At its January meeting, the Authority Board of Directors elected Gwinnett County Superior Court Clerk **Tom Lawler** as its new chairman. With his election, Tom becomes only the second chairman in the Authority's history. The board also elected Liberty County Superior Court Clerk **Barry Wilkes** as vice chairman and Crisp County Superior Court Clerk **Jean Rogers** as secretary/treasurer. Congratulations to Tom, Barry and Jean.



Tom Lawler

**Chairman Tom Lawler** — Tom has served on the Authority board for four years and now becomes its second chairman. He was first elected as Gwinnett's clerk of Superior Court in 1996, having previously served eight years as Gwinnett County district attorney. His public

service career began in January 1970 as a Gwinnett County police officer. After leaving for service in the Army, Tom returned to serve as solicitor of the Juvenile Court of Gwinnett County. Tom has served as legislative chair for the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Association and was a driving force behind the development of the "Clerks' Reference Manual." Additionally, he was the 2004 recipient of the "County Officer of the Year" award. Tom is an active member of the State Bar of Georgia and has years of experience in the private practice of law. Tom lives in Norcross with his family and plays golf for relaxation. When asked about the Authority, he responds,

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Daniel's long tenure ends

With the election of new officers, the tenure of **Woodson Daniel**, the Authority's longstanding chairman, came to an end. Woodson retired as Superior Court clerk of Pulaski County in 2000 but stayed on as chairman of the Authority until now. His position on the board will expire in April. Woodson was named to the Authority's inaugural board in 1993 by Gov. Zell Miller and was elected chairman by his fellow board members. He served as chairman for over eleven years.

Woodson began his tenure as chairman by overseeing the successful development and implementation of the statewide Central Index for UCC Filings, the original mandate of the Authority. Under his leadership, the Authority spent the next decade adding other valuable projects including the statewide Real Estate Deed Index, the Historical Deed Project, the Notary Public Project, the Civil Case Data Project, the Criminal Case Data Project, the

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Lawler...Cont. from page 1)

"The Authority is the best run government entity I have seen in all my years of public service. It is obvious that the dedication of the Authority staff and the cooperation of all the Superior Court clerks throughout the state have created an environment of success. I am proud to be a part of the Authority and, with the help of all the clerks and my fellow board members, I hope to be a positive influence on its future."

**Vice Chairman Barry Wilkes** — Barry was instrumental in the creation of the Authority and now continues his support as vice chairman.

He has served as clerk of Superior Court of Liberty County since 1985. A native of Southeast Georgia, he is a graduate of Georgia Southern University, serves on various local and state boards, and is very active in community-based civic and charitable organizations. He has

been the recipient of the "County Officer of the Year" and the "Superior Court Clerk of the Year" awards. He is an avid outdoorsman and naturalist; writes poetry and short stories; and enjoys local, state and national politics. He and his wife, Janelle, have two sons and four grandchildren. Barry believes that "when you

*"The Authority is the best run government entity I have seen in all my years of public service."*



Barry Wilkes



Jean Rogers

are part of an organization, you should be involved and give back whenever you can."

**Secretary/Treasurer Jean Rogers** — With the election, Jean begins her second term as the Authority's secretary/treasurer.

She has served as clerk of Superior Court of Crisp County since 1993 and also serves as clerk of Juvenile Court. Jean is a past president of the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia. She has been very active in the American Heart Association, serving on the state board of directors and as president

of her local chapter. A graduate of Georgia Southern University, she and her husband, Mickey, have three daughters. In addition to spending lots of time with her family, she enjoys her time away from the office traveling, working in her yard, reading and playing her piano. ■

## Newly elected clerks

The Authority congratulates the following Superior Court clerks on their recent election:

Brooks County - Ginger Shiver  
 Burke County - Sherri Cochran  
 Chatham County - Daniel Massey  
 Chattahoochee County - Laura Marion  
 Cherokee County - Patricia Baker  
 Coffee County - Angela Spell  
 Dade County - Kathy Page  
 Echols County - Paula Goss  
 Gordon County - Brian Brannon  
 Habersham County - David Wall  
 Haralson County - Dorothy Parker  
 Harris County - Stacy Haralson  
 Jackson County - Camie Thomas  
 Jeff Davis County - Myra Murphy  
 Macon County - Juanita Laidler

Marion County - Joy Smith  
 McIntosh County - Sandra "Bootie" Goodrich  
 Montgomery County - Keith Hamilton  
 Morgan County - Jody Moss  
 Pickens County - Gail Brown  
 Rabun County - Holly Henry  
 Randolph County - Kay Arnold  
 Seminole County - Earlene Bramlett  
 Spalding County - Marcia Norris  
 Stewart County - Patti Smith  
 Talbot County - Penny Dillingham  
 Taylor County - Robert Taunton, Jr.  
 Telfair County - Gene Johnson  
 Warren County - Shirley Cheeley

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## New board members named

The Authority's Board of Directors welcomes four new members:

■ **Cindy Mason**, clerk of Superior Court of Columbia County, was appointed to the board by the Appointments Committee of the State Senate and was sworn in at the October board meeting. Cindy has worked in the Augusta Judicial Circuit since 1976. Beginning in the clerk of Superior Court's office, she also worked as a freelance reporter, owned and operated a court reporting firm, working in all levels of the court, and worked as an official court reporter for several judges. She became clerk of Superior Court in 2001.

Cindy has a true love for research of all kinds and dreams of one day writing a book from past courtroom experiences. With three children, she spends her hours away from the courthouse with family or enjoying her "number-one, stress-release hobby," fishing.

■ **Rhett Walker**, clerk of Superior Court of Dodge County, was appointed by the Speaker of the House and sworn in at the October board meeting. Rhett was raised in Dodge County and, following high school, entered the U.S. Coast Guard where he served three years on an ice breaker traveling to Antarctica. Afterwards he returned home and farmed fulltime until being elected clerk in 2001. He continues to operate the cattle part of the farm and also enjoys hunting and fishing. He and his wife, Glynda, have two children.

■ **Judge Hugh Stone** was appointed to the Authority board by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and was sworn in at the

January board meeting. A native Atlantan, Judge Stone is a graduate of North Georgia College and the Emory University Lamar School of Law. He practiced law in Atlanta and then Blairsville/Union County where he continues to be a resident. In 1992, he was appointed Chief Judge of the Superior

Courts of the Enotah Judicial Circuit by Gov. Zell Miller. He was subsequently elected unopposed for three terms of office. In addition to his legal career, he served two years in the U.S. Army and twenty years in the Army Reserve, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. He and his wife, Rebecca, have two grown children.

■ **Dave Wills, Jr.** was appointed by Governor Perdue to serve as the County Commissioner Representative on the board. He will be sworn in at the April board meeting. From Preston, Dave currently serves as chairman of the Webster County Commission and has been a self-employed farmer for over twenty years. He is a member of the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia Board of Managers, the Middle Flint Regional Development Center Board of Directors and is a supervisor for the Lower Chattahoochee Soil and Water Conservation District. Dave earned his bachelor's of science degree from Georgia Southwestern State University and is a member of the 2003-2004 class of the Institute for Georgia Environmental Leadership, taught by UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government. He and his wife, Rebecca, have two children. ■



Cindy Mason



Rhett Walker



Hugh Stone



Dave Wills, Jr.

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(Daniel's...Cont. from page 1)

Protective Order Registry, the Liens, Plats and Maps Project, the PT-61 Project and, most recently, the Indigent Defense Funding Project. Woodson's legacy will also include leading the charge to fully automate all Superior Court clerk offices, from the largest to the smallest, and developing the first state-wide high-speed intranet network connecting all 159 court-houses.

As Vice Chairman Barry Wilkes stated at the board meeting,

"Woodson has been the Godfather of the Authority and has been its heart and soul. He set the direction and has always placed the interests of clerks above all others. He is to be recognized and congratulated for his dedication to clerks and the Authority. His involvement can be directly tied to the success the Authority has experienced."

Authority Executive Director David Williams

added his thoughts later. "Serving as the chairman of the Authority from its simple beginnings, Woodson provided the guidance, vision, enthusiasm and strength necessary to lead the Authority from an entity without a budget, staff or revenue to the successful, diversified organization that it is today. Few will ever know the countless hours he gave to the Authority ... not just 9-5, but evenings, weekends and everything in between. He placed the Authority's success above any

personal interest and the Authority has succeeded in large part because of his selfless efforts on its behalf. It's been an honor for me to work with him over the last ten years. Woodson will be sorely missed on both a personal and professional level. I wish him all the best and hope he can finally kick back and try to enjoy retirement." ■

***"Woodson has been the Godfather of the Authority and has been its heart and soul."***

### What a hit!

The Authority's website (GSCCCA.org) continues to show huge growth. In 2004, the site hosted **478,397 unique visitors**, a 35.4% increase over 2003. The site also had an impressive **610,974,885 hits**, a 67.9% increase over the previous year. In addition to anecdotal evidence, the statistics continue to prove not just the high usage of the system, but more importantly, its high value to our users.



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