



BANKRUPTCY BUZZ

LOCAL NEWS AND INFORMATION

UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

DECEMBER 2014

CLERK OF COURT KATHERINE GOULD FELDMAN RETIRING AFTER 37 YEARS SERVICE TO FLORIDA SOUTHERN FEDERAL COURTS

BY DAWN LEONARD

Opportunity is what drew her in, challenge, dedication, and a sense of camaraderie is what kept her around. Over the span of 37 years, Katherine (Kathy) Gould Feldman has been an integral part of the court family. On December 31, 2014, she will retire from her position as Clerk of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Florida, leaving behind a legacy that has inspired pride, encouraged growth, cultivated commitment, fostered integrity and propagated a family.

In 1978, Kathy left her position as an office manager of a small boutique law firm to join the U.S. District Court family as judicial assistant to then Chief U.S. District Court Judge C. Clyde Atkins. One year later, she transferred as a judicial assistant to the Honorable Sidney M. Aronovitz, where she became acquainted with a young law clerk by the name of Robert A. Mark.



After five years in chambers, and with the encouragement of Judge Aronovitz, Kathy applied for a management position in the District Court clerk's office. Kathy understood the importance of establishing a good working relationship between chambers and the clerk's office and was able to make the move seamlessly. After serving as the District's first official court reporter supervisor, she became the operations manager, where she found her niche and realized the potential for growth and development as a court manager. Kathy gained her first understanding of the bankruptcy process while managing the district court's appeals section, which included processing of bankruptcy appeals.

In 1986, the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts selected Kathy from the District Court and chief deputy clerk Karen Eddy from the Bankruptcy Court, as subject matter experts from their respective courts, to assist on a court management audit of the U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio.

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Bankruptcy Cases Filed From 1/1/14 to 11/30/14: Total Filed: 26,305

- Chapter 7 : 15,308
- Chapter 9 : 0
- Chapter 11 : 234
- Chapter 12 : 6
- Chapter 13 : 10,754
- Chapter 15 : 3

Additional filing statistics are available on the court website home page under [Court Information—Bankruptcy Case Filing Statistics](#):



NATIONAL PRO BONO WEEK

By: Laurel Myerson Isicoff, United States Bankruptcy Court, Southern District of Florida

"I will never reject, from any consideration personal to myself,
the cause of the defenseless or oppressed. . ."
Oath of Admission to The Florida Bar

Five years ago the ABA Standing Committee on Pro Bono and Public Service launched Pro Bono Week, an event that is now observed internationally. This year Pro Bono Week 2014 was scheduled for October 19 – 25, and the Bankruptcy Bar Association jumped in to make sure the Southern District of Florida had a full agenda.

Starting in early August Team Pro Bono met regularly. The Bankruptcy Court team members were Dan Gonzalez of Meland Russin & Budwick, immediate past-President of the Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida ("BBA"), Annika Miranda and Marcia Pereira, co-Chairs of the Pro Bono Committee of the BBA, Tina Talarchyk of The Talarchyk Firm and Leslie Cloyd of Berger Singerman PA (pro bono vice chairs for West Palm Beach and Broward respectively), and Clay Roberts, floating law clerk for the Bankruptcy Court. We partnered with the District Court, led by Senior District Court Judge Patricia Seitz. Our clerk coordinators were Joe Falzone, Chief Deputy Clerk of the United States Bankruptcy Court and Steve Larimore, Clerk of the District Court, who, with their staff, made tremendous contributions to the success of our Pro Bono Week celebrations.

We created posters and stickers (the stickers were Judge Mark's idea) and also put together a calendar of events that included all the events occurring around the District including events being organized by our pro bono counterparts in the various counties that make up the Southern District of Florida.

The Thursday prior to the start of Pro Bono Week the District Court and Bankruptcy Court sent out blast emails to all CM/ECF users reminding them about Pro Bono Week and directing them to the Courts' websites for more information. The Bankruptcy Court email blast warned recipients "You DO NOT want to be caught during Pro Bono Week without a pro bono case!!! – Click here and discover the "cure"".

The District Court and the Bankruptcy Court each created a special Pro Bono Week link and page. The Pro Bono Week page had a copy of the poster, a copy of the calendar, a link to a message about pro bono from the President of the Florida Bar, Greg Coleman, links to different sources for pro bono referrals, and honor rolls listing the names of all attorneys who took Bankruptcy pro bono referrals and those who took District Court pro bono referrals over the past year.

During Pro Bono Week we placed the posters in each of the Federal Courthouses located in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Ft. Pierce.

We also conducted Bankruptcy Pro Se Clinics in each of the Bankruptcy Courts and at a satellite location in Martin County.



We also had sign up tables with the volunteer sign up sheets at various locations during Pro Bono Week, including at all the Bankruptcy Courts. We had many volunteers "man and woman" those tables, and I want to thank all of you for helping!

Leslie Cloyd and Ashley Dillman Bruce
signing up volunteers



Poster in the Lobby
of the
C. Clyde Atkins
Courthouse

**National Pro Bono Week (continued from page 2)**

Any lawyer that signed up on the volunteer list was given a sticker.



Our Pro Bono Sticker

We had volunteers sign up at every recruitment event that we had. In all we signed up over 90 volunteers in four counties. Thank you all so very much for signing up to help us with pro bono in the Southern District of Florida.

All in all the celebration of Pro Bono Week 2014 in the Southern District of Florida was a tremendous success; we raised awareness, recruited many volunteers, provided lawyers with volunteer opportunities throughout the week, and gave our bankruptcy court practitioners and our district court practitioners an opportunity to collaborate on what I hope is only the first of many pro bono events.

But pro bono isn't just for Pro Bono Week. As we were all reminded when we took the Florida Bar Oath, pro bono is, and should be, an integral part of the service we provide to the public at large. Pro bono cases offer us not only the opportunity to meet our social responsibilities as professionals, but helping those who cannot help themselves is an incredibly rewarding experience. I took many pro bono cases before I went on the bench, and I never had a client as grateful as the ones whose \$2,000 financial crisis I solved (and I usually represented clients with many, many more zeroes in their financial crisis).

Every lawyer should take at least one pro bono case a year; and every law firm should have a formal pro bono policy in place. By providing a framework for pro bono service, young lawyers feel more comfortable taking a case. The Pro Bono Committee of the Business Law Section of the Florida Bar has developed a Pro Bono Policy Best Practices Guide. You can go to the Florida Bar Business Law section website – www.flabizlaw.org - and download a copy.

Pro Bono Week 2014 was a wonderful experience and I look forward to doing even more next year. But don't wait for Pro Bono Week. SIGN UP FOR A PRO BONO CASE NOW. Not only will you change the life of the person you help – you will change your life too.

RECENT COURT ANNOUNCEMENTS

[NOTICE REGARDING AMENDED SCHEDULE FOR HOLIDAY CLOSINGS](#)

[AMENDMENTS TO BANKRUPTCY RULES, FORMS AND FEES EFFECTIVE 12-01-2014](#)

[NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF THE CLERK OF COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA](#)

[BANKRUPTCY COURT MISCELLANEOUS FEE SCHEDULE INCREASES EFFECTIVE 12-01-14](#)

[ADOPTION OF INTERIM LOCAL RULES 5005-1\(A\)\(3\) AND 9013-1\(C\)\(25\)](#)



MIAMI BANKRUPTCY COURT MOVE TO C. CLYDE ATKINS U.S. COURTHOUSE SAVES JUDICIARY MORE THAN ONE MILLION DOLLARS

By: Steven Larimore, Clerk/Court Administrator, U.S. District Court, SDFL
Katherine G. Feldman, Clerk, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, SDFL

After nearly 35 years in the Claude Pepper Federal Building, the Miami Division of the Bankruptcy Court has relocated to the C. Clyde Atkins U. S. Courthouse and officially opened for business on October 10, 2014. As reported in the Judiciary's Third Branch Newsletter, this move will save the judiciary "about \$818,000 annually in rent and security costs". The move will also eliminate \$71,880 in reoccurring annual costs paid by the judiciary to support the Bankruptcy Court's DCN access.

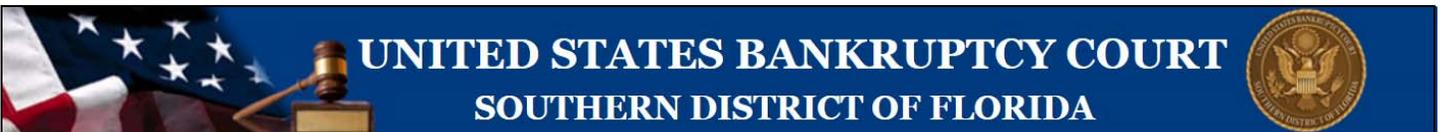
The three court unit executives (district, bankruptcy and probation) shared a vision for reducing space and containing costs as mandated by the Judicial Conference. The relocation plan was conceived in FY 2012, during discussions on ways to cut costs and potential shared administrative services opportunities. As discussions ensued, it became clear that moving the Miami Bankruptcy Court to the Atkins U.S. Courthouse would achieve substantial savings in rent and security costs and provide the best opportunity to successfully share administrative services, if all three court units were co-located in the same federal court complex.

The District and Bankruptcy Court clerks, with the support of their respective chief judges, worked closely to develop a new space plan that provided for (1) the Miami Bankruptcy Court clerk's office to backfill vacant District Court clerk's office space in the Atkins Courthouse; (2) the relocation of two Magistrate Judges from Atkins to a third building, the James Lawrence King Federal Justice Building, to free up chambers/courtroom space for the three Miami Bankruptcy Judges; and (3) the District Court to relinquish vacant jury assembly area space at the King Building, which would save an additional \$300,000 in annual rent costs.

The plan was approved by both the Judges of the District Court and the Bankruptcy Court eight months later, and submitted to the Circuit for final approval in July 2013. For the most part, local funds were obligated to cover the bulk of the costs for this project, so no Circuit monies were requested. Approval from the Circuit was quick and the plan also gained support and praise from the AO and the Judicial Conference as one of the most aggressive space reduction initiatives in the country.

The three court units have recently implemented a major component of our Shared Administrative Services Plan that combines district-wide procurement functions into one consolidated procurement office located in Bankruptcy Court space in the Atkins Building. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding on shared administrative services, the procurement office is supervised by the Bankruptcy Court with a reporting structure that allows each court unit equal oversight.

In summary, this move will save the Judiciary in excess of one million dollars a year in rent, security and other costs. The key to the project's success has been the climate of collaboration and close working relationships established between the two courts and the district's probation office, and we are proud of our accomplishments in the Southern District of Florida.



We are pleased to announce the launching of our new and improved court website. Please take a moment to visit and familiarize yourself with the new site, as we are confident it will provide a greatly improved user experience. If you have any comments, suggestions or questions about the new website, please contact us via email: Webmaster_FLSB@flsb.uscourts.gov.

**Katherine Gould-Feldman Retires (continued from page 1)**

Over the course of a six-week audit assignment in Cleveland, Ohio, Karen and Kathy expanded their working relationship and became friends. At about the same time, bankruptcy filings began to increase and the U.S. Trustee's Program established as a pilot program by the Bankruptcy Reform Act of 1978, was expanded nation-wide and was implemented in this district in late 1986. Then Bankruptcy Clerk, David Bird, was appointed as an Assistant U.S. Trustee for the Southern District of Florida, and Karen replaced David as clerk of the Bankruptcy Court. Karen soon reached out to Kathy and encouraged her to apply for the vacant chief deputy clerk position, and the rest is history. Kathy joined the Bankruptcy Court family as the chief deputy in August 1987. One of Kathy's first accomplishments was to bridge the gap between the two court units by reaching out to her district court colleagues to create a district-wide program to train existing and new employees about the functions of the three court units (district, bankruptcy and probation).

Over her 20 years as chief deputy, Kathy and Karen built a team within the clerk's office that embraced their shared ideas of synergy, evolution and knowledge expansion with a focus on customer service. In October 2005, their collaboration efforts paid off with a seamless and simultaneous transition to CM/ECF and implementation of BAPCPA.

In 2006, following the implementation of BAPCPA, bankruptcy filings plummeted which presented a new set of challenges for the clerk's office. In mid-2006, Karen announced her decision to retire at the end of the year, and Kathy succeeded her as Clerk in January 2007.

Kathy inherited a significant budget decrease and soon thereafter, a new rigid staffing formula was implemented that drastically cut authorized work units for all Bankruptcy Courts. Despite the adversity that lay ahead, Kathy was determined to maintain morale and improve customer service and work quality by implementing a structured cross-training program focused on creating a new "flat" organization of highly trained individuals with the skills to perform all case management and customer service functions. By the end of 2009, the clerk's office was successfully restructured to a full case management organization where each clerk was cross-trained to be able to answer almost any question asked by a customer, regardless of their position within the court. Kathy's goal of providing excellent customer service worked hand in hand with her goal to establish a well-trained and highly efficient clerk's office. Kathy frequently boasts that she often receives compliments from the public and the Bar regarding the excellent service provided by the clerk's office and gives staff the credit noting that "everyone works at their highest level, values customer service and knows their jobs."

During her tenure as clerk, Kathy has worked hard to build a close working relationship with her district court colleagues. In 2014, Kathy and District Court Clerk Steve Larimore were recognized in the Third Branch newsletter for their collaborative efforts in moving the operations of the Miami Bankruptcy Court to the C. Clyde Atkins U. S. Courthouse, which will save the judiciary more than \$1 million a year in rent and security costs. As the article stated, "One key to the proposal's success has been a climate of collaboration established between the two courts and the district's probation office..."

Kathy attributes her accomplishments to the unyielding support of her management team and judges, especially Chief Judge Hyman, who has been an inspiring boss, mentor and friend. Kathy notes that keeping up with Judge Hyman has been challenging since he is always forward thinking and one step ahead of the game. She fondly laments that "you have to act quickly or get left in the dust."

(continued on page 6)



Katherine Gould-Feldman Retires (continued from page 5)

When asked to comment about Kathy's service to the court, Judge Hyman stated:

"Kathy is extremely smart, organized and knowledgeable in all aspects of her job. These attributes have enabled her to successfully deal with a multitude of issues during the last 7 years during a period of declining budgets while having to meet the monetary requirements of implementing CM/ECF and expending funds for office renovations and moving costs without any layoffs of personnel or any sort of degradation of the services provided to the legal community."

"Kathy has a unique combination of being kind hearted in dealing with the staff and yet is tough enough to stand up to the Judges when she tells us we can't do some of the things we'd like to do."

"While we look forward to working with Joe Falzone, we will miss Kathy greatly!"

Given all of her successes and accomplishments, lessons learned and goals attained, Kathy has always understood the importance of timing. Patience and perseverance have been the catalyst for all of her decisions, but ultimately, in the end, it all boils down to timing or, "the regulation of occurrence, pace, or coordination to achieve a desired effect". Kathy's career has maintained the perfect tempo resulting in an effect that has not only transformed her life, but the lives of those who have had the pleasure to work with her and for her. And at this time, she feels as though the momentum has peaked and the inflection of her life has changed.

As she turns the corner to walk down a new path, Kathy plans to pursue other interests and passions that are nearest and dearest to her heart: her family, friends, love of nature and the Opera. So, it is with great sadness that we say farewell to our Clerk whose depth of character and grace under pressure, has set precedence for those who will follow in her footsteps. But it is also with great joy that we wish her well in her new endeavors and applaud the brilliant music that she will continue to compose and the lives that she will continue to touch with her passion.

By Dawn Leonard

SOME OTHER FAMOUS STARTS (AND STOPS) THAT HAPPENED IN JULY 1978 WHEN KATHY GOULD STARTED HER CAREER WITH THE FEDERAL COURTS

- ◆ **JULY 7TH: THE SOLOMON ISLANDS BECOME INDEPENDENT FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM.**
- ◆ **JULY 10TH: ABC NEWS WORLD NEWS TONIGHT PREMIERED.**
- ◆ **JULY 13TH: FORD MOTOR COMPANY PRESIDENT LEE IACOCCA WAS FIRED BY CHAIRMAN HENRY FORD II**
- ◆ **JULY 24TH: BILLY MARTIN RESIGNED AS YANKEE MANAGER**
- ◆ **JULY 25TH: THE FIRST SO-CALLED TEST-TUBE BABY, LOUISE BROWN, WAS BORN.**



FREE BANKRUPTCY CLINICS

SPONSORED BY

**Dade Legal Aid Put Something Back Pro Bono Project
Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach, Inc.
The American College of Bankruptcy Foundation &
The Bankruptcy Bar Association of the Southern District of Florida**

Please attend one of our FREE Pro Se Clinics at the locations and times below. Featuring a 45 minute video providing an overview of the procedures for filing bankruptcy, followed by Question & Answer Sessions staffed by pro bono attorneys who are available to give advice on general bankruptcy matters. Please note that the volunteer attorneys do not represent you. Participants are responsible for responding to any pleadings and for protecting your own legal rights.

***Miami Division: 301 N. Miami Avenue, Training Room**

Friday, January 9, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Friday, February 13, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Friday, March 13, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Friday, April 10, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Friday, May 8, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Friday, June 12, 2015	12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

***Fort Lauderdale Division: 299 East Broward Boulevard, Room 112**

Friday, January 9, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, February 6, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, March 6, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, April 10, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, May 15, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Friday, June 5, 2015	12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

***West Palm Beach Division: 1515 North Flagler Drive, 8th Floor, Courtroom B**

Wednesday, January 14, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wednesday, February 11, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wednesday, March 11, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wednesday, April 15, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wednesday, May 13, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Wednesday, June 10, 2015	11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Stuart/Port Saint Lucie/Indian River

Robert Morgade Library, Chastain Campus I.R.S.C., 5851 SE Community Dr.

Stuart FL 34997

“Sponsored by Martin County Bankruptcy Committee and Martin County Library System’s
“Lawyers in the Library” Program – For information call 772-419-0057”

Saturday, February 21, 2015	2:00 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Thursday, March 26, 2015	6:00 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Thursday, April, 16, 2015	6:00 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Thursday, May 14, 2015	6:00 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Thursday, June 25, 2015	6:00 p.m. – 8 p.m.

*You may **NOT** bring cell phones or electronic devices into the courthouse or you will be denied entry. Cell phones and electronic devices will not be stored for you.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Miami:	(Karen Ladis)	kladis@dadelgalaid.org
Fort Lauderdale:	(Kimberly Salamone)	ksalamone@ntmlawfirm.com
West Palm Beach:	(Eric Rosen)	erosen@fowler-white.com
Stuart/Port Saint Lucie:	(Jon Martin)	jlmbkdw@gmail.com



5-Letter Words
from
“Bankruptcy Filing”

By Lorraine Adam

Make 5-letter words by connecting only adjoining letters in the grid below. You can go horizontally, vertically and diagonally provided that the letters are touching. Make connections in as many directions as you like – BUT the words must contain 5 letters. *Hint: there are 13 words to be found! Answers can be found on page 7.*

B	A	F	I
N	K	L	I
R	U	N	G
P	T	C	Y

UPCOMING COURT HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Christmas Day - Thursday, December 25

Day After Christmas - Friday, December 26

New Year's Day - Thursday, January 1 and Friday, January 2

Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. - Monday, January 19

Washington's Birthday - Monday, February 16

COURT MISSION STATEMENT

To promote public trust and confidence in the administration of bankruptcy cases:

- *through easy access to comprehensible, accurate information about the court, its procedures, and records;*
- *by the efficient, respectful, and dignified conduct of business at all levels of the court—clerk's office, chambers and courtroom;*
- *through adjudication of bankruptcy cases by a fair and impartial tribunal that is designed to provide relief to the honest debtor, equitable distribution of available assets to creditors, and preservation of jobs and value through successful business reorganizations.*

**CONTACT BANKRUPTCY BUZZ
 PUBLICATION STAFF**

If you have any comments regarding this issue or want to suggest ideas for future articles, please contact “Bankruptcy Buzz” staff at the following email address:

Debbie_Lewis@flsb.uscourts.gov.

Please do not use the above email address to file or send papers to the court or to ask questions about court procedure or status of a particular case. Contact the clerk's office at any of the following numbers for assistance in these matters.

Visit the court website www.flsb.uscourts.gov for local filing information.

Thank you.

Miami: (305) 714-1800

Ft. Lauderdale: (954) 769-5700

West Palm Beach: (561) 514-4100

Please Note:

Clerk's office staff is not permitted to give legal advice.



Farewell to Katherine Gould-Feldman

