



The Gavel

Newsletter

Edition 2025-02

Spring is in the air! Our winter blahs will soon turn to color with warmth and new beginnings! While the earth is renewing, take a few moments to be thankful for the things in your life that make you happy! Spring is a time for new growth! Focus on your own growth, whether it be personal, work related, or whatever. Enjoy the sunshine, warmer weather, and be happy!



44th ANNUAL CONFERENCE!

The 44th Annual Education Conference is set to begin with the Council of State Representative meeting on Sunday, July 6, 2025, in sunny Albuquerque, New Mexico! There is a full slate of classes with excellent speakers and topics on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Do not forget the outing on Wednesday where we will have the opportunity to explore all that Albuquerque has to offer! Registration forms have been sent out to all members via email and mail. Please reach out immediately if you have not received yours and would like to attend! Additionally, encourage other judges from your state to attend! Not only will you receive excellent continuing education, you will have the opportunity to meet other judges from various states. A lot of our learning happens while we are together after classes. Here is our full agenda!

Sunday, July 6th

1 pm – 5 pm

Registration – Conference Center Lobby

10 am – 3 pm

Council of State Representatives Meeting
(invite only, lunch included)

Monday, July 7th

Breakfast on your own

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8:30 am	Welcome and Announcements
8:45 am – 9:45 am	Welcome from the New Mexico Supreme Court – Justice Thompson
9:45 am – 10 am	Break
10 am – 11 am	Judicial Wellness – Sandra Engel
11 am – 12 pm	Table Discussion Breakout Session (traffic, landlord/tenant, code violations (land use), civil/small claims, criminal, Judge/Clerk working together)
12 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch on your own
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Motion Practice – Judge David Overstreet
2:30 pm – 2:45 pm	Break
2:45 pm – 3:45 pm	Self-Represented Litigants – Judi Olean
3:45 pm – 4 pm	Break
4 pm – 5 pm	Self-Represented Litigants – Judi Olean
Dinner on your own	

Tuesday July 8th

Breakfast on your own

8:30 am – 10:30 am	The Heart of the Court – Part 2 – Judge Bill Sutton (ethics 2 credits)
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am – 11:45 am	Working with Attorneys – Judge Catherine Taylor
12 pm – 1:30 pm	Presidential Luncheon (provided)
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	Foundation Meeting (all Association members)
2:45 pm – 5 pm	Business Meeting (all Association members)
6 pm – 9 pm	Foundation Auction

Wednesday, July 9th Field Trip

8 am	Board Transport to Sandia Tram
10 am	Board Transport to Albuquerque Old Town
12 pm	Lunch (provided)



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2 pm Board Transport to Aquarium/Botanical Gardens

4 pm Board Transport to Hotel

Dinner on your own

Thursday, July 10th

Breakfast on your own

8:30 am – 10:30 am Implicit Bias – Dr. Kiran Katira

10:30 am – 10:45 am Break

10:45 am – 12 pm From Bench to Brief – Judge Elizabeth Allen

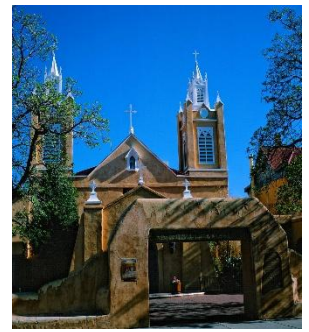
12 pm – 1:30 pm Lunch on your own

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm Creative Sentencing – Judge Kerry Burman

3:30 pm – 3:45 pm Break

3:45 pm – 4:35 pm Open Roundtable Discussion

6 pm – 9 pm Banquet (provided)



ANNUAL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING!

The annual General Membership Meeting will take place during the 44th Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM on Tuesday, July 8th. We have a lot of business to discuss including changes to the By-Laws and the Policies/Constitution. Additionally, elections will take place for Officers. Please be sure to attend so we have a quorum to discuss and vote on these important issues!

NOTICE!

The following states have elections for Representatives and Alternates this year! As per our By-Laws:

A. Election: State Representatives are elected by the member's own state for a two (2) year term:

1. Representatives may be elected prior to the Annual Membership Meeting by N.J.A. members in their state by the majority vote of that state's members providing that all N.J.A. members of that state or government entity are properly notified of the time, place and date of the election;
 - a) If the state's or government entity's members agree, the Representative shall arrange for the election to take place in the state or governmental entity;

- b) The Delegation from each state or government entity with an impending vacancy on the Council of State Representatives shall submit to the Chairperson of the Nomination Committee the names of the member elected by their prospective state or government entity to their State Representative;
- c) A Regular Member of the nominee's state or government entity may challenge the election and the dispute shall be referred to that state's or government entity's delegation for settlement.

Alabama	Arizona	California
Connecticut	Florida	Hawaii
Illinois	Iowa	Kentucky
Maine	Massachusetts	Minnesota
Missouri	Nebraska	New Hampshire
New Mexico	North Carolina	Ohio
Oregon	Rhode Island	South Dakota
Texas	Vermont	Washington
Wisconsin	District of Columbia	Tribal Entities

Be sure to provide the name of the Representative and Alternate chosen for your state to the Executive Director. They will be sworn in during the banquet at our Annual Conference in July!

ATTENTION!

Effective April 1, 2025, the National Judges Association toll-free number will no longer exist! For assistance, please call (406) 939-2899. If there is no answer, please leave a message and your call will be returned!

Additionally, the mailing address will change! Please use the following mailing address until the new permanent address is provided:

National Judges Association
315 S Pearson Ave
Glendive, MT 59330



EXCITEMENT AWAY FROM THE BENCH!

In November, I had the opportunity to take an 18-day service program trip to India as part of a group of ten women. Our leader, Rep. Michelle Bos-Lun, is a woman I served with in the Vermont Legislature. The trip was organized by Bihar Education Change (BE Change-www.bechangefoundation.org), which is a non-profit organization that funds projects in rural primary schools in Bihar Province, the poorest province in India. We flew into Delhi and did some sightseeing for a day or two as we adjusted to jet lag, which included the Gandhi Museum, the India Gate, and the Lodi Garden.

We were supposed to fly to Dharamshala, but planes were grounded due to the intense smog. A small bus was conjured up and we set out for what was supposed to be a ten-hour drive but turned out to be fourteen. We arrived in Dharamshala at 1:30 AM, unloaded the bus, and caught a few hours of sleep before getting up early to walk to the Dalai Lama's Temple. Meeting His Holiness the Dalai Lama, was an awesome, moving experience.

Our time in Dharamshala was spent learning about the Tibetan refugee experience, including visits to the Tibetan Handicraft Center, an elementary school for refugee children, and a bead factory where women are taught the art of lampwicking that gives them a skill, to deter them from being lured into the sex trade. Our afternoons were spent tutoring Buddhist monks in English, which they called the "universal language." We spent a day "off" hiking up to Bhagsu Falls and meeting with an American Buddhist nun. The government of Tibet (in exile) is in Dharamshala and a visit to the government buildings, including their Judiciary, was very interesting.

Dharamshala is in the foothills of the Himalayas; the terrain is very hilly, and I got plenty of exercise walking to all of our activities. Life there is much different. For two weeks, I ate a vegetarian diet and became very fond of turmeric lattes and mango lassi. It is not recommended to consume meat or poultry. When eating, you always use your right hand. It is also necessary to purify all drinking water, unless you buy bottled mineral water. Toilet paper is a luxury offered by the guest houses we stayed at but not at general public bathrooms, so one needs to go prepared.

We then flew to Bodh Gaya, which is a more agricultural area, in fact, almost every square inch is in cultivation with rice and vegetables. Our guest house was a yoga ashram, run by an Indian man and his Japanese wife. Across a small courtyard is the Prema Metta School and Orphanage, which BE Change supports. The children come to school in uniforms, are eager to learn, and seem to know that education is very important to break the cycle of poverty. We also visited Bhavishya Me Free Education School and Kamal School in a much more rural location. The children were also eager to learn, but some were clothed poorly, which broke my heart. The associated Kamal School is a place where women learn how to sew so they can help provide a living for their families.

BE Change sponsored the construction of the kitchens at both schools and provides daily lunches for the children. We ate with the children at Bhavishya Me School, which involved eating only with our right hands (no utensils) and sitting on the floor. Yes, I was able to get back up without help!! Each child



gets a heaping plate of rice with dal and aloo gobi (potato and cauliflower). It was impressive to see the kids eat every morsel on their plates.

Everything in India gets used. I watched a woman mixing cow dung and rice straw to make patties that are flattened into 6–7-inch rounds and stuck to the sides of buildings, trees, and walls. When dry, they are used for fuel. When cauliflower is harvested, the head is used to feed humans, the leaves go to the cattle, the stalks are used for broth, and the roots are dried for fuel.

Eighty percent of Indian rice production is done by hand. All day, you will see people out in the fields gathering and wrapping dried rice into sheaves, which are then stacked into huge bales and loaded onto workers' backs. Threshing may be done by machine or by hand, which is intense work.

Bodh Gaya is also the place where the Buddha experienced enlightenment, so there are many people making pilgrimages at temples of different nationalities. We were able to visit the famous temple with the great-granddaughter of the original Bodhi tree where the Buddha was enlightened.

Our final day was spent in Agra at the Taj Mahal. It is hard to verbalize how beautiful and amazing this perfectly symmetrical building is, which seems to float in the morning mist. It is a must see if you are in India.

India overwhelms the senses with color, noise, smells, horns, begging people, cows, and dogs. It took me a day or two to get used to the cacophony of Dharashala, but I found it ultimately beautiful. While not always easy, this trip was transformative and enlightening. What sticks with me most is a quote from His Holiness the Dalai Lama – “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.”

Hon. Carolyn Partridge (VT)
Windham County Assistant Judge

NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR!

Greetings to you all! It has been a whirlwind of a winter assisting with the finalization of the Annual Education Conference to be held this July in Albuquerque! I am pleased with the wonderful slate of classes and very excited for our Wednesday outing! A HUGE shout out to Hon. Carlton Gray for spearheading this!

Although I am a huge fan of the summer months, spring brings me happiness knowing that change is right around the corner. But with that being said, change can be hard; whether it is a change in seasons, change in life, or even a change in the laws that the Legislative Branch makes. We may not always agree with how we are to handle certain cases or how we are to sentence or rule on a civil matter, but we have all sworn to uphold the Constitutions of our States and of our Nation. Use this time to help make a change in people's lives. Remember we are dealing with humans, and don't think of the next person appearing before us as the same as the last one. Each case, whether criminal, civil or family, is different. Take the time to listen to the whole story.

Understand what may be a contributing factor and learn to not only use the law to make your determination, but also the sense and heart you have been given. You make a difference in the lives of those appearing before you. Do not take that lightly.

I'm excited to see many of you at conference this summer – old friends and new faces! If you haven't yet sent in your registration, please do so soon! Together we are a strong force! We need each and every one of our members!

Do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, news, photos, etc. I love to hear from you all!

Hon. Kerry Burman

MID-YEAR COUNCIL OF STATE REPRESENTATIVES MEETING!

The mid-year Council of State Representatives Meeting was held virtually in February. This meeting is attended by the Executive Board and all State and Alternate Representatives. There was a lot of discussion about changes to our By-Laws and our Policies/Constitution to bring the National Judges Association more current. We are excited for the changes that will be made with our website to make it more pertinent and full of useful information! We look forward to hearing suggestions from our members as well!

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES!

The National Judges Association Foundation offers scholarships to cover the registration fee to attend the Annual Conference. Please email Hon. Candace Hissong, Foundation Director, for more information! Snickerg28@gmail.com

"A judge must apply the law as it is,
not as he wishes it to be."

- Raymond M. Kethledge

Big OpenAI
Life Motivation

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

SR. DIRECTOR: Hon. Bill Sutton (AZ)

PRESIDENT: Hon. Carlton Gray (NM)

PRESIDENT ELECT: Hon. Mark Temaat (KS)

VICE PRESIDENT: Hon. Lamont Barnett (VT)

SECRETARY: Hon. Penny McPherson (MT)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Hon. Kerry Burman (MT)

STATE REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES!

ARIZONA – Hon. Bill Sutton

KANSAS – Hon. Mark Temaat

MISSISSIPPI – Hon. Tabitha Britton-Porter

MONTANA – Hon. Kerry Burman and Hon. Penny McPherson

NEVADA – Hon. Jennifer Klapper

NEW MEXICO – Hon. Collis Johnson and Hon. Carlton Gray

NEW YORK – Hon. Amel Jowdy and Hon. Gary Graber

OREGON – Hon. Candace Hissong

SOUTH CAROLINA – Hon. Derrick Dash

VERMONT – Hon. Lamont Barnett and Hon. Carolyn Partridge

WYOMING – Hon. William Conner

CONTACT INFORMATION!

Hon. Kerry Burman
National Judges Association
315 S Pearson Ave
Glendive, MT 59330

www.nationaljudgesassociation.org
406-939-2899
NJAExecutiveDirector@yahoo.com

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