

# TNWB CLERK'S OFFICE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2022

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And just like that, we are in a new year! Welcome, 2022! Over the last few months, we have had many exciting changes in the Clerk's Office and we wanted to share a few of those with you.

## **Appointment of new Chief Judge**

Please join us in congratulating our new Chief Judge Jennie D. Latta.

Bankruptcy Judge Jennie D. Latta was selected to serve as Chief Bankruptcy Judge for the Western District of Tennessee by the district court judges of the Western District on April 19, 2021. She succeeds Bankruptcy Judge David S. Kennedy who served as chief bankruptcy judge for over thirty years. As in other districts around the country, the chief bankruptcy judge in the Western District serves for a specified term of four years. It is the role of the chief bankruptcy judge to "ensure that the rules of the bankruptcy court and of the district court are observed and that the business of the bankruptcy court is handled effectively and expeditiously." 28 U.S.C. § 154. The chief bankruptcy judge convenes meetings of the bankruptcy judges and collaborates with the Clerk and Deputy Clerks as appropriate.

Judge Latta was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1961 and has remained here except for a brief stay in Tyler, Texas, when she was a child. Judge Latta holds degrees from the University of Memphis (B.A., 1981; J.D., 1986; Ph.D. 2014) and Saint Meinrad School of Theology (M.A. 2003). Judge Latta practiced law with two local firms before joining the court in 1997. She currently serves as a bankruptcy judge liaison to the Sixth Circuit Judicial Council, a Sixth Circuit Governor to the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges, and a member of the adjunct faculty at the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law where she teaches Debtor-Creditor law.

Judge Latta and her husband Jim have five adult children and six grandchildren. In her spare time, Judge Latta plays bassoon in the Memphis Wind Symphony and Germantown Symphony Orchestra and serves on the boards for both. She loves to play with her grandchildren any time, to knit in the fall and winter, and has recently started playing golf again.

Again, congratulations to Chief Judge Latta! We are all excited for her appointment and wish her the very best in her new role.

## **Welcome to our newest Bankruptcy Judge**

Welcome Aboard, Judge Denise Barnett

Please join the Clerk's Office in extending a warm, heartfelt welcome to Judge Denise Barnett. Judge Barnett and her husband and daughter come to us from Tampa, Florida. She took the oath of office on November 8, 2021.

Judge Barnett brings a wealth of knowledge to the courts. From 2022 until her appointment to the bench, Judge Barnett served as a trial attorney in the United States Trustee Program in Florida. From 1997 through 2002, Judge Barnett was an attorney in private practice in Jacksonville, Florida. Judge Barnett began her career as a judicial law clerk to the Honorable George L. Proctor, Chief Bankruptcy Judge Emeritus, Middle District of Florida, Jacksonville Division from 1995 through 1997.

Judge Barnett will hold Chapter 7 and Chapter 13 calendars virtually, via Microsoft Teams, until further notice; Chapter 11 court hearings will be held in-person, in Courtroom 630. Her court day for hearings is Tuesday. She will also be hearing cases from both Chapter 13 Trustees, with court proceedings being set

on alternate weeks for the respective trustee. Fran Riley is her career law clerk and Tonya Lepone is her courtroom deputy.

Again, welcome aboard, Judge Barnett!

### **Openings for Chapter 7 Trustees**

The United States Trustee has requested applications for those interested in serving as Chapter 7 Trustees in both the Memphis and Jackson Divisions for the Western District of Tennessee. The deadline for submitting resumes was December 31, 2021. We currently have one Trustee serving the Memphis Division and one Trustee serving the Jackson Division. We look forward to working with our future Trustees in the years to come here in Western Tennessee.

### **Resolutions for the New Year**

Some of the most popular New Year's resolutions each year are:

- Lose weight
- Kick a bad habit/start a new good habit
- Start exercising regularly
- Reconnect with family/friends

What are your New Year's resolutions?

### **Court Employee Spotlight**

Cindy Coady has been with the Bankruptcy Court for 30 years. She has served as a case administrator, ECF trainer and is currently an Administrative Analyst. Having lived in Memphis most of her life she is a graduate of White Station High School. She enjoys shopping, gardening, and traveling.

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