

The Docket

October/November 2021

THE LIFE OF A CRIMINAL CASE FILE

The first duty of the Clerk of Courts office is to maintain the counties criminal case records. Each criminal case that comes to the Common Pleas Court level starts and is managed by our office. Here is the life of a case file:



A Magisterial District Court holds a preliminary hearing and if appropriate evidence is presented the case is held for court and sent to the Clerk of Courts office. Once the MDJ records are received, a Common Pleas docket number is assigned consecutively starting with the first case of each year. The original paperwork consists of bail information, MDJ docket entries, the criminal complaint, and any additional documents that have been processed by the lower court.

A physical and digital file are created. The physical file stays in the Clerk of Courts office unless it is in court for proceedings on the case. The electronic case is maintained in two parts. The first part is the docket entries, which includes all the relevant information about the case and the parties involved, plus a record of all the events that occur. This is edited and maintained through a state wide program called Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS). For example a docket entry can say "Bail Posted", "Trial Scheduled", "Hearing Notice", "Discovery Filed", "Guilty Plea", etc. Each event that occurs on a case is recorded with an entry that also indicates the date and time. This information is accessible by the public and can be viewed at any time through the UJS portal.

The second part of the electronic process is scanning images of the case documents. Documents that are placed in the physical file are also scanned for quick and easy access. The documents are stored in the On-Base system, and will soon be converted to ERMS (Electronic Records Management System). All documents are available to the public upon request, unless the document is confidential. All three parts– the physical file, the electronic docket and the scanned documents are updated as close as possible to real time.

When a defendant appears in court, courtroom staff, including the Judge have access to all three parts of the case. Stay tuned for the next advancement when the On-Base system is merged into CPCMS/ERMS.

FROM CAMERAMAN TO DIRECTOR



Ben Semanoff grew up in Churchville, Bucks County, graduated from Temple, and had worked as a camera operator for television and movies for many years before getting a chance to direct. After working on shows such as *CSI: NY*, *CSI: Miami*, *House of Cards*, *The Leftovers*, *Billions*, *Law & Order Special Victims Unit*, and many others, Semanoff became the lead camera operator on the show *Ozark* starring Jason Bateman. While working on *Ozark* he was given a chance to make his directing debut on two episodes. The second episode, *Su Casa Es Mi Casa*, earned him an Emmy nomination. Most recently he has been working as the lead camera on the series *Stranger Things*.



Ben, his wife Erica, and their two children live in Doylestown. Erica is a bridal-jewelry designer.

Veterans Day

The Clerk of Courts joins all Americans in honoring our Veterans on November 11th. Veterans Day honors people who have served in the United States Armed Forces that were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. Originally called Armistice Day it was renamed in 1954. Armistice Day and Remembrance Day is celebrated in other countries to mark the anniversary of the end of the war.

Legally, two minutes of silence is recommended to be observed at 2:11pm Eastern Standard Time.



November 11, 1919 - President Wilson sends message on first Armistice Day honoring those who died in WWI.
 June 4, 1926 - Congress adopts resolution requesting the President issue annual proclamations calling for the observance of November 11 with appropriate ceremonies.
 May 13, 1938 - November 11 made a legal holiday "dedicated to the cause of world peace".
 June 1, 1954 - Congress changes "Armistice" to "Veterans".

Holidays with different meanings:
 Memorial Day - Honor those who died while in military service.
 Armed Forces Day - Honor those currently serving in the U.S. military.
 Veterans Day - Celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans.

Veterans Day is spelled without an apostrophe "because it is not a day that 'belongs' to veterans, it is a day for honoring all veterans."

TRIVIA

What was the original name of Washington Crossing, PA and what town is directly across the river?

We asked the staff: Where is your favorite place in Bucks County?

- Amanda—Neshaminy State Park
- Arianna—Fonthill Castle
- Deanna—Peace Valley Park
- Eileen—New Hope
- Frank—Doylestown Borough
- Jackie—Peddler's Village:
- Christmas Light Display
- Jason—High Rocks Trail
- Kim—Fonthill Castle
- Liz—My home
- Lizzy—Lake Nockamixon
- Marsha—Doylestown Borough
- Marissa—The Boroughs: New Hope, Doylestown, Etc
- Megan—Tyler State Park
- Michele—My Home
- Mike—Parx Casino
- Sam—Peace Valley Park
- Shannon—Newtown
- Sharon—DeLorenzo's Pizza, Yardley
- Shelley - Doylestown Borough



<https://buckscounty.gov/222/Clerk-of-Courts>

December/January Newsletter :
 History of the Clerk of Courts office.



Answer to Trivia: Washington Crossing, PA, formally called Taylorsville, lies across the river from Washington Crossing, NJ.