



Winter I, 2012

Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center Educator Newsletter

## COURT CALENDAR

Jan 25	MSC Public Hearing*
Mar 6–8	MSC Oral Arguments*
Mar 28	MSC Public Hearing*
Apr 3–5	MSC Oral Arguments*
May 1	Law Day
May 8–10	MSC Oral Arguments*
May 30	MSC Public Hearing*

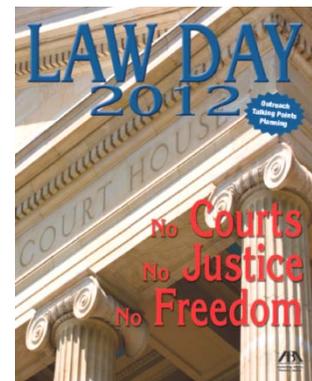
\*Proceedings of the Michigan Supreme Court (MSC) are broadcast on Michigan Government Television (MGTV). The State Bar of Michigan also archives proceedings online at [www.michbar.org/courts/virtualcourt.cfm](http://www.michbar.org/courts/virtualcourt.cfm).

## Law Day – May 1

You and your students are invited to celebrate America’s heritage of liberty under law by attending the Learning Center’s Law Day event, **May 1, 2012**. This year’s theme is “No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom.”

Themed activities will emphasize the role and importance of the judicial branch of government. Tours will include free curriculum materials and special guest speakers.

Openings are available for all grades. Call 517-373-7171 to reserve your tours today!



## School Tours, 2011–12

Openings are still available for tours of the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center. The experience aligns most closely with the following themes:

- Government and Civics
- Michigan Studies
- Core Democratic Values

Tour Hotline – 517-373-7171



## Law Day Video Contest

The American Bar Association is sponsoring a Law Day video contest for high school students, grades 9–12. Contestants are asked to compose a 3-4 minute video related to the theme “No Courts, No Justice, No Freedom.” Four finalists will win a trip to Washington, DC. Deadline: February 15, 2012. Details are available on the association’s website:

### Law Day – American Bar Association

[http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public\\_education/initiatives\\_awards/law\\_day.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/initiatives_awards/law_day.html).

## Core Democratic Values

Core democratic values are so important to the judicial branch that these words are etched in granite on the Michigan Hall of Justice:

- Freedom
- Truth
- Equality
- Justice



## Video Resource – Sweet Trials Historical Reenactment

As a part of the Great Michigan Read, the Learning Center presented historical mock trials in the Michigan Supreme Court courtroom on November 1, 2011. Video of the reenactments and accompanying curriculum materials for the high school level are now available at <http://courts.mi.gov/plc/sweet/trial.html>.

Using trial transcripts, the program reveals the story of Dr. Ossian and Mrs. Gladys Sweet, an African American couple who moved into an all-white Detroit neighborhood in 1925. Expecting violence, they and their friends armed themselves to defend the home, and a member of an angry mob that formed on their lawn was shot and killed. Was it murder or self-defense? Listen to the prosecution and Clarence Darrow's defense to decide.

**Right:** "Inspector Schuknecht" with Justice Michael F. Cavanagh. The inspector was on duty the night of the incident. He investigated the scene and testified during the trial that stones appeared to have been thrown into the house from the outside.



Courtesy Walter P. Reuther Library  
Wayne State University

## Exhibit – In Their Own Words: The Sweet Trials

A temporary exhibit at the Learning Center tells the story of the Sweet trials, using historical photos and the words of the participants. It includes the perspectives of Dr. Ossian and Mrs. Gladys Sweet (left), the doctor's brother Mr. Henry Sweet, defense attorney Mr. Clarence Darrow, assistant prosecutor Mr. Lester S. Moll, Judge Frank Murphy, and the local neighborhood protective association. The exhibit will be on display in the Learning Center through February 2012.

### Great Michigan Read

For more information about the Great Michigan Read, visit <http://michiganhumanities.org/> and click on Programs. Resources include free teacher's guides and discussion kits for the featured book, *Arc of Justice* by Kevin Boyle.

*The Great Michigan Read is presented by the Michigan Humanities Council with support from Meijer and the National Endowment for the Humanities.*



## Best of the Web MICHIGAN TRIAL COURTS



Michigan's trial courts, which are located in every county, handle more than 99% of the cases in the state courts annually. Below are links from the One Court of Justice website that will help you to find more information about your local trial courts.

**Maps** – Where are trial courts located?

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/maps/maps.htm>

**Contact Information** – How do I reach judges and court staff?

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/dirs/trialdir.htm>

**Websites** – Where can I find local courts on the internet?

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/services/dirs/tlinks.htm>

**Annual Report 2010** – How many and what types of cases do trial courts handle each year?

<http://courts.michigan.gov/scao/resources/publications/statistics/2010/2010ExecSum.pdf>