



THE COURT CONNECTION

**United States Bankruptcy Court
Middle District of Florida
Jacksonville, Orlando, and Tampa/Fort Myers Divisions**

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our Court serves the public by processing and deciding bankruptcy cases with fairness, impartiality, and excellence, while treating everyone with dignity, integrity, and respect.

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January 2013

The Court Connection

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SAYING GOODBYE TO THE OLD, AND WELCOMING THE NEW **By Chief Judge Karen S. Jennemann**

My new nickname apparently is "Chief Judge of Change", because, not only am I asking all of us to think district-wide, I actually moved my troops from our old familiar space to a fancy newly restored courthouse across the street. On November 16, 2012, the Orlando Division returned to its former home in the George C. Young United States Federal Building and Courthouse.



The Orlando Bankruptcy Court was located in the prior version of this building from 1975 until 1989. When space got tight, we moved into a nearby commercial building, now known as the Fairwinds Building. We have enjoyed the pleasure of holding court in a private, commercial building for the last 23 years, but we always missed the integrity, security, and presence of working in a federal courthouse.

Relying on my mantra that "Change is Good," we will keep fond memories of our old home. Here are the lawyers who appeared in the last hearing sharing a toast and reminiscing about our memories in that courtroom on the eve of our move.



The final hearing held in the Fairwinds Building was on November 15, 2012. The Debtors were David A. and Cheryl B. Knowles , Case No. 6:11-bk-11717-KSJ. Pictured from Left to Right are Peter Hill, Attorney for Trustee; Richard Hennings, Attorney for Debtor; and David Knowles , the Debtor.



The first hearing held in our new home was on November 26, 2012. at 2:00 p.m. The Debtor was Anita Pierce Jordan, Case No. 6:12-bk-02627-KSJ. Appearing from Left to Right are Stuart Ferderer, Attorney for the Chapter 13 Trustee; Jeffrey Ainsworth, Attorney for Deutsche Bank; and Robert Branson, Attorney for the Debtor.

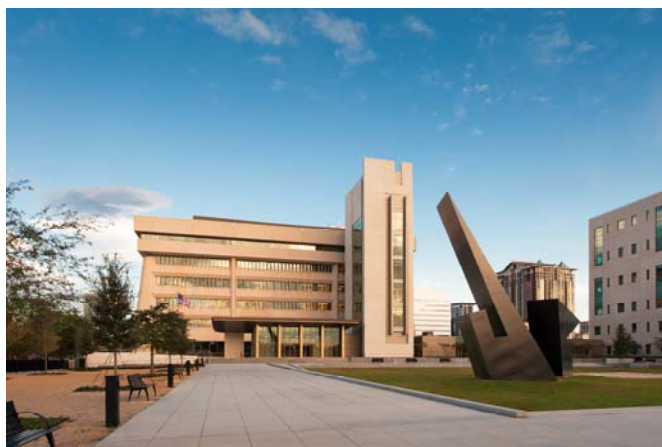


As sad as we were to leave, we are even more excited to move into our new home. We truly are returning to our roots and rejoining the other members of the federal court family in the Young Building. We will enjoy for decades the aesthetics of the building and the laudable green design thoughtfully incorporated into our new home. As public servants, we are glad that, not only will taxpayers benefit from an energy efficient building, but everyone who enters our doors can appreciate the artistry of encapsulating new

courtrooms with modern amenities and technology into a historical building that remains an icon of the Post-Industrial style in downtown Orlando.

The General Services Administration, their architects, and their contractors truly have hit a home run with this project. They honored the style of the original building, which became vacant when the District Court moved into adjacent quarters. They integrated both buildings, old and new, into a common campus by completing an interior walkway that allows the judges and judicial staff to communicate more freely.

I am so proud of our new home. I also am proud of my staff and all the parties who regularly appear here. All of you have embraced the progress that is visible throughout this new building. You have been a cheerleader for change, patient as we work through moving pains, and accommodating when the moment requires. As this new building adds more décor, improves its ever-evolving technology, processes more cases, and provides a foundation for more memories, I encourage



you to continue to embrace the changes because, as they say, *"When you're through changing, you're through."* The two modern buildings are enriched by the magnificent central park, designed by Dan Kiley, and the large public sculpture, *Host of the Ellipse*, relocated from Baltimore. The reoriented glass-lobbied entrance on Washington Street shines day and night as a beacon inviting our visitors and staff into a building specifically designed to dispense justice and to offer the hope of a financial fresh start for thousands of people every year.

I invite everyone throughout the district to visit. You are welcome anytime and we love to show off the space. If you are in the Orlando area on February 8, please come to the formal Rededication Ceremony or the family friendly Open House. More details are inside.

**EVERYONE IN THE BANKRUPTCY COMMUNITY IS INVITED
TO CELEBRATE THE ORLANDO DIVISION'S NEW HOME
February 8, 2013**



The United States Bankruptcy Court
Middle District of Florida and
The United States General Services Administration
Cordially invite you to the Rededication Ceremony
for the George C. Young Federal Building
and United States Courthouse
400 West Washington Street
Orlando, Florida
Friday, February 8, 2013
at ten thirty in the morning

Kindly RSVP by January 25, 2013 to Ms. Kelly Haynes
Phone: 404.526.3171
Email: kelly.haynes@gsa.gov

*Light refreshments immediately following ceremony



Bring Your Family To An

OPEN HOUSE

Featuring Family Friendly Activities Including:

- Catering by 4Rivers Smokehouse
- Live Music
- Balloon Art
- Photo Booth
- Crash the Bomb Sniffing Dog
- Office Tours

All Ages Welcome!

February 8, 2013 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

George C. Young Federal Building and
United States Courthouse
400 West Washington Street
Orlando, FL 32801

Hosted by the U.S. Bankruptcy Court, U.S. Trustee, and Office of the U.S. Attorney

NO PUBLIC MONIES ARE BEING USED FOR THIS EVENT

Dear POINT AND CLICK:

Question: My computer crashed Friday evening and I have lost access to my e-mail, including the Court's electronic notification of the documents filed in my cases. Is it possible to recover the notices without the Clerk's Office assistance?

Answer: Yes, it is possible to recover the information that would have been contained in the notices. The information contained in the notices can be obtained by generating an **ECF Activity Report** through the Court's CM/ECF system. To generate the report:

1. Log into CM/ECF as if filing a document.
2. Select *Reports* from the main menu.
3. You will be prompted to login again. Login with your firm's PACER login and password.
4. Select *ECF Activity Report* from the available reports. This report can be found under *FLMB Modified Reports*.
5. Enter the date for which the notices need to be retrieved. **Note:** If you need to retrieve notices for multiple days, a separate report will need to be created for each date.
6. An Attorney PRID Number (Personal Record Identification Number) is not required as the system recognizes the logged in user as the attorney for whom the report should be created.
7. Click *Run Report*.
8. The Summary of ECF Activity will display. If there is no activity to report, a blank screen displays. Depending on the amount of activity, the report results could take several minutes to display.

It is important to note that, although the content of the e-mails can be re-created through this report, the free look available to case participants through the Notices of Electronic filing cannot be re-created. Any document viewed through the report will be subject to the current PACER charges.

FREE BANKRUPTCY CLE IS NOW ONLINE

The IT hardware department is proud to introduce a new website that will offer Continuing Learning Education (CLE) credits for CM/ECF registered attorneys in the Middle District of Florida. The online, self-paced presentations consist of virtual CLEs recorded by members of the IT hardware department. Presentations are added to the website after each presentation, which are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and cover a wide range of legal topics relevant to bankruptcy attorneys.

CLE credit submission to the Florida Bar for CM/ECF registered attorneys can be accessed via the Electronic Filing/Submission section of the Court's home page as well as the Court's CM/ECF web page with the heading *CLE Attorney Credits*. The website also is available by clicking the following link: <http://pacer.flmb.uscourts.gov/cle/>.

Once a video has been viewed, a link will become available to post automatically the CLE course credits to the Florida Bar. The course credit number is also available at the end of each video.

We encourage attorneys, experienced or new, to view the free CLE videos tailored for our local bankruptcy practice and procedures. Court staff is also encouraged to view the CLE presentations during work hours. If you have any questions, please contact Richard Arendt.

THE FIRST ANNUAL BENCH BAR CONFERENCE
By: Steven M. Fishman, Steven M. Fishman, P.A. &
Kelley M. Petry, Kelley M. Petry, P.A.

Under the direction of Chief Judge Karen S. Jennemann, the Bankruptcy Steering Committee is under way. The Steering Committee consists of practitioners from Tampa, Orlando, Jacksonville, and Fort Myers, and is tasked with reviewing and assessing practices and procedures across the Middle District of Florida. The Steering Committee's goal is to provide direction to the Local Rules Committee and the Court on ways it can provide greater uniformity in pleadings and forms across the District.

On November 7, the Steering Committee hosted The First Annual Bench Bar Conference. A diverse group of 80 bankruptcy professionals attended, including judges, Chapter 7 Trustees, Chapter 13 Trustees, representatives from the U.S. Trustee's Office and Clerk of Court's office, and consumer, business, and creditor attorneys.

The Conference was held in the Sam Gibbons Courthouse in Tampa on the day before The View from the Bench. Attendees were split into eight tables of eight attendees representing the different groups in attendance. The task was to discuss and examine several important issues confronting the Middle District. Each table then shared the views and ideas generated from each topic discussion, listed below:

Alternative Dispute Resolution ("ADR") - What is its role in bankruptcy?

- There is high success rate in state court with mandatory ADR and the Chapter 13 mortgage mediations.
- ADR is particularly advantageous for creditors.
- ADR should be uniform.
- No consensus on whether bankruptcy ADR should be mandatory: some thought never and some thought it should be required for certain types of cases (preference, fraudulent transfer) over \$50,000.
- Most participants had concerns about whether ADR could be abused as a delay tactic.
- Mediators should be attorneys because they are better equipped to deal with legal issues, especially bankruptcy law.

Noticing - Much less noticing by the court and much more noticing by the parties is forthcoming to cut costs. What should we expect?

- Electronic noticing must be maximized.
- Creditors should provide, and always update, email addresses and agree to accept electronic service; moving parties should notice hearings;
- More noticing will be shifted to Chapter 7 and 13 Trustees and debtor's attorneys.
- The judges will revisit debtor's attorney's no-look fees.

Professionalism - What are the various ways to improve professionalism?

- There is a general consensus that sanctions work.
- The Court should distinguish between novice attorneys in need of help and experienced attorneys.
- For "experienced" attorneys, more uniform sanctions for misconduct in the following areas: missed court-imposed deadlines and general tardiness; unprepared attorneys; excessive fees.
- Trustees should utilize Motions to Disgorge and Dismiss more often to register the misconduct with the judge.
- More mentoring is needed.
- Unbundling of fees should not be allowed.

The discussions were lively, and progress was made in the evolution of these issues. We are all looking forward to The Second Annual Bench Bar Conference.

**THE BANKRUPTCY/UNIFORM COMMERCIAL CODE COMMITTEE
OF THE FLORIDA BAR BUSINESS LAW SECTION**

By Jay Brown, Chair (Bankruptcy/UCC Committee of the Florida Bar Business Law Section)

For those not familiar with the Bankruptcy/UCC Committee of the Business Law Section of the Florida Bar, this article is intended to introduce you to this Committee. For those of you already familiar, this article lets you know some of the items the Committee will work on in 2013.

The Committee consists of lawyers who practice commercial and consumer law and specialize in bankruptcy, creditors' rights, and secured transactions. Committee activities include:

- (1) drafting and analyzing proposed legislation concerning the Uniform Commercial Code, other rights of debtors, creditors, and other persons in interest under state law (foreclosure, assignment of rents, etc.), exemptions, assignment for the benefit of creditors, and other related legislation;
- (2) sponsoring various seminars, including the annual View From the Bench in Tampa and Miami, at which bankruptcy judges share their respective views concerning bankruptcy law and procedure;
- (3) studying substantive and procedural laws that impact commercial and bankruptcy law; and
- (4) working on and supporting pro bono, diversity and law student/mentoring initiatives of the Business Law Section and Florida Bar.

The Committee meets three times a year: at the Florida Bar's annual meeting (June 25-29, 2013 at the Boca Raton Resort & Club), at the Business Law Section's retreat in Naples over Labor Day weekend, and at a mid-year meeting (usually in December or January). There are also various subcommittees that meet in person or by phone over the course of the year. The statewide Bankruptcy Judicial Liaison Committee meets with a dinner to follow the day prior to each of the Bankruptcy/UCC Committee meetings.

In 2013, the Committee expects to analyze and give input on a number of pending and anticipated legislative measures, including:

- (1) Amendments to Florida's Limited Liability Company Statute;
- (2) Amendments to Florida's Uniform Fraudulent Transfer Act (Fla. Stat. Chp. 726) to add charitable organization protections;
- (3) Amendment of Fla. Stat. § 55.10 to include final orders of state agencies; and
- (4) Efforts to enact non-judicial foreclosure.

On April 26, 2013, the Committee will sponsor a refresher course on Article 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code in Tampa. We are also working on a statewide call-in CLE on Bankruptcy and Intellectual Property issues.

The Committee is also working on a project on receivers and receiverships with the Florida Bar's Real Property Probate and Trust Law Section.

This is just a sample of the work the Bankruptcy/UCC Committee does each year. For more information or for details on future Committee events, see www.flabizlaw.org or contact me at jacob.brown@akerman.com

We welcome your involvement on the Committee and hope to see you at our meetings in 2013.

FUTURE STATE OF THE DISTRICT PRESENTATIONS

The first State of the District presentation was held on January 16, 2013 in Jacksonville, Florida . The featured speaker was Chief Judge Jennemann. The future State of the District Presentations will be held on:

March 20, 2013 at 12:00 pm in Fort Myers, FL

March 21, 2013 at 12:00 pm in Orlando, FL

April 9, 2013 at 12:00 pm in Tampa, FL

COURT COMMITTEE REPORTS

Training Committee Update — After several months of preparation, the training team completed a two-day session in Tampa with representatives from the Federal Judiciary Center—the Federal Court’s training branch. This session resulted in a draft 18-month Strategic Training Plan for staff. The Committee is excited about the progress creating and eager to implement the training plan, which includes many staff-requested training needs. Going forward, the Committee will work on implementing and monitoring the training plan to determine if and when any modifications are needed.

IT Committee — The IT committee continues to test CM/ECF event additions and modifications as needed. Additionally, they are currently reviewing Electronic Learning Modules to learn more about CM/ECF 5.0 and 5.1. Over the next couple months this committee will be busy with the very important task of testing of CM/ECF 5.0 and 5.1 in preparation for implementation.

Procedures Committee I — This Committee completed draft procedures for the internal processing of applications to pay filing fees in installments and provided several suggestions on additional uniformity across the District. The draft procedures are being submitted to the Procedures Review Committee. The Committee will now begin work on procedures for processing amendments to schedules and statements.

Procedures Committee II — This Committee continues to work on the large project of writing case opening procedures which address how new cases are initially processed. This is a large project because procedures have to be written for each Chapter. Draft procedures on Chapter 7 cases are complete and will be submitted to the Procedures Review Committee. This Committee also assisted in collecting all bankruptcy courts’ Motion for Relief From Stay procedures currently in place They are compiled for inclusion in the Court’s Procedures Manual.

Procedures Committee III — This Committee is working on developing uniform procedures for reviewing cases for entry of a discharge. It also has compiled a list of noting differences. After reviewing related Bankruptcy Rules and other Resources, the Committee will draft uniform procedures.

Procedures Review Committee — This Committee completed work on reviewing over 900 CM/ECF events to determine which ones require case management quality Control review and which ones do not need to be reviewed. This work will allow us to update our case management reports to only include entries that need staff review and prevent duplicative efforts. This committee will be busy in the coming months reviewing draft procedures from the Procedure Committees.

Outreach Committee — The collection for the CFC drive ended in December for all three offices. The Jacksonville Division collected \$1,795.10 raised by jean/carpi days and downstairs parking. The money collected was sent to American Cancer Society. The Orlando Division collected \$ 2,157.24 (which includes 2 Patriot Donors and 2 Super Hero Donors). \$255.74 was collected from a fund raiser and the money was donated to Meals on Wheels. Also collected was 139 pounds of food donated to Second Harvest Food Bank, which was the equivalent of 93 meals.

The Tampa Division collected \$3,324.58 (which includes 3 Coin Givers, and 1 Eagle Giver). \$280.25 was donated to Guide Dog Services; \$280.25 was donated to Ronald McDonald House. The monies were raised from fund raisers (a pizza/salad sale, a spa gift basket raffle, and two jeans days per week). The Bankruptcy Court, with the help of District Court, collected a total of 445 pounds of food for Metropolitan Ministries. They also decorated cookies and purchased and delivered gifts to 96 residents at Hanna Oaks Nursing Home.

Website Committee — In the last issue of the Court Connections newsletter, the website committee’s article noted recommendations for the Court’s internal website. Of late, the Court’s external website (flmb.uscourts.gov) has become the primary focus. The committee has been brain storming ideas and suggestions for improving categorical placement of information and website links under new headings on the newly created external demo website. This new site will allow web viewers to locate needed information more quickly and accurately. The committee is trying to keep three major guidelines in mind during this process: **Is it fair? Is it needed? Is it simple as possible?** The Website Committee also has been working to enhance the Emotional Support link, available at: <http://www.flmb.uscourts.gov/support/>.

For those unfamiliar with this link, the Emotional Support link provides resources available throughout the State of Florida for those in need of assistance. Financial and economic hardships can take a significant toll on health, both mentally and physically. Enhancements that have been made include:

- The Emotional Support logo / link can be seen on the front of the Court’s current home page in red.
- The link can also be found under the heading, “Filing without an Attorney.”
- The Emotional Support link now displays on all intake monitors in all divisions.

TAMPA DIVISION JUDGES' MENTORING PROGRAM

The 2013 dates for the Tampa Bankruptcy Judges' Mentoring Program for New Bankruptcy Lawyers are listed below. All programs begin at noon and end at 1:30 p.m. and are held in the 5th floor training room of the courthouse in Tampa. CLE credit is available. We will post a notice listing the topics on the home page of our website in the announcements section about a month in advance. Please come.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program Title</u>
February 26, 2013	MEANS TESTING
May 28, 2013	TBA
August 27, 2013	TBA
November 20, 2013	TBA

**BLES IS BORN
by Roy Kobert, Esquire, Broad & Cassel**

Effective December 28, 2012 The Bankruptcy Law Educational Series Foundation, Inc. (BLES) was incorporated with the State of Florida. As a direct result, there is now a vehicle available in the Middle District of Florida to promote bankruptcy legal education programs and to actively fund pro bono and other public service products relating to the practice of bankruptcy law.

The initial funding for BLES came from the voluntary bankruptcy bars in Fort Myers, Tampa, Orlando and Jacksonville. Moreover, during the Business Law Section's midyear meeting in Orlando on January 10, 2013, this Florida Bar Section, which includes the Bankruptcy/U.C.C. Committee, has graciously pledged \$9,000 as additional seed money.

Future funding is envisioned from unclaimed funds provided for in Chapter 11 confirmed plans, as well as through the active participation of members of the Middle District bankruptcy bench at BLES sponsored seminars, from which a portion of the registration fees would be earmarked to this program.

Please continue to watch this space for future information regarding the launch of BLES and participation opportunities.

ATTENTION ALL CM-ECF USERS**Look for a new improved version of CM-ECF****The Court will upgrade to Version 5.1 in April 2013**



Pictured: Charo Vargas (Case Manager—Judge McEwen’s Team)

LEGAL MAGNET MIDDLE SCHOOLERS HOSTED BY TAMPA DIVISION by The Honorable Catherine Peek McEwen

Students from the Girls Preparatory Academy of Ferrell Middle School and the Boys Preparatory Academy of Franklin Middle School toured the Sam M. Gibbons United States Courthouse in Tampa recently. These schools are single-sex legal magnet middle schools. The 32 sixth- and seventh-grade students who visited learned the difference between state and federal courts and had the opportunity to ask anything (and they did) of District Judge James Moody, Jr. and Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Charles R. Wilson. The students also toured the U.S. Marshal's areas of the courthouse (the holding cells were a popular stop) and the civics kiosks. During pizza-and-soda lunch break, the students learned of different jobs within the judicial system; they heard from Officer Jose Montanez in Pretrial Services, Court Security Officer Brenda Redden, Chief Deputy Probation Officer Trina Kenon in Probation, and our own case manager Charo Vargas.

TAMPA DIVISION’S CLOTH PROJECT

The Tampa Division embraced the Court’s challenge to design a project emphasizing that every team member is essential.



APPLICATIONS FOR RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE MEDIATORS

The Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida is a national leader in using mediation to assist parties who wish to modify residential mortgages. Debtors who own residential property, cannot afford their current mortgage payments, but can afford to pay a meaningful portion of their gross income towards a modified mortgage may qualify to participate in the Mortgage Modification Mediation Program in the Middle District.

In accordance with Administrative Order FLMB 2013-3, beginning February 1, 2013, the Clerk of Court will maintain a list of mediators in each division of the Middle District who are certified to mediate modifications of residential mortgages. Parties who wish to be certified by the Court as a mortgage mediator must:

- Be qualified as Florida Supreme Court Certified Circuit Court Mediator (visit www.flcourts.org);
- Have completed at least 8 hours of training approved by the Chief Bankruptcy Judge or her designee; and
- Agree to accept two pro-bono mediation assignments per year;

Application forms are available on the Court's website at www.flmb.uscourts.gov. The Court is reviewing approved training courses (see Section 2), which will be posted on the Court's website as they are approved. Bankruptcy Judge Catherine Peek McEwen is the designated judge to certify acceptable training.

REVISED TELEPHONIC APPEARANCE PROCEDURES

The start of the year marked many technological changes for the Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida. One of these changes is the launch of the CourtCall system for telephonic procedures in all Middle District bankruptcy courtrooms. CourtCall operates as a third-party dispatcher between the Court and the parties appearing by phone. Parties making telephonic appearances call CourtCall, not the Court, and are placed in a telephonic "waiting room" until their docket is heard by the judge. At the proper time, a CourtCall operator will patch the appropriate parties into the courtroom to be heard. The system prevents noisy disruptions of multiple parties waiting on the live line, and ensures only those who have requested to appear for a specific matter are heard.

The main difference between the old procedures and new telephonic procedures is that parties seeking to appear telephonically now do not need to seek permission from the Courtroom Deputy. **Appearances must be arranged by contacting CourtCall directly at 866-582-6878 no later than 5 p.m., EST, on the business day prior to the hearing date.** All parties are required to follow the guidelines posted on the Court's website under *Telephonic Procedures*.

OPEN DOOR HOURS WITH CHIEF JUDGE JENNEMANN FOR 2013

The Scheduled Open Door Hours with Chief Judge Jennemann will be:

Jacksonville (Room 4-403):

May 6, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
July 1, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
November 4, 2013 @ 2:00 pm

Orlando (Room 6169):

April 29, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
July 22, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
October 28, 2013 @ 2:00 pm

Tampa (8th Floor Conference Room):

April 9, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
July 16, 2013 @ 2:00 pm
October 22, 2013 @ 2:00 pm

Do not wait for a scheduled time, however, if you have a suggestion. Call Chief Judge Jennemann at 407.237.8110 or email your ideas to: karen_jennemann@flmb.uscourts.gov.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR PRO BONO CONTRIBUTIONS IN TAMPA AND ORLANDO

PRO BONO NEWS FROM TAMPA

On April 25, 2013, the Thirteenth Circuit Pro Bono Committee will host their annual Pro Bono Awards Ceremony at 5 p.m., followed by a reception at 6 p.m. The event will be held at the Chester Ferguson Law Center (HCBA Building), located at 1610 North Tampa St. in Tampa, Florida, and will publicly recognize the volunteer lawyers who donated their services to those who cannot afford to pay for legal representation. All are welcome to join Judge McEwen, chair of the 13th Cir. Pro Bono Committee, and members of the state and federal judiciary in recognizing these dedicated lawyers who improve lives and access to the courts and foster efficiency in the bankruptcy system by assisting those in need. Five awards will be awarded at the Ceremony. For more information on the awards and nomination forms, visit: TBBBA.com. Nominations must be made no later than February 19, 2013.

The Tampa and Ft. Meyers Divisions have four exciting ways to get involved with Pro Bono activities. First, they have a well-developed Legal Assistance Program for Low-Income individuals. The program offers legal assistance to low income debtors, and in some cases their spouses and former spouses, in adversary proceedings and contested matters before the bankruptcy court.

Second, the TBBBA started a pilot consultation project last October for the National Celebrate Pro Bono Week. The courthouse is staffed three days a week and any consumer party may appear for a free consultation.

Third, the 13th Circuit Pro Bono Committee, chaired by Judge McEwen, is planning a Judicial Pro Bono Summit to discuss new ways the courts can foster pro bono activities in the district. Look forward to more thoughtful ideas on how to get involved in the pro bono community.

Lastly, the TBBBA and the Bay Area Legal Services group have collaborated to create a “low bono” panel to assist low-income Chapter 7 debtors who are not eligible to receive pro bono services from the Bay Area Legal Service. BALS does the initial intake review and consultation before a low bono volunteer takes over the case for a one-time fee of \$600.

PRO BONO NEWS FROM ORLANDO



The Orlando Division also has honored its legal assistance contributors by hanging a plaque in the Bankruptcy Court sixth floor lobby identifying all members of the bar who have donated their time to serve in the Pro Se Assistance Clinic, a new initiative funded by the District’s Bench-Bar Fund. The Clinic opened last year and is staffed by experienced bankruptcy attorney volunteers who offer free, on-site information and guidance to individuals who are representing themselves in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court. Those participants who are recognized on the inaugural plaque include:

Walter Benenati, Marie Benjamin, Alvin Benton, Carole Bess, Michele Biecker, Robert Branson, Juan Burgos, Linda Coco, Timothy Dave, Andrea Dwyer, Edward Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Green, K. Hunter Goff, Roman Hammes, James Trammell Harper, Jr., Kenneth Herron, Jr., Peter Hill, Jason Klein, Jeanne Kraft, Andrew Layden, Cynthia Lewis, Kevin Mangum, David McFarlin, Allison Moscato, Lori Patton, Melody Pullen, John Raffaelli, Georgina Roman-Secor, Andrew Roy, Adam Russo, R. Schott Shuker, Alec Solomita, Katie Stone, Jonathan Sykes, Christopher Thompson, Arlene Vellon, Astrid Vellon, Nicolette Vilmos, Erik Washington, Frank Wolff

Each year the Bankruptcy Pro Se Assistance Clinic plaque will be updated to recognize those who participate in the program during the prior year. The lawyer volunteers at the Clinic help the pro se litigants understand the bankruptcy process, but they cannot represent the litigants in court or file pleadings on their behalf. If you would like to volunteer for the Pro Se Assistance Clinic, located at the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Orlando, please contact Kelly Crumbaker at admin@proseassistanceclinic.com.

NEWS FROM THE JACKSONVILLE BANKRUPTCY BAR ASSOCIATION

In November, the Jacksonville Bankruptcy Bar Association conducted a "Lunch and Learn Boot Camp" with Chapter 7 Trustees Gordon Jones and Aaron Cohen regarding frequent omissions and errors in Chapter 7 petitions. Over 30 lawyers attended. Also in November, many members of the JBBA Board of Directors attended the Bench Bar Conference in Tampa on November 7, 2012 to discuss three issues: (1) Attorney Professionalism; (2) Alternative Dispute Resolution/Mediation; and (3) the Shift of Noticing Responsibilities from the Clerk to the Bar. Finally, in December, the JBBA hosted its Annual Holiday Party at the River Club in downtown Jacksonville.

The JBBA will again be busy in the early months of 2013. In January, the JBBA hosted Judge Jennemann's "State of the District" presentation at the River Club in downtown Jacksonville. Judges Funk and Glenn, and Clerk of Court, LeeAnn Bennett, also spoke. In February, the JBBA will honor the hard work and efforts of the Jacksonville Bankruptcy Court Clerk's office at its annual "Clerk's Luncheon" scheduled for February 6, 2013. Like the last three years, the Clerk's Luncheon will be held at the downtown Jacksonville Public Library.

BIGGEST LOSER BANKRUPTCY EDITION
By: Robert B. Branson, Esquire

Our office lost a combined weight loss of 77.6 pounds over a four month period with our informal biggest loser challenge!

The challenge began on August 1, 2012 and ended December 5, 2012. The entire office at BransonLaw, along with Jeff Ainsworth joined to form two teams.

We decided to do the challenge after my mother-in-law received a call from her doctor's office that they wanted to see her right away. Half my office ran down to the doctor's office (my wife, sister-in-law and mother-in-law work here) to be told that she had some scarring on her kidneys and with her diabetes she needed to eat healthier, exercise and lose weight. We all decided if she could do it, we could do it!

We weighed in each Wednesday to encourage each other and especially to keep the competition going! Some of the healthier lifestyle changes we made were watching calorie intake, exercising more and making better food choices. We used free apps on smart phones for calorie and exercise tracking, online recipe sites for calorie listings, and asked for nutrition menus at restaurants! For exercise, the group utilized Zumba on Xbox, Jazzercise, gym workouts, strength training with resistance bands and walking! What an amazing difference can be made when you add up all the little changes.

We all feel better and healthier for it and have already started 2013's challenge!

PS: Jeff and I had a personal wager and I beat him by a slim margin (of less than a pound). But a win is a win. You will be seeing him in Gator colors in Court soon! We are trying to see if a dress will be permissible. We hear it may be approved by Chambers! It's only fitting since he had plans for me to wear a FSU cheerleading outfit if he had won!

Wishing you all a healthy, wealthy and lighter 2013!



Judges Corner



PORTRAIT CEREMONY FOR JUDGE ARTHUR B. BRISKMAN



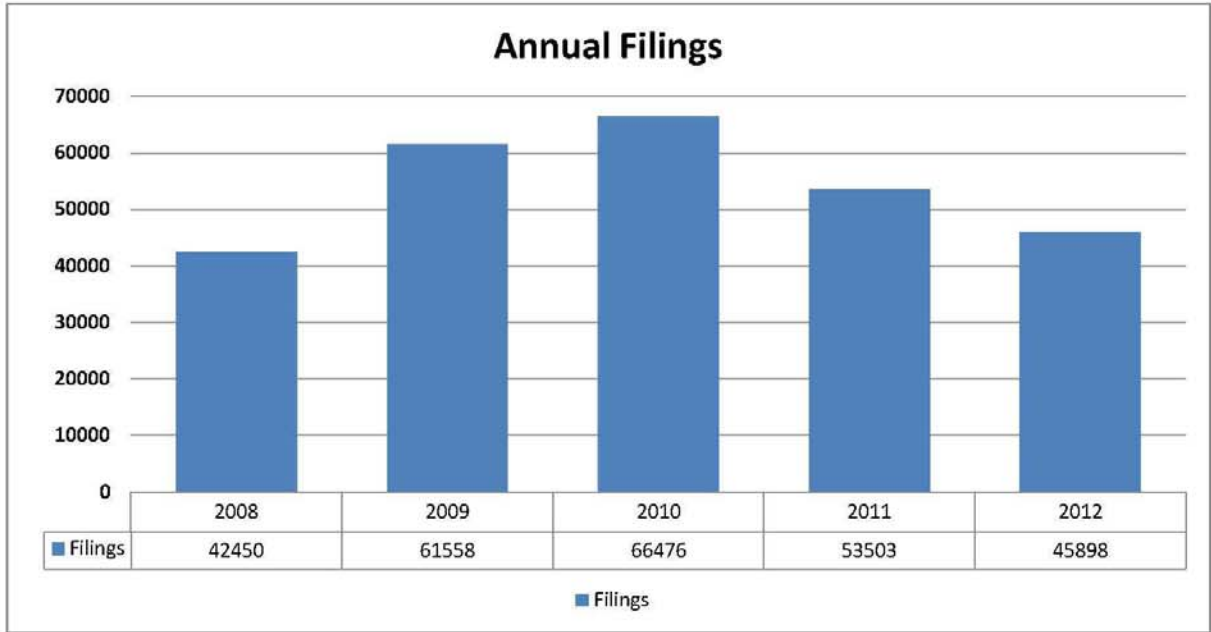
On December 13, 2012, the Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Court, family, and friends, along with the Central Florida Bar Law Association and the Orange County Bar Association, honored the lifetime achievements of Hon. Arthur B. Briskman at his portrait ceremony held in the new George C. Young United States Federal Building and Courthouse. The Court paid tribute to Judge Briskman's many years of public service by commissioning a portrait by local portrait artist Jon Houghton, one of the most accomplished portrait artists in the country today. Judge Briskman was honored by Chief Judge Dubina of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals; Chief Bankruptcy Judge Jennemann, Bankruptcy Judges McEwen, Delano, May, and Glenn ; and Chief District Judge Conway of the Middle District of Florida. He was accompanied by his wife, Jane, his daughters Mimi and Rachel, and their families. The portrait, in which Judge Briskman proudly dons support for his Alma matter, the University of Alabama, now hangs outside Judge Briskman's courtroom on the sixth floor of the new Young Building.

Judge Briskman graduated from the University of Alabama in 1969 and from the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University in 1972. From there, he served as a state court administrator, teacher, municipal judge, and firm partner until he was drafted as Chief Counsel for Senator Howell T. Heflin (D-AL) in 1979.

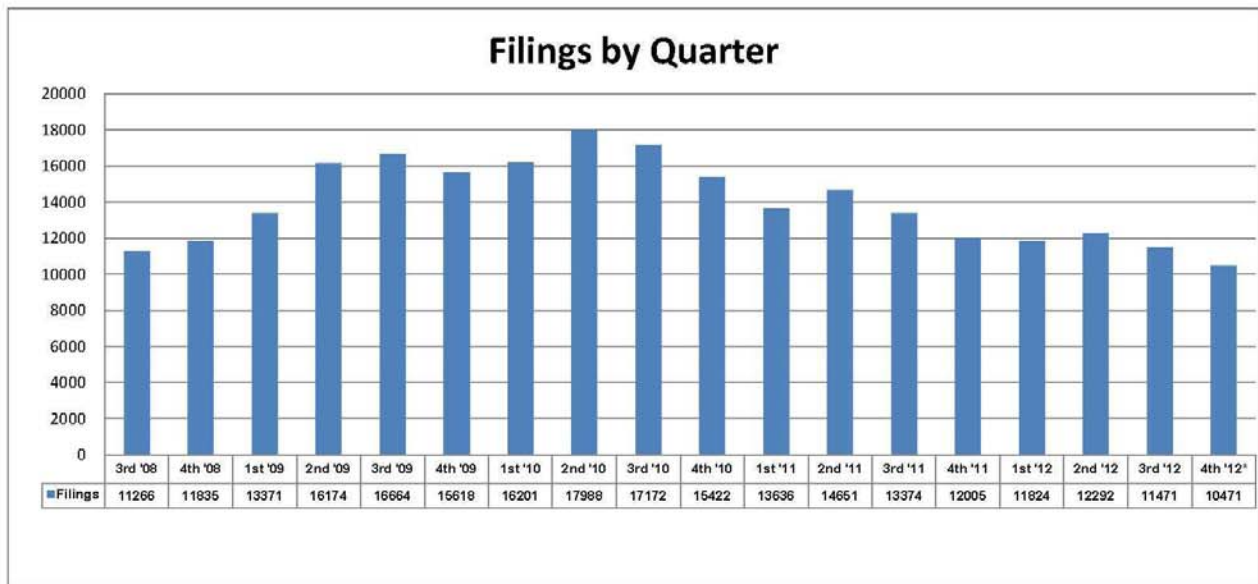
Judge Briskman left Washington in 1985, when he was appointed to the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Alabama. He served as a bankruptcy judge in Mobile, Alabama until 1993, when he transferred to his permanent post in the Middle District of Florida Bankruptcy Court in Orlando. Judge Briskman sat on the bench for almost 27 years and recently retired on July 24, 2012. He was recalled to service on July 25, 2012 to assist in administering the busy Middle District bankruptcy docket. Please stop by to view the portrait and join us in congratulating Judge Briskman on his many years of service.

QUARTERLY STATISTICS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012, FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

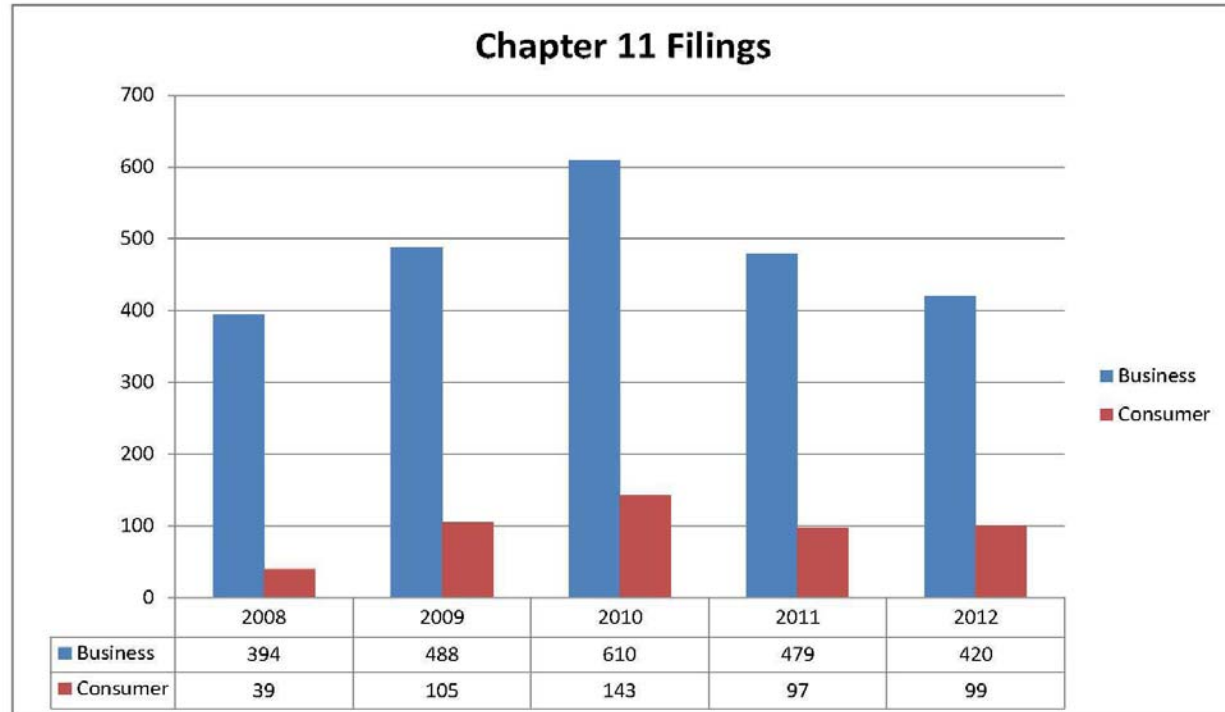
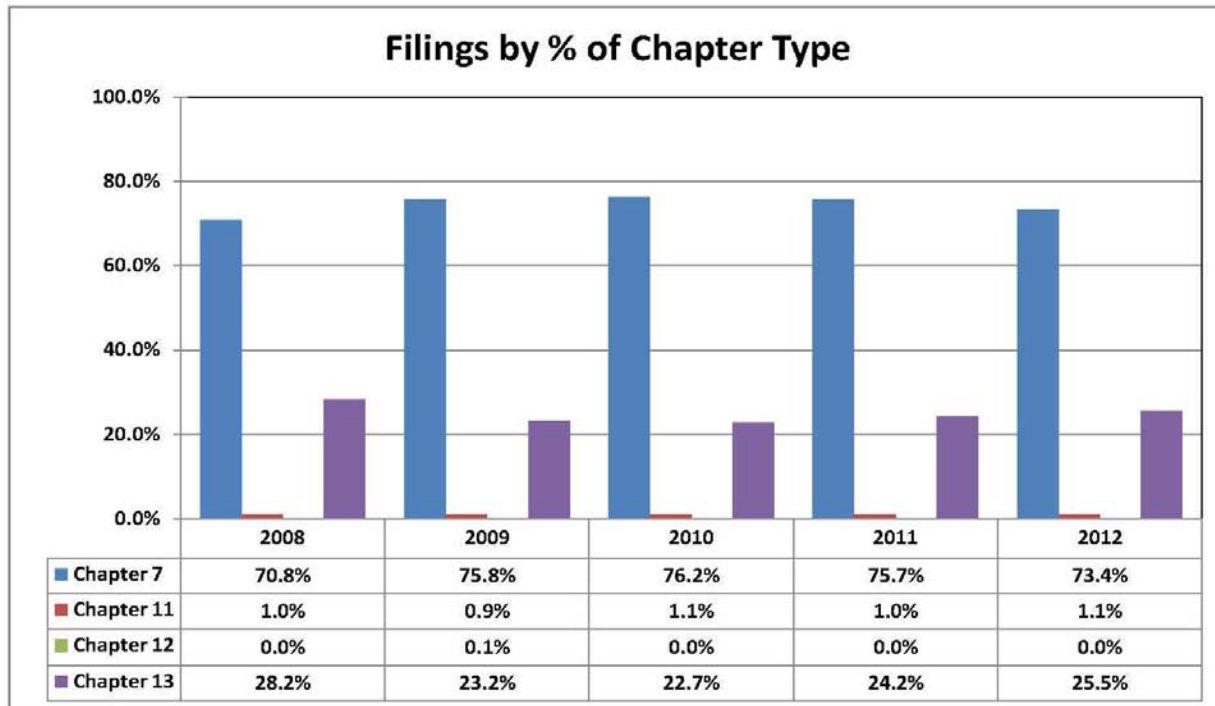
United States Bankruptcy Court - Middle District of Florida
 Updated January 8, 2013 Meeting Data and Information
 Statistics as of December 31, 2012



Year	Annual Filings	vs. 2008	vs. Prior Yr.
2008	42450		
2009	61558	45%	45%
2010	66476	57%	8%
2011	53503	26%	-20%
2012	45898	8%	-14%

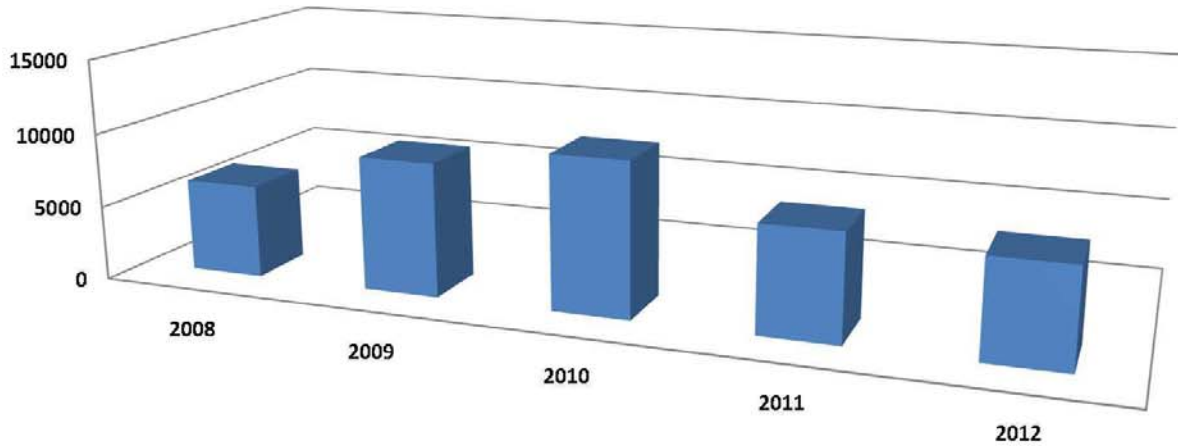


QUARTERLY STATISTICS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012, FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA



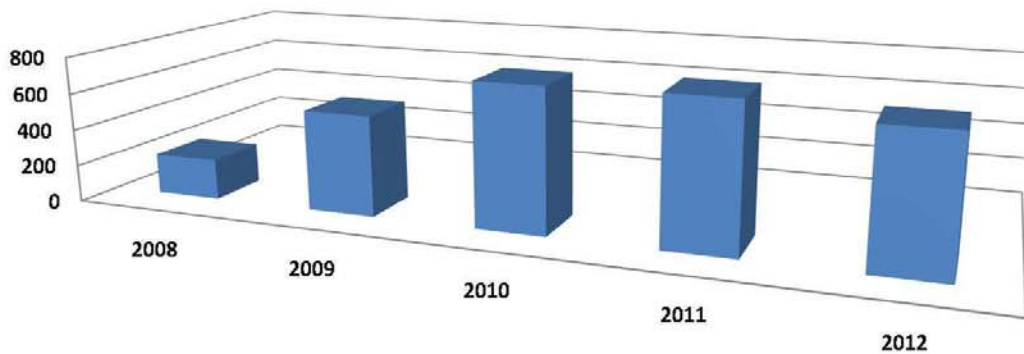
QUARTERLY STATISTICS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012, FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA

Pro Se Filings



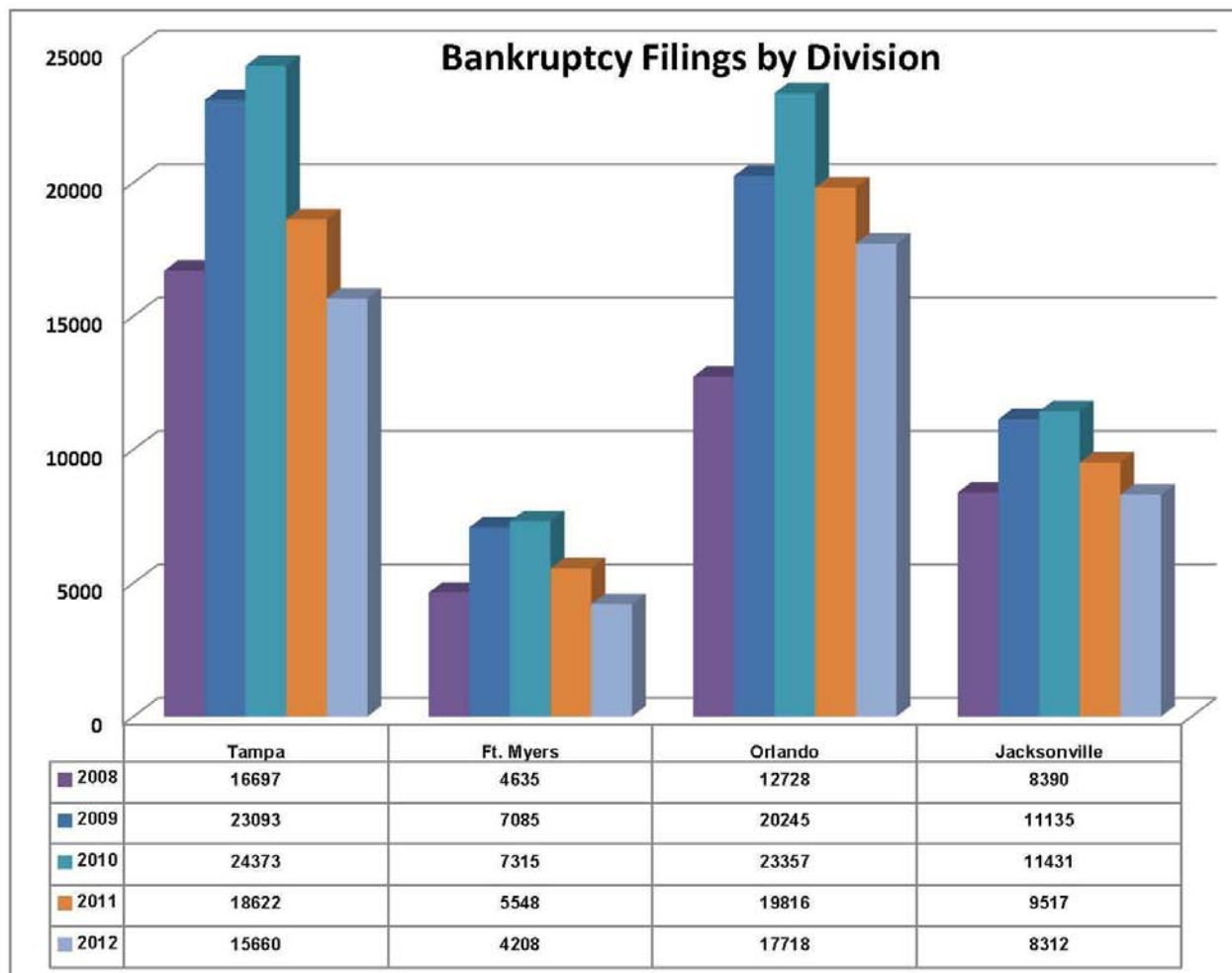
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
■ Pro Se	6267	8985	10293	7123	6511
% of All Filings	15%	15%	15%	13%	14%

In Forma Pauperis Filings

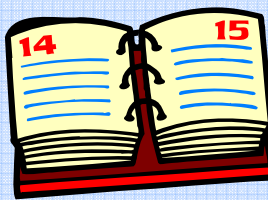


	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
■ IFP Granted	220	544	771	781	711
% of All Filings	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

QUARTERLY STATISTICS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012, FOR THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA



Note: Previous quarterly reports incorrectly reflected total cases filed by including adversary proceedings.

*****HAPPENINGS AROUND THE MIDDLE DISTRICT*******FT. MYERS**

March 20 @ noon State of the District Luncheon with Chief Bankruptcy Judge Karen S. Jennemann and Bankruptcy Judge Caryl E. Delano

JACKSONVILLE

May 6 @ 2:00 pm Open Door Hours with Chief Judge Jennemann (Room 4-403)
 May 15 Boot Camp on Professionalism for Lawyers

ORLANDO

February 8 @ 10:30 am Rededication Ceremony for the George C. Young Federal Building and United States Courthouse
 February 8 @ 4:00 pm Open House for the George C. Young Federal Building and United States Courthouse
 February 15 @ noon Quarterly Brown Bag Luncheon presented by Charles R. Sterbach, Assistant United States Trustee (USDC Jury Room) - Topic: "Problems with Pro Se Debtors: Common Abuses of the Bankruptcy System"
 March 21 @ noon State of the District Luncheon
 April 26 Annual CFBLA Bankruptcy Seminar—Embassy Suites, Orlando, FL
 April 29 @ noon Open Door Hours with Chief Judge Jennemann (Room 6169)
 May 17 @ noon Quarterly Brown Bag Luncheon presented by Chief Judge Jennemann (USDC Jury Room) - Topic: "Making Orders Orderly"

TAMPA

January 8 @ noon Consumer Brown Bag Luncheon
 January 8 @ 5:30 pm TBBBA Board Meeting @ SRBP
 January 22 @ 2:00 pm Open Door Hours with Chief Judge Jennemann (8th floor Attorney Conference Room—Courtroom 8A)
 January 15 @ noon TBBBA Luncheon
 February 5 @ noon Consumer Brown Bag Luncheon
 February 5 @ 5:30 pm TBBBA Board Meeting @ SRBP
 February 12 @ noon TBBBA Luncheon
 April 9 @ noon State of the District Luncheon
 April 9 @ 2:00 pm Open Door Hours with Chief Judge Jennemann (8th floor Attorney Conference Room—Courtroom 8A)
 February 26 @ noon Judge Mentoring Program @ USBC 5th Floor Training Room (Means Testing)
 April 25 @ 5:00 pm Annual 13th Circuit Pro Bono Awards Ceremony (Chester Ferguson Law Center (HCBA Bldg.)
 May 28 @ noon Judge Mentoring Program @ USBC 5th Floor Training Room (Topic TBA)
 August 27 @ noon Judge Mentoring Program @ USBC 5th Floor Training Room (Topic TBA)
 November 20 @ noon Judge Mentoring Program @ USBC 5th Floor Training Room (Topic TBA)

OTHER**IMPORTANT DATES**

June 26-29 Florida Bar Annual Convention at Boca Raton, FL
 BLES Board Meeting

**United States
Bankruptcy Court**

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Orlando, FL 32801

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**The Court Connection is
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October 15

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articles by January 1, April 1,
July 1, and October 1 to:**

Kim Osment

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[www.flmb.uscourts.gov **]**