2017 – A Year of Change
By: Sheryl Loesch, Clerk of Court

This is the time of year where people reflect over the events of the past year and then turn their attention to the future. Many of us wonder where the time went as the year seemed to pass quickly.

A couple years ago and quite by chance, I stumbled upon a blog written by Anuschka Rees, a woman from Berlin who customarily writes about fashion topics. Instead of blogging about fashion, Ms. Rees wrote an interesting feature on reflections at years' end and ways to think about the upcoming year. Instead of suggesting the typical New Year's resolutions frequently broken, she offers actual questions to use to "reflect and appreciate" the events of the past year, and to then "get excited" for the upcoming year.

While I will not list all the questions suggested by Ms. Rees (you can easily google her and find the list if you are so inclined), I would like to list a few I found valuable.

1. What new things did you discover about yourself?
2. What single achievement are you most proud of?
3. What was the best news you received?
4. Which of your personal qualities turned out to be the most helpful this year?
5. Which new skills did you learn?

Some questions suggested to use when looking toward the new year include:

1. What do you want to see, discover, explore?
2. What skills do you want to learn, improve, or master?
3. Which personal quality do you want to develop or strengthen?
4. Which habits do you want to change, cultivate, or get rid of?
5. What do you want to achieve career-wise?

While these are only a few of the questions suggested for personal reflection, you get the idea.

When I think back over this past year, I am amazed at the substantial changes that took place in our court. One exciting change was the rollout of The Source. This was the culmination of the herculean efforts of Judge Jennemann, Danielle Merola, Kim Osment, and Marco Equia, along with the members of the Procedures Committee, and the assistance of Raymond Waguespack and Christine Baker who assisted by reviewing the drafts. This initiative has captured the attention of other courts who are envious of having such a resource. We should each feel very proud to be part of such a dynamic court – I know I am! Kudos to all involved.

Earlier in 2017, our court said goodbye to its beloved Clerk of Court, Lee Ann Bennett, as she embarked upon a new career as the Deputy Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts – another proud moment for the Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida. This change was bittersweet as it was sad to see our friend and colleague leave the Middle District of Florida; however, how exciting to have someone in such a high level position in Washington who understands not only bankruptcy courts, but who also understands large bankruptcy courts and what they face each day. We are very happy for Lee Ann's achievement and know she is just a phone call or email away.

We are also saying goodbye to our beloved Judge May as he enters the new phase of life as a retiree. We are happy for him as he starts down this new path but we will miss him and hope he stays in touch and keeps us updated on his adventures.

While saying goodbye to Judge May, we also get to welcome Judge Colton as an official judge in the Middle District of Florida. This court has been so fortunate to have such wonderful judges. We truly are a court family.

When I think back over the past year, there are some things I will not miss – hurricanes and I-4 construction come to mind (although I know the I-4 construction will remain with us for years to come.)

I cannot believe that I have been your clerk for nine months. I want to thank each one of you for making me feel so welcome and for all your support of the judges and the clerk's office this past year. This is truly a great court. I wish each one of you Happy Holidays and all the best in the coming year. We will definitely make it another great one.