

## **Chief Justice Waller thanks Chancery Clerks for aiding Webster County**

February 13, 2013

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. on Feb. 12 praised public officials who came to the aid of Webster County. When a Jan. 17 fire heavily damaged the Webster County Courthouse in Walthall, officials from around the state reached out immediately to help.

In a brief address to the annual Chancery Court Clerks Statewide Seminar in Jackson, Chief Justice Waller paid special recognition to Webster County Chancery Clerk Russell S. Turner, who as clerk of the court and clerk to the Board of Supervisors has been involved in restoration and recovery efforts for county government services. He also recognized Webster County Circuit Clerk Deborah Hood Neal for her work in the aftermath of the fire.

Chief Justice Waller praised Hancock County Chancery Clerk Timothy A. Kellar, who went to Webster County four days after the fire to advise and assist local officials with recovery efforts. Kellar returned to Webster County Jan. 30 to spend three days working with Turner and the Webster County Board of Supervisors.

Kellar has first-hand experience in disaster recovery for county government. Hurricane Katrina devastated the Hancock County Courthouse, leaving records soaked and daylight shining through the roof, and damaged or destroyed most local government facilities.

Chief Justice Waller noted that Sunflower County Chancery Clerk Paula Sykes, president of the Mississippi Chancery Clerks Association, has worked with Webster County and clerks from across the state to provide assistance.

Other chancery clerks who were recognized for their helping hands are: Attala County Chancery Clerk Gerry Taylor, Carroll County Chancery Clerk Stanley Mullins, Choctaw County Chancery Clerk Steve Montgomery, Clay County Chancery Clerk Amy Berry, Lafayette County Chancery Clerk Sherry J. Wall, Leflore County Chancery Clerk Sam Abraham, Lowndes County Chancery Clerk Lisa Younger Neese, Madison County Chancery Clerk Arthur Johnston, Montgomery County Chancery Clerk Talmadge "Tee" Golding, Noxubee County Chancery Clerk Mary Ruth Shelton, and Rankin County Chancery Clerk Larry W. Swales.

Madison, Rankin and Lafayette counties and Mississippi State University provided computer equipment for various county offices, Turner said.

"It let us get up and going within a few days rather than waiting to have new equipment come in," Turner said. "I don't know how we could have been able to get up and going that quickly without the assistance."

Turner noted that many other clerks and public officials from around the state called to offer help. He expressed deep appreciation to all those who offered assistance.

Webster County government offices have temporarily moved to Eupora, sharing space with the Webster County Extension Service and the Webster County Justice Court.

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