

CaseNET: Different Does Mean Better!

CaseNET is the program we use to administer Chapter 13 bankruptcy. Our office has come a long way since January of 1998 when we converted from the old Wang computer to the client/server technology of today's CaseNET. Our primary focus of the database is to always have accurate financial data. Even more than that, the Information Systems team is committed to giving the users the best application to help them do their job in the easiest and most efficient manner. Here's what we've done recently and expect to do in the future.

CaseNET runs on an application called 4TH Dimension. Each user has an application called 4D Client on their computer while the server machine in the computer room runs an application called 4D Server. 4TH Dimension is created and supported by a company called 4D. The first week of February our office upgraded our 4D server and copies of 4D client to version 6.7 from version 6.0. This upgrade was critical because the company 4D would only continue to support its customers that use the latest version.

Cliff, the Programmer/Analyst from the Information Systems team worked tirelessly to guarantee that CaseNET would successfully run on the new version of 4TH Dimension. With everything in place, we conducted office-wide testing the week before the upgrade and it all came together. In addition, more speed increases have been experienced since the IS team dedicated a Saturday later in February to installing more memory on each user's Macintosh. With these efforts, we have noticed an increase in CaseNET's performance since the upgrade, especially with the use of the Print Letter module.

The current CaseNET release includes a new feature in the Print Letter Module that allows "batch processing" of form letters by importing a list of case numbers. The two jobs that will create a list of case numbers when they are run are:

- ★ Court Call: Export Items
- ★ §341 Meeting Check-In Sheet.

We are also changing some CaseNET jobs so that different users can run the same job simultaneously. Motions to Dismiss and Court Call Export are two of the jobs to be changed.

Did you know that this office is the only trusteeship in the country to use this software? Other trusteeships use software that is created and maintained by a large software vendor. The fact that we are the only CaseNET office has its advantages and disadvantages. One advantage is that we don't have to wait on hold to talk to a customer service representative in Memphis when we have a question about the software. We can just walk down the hall. A disadvantage is that we don't have standard trustee and financial reports that all the other trusteeships have. That means that the auditors who come annually to our office to check our books and management structure aren't familiar with our system. So to them, different doesn't necessarily mean better.

Likewise, some also feel our uniqueness in software limits the beneficial relations other trusteeships have experienced with their providers. True, we may be alone in the fact that we are the only trusteeship to use CaseNET, but our office is not alone in our development efforts with CaseNET. We too have a maintenance agreement with 4D that allows us to purchase upgrades and receive software support. This is a very important relationship that we maintain. In fact, Cliff is in contact with other software developers who design applications in 4TH Dimension as well.



CaseNET (continued from page 1)

And so, our network of support is large and just as beneficial as the next.

The power of CaseNET lies in its structure. Since the structure of the database is relational, you can find almost any information you are looking for. For example, Rosalind in the Claims Department came into my office just yesterday, worried that CaseNET had incorrectly allocated money to a claim in the "Non-scheduled secured claims" plan group.

We determined that an error had been made in loading a duplicate claim and that CaseNET had done the allocation correctly. To find out if there were any other claims on the system that might have incorrect allocations, we did a quick search. I first found all the confirmed cases. Then, I found the plan groups for those cases and searched within them for plan groups with labels containing "Non-scheduled" or "Debtor Responsible". Next, I found the claims that belonged to those plan groups and searched within that set to see if any had allocation dollars in them. There weren't any and Rosalind was amazed at how quickly I could conduct these searches to answer her question.

This example demonstrates that individuals can find information themselves without waiting for a programmer to write a program to look for it for them. The only burden is that one must do it themselves! There are some searches and reports that do need to be as simple to run as pressing a button like reporting to the U.S. Trustee and other

management. Others searches and reports are limited only by your imagination and the problem you are trying to solve at the moment.

What can we expect from CaseNET in the future? It is always a work in progress. Beginning March 19th, the managers are going to meet every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for an hour with Ms. Marshall and Information Services so that priorities for CaseNET development can be established.

I will put together an in-house web page so you can see the items on the priority list. We'll also put out an email address so you can request new features for CaseNET directly.

Some of the things we will be working on are dictated by the results of our annual audit conducted by Tans and McAfee. For example, we are required to put together a General Ledger program that will aid in the reconciliation of our bank accounts every month. Other things Cliff and I are currently working on include:

- ★ A job to allow post confirmation review of cases by teams.
- ★ A new reserve field at the claim level that stores money which is returned or unclaimed by the creditor.
- ★ Six new financial reports: Three to track cases and claims on hold and three to report on case and claim reserves.
- ★ Cash Flow module which handles all movement of money.

The Information Systems team is dedicated to providing its assistance in making our office function at the level it should and wants. CaseNET and its continued evolution is just one of the mechanisms we use to accomplish this. As always, each team member has been instrumental in the notable achievements so far this year and we hope to bring even more notes of advancements in the future.

Sandra Pillar

The Marshall Chronicles	
The Editorial Staff: Amanu Nwaomah, Cheryl Jones, Shanika Thomas, Santricia Teat, Karen Barron, Nicole Robertson, Joanne Coshonis, Robin Dirksen and Dave Latz	
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Corrections From Last Issue

On behalf of the Newsletter Committee, I would like to offer a formal retraction for the following errors:

In our February 2002 publication, the incorrect answer was listed in regards to question number 3. The correct answer was (A) Montgomery.

In addition, we failed to acknowledge the fact that Lavone Kizer-Merritt also purchased diapers for Agueda Orozco's baby.
Amanu Nwaomah

There is nothing wrong with making mistakes. Just don't respond with encores. — Unknown



Trustee Matters

Civil Enforcement Initiative

"The United States Trustee program has launched an initiative to more aggressively use existing civil enforcement methods to curb abuse of the bankruptcy system." At the Judges /Trustees liaison meeting which was held February 20th, 2002, Dean Harvalis

from our U.S. Trustee's office shared with all the Chapter 13 Trustees present our role and the U.S. Trustee's position on this matter. Please pay close attention to one of the priorities of the Civil Enforcement Initiative:

"Protecting consumer debtors, creditors, and others who are victimized by those who mislead or misinform debtors, make false representations in connection with a bankruptcy case, or otherwise abuse the bankruptcy process. Attorneys and bankruptcy petition preparers (non-attorneys who prepare bankruptcy documents for a fee) must engage in full disclosure, be free of conflicts of interest, and engaged in ethical practices. Enforcement measures include motions for sanctions, contempt of court, and disgorgement under 11USC §110 for misconduct by bankruptcy petition preparers."

Our staff will be trained on how to recognize when a petition preparer has completed a petition, yet the debtor's signature is the only signature which appears on the peti-

tion. Questions to the debtor will reveal if the debtor received assistance in preparing the petition and whether a fee was paid for those services. If we ascertain that the petition preparer has not engaged in full disclosure, then there are enforcement measures that can be taken. We will have an individual contact at the U. S. Trustee's office that will work with us on these matters. Not only do I want the staff to be able to recognize and identify this situation, but I also want the staff to properly document, investigate and follow through with the correct questions and the investigation. I will disseminate a questionnaire to all the hearing officers and the attorneys, which will serve as a guide and a format to use. If at all possible, the staff attorneys or the Trustee will conduct the §341 meetings where the debtor is representing himself or herself.

Please advise me of any unethical practice by an attorney, which affects the consumer debtors or creditors. Additionally, please identify and keep a note of those attorneys that are consistently late and/or those that do not attend the §341 meetings.

Restructuring of Areas

March 1st, 2002, marked my six-month anniversary with the Trusteeship. As promised, I have made a thorough assessment of our current operations. Now that the assessment is completed, there are some changes that need to be made in order to improve the workflow of the office. Additionally, processes and procedures will be streamlined in order to increase productivity and office efficiency. Other changes will take place gradually. The new organizational chart will be available at our monthly staff meeting on Friday, April 5th, 2002.

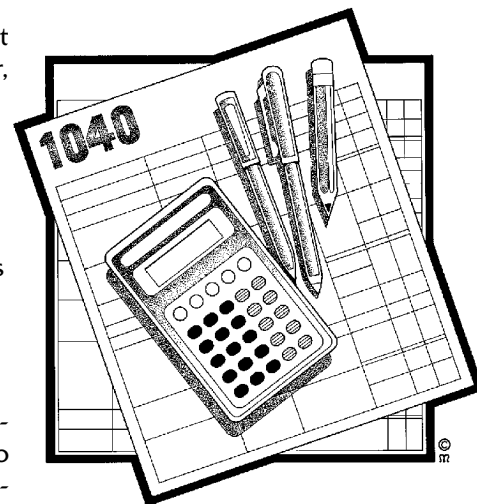
Marilyn O. Marshall

Are You Ready?

Do we really need to say it? File those taxes by April 15th! Now is the time to start gathering the information you will need to file your federal tax return. In particular, make sure you have:

- ✓ W-2 forms from all your employers
- ✓ 1099 forms from banks and brokerage houses
- ✓ Proof of alimony or unemployment compensation you have received
- ✓ Information on capital gains or losses if you sold stocks or other investments
- ✓ Mortgage and student loans interest paid
- ✓ Property taxes paid
- ✓ Charitable deductions

If you think you won't make the deadline, go to the IRS Web site (irs.gov) and download an extension request (form #4868), which will give you an extra four months to file. If you owe money and would like to set up a payment plan, download an installment agreement request (#9465) and send it in with your return.



Candidate Interviews

We have received three applications each for the open claims and confirmation positions.



The first phase of the selection process begins the week of March 18 with an initial screening interview with each applicant to determine whether each meets the general qualifications for the job. The Department supervisor and the Human Resources administrator will meet with applicants jointly. Following the interview, they will prepare a written evaluation of each applicant. The total score of the evaluation will determine which of those candidates will proceed to the second phase of the selection process—an interview with the Trustee. A favorable evaluation will be determined in part by the applicant's responses to the interview questions and their performance on the aptitude tests they will be given.

Shortly after the second phase of interviewing has been completed, the Trustee will announce if we have successfully identified the candidates who will be promoted to new positions or whether we will have to hire from outside the organization. The Human Resources administrator will keep candidates informed of their status during each step in the hiring process.

The candidates chosen for the positions will participate in future training sessions to ensure successful performance of their new tasks. Every effort will be made for a smooth transition to ensure that open positions are filled and that work is completed with minimal interruption.

We are committed to promoting from within whenever possible and thank all of the staff members who rose to the challenge. We wish all of you the best of luck in your careers.

Robin Dirksen

Walk & Roll

The 30th Anniversary American Cancer Society Walk & Roll will be Sunday, May 19th, 2002. Mark your calendar and join the Chapter 13 Trustee Team.

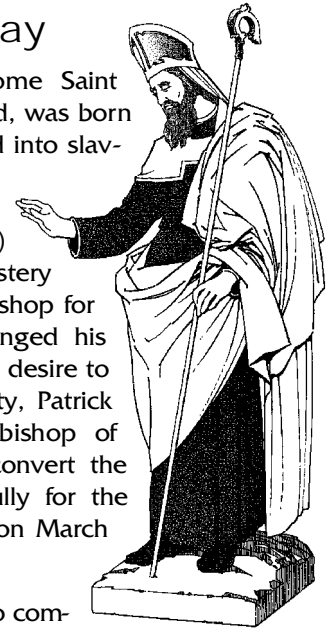
Our team coordinator is Juliana Jones, and assisting her is Shanika Thomas.

If you'd like information or need any sign-up or pledge forms, please contact one of them. T-Shirts will once again be distributed to those who have accumulated pledges of \$40.00 or more.



Saint Patrick's Day

The man who would become Saint Patrick, patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales about AD 385. Sold into slavery by Irish marauders who raided his village, Maewyn (as he was originally called) escaped and fled to a monastery where he studied under a bishop for the next 12 years and changed his name to Patrick. Realizing his desire to convert pagans to Christianity, Patrick was eventually appointed bishop of Ireland and proceeded to convert the island nation very successfully for the next 30 years. Patrick died on March 17, AD 461.



On this same date in 1962, to commemorate this great missionary of Catholicism, 100 pounds of green vegetable dye were dumped into the Chicago River.

Though deeply religious in its roots, St. Patrick's Day has become much more a secular party day in recent years. No matter what race, creed, color, or nationality, every one is Irish on St. Patrick's Day...if being Irish is wearing green clothing, painting shamrocks on your face, and drinking far too much green beer. So what happened to the revered status of March 17 that Irish immigrants brought across the Atlantic Ocean?

My guess is that it was lost in the melting pot of American culture. Rather than remaining the private celebration of a boisterous, fun-loving people, St. Patrick's Day has become a national celebration of good cheer, good company, and good riddance to bad troubles. But lest we Americans feel shamed by our slightly irreverent treatment of the patron saint of Ireland, let me assure you that the holiday is no longer wholly religious in Ireland either. Though still bearing the markings of the traditional Christian day of prayer, the parades, shamrocks, and green beer are provided for the tourists. In fact, it has turned out to be one of the most celebrated events in Ireland and a major tourist attraction.

So on March 17 feel free to wear green clothing. Feel free to watch the parades pass by and greet passing strangers with a choice Gaelic phrase. Feel free to celebrate Irish culture and go to mass if you're feeling religious. And feel free to sit down and make a new friend over a pint of fine Irish lager dyed green for St. Patrick's Day, a day to put differences aside and greet the world with a friendly smile.

Kyle Issleb with contributions from Eileen Kilkelly

CASE ADMINISTRATION – CLAIMS
Written Case Inquiries

Debtors, debtor’s attorneys, and creditors always need information for their respective cases. This information is obtained through phone services. However, there are some requests that are made by mail or fax. Did you know that Carlos Lagunas in our Claims Department handles these requests? Carlos generates a letter of explanation for the inquiries. The general response time is three to four business days.



Some of the most common inquiries include:

- ☞ Is the case confirmed? If not, the reason for the confirmation denial or the date of continuance?
- ☞ How much longer will the case be open?
- ☞ When specific creditors will be receiving money?
- ☞ Which creditors have been paid in full to date?
- ☞ Is the debtor current with plan payments?

With the constant updating and changing of our website capabilities along with the Bankruptcy Court’s website, the number of written inquiries has been reduced. However, there are still many of our clients who do not have access to the Internet and therefore continue to make requests in this fashion. Nevertheless, Carlos is always happy to serve and inform our bankruptcy community.

Carlos Lagunas

FINANCIAL – RECEIPTS
Tighter Controls

In the Receipts Department we are constantly working toward the development and implementation of more stringent audit controls. In order to increase the number of checks that go directly to our lockbox for processing and limit the number of checks that come through our door, we’ve recently put into practice a few changes.

For instance, our staff attorneys no longer accept payments in court. Debtors and debtor’s attorneys are given a pre-printed envelope with our lockbox address instead.

This greatly reduces the number of checks that come through our office. Less handling of checks provides us with tighter controls and limits our exposure to loss.

Nicole Robertson



FINANCIAL – DISBURSEMENTS
It Figures

The Financial Department has some interesting figures:

Our February Disbursements were \$2,952,698.38 and the Closing Team audited 143 cases.

Rita Saunders

CASE ADMINISTRATION – CONFIRMATION
New Procedure!

We are implementing a new procedure at the front desk for debtors checking in for their §341 meeting. Effective immediately Eileen Kilkelly, our Client Services Representative, will be asking debtors to hand her their Government or State issued ID, Social Security Card, and pay stub. Eileen will then make copies, place them in the file and hand the original documents back to the debtor.



This new process will not only insure that the debtor has the proper identification but will also help to facilitate a more expedient §341 meeting. These documents will also remain in our files for future reference.

Elva Valdivia-Lynch

LEGAL
What Is This
Nunc Pro Tunc
Stuff?

The Legal Department has been busy cleaning up old cases that are still open. We have been comparing our case statistics with the Clerk of the Court to reconcile what cases should be open and pending. We found that some cases were missing parts and that the Clerk could not close these cases. Many times orders were entered in open Court but did not make it to the case file. Even though these events happened years ago, the open docket needed to have some type of resolution.

In order to clean these cases up, we had to piece together the events of each and what parts/orders were missing. Motions were set to have the missing orders entered "nunc pro tunc." Black's Law Dictionary defines nunc pro tunc as simply "now for then." This action allows us to enter an order now that should have been entered in the past. The order relates back to that time and validates everything else that has happened since then. Through this process we have been able to clean up some outstanding cases, thus bringing us closer to reconciling our case load. We are planning to compare lists again in the near future, therefore you may see more of these motions cross your desk.

Now when someone asks "what is nunc pro tunc?" smile and tell them, now for then, silly.

Anthony Olivadoti



Just Food For Thought...

There are many childhood experiences that have no real bearing on one's adult life. However, there are those that do and should be reflected on from time to time. Did you ever play the telephone game? Were you the one who translated the message exactly word for word or were you the one who passed along some ridiculous distortion? Think about it...really.

If you find yourselves constantly in situations where your interpreted words never seem to match up with its true and factual occurrence, I suggest one of the following options:

Reflect back on the game winning techniques of the telephone game: stop, open your ears, and carefully listen

or

Stop trying to translate, you are obstructing the truth.

Tax Humor

Most people don't find doing their taxes particularly humorous. So here is a way to poke fun at all things related to taxes--forms, accountants, audits, and deductions!

If a lawyer and an IRS agent were both drowning, and you could only save one of them, would you go to lunch or read the paper?

What's the definition of an accountant? Someone who solves a problem you didn't know you had in a way you don't understand.

Why did the auditor cross the road? Because he looked in the file and that's what they did last year.

There are three kinds of accountants in the world. Those who can count and those who can't.

For every tax problem there is a solution which is straightforward, uncomplicated and wrong.

People who complain about paying their income tax can be divided into two types: men and women.

If you love something, set it free.

If it comes back, it will always be yours.

If it doesn't come back, it was never yours to begin with.

But...

If it just sits in your living room, messes up your stuff, eats your food, uses your telephone, takes your money, and doesn't appear to realize that you actually set it free in the first place, you either married it or gave birth to it.

Either of which is probably tax deductible.

Employee Bio: Tanto Hidyoningrat



Nickname: Hidy.

Birth date: February 2, 1975.

Birthplace: Bandung, Indonesia.

Family: Father, Mother, two

Brothers and one Sister.

Position: Payroll Specialist.

Years with the office: Three.

Favorite Food: Indonesian food, too many to mention.

Favorite Movie/TV program: The Simpsons/Dr. Strange Love.

Favorite Color: Navy Blue.

Favorite Expression: Bored out of my mind.

Favorite Smell: Milk chocolate.

Favorite Childhood memory: Hey, that's too personal.

If you could meet one person in the world dead or alive who would it be? One of the Prophets. No one in particular - Jesus, Muhammad or Budha, I have some serious questions to ask.

What's most important in life? Your opinion of yourself and how you deal with life.

Is the glass half full or half empty? Half full.

What's guaranteed to make you smile? A simple hello or hi from a loved one.

First thing you do in the morning when you wake? Go back to sleep.

My friends would describe me as: Outgoing and very, very, very liberal.

A perfect day for me would be: The alone version: staying inside my apartment all day with my laptop connected to the internet, playing PS2 and drinking beer with snacks close by.

Most embarrassing moment: Anytime someone gives me a compliment in public.

Proudest moment: When my eight month old nephew remembered who I was after not seeing me in weeks.

In 5 years I see myself: Finally getting my MBA and on my way to conquering the world.

April Birthdays, Service Anniversaries and Other Notable Dates



April Fools Day on April 1st.

Happy 2nd Anniversary to **Laura Mendoza** on April 3rd.

All Staff Meeting on April 5th.

Happy 9th Anniversary to **Dave Latz** on April 5th.

Happy Birthday to **Rosalind Lanier** on April 6th!

Daylight Savings Time Begins on April 7th.

Happy 3rd Anniversary to **Shanika Thomas** on April 12th.

Happy Birthday to **Angela Hope-Davis** on April 20th.

Happy Birthday to **Cliff Tarrance** on April 25th.

Congratulations & Celebrations

Congratulations are in order to Patti, our Disbursement Specialist, for being nominated as February's Employee of the Month. Patti has been employed with the Trustee's Office for a little over 11 years. Patti's dedication and hard work has not gone unnoticed. A few of the comments made by Patti's co-workers: "I can ask Patti a question at any given time and never feel like I'm bothering her", "Patti is so helpful", "Patti goes above and beyond the call of duty," "Patti is a kind and generous person." The list could go on and on but to sum it all up, Patti's recognition as Employee of the Month is well deserved. Congratulations Patti and keep up the good work!



Celebration time is in order! Our Trustee, Marilyn O. Marshall, reached her six month anniversary in March, 2002. Since Ms. Marshall's appointment to the Trusteeship, the office has undergone several positive changes. The Trustee has been actively involved in opening communication lines with the judges, debtor attorneys and debtors. Ms. Marshall has proven that she is committed to providing outstanding service to the bankruptcy community. Congratulations Trustee, Marilyn O. Marshall, for a job well done.

Are you a volunteer for the American Cancer Society? Have you achieved a life changing goal? If yes, then the Employee Recognition Committee is looking for you! We are in search of those people that have accomplished something exceptional and have gone beyond the call of duty. Chapter 13 Humanitarians please come forth. If you've done a humanitarian service or know of someone who has, please let the chairperson, Juliana Jones, know. Karen Barron

Guess Who? (Find the answers on page 8.)



This baby looks like she's already talking!



This baby started collecting toys very early on!



Patti shows off some of the treasures she received as our February Employee of the Month!

Way to go Patti!

Patti started working for the Office of the Chapter 13 Trustee on February 25th, 1991, and it's been wonderful watching Patti develop her skills and learn about the Chapter 13 arena.

She has been doing an exceptional job as a Disbursement Specialist. She has really risen to her challenging new responsibilities in the last 1 1/2 years. While training for her new disbursement responsibilities, she also trained Denise who joined our closing team last February and trained Mark on some of her old responsibilities. She also took her first college accounting course last semester.

It has been a pleasure working with someone who is dedicated to providing bankruptcy information, excellent customer service, and who assures that disbursements and refunds are accurate each month.

Her knowledge of closing cases has been transferred to Mark and Denise. She has provided many hours of training and has passed on her expertise in closing bankruptcy cases. She handles all her new responsibilities as Disbursement Specialist with the same dedication and zeal.

Patti has also learned to multi-task, to stop using post-it notes and has come to love her documentation time on Friday mornings.

I am grateful to have Patti as part of the Disbursement / Closing Team.

She has been a great co-worker, team member and wonderful friend to many of us here.

She also always provides scrumptious homemade goodies such as chili, sloppy joes and cheesecake for our staff.

Rita Saunders

Newsletter F Y I s

If you would like to contact us or submit ideas or articles for the newsletter, you can do so by:

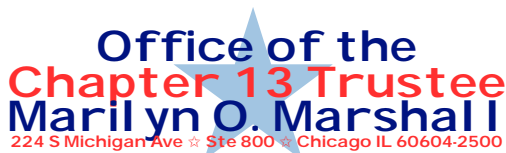
- ✓ e-mailing us at newsletter@chi13.com
- ✓ dropping your submission or idea in the anonymous newsletter folder located in the mail room, or
- ✓ leaving them with Amanu

Please remember when making a submission to the newsletter, it must be:

- ✓ type-written and
- ✓ submitted by the 3rd Wednesday of the month via e-mail, a Word document or an ASCII file.

We also ask that anyone who goes to a seminar please be prepared to furnish the committee with a detailed article on its subject.

You may also view this edition of the Chronicle and previous issues on the Chapter 13 Trustee website at <http://www.chicago13.com/>.



Directory Assistance Adds Up

There are two sets of telephone books in the office, consisting of the Chicago white and yellow pages. One is located on the Jackson side and one on the Michigan side. Additionally, there are web sites available for telephone, address and zip code look ups. If you need this type of information, please use these resources to find it.

Ameritech charges 95¢ for every information call (411, 555-1212 and National Directory Assistance) and 90¢ for every NameFinder Plus call.

Please use these services only as a last choice for finding your information.

Speak Your Mind!

Calling all those who are willing to take the challenge. Is there something that you think our readers could benefit from? Or is there just something you want to say? Well, here's your opportunity to let us know. Starting with next month's issue, we will be running an editorial section. Voice your opinion...we'll be waiting.

Those adorable babies are Shanika Thomas on the left and Dave Latz on the right! Did you guess correctly?

Guess Who Answers!