



From the Bench, Judge Larson’s view of the new Courtroom technology:

The courtrooms in the new Dickinson County Courthouse contain state-of-the-art technology that the citizens of Dickinson County can be proud of. Substantial planning went into the courtroom technology, including several meetings with the architects, meetings with technology providers, and trips to review existing state and federal courtrooms. As a result, Dickinson County now has very functional, user-friendly courtrooms to serve the citizens of Dickinson County now and well into the future.

A significant improvement in the new courtrooms is a multi-dimensional sound system. The witness stand, counsel tables and bench all have microphones that broadcast over an acoustically balanced speaker system, which includes three speakers dedicated solely to the jury box. Additionally, a wireless transmitter has been installed in each of the courtrooms that

allows for the use of headphones by persons with hearing impairments. For remote witnesses, the courthouse telephone system may be tied into the sound system, providing for telephone testimony to be heard through the courtroom speaker system. Additionally, a CD recorder has been linked to the sound system, which allows for live recording of all proceedings in the courtroom. For cases with media coverage, a press feed has been provided in the back of the courtroom, allowing television and radio reporters to link their systems directly to the courtroom sound system. The entire sound system can be controlled from the bench, providing the presiding judge with an additional level of control over the courtroom. The system even allows for the introduction of white noise into the jury box during brief bench conferences between the judge and attorneys, thereby eliminating the need to send the jury out of the courtroom while the attorneys are discussing evidentiary matters with the judge.

Internet connections have been provided at the counsel tables and the bench so that attorneys and the judge can access legal research materials during the course of a trial. Internet access in the courtroom also gives the attorneys the capability to communicate with their office during the trial, facilitating the scheduling of witnesses and the handling of other trial-related matters.

There are flat-screen monitors stationed at the bench, witness stand and court reporter’s desk. A large portable flat-screen monitor is also available and can be positioned for use by the jury during jury trials. The use of monitors allows the attorneys to present exhibits, videotaped depositions, pictures and Power Point presentations to the jury and presiding judge. Connections to the monitors are provided at the counsel tables and witness stand, which allow the attorneys and expert witnesses to connect their personal laptops into the courtroom system. Additionally, there is a large motorized drop-down screen available for projecting images through the use of an Elmo system or other overhead projection systems.

Planning for future technology has been provided through in-place conduit and raceways, which can be used to replace or supplement the existing technology wiring. An equipment room is positioned between the two jury courtrooms to allow for future technology needs, including flexibility to install a large rear projection monitor in the wall directly across from the jury box in each courtroom.

Courtroom security is provided by the Dickinson County Sheriff through the use of closed-circuit security cameras and a state-of-the-art security triangulation system for court personnel. In addition to monitoring capabilities, the security system also allows the sheriff to remotely control access doors to secure areas of the courthouse. A card system is used for access to secure areas, and every time a secure doorway is used, a computerized log automatically enters the time the door was opened and whose card was used to open it. The use of technology in the courtroom provides litigants with a powerful tool to efficiently present information during courtroom proceedings. The current technology installed in the Dickinson County courtrooms, together with the planning for future technology needs, ensures that Dickinson County will be well served both today and for years to come.

County Attorney, Rosalise Olson Reports: Last year was a very busy year for the Dickinson County Attorney’s office. The Third Judicial District Court Administrator added two District Court hearing dates per month to the docket. According to the Third Judicial Court of Iowa Annual Report, the number of cases the Dickinson County Attorney’s office handled in 2005 are as follows:

Charges Filed for Felonies:		Charges filed indictable misdemeanors:	
Sexual Assault	11	Domestic Abuse	43
Domestic Assault	4	Other Violent	19
Other Violent	16	Property	60
Property	1	Drugs	81
Drugs	32	OWI II	31
OWI 3 rd +	19	OWI I	141
Other Non-violent	<u>61</u>	Driver’s license Rev/Bar	23
Total Felonies:	144	Other non-violent	<u>25</u>
		Total Indictable Misd.:	423

Delinquency Complaints totaled 172

Along with a large number of criminal charges, the Department of Correctional Services is keeping convicted criminals a shorter period of time because of budget cuts and overcrowding concerns. The Department of Correctional Services reported the following statistics regarding the average length of time a person will spend in prison after conviction:

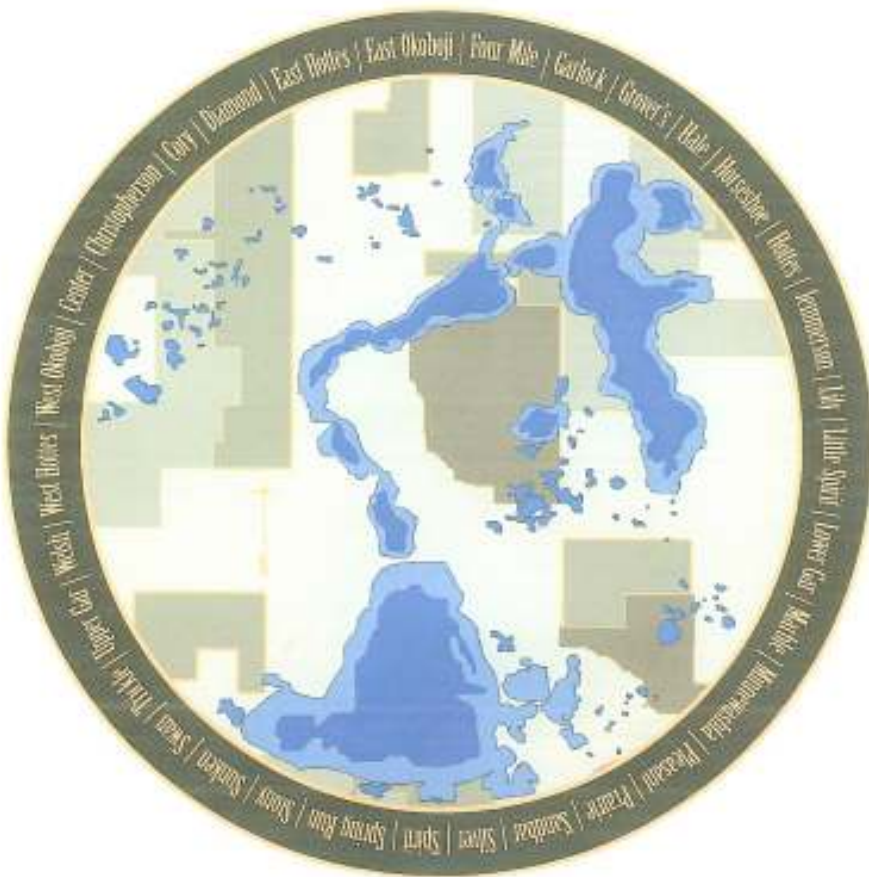
	<u>Average</u>
B Felony (50 yr sentence)	15 yrs
B Felony	5.38
C Felony (Mandatory 70%)	7.53
C Felony	2.8
D Felony	1.35

Rosalise ends the report by saying the County Attorney’s office is working fast and furiously to keep up with all of the activity.

Courthouse Construction: Pam, Paul, Wayne and Mardi attended the construction meeting on July 20, 2006. After the status of construction and various construction PRs were discussed, the list of outstanding issues in Phase I was passed out. The following are some of those issues and the status associated with them.

1. West main door lock continues to work and then not work – Accurate Control says this lock has had intermittent trouble since the beginning. They have checked and rechecked the controls and the controls have been working properly. They believe the problem is a hardware problem. This issue was given top priority at the construction meeting by all that attended.
2. East security door leading to the security hallway hasn't locked properly from the beginning. To date there are loose wires and no hardware. This was given top priority as well.
3. The C01PTZ camera has failed and is sent out for Warranty repairs. When it returned from being repaired, it was damaged in shipping. This also has become a top priority.
4. Those Supervisors present gave the nod for the go ahead to wrap the water lines from the Chiller with insulation. This will stop the condensation which is causing the water drips in the Clerks of Courts area.
5. Bathrooms – any and all bathrooms with a drain must have water run down them on a regular basis or they will dry up and allow sewer smell. The BOS will instruct maintenance to do this during cleaning.
6. Lack of hot water in the second floor bathrooms is caused by the distance the water has to flow from the hot water heater. These bathrooms are not used enough to keep the hot water at the sink. There are a couple of fixes but neither of them can be done until phase II construction.
7. Numerous keying issues were discussed. Roger will be contacting RDG to find out the design in relation to keys and swipe cards.

This is just the status of 7 of the 45 items on Courthouse list maintained by Beth Will. If you have issues related to the Phase I construction and you have not reported it to Beth, please do so as soon as possible..



Floor Medallions: This is the floor medallion proposed for the center of the building where Phase I and Phase II connect. The colors are not quite true in this newsletter. The blues represent all of the lakes in Dickinson County and each lake is named in golden brown around the edge of the circle. The grayish colors are really a variety of green tones representing the earth. The Board of Supervisors has not yet approved this version but has given the nod to the concept. The Board is also considering the strategic placement of floor squares in phase II with the names of each township written in them. The decision to go forward with these plans will come as the construction of Phase II moves along.

Time Capsule: The Board of Supervisors gave RDG the go ahead for a time capsule to be installed in the wall of the Tower. Each office can start thinking about what they might want to include in the capsule. Whatever it might be, it should not be any bigger than a # 10 envelope. Decisions on what will be included will come later and could be made by a committee charged with that responsibility.

Ferguson Buildings: The Board of Supervisors has been considering the options for the recently acquired Ferguson Buildings. To date the thought is to sell the east building and the quansite hut and use that space for temporary parking. The West building would be available for McHann to use for storage of materials. The BOS will be discussing this again at the 7-25-06 Board meeting.