

On the road

Few view court's visit to far-flung OCC campus

By Ralph R. Echtlnaw
staff writer

Judge Susan Moliseev looked over a sea of empty chairs last week and convened her "people's court" on Oakland Community College's Highland Lakes campus.

Fewer than 50 people showed up, never more than 10 at a time, to watch Molisev sentence three drunken drivers and conduct two examinations Wednesday in the student center building's auditorium.

As part of an agreement with OCC, four area district court judges took their courts on the road to OCC campuses at Auburn Hills, Orchard Ridge, Southfield and Highland Lakes last week.

Better attendance was reported at Orchard Ridge and Auburn Hills, according to Dr. Joseph Macri, director of public safety and dean at the Southfield campus. Orchard Ridge

had 150 in the audience at any one time and Auburn Hills had 100, Maceri said.

A session at the Royal Oak campus was canceled because officials couldn't round up enough cases to fill out the docket, OCC spokesman George Cartsonis said.

Molseev said Wednesday that it was nice to get away from her usual venue and "see the world. I think it's as much for me as for the people out there," gesturing to the auditorium's empty seats.

The judge hoped the drunken driving sentences might have a deterrent effect on whoever checked out the action.

It's also important, she said, that "the people understand the courts are there and accessible. This is my people's court."

However, many of the people involved in the five cases Molisev heard had difficulty finding the

Highland Lakes campus, located off Cooley Lake Road in Waterford Township.

For instance, Oakland County assistant prosecutor Lisa Green showed up 25 minutes late. "I got lost," she said. Green had the misfor-

tune to park on a portion of the campus from which a trek across a field was necessary to reach the student center. She said many attorneys refused to have their cases heard at Highland Lakes because it's "so far

Also getting lost were the court stenographer and OGC public safety

stenographer and OGC public safety officer Harry Sacha, who was embarrassed to stop and ask for directions while wearing a uniform.

LATHRUP VILLAGE POLICE officer Scott Konczal, who was to testify in a concealed weapon case, said upon arrival, "I never had this before. I looked at my subpoenas . . . Highland Lakes court! I can't believe it!"

Officer Sacha reported that one of the fellows charged with drunken driving also had difficulty finding the campus.

The four OCC public safety officers who guarded the "courtroom" seemed to enjoy the respite from their usual duties. "This is the premier event for us," Sgt. Carl Bryant

... (But) we thought the participation would have been a little better (here)."



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Judge Susan Moiseev (third from left) presided over a session of the 46th District Court last week at the Highland Lakes campus of Oakland Community College. Many of the participants had difficulty finding the campus.

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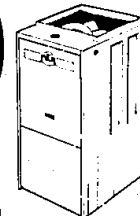
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