

NEWS RELEASE: July 2, 2009

Division 25 moves to Judicial Courts Facility July 6

Greene County's 31st Judicial Circuit, Division 25, moves into its permanent courtroom on the first floor of the Greene County Judicial Courts Facility Monday, July 6.

Since it opened April 6, Division 25 has temporarily held court in the Greene County Historic Courthouse Hearing Room, while a permanent courtroom was under construction. The new courtroom is one of two created out of the former Christian Greene Taney Prosecutors Regional Child Support Office, which relocated from the Judicial Courts Facility in February.

The second courtroom will house Greene County's new Family Court Commissioner, a position included in the Missouri State Budget recently approved by Gov. Jay Nixon. The Family Court Commissioner position is expected to be filled later this year.

The new courtrooms were constructed by the Greene County Building Operations Department for a total cost of \$40,000, funded by general revenue. Greene County Administrator Tim Smith said utilizing internal staff, rather than bidding the project out, saved significant taxpayer dollars.

"We built this in-house at bargain basement prices," said Smith, "We had a preliminary plan prepared, and initial estimates for a construction contract were at \$250,000."

Smith said much of the cost savings came from in-house carpentry on judges' benches, installation of wiring and the purchase of used church pews for courtroom seating.

Greene County Presiding Judge Dan Conklin established Division 25 by administrative order March 11 to accommodate visiting judges supplied by the Missouri Supreme Court through the Judicial Partnership Program. The program was established in response to the Supreme Court's October, 2007, Weighted Workload Study, which showed Greene County's 31st Circuit needed seven additional judges to manage the court's annual caseload.

Division 25 is staffed with a rotating roster of visiting judges from Missouri's judicial circuits. Cases heard in Division 25 are limited to associate civil suits for less than \$25,000, such as lawsuits, landlord-tenant disputes and small claims.

Court will be in session in the new Division 25 courtroom at 9 a.m. Monday. The new courtroom will be formally dedicated later this summer.

For more information, call Jerry Moyer, Greene County Courts Administrator, at 417-868-4899; or Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Greene County Public Information Officer, at 417-829-6019 or 417-379-5713.

** Media wishing to photograph or video the new courtrooms are advised to schedule an appointment today (Thursday, July 2) as the Judicial Courts Facility is closed Friday for the Independence Day holiday.

###