



STEPHANIE MINGO FRANKLIN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COURT JUDGE

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Stephanie Mingo, Judge of the Franklin County Environmental Court, was our speaker today. She has been the court's judge since 2019. The court itself was established in 1991. Interestingly, the Franklin County Environmental Court is the only one of its kind in the State of Ohio.

The Environmental Court focuses on housing issues and environmental crime. It is among the busiest of the courts in Franklin County. The court's typical monthly caseload hovers around 1,300 to 1,600 cases per month.

The court frequently deals with nuisance properties which may feature violations of housing, building, zoning or fire codes. With respect to felony-level environmental violations the Environmental Court shares jurisdiction with the Franklin County Common Pleas Court.

The majority of the court's cases originate in the City of Columbus but they are not exclusively from the city. The caseload handled by the court is the result of a complaint-driven system. Most cases take one to two years to cycle through the court. This is often due to common problems such as tracking down heirs to a property or finding other

parties who may have an interest in the property.

In many cases the City of Columbus will request an injunction to prohibit an owner from holding a property that is non-compliant with applicable codes. The court will often allow a 60-90 period for a property owner to bring the property into compliance.

Most cases are not the result of delinquent landlords. The majority are from situations where the owners do not have the resources to maintain the property. In those cases the court will attempt to find resources to help bring the property up to code. When COVID struck a number of those resources dried up and Judge Mingo is hoping that they will return in the future.

When crimes occur at properties around the community the properties are often referred to the Environmental Court as potential public nuisances. The court's ability to shut down such troubled properties is one area of significant positive impact to the community.

The court also handles environmental crimes such as illegal dumping, hazardous material handling and environmental waste dumping.

Animal-related cases such as abuse and neglect also come to the court.

In the case of abandoned or vacant properties which are boarded up the Environmental Court reacts by searching for the owner. If no owner can be found a court-appointed receiver works to bring the property up to code and arrange for its sale. Care is taken to sell the properties to new owners who

[CLICK HERE](#) to view this meeting and all previously recorded Rotary meetings

GREETERS

May 2

Cameron Box
Eric Stoll

May 9

Matt Kirby
Steve Turnbull

May 16

Michael Zieg
Ali Carine

REGISTRATION DESK

May 2

Jim Winfree
Rudy Whippis

May 9

Keith Schneider
John Cleland

May 16

Don Leach
Brian Bainbridge

CALENDAR

May 2- Scioto CC/Zoom

Erin Moody, Natun Guatemala
Host: Steve Sandbo

May 9- Raymond Memorial/
Zoom

Veeramani Kaaruppuchamy,
Food Sustainability
Host: Jack & Sandra Cotter

May 16- Scioto CC/Zoom

Roberta Winch, Ohio SBDC,
CSCC Director, Export
Assistance Network,
Ohio Export Programs
Host: Ralph Griffith

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Submit your volunteer opportunity to herb@herbgillien.com for inclusion in the Rotaryview Newsletter.

SOCIAL EVENTS

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OUR NEXT MEETING

MAY 2ND
Scioto Country Club/Zoom

Upper Arlington
Rotary
Club



STEPHANIE MINGO

FRANKLIN COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COURT JUDGE

are local and vetted to the greatest extent possible to avoid absentee owners whose interests don't align with local needs. Judge Mingo emphasized that no receiver is ever appointed for an owner-occupied house.

There is also the need to balance the perception that the Environmental Court is taking properties from people and ultimately promoting gentrification.

The Q&A session:

We learned that the court handles cases involving trucks which illegally transport hazardous material across prohibited roads and highways.

The Environmental Court has 7 total personnel. The staff includes 2 bailiffs, 3 environmental specialists and secretary and Judge Mingo.

THE MEETING



Club Vice President **Andy Livingston** filled in for **Milt Lustnauer** today. He asked John Ness to offer the invocation and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Tom Westfall introduced his guest **Bob Leboeuf**. There were no visiting Rotarians today.

Andy Livingston updated us on the activities of Buddy Up For Life. UA Rotary provided financial support to the organization (formerly known as Buddy Up Tennis) last year. The organization provides support for individuals with Down Syndrome. Since last year the organization has funded an apartment update and funded several classes including session on goal-setting, apartment maintenance and budgeting among others.

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:



Jack Cotter announced that the next Rotary Roundtable presentation on May 9 will feature Viru Karuppuchamy, from The Ohio State University College of Food, Agriculture & Environmental Science. The topic will be Agricultural Biotechnology and Food Sustainability. We will meet at 11 a.m. at Raymond Memorial Golf Course. We hope see you there.

Jaime Sisto proudly announced the arrival of his fifth grandson.

Bob Long asked for three UA Rotary volunteers to help at the District Assembly at Columbus State on Saturday, May 28. Let Bob know if you can help.

Chip Knoop announced a Bed Brigade build on Saturday, May 6. We'll need 8 to 10 Rotarians.

Steve Sandbo and **Dave McCurdy** will be leading a trip to Guatemala October 22-27. Steve also announced the next Night of Zacapa will be July 26. Steve's father, Doug, is recovering from a fall at his Florida condo.

Jessica Grisez, Upper Arlington Community Foundation, thanked UA Rotary for the \$75,000 commitment to help fund the multi-purpose gym at the new community center. In addition, the community funding drive has already raised over \$8.1 million.

Eric Stoll encouraged attendance at the Annual Fundraiser on May 23. He also urged all members to contribute an item for the fundraiser auction.

Chuck Manofsky thanked **Milt Lustnauer** and others involved in organizing the recent Pickleball social event. A good time was had by all.



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SORTING OUT WHERE TO CONTRIBUTE

Where do your contributions go? There are three main organizations where we as Upper Arlington Rotarians direct our Rotary giving. Sometimes it can be confusing, so here is something to hopefully help keep things straight.

ORGANIZATION	DONATION DESIGNATIONS	ADDRESS	MEMBER CONTACT	EMAIL
Upper Arlington Rotary Club	Club dues	P.O. Box 12013 Columbus, OH 43212	Peggy Concilla	plc@columbus.rr.com
Upper Arlington Rotary Foundation	Annual \$250 and some other club funding requests	1704 Sundridge Dr. Columbus, OH 43221	Andy Livingston	andy.w.livingston@gmail.com
Rotary International Foundation	\$125 Club, Paul Harris and Polio Plus	244 Daniel Burnham Sq. Columbus, OH 43215	Debbie Johnson	debbiejohnson33@gmail.com