

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Delaware Courts once again celebrate the season with reenactment of
the courtroom scene from *Miracle on 34th Street***

*For its 19th year, the reenactment returned to live performances
at the main county courthouses across the state.*

The Delaware Judiciary's annual holiday tradition of performing the courtroom scene from the holiday classic *Miracle on 34th Street* returned to live performances in courtrooms in all three of Delaware's counties last week.

The annual holiday tradition moved to online Zoom performances for elementary school students -- mirroring what was happening in actual court proceedings during 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.. But this year the shows were back in the courthouses, beginning with three performances in the Sussex County Courthouse in Georgetown in that building's historic Courtroom 1, on Dec. 13, 2022. This was followed by two performances at the Kent County Courthouse in Dover on Dec. 14, 2022, in that building's historic Courtroom 1, and concluding with three performances on Dec. 15 and three more on Dec. 16 in the Leonard L. Williams Justice Center in Wilmington in Courtroom 8B.

The show, featuring members of the Delaware Judiciary, the Delaware Bar and court staff (along with a few other volunteers), was created by Attorney Richard K. Herrmann in 2003, after his wife suggested to him, after seeing a live performance of *Miracle on 34th Street*, that it might be interesting to see the courtroom scene performed in an actual courtroom. Herrmann then reached an agreement with the copyright owners, 20th Century Fox, to stage the performances for school children between grades 3 and 5 and enlisted members of the legal community to participate.

This year some 1,300 students from public and private schools across the state attended one of the shows. The focus of the show is a hearing for a department store Santa who believes he is the real Santa Claus. Family Court Judge James McGiffin portrayed Kris Kringle and former Superior Court Judge M. Jane Brady – who has been a part of every show since its founding – played Kringle's defense attorney.

While the fanciful story comes from the movie, the courtroom procedures are the same ones that are used in Delaware courtrooms, giving the students who attend a lesson on courtroom procedure and how our legal system works.

Rounding out this year's cast, Elizabeth Soucek played the Attorney General in Sussex County, Tetra Shockley played the Attorney General in Kent County and Deputy Attorney General Kevin Carroll played the Attorney General in the New Castle County performances. Superior Court Judge Craig Karsnitz presided over the Sussex County performance, Retired Superior Court Judge William Witham, Jr. presided over the Kent County show and Superior Court President Judge Jan R. Jurden and Family Court Chief Judge Michael K. Newell divided the New Castle County performances.

The character of R.H. Macy was portrayed by Kathi Karsnitz in Georgetown, David Bever in Dover and by Pamela Brown in Wilmington. Rob Gibbs portrayed the psychologist in Georgetown and Dover and Victoria Lodge played the role in Wilmington. Sean O'Sullivan, the Delaware Judiciary's Chief of Community Relations portrayed the Postmaster General.

The prosecutor's daughter was portrayed by Claire Nagle in Sussex, Ivy Jackson in Dover, and Kaci Garber in Wilmington.

The Delaware Judiciary would also like to thank Susan Hadley, the records manager at the Wilmington law firm Morris James, who provided vital logistical support for the show.

Public, private, and parochial schools are invited to attend at the beginning of the school year and performances are then filled on a first-come, first-served basis. If your school would like to be on the invitation list next year, please send a message to Chief of Community Relations Sean O'Sullivan at Sean.O'Sullivan@delaware.gov requesting to be added to the invite list.