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Stellpflug, Janssen, Hammer, Kirschling & Bartels, S.C.

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Topic for the Month:

New Federal Court Division in Green Bay

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Honorable William C. Griesbach: Is the first appointed judge for the new U.S. District Court Division of Green Bay. This division is part of the Eastern District of Wisconsin. Prior to judge Griesbach's confirmation, there were two Federal Courthouses, one in Madison (Western District) and one in Milwaukee (Eastern District).

Judge Griesbach is well known in Brown County. He graduated with a B.A. degree from Marquette University, in 1976. Judge Griesbach attended law school at Marquette University, graduating in 1979. After graduation, judge Griesbach worked as a law clerk for the Honorable Bruce F. Beilfuss, of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. He then served as a staff attorney for two years at the United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit. In 1982, judge Griesbach entered the private practice of law, working at a Green Bay law firm, through 1987. From 1987 through 1995, judge Griesbach was an assistant district attorney in Brown County. From 1995 through 2002, judge Griesbach was a Brown County Circuit Court judge.



Process of Recommending and Confirming a New Federal Judge: The system for nominating and confirming a candidate for federal judgeship was put to the test in Wisconsin several years ago. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on judge Griesbach's nomination on April 11, 2002 and voted unanimously to approve his nomination on April 18, 2002. On April 25, 2002, the U.S. Senate voted unanimously to confirm William C. Griesbach as a federal judge for the Eastern District of Wisconsin in Green Bay, by a vote of 97 to 0. President Bush previously nominated judge Griesbach for Senate confirmation on January 23, 2002. The quick confirmation of judge Griesbach shows that Wisconsin's Federal Nominating Commission works well for Wisconsin citizens. This Commission dates back to 1979, when it was established by Senators Gaylord Nelson and William Proxmire.

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Statistics were used to Support the Addition of the Green Bay Division: According to a 1998 study conducted by the General Accounting Office, Wisconsin had 859,966 individuals per authorized judge. That ratio was the highest in the nation. By comparison, North Carolina, the second-highest in the study, had 665,715 individuals per judgeship. In addition, 30% of the Eastern District's filings originate from the northeastern part of the state.

The establishment of the Green Bay Division was the result of over 20 years of hard work by politicians, attorneys, judges and community members. In 1994, Senator Herb Kohl introduced legislation to create a federal judgeship in Green Bay. In 1999 Senators Kohl and Feingold co-sponsored legislation in the Senate, known as the Federal Judgeship for Northeastern Wisconsin Act of 1999. Representative Mark Green introduced identical legislation in the House of Representatives.

Counties Served by Green Bay Division: The new division serves the following 21 counties: Brown, Calumet, Dodge, Door, Florence, Fond du Lac, Forest, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago. The remaining counties are served by the Milwaukee Division: Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Walworth, Washington and Waukesha.

Temporary Courtroom Facilities: Judge Griesbach's temporary courtroom is located at 125 S. Jefferson St., Green Bay. Due to security considerations, criminal jury trials will be held at the Brown County Courthouse. A permanent federal courthouse site is anticipated within the next 5 years, pending federal funding. The first funding phase is the design phase, which will require an appropriations bill to fund the design phase. It is estimated that the cost of the design phase would be \$ 1.5 to \$ 2 million. According to a U.S. General Services Administration report, the construction phase would be for a permanent courthouse with 63,366 square feet in size. The construction cost would be approximately \$ 25 million. A permanent courthouse would house offices for judge Griesbach, U.S. Attorneys, U.S. Marshals, a part-time federal bankruptcy judge and U.S. Magistrate Judge.

