

For Immediate Release  
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**Liberty County Clerk of Courts Receives Superior Court Clerks'  
Association of Georgia's First Lifetime Achievement Award  
and  
2013 ÉCLAT Award**

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Liberty County's Clerk of Courts, F. Barry Wilkes, is the recipient of the first lifetime achievement award ever presented by the Superior Court Clerks' Association of Georgia to one of its members and the association's 2013 ÉCLAT Award.

The lifetime achievement award was conceived by Thomas C. Lawler, III, former Clerk of the Superior Court of Gwinnett County and president of the Council of Superior Court Clerks of Georgia. Lawler, who was longtime district attorney for the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit before being elected clerk of superior court, planned to present Wilkes the award in November 2011 during the fall Constitutional Officers of Georgia conference in Savannah but he was incapacitated and died that month from cancer.

"Receiving the first lifetime achievement award ever presented by the Superior Court Clerks' Association during its fifty-plus-year history is, in and of itself, one of the greatest honors ever bestowed upon me. It was bittersweet and what makes it even more special is that Tom, one of my best and closest friends and a superior court clerk who I respected greatly and held in utmost esteem, conceived the idea before his death and it is words that he penned describing why I am worthy of the award inscribed on the plaque that I received," Wilkes said.

The verbiage written by Lawler recognizes Wilkes for "more than 25 years of service, dedication, inspiration, and extraordinary leadership given to the Superior Court Clerks of Georgia, for the guidance which allowed his peers to excel in the areas of legislation, education, and technology and, most importantly, for providing to Superior Court Clerks of Georgia a special vision of the future that must only come from God-given talents you possess."

Presenting the award on October 9 during the association's fall business meeting in Savannah, Connie Cheatham, Clerk of the Superior Court of McDuffie County, told clerks of superior court, "There is very little in the 'clerk world' that Barry has not done or accomplished... One of his best attributes is his ability to see into the future, plan for it, and take action on those plans. One prime example is his participation in the creation and implementation of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority, which has proven to be one of our and the citizens' of Georgia greatest assets. Without his and others' foresight, most clerks' offices would not have the resources and technology they have today. He is a born leader who exemplifies exceptionalism, leadership, teamwork, commitment, and accomplishment."

In addition to the lifetime achievement award, Cheatham also presented Wilkes with the 2013 ÉCLAT Award, which the association confers only in a year when the award's selection committee determines a superior court clerk merits recognition for his or her accomplishment and achievement.

Wilkes, Cheatham said, earned the award this year for "recognizing the need to revise and modernize Title 15 of the Official Code of Georgia as it relates to the duties and responsibilities of superior court clerks. (He) took on the huge task of writing legislation to overhaul and modernize many provisions, which became House Bill 665. The bill was mammoth in scope. Many doubted it would ever pass. There was a lot of opposition from others in the judiciary and state and local government to some provisions in the bill. However, Barry does not know the word 'can't.' After a long and hard battle, the bill passed during the 2012 legislative session. His tenacity, ability to plan for the future, and follow through on those plans has proved to be a true blessing for us all, time and time again and against all odds."

She said that Wilkes was very instrumental in creation of the Superior Court Clerks' Benevolent Fund, which was established under the auspices of the association to help clerks of superior court, their families, and others in who have suffered severe injury, disability, or catastrophic loss resulting in great hardship. The fund is endowed solely from charitable gifts.

Wilkes is currently serving his eight, four-year term of office as the elected clerk and court administrator of the superior court of Liberty County. He also serves as clerk and administrator of the counties' state, juvenile, and magistrate courts. He is the chairperson of the Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Cooperative Authority, the state entity that provides online access to real estate and personal property documents (deeds, liens, and plats) filed in superior court clerks' offices in the 159 counties of the state (visit [www.gsccca.org](http://www.gsccca.org) for more information).

For more information about Wilkes and his accomplishments, go to [www.libertyco.com](http://www.libertyco.com), the official website of the Office of the Clerk of Courts of Liberty County, and view [www.libertyco.com/info/BWilkes.html](http://www.libertyco.com/info/BWilkes.html).

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