

Judge-elect gets schooling for new job

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

For Marla Parker, newly elected judge for the 47th District, it's back to school this week for a refresher.

Parker is spending the week with other newly elected judges in a special class covering everything from criminal law to "the art of judging." The class is run by the Michigan Judicial Institute and features expert presenters to bring judges up to speed on court procedures and refresh them on laws they may not have worked with since law school.

Parker, who served as a magistrate for more than three years, said she will have an advantage over many in "the Class of '92" who have other backgrounds, including corporate attorneys who have never been in court.

"That is the one thing that many of my new colleagues won't have — experience running a courtroom," she said. "I feel very comfortable with being a judge, because I've done many of the things a judge must do. I know the court (47th District) and I'm familiar with the court staff." Tom Farrell, public information officer with the Michigan Supreme Court, said the institute is especially helpful to those new judges with little or no courtroom experience.

"The legislature created the institute because many judges and court staff did not have the experience," Farrell said. "In most cases, it's the first time they'll be sitting on the other side of the bench."

The institute is not only for new judges. It operates from September to June, like many other schools, but employs an

adjunct staff of judges, law professors and other professionals who serve as "presenters" during the sessions. Even officials from correctional institutions explain what judges can expect when they sentence criminals, Farrell said.

Four teams teach at any given time at the institute, said program assistant Linda Tarrant. One team teaches judges; one teaches court administration and magistrates; one teaches court staff, she said.

"The legislature budgets for the institute," Tarrant said. "Meals, lodging and materials are all paid for by the state."

Parker, 37, defeated Jack McDonald for the post vacated by retiring Judge Margaret Schaeffer. She has been in practice for 12 years since graduating from Wayne State University Law School. Parker said she has been sending clients to other attorneys over the past year to prepare for her full-time job on the bench.

"I have everything pretty well wrapped up," she said.

Parker's course concludes Friday, to be followed at a Sheraton Inn near Lansing. Topics of the seminar include: transition to the bench, Michigan rules of evidence, judicial ethics and conduct, court administration, small claims and traffic adjudication, sentencing procedures, criminal pretrial issues, evidence ruling workshop, landlord tenant issues, fairness in the courts, fact finding, and trial process and decision making.

She will be sworn in as judge at a public ceremony at the Farmington Hills City Hall at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 13.

Student from page 1A

Craig described the unidentified student as a violent individual, who had a history of such behavior.

Reports indicated that was the student's second suspension. Police also filed a petition for aggravated assault in Oakland County Probate Court.

Craig also contends the school instituted a procedure for monitoring hallways, but the hallway

where the incident occurred was not monitored that day.

"That's grossly negligent in my opinion," he said.

Schools Building and Student Services director Don Cowan said it would be premature to comment on the suit since it hasn't been filed.

He added such suits are usually turned over to an insurance company, which provides legal counsel.

Joanne LaFlour, who is a consultant with Livonia Clarenceville Schools, has been outspoken in calling for an end to the violence in schools since the Dec. 8 incident.

She said she'd like to see 911 be called in an emergency and a violence prevention program put into place. She added she contacted Cowan initially about her concern.

LaFlour has opted for a lawsuit to attract school officials' attention.

"I don't want this to be swept under the rug," she said.

Kenneth LaFlour is back in school. His mother said further testing will be done to check for any further damage as a result of the head injury. She adds he's had some memory loss, but otherwise is doing OK.

Ice rink from page 1A

hockey in Redford Township. "I think it's a disadvantage to these kids."

Picard sees a lot of kids as well as adults in the sporting goods store he's operated for two years on Grand River Avenue.

Along with hockey gear, skates and sticks, there are trading cards and several pieces of memorabilia on display. Several Red Wings such as Bob Probert, Steve Yzerman and Sergei Fedorov have visited and signed autographs.

Jerseys with Picard's name on the back hang from the ceiling. Those are not for sale, remnants of a 13-year career that included stops in Washington, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Quebec and Detroit.

One youngster responds with a "Wow," when he matches Picard's hockey cards on display with the face behind the counter.

"When you (make the) transition from hockey to normal life, it's not easy," said Picard, who retired during the 1990-91 Red

Wings training camp as a result of a recurring ankle injury. "A lot of guys it takes a little longer to adjust."

"It was tough for the first few months. But it's tougher on the family. They're used to you going away for a while. Now I'm home 365 days of the year."

Home has been Farmington Hills, where Picard, wife and two children have lived since his retirement. He likes the schools and the community, which Picard

said supports local businesses.

Picard's one of several former professional athletes who play here and later live here. The people are down-to-earth and friendly, especially those who come into Robert Picard Sports.

"I've had the same customers since I opened," he said. "If I tell them something is good for their son — they'll believe me because I played the game. I have that edge of having played and knowing the equipment."

Jail from page 1A

"At no time did Mr. Adams assault him (the agent) with a weapon," Crawford said.

Adams did flee agents, but that was because they failed to identify themselves adequately as police officers, Crawford said.

"With the current climate of criminals identifying themselves as police officers, I think you can understand why my client fled when they didn't properly identify themselves."

Crawford said the \$10,000 in

cash seized in the raid on Adams' Farmington Hills house was not an unusual amount of money considering his client's business. Adams owns the Palace Hair Salon on Harper in Detroit.

"He's the owner of a substantial business with 42 employees," Crawford said.

Donohue said two of three other men charged in the incident, Lou-

is Holmes and his nephew Gregory Holmes, both of Detroit, had not been arraigned as of Tuesday. Albert Johnston, also of Detroit, faces drug charges as well.


Charging the two, and giving them time to retain attorneys and go over their defense will take time, and likely mean a delay, Donohue said.

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