

Circuit court campaign

Kramer would like magistrates

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Albert Kramer, a former state representative, with a bustling private practice in Detroit and Southfield, wants to become a judge.

Kramer, who served in Lansing from 1964 to 1970, is aiming for one of three new Oakland Circuit Court seats.

The 56-year-old Kramer, like a number of other circuit court challengers, suggests a number of fundamental changes in the operation and administration of the court. These he said, would result in more efficient handling of civil cases and backlogged criminal dockets.

A lawyer of 29 years with a sometimes jovial face, Kramer said he would like to set up separate dockets and make each judge responsible for those cases. Presently, dockets are handled centrally.

He said he would like to see a magistrate system initiated to handle the courts more "mundane" proceedings.

He said he'd like to see trials run uninterrupted and would suggest that Oakland's traditional "motion day"—Wednesday—be moved to Friday to allow four days of uninterrupted trial time and avoid "cutting the week to ribbons."

SPEAKING in favor of a magistrates program in an interview last week, Kramer said: "I'm not going to



ALBERT KRAMER:
Don't waste legal talent

waste a lot of good legal talent and time on some very mundane motions and hearings.

"I intend to take the more mundane things and give them the treatment they deserve."

Among those proceedings to be handled by a magistrate program would be many of the routine divorce cases which come before Oakland's 11 circuit judges. Magistrates would be able to approve mutually-acceptable settlements and many of the time-con-

suming motions which must now be heard by the judges.

Because the "present system just doesn't seem to be working," Kramer also suggested creation of a special family court to handle certain domestic and juvenile matters.

LIKE OTHER candidates, Kramer said he would do away with "the cattle call" in his court. The term describes the practice of a judge calling up a large number of criminal cases for trial on one day even though only a few trials will actually get started.

Attorneys are particularly critical of the practice because it requires that they and their witnesses be prepared to go to trial even though it is highly likely that they will not.

"I don't intend to call hundreds of lawyers to come to my courtroom at 9 a.m. in the morning one day.

"I'll space 'em out," he said.

AS FOR FORSAKING his thriving private practice for a \$50,000-a-year circuit court seat, Kramer said becoming a judge has always been a professional objective.

"A judgeship is a certain pinnacle of the lawyer's profession. Any professional wants to assure that kind of position.

"That's why people like doctors aspire to becoming chiefs of staff."

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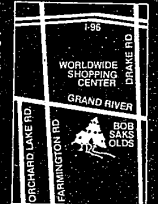
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