

THE COURTS:

INCUMBENTS RARELY CHALLENGED

With the exception of the State Supreme Court, this wasn't the year to challenge judicial candidates. Most incumbent judges are unopposed.

Here are thumbnail sketches of the candidates in contested races, along with how they were rated by Civic Searchlight, Inc. and the Oakland Citizens League. "PWQ" means preferred and well qualified; "WQ", well qualified; and "Q", qualified.

STATE SUPREME COURT

Michigan's Supreme Court, the state's highest, is technically non-partisan, but in practice candidates must be nominated by political parties. At present, Democrats hold a 6-1 edge.

Democrats nominated Wayne County Circuit Judge Horace Gilmore, a jurist and author who supervises training of new judges, and Robert Evans, a judge of Recorder's Court in Detroit and the only black running for the high court.

Republicans picked Mary Coleman, a Calhoun County probate judge, chairman of the state probate judges association and the first woman nominated for the high court; and James S. Thorburn, an Oakland County circuit judge.

Two candidates formed their own independent for the sole purpose of running for the high court. They are Appeals Judges Vincent J. Brennan and Charles L. Levin.

Zoltan Ferency, former state Democratic chairman and now a

Michigan State University law professor, is the Human Rights Party candidate.

Oakland Circuit Judge William John Beer, who once had his eye on a Democratic nomination, was nominated by the American Independent Party.

The only local resident running for the Supreme Court is William A. Ortman, who has served two terms on the Wood Creek Farm's village council.

COURT OF APPEALS

Nine judges serve on the second highest court. Three are elected for six year terms every two years. Three judges come from each of three districts. Wayne County constitutes one district; Oakland and mid-state counties are a second; the outlying counties the third.

In the Wayne County district, incumbent Appeals Judge T. John Lesinski is unopposed.

In the district including Oakland County, incumbent Appeals Judge Timothy C. Quinn is unopposed.

OAKLAND CIRCUIT JUDGE

One judge is unopposed to fill a vacancy, and three others are unopposed for new six-year terms.

There are two new vacancies, however, and a hot contest has developed between four candidates.

Alice L. Gilbert (PWQ), 40, a district judge in Birmingham.

Richard D. Kuhn (PWQ), 43, Pontiac, a former Constitutional

Convention delegate and conservative Republican leader.

John N. O'Brien, 43, Berkley, a former assistant Oakland County prosecutor.

Julian A. Cook Jr., 42, Oak Park, former chairman of the State Civil Rights Commission.

Circuit court handles civil cases involving \$10,000 or more and all felony (criminal) cases. It also hears appeals from district courts.

OAKLAND PROBATE JUDGE

A spirited contest with partisan overtones has developed between two men seeking one six-year post. You may vote for one.

Incumbent Judge Donald E. Adams (PWQ), 60, of Pontiac, has been on the bench 11 years.

Barry M. Grant, 36, of Southfield, is a former school board member and assistant county prosecutor.

Probate court handles estates, wills, appointment of guardians for minors, adoptions and juvenile delinquencies. A probate judge also has certain powers in political appointments-- which is why Republicans are strongly backing Grant.

DISTRICT JUDGES

Farmington District Judge Michael J. Hand is unopposed for a new four-year term.

In Southfield, Mayor Norman Feder is unopposed in seeking a newly created judgeship.

There is a two-man contest in another Southfield District Court seat. Incumbent Judge James Clarkson



(PWQ), 47, a former mayor and state representative, is being challenged by Sol E. Goldberg, 44, a local attorney.

WAYNE CIRCUIT JUDGE

Nine incumbent circuit judges are unopposed for new six-year terms.

There are two contests for the Wayne circuit bench:

• For a new six-year term, Thomas J. Brennan (WQ) faces W. Leo Cahalan (Q). Brennan, 50, of Dearborn, is a member of the State Board of Education and former member of the State Employment Security Commission Appeals Board. Cahalan, 41, of Grosse Ile, is an assistant Wayne County prosecuting attorney.

• For a vacancy ending in 1974, John R. Kirwan (PWQ) faces John J. McCann (Q). Kirwan, 45, of Detroit, is a judge of Recorder's Court (traffic division). McCann, 43, of Livonia, is a Wayne County commissioner.

WAYNE PROBATE JUDGE

Three incumbent judges are unopposed--George Bashara, Ernest Boehm and Ira Kaufman.

DISTRICT JUDGES

In Redford Township, Judge Robert Brang (WQ), 52, is finishing his first term. He is being challenged by Paul W. Harty (WQ), 55, a former member of the zoning appeals board of the township.

Livonia's Judge James Mies is unopposed.

Judge Dunbar Davis is unopposed in the 35th judicial district, which covers Plymouth, Northville and Canton.

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