

Mrs. Shapiro challenges in 46th District court

(Editor's note—The 46th District Court includes Southfield, Lathrup Village, Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin. Salary for the judge is \$33,300.)

SOUTHFIELD—"Equal protection under the law is a hollow phrase without greater community involvement with the local court."

That's the contention of Regina Shapiro, a 41-year-old attorney and political novice, who is the first woman to vie for a judgeship in Southfield's 46th District Court. She will challenge incumbent Judge Clarence Reid Jr. in the November election.

Judges are elected by the people, and they're obliged to inform the public how it can best be served by the court," she said.

One example that points up the need for community involvement in



the judicial system, is that 75 percent of the citizens I've talked with never heard of the small claims division of the court.

"This is where claims up to \$300 are adjudicated by two parties without the expense of hiring a lawyer. I

would inform the public on how to use this unique court and urge the legislature to increase the claim limit to \$1,000."

MRS. SHAPIRO said she objects to judges having unlisted phone numbers and not making themselves available. If she's elected, she said she plans to have a "hot line" telephone system installed in her home so she can be reached seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

"I don't feel defendants should sit in jail for hours waiting for a judge to come and arraign them," she asserted. "That's a deprivation for the constitutional right to freedom until proven guilty."

Mrs. Shapiro said she would also hold night court on a regular basis. "Too many minor traffic tickets are paid by offenders who would rather have a court hearing but can't afford

to take a day off from work.

"Win or lose, there's no greater satisfaction than having your day in court and telling your side of the story."

Mrs. Shapiro said a judge's job doesn't begin and end on the bench. As an elected official and a concerned citizen, she vowed she would participate in and encourage crime prevention programs.

Mrs. Shapiro said she's aware many voters pull levers for "name candidates," but she's opposed to the concept of appointing, rather than electing, judges.

"Appointments would be politically oriented," she said. "I do feel that candidates should be screened by lawyers' associations and rated according to qualifications. The public should be better informed and more candidates' rallies should be held. In a democ-

cracy, the right to vote is what our country is all about."

Mrs. Shapiro said she favors the proposed state financing of local courts for uniform control and supports the probation system for first offenders, including the volunteer program. She said she has been asked repeatedly why she is running for judge when she's a wife and a mother.

"I THINK this is the greatest time in history for women to run for judicial positions," she said. "The public is ready to accept qualified women and let discrimination go down the drain. I believe there should be a proportionate number of women and men on the court bench."

Mrs. Shapiro, a 1958 graduate of Wayne State University school of law, has been an attorney for 16 years. She maintains a trial and appellate prac-

tice in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties and has been associated with the law firm of Sommers, Schwartz, Silver, Schwarz, Tyler and Gordon. Mrs. Shapiro, her husband, Abba, and their two daughters Susan, 14, and Debra, 10, have lived in Southfield for 10 years.

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Incumbent Judge Reid running on his record

SOUTHFIELD—Judge Clarence Reid Jr. found out 17 years ago that there's a big difference between sitting on a court bench and the private practice of law.

The 47-year-old presiding judge of Southfield's 46th District Court is seeking re-election to a second six-year term. He started his career as justice of the peace in 1957 when Southfield was a township.

"A practicing attorney may handle only one type of case," he remarked. "When you're sitting on the bench, you hear all aspects and you learn to apply the law to an infinite variety of cases."

Reid considers himself a strict constructionist who follows the Constitution to the letter.

"I interpret the law; I don't write it. You can't overrule the Supreme Court."

Reid said he has mixed emotions about the issue of appointing, rather than electing, judges.

"IF THE law is changed, naturally I'll go along with it," he said. "I believe the right to vote is important and if the appointive system is good

for judges, it should be applied to other elective offices.

"I would favor appointments if the governor looked to the circuit or appeals court to elevate judges to higher positions. But to select someone out of the system with no experience is nothing more than a popularity contest."

Reid concedes that the electorate votes for "name" candidates and many don't bother to vote for judges at all. In the primary, he said, of the 13,000 who voted in Southfield, 10,000 pulled levers for district judge.

IN RESPONSE to his challenger's criticism of judges having unlisted telephone numbers, Reid said he has given his number to police officers, and they're authorized to give it to attorneys and bondsmen.

"I don't believe defendants should wait in jail for hours to be arraigned," he said. "I've held arraignments on Sundays and holidays, and the judges hold court every Saturday on a rotating basis to handle lock-up cases."

"We've held night court for the Village of Franklin for six years, and if we find the need, we'll consider the same for Southfield. But it's impor-

tant to realize that night hours involve judges, city attorneys, defendants and defense attorneys, prosecuting attorneys, police officers, court officers and court reporters.

REID SAID he sees the need for more judges in the future as more police officers are put on the road and crime increases along with the population.

He believes state financing of courts will become law and views it as a step in the right direction.

Reid is chairman of the traffic law committee of the State Bar of Michigan and a member of the ad hoc committee of the Michigan District Judges' Association dealing with revisions in the criminal justice system.

He is a graduate of Detroit College of Law and National College of State Trial Judges at the University of Nevada. He served as municipal judge of Southfield from 1958-1959 and was elected district judge in 1969.

He is past president of the Oakland County District Judges Association, Southfield Kiwanis Club and the local PTA. He has been a Southfield resident for 19 years and has three children.

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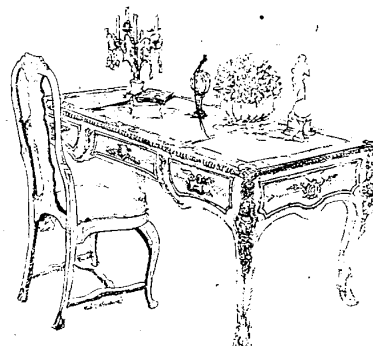
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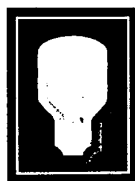
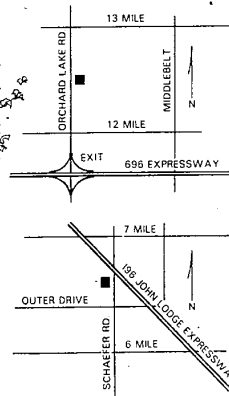
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