Courtroom scramble

Gage misses high court seat, may get another

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Part of the fun in the aftermath of an election is speculation about who will fill vacancies created by the outcome.

One scenario includes Oakland Circuit Judge Hilda R. Gage who ran a vigorous but unsuccessful race for the Michigan Supreme Court.

Uncertified figures from Michigan election officials indicate that Gage finished third — behind winners James H. Brickley, an incumbent justice from Traverse City, and Marilyn J. Kelly, a court of appeals judge from Bloomfield Hills.

Gage garnered 964,145 votes and lost to Brickley, the top vote getter, who received 1,331,554 votes and Kelly, the runner-up, who received 1,099,391.

Gage finished ahead of fourth place finisher, William B. Murphy , an appeals court judge from East Grand Rapids, who pulled 881,027 votes.

The story doesn't necessarily end with Gage losing, according to rampant speculation.

Kelly's winning a seat on the high court creates a vacancy on the Court of Appeals, a seat to be filled by Gov. John M. Engler, who supported Gage in her bid for the supreme court.

Gage Friday said she has thought about the Court of Appeals, but hasn't decided whether she would be interested.

Asked if she had discussed the possibility with Engler, the judge answered, "I can't answer that."

A political insider, however, said that's a "distinct possibility.

"Since the governor supported Judge Gage for the state's highest court," said the insider, who preferred not to be identified. "It's logical he would support her for the court of appeals. And, since it's his (the governor's) appointment . . . ."

The ripple effect doesn't stop there.

The appointment of Gage to the court of appeals would create a vacancy on the Oakland Circuit Court — a vacancy that will also be filled by the governor.

"I've had a lot of people call me to say they'd like to be a judge," said the insider, an attorney and court observer. "They think Gage will be appointed, and the vacancy will open up here."

While several names are bantered about as possible successors to Gage, one stirs an immediate reaction — that of outgoing Oakland prosecutor Richard Thompson.

Thompson was defeated in the Republican primary and is leaving after more than two decades with the office — 15 years as chief assistant under L. Brooks Patterson and eight years as prosecutor.

Thompson would not necessarily be on everyone's short list for appointment to the Oakland Circuit Court, according to the political insider, who said the incumbent prosecutor created too many enemies and became too controversial in what was scene as his heavy-handed prosecution of Dr. Jack Kevorkian

Holiday Connection program helps families meet needs

For the sixth consecutive year, United Way Community Services' Tel-Help service will offer the Holiday Connection program from Thanksgiving until Dec. 31. Holiday Connection serves as a clearinghouse to meet the special needs of the tri-county area that emerge during the holiday season:

•referring families in need to human service agencies

•linking individuals, families or groups who wish to donate time with volunteer opportunities

•matching financial or other resources with agencies serving families with similar needs.

"The demand for resources continues to increase each year," said Virgil H. Carr, president and CEO, United Way Community Services. "Of the more than 800 calls that Holiday Connection received in 1995, less than five percent were from businesses and families wishing to donate goods or financial resources. Because the need for services has been greater than the resources available, agencies and groups often can't meet all the requests."

Holiday Connection will match the people with special holiday needs, with the human service agency that can provide them the necessary services. This year a Holiday Connection Wish List was developed, with requests from human service groups during the holiday season as well as some of their year-round needs. The wish list is a tool for companies, service and church groups, families and individuals interested in donating items or volunteering, to the agencies or group in need of resources.

Help ensure a brighter holiday for individuals and families in the tri-county area by volunteering time or donating money or other resources to the Holiday Connection. If you or someone you know wants to lend a hand - or needs a hand - call the Holiday Connection at (313) 226-9888 or 1-800-552-1183 from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

OAKLAND KALEIDOSCOPE

Oakland Kaleidoscope is a roundup of Oakland County news and notes collected from government, school, civic, community and neighborhood sources. Write: Oakland Kaleidoscope, c/o Oakland County editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Our fax number is (810) 644-1314.

FOSTER FAMILIES

Every day, children are left without a home due to neglect, abandonment or abuse. The Detroit-based Methodist Children's Home Society is seeking foster families in **Oakland County** for these children ages infant to 14. Open your heart. Open your home. Become a foster parent. For details, call Joyce Newsom at (313) 531-4155.

MRS. OAKLAND

Applications are being accepted for the title of Mrs. **Oakland County**, preliminary title to the Mrs. Michigan International Pageant, to be held on April 20, 1997, at the Smith Theatre, Oakland Community College, **Farmington Hills**. The pageant strives to recognize today's married woman's role as wife, mother, professional and civic or charitable volunteer, as well as her accomplishments. Mrs. Oakland County will receive an official title and sash. Mrs. Michigan International will be awarded an all-expense paid trip to Texas to compete for the title of Mrs. International, prizes and cash. For application information, write Michigan Pageants, Inc., 2474 Pontiac Drive, **Sylvan Lake**, MI 48320. Or call (810) 682-7616, or fax to (810) 682-9221.

LECTURE SERIES

The Brown Bag Lecture Series travels to the time of the stagecoach during a presentation by historian Barbara Young from noon to 1 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 21, in the auditorium of the Oakland County Information Technology building. Young will lecture on the stagecoach inns, taverns and hotels of Oakland County and discuss their importance to early settlement. She is co-author of a book on Milford history entitled "Ten Minutes Ahead of the Rest of the World." For information, call the **Oakland County** Office of Arts, Culture & Film at (810) 858-0415.

CHILDREN'S CELEBRATION

Upland Hills School, 2575 Indian Lake Road, **Oxford**, is sponsoring a Children's Holiday Celebration on Saturday, Dec. 7, for children ages 3 to 8 with a parent. Activities include candle dipping, cookie decorating, storytelling, holiday singing, wrapping paper decoration and more. Gift shopping is available at the "Stocking Stuffer Store." The cost is $8 per child for sessions from 10 a.m. to noon, or from 1 to 3 p.m. For information and to reserve your space, call (810) 693-2878.

NEW APPOINTMENT

Oakland County Probate Judge Eugene Arthur Moore was appointed vice chair of the Trial Court Assessment Commission. The commission makes recommendations for funding for our trial courts, for the number of judges and for any reorganization of our judicial system. Justice Elizabeth Weaver chairs the commission made up of 21 members appointed by the governor.

GRANTS AVAILABLE

The Detroit Edison Foundation's Energy and the Environment teacher mini-grant program is expected to benefit 20,000 students in southeast Michigan, including **Oakland County**. Information about grants were sent to principals of all public and private K-12 schools in anticipation of the Dec. 2 deadline. The program offers resources to educators for projects related to the environment or energy use that go beyond the scope of most school budgets. Judges look for interdisciplinary projects that incorporate problem-solving, decision-making and critical-thinking skills from their students. Grants average $250, and 100 teachers will receive a total of $36,000. For applications and information, call (313) 235-7187.

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If someone you love has Alzheimer's, the confusion they suffer is bad enough. But you may be just as confused about how to care for them. That's why we're inviting you to our free seminar *At the Heart of Alzheimer's*, conducted by Carol Simpson — an expert in the field of Alzheimer's caregiving and a noted author on the subject. She will share insights and personal experiences to help you be a more creative and flexible caregiver. Topics include the home environment, challenging behaviors, and caregiver burnout.
We'll provide complimentary copies of Ms. Simpson's book *At the Heart of Alzheimer's* at the seminar.
Seating is limited, so call today for reservations, **810-795-0998**, weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Refreshments will also be served.
We hope you join us, because the best treatment for Alzheimer's is a well-informed caregiver.

Carol Simpson
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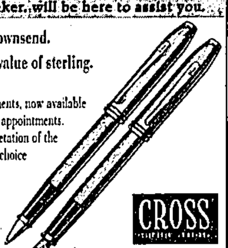

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