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Superior Court Judge David W. Ryan Retires

Superior Court Judge David W. Ryan will retire on April 21, 2006, after nearly 20 years on the San Diego County bench. Appointed to the bench by Governor George Deukmejian in 1986, Judge Ryan, 63, is well known for his tenure and work at the North County courthouse where he has served in numerous positions and strived to change how drug cases and domestic violence cases are handled by the Court.

Spending the first 13 years of his judicial career as a North County Municipal Court Judge, Judge Ryan served as its Presiding Judge in 1991. He has remained in the North County where he was very active in the 1998 Municipal/Superior Court unification and supervised the first Domestic Violence Prevention Court in the North County. In 2000, Judge Ryan publicly supported the passage of Proposition 36. The initiative, which was passed by 61% of state voters, allows all people convicted of first and second time nonviolent, simple drug possession to receive drug treatment instead of incarceration.

A native of Massachusetts, Judge Ryan received a B.S. in Finance from Northeastern University in Boston and attended graduate school at the Bernard Baruch School of Business in New York City. Judge Ryan served as a First Lieutenant in the U.S. Army during the Viet Nam War years. After military service, he worked as a financial analyst before enrolling in law

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school at the University of San Diego. Upon receiving his law degree and passing the State Bar, Judge Ryan served in a number of legal positions including private law practice (specializing in estate planning and real estate law) and serving as a Deputy City Attorney for San Diego where he spent two years as legal advisor to the San Diego Police Department.

“The Court will not only miss Judge Ryan's experience and knowledge, but he will be missed for the passion he brings to the bench in focusing the court's attention on substance abuse and domestic abuse issues,” says Presiding Judge Janis Sammartino.

“I have enjoyed my tenure with the Court and to be part of the long line of black-robed men and women who have so capably and publicly served the residents of San Diego County since 1879,” says Judge Ryan.

Married with five adult children and nine grandchildren, Judge Ryan plans to spend his retirement working in his large Japanese Garden and a family vineyard where he grows Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes. He plans to volunteer more time to Wildlife Assist, a volunteer agency which rescues sick or injured wildlife for transport to rehabilitators. He soon hopes to complete his work towards a certificate in Alcohol & Drug Studies at San Diego City College so he can volunteer his time as a counselor helping distressed families with substance abuse or domestic violence issues. “My very first job after college was a welfare caseworker for the City of New York. The War, and later the law, brought me away from social work but in this last passage of my life I want to help those who are less fortunate than I have been because I have been very blessed in my life,” says Judge Ryan.