

JUDGES OF THE COURT OF APPEALS

P.O. Box 30022, Lansing, MI 48909

1st District

Term expires

KIRSTEN FRANK KELLY, Grosse Pointe Park	Jan. 1, 2007
KAREN FORT HOOD, Detroit	Jan. 1, 2009
CHRISTOPHER M. MURRAY, Grosse Pointe Farms	Jan. 1, 2009
MICHAEL J. TALBOT, Grosse Pointe.	Jan. 1, 2009
HELENE N. WHITE, Detroit	Jan. 1, 2005
KURTIS T. WILDER, Canton	Jan. 1, 2005
BRIAN K. ZAHRA, Northville Township	Jan. 1, 2007

2nd District

MARK J. CAVANAGH, Royal Oak	Jan. 1, 2009
JESSICA R. COOPER, Beverly Hills	Jan. 1, 2007
PAT M. DONOFRIO, Clinton Township.	Jan. 1, 2005
E. THOMAS FITZGERALD, Owosso	Jan. 1, 2009
HILDA R. GAGE, Bloomfield Hills.	Jan. 1, 2007
KATHLEEN JANSEN, St. Clair Shores.	Jan. 1, 2007
HENRY WILLIAM SAAD, Birmingham.	Jan. 1, 2009

3rd District

RICHARD A. BANDSTRA, Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2009
JOEL P. HOEKSTRA, Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2005
JANE E. MARKEY, Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2009
WILLIAM B. MURPHY, East Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2007
JANET T. NEFF, East Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2007
DAVID H. SAWYER, East Grand Rapids.	Jan. 1, 2005
MICHAEL R. SMOLENSKI, Grand Rapids	Jan. 1, 2007

4th District

STEPHEN L. BORRELLO, Saginaw	Jan. 1, 2005
RICHARD ALLEN GRIFFIN, Traverse City.	Jan. 1, 2009
PATRICK M. METER, Saginaw	Jan. 1, 2009
PETER D. O'CONNELL, Mt. Pleasant	Jan. 1, 2007
DONALD S. OWENS, Williamston	Jan. 1, 2005
BILL SCHUETTE, Midland.	Jan. 1, 2009
WILLIAM C. WHITBECK, Lansing, Chief Judge.	Jan. 1, 2005

SANDRA SCHULTZ MENGEL, Chief Clerk

Source: State Court Administrative Office

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF JUDGES



**JUDGE
RICHARD A. BANDSTRA**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Grand Rapids, born April 2, 1950, at Chicago; graduate of Illiana Christian High School, Lansing, Illinois; B.A., Calvin College (Grand Rapids); M.A. (sociology) and J.D., University of Chicago; married to the former Cynthia Gale Triezenberg since 1970; daughters: Carissa and Justine; associate professor of sociology, Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois, 1974-1976; associate editor, *The University of Chicago Law Review*, 1978-1980; law practice at the Federal Trade Commission (Chicago), Jenner & Block (Chicago) and Warner, Norcross & Judd (Grand Rapids); state representative (1985-1994) from Grand Rapids with service as Floor Leader of the Michigan House, vice-chair of Judiciary and Public Health Committees, member of other legislative committees, chair of the Task Force on Taxpayer Rights, chair of the Task Force on AIDS Policy and member of the Commission on the Courts in the Twenty-First Century; recipient of numerous awards for legislative accomplishment including the American Legislative Exchange Council's Outstanding Legislator Award for chairing the Task Force on Civil Justice; recipient of the 1988 Annual Grand Rapids Jaycees Distinguished Service Award for work with community programs; member: Michigan Judges Association Executive Committee, American Bar Association Council of Chief Judges, Michigan Council of Chief Judges, Michigan Bar Foundation Fellows; board member and/or board president: Board of Publications (Christian Reformed Church), Habitat for Humanity of Grand Rapids, Community Reconciliation Center, Association for Public Justice, Advisory Center for Teens, Eastown Community Association, Committee on Race Relations (Christian Reformed Church), Alternative Directions and World Affairs Council of West Michigan; elder, deacon, and council president, Eastern Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids; Legal Specialist, American Bar Association Central and East European Law Initiative, serving in Bratislava, Slovakia, 1998-1999; speaker, Michigan Judicial Conference, 1995; panel member, Michigan Appellate Bench Bar Conference, 1995 and 1998; elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in November 1994, to an eight-year term; appointed Chief Judge Pro Tem, 1997; appointed Chief Judge, 1999 for terms ending December 31, 2001.



**JUDGE
STEPHEN L. BORRELLO**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Saginaw; born June 9, 1959 to Leopold and Audre Borrello; B.A., Albion College, 1981; J.D., Detroit College of Law, 1984; also attended Michigan State University where he was a graduate assistant and lecturer in the Department of History. Judge Borrello was appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals on June 9, 2003. Prior to his appointment he was an assistant prosecuting attorney in Saginaw County before becoming a shareholder in the firm of Gilbert, Smith & Borrello, P.C. As a private practitioner he served as general counsel to the Michigan State Building and Construction Trades Council, Michigan Laborers' District Counsel and the County of Saginaw. He was a frequent lecturer on labor law issues at the Michigan State University School of Labor and Industrial Relations, The Walter and Mary Reuther UAW compound at Black Lake, and authored numerous articles on construction labor law issues. His professional affiliations are the American Bar Association, the State Bar of Michigan, Michigan Trial Lawyers Association, American Trial Lawyers Association, AFL-CIO Cooperating Attorneys Council, and National Building Trades Lawyers Council.



**JUDGE
MARK J. CAVANAGH**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Royal Oak; born August 12, 1953; B.A., University of Michigan; J.D., Detroit College of Law; domestic relations investigator, Wayne County Friend of the Court; assistant Wayne County Prosecutor, Appellate and Felony Trial Divisions; private law practice, 1985; Special Assistant Attorney General, Worker's Compensation Division, State of Michigan; professional activities include the State Bar of Michigan, Recorder's Court Bar Association, Wayne County Juvenile Court Trial Attorney Association, the Irish-American Lawyers Association, Michigan Judges Association, and is admitted to practice in the Federal courts in Michigan. Judge Cavanagh was reelected to a 6-year term on the Court of Appeals, 2nd District, in November 2002. He has two daughters, Laura and Katie.



**JUDGE
JESSICA R. COOPER**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Of Beverly Hills. Jessica Cooper has been a judge for 24 years. She was elected to the 46th District Bench in Southfield, Michigan in 1978 and re-elected in 1984. In November 1986, she ran for and was elected to the 6th Circuit Bench in Oakland County, Michigan. She was re-elected in 1992 and 1998. In 2000, Judge Cooper was elected to the Michigan Court of Appeals. A 1973 graduate of Wayne State University Law School, she began her career as an assistant defender in the State Appellate Defender's office in 1973. She opened her own general law practice in Bloomfield Township, Michigan in 1975, with special emphasis on civil rights litigation. Judge Cooper's civic activities have included service on the boards of HAVEN (Oakland County's domestic violence shelter and sexual assault counseling center), Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Jewish Family Service, the Advisory Board of Forgotten Harvest (a mobile food distribution program for the needy), and CANCO (Oakland County Child Abuse and Neglect Council). She is a founding member of the National Association of Women Judges, and served as its publication editor and member of the National Task Force on Gender Bias in the Courts. Judge Cooper has been an adjunct professor at Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University for the past 6 years where she teaches Applied Evidence and Trial Practice. She has also taught week-long seminars in trial practice at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, in May 2000 and 2003. In 1997, she ran as an independent for the Michigan Supreme Court. She filed petitions with over 44,000 signatures to win a place on the ballot. With no partisan backing and very little financial support, she received close to 500,000 votes. Judge Cooper received national and international acclaim for her work as the presiding judge on the Jack Kevorkian and Itsumi Koga cases.



**JUDGE
PAT M. DONOFRIO**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Clinton Township; B.S., Wayne State University, 1967; J.D., Wayne State University School of Law, 1970; commenced private practice of law and, in 1974, was a founding member of the Oakland County law firm of Romain, Donofrio, Kuck & Egerer, P.C., now Romain, Kuck & Egerer, P.C.; appointed to the Macomb County Circuit Court bench in 1997 and elected to the court in 1998; served as presiding judge of the civil/criminal division of the circuit court from 1998 until his appointment to the Michigan Court of Appeals; member of the Michigan Judges Association, the American Judges Association, the Michigan Supreme Court Committee on Model Civil Jury Instructions, the negligence, criminal, family and appellate sections of the State Bar of Michigan, the Inns of Court, Oakland County, and the Selfridge Base Community Council; earned certificates from the National Judicial College and the National Drug Court Institute; served as a member of the faculty of the Institute for Continuing Legal Education, the National Judicial College, the Michigan Judicial Institute, and the Michigan Supreme Court Task Force on Trial Court Performance Standards; appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals, 2nd District, effective November 8, 2002.



**JUDGE
E. THOMAS FITZGERALD**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Owosso; born November 29, 1939, in Detroit. He attended Assumption High School in Windsor, Ontario, and the University of Detroit, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1963. From 1963 to 1966, he attended the University of Detroit Law School, receiving both a Juris Doctor degree and a Bachelor of Laws degree. Judge Fitzgerald was in private practice in Detroit from 1967 to 1968. In 1968, he joined Ellis Bowler & Associates in Durand. In 1969, he established the law firm of Fitzgerald & Dumon, P.C., in Owosso, concentrating primarily on the practice of criminal and domestic law. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, American Bar Association, Shiawassee County Bar Association (of which he is a past treasurer, secretary and president), Genesee County Bar Association, Ingham County Bar Association, American Judges Association, Michigan Judges Association, and State Bar of Michigan Appellate Court Administration Committee; Rules Committee; American Trial Lawyers Association; judge of Moot Court Competition for Thomas M. Cooley Law School; Judge, Finals U of D Mercy Moot Court Competition; Cooley Law Review; Distinguished Brief Award Judge, 1999, 2000; Michigan Youth in Government; Irish-American Club of Lansing, Michigan Trial Lawyers Association, American Judicature Society, Michigan Association of Professions, University of Detroit Alumni Association, Appellate Bench/Bar Executive Committee, Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society; Fellow, Michigan State Bar Association. He is married to Assistant Attorney General Kathy Fitzgerald and has three children: John, Jennifer and Mary Kate; is a member of St. Paul's Catholic Church in Owosso, and has been active in many civic organizations, including the Boy Scouts; Honorary Chairman of 1991 March of Dimes Walk America, and Board of Directors, American Heart Association. He received an honorable discharge from the United States Marine Corps in 1962; adjunct professor, Thomas M. Cooley Law School, 1991-1996; first elected to the Court of Appeals, 2nd District, in 1990 to a six-year term; reelected in 1996 to another six-year term; reelected in 2002 to another six-year term.



**JUDGE
HILDA R. GAGE**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Of Oakland County; born June 16, 1939; judge of the 6th Judicial Circuit (Oakland County), 18 years; Chief Judge, two years; became a member of the Board of the National Judicial College in 1987, elected vice-chair in 1989; past chair, American Bar Association National Conference of State Trial Judges, the ABA National Conference of State Trial Judges Committee on Court Delay Reduction, and the ABA Task Force on Reduction of Litigation Costs and Delay; ABA House of Delegates, 1982; elected to the American Law Institute in 1981, and elected a fellow of the American Bar Foundation in 1979; joined the National Center for State Courts Coordinating Council on Life-Sustaining Treatment Decision-Making in July 1989; past chair, Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission (1991) and the Judicial Conference of the State Bar of Michigan; president, Michigan Judges Association, 1987; member, Michigan Civil Rights Commission (1975-1978); appointed by Governor Engler to the Michigan Sentencing Guidelines Commission in April 1995; member, executive board, Children's Hospital of Michigan; Wayne State University Law School Committee of Visitors; member, board of directors, American Committee for Weizmann Institute of Science, and Dysautonomia Foundation, Inc., Michigan Chapter; member, executive committee, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Michigan Chapter; Habitat for Humanity, participant, Women's Build, May 2001; elected to board of directors, National Center for State Courts, September 2001; recipient of numerous honors, including Women's Bar Association Award (2000), "Michiganian of the Year" distinction by *The Detroit News*, the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame Award (1995), the State Bar of Michigan Roberts P. Hudson Award, the Oakland County Bar Association Frances R. Avadenka Award, the National Center for State Courts Distinguished Service Award, and the John N. O'Brien Memorial Award; first recipient of the American Bar Association National Conference of State Trial Judges Distinguished Service Award; appointed to the Court of Appeals, November 1996; elected, November 1998.



**JUDGE
RICHARD ALLEN GRIFFIN**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Traverse City; born April 15, 1952, at Traverse City; B.A. magna cum laude, Western Michigan University Honors College, 1973; J.D., University of Michigan Law School, 1977; married to N. Christine Griffin; children: Sarah, Kelley, and Karaline; member, State Bar of Michigan (1977), the Florida Bar (1978), Federal District Court-Western District, Michigan; Federal District Court-Eastern District, Michigan, and U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals; law clerk, the Honorable Ross W. Campbell, 1975-1977; associate, Williams, Coulter, Cunningham, Davison & Read, 1977-1981; partner, Coulter, Cunningham, Davison & Read, 1981-1985; partner, Read & Griffin, 1985-1988; former member of the Federal Judicial Selection Committee for the Western District of Michigan; president, Grand Traverse Zoological Society; past chairman, Yellow Ribbon Committee; and Long Lake Township Building Authority; advisor and chief judge, Michigan YMCA Model Judiciary Program; elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in November 1988; reelected to the Court of Appeals, 4th District, in November 1996 and November 2002. On June 26, 2002, President George W. Bush nominated Judge Griffin to be a United States Circuit Judge for the Sixth Circuit.



**JUDGE
JOEL P. HOEKSTRA**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Grand Rapids; born May 10, 1947, to Richard C. and Joan Hoekstra; married to Greta J. (Buis) Hoekstra; children Bryan and Karin; B.A., Calvin College, 1970; J.D., Valparaiso University School of Law, 1973; Assistant Kent County Prosecuting Attorney, 1973-1985, founded and supervised Juvenile Division, 1977-1979; elected to 61st District Court, 1984 and reelected, 1990; Chief Judge, 1989-1993; member, Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church, Elder and Council President, 1998-2001; adjunct professor of criminal justice, Calvin College and formerly of Grand Rapids Community College; president, Grand Rapids Urban Young Life Committee; former board member, Grand Rapids Christian Schools, Very Special Arts, Project Rehab, Kent County Community Corrections, Family Impact, Kent County Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee; elected to Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in 1994.



**JUDGE
KAREN FORT HOOD**

Term expires January 1, 2009

In November 2002, Judge Karen Fort Hood made history when she was elected as the first African American woman to be elected to the Michigan Court of Appeals. A former Detroit public school teacher and probation officer, Judge Hood was elected to the Recorder's Court bench in 1992. In January 1999, she became presiding judge of the Wayne County Circuit Court, Criminal Division. As presiding judge, she handled administrative duties relative to the court, including the adjournment of cases, disqualification of judges, discipline of attorneys, and resolution of conflicts between the thirty-one judges of the Criminal Division. In addition, Judge Hood presided over the entire domestic violence docket for the Wayne County Circuit Court. Judge Hood also carried a docket of other criminal cases. Before being elected to the bench, Judge Hood was a special assistant prosecutor in Wayne County Juvenile Court. She served from 1984 through 1988, and prosecuted juvenile offender and abuse and neglect cases. From 1989 through 1992, she transferred to the Appellate Division of the Prosecutor's Office where she researched, wrote, and argued hundreds of briefs and other appellate matters. She was appointed an assistant prosecuting attorney in 1988 and served until 1992, when she took the bench. Judge Hood is also very active in the community. Judge Hood is past president of the Association of Black Judges of Michigan and is a member of the Wolverine Bar Association. She is on the executive board of the Detroit NAACP and a member of the Western Wayne NAACP. Judge Hood has been active in the National Council on Alcoholism for years, and is currently on the board of B.A.B.E.S. (Beginners Alcohol Addiction Basic Education Studies), which is a subsidiary of the National Council on Alcoholism.



**JUDGE
KATHLEEN JANSEN**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Of St. Clair Shores, Michigan; graduate of Girls Catholic Central High School; B.S., Michigan State University; J.D., University of Detroit Law School; general practice of law (1977-1982) with Mancini & Blumenthal, P.C., became partner and practiced with the firm until 1982; elected Macomb County Probate Judge, 1982, and served through 1984; elected to Macomb County Circuit Court, 1984, and served through 1989; appointed to the Court of Appeals, 1989, and elected to fill balance of term, 1990; reelected to Court of Appeals, 1994 and 2000; member, State Bar of Michigan, Macomb County Bar Association, Women Lawyers Association, National Association of Women Judges, and Advocates Bar Association; past president, Women's Equity Action League — Michigan Chapter; member, Henry Ford Heart and Vascular Institute Advisory Board.



**JUDGE
KIRSTEN FRANK KELLY**

Term expires January 1, 2007

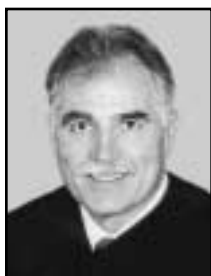
Judge Kirsten Frank Kelly was born August 10, 1956, in Elgin, Illinois. She graduated from Ithaca High School in Ithaca, New York, in 1974, from Michigan State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1978, and from the University of Detroit School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree in 1981. Also in 1981, Judge Kelly joined the Detroit law firm of Durant and Durant, where she practiced civil litigation, and she became a partner in the firm in 1987. Also in 1987, she was elected a municipal judge, and she was twice reelected to that position. After taking time off in 1991 following the birth of her third child, Judge Kelly formed another law firm and practiced both civil and criminal law. In 1994, she was appointed to the Wayne Circuit Court by Governor John Engler. In 1997, Chief Justice Conrad Mallett appointed her presiding judge of the Family Division of the Wayne Circuit Court. Judge Kelly was elected to the Court of Appeals in the 2000 general election. Judge Kelly has served two terms as president of the Michigan Association of Municipal Judges, served on the board of directors of the Michigan District Judges Association, and has been a hearing panel vice chairman for the Attorney Grievance Commission. The judges of the Wayne Circuit Court elected Judge Kelly to serve on the Executive Committee, and she also serves on the Domestic Relations Committee of the Michigan Judges Association. She has been a volunteer with the Legal Alternatives for Women Program, supervising and instructing attorneys and lay volunteers in the proper application and implementation of domestic violence law. Judge Kelly's civic activities include being a member of Leadership Detroit XVII (class of 1995), a charter member of the Grosse Pointe Sunrise Rotary, a member of the Grosse Pointe School System Superintendent's Advisory Committee, and a member of the board of directors of the Substance Abuse Community Council of Grosse Pointe. Judge Kelly and her husband, William B. Kelly, have three children. She and her family attend St. Ambrose Catholic Church.



**JUDGE
JANE E. MARKEY**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Grand Rapids; born May 27, 1951, at Saginaw; B.A., with high honors in Spanish/Secondary Education, Michigan State University, 1973; J.D., cum laude, Thomas M. Cooley Law School, 1981; editor-in-chief, *Thomas M. Cooley Law Review*; prehearing attorney/law clerk, Michigan Court of Appeals, 1981-1982; civil and appellate trial practice, 1982-1990 with the law firms of Baxter & Hammond and Dykema, Gossett (members of Baxter & Hammond formed the Grand Rapids office of Dykema, Gossett in 1984). Elected to the 61st District Court serving the City of Grand Rapids in 1990; reelected in 1992. Member, American Bar Association, State Bar of Michigan; hearing panelist, State of Michigan, Attorney Discipline Board, 1989-1995; member, Michigan State Bar Grievance Committee, 1990-1992; fellow, Michigan State Bar Foundation; member, Academic Advisory Committee for District Court, 1993-1995; member, American Judges Association; has served as a faculty member for National Institute of Trial Advocacy, the Hillman Advocacy Program, U.S. District Court, Western District, Michigan Judicial Institute, Institute of Continuing Legal Education. Married to Attorney Curt Benson; two children, Caitlin and Robert. Elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in 1994; reelected in 2002.



**JUDGE
PATRICK MURPHY METER**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Saginaw; born March 17, 1948, in Cleveland, Ohio; attended St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland, and graduated from St. Teresa High School in Decatur, Illinois, in 1966; studied one semester at Colegio LaSalle in Arequipa, Peru, as an American Field Service exchange student; educated at the University of Notre Dame, graduating with a B.A. (Spanish) in 1970 and a J.D. in 1973; taught Spanish at the University of Notre Dame at the undergraduate level while attending law school, as well as serving as a juvenile probation officer for two years; married to Barbara Lacasse Meter and is the father of five children; member, Michigan and Texas Bar Associations; admitted to practice in the U.S. District Court, Eastern District; served in the United States Naval Reserves; appointed to the Tenth Judicial Circuit Court bench by Governor Engler in late 1991; elected to a full six-year term in 1992 and again in 1998. From 1973-1984 served Saginaw County as Assistant Prosecuting Attorney and then Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney; after prosecutorial service, devoted seven years as an associate and then partner in mid-Michigan law firm of Braun, Kendrick, Finkbeiner, Schafer & Murphy; in past years has served as an instructor and member of the adjunct faculties for Saginaw Valley State University, Delta College, and Concordia College; elected in 1996 to the State Bar Representative Assembly and the Saginaw County Bar Association Board of Directors; president, Saginaw County Bar Association, 1999-2000; Executive Board, Michigan Judges Association; community service over the years has included the Rotary Club, Boy Scouts of America/Law Explorers, Fraternal Order of Police, Greater Michigan Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, and the Boys and Girls Club; member, St. John Vianney Roman Catholic parish in Saginaw; appointed to Michigan Court of Appeals in 1999.



**JUDGE
WILLIAM B. MURPHY**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Of Grand Rapids; Aquinas College, 1963-1965; B.A., Michigan State University, 1965-1967; J.D., Wayne State University Law School, 1967-1970, cum laude, Wayne Law Review Board; law clerk, Michigan Court of Appeals, 1970-1971; civil and criminal trial practice, 1971-1988; founding partner, Murphy, Burns, & McInerney, P.C., Grand Rapids, 1973; adjunct professor, Detroit College of Law at Michigan State University; member, American Bar Association, State Bar of Michigan, Grand Rapids Bar Association, and Wayne State University Law School, Alumni Board of Directors, 1985-1988; president, Michigan Trial Lawyers Association, 1986-1987, Kent County Office of the Defender, 1984-1988, Grand Rapids Catholic High Schools, Board of Education, 1988-1991; trustee, Grand Rapids Bar Association, 1978-1980, 1988-1991; member, Representative Assembly, State Bar of Michigan, 1981-1984; State Bar of Michigan, Judicial Qualifications Committee, 1983-1987, 1994-1995; board member, State Bar of Michigan, Negligence Law Section, 1986-1988; member, executive board, Villa Elizabeth, full-care nursing home for the aged, Grand Rapids, 1979-1985; Catholic Social Services, 1991-1994; member, board of directors, Grand Rapids Urban League, 1993-2000 and 2003-; Project Rehab (substance abuse prevention and rehabilitation program), 1998-2000; and Second Harvest Gleaners Food Bank of West Michigan, 1994-2001; Board of Trustees, Aquinas College, 2002-; trustee, Michigan State Bar Foundation, 2002-; fellow, Michigan State Bar Association; married to Paula; children: Bridget, Erin, Meghan, Kara; appointed to Court of Appeals, 3rd District, March 17, 1988; elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in November 1988, 1994, and 2000; elected Chief Judge Pro Tem, 1992 and 1994, appointed Chief Judge Pro Tem, 1996; elected to Michigan Judicial Tenure Commission, 1995, 1998, and 2001; chair, 2000-2003; elected to State Bar Board of Commissioners, 2001.



**JUDGE
CHRISTOPHER M. MURRAY**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Christopher Murray was appointed a judge of the Wayne County Circuit Court on January 10, 2000. In November 2000 he was elected to a six-year term. Judge Murray was assigned to the Family Division of the Circuit Court, where he handled domestic relations matters. In January 2002, Judge Murray was appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals. In November 2002, he was elected to a six-year term expiring on January 1, 2009. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1985 at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, and his Juris Doctorate in 1990 at the University of Detroit School of Law in Detroit, Michigan. Prior to taking the bench Judge Murray was in private practice with the Detroit law firm of Keller, Thoma, et al, where he represented school districts, municipalities, and corporations in cases involving employment discrimination, premises liability, and constitutional law. From 1995 to 1997, Judge Murray served as Deputy Legal Counsel to Governor John Engler. While in private practice Judge Murray served as Chairman of the State Board of Ethics, and also served as a member of the Local Government Claims Review Board. Judge Murray has had several articles published in Michigan legal periodicals, including the *Michigan Bar Journal*. Judge Murray is currently a member of the Model Civil Jury Instructions Committee, and is on the Board of Directors for the Incorporated Society of Irish-American Lawyers and the Catholic Lawyers Society. Judge Murray is married to Bridgette, and has three children: Bailey (age 9), Matthew (age 6), and Griffin (age 5).



**JUDGE
JANET T. NEFF**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Of East Grand Rapids; B.A., cum laude, University of Pittsburgh, 1967; J.D., Wayne State University Law School, 1970; estate and gift tax examiner, Internal Revenue Service, 1970; law clerk, Court of Appeals, 1970-1971; assistant city attorney, City of Grand Rapids, 1971-1973; associate and partner, VanderVeen, Freihofer and Cook, 1973-1978; special assistant attorney general, Second Injury Fund and the Silicosis and Dust Disease Fund, 1976-1978; commissioner, Michigan Supreme Court, 1978-1980; assistant U.S. attorney, Department of Justice, 1980; private law practice, William G. Reamon, P.C., 1980-1988; former member, board of directors, Easter Seal Society, Women's Resource Center, Junior Achievement, and United Way of Kent County; former member, board of trustees, Winchester Scholarship Fund; former member, U.S. District Court Professional Review Committee, Grand Rapids Area Legislative Business Forum, and Kensington Community High School Advisory Board; board of commissioners, State Bar of Michigan; Grand Rapids Bar Association: treasurer, 1985-1987, vice-president, 1987-1988, president-elect, 1988-1989, president, 1989-1990; board of directors, Kent County Medical Foundation; faculty member, Federal Trial Skills Workshop, Federal Bar Association, Western District of Michigan; member, State Bar of Michigan Character and Fitness Committee; State Bar of Michigan, Grand Rapids Bar Association, Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan; Michigan Supreme Court Judicial Information Systems Advisory Commission, Michigan Supreme Court Technical Advisory Group, Board of Governors West Michigan 32nd Degree Masonic Learning Center for Children; co-chair, Women Building the Dream With Habitat for Humanity and WLAM, western region; married to David A. Neff, daughters: Genevieve and Meredith; elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in November 1988; reelected November 1994 and November 2000.



**JUDGE
PETER D. O'CONNELL**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Judge Peter D. O'Connell was born August 15, 1948, in Harrison Township, Macomb County. He graduated from Ferndale High School, holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Western Michigan University, a J.D. from the Detroit College of Law and was one of the first three judges in the United States to obtain a Masters of Judicial Studies from the University of Nevada. Judge O'Connell is on the faculty of the Michigan Judicial Institute, the National Judicial College and an adjunct professor at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Judge O'Connell served 16 years as the 76th District Court Judge. He is a former Chief Assistant Prosecutor in Isabella County and has been a visiting Circuit, District or Probate Judge in 30 Michigan counties. He is past president of the Michigan District Judges Association and has published articles in the *Detroit Law Review*, *Criminal Practice Law Review*, *Colleague*, *Benchmarks* and the *Michigan Bar Journal*. Judge O'Connell has lectured extensively on the subject of jury management, jury selection and pre-trial publicity. Judge O'Connell resides in Mt. Pleasant. He was elected to the Court of Appeals on November 8, 1994 and reelected in November 2000.



**JUDGE
DONALD S. OWENS**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Williamston; born December 25, 1943, at Ann Arbor, Michigan; graduate of the University of Michigan: B.A. in Economics 1966, M.B.A. 1967, J.D. 1969; married to Jeanie Leyden Owens; four adult children: Michael, Daniel, Stephen and Elizabeth; in private practice with McLean, Seaman, Laing and Guilford, Lansing, Michigan, 1969-1974; Ingham County Probate Judge, 1974-1999; Chief Judge, 1984-1992, 1996-1999; Ingham County Circuit Court — Family Division Judge, by assignment, 1998-1999; Michigan Guardianship Ombudsman, 2000-2001; named 1999 Michigan Judge of the Year by the Michigan Association of Court Appointed Special Advocates; present and past offices include: president, Michigan Probate Judges Association and Ingham County Trial Judges Association; chair, Judicial Conference of the State Bar of Michigan, Juvenile Court Rules Committee, Juvenile Law and Adoptions Committee, Ingham County Election Commission, Judicial Candidate Evaluation Committee, Ingham County Bar Association, Program and Education Committee, MPJA, Probate and Trust Law Committee, ICBA; co-chair, Family Division Joint Court Rules Committee; vice-chair, Juvenile Law Committee, State Bar of Michigan; associate editor, Michigan Probate Judges Association publication *Inter-Com*; Judge of Moot Court Competition for Thomas M. Cooley Law School; vice-president, Children's Charter of the Courts of Michigan; co-chair, Lansing Advisory Committee on Homeless Youth; state advisor, Michigan Child Studies Association; president, Steele Street School PTO; president, Kiwanis Club of Mason; deacon, First Presbyterian Church of Lansing; Big Brothers/Big Sisters Advisory Board; present and past memberships include: Michigan Court Forms Committee; Michigan Committee on Juvenile Justice; Coleman Commission; Probate and Juvenile Court Docket Tracking Committee; Probate and Juvenile Court Benchbook Steering Committee; Family Court Implementation Task Force; American Bar Association; State Bar of Michigan; Ingham County Bar Association; Michigan Judges Association; Michigan Probate Judges Association; Ingham County Trial Judges Association; National Trust for Historic Preservation; Nature Conservancy; Michigan Association for Emotionally Disturbed Children; N.A.A.C.P.; Urban League; Friends of the Michigan Women's Historical Center; Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; First Presbyterian Church of Lansing; Lansing Area Safety Council; Kiwanis Club of Mason; Beta Gamma Sigma; Boy Scout Merit Badge Counselor; 4-H Softball Coach; AYSO Soccer Coach; lecturer for: Michigan Judicial Institute; Michigan Judges Association; Michigan Probate Judges Association; Institute for Continuing Legal Education; State Bar of Michigan; Michigan Family Independence Agency; Michigan State Police; University of Michigan; Michigan State University; appointed by Governor John Engler to the Court of Appeals, Fourth District, and took office December 1, 1999.



**JUDGE
HENRY WILLIAM SAAD**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Judge Henry William Saad received a degree of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, with distinction, from Wayne State University in 1971 and graduated magna cum laude with a Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State University in 1974. Prior to his appointment to the Court of Appeals, Judge Saad was a partner at Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen & Freeman, where he practiced law for twenty years. Judge Saad has served both as an arbitrator with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission and as a hearing referee with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. He is an adjunct professor of law at University of Detroit/Mercy School of Law, Wayne State University Law School and Thomas M. Cooley Law School. Judge Saad is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and is a trustee for Detroit Public Television and a board member of the American Heart Association and the Motor City Lyric Opera. In 1995, Judge Saad received the Arab-American and Chaldean Council (ACC) Civic and Humanitarian Award for Outstanding Dedication to Serving the Community with Compassion and Understanding and, in 1997, the Oakland County Republican Committee honored Judge Saad with the Salute to Justice, John O'Brien Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service to the People of Oakland County. In 2000, Wayne State University Law School presented Judge Saad with an honorary membership in the Order of the Coif. Judge Saad has written articles published in the *Employee Relations Law Journal*, *Management Solutions*, *Michigan Journal*, *Michigan Lawyers Weekly*, *Editor & Publisher*, *The Wayne Law Review*, *Michigan Practitioner Series*, *Family Law and Practice* (Chapter on Ethics), and *OCBA Laches*. Judge Saad was appointed to the Court of Appeals by Governor John Engler, effective December 23, 1994; he was elected to the Court for a six-year term in November 1996, and was reelected in November 2002.



**JUDGE
DAVID H. SAWYER**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of East Grand Rapids; born July 14, 1947, at Grand Rapids; B.S. in public administration, University of Arizona, 1970; J.D., Valparaiso School of Law, 1973; married to Elsbeth F. Sawyer; children, Brent and Ryan; Episcopalian; former Kent County Prosecuting Attorney, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, and criminal justice teacher, Grand Rapids Junior College; former president, vice president, treasurer, and board member of the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan; member, State Bar of Michigan; fellow, State Bar of Michigan; member, Grand Rapids Rotary Club, Arizona Letterwinners Association, and Kent County Courthouse Design Committee, 1998; board member, Senior Meals; past president, West Michigan Air Force Academy Parents' Club; chairman, Kent County Justice Center Task Force, 1997; elected to the Court of Appeals, 3rd District, in 1986 and reelected in 1992 and 1998.



**JUDGE
BILL SCHUETTE**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Born October 13, 1953, in Midland, Michigan. He graduated cum laude from Georgetown University in 1976, receiving a Bachelor of Science in the Foreign Service. He also studied at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. Judge Schuette earned his law degree from the University of San Francisco in 1979. Schuette and his wife, the former Cynthia Grebe, reside in Midland. They are the parents of Heidi, born in April 1993, and Billy, born in July 1995. Judge Schuette's commitment to public service began in 1984 when he was elected to the United States House of Representatives. At the age of 31, he was one of the youngest Congressmen in America. During his 3 terms in Congress, Schuette served on the House Budget Committee, the House Agriculture Committee, and Select Committee on Aging. In 1990, Bill Schuette was Michigan's Republican candidate for the United States Senate. In January 1991, Schuette was named Director of the Michigan Department of Agriculture. As a member of Governor John Engler's cabinet, his policy responsibilities were diverse, ranging from agribusiness export development to environmental stewardship initiatives for production agriculture. When Schuette was Director of Agriculture, his wife Cynthia and he created the Michigan Harvest Gathering, a food and fund drive to help feed hungry people throughout Michigan. In 1994, Bill Schuette was elected to the Michigan Senate, representing Michigan's 35th Senate District. During his 8 years in the Senate, he served on the Judiciary Committee, the Technology and Energy Committee, the Gaming and Casino Oversight Committee and was Chairman of the Economic Development Committee and Chairman of the Reapportionment Committee. Judge Schuette is a member of the State Bar of Michigan and has also been a member of various boards and organizations in his community and throughout Michigan. Currently, he serves as vice president of the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation and is a trustee of the Elsa U. Pardee Foundation. He also serves on the board of trustees of Albion College and is a member of the visiting committee of the Gerald R. Ford Institute at Albion College. In addition, he is a member of the board of directors of the Education Freedom Fund. Judge Schuette was elected in November 2002 to a term ending January 1, 2009.



**JUDGE
MICHAEL R. SMOLENSKI**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Born November 28, 1944 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to J. Robert and Mary B. Smolenski; married to Kathleen Smolenski; seven children; family active in Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Grand Rapids, Michigan; graduate of Grand Rapids Catholic Central, 1962; attended Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1962-1964; B.A., political science, University of Michigan, 1966; graduated University of Michigan Law School, 1969; Kent County Legal Aid Society, June 1969 to December 1969. JAG Officer and Special Court-Martial Judge in the U.S. Marine Corps, 1970-1973; employed by Grand Rapids City Attorney, 1973; general trial practice, Bergstrom, Slykhouse & Shaw, P.C., 1973-1977; partner, in general practice of law with Michael B. Quinn, 1977-1984; appointed by Governor Blanchard to 61st District Court bench replacing his retired father, J. Robert Smolenski, 1984; elected to the Kent County Circuit Court, 1990; elected to the Michigan Court of Appeals, 1994, and reelected in November 2000; appointed Chief Judge Pro Tem in January 2001; served two terms as Kent County Commissioner, 1979-1982; founding member, Garfield Park Neighborhood Association, 1973, Stepping Stones Montessori School, 1982, and New Start Program for treatment of chronic alcoholic repeat offenders; former member, board of directors, Baxter Community Center; former board member, Dispute Resolution Center; former member, St. John's Home Advisory Board, YMCA Camp Manitou-Lin Board, and Kent County Domestic Violence Coordinating Committee; founding member, original member, Citizens Advisory Task Force for Community Development in Grand Rapids, 1974.



**JUDGE
MICHAEL J. TALBOT**

Term expires January 1, 2009

Of Plymouth, born August 8, 1945 in Wayne County, Michigan. He graduated from Divine Child High School in Dearborn in 1963, from Georgetown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Administration in 1967, and from the University of Detroit School of Law with a Juris Doctor degree in 1971. He was employed by the Office of the Mayor of the City of Detroit from 1967 to 1969, and he was a member of the Labor Relations Staff for Leaseway Transportation from 1969 to 1972. He graduated from the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia as a Second Lieutenant and served in the United States Army Reserve from 1969 to 1975. From 1972 to 1978, Judge Talbot was a partner in the law firm of Talbot, Grant & McQuarrie. He was appointed to the Common Pleas Court for the City of Detroit by Governor Milliken in April 1978 and appointed by Governor Milliken to the Recorder's Court for the City of Detroit in 1980. Governor Engler appointed him to the Wayne Circuit Court in 1991 and to the Court of Appeals in 1998 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Maureen Pulte Reilly. In November of 1998, he was elected to serve the remainder of Judge Reilly's term. He was reelected to a six-year term in 2002. Judge Talbot is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the International Academy of Trial Judges, the Incorporated Society of Irish-American Lawyers. He has been chairperson of the Criminal Law Section of the State Bar, a member of the Special Committee, Victims of Crimes, the Criminal Jurisprudence Committee, and the Committee of Court Administration, all of the State Bar. He has received the Crime Prevention Association of Michigan Service Award twice, the State Bar of Michigan Service Award, and the Michigan Corrections Association Judicial Servant Award. He has also served as a member of the faculty of the National Judicial College, a member of the faculty and the Judicial Advisory Board of the National Organization Victim Assistance, and on the board of Jefferson House (a residential drug treatment facility). Judge Talbot actively assisted in the writing of the Crime Victim's Rights Act of Michigan. His community activities include serving on the Board of Education for the Archdiocese of Detroit, and Chair of the Priest Review Board for the Archdiocese of Detroit, and Chair of the Priest Review Board for the Archdiocese of Detroit.



**CHIEF JUDGE
WILLIAM C. WHITBECK**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Judge William C. Whitbeck was born on January 17, 1941, in Holland, Michigan, and was raised in Kalamazoo, Michigan. His undergraduate education was at Northwestern University, where he received a McCormack Scholarship in Journalism. He received his LL.B. from the University of Michigan Law School in 1966, and was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1969. Judge Whitbeck has held a variety of positions with the state and federal governments, including serving as Administrative Assistant to Governor George Romney from 1966 to 1969, Special Assistant to Secretary George Romney at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1969 to 1970, Area Director of the Detroit Area Office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 1970 to 1973, Director of Policy of the Michigan Public Service Commission from 1973 to 1975 and Counsel to Governor John Engler for Executive Organization/Director of the Office of the State Employer from 1991 to 1993. He served on the Presidential Transition Team of President-Elect Ronald Reagan in 1980, and as Counsel to the Transition Team of Governor-Elect John Engler in 1990. In private practice, Judge Whitbeck was a partner in the law firm of McLellan, Schlaybaugh & Whitbeck from 1975 to 1982, a partner in the law firm of Dykema, Gossett, Spencer, Goodnow & Trigg from 1982 to 1987, and a partner in the law firm of Honigman Miller Schwartz & Cohn from 1993 to 1997. Judge Whitbeck is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the American Bar Association, the Ingham County Bar Association, the Castle Park Association, the Michigan Law Revision Commission, and the Inns of Court. He is also a Fellow of both the Michigan State Bar Foundation and the American Bar Foundation. Judge Whitbeck and his wife, Stephanie, reside in downtown Lansing in a 125-year-old historic home that they have completely renovated. They are members of St. Mary Cathedral. Governor John Engler appointed Judge Whitbeck to the Court of Appeals effective October 22, 1997, to a term ending January 1, 1999. Judge Whitbeck was elected in November of 1998 to a term ending January 1, 2005. In December of 2001, the Michigan Supreme Court appointed Judge Whitbeck to a two-year term as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals.



**JUDGE
HELENE N. WHITE**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Detroit; born December 2, 1954, in Jackson Heights, New York. Attended Great Neck North Senior High School in Great Neck, New York, graduating in 1972; Barnard College, Columbia University, New York City, 1972-1975, A.B. cum laude; University of Pennsylvania Law School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, J.D. 1978. Law clerk, Justice Charles L. Levin, Michigan Supreme Court 1978-1980. Elected Judge of the Common Pleas Court for the City of Detroit November 1980. Became 36th District Court judge through court reorganization, September 1981, served through 1982. Elected to Wayne Circuit Court November 1982, reelected in 1988, serving a total of 10 years. Elected to open seat on the Court of Appeals occasioned by retirement of Judge Joseph B. Sullivan, November 1992. Reelected November 1998. Member, State Bar of Michigan, Pennsylvania Bar Association, American Bar Association, American Judicature Society, Women Lawyers Association of Michigan, Wolverine Bar Association, Detroit Bar Association, and National Association of Women Judges; serves on boards of Michigan Legal Services; COTS (Coalition on Temporary Shelter) (board president 1992-1994); Metropolitan Detroit YWCA; Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit; National Board of Governors American Jewish Committee (former vice-president Detroit Chapter); advisory boards of Detroit Women's Forum and Sojourner Foundation; Detroit Institute of Arts Founders Junior Council 1990-1997; recipient of the Spirit of Detroit Award and Detroit Human Rights Commission Horizon Award.



**JUDGE
KURTIS T. WILDER**

Term expires January 1, 2005

Of Wayne County, born April 26, 1959, at Cleveland, Ohio; graduate of Cleveland Heights High School, Cleveland Heights, Ohio; A.B. Political Science, University of Michigan, 1981; J.D., University of Michigan Law School, 1984; private practice, Foster, Swift, Collins and Smith, Lansing, 1984-1989, Butzel Long, Detroit, 1989-1992; appointed by Governor John Engler to the 22nd Circuit Court in March 1992 and elected to the 22nd Circuit Court in November 1992 and November 1998; chief judge of the 22nd Circuit Court, 1995-1998. Appointed to the Michigan Court of Appeals by Governor John Engler effective December 30, 1998, to fill the unexpired term of the late Judge Myron H. Wahls, and elected November 7, 2000, to the Court of Appeals for the balance of the term ending January 1, 2005. Member, Fellows of the Michigan State Bar Foundation, Association of Black Judges of Michigan, Wolverine Bar Association, and Federalist Society, Board of Advisors, Lawyers Division - Michigan Chapter; president, State Bar of Michigan Judicial Conference; past president, Michigan Judges Association; member, State Bar of Michigan Open Justice Commission, State Bar of Michigan Judicial Ethics Subcommittee; life member, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Detroit Chapter; member, Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity-Gamma Rho Boule; chairman, Board of Trustees, National Kidney Foundation of Michigan; past chairman, State of Michigan Community Corrections Advisory Board; past member and director, Ann Arbor Rotary Club; past member, State Bar of Michigan Criminal Jury Instruction Committee; married to Cindy Wilder, two children.



**JUDGE
BRIAN K. ZAHRA**

Term expires January 1, 2007

Judge Brian Keith Zahra is married to Suzanne Casey and resides in Northville Township. He was born in Detroit on January 9, 1960. He is a 1977 graduate of Dearborn Divine Child High School; holds a Bachelor of General Studies degree from Wayne State University (1984); and a J.D., cum laude, from University of Detroit School of Law (1987) where he served on the University of Detroit Law Review (1986-1987). Judge Zahra served as law clerk to the Honorable Lawrence P. Zatkoff, United States District Judge, Eastern District of Michigan (1987-1989) before joining and becoming a partner with Dickinson, Wright, Moon, Van Dusen & Freeman (1989-1994). Judge Zahra is an adjunct professor at the University of Detroit/Mercy Law School. Judge Zahra serves on the Court Rules Committee of the Michigan Judges Association and co-authored the chapter on Judgments for the Institute of Continuing Legal Education's publication *Michigan Civil Procedure* (1999). He served on the Domestic Violence Legislation Implementation Task Force (1995-1997) and on the advisory committee for the Michigan Judicial Institute Domestic Violence Benchbook (1998). Judge Zahra is a member of the Kiwanis Club International, the Federalist Society, the Catholic Lawyers Society, the Detroit Community Initiative, Leadership Detroit, Boys & Girls Club/Alumni Association, the Incorporated Society of Irish American Lawyers, the Wolverine Bar Association, the Maltese American Benevolent Society, and the Maltese American Community Club. Judge Zahra was appointed to the Third Circuit Court by Governor John Engler on December 20, 1994, and elected to the Circuit Court in 1996. Governor Engler appointed Judge Zahra to the Michigan Court of Appeals on January 1, 1999. Judge Zahra was elected to the Court of Appeals in November 2000.