



## Supreme Court of Appeals State of West Virginia

# News

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### **Two circuit judges retire, one to be sworn in as a senator on Thursday**

For immediate release Tuesday, January 29, 2013

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Two long-time circuit judges are retiring this month, and one will swear in the other as a West Virginia Senator at 2 p.m. on Thursday, January 31, in the Senate Chamber.

Twenty-Second Judicial Circuit (Hampshire, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties) Judge Donald H. Cookman will be sworn in as a Senator at 2 p.m. Thursday. The oath of office will be delivered by his brother-in-law, Twenty-Sixth Judicial Circuit (Lewis and Upshur Counties) Judge Thomas H. Keadle, who is retiring Thursday. Judge Keadle is married to Judge Cookman's sister, Beverly.

Following the ceremony in the Senate Chamber, there will be a reception in the Capitol Rotunda.

Judge Cookman retired January 23, the same day Governor Earl Ray Tomblin appointed him to a seat in the Fifteenth Senatorial District (Hampshire, Morgan, and portions of surrounding counties). Judge Cookman fills the seat vacated by Senator Walt Helmick, who was elected West Virginia Agriculture Commissioner in the Nov. 6 general election.

Judge Cookman has been a Circuit Judge since 1993 and an attorney since 1971. He was the Hampshire County Prosecuting Attorney from 1973 thru 1992, and he served as a Special Prosecuting Attorney in Hardy, Pendleton, and Mineral Counties. During his years as a circuit judge he served as a special judge in other counties on numerous occasions and several times was called to sit on the Supreme Court when a Justice was recused. Judge Cookman has served as President of the West Virginia Judicial Association and as a member and Chairperson of the Judicial Ethics Commission. He recently was appointed by the Supreme Court to be one of four judges on the new statewide Business Court.

Judge Cookman is a graduate of Romney High School, West Virginia University, and West Virginia University College of Law. He and his wife, Paula Jean, live in Romney. They have three children and three grandchildren.

Judge Keadle, 75, has been a judge since 1985 and an attorney since 1974. He practiced law in Romney from 1974 until 1981 and also was an assistant prosecutor in

Hampshire County during that time. Judge Keadle then moved to Buckhannon and practiced law there before his election to the bench in 1984.

Judge Keadle is a graduate of Alderson High School, West Virginia University, and West Virginia University College of Law. Between high school and college, he served four years in the Marine Corps; he was a sergeant by the time of his discharge. He then was a state trooper in Romney and Buckhannon for nearly eight years before enrolling in college.

Judge Keadle and his wife recently moved from Buckhannon to her hometown of Romney. They have two children and three grandchildren.

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