

Battle for Supreme Court is bitter

LOCAL

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by Thomas Moore

Ceballos.

One of the nastiest campaigns this election year has been the race for Nevada Supreme Court Judge between Clark County Juvenile Judge Miriam Shearing and District Court Judge J. Charles Thompson. The winner of the race will take the seat of retiring Nevada Supreme Court Judge John Mowbray.

The Nevada Supreme Court is the court of last resort for state cases. It hears cases and disputes involving the Nevada Constitution and is the last stop, before the United States Supreme Court, for any case that does not come under federal jurisdiction. The Justices are elected to the court for a six year term.

Thompson and his supporters have accused Shearing of ignoring the case of child killer Manuel Lopez. Lopez was convicted of brutally killing his 4-year-old stepdaughter Jessica

Thompson's television adds claim that Shearing simply forgot about Lopez's appeal keeping him from being executed for two extra years.

Shearing's campaign claims that Thompson court has "lost the appearance of fairness" because he has refused to disqualify himself from cases where one of the parties before his court has contributed to his re-election effort.

Miriam Shearing
Occupation Clark County Juvenile Court Judge

Past Experience Shearing has been a Juvenile Court Judge since 1990 and a District Court Judge since 1983. She was previously a Justice of the Peace in Las Vegas Township from 1977-80. She has been secretary, director and president of the Nevada District Judges Association as well as other legal societies and professional organizations. Shearing is married and

has three children.

Objective Says she is not a part of the "good old boys" who refuse to accept the changing face of Nevada, whose interests must not gain a stranglehold on the Nevada Supreme Court.

J. Charles Thompson
Occupation District Court Judge

Past Experience Has served as a District Court Judge since 1975. He has been a part-time instructor on legal matters at UNLV as well as a lecturer for the Nevada State Bar Association. Thompson has served as a faculty member at the National Judicial College and was selected by the Nevada Trial Lawyers Association as Jurist of the Year for 1977. He is currently the president of the Nevada District Judges Association.

Objective To be a "guardian" of Nevada's entire legal system.

them. Once in affect, the act may only affect non-disabled people in indirect ways, such as the costs of retrofitting businesses.

On the other hand, the Clark County Commission may decide to pass a new property tax on homeowners to pay for an extension of a road that could run through their neighborhood. In that case both the cost of the road and its intrusion will be felt almost immediately and directly by the people in that neighborhood.

The same is true for the Clark County Court System. The decisions our district judges and justices of the peace make today set precedent for state and local laws that will regulate peoples lives tomorrow.

Justices of the peace handle criminal misdemeanors, felonies and civil suits. Their decisions may immediately effect many students.

"They (students) could appear in front of them at anytime," said Jerry Simich, assistant professor of political science. "It's a powerful position. Their decisions effect people's lives for a long period of time. They should get to know about them and vote on them."

Simich said it's important to choose people with "sound judgement" who will make the right decisions.

The County Commission

The county commission is the policy making body of city government. It also governs those areas which are not in the city. The commission serves as the board for McCarran Airport, the city sanitation district and University Medical Center among others and has control of all the regional boards such as the boards of health and transportation. It passes local ordinances and policies.

The Commission governs Clark County which stretches from Bunkerville to Laughlin. The seat has a four year term.

Bruce Woodbury, Republican

Incumbent: three previous terms

Political Past: Chair of the regional transportation commission, senior member of the regional flood control district board, former commission chair, private law practice for 20 years.

Objective: Make sure plans, such as master transportation, clean air and flood control plans, are implemented. He also wants to improve parks and recreation services and add cultural aspects. He is concerned with growth management.

Mel Clark, Libertarian

Occupation: Construction Consultant, former city employee.

Political Past: Past president of local Jaycee chapter

Objective: Fighting for freedom and less government. He is opposed to special interest and the use of tax dollars for these issues. He is opposed to tax dollars for building schools, new communities for those just coming in and primaries. He wants privatization of city jobs, a voucher system for medical care and a better water system.

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