

# JUDGE ADDELIAR GUY 1923-1997

## Guy

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for seven years.

In 1964, former Clark County District Attorney Ted Marshall hired Guy as a research and administrative assistant after meeting him at a Young Democrats political convention. Two years later, when Guy had met state residency requirements, he became the state's first black deputy district attorney.

He served as chief deputy district attorney from 1973 to 1975 when he was appointed to serve as a District Court judge in 1975 by former Gov. Mike O'Callaghan. In an earlier interview O'Callaghan recalled choosing Guy, "because of what people said about him and everything everybody said about him is true."

Guy would later campaign and win re-election bids to retain his seat for 20 years. In an annual Las Vegas Review-Journal survey of local judges - with information and scorecards from local attorneys - Guy regularly scored above average in his knowledge of the law and his consistency in judgments.

And from 1975 until his retirement, he served as an alternate justice of the Nevada Supreme Court.

"He was a pillar of integrity and honesty," said Judge Michael Douglas who was appointed to replace Guy by Gov. Miller in January 1996 when Guy retired for health reasons.

"He set high standards, had a high work ethic and expected us to give our best," said Douglas who worked in the District Attorney's Office prior to his appointment. "He made me a better attorney and a better judge."

Guy established himself as a compassionate judge whose courtroom demeanor emphasized protocol and respect for the law and tradition. He passed on his high standards for the legal profession to all the attorneys who appeared before him, particularly the black lawyers, several attorneys said.

The young African-American attorneys who litigated in his courtroom, had to be especially well-prepared, said attorney David Phillips.

"We had to be ready, when we went into his court," Douglas said. "He made us work harder, but we appreciated it because we knew why he



Clockwise, Judge Guy always had words of advice and encouragement for all of Las Vegas' youth. The judge was considered a legal profession trailblazer becoming Nevada's first black deputy district attorney and District Court Judge. Guy, seen here filing re-election papers, never lost an election during his 20 years on the bench. Sentinel-Voice file photos

was doing it.

"He mentored and supported the minority members of the bar and asked us, 'Who is going to take my place?'" Douglas said.

Guy often used plenty of time to research and consult with others to ensure his decisions were right, even when sentencing convicted people to prison. "He wanted them to place value on their lives and he attempted to change their lives," Douglas said. "He acknowledged the dignity of all, but he wasn't preachy."

Guy was determined to help young people, especially African-Americans, achieve their rightful place in society. He worked with the Boy Scouts of American and the Boy's and Girls Club of Las Vegas (whose West Las Vegas facility - which is now undergoing an expansion - is named in Guy's honor. One of the Clark County School District's new middle schools will be named in his honor).

He even sponsored the Addeliar D. Guy Law



School Scholarship Fund for aspiring legal students.

Guy, who was the first black to serve on the Las Vegas Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, also served the Las Vegas NAACP, the North Las Vegas Rotary Club, Help Them Walk Again, Toastmaster's, Pop Warner Football, Saints and Sinners, the American Legion, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the March of Dimes, the United Way and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

He also served on U.S. Sen. Harry Reid's Service Academy Board, recommending young people for appointments to one of the four military academies and for reserve officer training.

"A decorated soldier, I counted on Judge Guy's ability to astutely assess the character and the temperament of

young Nevadans seeking to lead our armed forces," Reid said. "Nevada has lost a hero and I have lost a close personal friend."

"He was one-of-a-kind, a real jewel," said Yvonne Atkinson-Gates, chairwoman of the Clark County Commission. She said Guy's most precious gift to her was his advice of which she cherished.

"He advised me to be inclusive, to look at the whole community, not just one aspect of it," she said.

Guy was also known as a committed family man. "It was something to see him with his grandchildren," Douglas said. "They will really miss him. We will all really miss him."

State Sen. Neal, a close friend of the judge's for 30 years, was moved during Tuesday's services, when he described how much he'll miss the personal comradery that Guy and he shared.

Neal related Guy's struggle with the "illusive

twins" of justice and fairness and their relation to race in the legal system. "No mindful discussion can take place on the issue without an understanding of the sociological issues of the black community," Neal quoted from a 1983 speech Guy delivered to the National Bar Association.

Besides Miller, other dignitaries that were among the hundreds of friends and family that attended the Catholic funeral mass included members of the Nevada Supreme Court and the Clark County District Court - all dressed in their black robes; Las Vegas Mayor Jan Laverty Jones; North Las Vegas Councilman John Rhodes, Sheriff Jerry Keller and local radio host and columnist Barbara Robinson.

Pall bearers were Dr. William "Bob" Bailey, District Attorney Stewart Bell, Dr. John Crear, Marty Exber, Orin Grossman, Danny Herndon, Seth Lublin and Nick

Panellis.

Honorary pall bearers were Prescott Berry, Wesley Dillard, the Hon. Glenn T. Johnson, Jerry Jorry, the Hon. William Peterson and Dr. Lynwood Rayford.

Burial was held at Palm Memorial Estates as a full military honor guard provided the full ceremony due this former soldier who became a beloved justice.

At the time of his retirement in Jan. 1996, Guy seemed to have been content with life's work.

"I've enjoyed my life," he said then. "For the most part, I've been lucky. I've had people help me who I've never known, and I've had people help me that I never knew helped me."

On Tuesday, hundreds of some of those same people honored Guy for his legacy of helping inspire greater achievement in their lives.

## Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

### Theta Phi Lambda Chapter

would like to extend our sincere condolences on the passing of our esteemed

## Brother Judge Addeliar Guy



He truly embodied the aims of our dear fraternity:

**Manly Deeds,  
Scholarship and  
Love for All Mankind**

Russell E. Flye, President  
Frank Russell, Vice-President

