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*District Judge Ron Svaty
Ellsworth County District Court*

Longtime 20th Judicial District judge to retire

TOPEKA — District Judge Ron Svaty, who has served in Ellsworth County in the 20th Judicial District since 2004, will retire Oct. 1.

Svaty has spent all but his first year out of law school working in Ellsworth. He clerked for one year for the Alaska Supreme Court following graduation from Stanford University School of Law in 1967.

Svaty practiced law in Ellsworth from 1969 until his election to the bench.

An Ellsworth native, he graduated from Kansas State University in 1964 with a liberal arts degree and pre-law emphasis. He and his wife, Pat, have been married 53 years, and they have three daughters and six grandchildren.

Svaty said he will miss his association with the legal profession.

"What stands out, and what I'll miss the most, are the dedicated lawyers I've dealt with as a judge. I've been extremely impressed with their ability and commitment. I'm going to miss that the most. Most of them are idealists; they look on the law as a calling. I know that's not true everywhere, but it is out here."

He said he also will miss his longtime secretary Vi Jiricek, who has worked for him since he returned to Ellsworth in 1969 and is currently battling cancer.

"I'm praying for the best for her," he said.

Svaty said his retirement plans include attending his Stanford law class' 50th reunion in October and helping his nephew Josh Svaty, a former state representative, in his campaign for the Democratic nomination for governor in 2018.

Judges in the 20th Judicial District are elected by partisan ballot. State statute requires the governor to select a replacement to complete a vacated term of office. Svaty was last elected to a four-year term in 2014.

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