

Judge Races – Answers to Some Questions

I've received a number of questions regarding various judicial races so I will try to answer them generally with the following information:

The state level judicial races are partisan contests; that is they are contested by party. The candidates run as Republicans or Democrats. The only elected offices for which candidates may cross file are County Common Pleas Judges, District Magistrates and School Board (on the theory that these are non-partisan).

Retention Elections

In Pennsylvania, at the end of a judge's term instead of running for re-election, if a judge wishes to continue to serve, the judge must face a yes-no retention election. This is non-partisan. The judge runs without party affiliation and all voters may vote on retention for each judge. (Magistrates must face re-election)

Supreme Court Justices Facing Retention

Thomas Saylor (R)

Debra Todd (D)

Superior Court Judge Facing Retention

Jacqueline Shogan (D)

Supreme Court Partisan Election (Elect One)

Justice Sallie Mundy was appointed to the court and must now run for a full term. Since only one candidate is running in each party, each will win their respective primaries and face each other in the General election in November.

Sallie Mundy (R) Incumbent

Dwayne Woodruff (D)

Superior Court Partisan Election (Elect Four)

Two of the three incumbents appointed to the court chose not to run opening two positions. One incumbent appointee is running for election. A fourth opening was created when Sallie Mundy was appointed to the Supreme Court. Four Republicans and four Democrats will face each other in November.

Craig Stedman (R) Endorsed by State GOP
Paula Patrick (R) Endorsed by State GOP
Wade Kagarise (R) Endorsed by State GOP
Emil Giordano (R) Endorsed by State GOP
Mary Murray (R) Not endorsed by State GOP, Nor recommended by Bar Assoc.
Geoffrey Moulton, Jr. (D) Incumbent
Carolyn Nichols (D)
Maria McLaughlin
Deborah Kunselman (D)
William Caye II (D)

Commonwealth Court Partisan Election (Elect Two)

One of the two incumbents appointed to the court chose not to run for election opening a position. One incumbent is running. There are only two Republicans on the ballot so they will face two of the six Democrats in November.

Christine Cannon (R)
Paul Lalley (R)
Joseph Cosgrove (D) Incumbent
Todd Eagen (D)
Ellen Ceisler (D)
Bryan Barbin (D)
Timothy Barry (D)
Irene Clarck (D)

Washington County Common Pleas Judge (Elect One)

One vacancy on the Common Pleas bench opened up with the retirement of President Judge O'Dell Seneca. Five candidates have cross filed to fill the position and will therefore appear on both Republican and Democrat primary ballots. Material on the candidates and Bar Association ratings have been disseminated in other publications. Voters in each party will vote for one candidate. If different candidates win the Republican and Democrat nominations, they will face each other in November. If one candidate wins both nominations, the election is pretty much over but for a possible write in effort in November.

Phillippe Melograne
Kristin Clingerman
Joyce Hatfield-Wise
Brandon Neuman
Charles Kurowski

Dave Ball
Vice Chairman
Washington County Republican Party

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