



PRESS RELEASE
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United States District Judge Richard T. Haik announced today that Magistrate Judge Mildred E. “Mimi” Methvin will retire effective November 1, 2009, to open her own mediation practice after more than twenty-six years on the federal bench in Lafayette, Louisiana.

A native of Alexandria, Louisiana, Judge Methvin graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Tulane University in 1974, and received her J.D. Degree from Georgetown University Law Center in 1976. While attending law school, she worked full-time on Capitol Hill as an administrative assistant and speech-writer for U. S. Representative Gillis W. Long. Following law school, Judge Methvin practiced law as an associate at Gist, Methvin & Trimble in Alexandria. In 1979, she was appointed as an Assistant U. S. Attorney in Shreveport, where she defended medical malpractice cases, and helped prosecute a lengthy vote-buying case arising out of the 1978 Congressional election. In 1981, she moved to West Virginia to serve as an environmental staff attorney with the Department of Interior’s Office of Surface Mining. On June 12, 1983, at age thirty, she was appointed U. S. Magistrate Judge for the Western District of Louisiana, sitting in Lafayette. At the time, she was the youngest federal judge of any type in the United States.

Judge Methvin handles a wide range of criminal and civil pretrial matters, presides over jury and non-jury trials, and has conducted over a thousand mediations. She is a frequent speaker on alternative dispute resolution, civil case management, and federal practice, and has been a featured speaker at the Phi Beta Kappa Lecture Series at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In June, she spoke in Boston about federal court practice at an Aviation Litigation Seminar sponsored by the American Conference Institute.

Since 1989, Judge Methvin has been deeply involved with the American Inns of Court movement, serving as organizational chair of two Inns of Court in Lafayette, Louisiana, and assisted with a third in New Iberia. She has served as President and long-time executive board member of the American Inn of Court of Acadiana. In 2008, the Acadiana Inn won two of the twelve national awards for programming excellence.

In 1997, U. S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist appointed Judge Methvin as one of only three magistrate judges in the country to serve on the committee which makes nationwide policy for the federal magistrate judges system. She served in that capacity until 2003.

For the last five years, Judge Methvin has appeared anonymously as “Captain Jack Sparrow,” complete with beard, cutlass, and chocolate pirate coins, at the Games of Acadiana, a fund-raiser for the Miles Perret Cancer Center. In addition, she has served as a volunteer judge for the National High School Mock Trial Championship program, and has participated in a number of local and state bar association programs.

Judge Methvin has two children, three stepchildren, and two grandchildren. She obtained her second-degree black belt in American Shotokan Karate in 2004, and recently completed an RYT-certified yoga teacher training course. Since 1999, she has taught kickboxing and yoga classes to courthouse personnel twice a week in her jury room.

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