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FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge  
19th Judicial Circuit  
Lake County  
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Date of Release: October 31, 2025  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Waukegan, Illinois

## ASSOCIATE JUDGE GEORGE D. STRICKLAND RETIRES

Associate Judge George D. Strickland marks a significant milestone today, October 31st, 2025, as he retires from the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit after over 19 years of dedicated service to the people of Lake County. As a fitting tribute to his distinguished career, a gathering took place, bringing together colleagues, friends, and family to celebrate his impactful journey on the bench. Chief Judge Daniel B. Shanes and Circuit Judge Victoria A. Rossetti eloquently shared their reflections, honoring his career.

Judge Strickland received his undergraduate degree from Northern Illinois University and his Juris Doctor in 1983 from John Marshall Law School. He was admitted to practice in Illinois in 1983 and was a sole practitioner for a short time before joining the Lake County State's Attorney's Office in 1984. He served as an Assistant State's Attorney for approximately 22 years, during which he tried numerous felony cases and served as the Chief of the Criminal Division. Judge Strickland was appointed to the bench on July 12th, 2006.

"Saying goodbye to such a good friend is not easy; it brings both sadness and pride due to his distinguished career. I began working with George as an assistant state's attorney in Lake County in 1984, and he has consistently been an exceptional jurist. He has tried and presided over some of the most notable and serious cases. As a judge, George has been described as fair, honest, and respectful in every case he has handled. He has always been a teacher, mentor, and leader. His career is marked by a dedication to the law, hard work, dignity, respect, humility, humor, and friendship towards all of us at the Nineteenth Judicial Circuit. George understood the significance of his black robe and title, and he never misused them. He was always confident, unafraid to make decisions, and unconcerned about the possibility of reversal. He demonstrated fairness, open-mindedness, and preparedness in all his assignments. He served without prejudice, maintained integrity, and fulfilled his duties with the utmost good faith. He has truly lived up to his oath as a judge, and he will be greatly missed. It was my honor to serve with George," said Judge Victoria A. Rossetti.

"George entered public service as a young prosecutor in the Lake County State's Attorney's Office. He quickly earned a reputation for being thorough, fearless, and fair; three qualities that would define his entire career. In 2006, George made the leap from advocate to arbiter, joining the bench. It was a natural progression for someone who spent decades upholding the law with such consistency and care. George approached the bench with humility and respect for the enormous responsibility the role carried. He understood that every case represented real people and real consequences; he listened, really listened. And while George could be tough when the law required it, he also had a deep appreciation for the people and the stories behind their cases. Judge Strickland's contribution to our Circuit goes well beyond the Courtroom. He has mentored dozens of young lawyers and new judges. Teaching them not only black-letter law but also the quiet skills that define true judicial temperament. He reminded all of us that justice at its best is steady, principled, and unflinching, even when the world outside is watching. Judge Strickland, on behalf of the entire Nineteenth Judicial

Circuit, thank you; you have served with honor, and you leave this bench stronger for having sat upon it," said Chief Judge Daniel B. Shanes.

In his own farewell, Judge Strickland reflected, "To all my fellow judges, the young lawyers, and our justice partners, I want you to remember the significance of what you do each day, even when it may seem trivial. You are touching people's lives, and that is a great honor. Each of you is making a difference in our community. I feel incredibly blessed to have had this opportunity; thank you."

Throughout his tenure, Judge Strickland handled a wide array of cases, presiding over traffic, family, misdemeanor criminal, domestic violence, bond court, and felony cases. He was also an active member of multiple Court Committees, contributing to initiatives in technology, community outreach, judicial education, and security.

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