



News Release

FROM: Chambers of the Chief Judge
19th Judicial Circuit
Lake County
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Waukegan, Illinois

TWO NEW JUDGES COMPLETE LAKE COUNTY BENCH

Chief Judge James Booras received official word on Thursday, February 12, 2009, from the Administrative Office of the Illinois Supreme Court that the two newly elected associate judges of the 19th Judicial Circuit are John J. Scully and Donna-Jo Vorderstrasse. "We congratulate these outstanding and experienced attorneys and look forward to their joining the bench as quickly as possible," said Booras. "Adding two judges to the bench will be a significant benefit in support of the disposition of our rising caseloads in a more timely and expeditious manner."

John J. Scully retired from the United States Attorney's Office in 2007, after a storied career as an Assistant United States Attorney, where he is best-known as a member of the team of prosecutors on the "Family Secrets" case. He began his federal career with the Department of Justice in 1982 as a Special Attorney with the United States Organized Crime Strike Force. In 1990, the Strike Force merged with the United States Attorney's Office. Judge-Elect Scully specialized in investigations concerning corrupt organizations, but he also investigated and prosecuted numerous cases in U.S. District Court including charges of racketeering, wire and mail fraud, stock manipulation, tax fraud, illegal narcotic conspiracies and other federal violations. On October 28, 2008, John was presented with the John Marshall Award from the Attorney General of the United States. This award is the Department of Justice's highest award presented to attorneys for contributions and excellence in legal performance.

Judge-Elect Scully's career as a prosecutor began in Lake County, however as an Assistant State's Attorney in the Lake County State's Attorney's Office in the early 1980's, and his election as Associate Judge brings him back home. He received his undergraduate degree from the United States Naval Academy in 1969 and earned his Juris Doctor from the University of San Diego School of Law, graduating with honors in 1974. He was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1978, and is also licensed in the State of California.

Mr. Scully has extensive military experience. He is a Vietnam War veteran, serving in combat waters, on the destroyer USS Hull. He was on active duty with the United States Navy from 1965-1978, resigning with the rank of Lt. Commander. Thereafter, he served in the United States Naval Reserves from 1978 to 1999 specializing in intelligence assignments, and finally retired with the rank of Captain. John and his wife Pat are area residents of Lindenhurst and have four grown children, and four grandchildren.

Donna-Jo Vorderstrasse is a partner in the law firm of Diver, Grach, Quade & Masini. She has practiced her entire 25 year career in Lake County, and concentrates in family law, mediation, and real estate. A large part of her legal practice involves representing children in family law cases and serving as the Guardian ad Litem for minors and disabled adults in probate cases. In 2002, Ms. Vorderstrasse began her career as a family court mediator. She says, "On a personal level, it is very rewarding to assist people in working out a peaceful resolution to their divorce and to instruct them along the way regarding the best interests of their children. On a professional level, mediating has taught me the importance of remaining neutral and listening to both sides of a case."

Ms. Vorderstrasse is well-known as a leader in local bar association matters. She has extensive involvement in the Association of Women Attorneys in Lake County, having served as Treasurer, Vice-President, and finally as President in 2008. During her term, she inaugurated the women's bar's first Charitable Committee, with the goal of assisting women in the Lake County community, and also its first continuing legal education seminar on Professionalism and Ethics.

Since 2005, Judge-Elect Vorderstrasse has been a member of the Sexual Offender Management Board, which is a coalition of social service agencies including court personnel, dedicated to the coordination of services to sexual offenders and their victims. Her work on the subcommittee charged with developing a protocol for when contact between offenders and their children is appropriate brought her insight, she says "into the interplay between all the different departments in the sexual offender arena."

Judge-Elect Vorderstrasse attended Valparaiso University on a 4-year scholarship, graduating in 1979 with Highest Honors. She was President of the Chi Sigma Xi Sorority and a graduate of Christ College Honors. She was awarded a scholarship to the law school at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, where she earned her Juris Doctor in 1984. After being admitted to practice law in Illinois, Donna-Jo served as a prosecutor for the Lake County State's Attorney's Office from 1984-1986. She and her family reside in Fox Lake, Lake County, Illinois.

Arrangements for the formal installation of John J. Scully and Donna-Jo Vorderstrasse as Associate Judges are forthcoming.

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<http://19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us>