

Michele Herrington
P.O. Box 1565
Helena, Montana 59624

September 17, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members,

This letter is a recommendation that you select DeeAnn Cooney to serve as First Judicial District Judge. Ms. Cooney has been a friend and mentor for the past six years.

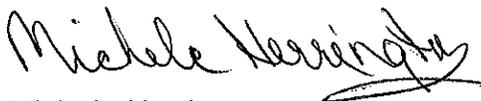
As a speech pathologist in Pondera County, Montana, I work with many children who live in grinding poverty. DeeAnn Cooney is one of the very few people with whom I can have productive conversations about the circumstances in which my students are living.

While Ms. Cooney does not condone the neglect and abuse that many children face, she has an empathy and insight into my students' families that enable her to focus on the issues at hand. I rely on her advice because she is able to reserve judgement, have compassion for the circumstances of all parties, and make recommendations that enhance the outcomes for all the people involved, whether they are the children themselves, their families or educators.

All of the people of Montana, whether they are wealthy landowners or poor hired hands, would get a fair hearing from Ms. Cooney. I know this because I benefit from her good judgement and perceptive analysis on a regular basis.

Thank you for strongly considering Ms. Cooney for this very important position.

Respectfully yours,



Michele Herrington

September 17, 2015

Judicial Nominating Commission
Montana Supreme Court
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Commission Members:

I am pleased to offer this letter recommending Dee Ann Cooney for the important position she seeks.

I formed an association with Ms. Cooney some sixteen years ago when she volunteered her skills, compassion and abundant energy to the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) that I directed in the First Judicial District. Over a number of years to follow, Ms. Cooney was appointed to several cases. Her work as a CASA volunteer was distinguished by a focused commitment to each child she served. She demonstrated a knack for quickly finding the heart of a case, a talent for replacing obstructions with solutions, and a habit of reminding all involved of the urgency child protection work demands. During her tenure with CASA, Ms. Cooney proved herself a decisive, objective and properly impatient child advocate.

I have a long history in child welfare services--twenty-five plus years with what is presently known as the Division of Child and Family Services and fourteen years as the director of Helena's CASA program. I've witnessed the frightful manner in which the Court's calendar has been progressively consumed by child abuse and neglect matters. Ms. Cooney is more than sensitized to this issue and deeply comprehends the destruction child abuse brings to children and families. She, too, knows well the system by which these cases are processed.

As District Judge, I am confident Dee Ann Cooney will serve the office admirably.

Sincerely,



Bill Collins

416 Monroe

Helena, MT 59601

(406) 443-6434

billcollins2012@yahoo.com

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Thursday, October 1, 2015 5:39 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Tom Keegan [<mailto:tkeegan1313@aol.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, September 29, 2015 10:11 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: First Judicial District Judge Vacancy

Dear Commission Members,

Recently retired, I practiced law in Helena for 40+ years. In all that time we have been blessed to have great District Court Judges. It is my measured opinion that Dee Ann Cooney will continue that tradition. I have known her for a long time and can unreservedly tell you she is a very good lawyer and more importantly a quality person. Please send her name to Governor Bullock. Thanks.

Tom Keegan

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P. O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

October 1, 2015

Dear Montana Judicial Nomination Commission and Governor Steve Bullock,

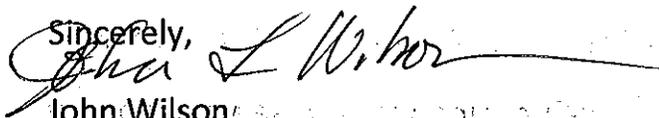
I am writing in support of selection of DeeAnn Cooney for District Court Judge for the 1st Judicial District. I have known DeeAnn both in her capacity as a practicing attorney and as a personal friend for many years. She is a woman of strong integrity who exhibits well developed, positive professional interpersonal skills.

Two personal attributes that distinguish her as an excellent candidate for District Court Judge are her thoughtfulness and her thoroughness. Her thirty years as a practicing attorney have given her a significant and useful set of professional skills and experiences to draw upon in the application and administration of Montana law as District Court Judge.

No stranger to the application of Montana law through the judicial system, she understands the "mechanics" of how the court works. She has extensive litigation experience, civil law experience, and CASA family law experience. Together with an impressive track record of resolving issues before they are litigated, DeeAnn seeks the best outcome for all involved parties.

DeeAnn is an experienced, knowledgeable, fair, unbiased, creative and talented individual. She is smart, quick, insightful and frankly not easily intimidated. Her knowledge, skills and proven professional track record will make her an excellent District Judge.

Sincerely,



John Wilson

405 Monroe Ave.

Helena, MT 59601

406 443 2884



Lewis & Clark C O U N T Y



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Andy Hunthausen

Michael A. Murray

Susan Good Geise

City County Building 316 North Park Helena, Montana 59623 406.447.8304 Fax: 406.447.8370

October 5, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing in support of DeeAnn Cooney's appointment as District Judge. I have known DeeAnn in her professional capacity for many years. She is a very competent attorney and has consistently brought a tireless work ethic and integrity to the work she has performed on behalf of Lewis and Clark County.

I also know DeeAnn as an active member of the Helena community. She and her family have been involved community members, and she has been an steadfast contributor to many projects benefiting the community.

Judges bring their life experiences and personalities into their decisions on the bench. DeeAnn is a direct and decisive person. She is empathetic, fair-minded, and has no personal agendas to bring to the Court. I believe that DeeAnn would make a balanced and effective judge for the First Judicial District, and I urge the Commission to pass her name to the Governor for consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike Murray, County Commissioner

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 7, 2015 4:25 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Jan and John Wilson [<mailto:jwilmt@msn.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2015 1:42 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Letter of support for DeeAnn Cooney - 1st Judicial District Judge Applicant

October 7, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P. O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Montana Judicial Nomination Commission and Governor Steve Bullock,

I am writing this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney for the district court judge position for the 1st Judicial District. DeeAnn is a longtime friend whom I have found to be a vibrant, capable and passionate person, very involved with her family, friends and community. She would make a good judge because of the breadth of her life experiences and her balanced and deliberate approach to resolving life-changing circumstances. DeeAnn is committed to finding the best outcome for all involved.

I have admired her energy and commitment to the Helena School District and the Helena community over the past 25 years. She was a H.A.M.E. (Helena Advocates for Montessori Education) board member which advocated for and established the first public school Montessori classroom in Montana. She also tutored students at both the elementary and middle school levels and served on the Helena School District Book Challenge Committee. DeeAnn was also an active CASA volunteer for many years. She is presently a board member of the Last Chance Nordic Ski Club. She has devoted much attention outside her regular job to developing and supporting a healthy and safe environment in which people living in Helena can thrive.

DeeAnn is well-versed in Montana and federal law because she is a practiced attorney of 30 years. She would serve well the citizens of Lewis and Clark and Broadwater counties. People

can count on her to be just, fair and impartial as she reviews and deliberates their particular situations. They can be assured that her high ethics only permit a faithful execution of her pledge to uphold the law. Please give DeeAnn Cooney your highest consideration.

Jan Jamruszka-Wilson
405 Monroe Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

BOONE KARLBERG P.C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

W.T. BOONE (1910-1984)
KARL R. KARLBERG (1923-1988)
JAMES J. BENN (1944-1992)
THOMAS H. BOONE, of Counsel
WILLIAM L. CROWLEY
RANDY J. COX
ROBERT J. SULLIVAN
DEAN A. STENSLAND
CYNTHIA K. THIEL
ROSS D. TILLMAN
JAMES A. BOWDITCH

MATTHEW B. HAYHURST
SCOTT M. STEARNS
NATASHA PRINZING JONES
THOMAS J. LEONARD
JULIE R. SIRRS
TRACEY NEIGHBOR JOHNSON
CHRISTOPHER L. DECKER
RANDY J. TANNER
MARY CILE GLOVER-ROGERS
ZACHARY A. FRANZ
KARI L. DADY

October 9, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620

Re: Application of DeeAnn Gribble Cooney

Dear Commission Members:

I write this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney for the District Judge position in the First Judicial District. I have known DeeAnn since 1979. She is a friend and a professional colleague. I support her application without reservation for the important position of judge in the First Judicial District. The judges of that district are presented some of the toughest and most controversial cases that arise in Montana, and the State has been blessed to have numerous first-rate judges there. DeeAnn will continue that tradition.

Having practiced law in Montana since my admission in the fall of 1979, I have appeared in almost every judicial district in the state and in all of the federal district courts. I have argued or tried cases before 35 of the existing state district court judges and before all of the federal court judges. My experiences have convinced me that a good judge should have three things: 1) A commitment to the rule of law. It is not the job of the district court judge to shade decisions based on the desired result or outcome. I have had many conversations with DeeAnn regarding her views, and she understands and appreciates that the rule of law is more important than the result in any given case; 2) Patience and tolerance. Particularly with *pro se* litigants and people whose appearance in the judicial system is a frightening and intimidating experience, a trial judge must convey a sense of fairness and compassion. DeeAnn is both fair and compassionate; 3) A committed physical and intellectual work ethic. This is self-explanatory, and DeeAnn has demonstrated these characteristics in her work for years. I doubt you will hear to the contrary.

Judicial Nomination Commission
October 9, 2015
Page 2

In addition to possessing the characteristics of a first-rate judge, DeeAnn is a first-rate person. As noted, I have known her since 1979. She is a friend and I admire what she has accomplished - with her family, her career and the place in which she lives. DeeAnn has been actively involved in good causes and has devoted her energy to important improvements in this state and in her community.

I strongly urge the Commission members to favorably consider DeeAnn and to forward her name to Governor Bullock for his consideration. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randy J. Cox", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Randy J. Cox



Montana Association of Counties

Serving Montana Counties Since 1909

2715 SKYWAY DRIVE, SUITE A, HELENA, MT 59602

(406) 449-4360 Fax (406) 442-5238

www.mtcounties.org

October 13, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
C/O Lois Menzies
Office of the Court Administrator
PO Box 203005
Helena MT 59620-3005

RE: 1st Judicial District Judgeship Letter of Support for Dee Ann Cooney

I am pleased to have the opportunity to submit this letter of support for Dee Ann Cooney of Helena. I first became acquainted with Dee Ann while serving as a trustee of the Montana Association of Counties Joint Powers Authority and Joint Powers Insurance Authority, both group risk sharing trusts, providing workers compensation and property and casualty coverage for member counties in Montana. For the past ten years as the Executive Director of the Montana Association of Counties I also serve as a trustee and trust secretary of our three group risk sharing trusts. In this capacity I have the opportunity to observe the work performed by attorneys that we engage to provide defense to our member counties. Simply put, Dee Ann is one of the best.

Dee Ann has been providing defense services to our Trusts for some 20 years, covering a vast array of types of claims such as workers compensation claims, road disputes, discrimination and employment claims, arbitrations, and jail and law enforcement claims.

The things I have learned about Dee Ann that stand out to me are her thoroughness in researching and preparing a case, her vast knowledge of Montana and Federal Law, her attention to minute detail and her ability to apply all of this to a case at hand in a fair, impartial and neutral manner. While in her role as a defense attorney, she is an advocate for the defendant county, she must also weigh the plaintiff's allegations and ultimately recommend a fair settlement of a claim if necessary. However, by far the most important things are her character, integrity and sound judgement. Those traits cannot be learned but are a part of a person's fiber and being. I believe that is what makes a good judge.

Dee Ann possesses all of the skills, knowledge and personality traits that will make her an excellent judge, serving the people of Montana in a fair and impartial manner.

I urge your favorable consideration of Dee Ann Cooney as a nominee to Governor Bullock for his appointment to the vacancy in the Judgeship of the 1st Judicial District.

Sincerely,

L Harold Blattie
Executive Director

October 12, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Letter of Support for DeeAnn Cooney.

Greetings from Jim Smith, writing in support of Ms. DeeAnn Cooney's application for District Judge.

I write as a layman and can only speak to DeeAnn's personality and character, rather than her legal qualifications and abilities. The only hesitation I have writing this letter is my preference that DeeAnn was a candidate for the Helena City Commission. That will be my sole attempt at humor.

I know DeeAnn to be a positive, energetic, contributing community member. Beyond that, however, I know her as a hardworking, fair and thoughtful person. It is, perhaps, those latter qualities that are what the members of the Judicial Nomination Commission seek when they recommend a person for District Judge. If so, I believe she is very well qualified for the position she is seeking.

DeeAnn involved herself in our schools and education since her three children were in their primary grades, as a tutor at Smith and Central grade schools and at Helena Middle School. She has served on the 'Book Challenge' committee for the Helena School District. In addition, she has been a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for many years. As a CASA volunteer, DeeAnn advocated for foster children within the judicial system, always articulating the need for a healthy, permanent placement when reunification with the birth family was no longer an option. She has been the voice of many children over the years, and their lives are better because of her advocacy on their behalf.

I've also skied many a mile with DeeAnn on the Mac Pass ski trails. She is on the board of the Last Chance Nordic Ski Club. She has been an avid supporter of the Prickly Pear Land Trust. As one of the original 'Dirt Divas' she introduced any number of women to the sport of mountain biking and guided them through the wonderful trail system in and around Helena.

DeeAnn and her family have enriched Helena. She cares for this city and its

people, and for all the citizens in the First Judicial District. I believe she will bring a valuable skill set to the bench, one that will balance accountability with compassion; and that she will apply justice fairly in both criminal and civil proceedings.

Thanks you very much for opening this comment period, and allowing me to support Ms. Cooney through this letter. Thanks in advance of the consideration I know it will receive. If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call.

Kindest Regards,

Jim Smith, Mayor
Helena, Montana

406-443-1570 (O)
406-442-0606 (H)
406-949-1002 (C)

HARLEN & PARISH, P. C.

ATTORNEYS AT LAW
36 West Sixth Avenue
Helena, Montana 59601
(406) 443-0360
FAX: (406) 449-3693

October 9, 2015

ADVANCED VIA E-MAIL

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
Helena, MT

Re: DeeAnn Cooney / Applicant for Judge in Montana's First Judicial District

Commission Members:

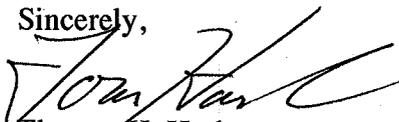
I am writing to offer my full support and recommendation for appointment of Ms. DeeAnn Cooney for Judge in Montana's First Judicial District, to be vacated by Jeffrey M. Sherlock.

DeeAnn has spent the majority of her legal career representing Montana's Counties throughout the state as defense counsel in association with MACO. She has proven herself time and again in the areas of litigation defense and in her work as a hearings officer. DeeAnn possesses the requisite qualities to serve Lewis and Clark County as District Judge. She will transition her passion, hard work and demand for fairness to the bench and I am excited for DeeAnn to have an opportunity to apply her talents at this level.

DeeAnn has also demonstrated her ability to balance a demanding legal career with her dedication to family. She and her husband, Mike, have raised three wonderful children and are proud to call Helena their home for the past 25 plus years.

I believe DeeAnn is well qualified and would be a wonderful addition to the judiciary. Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to offer my support for DeeAnn.

Sincerely,



Thomas K. Harlen

1907 Leslie Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
October 9, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: *Application of DeeAnn Gribble Cooney*
First Judicial District Judgeship Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

It is my privilege to offer for your consideration this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney's application to fill the position of District Court Judge in the First Judicial District.

I spent the first twenty years of my practice with the law firm of Garlington, Lohn, & Robinson and the last six years working closely with DeeAnn in my position with MACo Defense Services. Without hesitation, I am proud to say that I have spent my entire career working with the finest lawyers in the state.

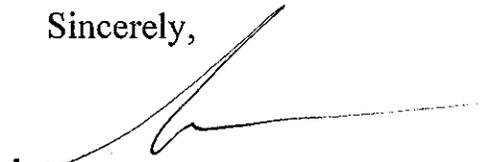
DeeAnn is a brilliant legal scholar with impeccable research and writing skills. Her mind is analytical, her judgment sound, and her work ethic beyond reproach. DeeAnn is meticulously prepared for any task, be it a deposition, an oral argument, or the examination of a witness at trial. She is always professional in her communications with the court, opposing counsel, and witnesses.

DeeAnn's approach to litigation is unique in the sense that she maintains the ability to employ reason and objectivity to cases as they develop. Unlike many of us, she does not allow her ego, or the desire to win, cloud her judgment. This quality ensures that she never loses sight of the best interests of her clients and our profession.

While DeeAnn's practice is primarily the defense of governmental entities, she does not associate herself with either the defense bar or the plaintiffs' bar. The ability to maintain objectivity, regardless of one's background, is an essential quality of any judge. Lawyers too often find themselves evaluating cases, in part, based on the perceived biases of the presiding judge. Knowing DeeAnn as a colleague and a friend, I am confident that her personal feelings would never override her deep-seated belief that judges should be impartial and employ sound reasoning to each and every case over which they preside.

Although we are losing a truly exceptional judge with the retirement of Judge Jeffrey Sherlock, I am honored to recommend DeeAnn Cooney for appointment to the position of District Judge in the First Judicial District.

Sincerely,



Maureen H. Lennon



Smith & Stephens

-P.C. Law Offices-

JOHN E. SMITH, Esq.
john@smithstephens.com

COLIN M. STEPHENS, Esq.
colin@smithstephens.com

NICK K. BROOKE, Esq.
nick@smithstephens.com

Downtown Missoula
315 West Pine
P.O. Box 7337
Missoula, MT 59807
(406) 721-0300
(406) 721-5370 Fax
www.smithandstephenspc.com

AMANDA M. JOHNSON, paralegal
amanda@smithstephens.com

BEN M. DARROW, paralegal
ben@smithstephens.com

CAROL E. SMITH, office manager
carol@smithstephens.com

October 3, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of the Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: Public Comment for First Judicial Dist. Judge

To the Honorable Judicial Nomination Commission:

It is my good fortune to submit this comment on the character and fitness of DeeAnn Gribble Cooney for district court judge for the First Judicial District.

I have known DeeAnn since long before I was an attorney. Although she was a family friend, I came to know her as an attorney when I attended Carroll College. I worked as general gopher and odd-job man for the Downtown Professional Center and the law firm of Utick & Grosfield, the firm for which DeeAnn worked.

DeeAnn was always available to answer my very elementary questions about the practice of law, especially the minutia of the law. She was always very passionate about the practice and the integrity of the profession. She went to great lengths to describe the process and, more importantly, the reason behind the process. She was able to explain it terms that I was able to understand, even the often-complicated public policies.

Based on this history alone, I believe that DeeAnn will be especially patient and skilled at dealing with the ever-growing population of *pro se* litigants with whom she will be dealing as a district court judge.

When I finally decided to go to law school, DeeAnn was the first attorney I asked for a reference letter. She and Norm allowed me to continue to work with them while I was in law school. During this time DeeAnn did an excellent job of taming the arrogance that arises in every first and second year law student, including (or especially) in me. Again, she was patient and imparted the passion and belief she has in our profession.

DeeAnn believes that lawyers can accomplish true good in the world. She devoted her time to the school board and to working with children's causes. Her passion and skill with the law was helpful to everyone she assisted.

DeeAnn is also a skilled attorney. During her time working with the Montana Association of Counties she encountered all classes of individuals. All of these are individuals with whom she will interact as a district court judge, including county commissioners, law enforcement, defense attorneys, insurance adjusters, plaintiff's attorneys, and judges. She was adept at handling all personalities.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly in what is no doubt a very busy judicial district, DeeAnn is a very hard worker with a very good memory. I can recall at least two very document-intensive cases. One particularly was her work on the *White v. Martz* case. This case was the large case that gave birth to the Montana Public Defender system. There were many plaintiffs from many different counties (seven counties if I recall . . . DeeAnn's memory is better than mine). Each plaintiff was making claims about their respective defense counsel. Each plaintiff and each criminal defense attorney came from a different county that had a unique public defender scheme. I had the good fortune of working on this case with DeeAnn and then-Solicitor General Brian Morris. I was stunned at how much information DeeAnn could hold in her head. She worked late hours and was able to process the entire case. It was incredible.

I've been practicing law for ten-years and I know the tasks of district court judges are many and the job is difficult. I do a great deal of appellate work and have well over 30 published opinions from the Montana Supreme Court. I've orally argued before that Court on four occasions. In my capacity as an appellate

attorney, I've read thousands of pages of transcripts. I've read comments by good judges, bad judges, and great judges. I have absolutely no doubt that DeeAnn will be a great judge and the community of Helena, and all of Lewis & Clark County will benefit from her hard work, her veneration of the legal profession, and kindness.

Thank you all for your time and attention.

Regards,
SMITH & STEPHENS, P.C.

Colin M. Stephens

DOUBEK, PYFER & FOX, LLP

Attorneys at Law

JOHN C. DOUBEK
RICK PYFER
PATRICK T. FOX
KEIF STORRAR

307 NORTH JACKSON • P.O. BOX 236
HELENA, MONTANA 59624
406-442-7830
FAX 406-442-7839
www.doubekpyfer.com

CARL A. HATCH
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October 6, 2015

Montana Judicial Nomination Committee

c/o Montana Supreme Court

Room 323, Justice Building

215 North Sanders

P.O. Box 203003

Helena, MT 59620

RE: First Judicial District Court Judge opening - DeeAnn Cooney

Dear Commission Members:

This comment is with regard to the First Judicial District Judge vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Sherlock. We are sorry that Judge Sherlock is retiring. He had a stellar career and was an excellent Judge and public servant in Helena for many years. Although it is extremely difficult to replace a tremendously qualified Judge like Judge Sherlock, it is my opinion that two individuals who have placed nominations rise to the top of the list of potential candidates. I am writing on behalf of Don Jones and DeeAnn Cooney.

DeeAnn Cooney and I have known each other since she began her practice in Helena. We were also in the same neighborhood and I had interaction with her and her family from time to time. She practiced with the Utick & Grosfield firm for many years before taking a job as counsel for the Association of Counties. She has worked for CASA and other youth advocacy groups over the years and has been a tremendous servant of the community and the Court.

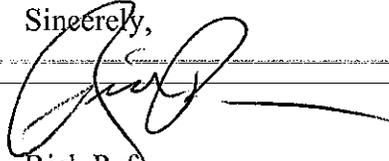
Dee Ann is smart, clear thinking and does a very professional ethical job of advocating for her clients. I believe she would be a fair, unbiased judge who would apply the law to the facts and make reasoned decisions.

Also, the job of district court judge requires a person who has been involved in the court system and knows and understands the social dynamics of many types of scenarios. Unfortunately, divorce and family law in general and criminal law and other processes do take up a large part of the Court's time. DeeAnn would be efficient for this work and fair to all parties involved.

As a social security disability advocate she was well thought of and always was prepared and presented well.

I would recommend her highly for this position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Pyfer", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rick Pyfer
Attorney at Law

RJP/nr

GROSFIELD LAW FIRM

NORMAN H. GROSFIELD

**44 North Last Chance Gulch, Suite 5
ALL MAIL TO: Post Office Box 5015**

norm@grosfieldlaw.com

**Helena, MT 59604-5015
Telephone (406) 443-7295
Fax (888) 833-9509**

October 12, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies

Office of Court Administrator
Post Office Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: DeeAnn Cooney

Dear Commission Members:

I am submitting this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney for the District Judge position in the First Judicial District.

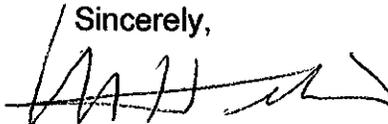
I worked with DeeAnn for approximately 24 years in a general litigation firm, and I believe I am in a good position to evaluate her abilities for consideration as a district court judge. Our office handled many different types of litigation including claims involving personal injury, civil rights, wrongful termination, property damage, subdivision and property disputes, and Social Security disability issues. DeeAnn was involved in all aspects of the litigation process and has extensive experience in civil litigation matters.

DeeAnn also possesses the skills necessary to manage a busy district court docket. She is thorough and efficient, and has excellent writing and research skills as well.

DeeAnn has great empathy for others, especially those who suffer in society. She would protect the rights of all citizens regardless of their status or situation. She would also show patience and courtesy toward all who would appear before her.

I strongly urge the Commission to consider DeeAnn for the open position in the First Judicial District.

Sincerely,



Norman H. Grosfield
Attorney at Law

9 October 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: 1st Judicial District vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to lend support for the nomination of **DeeAnn Cooney** as appointee for the upcoming vacancy in the First Judicial District.

DeeAnn and I worked together for more than 20 years in Norm Grosfield's law office in Helena. She was fresh out of law school when she joined Norm's firm and took on a variety of cases. Norm hired me to help him with legal research and writing, so DeeAnn and I worked very closely together in a small but busy civil practice.

DeeAnn embodies all of the best characteristics of a good judge. She respects the court as an institution; the judicial process itself is meaningful to her (it may sound corny, but she loves the law). She has great integrity; proper ethical and professional conduct are important to her. She is intelligent: capable of understanding and analyzing complex factual and legal information. She is a good writer; her orders will be clear and concise. She believes in fairness; the search for a just resolution under the law will be her goal. She cares about people; those who appear before her will not just be "parties" to a court action, they will be treated as human beings with real life issues to be resolved.

For 30 years DeeAnn has immersed herself in the private practice of law. Although she has not had to master the criminal side of the law, she will work hard to quickly gain the necessary expertise when she is called upon to decide those cases. Her civil litigation experience makes her very knowledgeable about the crucial discovery process, evidentiary disputes, and the nuts and bolts of how cases move through the courts.

By statute (§25-2-126, MCA), the judges in the First Judicial District are charged with extra responsibility because if a party files an action against the State of Montana, the proper place of trial is in the county in which the claim arose or in Lewis and Clark County. Lots

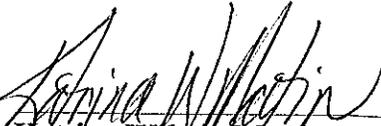
of the biggest cases in the state get filed in that county. DeeAnn will have no difficulty with large, complex, or controversial cases of statewide importance. She keeps herself well informed on issues facing the state as a whole, and her practice representing counties and county officials has taken her to all corners of the state. Her perspective is deep and wide; it goes beyond the capital city, which is important in terms of this vacancy.

One aspect of DeeAnn's career renders her uniquely qualified to step in as a trial court judge. Families under stress are prevalent in today's society; courts are regularly called upon to adjudicate difficult and highly charged cases of dissolution, parenting, and dependent/neglect. DeeAnn's years as a dedicated CASA volunteer make her especially prepared to address the legal and personal challenges inherent in such cases. Her CASA experience will be invaluable on the bench.

In our revered democracy, we still place judicial officers on a raised dais and dress them in black robes. We do those things to enhance the respect citizens have for the courts, but it is the officers themselves who must, by their conduct and judicious actions, earn the people's respect. The rule of law depends on it. DeeAnn understands that critical concept; she will earn the people's respect.

Please include DeeAnn Cooney's name on your list of nominees to Governor Bullock. She has the skills and temperament to be a great judge; she will do us all proud.

Thank you for your time and attention.


Katrina Wilson/Martin
1720 24th Ln. NE
Dutton, MT 59433

1907 Leslie Avenue
Helena, MT 59601
October 9, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Re: *Application of DeeAnn Gribble Cooney*
First Judicial District Judgeship Vacancy

Dear Commission Members:

It is my privilege to offer for your consideration this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney's application to fill the position of District Court Judge in the First Judicial District.

I spent the first twenty years of my practice with the law firm of Garlington, Lohn, & Robinson and the last six years working closely with DeeAnn in my position with MACo Defense Services. Without hesitation, I am proud to say that I have spent my entire career working with the finest lawyers in the state.

DeeAnn is a brilliant legal scholar with impeccable research and writing skills. Her mind is analytical, her judgment sound, and her work ethic beyond reproach. DeeAnn is meticulously prepared for any task, be it a deposition, an oral argument, or the examination of a witness at trial. She is always professional in her communications with the court, opposing counsel, and witnesses.

DeeAnn's approach to litigation is unique in the sense that she maintains the ability to employ reason and objectivity to cases as they develop. Unlike many of us, she does not allow her ego, or the desire to win, cloud her judgment. This quality ensures that she never loses sight of the best interests of her clients and our profession.

While DeeAnn's practice is primarily the defense of governmental entities, she does not associate herself with either the defense bar or the plaintiffs' bar. The ability to maintain objectivity, regardless of one's background, is an essential quality of any judge. Lawyers too often find themselves evaluating cases, in part, based on the perceived biases of the presiding judge. Knowing DeeAnn as a colleague and a friend, I am confident that her personal feelings would never override her deep-seated belief that judges should be impartial and employ sound reasoning to each and every case over which they preside.

Although we are losing a truly exceptional judge with the retirement of Judge Jeffrey Sherlock, I am honored to recommend DeeAnn Cooney for appointment to the position of District Judge in the First Judicial District.

Sincerely,



Maureen H. Lennon

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 4:53 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: jeholliday@comcast.net [<mailto:jeholliday@comcast.net>]
Sent: Thursday, October 08, 2015 4:28 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Letter of support for DeeAnn Cooney - 1st Judicial District Judge Applicant

8 October, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
Office of Court Administrator
P. O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005

Dear Montana Judicial Nomination Commission and Governor Steve Bullock,

I am writing you today in support of the nomination of Ms. DeeAnn Cooney to the position of district court judge for the 1st Judicial District in the state of Montana. My interaction with Ms. Cooney is as a friend and via mountain climbing and is not professional.

I am a registered professional engineer in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and am employed as a structural analyst by the Bechtel Marine Propulsion Laboratory in West Mifflin, Pennsylvania. I am also certified by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a Firefighter I and as a Rope I/II Rescue Technician. Additionally, I am a volunteer firefighter and on the technical rescue team at my place of employment. My interests include hiking, backpacking and mountaineering. I am currently training to climb Carstensz Pyramid this November, which will successfully complete my climbing the Seven Summits (the tallest mountain of each of the seven continents).

It was while climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania (the tallest mountain in Africa) in January of 2014 that I met Ms. Cooney. Ms. Cooney and I were teammates on that climb. I was immediately impressed with her strength and fitness, and she proved to be a capable climber and an excellent teammate. She was well prepared for the climb and was ready to meet all of the demands and rigors of each day. She displayed an incredible focus and drive to get the job done, and done well. We summited together that January.

During the trip, I had many wonderful and deep conversations with Ms. Cooney. I learned that she brings the same drive and determination that she brought to fitness, training, and climbing to all other aspects of her life. She is very dedicated to her family as well as to her profession bringing great passion, energy, and enthusiasm to everything that she does. She is highly intelligent and is conversant on a deep level on a wide range of topics. I always enjoyed our conversations and was impressed with her well thought-out and reasoned positions on a range of topics. As an engineer, I appreciate Ms. Cooney's no-nonsense approach to life, and I found her to be fair and honest, just but compassionate. Ms. Cooney also displays a deep concern for and empathy with the pain and difficulties of others, having lost a loved one to Alzheimer's disease in 2013.

Needless to say, Ms. Cooney made a lasting impression on me, and I have maintained a friendship with her to this day. I believe that Ms. Cooney would make an outstanding judge, and I strongly encourage you to give her your highest consideration.

Warm regards,

James Holliday
531 Maytide St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15227
jeholliday@comcast.net

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 4:52 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Tabor, Paige
Sent: Thursday, October 08, 2015 2:06 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Public Comment for DeeAnn Gribble Cooney

My husband Kier Boyea and I are small business owners. Four years ago we bought CrossFit Helena (CFH). Having never owned a small business before, this has been a learning process. I continue as a State employee while Kier's time is fully focused on CFH.

DeeAnn Cooney has been a member of CFH since it opened. Over the years we have become friends. DeeAnn has served as our attorney for the business since we purchased it. She is so much more than just our attorney, though.

When we struggled to decide how to set up the business – as sole proprietors or as a corporation – DeeAnn helped us understand the implications of various options. As we grew and moved to larger and larger buildings, DeeAnn worked relentlessly to help us navigate zoning changes, leases, liabilities, and so many other things.

DeeAnn is an invaluable resource to us. She keeps a cool head and is a quick thinker. Our small business continues to grow and prosper because of the support she has given us. When we have questions about ethics, she is the first person we consult. We are beyond grateful that she has adopted us and our small business as her fixer upper project.

I strongly recommend DeeAnn Cooney for the First Judicial District Judgeship. She will bring clarity, rational thinking, and wisdom to the bench. Thank you for taking the time to read my public comments.

Sincerely,

Paige Tabor



Paige Tabor, DC | DNRC Safety Officer / HR Trainer
PO Box 201601; 1625 11th Ave | Helena, MT 59620-1601
P 406.444.2079 | C 406.437.2746 | F 406.444.1357
<http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/> |  [Like us on facebook](#)

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 4:52 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Stan Bradshaw [<mailto:bradshawstan5@gmail.com>]
Sent: Thursday, October 08, 2015 10:57 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Application of Dee Ann Cooney for the position of district judge in the First Judicial District

Dear Commission Members:

I have served with Dee Ann on the board of the Last Chance Nordic Ski Club for that past several years. As the two lawyers n the board, we routinely field questions about legal issues that affect the club. As a result, I have had an opportunity to observe, at close range, Dee Ann's analytical skills and her exercise of personal judgment. she has been exceptional on both counts.

Her legal analysis is thorough and painstaking, assuring that when the club has to take into account legal questions, it has full disclosure of all the options and risks that may attend the issue. At the same time, she brings a clear-headed pragmatism to board discussions that every small organization needs to function. In short, she not only provides the legal analysis necessary to the board's deliberations, she is able to then steer the conversation to a productive conclusion.

Both of these traits assure that, if appointed to the judgeship, she will be an exceptional judge.

Sincerely,

Stan Bradshaw

Elizabeth A. O'Halloran
716 Power Street
Helena, MT 59601

October 14, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

RE: Application of DeeAnn Cooney
First Judicial District Judge Vacancy

Honorable Members of the Commission:

Please accept this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney's application for appointment as District Court Judge in the First Judicial District.

As a member of the Montana State Bar for 21 years and a regular participant in civil litigation, I am confident that DeeAnn Cooney's experience, demeanor, and personal philosophies are entirely consistent with Montana's expectations for its judges. DeeAnn has the unique capacity to sort through evidence and argument to arrive at a consistently fair evaluation. I have no doubt that she will bring these skills to the bench, in addition to her propensity to efficiently manage an active, heavy case load with grace and mastery.

Most of all, DeeAnn Cooney has a strong public duty ethic. As a judge, I have no doubt that she will undertake her judicial duties with a strong commitment to both the United States and Montana Constitutions' mandates regarding public access to the courts and the public's right to seek redress in her courtroom. Fairness is the most fundamental quality we can demand of a judge and Ms. Cooney demonstrates that quality time and again.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comment. Please select Ms. Cooney as a candidate for the Governor's consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. O'Halloran

Carlo J. Canty
4 Elkhorn Drive
Clancy, Montana 59634

October 9, 2015

Montana Supreme Court Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Ms. Lois Menzies
Office of the Court Administrator
P. O. Box 203005
Helena, Montana 59620-3005

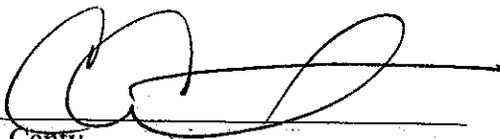
Dear Ms. Zadick, Ms. Halverson, Ms. Charles, Mr. Rusche, Mr. Harper and Hon. Judge Simonton:

First, allow me to commend you for your commitment to ensuring the quality and integrity of the Judiciary of our great state. It is an honor and privilege to share with you my highest recommendation of Dee Ann Cooney to succeed Judge Sherlock as our next District Court Judge.

Professionally, Dee Ann is the lawyer we all aspire to be. You will find no disagreement on that point among those of us who hope to appear before her as Judge. While intensely committed to her work, she has also assured valuable time for a family that is held in the highest regard here in Helena and across Montana. I also know Dee Ann as an accomplished outdoor athlete and recreationist. It is easy to observe how her enthusiasm in these pursuits adds to her overall strength as a person. Finally, having known Dee Ann for years and aware of our common experience, I can assure you she will take great care in assuring the rights of all who come before her and can be well-entrusted with the tremendous responsibility before her.

Once you have met Dee Ann and have made a thorough assessment of her as an applicant and person, I believe it will be easy for you to confidently recommend her as a finalist for consideration by Governor Bullock.

With My Highest Regards,



Carlo J. Canty

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:29 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Oliver Goe [<mailto:oliver@bkbh.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 3:29 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Judicial nomination Commission re DeeAnn Cooney

Dear Montana Judicial Nomination Committee Members: I am sending this email in strong support of DeeAnn Cooney for the District Court Judge position being vacated by Judge Sherlock. I have known DeeAnn both professionally and personally for approximately 25 years. I can't think of any reason as to why DeeAnn would not make an absolute first rate judge for the First Judicial District and have many reasons to believe that she should receive the recommendation of this Committee and the appointment.

Based on my personal observations and discussions with others in the legal community there is no question but that DeeAnn has cultivated the skills necessary to be a quality jurist. She has the ability and work ethic necessary to fully analyze the complex factual and legal issues that often come before the First Judicial District Courts. However, of equal importance is the fact she has the "objectivity" and "common sense" to make the right decision in difficult situations. I also believe she has the "courage" to render an unpopular opinion where the facts and the law require it and, the "compassion" necessary when addressing those circumstances and cases that require it. In short she demonstrates those qualities I want to see in a judge when I appear in court.

Dee Ann has exhibited the foregoing qualities and skills in her professional life but also as a member of the Helena community and in raising her family.

Thank you for your consideration.

Oliver H. Goe
Attorney
oliver@bkbh.com
www.bkbh.com

Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven, P.C.
800 N. Last Chance Gulch, Ste. 101, Helena, MT 59601
P.O. Box 1697, Helena, MT 59624
p. (406) 443-6820
f. (406) 443-6883

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Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:31 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Robert Farris-Olsen [<mailto:rfolsen@mswdlaw.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 7:39 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Letter of Support for DeeAnn Cooney

Dear Commission Members:

I write this letter in support of DeeAnn Cooney's appointment to fill the seat of Judge Jeffrey Sherlock.

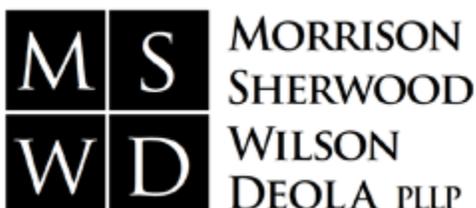
I have known DeeAnn for more than two decades. During that time, I attended school, and played soccer with her kids. From my childhood, I remember her as being kind, caring, and supportive of not only her children, but of everyone. I know she would bring this same mentality to the bench.

Now, I know DeeAnn as a colleague. She represents that which other attorneys should aspire to be. Not only does she represent her clients, and represents them well, but she represents her community. For more than a decade, DeeAnn represented the most vulnerable in our community as a CASA advocate. She was also very active in the Helena School System. As a result, she not only understands the law, but comprehends the community and the role of a judge in making fair and just decisions. I am confident that on the bench she would use these experiences to make objective, unbiased, and fair decisions.

It is for these reasons that I cannot think of a better person to fill Judge Sherlock's seat.

Sincerely,

Robert Farris-Olsen
401 North Last Chance Gulch
P.O. Box 557
Helena, Montana 59624
406-442-3261
406-443-7294 FAX
PLEASE NOTE MY NEW EMAIL ADDRESS is rfolsen@mswdlaw.com



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Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:32 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: olivergoe@bresnan.net [<mailto:olivergoe@bresnan.net>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 13, 2015 10:15 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Fwd: judicial nomination commission; attn: Lois Menzies

To the Judicial nomination commission:

I have known DeeAnn Cooney for 28 years. Our children grew up together and I have known her throughout many different stages of life. I know her to be honest, ethical, compassionate and open-minded. She has a very strong sense of community service.

DeeAnn has extensive experience in the practice of law, including litigation, and excels in her profession. She has been active in volunteering in the community.

As a citizen and member of the bar in this state, I wholeheartedly recommend DeeAnn Cooney to serve as a judge in the first judicial district.

Sincerely,

Christina Lechner Goe, J.D.

446 West Lawrence Street

Helena, Montana 59601

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:31 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Sarah Hubber [<mailto:shubber@atchleycpas.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:22 AM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: Public Comment - DeeAnn Cooney

Dear Commission Members,

I would like to strongly recommend that DeeAnn Cooney be selected to serve as First Judicial District Judge.

I know Ms. Cooney as a dear friend and as a trusted advisor. As a CPA, I have often sought DeeAnn's advice because I can rely on her to evaluate all facts and offer insightful, effective recommendations that consider the welfare of all parties involved. She is the most professional and competent attorney that I have worked with, and I value her input greatly.

DeeAnn is a compassionate, intelligent person with a humbly magnetic personality and an ability to apply reason without bias. These are just a few of the many qualities that make her an excellent candidate for District Judge. I strongly encourage the Commission to forward Ms. Cooney's application to Governor Bullock.

Best regards,
Sarah Hubber, CPA

Cook, Kevin

From: Menzies, Lois
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 8:29 PM
To: Cook, Kevin
Subject: Public Comment -- Cooney

From: Jim Hunt [<mailto:jhunt@huntlaw.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 14, 2015 3:44 PM
To: MT Supreme Court,
Subject: DeeAnn Cooney recommendation for First Judicial District Court Judge

Dear Judicial Nomination Commission Members:

Please accept this as a recommendation to send DeeAnn Cooney's name to the Governor for consideration for selection to replace the Honorable Jeffrey Sherlock as a First Judicial District Court Judge. I have known DeeAnn and her family for well over 20 years and am familiar with her as a lawyer and as a person.

DeeAnn is intelligent, hard working, compassionate, and has a great deal of common sense. She is empathetic and protective of individual rights. There is no doubt in my mind she has the judicial temperament necessary to make her an excellent district court judge.

DeeAnn is also personally well-grounded. My family has had contact with her family over the years and it has always been positive. I have never heard anyone say anything negative about DeeAnn whether it was practicing law, dealing with school issues, or interacting with friends. She also has a great sense of humor.

In reviewing recommendations written by others, I note most are longer than mine. Mine is short because I think you have enough to read and consider. Therefore, please do not take this relatively short recommendation for anything other than a 100% enthusiastic endorsement of DeeAnn.

Thank you,

Jim Hunt
404-442-8552

DOUG AND JULIE MITCHELL

October 14, 2015

Judicial Nomination Commission
c/o Lois Menzies
Office of Court Administrator
P.O. Box 203005
Helena, MT 59620-3005
mtsupremecourt@mt.gov

Dear Commissioners:

It is our distinct honor to recommend to you the application of DeeAnn Cooney to serve as District Court Judge for the 1st Judicial District of Montana.

DeeAnn will bring to the bench not only a strong, diverse legal skillset but, perhaps more important, a judicial temperament that will ensure every case and every person that comes before her is treated fairly.

Neither of us are lawyers. That said, we appreciate the breadth of legal experience and knowledge that DeeAnn will bring to the District Court. This diversity of experience, we believe, is a significant asset that will be of benefit to the citizens of the First Judicial District of Montana.

As non-lawyers, we want to spend more of our time sharing with you about the rare personal qualities that will make DeeAnn an extraordinary Judge. She's smart; very, very smart. Over many years, we have had the opportunity to engage with DeeAnn on topics that range from parenting and community issues, to human and civil rights. Her intellectual acuity and her curiosity to learn are rare, important to success in this job and constantly present in her life.

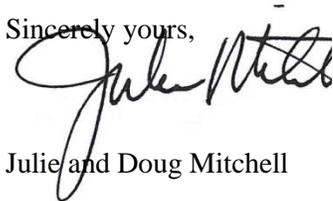
DeeAnn Cooney is also thoughtful. More often than not, DeeAnn will push the soft edges of conversations to make sure she's getting all the information there is to consider. Sometimes, that will include questioning her own initial perceptions to make sure she's thinking robustly about a subject. This quality seems to us to be critical to a successful judge.

There's not an ounce of quit in this Montana native. DeeAnn will do the work it takes to get it right. No matter how long it takes or how hard it is, she'll never give up. Everyone who appears before a judge deserves to have a person with that kind of dedication.

Last, she's ready. DeeAnn is not applying to fill this position as the capstone to a distinguished career. She'll bring both valuable experience and a passion for this new chapter in her life to work her first day as a judge and every single day thereafter.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these views. Your choice is not an easy one and we appreciate your consideration and your service.

Sincerely yours,



Julie and Doug Mitchell