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NEWS RELEASE

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In Memoriam: Napa County Superior Court Mourns the Passing of Former Judge Steven Thomas Kroyer

NAPA, CA – The Napa County Superior Court deeply mourns the passing of the Honorable Steven Thomas Kroyer, who departed yesterday following a long and courageous battle with a serious medical condition. In the weeks before his passing, Judge Kroyer spent meaningful time saying goodbye to his family, friends and colleagues.

Stephen T. Kroyer served as a Napa County Superior Court judge from 1997 to 2011 and was appointed by Governor Pete Wilson. Before the joining the Napa County Superior Court bench, he was a deputy district attorney and a police officer in Napa County, earned a bachelor's degree from Rice University, and a J.D. from Western State University of Law.

"It's a profound loss for the Napa community", said Presiding Judge Scott R. L. Young. "Judge Kroyer was an exceptional judge who deeply respected the law, the court, and the entire Napa community. We will miss him dearly."

District Attorney Allison Haley, who worked closely with him, said: "Judge Kroyer raised an entire generation of Napa lawyers. On the bench he did not suffer fools; you learned quickly to be prepared, poised, articulate and in command of the facts and the law. Off the bench, he was a generous teacher, deeply empathic mentor, and consummate cheerleader. Every time I appeared before him; I wanted him to be proud of my advocacy even if he didn't rule in my favor – which was not infrequent."

"Steve Kroyer was a lifelong public servant", said Assistant Presiding Judge Joseph Solga. "He was an honest judge who showed independence and integrity in his rulings. Off the bench, he was a kind man who contributed his time and energy to many community service projects. His passing represents a great loss to our community. I will miss him."

When reached for comment this morning, former Presiding Judge Mark Boessenecker (retired) said: "It was truly a blessing to have Steve as a friend and colleagues for so many years. He had a significant and long-term impact on the Napa Court and legal community. He handled his cancer diagnosis with grace and dignity. I will miss him."

"Steve and I became friends as new young lawyers in Napa years ago", said former Presiding Judge Diane Price (retired). "He conscientiously mentored me when I became a judge and was a dear colleague and friend. I'll especially remember him as a devoted family man. He will be greatly missed."

"I will remember Steve as a highly skilled deputy district attorney as well as an intelligent, hardworking judicial colleague, and a devoted husband and community member", said former Presiding Judge Ronald Young (retired).

Retired Court Executive Officer Rick Feldstein said: "Judge Kroyer will always be remembered by court staff as an outstanding and dedicated judicial leader. More importantly, however, he will be most remembered as a friend and colleague who supported and inspired us to better serve the local justice community."

Former colleague Judge Raymond Guadagni (retired) wrote the following at the time of Judge Kroyer's retirement:

> "Brilliant. Industrious. Meticulous. A few words that only begin to describe an amazing judge, an extraordinary colleague, and an even more incredible person. Judge Kroyer's legacy originates from his love for his family, his dedication to the court, his commitment to our community, and his fidelity to the law. Judge Kroyer's endeavors were never motivated by public praise or glory. Instead, he acted out of a sense of duty and honor. He got the job done simply because it needed to be done, and nothing more."
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> "As presiding judge, he regularly took the initiative to make improvements to our court, but he was always humble enough to know when to let go. For example, Judge Kroyer developed a new approach to our criminal calendaring system. As part of the process, he consulted with all the participants, spoke with other courts, and spent countless hours thinking the idea through. After the launch, he reworked the problems as they arose and fine-tuned the overall operation."
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> "When faced with failure, most will blame others, make excuses, or worse yet, bury their heads in the sand. Not Judge Kroyer. When it became clear that the new system fell short of expectations, he did not complain or blame. Instead, he had the courage to announce that his new approach was not working and reinstituted the old system. "
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> "In the courtroom, Judge Kroyer's candid, yet pointed appraisal of the issues and of those who presented them enabled him to quickly get to the heart of the matter. In every case he listened intently to both sides and in every case he applied the law, irrespective of public opinion, popular outcry, and in many cases, his own personal views. Such qualities in temperament are admired by all who work beside him."
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> "Most amazing, however, is Judge Kroyer's strength — his strength in both mind and spirit. He has battled a serious medical condition for quite some time, but you would never know it. By sheer force of will, Judge Kroyer continued his day-to-day service without ever a complaint and without ever feeling sorry for himself."
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> "I will miss him around the courthouse and his absence from the bench will be keenly felt by both our local bench and bar."

At this own retirement, Judge Kroyer reflected that being a judge was hard work: "I worked seven days a week, twelve hour days for the first six months," he said. "The job is so big and

complicated. You don't just specialize in one area of the law; you have to take every case that comes your way." While prosecutors are advocates, judges must remain neutral. "You have to reserve judgment and can't let your own values get in the way."

Kroyer's wish for his legacy has always been quite simple — "**I want to be remembered as a happy and successful man, who loved his family**," he said.

Judge Kroyer was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him. He will be long remembered for his dedicated service, his profound impact on our legal community, and his inspiring vision for our court. Please keep his family in your thoughts during this difficult time.