



Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF VENTURA
Hall of Justice
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

Michael D. Planet
Executive Officer/Clerk
and Jury Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 6, 2015

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FORMAL INSTALLATION CEREMONY FOR JUDGE MICHAEL S. LIEF

The formal installation ceremony for Judge Michael S. Lief will take place on Friday, February 13, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in Courtroom 22 of the Hall of Justice in Ventura. The oath of office will be administered by retired Judge James Cloninger.

The ceremony will be open to the public, elected officials, local bar, and representatives of court-related county departments. The press is invited to attend and to take any desired photographs during these special ceremonial proceedings.

Judge Lief was elected to the bench on June 3, 2014. His term of office began January 5, 2015. He fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge James Cloninger.

Most recently, Judge Lief was a Senior Deputy District Attorney with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. He has worked in the Conviction Integrity, Writs and Appeals, Felony, and Special Prosecutions Workers' Compensation Fraud units. He began his legal career in September 1996 as a Deputy District Attorney prosecuting misdemeanor DUI, theft, vandalism and battery cases.

Judge Lief was the District Attorney's representative in Mental Health Court from 2007 to 2012. He also participated on behalf of the DA in the creation of Veterans Court.

Judge Lief is a United States Navy veteran. He served aboard a submarine, the USS Blueback, and a battleship, the USS New Jersey. He completed his service as a petty officer second class. He currently serves as a captain in the JAG Corps of the California State Military Reserve.

Judge Lief is also an ex-newspaper editor for *The New Jersey Herald*, and is the lead author of three non-fiction books: *"Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury: Greatest Closing Arguments in Modern Law,"* *"And the Walls Came Tumbling Down,"* and *"The Devil's Advocates,"* all published by Simon & Shuster. Additionally, he wrote the entry on legal oratory in *"The Oxford Companion to American Law."*

Judge Lief earned his law degree from Pepperdine University School of Law and his Bachelor's degree from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He is currently assigned to Courtroom 10, hearing non-custody traffic matters, infractions and misdemeanors, civil assessment cases and traffic court trials.

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