

SPENDY BASH PLANNED FOR RETIRING FED JUDGE



PHOTO: HOGANRETIREMENT.COM

Michael Hogan has stepped down after 39 years as a judge in federal courts, and the \$100,000-plus privately funded retirement bash planned in his honor has been downsized at his request. The change in plans also follows a story in *Willamette Week* Nov. 21 that quotes Portland attorney Michael Esler saying “The ostentatiousness makes us lawyers look even worse than we already look.”

“The grand idea of having the world’s best party has turned into a fun tailgater,” says attorney Tom Hoyt of the Eugene law firm Speer Hoyt. He came up with the idea and heads a small committee organizing the event set for Jan. 12 at the Club Room at Autzen Stadium.

The original budget has two columns, one if 500 guests RSVP, the other is for 700 guests, and Hoyt says that it’s too early to know the numbers. The budget for food and drinks alone was \$50,000 to \$70,000, and the local PR firm Cawood Communications would be paid \$10,000 to \$12,000 to help organize the event, do the website and registration. Transforming the Club Room into “party central”

would cost \$21,000 to \$22,000; and an “appropriate gift” to Hogan is anticipated to cost \$5,000.

Hogan, a UO grad before attending law school at Georgetown, is a big Duck football fan and is known for his tailgating parties before home games, so the new, much cheaper menu will reflect that. “Originally I was going to have sliced prime rib and certified tofu and wild salmon, and now we’re down to sliders, hamburgers, hot dogs and chicken sticks,” Hoyt says. “It’s going to be a fine party and we’re hoping to have a lot of people.” Information about Hogan Retirement Event, Inc. and registration for the party can be found at hoganretirement.com Tickets are \$40.

Hoyt formed a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit organization to handle the event’s finances. “I wanted to have a separate bank account,” he says. “I’ve hired a CPA to audit it and all of the moneys will be run through it, and if we have any money leftover that check will go to the Campaign for Equal Justice [which provides legal aid services]. And then we close it out. I didn’t want anybody to think that Tom

Hoyt or anybody else associated with this was going to make a nickel off of it.”

Hogan has worked with hundreds of lawyers and judges during his career and they are scattered all over the country. “I’m still building a list of people who will receive emails and I’m making it fairly broad,” Hoyt says, “and of course we have the Hogan family and personal acquaintances, the judiciary, the marshal’s office, people he’s worked with.”

What does Hogan think about this party? “He’s humbled and embarrassed and he doesn’t like people fussing over him, and I basically told him to build a bridge and get over it because it was going to happen,” Hoyt says. “It’s an effort by a group of us to try to recognize his contribution. He’s been an outstanding jurist.”

Hogan’s mediation skills have garnered him a lot of admirers in recent years. He has played pivotal roles in sex-abuse settlements with the Catholic Church and he personally managed the \$1.3 billion bankruptcy restructuring of Sunwest Management, a huge nursing home enterprise, without shutting down any facilities.

His reputation among environmental attorneys and activists is not so glowing. Hogan ruled in favor of the timber industry on numerous old-growth timber sale lawsuits and several of his rulings were overturned by the Ninth Circuit Court on appeal. And he made headlines and angered biologists in 2001 when he ruled that threatened wild stocks of Oregon coastal Coho salmon were equivalent to hatchery-bred Coho and did not need protection.

“You can write anything you want to about that,” says Hoyt when asked about the environmental rulings. “I’m just talking about my friend who called them the way he saw them and did a pretty good job of being a judge. My objective is not to review all of his decisions but to thank him for being there.” — *Ted Taylor*

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