



New Bonney Lake Municipal Judge Ron Heslop, right, shakes hands with Councilmember Laurie Carter as the council and mayor look on  
Brian Beckley/The Courier-Herald

## **Ron Heslop sworn in as new Bonney Lake Municipal Judge**

Apr 15 2010, 4:50 PM

Beginning Monday, defendants in Bonney Lake who come in to face the courts will see a new face behind the bench staring back at them.

The city council April 13 unanimously confirmed Ron Heslop as the new municipal court judge for the city. Heslop will take over for interim Judge James Helbling, who retired in 2008 but was persuaded to come back this year until a replacement could be found for Doug Haake, who was not reappointed.

"He'll be a great addition to the court," Mayor Neil Johnson said of Heslop on Thursday, adding that Heslop has the "right personality and meshes well with the community spirit."

Heslop, 65, has been practicing law for 33 years and has served as a Pro Tem judge in Bonney Lake for two years, as well as a pro tem judge in Fife, Puyallup, Tacoma, Federal Way, Lakewood and Pierce County.

Heslop was born in Portland, Ore., and raised in California. He attended the University of Utah, where he joined the ROTC and attended flight school before serving Vietnam, where he received awards for his service.

Heslop left active duty in 1974 and bought a tire store in Portland, which he ran until 1983.

Heslop said at that time he decided to use his GI Bill benefits to attend law school, though he had no intention of practicing law. Upon graduation from the University of Puget Sound law school in 1983, he was convinced to stay in practice by a friend whom he was helping out.

Heslop said his wife was also from this area, which helped persuade them to stay in the area.

"Look at what it took to replace me," Helbling joked to the council after he swore in Heslop as the city's new judge.

Helbling also said he thought the city made a good choice and would be in good hands.

"He'll be a great judge," he said.

Heslop said Helbling offered little advice about his new role, but praised the city administration and staff. Heslop also said he and Helbling share similar views of the law.

"I think he and I see pretty much eye-to-eye," he said.

Heslop said he does not foresee any major changes in the courts and said his view of the system is that a judge needs to be part of the community and the court needs to reflect the values of the city.

In the case of Bonney Lake, he said that means offering advice and information to help get those who appear in front of him back on track.

"Some cities just enforce the law and don't worry about the individual," he said, adding that his court, like Helbling's before him, would be "citizen oriented."

"I want to help people and get them going in the right direction," he said.

Heslop said he looks forward to getting starting in Bonney Lake and said hopes to become as part of the fabric of the community as Helbling became.

"There's good folks up there," he said of Bonney Lake. "I want to be part of the community."

Johnson agreed and said he thinks Heslop is the right fit for the position.

"He represents Bonney Lake very well and will definitely fill Jim's shoes," he said.