

## Judge Cooper announces retirement

By BARB OWENS staff writer | 0 comments

Kittitas County Superior Court Judge Michael E. Cooper intends to retire from the court effective Oct. 1. Cooper advised Gov. Chris Gregoire and state Supreme Court Chief Justice Barbara Madsen in August of his intention to retire.

Cooper, 66, previously announced he would not run for re-election in 2012. He retires after more than 22 years on the bench.

"I just want to get on with my life," Cooper said. He recently took a three-week vacation for the first time, and time constraints were too binding, he said. Another factor in his decision to retire is the unexpected death of a close friend last year.

Cooper said it made him stop and think. He wants to get onto the next phase of his life and do something of significance.

### Seeking replacements

Gov. Gregoire is seeking qualified members of the Washington State Bar Association to fill Cooper's position. The governor will appoint a new judge in November, said Narda Pierce at the Office of the Governor. The new judge will serve the remainder of Cooper's term and in order to continue on the bench, must run for election in November 2012.

Interested and qualified people must submit an application to Narda Pierce, General Counsel, Office of the Governor in the Legislative Building at P.O. Box 40002, Olympia, WA 98504. Visit [www.governor.wa.gov/judicial](http://www.governor.wa.gov/judicial) to download an application.

The deadline to apply is Oct. 17. Judicial evaluation ratings must be submitted by Oct. 26.

Cooper said he will stay on board pro tem after Oct. 1 to finish cases that are pending and to serve as judge in other cases to the extent that parties agree until his successor is appointed and takes office.