

Tri-CityHerald.com

[Next Story >](#)

Jurors to deliberate in Tashia Stuart murder trial

State Court of Appeals judge sworn in during ceremony in Pasco

Published: July 1, 2013 Updated 4 hours ago



George Fearing, right, is sworn into the Washington State Court of Appeals Division III by retired Benton/Franklin Superior Judge Dennis Yule, left, as Fearing's father Richard Fearing of Mount Vernon hold the Bible on Monday at the Franklin County Courthouse in Pasco.

PAUL T. ERICKSON — Tri-City Herald [Buy Photo](#)

Geoff Folsom, Tri-City Herald

Judge George Fearing couldn't make it though his speech Monday.

The newest state Court of Appeals judge for the Spokane-based Division III choked up as he talked about his law partners and his family during his swearing-in ceremony in Pasco.

So Fearing brought law partner Beau Ruff up to read the rest of his prepared remarks.

Ruff read Fearing's praise for his 17-year-old son, George, who helped present his father with his robe. He also thanked his dad, Richard, a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

"The law has been and will continue to be my ministry," Ruff read for Fearing.

After the hourlong ceremony, Fearing told the Herald, "I've been very close to my law partners. It's tough to leave. I'm very close to my family."

He's been with the law firm of Leavy, Schultz, Davis & Fearing in Kennewick for 31 years.

Nearly 30 current and retired judges in their black robes attended Monday's event in the historic courtroom at the Franklin County Courthouse, where Fearing, 55, chose to have his ceremony. The other four judges from Division III, which covers all of Eastern Washington, also spoke.

And state Supreme Court Chief Justice Barbara Madsen called the Appeals Court a "workhorse court," making 80 decisions a year. That compares to 15 for the state Supreme Court.

"Indeed George, you have a big job in front of you," Madsen said. "I think that speaks highly of why (Gov. Jay Inslee) chose you."

Inslee planned to be at the ceremony, but his plane had mechanical problems, Madsen said.

Appeals Court Chief Judge Kevin M. Korsmo, who presided over the swearing-in, said the fact that the governor planned to come showed the high regard he holds for Fearing.

After taking the bench, Korsmo also poked fun at Monday's heat.

"I remember now why I don't live here anymore," he said, as many of the 160 people in the courtroom fanned themselves with their programs.

While Fearing had his ceremonial swearing-in Monday, he's been serving since June 24. He heard cases in Tacoma because the Appeals Court there has a backlog.

"Despite the three divisions, we are one court," Korsmo said. "We trade cases back and forth and actually trade judges back and forth."

Inslee announced Fearing's appointment in May, making him the sixth member of the University of Washington's class of 22 people in 1982 to reach the Appeals Court level.

Fearing replaced retiring Judge Dennis Sweeney, also from The Tri-Cities, who had offered Fearing an internship in 1981. Fearing went on to take a position with the firm after graduating from law school. He specializes in litigation, consumer law, personal injury cases, wrongful termination and business law.

Fearing said he was grateful for the people who showed up to support him Monday.

"It's humbling, and it will reinvigorate me to use my talents to perform as an exemplary judge with integrity and justice for all," he told the Herald.

His son, George Dahl Fearing, said it's nice to see his dad's years as a lawyer rewarded.

"He's a very humble person," he said. "He's also taught me his studiousness and his love of knowledge."

The court in Spokane has no appellate arguments scheduled until September.

In November, Fearing must run for re-election. He has one challenger, Gary Metro, a Tri-City defense attorney.

[Back to Top](#)
[< Previous Story](#)



State lawmakers provide \$5.4 million for new Delta High

[Next Story >](#)



Jurors to deliberate in Tashia Stuart murder trial

[Email Newsletters >](#)
[Manage newsletter subscriptions](#)
[Tablets >](#)
[Apps and services for tablet devices](#)
[Mobile >](#)
[Apps and services for your mobile phone](#)
[Social Media >](#)
[Get updates via Facebook and Twitter](#)
[e-Edition >](#)
[Your daily paper delivered to your computer](#)
[Home Delivery >](#)
[Manage your home delivery account](#)
[Digital Subscriptions >](#)
[Manage your online subscriptions](#)