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James M. Biernat Jr., Chief Judge  
16th Judicial Circuit Court,  
Macomb County Probate Court,  
42nd District Courts

News



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## *For Immediate Release*

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## **In Memoriam, Judge Sanborn**

Judge Kenneth “Ken” Noble Sanborn passed away today (November 20, 2018) at the age of 92. Judge Sanborn had a lengthy and exemplary career as a lawyer, public servant, and judge. As a young attorney, he provided *pro bono* representation for Lieutenant Milo Radulovich in a celebrated trial which served as the basis of the film *Good Night, and Good Luck*. Lieutenant Radulovich was stripped of his commission due to the alleged communist sympathies of his father and sister, and Judge Sanborn successfully fought to have Radulovich’s commission reinstated. This trial is widely regarded as heralding an end to McCarthyism and the Red Scare of the 1950s.

Judge Sanborn held numerous public offices throughout his distinguished career. He served as Clinton Township Justice of the Peace, State Representative for Macomb County, Clinton Township Supervisor, Trustee and Chairman of Macomb Community College. He was elected as Macomb County Probate Judge in 1972, and subsequently served as Circuit Court Judge from 1978 to 1990. In 2008, the Michigan Supreme Court appointed Judge Sanborn as Acting Chief Judge of the Macomb County Probate Court. He served in this capacity until January of 2010. He continued to serve as a visiting judge for the 16th Judicial Circuit Court for many years after. Judge Sanborn was well respected by all who had the pleasure of working with him, and his dedication to the legal profession.

Chief Judge James M. Biernat, Jr. stated “Judge Sanborn will be sorely missed. His commitment to justice was exemplified in the historic *Radulovich* case; he was willing to do the right thing even when unpopular and at some risk to his own career. Judge Sanborn’s character is a great example to new attorneys.

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