

# Hopefuls file for D.A.'s office

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District Attorneys

SANTA CRUZ — A few of them have been cited for contempt of court, and one spent some time in jail for drunken driving.

But, for the most part, the eight candidates for the district attorney's job are a staid and accomplished bunch who pay their taxes, sing in church and have no shortage of ideas of what they would do if they are appointed to replace Art Danner, who was appointed to the bench, according to their job applications.

The deadline to apply for the district attorney's job was 5 p.m. Monday — and several lawyers brought their applications in just minutes before that cutoff.

No surprise candidates emerged in the highly contested and closely watched fight for the job. The Board of Supervisors is expected to make the appointment Feb. 11. The winning candidate will have the job until it is filled in the March 2000 election.

Eight candidates who had previously declared their intentions submitted applications. The field includes a former district attorney, the acting district attorney, a former chief deputy who was fired by Danner in the political shuffle for his job, and three other lawyers from the office.

Peter Chang, who was district attorney from 1967 to 1975, and Ron Ruiz, a criminal-law attorney who practices in San Jose, were the only two candidates who have been cited for contempt of court, according to their applications.

Ruiz noted in his application that he was cited by the late Judge Bruce Allen in 1974 in a homicide case. The prosecutor in the

case was a black man, Ulysses Beasley. During a heated argument over an objection, Ruiz said he said, "I'm tired of his Amos and Andy games," referring to Beasley. He was immediately cited for contempt and fined \$200.

Ruiz said he and Beasley were good friends before and after the incident. He referred the supervisors to Beasley's widow for further information.

The details of Chang's reprimand are sketchier. "I believe I was cited for contempt by Judge (Richard) McAdams in 1982 and it was dismissed the same day, but I cannot find any record of it or anyone who remembers it," Chang said.

According to Sentinel files, McAdams wanted to cite Chang for being possibly intoxicated in the courtroom. It was dismissed after Chang showed documents that he is diabetic and had not taken his medication that day, which might have affected his behavior. The contempt citation was dropped, but Chang was warned to watch his courtroom behavior.

Chang, a well-known defense lawyer as well as prosecutor, listed among his outstanding cases the prosecution of mass murderers John Frazier and Edmund Kemper. He also detailed his own two arrests for driving under the influence of alcohol in 1981-82. He served two days in jail for his first offense and 10 days for his second. He also was fined \$600 in 1988 for reckless driving.

While other candidates outlined support for committee reviews such as "three strike committees, or "death penalty committees," Chang blasted away at committees saying those decisions should be made by the dis-

trict attorney. "He cannot find comfort in saying, 'Well, this was my committee's decision.' Whenever you spread accountability it becomes dithering, time wasted," Chang said. "Thank you for reading this," summarized Chang.

Ariadne Symons, an assistant district attorney, subtly underscored the current flux in the office while listing her job supervisor: "To be determined by Board of Supervisors," she wrote. At the end of her current duties, Symons listed an unusual prosecutorial experience. "... I clean out the refrigerator on a regular basis," she said. And among her qualifications for the job, Symons said, "Equally important, I have a sense of humor."

As a wife, mother, prosecutor and author of five novels, Assistant District Attorney Christine McGuire said she has developed "excellent organizational skills" for the job.

McGuire also acknowledged her role in a controversial case 18 years ago when she was a second-year prosecutor in Tehama County. McGuire was the prosecutor and was dating the defense attorney in the trial. The appeals court reversed the case for ineffective assistance of the defense counsel. The court said the defense attorney should have explained the relationship to his client, thus giving him the opportunity to get another lawyer. McGuire noted that both the district attorney and judge in the case knew of the relationship.

Former Chief Deputy District Attorney Jon Hopkins is currently unemployed — Danner fired him to make way for Kate Canlis to become acting district attorney. But before that, Hopkins listed 175 trials among

his 20 years of experience in Santa Cruz County, including 22 homicide cases and the county's only income-tax fraud case. Also noted on his resume were jobs as a lifeguard, musician, bank teller and a stint as a management trainee at Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.

Ed Frey noted that his goal as district attorney would be a "massive shift of district attorney resources toward violent and abusive behavior, and away from "crimes" that have no victims.

Frey said he has "sought to remedy the control of electoral politics by the moneyed interests, particularly corporations who provide massive campaign funding and/or control large media holdings."

Assistant District Attorney Bob Lee listed among his most significant cases the prosecution of August Quitman Large, the longest unsolved rape case prosecuted in county history. Large was arrested some 12 years after the rape, but Lee was stymied when his request for funds to fly to Oregon to interview a key witness was denied. Lee said he flew on his own time and expense; found the witness, who implicated Large.

Canlis has the blessing of Danner for his former job. But she would do things differently.

Canlis said she would do her best to "avoid any notion of a war room mentality which frequently characterized our office's approach to budgeting and personnel issues."

"I recognize that a cooperative approach to many issues leads to an effective compromise," she said.