

MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT



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Robert J. Danhof, former Michigan Court of Appeals chief judge, delegate to 1961-62 state Constitutional Convention, mourned by Michigan courts

LANSING, MI, March 5, 2013 – Robert J. Danhof, the long-time chief judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals and a delegate to the 1961-62 Michigan Constitutional Convention, will be remembered for his intelligence, leadership, and dedication to public service, said Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert P. Young, Jr. and Court of Appeals Chief Judge William B. Murphy.

Young said that Danhof, who died on March 1 at age 87, “was both a fine judge and a revered Michigan statesman. He headed the committee that drafted Article VI of the 1963 Michigan Constitution, so in many ways he is the architect of our state’s judicial branch as it exists today.”

Murphy called Danhof “an outstanding judge, a good and decent man, and a great leader who contributed enormously to the success of the Court of Appeals. He highly valued this court, his colleagues, and public service. And he was devoted to his wife Peg and their children.”

Born in Grand Rapids, Danhof earned his undergraduate degree at Hope College and his law degree from the University of Michigan Law School. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Western District of Michigan and in 1960 was named U.S. Attorney for the Western District.

At age 36, Danhof was one of the youngest delegates to the Constitutional Convention. As chairman of the convention’s judiciary committee, he presided over the discussions that produced Article VI, including the creation of the Court of Appeals.

In 1962, Danhof joined Governor George Romney’s staff as legal counsel. In 1969, Romney appointed Danhof to the Court of Appeals. Danhof was elected chief judge in 1976 by a vote of other Court of Appeals judges; he continued to serve as chief judge until his retirement in 1992.

Danhof, who served 11 years as vice chairman of the Michigan Historical Commission, was well known for his profound knowledge of Michigan political history, said Murphy. “If he had a hobby, that was it – the political history of Michigan,” Murphy recalled. “He was a great historian and also a direct participant in some of the most important times of this state.”

Visitation is scheduled for 2-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. today at the Langeland-Sterenbergh Funeral Home, 315 E. 16th Street, Holland. A funeral service will be held on Wednesday at 11 a.m. at Hope Church, 77 W. 11th Street, Holland.