



JOHN DUSKEY/DAILY REPORT

Like father, like son: Robert E. Flournoy III, left, is following in the footsteps of his dad, Cobb Superior Court Judge Robert E. Flournoy Jr., right, by stepping into a Cobb judgeship.

As Judge Flournoy Leaves, Son to Join Cobb Bench

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Staff Reporter

Cobb Superior Court Judge Robert E. Flournoy Jr. retires this year, but his son, Robert E. Flournoy III, will assume a newly created post on the Cobb bench.

The state Judicial Nominating Commission chose the younger Flournoy as the county's ninth Superior Court judge. The legislation creating the new judgeship takes effect July 1.

Flournoy, 47, says he expects the governor to swear him in the first week of July.

The post is one of six Superior Court judgeships the General Assembly created last session. Nominees lists for the new seats in Atlanta, Bell-Forsyth,

Chattahoochee and Towaliga circuits are expected soon.

Flournoy III has practiced family law in Marietta for about 20 years. He says he gave little thought initially to a judicial career, but changed his mind when the General

Assembly created the post. It's important, he says, to have a judge who has spent time arguing cases.

"I always figured I'd practice law," he says, "though there was always a possibility I would pursue a judicial career after practicing for a long time."

Noting the high volume of family law cases that Cobb Superior Court judges must handle, Flournoy says his area of expertise

Robert E. Flournoy III will fill the new judgeship created by the recent Legislature.

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Flournoy Dad, Son Have New Bond, as Fellow Cobb Superior Judges

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should come in handy. It will give him a different perspective, he says, than he would have if he came directly from state court or criminal law practice.

"I think it's important that you have a family law practitioner on the Superior Court bench," he says.

Competition for Post

Flournoy was born in Atlanta and received his undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Georgia. His competition for the post included David P. Darden and Albert E. Jones. Darden is a partner with Talley & Darden in Marietta and city attorney for Austell. Jones is a sole practitioner in Marietta, and specializes in personal injury cases.

Nominating commission members met as a panel May 25 to interview 12 candidates for the Cobb post. The panel narrowed the list to three, who were then interviewed by Gov. Roy Barnes.

In addition to Commission Chair George "Buddy" Darden, a partner with Long, Aldridge & Norman, the panel charged with selecting the candidates for Barnes included Joyce E. Bostic, Robert

E. Bourne, Kenneth S. Canfield, Richard T. deMayo, Herbert H. Mabry, Steven F. Scheer and Vice Chair Thomas G. Sampson. (Buddy Darden is no relation to David P. Darden.)

Father Chides Son

The elder Flournoy, who has served nearly 14 years, says he's proud his son earned the post, but says he thought his son would have learned something from his father's time on the bench.

"He ought to have known better, but apparently not," he says laughing.

Flournoy says his son will inherit one-eighth of the sitting judges' cases. It's a sort of initiation, Flournoy says. "I

expect that the cases they give him will not be the simplest."

And the cases just keep coming, the judge says. "It's like dirty dishes," he says. "No matter how many you wash there's always more in the sink."

Father and son will be colleagues for about five months, until Flournoy Jr. retires from the bench Dec. 31.

The final hurdle for Flournoy III was the interview with the governor. He remembers one question in particular. "He wanted to know why a seemingly rational person would want to seek this job," he says, laughing. □

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**"... [T]here was always a possibility I would pursue a judicial career after practicing for a long time."
—Robert E. Flournoy III**

Superior Court Judge Robert E. Flournoy Jr. of the Cobb Judicial Circuit is the father of Matt Flournoy.

Superior Court Judge Robert E. Flournoy III of the Cobb Judicial Circuit is the older brother of Matt Flournoy.

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