

## Clermont Co. Judge Helps Homeowners Fight Foreclosure



A Tri-State area judge isn't waiting on the federal government to rescue homeowners. He's taken the matter into his own hands is saving homes, one family at a time, for free.

Clermont County saw more than 900 foreclosures in 2006 and county leaders said that number is projected to rise to more to more than 1,500 in 2008.

Judge Robert Ringland has a plan to help that number drop.

"I found out about it when we got a foreclosure notice. It came right along with it. They set me up with an attorney and he kind of smoothed things out with the mortgage company. Now we're back on track," Marc Holland, who was nearly foreclosed on, said.

The paper explained Ringland's foreclosure-mediation program. It set Holland up with legal help to get out of financial ruin, without any fee.

"If we can save one house, one family, we've accomplished something in this program," Ringland said.

The judge said he knew he had to step in as he watched courts get flooded foreclosure cases and took a look at the numbers.

Holland was just one of the 111 homeowners who called on the program.

His lawyer, Pat Hornschmeyer, is one of the more than 30 lawyers working pro bono for the program.

They've been trained by attorneys from the legal aide society who said the program helps their sky-rocketing workload.

"We don't have the resources to help everyone who calls us. There are way too many homeowners in trouble. This really increases our capacity. We're able to save more homes this way," attorney for Legal Aid Mark Lawson said.

Anyone who lives in Clermont County and feels as though they need help, is encouraged to contact Judge Ringland at the County Courthouse.