



Patricia Valenzuela/Democrat

Court decision celebrated

Yolo County recognized the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in Gideon v. Wainwright Tuesday. Supervisor Mike McGowan, at right, read a resolution. Public Defender Barry Melton, center and Chief Assistant Public Defender Jessie Morris Jr., at left, accepted the resolution. The decision revolutionized America's understanding of the right of counsel guaranteed by the 6th Amendment after a poor Florida inmate who was sentenced to prison after being tried and sentenced without a lawyer sent the Supreme Court a handwritten note asking for a lawyer. Mr. Gideon was later retried by the state of Florida with the assistance of a public defender and was acquitted after spending more than two years in prison.

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