

## **Hazel Park same-sex couple at front lines of marriage equality fight are wed in private ceremony**

Southfield >> For April DeBoer and Jayne Rowse, the Hazel Park couple who helped to make history when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage in June, the long fight may finally be over.

The two were wed in a private ceremony Saturday, WDIV reports. U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman, the very same judge who heard the couple's state case in 2014 and struck down the Michigan ban, officiated the ceremony.

The wedding was held at a Southfield banquet hall with more than 200 family members and friends in attendance. The Associated Press reports DeBoer wore a cream-colored wedding dress - Rowse wore a black tuxedo. The couple were escorted by their adopted children and DeBoer's father; the newly-weds walked down the aisle to George Harrison's "Here Comes the Sun."

The report states the children had read their own vows, and declared they would take each woman as their "legal mommy."

The battle began in 2012 when the couple sued the State of Michigan for parental rights over their four children. At the time, the state barred any joint adoption due to its non-recognition of same-sex marriage, the result of a 2004 state constitutional amendment.

After Friedman struck down the ban last year, roughly 300 Michigan couples married in a small span of 24 hours. Shortly after, federal appeals court shot down Friedman's ruling, placing the marriages in legal limbo. However, U.S. District Judge Mark A. Goldsmith opined in January that Michigan must recognize the marriages officiated within that window.

This complex courtroom wrangling eventually facilitated action that soon reached the highest court in the land, who ultimately decided in favor of same-sex marriage.