HONORABLE THOMAS J. RYAN was born in Caldwell and graduated from Nampa High School. His father was in the seed business and his mother was in education. In 1975, Judge Ryan graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a degree in Accounting. Between 1975 and 1980 he worked as a Certified Public Accountant with the international accounting firm of Touche Ross & Co. (now Deloitte LLP).

In 1983, he graduated from the University of Idaho, College of Law. In 1985 and 1986, he worked as a trial attorney in the Ada County Public Defender's Office. From 1986 through 1994 he worked as a trial attorney.

In 1995, Judge Ryan was appointed as the Magistrate Judge in Owyhee County. In 2007, he was appointed as a District Judge with chambers in Caldwell.

Judge Ryan has been appointed to the Juvenile Justice Commission since 1998 by Governors Kempthorne, Risch and Otter. In 2004 he was given the John Schuler Award for Outstanding Contribution to Juvenile Corrections by the Idaho Juvenile Justice Association. He previously served on the Statewide Drug Court and Mental Health Court Committee of the Idaho Supreme Court and presided over the Canyon County Drug Court for a five year period. He also served on the Lawyers' Assistance Program committee of the Idaho State Bar. In 2004 he received Idaho State Bar's Outstanding Service Award.

Judge Ryan is married, has three children and seven grandchildren.