

1. State the main reason why voters should return you to the bench.

- a. Since being appointed, I have tried countless bench trials, both criminal and civil. In addition, I have presided over many misdemeanor, felony and civil jury trials. I have also handled countless matters with self-represented litigants. Prior to being appointed, I spent 14 years doing a wide variety of civil matters, including arbitrations, bench trials, jury trials, and appeals.

I have served as an Associate Judge since November 2007. In 2012, I was elected a Circuit Judge. Since taking office, I have presided over orders of protection, adoptions, forcible entry and detainer matters, small claims, mental health hearings, ordinances, domestic violence, felonies, misdemeanors, traffic felonies, misdemeanor felonies, juvenile cases and all types of civil matters. Prior to being appointed, I had a wide-ranging civil practice that included: insurance defense, wills and estates, guardianships, real estate, adoptions, divorce, workers compensation, bankruptcy, and assorted business matters. I also did numerous appeals.

2. What actions have you taken as a judge of which you are most proud?

- a. As a Judge, two groups of cases have been the most challenging to me. The first group involves the mentally ill. These cases highlight the lack of adequate mental health services and the inability of the justice system to properly handle the growing population of mentally ill defendants. The laws, the facilities, services, and the system are not equipped to deal with the chronically mentally ill. This issue is evident in the hospitals and the jails where some pass through repeatedly.

The second group involves domestic abuse and children. As a Judge who presided over domestic violence court and juvenile court, I have seen the adverse effects on children. Since taking the bench, I have been instrumental in appointing Guardian ad litem's to protect the children's interests. The guardian ad litem is a lawyer who is appointed to protect the children's best interest. The children need protection as well as a voice. With respect to the resolution of these groups of cases, the system does not always allow for a solution that meets the needs of all parties. These matters present challenges that extend beyond the legal system. These two groups need special consideration and my role has been to ensure that they are provided protection within the boundaries of the law.

3. Name and describe one change you would make in the Illinois court system

- a. Mental Health Courts are an alternative to traditional sentencing. Defendants with mental health issues present a unique dilemma for participants in the legal system. Some defendants with mental illness can function in society provided they are complying with their treatment. Legal issues arise when those with mental illness stop taking their medication. For non-violent offenders, Peoria County has developed a Mental Health Court to better address those defendants who benefit from intensive services and resources to allow them to become productive members of society. This is a trend which should continue.

4. One prominent Illinois judicial evaluation survey asks attorneys to evaluate candidates on integrity, impartiality, legal ability and temperament. Critique yourself in these four areas as to how you personally approach your job as a judge?

- a. In my most recent Bar Poll results my scores in these areas are as follows: Integrity 98.61% - recommended; impartiality 97.56% - recommended; Legal Ability 95.45% - recommended; Temperament 97.21% - recommended.