

The Columbus Dispatch

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For Domestic Relations judge

Geer would restore confidence to a troubled courtroom

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The race for the Franklin County Domestic Relations Court seat presently held by Judge Carole Squire is complicated by the unresolved misconduct allegations pending against the judge before the Ohio Supreme Court's discipline panel. But because those allegations are grave and supported by the overwhelmingly bad ratings Squire earns from central Ohio lawyers, The Dispatch believes voters would do well to vote for Squire's opponent, lawyer Chris Geer.



Geer

The allegations against Squire, a Democrat, are among the most serious that one can level against a judge. Some lawyers and parties who have appeared before her say she abused their rights, broke the law and judicial rules.

Hearings on the allegations are winding down, but the board doesn't expect to have a decision by Nov. 7, when voters must decide whether to return Squire to the bench.

Based on the information before voters now, Republican Geer is the better choice for the job. He has spent more than two decades practicing family law in Columbus and is very familiar with the court. His demeanor is measured and careful. He has avoided commenting on his opponent's professional difficulties.

But if Geer is reticent on that topic, his peers are not. Squire's judicial performance is ranked by lawyers who practice before her as the worst in Franklin County. This summer, when 7,000 Columbus lawyers were polled about their preference in this contest, 1,111 answered. Of them, 1,041 chose Geer, and only 70 selected Squire. Every other incumbent in the poll was preferred, and the Squire-Geer race was far and away the most lopsided.

Squire rejects the four counts utterly and attributes them to a cabal of fellow judges and at least 134 local attorneys whom she says have conspired to destroy her because they oppose her efforts to protect children and ensure justice.

This conspiracy theory is outlandish and calls into question Squire's judgment, to say the least.

She said during a Sept. 22 hearing: "With all that was going on three years ago, I was just glad to get out alive. I don't know....Itwasawar zone."

Franklin County voters can restore peace by supporting Geer on Nov. 7.

(The Dispatch will endorse in other Common Pleas Court races on Monday.)