



Candidate Questionnaire - Circuit Judge

August 2024 Primary Election

Your name: Elizabeth V. Krier (Beth)

Campaign email address: Elizabeth@keepjudgekrier.com

Campaign phone number: (239) 980-2224 (Terry Miller, Campaign consultant)

Your age: 66

Today's date: 7/6/24

Judge Elizabeth Krier moved to Naples Florida in 1985, from Columbus, Ohio, by way of Chicago Illinois. She raised two children in Naples who attended Gulf View Middle and Naples High Schools, one of whom returned after college to work in the Naples area.

EDUCATION:

Judge Krier earned a B.A. in political science from the University of Chicago and a J.D. from Chicago Kent College of Law.

LEGAL EXPERIENCE:

Judge Krier practiced family law for most of her almost 20-year legal career prior to being elected to the circuit court in 2006. For one year, she worked as a domestic and sexual violence prosecutor in Iowa. In Florida, Judge Krier worked as an associate and later partner at the Naples-Florida law firms of Asbell, Hains, Doyle & Pickworth, P.A., Cummings & Lockwood, and Woodward, Pires & Lombardo, P.A.

JUDICIAL PHILOSOPHY

Judge Krier is committed to the accurate and consistent application of the law and to providing as much court access to litigants and their attorneys as possible. When a judge's goal is to accurately and consistently apply the law and protect the Constitution, fairness and impartiality are the end results. The law is blind. It doesn't care what you look like or how much money you have. What matters is the letter of law and the evidence of the case.

What forms of voluntary professional and community service have you been involved with in Southwest Florida in the past? Currently?

Local and State Bar Association committees addressing improvement of legal services and attorney well-being, including: serving as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Professionalism from 1993 to 1995; serving as board member and vice-chair of Collier County Family law section and Chair of Interdisciplinary Committee on Child Related Issues, 1991 to 1995; and, pro bono legal services, for which I received an award in 1988.

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Judicial professional and community service addressing improvement of court and related services, including: Florida Supreme Court appointment to the Judicial Management Council, 2013 to 2015; Chief Judge appointment as chair of the 20th Circuit Advisory Court Improvement Panel, 2011 to 2014; Collier County Court's Technology Committee, 2011 to 2013; Collier County Chapter of Florida Association of Infant Mental Health, 2010 to 2014, Safe Havens (program to improve supervised visitation), 2008 to 2012; Domestic Violence Alliance, 2009 to 2012; Dependency Court Improvement Panel, 2012 to 2014; and, Serving as co-chair of 20th Circuit's Model Court Committee, 2011 to 2014.

Community organizations that contribute to community improvement, including: serving on the Board of Trustees of North Naples United Methodist Church from 2005 through 2009; member of North Naples Rotary, 2006 to 2012; Leadership Collier 1993/1994, Leadership Southwest Florida 1995, and Leadership Collier Foundation Board Member, 2012 to 2015.

Current service includes membership in: Michael R.N. McDonnel Inns of Court; Collier and Lee County Bar Associations; Florida Bar Association; Collier County Women's Bar Association.

What has been your greatest accomplishment in your legal career? Reducing the number of pending cases significantly in every division in which I've served; improving decisions in child abuse cases across Florida by judges and all stakeholders through conducting trainings focused on parents' protective capacities and children's vulnerabilities; and, providing consistent and accurate application of Florida laws as a judge.

Which of the various types of matters that have or would come before you as a Circuit Judge would present the least challenge for you? Why? All case types present certain challenges. I value my service to all litigants and attorneys.

In the beginning of my judicial career, I was more familiar with family law. The challenge for judges in these cases is listening for the evidence amongst the emotions of the litigants and using the unwieldy tool of the law to tell parents how to divide time with their children and/or how to otherwise parent their children. It's analogous to using a chainsaw to sculpt a delicate sculpture. The result isn't pretty. These cases consume a great deal of time in court as well as out of the courtroom preparing written rulings.

Criminal cases present important Constitutional issues with many more jury trials occurring than in civil cases. Nevertheless, the price of a judge making a mistake in a ruling is significant, both for defendants and our community.

Civil cases encompass the broadest area of law for circuit court judges. Of the approximately 742 chapters of the Florida Statutes, approximately 47 pertain to criminal, 6 to family law, 9 to probate and guardianship, and the remaining 680 chapters apply to civil cases. Civil cases present the greatest case management challenges as the number of civil cases increase and decrease significantly based on hurricanes, the economy and legislation. Much of a judge's court time is consumed by pre-trial

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proceedings rather than trials because a majority of these cases settle before trial. When trials do occur, they often require weeks of trial time.

Which of the various types of matters that have or would come before you as a Circuit Judge would present the greatest challenge for you? Why? As indicated above, each type of case has its own unique challenges. The greatest challenge in any type of case is simply the time required to prepare for court proceedings and prepare written rulings in addition to time in court.

Who are your judicial role models? Why? Chief Justice Roberts and [deceased] Justice Antonin Scalia. Their decisions tend to apply Constitutional principles and laws accurately and consistently. Our Constitutions and laws work well if they are applied as written. They protect the individual rights that they specify and facilitate the free flow of commerce if they are consistently and accurately applied. This has resulted in the U.S. being the freest and the most prosperous nation in the World.

What are the pros and cons of serving as a judge as compared to practicing law? Serving as a judge gives me the opportunity to serve more Southwest Floridians than practicing law as well as serving the rule of law. Circuit judges see regular people experiencing trauma and transition, including divorce, death, injury and being charged with crimes. We serve everyone by applying the law accurately and consistently as it is written so that all Floridians can continue to exercise their Constitutional rights and enjoy the prosperity facilitated by the rule of law.

Have you ever been disciplined by the Bar Association or any other authority on attorney or judicial conduct? No.

Why should voters support you rather than your opponent? Experience and commitment matter in the administration of justice because justice delayed is justice denied and justice based on an agenda, is no justice at all. I have almost 20 years of experience with the law and managing cases and dockets as a judge and magistrate. I am one of the hardest working judges in the 20th Circuit. I am committed to serving the law and the people of Southwest Florida.

Experience is required to accumulate legal knowledge and apply it. Judges preside over a broad spectrum of court cases and laws. Rarely, if ever, does a judge preside over the area of law in which he or she practiced as a lawyer at least initially or even for a long period of time throughout his or her judicial service. I have served more than once in every division and presided over many different types of cases.

Experience matters because 50% of judicial effort is managing cases, attorneys, litigants and coordination between the various branches of government. Learning to manage not only one docket, but different kinds of dockets and in different counties, requires time. I have served as a circuit judge for almost 18 years and before that

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served as a civil and family law magistrate. I have served in 3 of the 20th Circuit's counties, and I have served in all divisions and presided over all types of cases: criminal, including death penalty and drug trafficking cases; civil, including car accidents, property damage, medical malpractice, zoning, employment and class action lawsuits; probate and guardianship cases including will contests and removing guardians for malfeasance; and family law including divorces, child custody cases and domestic violence injunction cases. I have significantly reduced the number of cases in every division and docket in which I've worked. In Lee County, I reduced my civil docket from over 1100 cases to 860 cases in a 3-year period. I have reduced my current felony criminal docket from over 760 cases to 488 cases in a 2-year period.

I have the demonstrated experience and commitment to continue serving the people of Southwest Florida.

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