

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 9, 2006

**SUPREME COURT FILLS VACANCY IN FIFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT  
WITH LONGTIME PARIS ATTORNEY**

The Illinois Supreme Court announced Wednesday the appointment of longtime Paris attorney Steven L. Garst as resident circuit judge for Edgar County in the Fifth Judicial Circuit.

Mr. Garst was appointed to fill the Circuit Court seat which became vacant upon the August 1<sup>st</sup> retirement of Judge H. Dean Andrews. His appointment is effective September 8 and will expire December 1, 2008. Mr. Garst will be eligible to seek a full six-year term by running for election in 2008.

The appointment of Mr. Garst was recommended to the Supreme Court by Justice Rita B. Garman following a review process by a special citizen screening committee.

"Mr. Garst's long and extensive legal career and his very high ranking by the committee show his experience and dedication to the law," Justice Garman said. "I am confident he will be an excellent judge of the Fifth Circuit, and will serve the people of Edgar County in an exemplary fashion."

Mr. Garst, 56, has practiced law in Edgar County for more than 31 years. He served as public defender in Edgar and Clark Counties. He was appointed by former Governors James Thompson and Jim Edgar as public guardian and public administrator of Edgar County for four terms. Mr. Garst currently serves a partner with the law firm of Fruin, Garst & Kash of Paris. He also serves as Paris City Attorney.

"I am honored to accept this appointment by the Supreme Court and I look forward to assuming the duties as resident circuit judge of Edgar County," Mr. Garst said.

Mr. Garst received his B.A. degree from Illinois State University in 1971, and received his *juris doctor* degree from the University of Illinois College of Law in 1974. Mr. Garst is active in several bar and civic organizations, including serving as director of the Edgar County Children's Home.

**MORE**

**Fifth Circuit Vacancy Filled**

## **Add One**

He currently serves as director of the Paris' public library and the Chamber of Commerce. He is active in the First United Methodist Church, located in Paris. In addition, he has served as president, vice president and secretary of the Edgar County Bar Association.

Justice Garman's special committee which reviewed the candidates consisted of four non-lawyers and three lawyers.

The non-lawyer members were: Dale Barkley, who served as chairperson of the committee, Paris; Larry Johnson, Chrisman; Jan Nebergall, Paris, and Mary Ann Tucker, also of Paris.

The lawyers on the committee were the Hon. Ralph S. Pearman, retired chief judge of the Fifth Judicial Circuit, Paris; and Paris attorneys Larry Jones and Fred Kreckman.

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**(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: Joseph Tybor, press secretary to the Illinois Supreme Court at 312.793.2323)**