



The Municipal League of King County
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2008 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

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The Municipal League of King County requests every candidate who participates in the candidate evaluation process to **submit background information prior to his/her interview with a candidate evaluation committee**. The questionnaire is the basis of the League's research and interview process. The League's ratings are non-partisan; they are based on standards of Involvement, Effectiveness, Character, and Knowledge, all of which have been developed and refined over the past 90 years.

A printed version of the questionnaire is available for candidates who prefer to use the traditional format. To obtain a hard copy, please contact the League office. A copy of this questionnaire will be provided to Candidate Evaluation Committee members to help them prepare for your interview. Candidate responses, except the confidential section, will be available to the general public at the League website.

The Municipal League requests the following materials from candidates. Please check to make certain you have sent in your:

- Candidate Questionnaire**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not sending
- Resume (education, employment, and professional activities)**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not ending
 Check here if you DO NOT want your resume posted on the Municipal League website
- Campaign Materials**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not ending
- Constituent Newsletters and other publications**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not Sending
- Photograph**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not ending

Note: Electronically submitted questionnaires are strongly preferred. All materials can be emailed to cec@munileague.org. They can be processed and made available on-line far more rapidly than handwritten or typed submissions.

For non-electronic submissions, please print clearly and legibly and return the application **as soon as possible in order to allow the committee the greatest amount of time to prepare a complete report on your skills and experience.**

**We request that you return the Candidate Questionnaire
by June 1, 2008**

If you have not yet been contacted to schedule an interview, or if you have questions about the candidate evaluation program, please contact the League office at 206-264-1070.

If you have a disability and require accommodation to participate in the candidate evaluation process, please contact the CEC Coordinator at the League office.

2008 Candidate Questionnaire

SECTION I

BASIC CANDIDATE INFORMATION

1. Name as it will appear on the ballot

First Name	Middle Initial or Nickname	Last Name
Jean		Rietschel

2. Office sought (include office, jurisdiction, position/district number):

King County Superior Court Position 37

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes x No

4. How long have you resided in this district/city?

24 years

5. How long have you resided in King County?

24 years

6. Is the office sought partisan or nonpartisan? Partisan x Nonpartisan

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Committee to Elect Judge Jean Rietschel

Address: PO Box 19473

City/State/Zip: Seattle WA 98109

Campaign Phone: 206 354 9578

Campaign Fax: 206 382 1338

Campaign E-mail: rietsche@mindspring.com; Vicki@connectionsgroup.org

Campaign Website: www.ElectJudgeJean.com

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

1. Beginning with the most recent position, please list public offices you have held. Include positions on appointive boards or commissions.

Public Office	Elective or Appointive?	Dates Held	Leadership Role (if any)
Seattle Municipal Court Judge	appointed initially by Mayor Norm Rice, 3 subsequent elections	1996 - present	Presiding Judge 2000-2003, Executive Committee 1998- 2006, Acting Presiding Judge 1998 - 1999

2. If you ran for public office but were not elected, please list those races below:

Office Title	Year of Run

SECTION II

In this section, we are seeking responses that reflect the four ratings criteria: involvement, effectiveness, character, and knowledge. These are defined as follows:

- **Involvement:** What has the candidate done previously in family, neighborhood, community, volunteer work, employment or public life to suggest readiness to accomplish challenging objectives? How do these activities demonstrate readiness for the challenges unique to the office sought?
 - **Effectiveness:** Has the candidate demonstrated promise of being productive in the office sought? Has the candidate shown the ability to work with other people?
 - **Character:** Do the candidate's personal traits show the ability to take on the responsibilities of campaigning for and holding the public office she or he is seeking? Is the candidate a leader, participant or observer? Is the candidate trustworthy, reliable and candid?
 - **Knowledge:** Has the candidate demonstrated the willingness and ability to learn and adapt? Does the candidate understand the duties and challenges of the office sought? Does the candidate have a firm grasp of the issues important to his or her constituency and their potential effects?
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1. In one page or less, why are you running for this office? (Note: the interview committee will be given a copy of this statement before your interview; at the beginning of your interview you will have the opportunity to expand on this statement in any way you wish.)

I am running for this office because I am the most qualified candidate for the position, because I love serving as a judge and because I offer a unique set of qualities to Superior Court. I have served for twelve years in Seattle Municipal Court. I am well respected by the legal community as a fair and impartial jurist. I have been rated exceptionally well qualified for Superior Court by the King County Bar Association, the Washington Women Lawyers, the Joint Asian Bar Association, the Latina/o Bar Association and QLaw, as well as well qualified by Loren Miller Bar Association. When attorneys rate the judges they appear before every four years, I have also been very highly rated in the King County Bar surveys of sitting judges.

While I am an excellent trial judge, I have accomplished more than my duties in the courtroom. I have instituted innovative programs that have positively impacted the community, holding offenders accountable while increasing the opportunity for rehabilitation. I established the Domestic Violence Court, which keeps domestic violence cases before the same judge for the entire duration of the case. Having one judge keeps defendants accountable and helps to increase victim safety. I expanded the Relicensing programs that encourage payment plans and community service to allow individuals to get their licenses reinstated. This program puts young and impoverished offenders back into the community able to be employed. It has increased public confidence in the court system and led to Statewide legislation requiring other courts to allow time payments. I co-chaired the Misdemeanor Report, a broad coalition of criminal justice and community leaders. The recommendations of the Report of alternatives to confinement, relicensing programs, and strategies to reduce failures to appear have been adopted by courts throughout the State. I am proud that under my leadership as Presiding Judge, Seattle Municipal court instituted a wide range of alternatives to confinement, saving the taxpayers money while also still ensuring accountability of defendants.

I have the unique experience of having been the Presiding Judge in a court with 250 employees, responsible for the administrative functions of the court. This experience is invaluable in helping to deal with the budget crisis presently facing Superior Court.

Before becoming a judge I tried over 50 felony cases, had eight years of private practice which included civil matters such as personal injury, trusts, wills and probate, adoptions and dependencies, and contract law. I have the experience of being a small business owner and the understanding of that perspective. I have also argued cases to the State Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals.

As a judge I have spoken on many panels pro bono on legal issues, mentored law

students, presided over mock trials. I also volunteer as a board member of Seattle Counseling Service, an organization that provides mental health, drug and alcohol counseling. I have dedicated my life to public service and wish to continue to do so.

2. Describe your most important personal characteristics or traits as they relate to the office you seek.

The most important characteristics for a judicial officer are fairness, impartiality, diligence, and intelligence. I believe that I possess all of these qualities. A judge must possess the intelligence to listen to arguments, read through briefs, and analyze the law. I believe my experience, reputation and ratings demonstrate that I do possess this characteristic. Intelligence takes one only so far. A judge must be diligent, willing to prepare, to read all of the briefs, to put in the time required to perform capably. I have demonstrated over my career that I do read each brief that is filed, do any necessary research, and come to court prepared. These qualities, however, are only the foundation.

Fairness and impartiality are the critical factors. As a trial judge, I strive to create an atmosphere in my courtroom where every litigant feels that he/she had an opportunity to be heard, and where he/she was in fact heard by the court and in some instances, the jury. In most cases one side will prevail, so it is imperative that both sides at least feel that they had the opportunity to present their case. Impartiality requires one to be constantly aware of possible biases, to educate oneself on cultural competency issues and to remain vigilant in creating an appropriate courtroom atmosphere.

I strive at all times to be fair and impartial, to be aware of potential biases, and to continue to educate myself. In one of my longer trials, the Greenpeace case, in which eight individuals had suspended themselves over the Aurora bridge to protest factory fishing, sides, the witnesses and the jurors took the time afterwards to praise my fairness.

3. Please describe, in sufficient detail, one to three accomplishments or contributions of which you are most proud. These examples should illustrate skills and capabilities you think apply to the office you are seeking. These accomplishments may have occurred at any time in your personal, professional, or public life.

AJOMP Misdemeanant Report This was a two-year process involving representatives from district and municipal courts, county and city legislatures, police, Harborview, corrections, and mental health agencies. We analyzed data from a wide variety of sources to make recommendations on the more efficient processing of misdemeanor cases. I was the co-chair of the committee. The King County Council and other legislative bodies have used our report in making planning and funding decisions for justice projects. Our three top recommendations have become the priorities of the time: establish failure to appear reduction strategies, establish alternative sanctions and establish relicensing programs. These recommendations were acted upon and have become established programs at our local courts and through out the state.

City of Seattle v Hodwitz et al (Greenpeace) (1998) The City charged 14

Defendants with public nuisance after a protest action against factory fish trawling. The defendants had suspended themselves from the Aurora Bridge. This case was extremely high profile and followed by the news media at every court appearance. There were 19 briefed pretrial motions. I dismissed charges against two defendants who had only spoken to the media on first amendment grounds. I severed the cases of the defendants who were assisting. The trial was moved to Superior Court, due to its size. There were 10 lawyers and 8 defendants for the jury trial and it lasted nearly two weeks. This trial required extensive management and preparation. This case was a significant accomplishment due to the glare of the publicity, the cameras in the courtroom, and the difficulty of dealing with 10 lawyers at one time. After the trial had

concluded both sides, the jurors, and even the defendants in the case expressed their appreciation for my fairness, objectivity and the quality of my decisions.

Domestic Violence Court

After a series of meetings with court employees, prosecutors, public defenders, and private counsel, I established a domestic violence court. This court keeps all domestic violence cases for the two-year period of jurisdiction. I presided over the court for the first two years and three months. The goals of the court included increasing offender accountability. One of the problems we had prior to the initiation of this court was in the area of probation reviews. In a system where any judge could hear the review, when a defendant failed to comply with the terms of the sentence, judges only imposed a sanction of any kind in thirty per cent of the cases. Once the domestic violence court was established, the reviews were held before the same judge who had imposed the sentence. This resulted in sanctions being imposed in seventy per cent of the cases. Keeping these cases before the same judge for their duration allows the judge to become informed about the dynamics of the case. The court is still ongoing after my rotation which I believe is the greatest accomplishment.

4. Please list or describe current and past activities in the community in which you have acquired skills that relate to the office you seek. Include your role in the activity and the year(s) in which you were involved. Involvement consists of many areas such as family, neighborhood, community, employment, or public life.

Judicial Ethics Advisory Board 2003 – 2006
Chair, Trial Court Coordinating Counsel 2003 –2005, member 2002 – present
Chair, Regional Law and Justice Committee of King County 2002

Chair, Regional Relicensing Summit 2000 –2001

Co-chair, Misdemeanor Work Group, Adult Justice Operational Master Plan 2000 –2003

- Advisory Committee, Adult Justice Operational Master Plan 2000-2003
 - District and Municipal Judges Association representative to the WSBA Court Rules and Procedures Committee
 - DMCJA Courts Helping Courts Committee 2002-2003
 - DMCJA Legislative Committee 2003 -present
 - DMCJA Rules Committee 2001 -present
 - Seattle Domestic Violence Council, Critical Incident Review Committee 2001, Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review 2000, Stop Grant Domestic Violence Project 2002 -2006, King County Domestic Violence And Child Maltreatment Coordinated Response
 - King County Public Defense Study 2000
 - WSBA Rules and Procedures Committee 2001 –2003, DCMJA representative
 - University of Washington Mentor Program 2006
- Presiding Judge Education Committee 2003

- Speaker: Choosing the Judiciary, Criminal Justice Institute, Race and Other Factors Facing Criminal Justice, WSBA Preparing for a Judicial Career, Superior Court Judicial Conference, District and Municipal Judges Association Judicial Conference, Seattle University Law School on Sentencing, Criminal Law Issues, Domestic Violence Court, Judicial Ethics, Criminal Law Institute, Arraignments, Public Disturbances, Relicensing .
- Judicial Officer for Mock Trials: Seattle University Law School, UPS Sojourner Truth Moot Court, YMCA Mock Trial Finals, University of Washington Law School Mock Trials
- Legals, former chair, founding member, former LGBT Bar Association
- Board member, Seattle Counseling Service 2006- present

5. Please describe the duties of the office you seek. Which are the most important duties and why?

The duties of a Superior Court Judge are to adjudicate cases in criminal, civil, juvenile, and family law. The trial judge has to manage his/her courtroom, move cases in an efficient manner, respond to requests for motions on other pending cases and handle administrative assignments. One of the most important duties at this particular time is the duty to handle cases in an efficient manner. Parties and ultimately justice is not served if cases are delayed too long in waiting for trial dates. The vast majority of the judges in Superior Court on any given day will be hearing criminal cases, family and juvenile law matters. These judges are also assigned a civil calendar to manage. Efficiency and experience is key in handling these assignments. I believe we need judges who can step up to these responsibilities.

**EDUCATION BACKGROUND SUMMARY
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report is distributed to voters in print and on our website. It includes a summary of the candidate's education. Please summarize your education in 120 characters (letters, punctuation, and space all combined). The League will delete material that exceeds the space limit by beginning with the last entry. Suggested order is (degree) (subject) (school) (year, if desired).

Note: *If this question is left blank the League will not include education information in your candidate profile.*

University of Washington, Juris Doctor 1977

University of Rochester, New York, BA in Philosophy, with Distinction

**CIVIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY
FOR PUBLICATION IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION REPORT**

The Municipal League's Candidate Evaluation Report includes a summary of each candidate's civic involvement. Please summarize your civic involvement in the space below. We will make every attempt to include the information in the Candidate Evaluation Report as submitted. Due to space restrictions in the Report, your response is limited to 500 characters (letters, punctuation, and spaces all combined). It is important that you list your involvement beginning with the most important and ending with the least important. If you exceed the length of response permitted, or if the League should find it necessary to shorten responses for publication purposes, deletions will be made beginning with the last item listed.

Note: *This information will appear verbatim on the League's Candidate Evaluation Report. If this question is left blank, the Municipal League will not include information on your civic involvement in the Report.*

Check here if you would like the Municipal League to copy the first 500 characters from Question 4 to paste into this section.