



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 Sending
 Check here if you DO NOT want your resume posted on the Municipal League website
- Campaign Materials**
Sent by: Email US Mail Fax Not Sending
- Constituent Newsletters and other publications**
Sent by: XEmail US Mail Fax Not Sending
- Photograph**
Sent by: X Email US Mail Fax Not Sending

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
Suzanne	Sue	Parisien

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

King County Superior Court, Position # 1.

3. Are you the incumbent? Yes X No

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

Approximately 6 years.

5. How long have you resided in King County?

15 years in total.

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Committee to Elect Sue Parisien for Superior Court Judge

Address: P.O Box 685

City/State/Zip: Mercer Island, WA 98040

Campaign Phone: 206-261-0928

Campaign Fax: _____

Campaign E-mail: info@sueforjudge.com

Campaign Website: Sueforjudge.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)
N/A			

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

Office Title	Year of Run
N/A	

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 to become a Superior Court Judge because few positions offer the same opportunity to impact people's lives on a daily basis. Every day in every courtroom across this country, Judges are making incredibly important decisions that affect each and every one of us in many ways. Ninety-five percent of litigation takes place in state courts. Many legal issues are primarily decided there, including divorce, property rights, child welfare issues, employment law, product liability and medical malpractice. I have been incredibly fortunate to have practiced in many of these areas.

Having practiced in countless courtrooms across Washington (and before that in Pennsylvania and New Jersey) for the past 18 years, I have learned the qualities that define a superior Judge. I believe I possess many of these same qualities and have an earnest desire to learn those that I have yet to attain. After 18 years as an advocate, I am ready to become a neutral decision maker. In addition to a genuine love and respect of the law, I am interested in finding ways that our courts can be more accessible and responsive to those it serves. I sincerely believe we can make significant improvements in this area even in the face of current budget constraints.

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

Having practiced in countless courtrooms in three States, I have come to conclude that there are many characteristics that come together to define a superior Judge. It is difficult to place them in the order of importance but below is my best effort:

- A commitment to public service- Judges are there to serve the public—not just the parties appearing before them in a given proceeding, but the larger community which depends on the fair and impartial application of the law. I think the finest Judges are those for whom public service is a privilege. I have worked in both the private and public sector and have come to view my work for the Office of the Attorney General as an honor and privilege. I can think of no greater honor and responsibility than to serve the public as a Judge;
- Vast real life experiences- Superior Court Judges preside over a wide array of legal matters involving individuals in many different circumstances. Both professionally and personally, I have the kind of experience which makes me uniquely qualified to be a Superior Court Judge. I've been fortunate to enjoy an incredibly diverse career working for law firms; the insurance industry; as the Director of General Liability and Employment Litigation for Nordstrom Inc.; and, beginning in 1998, as an Assistant Attorney General. Outside of work, I have been richly rewarded through my community service—in my daughters' school; on the board of Temple Beth Am; providing *pro bono* legal services for children in the foster care system, the indigent and victims of domestic violence. I am a recent breast cancer survivor and am especially proud of my role as a speaker and facilitator for a non-profit dedicated to prevention and early detection;
- A robust knowledge of the law- In King County, civil cases out-number criminal cases almost 4 to 1 (in 2007 the precise number of civil case filings was 38,899 compared to 10,976 criminal filings). With this, a diverse and robust knowledge of many areas of civil law is most important. I have been fortunate to practice in many different areas of civil law including discrimination, civil rights, medical malpractice, personal injury, breach of contract, negligence, wrongful death, premise liability, dram shop liability and insurance coverage/bad faith.
- Humility and empathy- These two qualities are extremely important. Aloofness and arrogance have no place in the courtroom, particularly coming from the bench. Judges will preside over matters involving people in many life circumstances, some particularly difficult. Empathy is critical and is not a trait which one can "learn". My personal history has instilled both of these qualities. I lost my mother when I was two years old and was raised by my father who was a part time ESL (English as a second language) teacher. We lived in subsidized housing in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. I put myself through college and law school by working 2 and 3 jobs at a time. I have never been afraid of hard work and this too is critical. The best Judges are conscientious and well-prepared. This takes time and hard work.

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.

Being recognized by the Philadelphia Bar Association for my community service was a significant professional accomplishment and the one for which I am most proud. From 1992 until 1997, I averaged 15 hours a week of community service which included providing legal services to the indigent through the Volunteers for the Indigent Program (VIP); volunteering as a court appointed Child Advocate and *guardian ad litem* to several children in the foster care system; cooking and delivering meals to homebound AIDS victims through MANNA (Metropolitan AIDS Neighborhood Nutritional Alliance) and providing home cooked meals for up to 25 families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. I did this while balancing a demanding litigation practice at Aetna/Travelers Insurance Company. See community service articles attached hereto.

In 1998 when I began with the Attorney General's Office, I had only been practicing in Washington for 6 months. I had little experience with Washington litigation practice and minimal motion practice. My practice in Philadelphia was primarily fast paced personal injury with little motion practice aside from routine discovery matters. I decided that preparing dispositive motions on as many cases as I could would be the best way to quickly get up to speed on my cases and familiarize myself with Washington motion practice.

Working in the order of approaching trial dates, I prepared, argued and was successful in getting 10 cases dismissed in a 14 month period. At the time, it was a record in the office for which I received a commendation from Attorney General Gregoire. Many of the dismissals were in difficult, factually-laden employment cases including two disability discrimination, two age and sex discrimination, and one sexual harassment case.

In 2002 when I began working as the Director of General Liability and Employment Litigation for Nordstrom, Inc., I had no management or corporate in-house experience. I went from litigating cases in Washington State to supervising a large staff of in-house attorneys, claim adjusters, and outside counsel throughout the United States. In addition, I managed a wide array of corporate advisory and training responsibilities. The sheer volume and diversity of responsibilities that I managed at Nordstrom was a significant professional and personal 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.

Early on in my career, I was extremely involved in a wide variety of community service, some in my capacity as an attorney, and others in a non-legal capacity. From 1992 until 1997, I averaged 15 hours a week of community service which included providing legal services to the indigent through the Volunteers for the Indigent Program (VIP); volunteering as a court appointed Child Advocate and *guardian ad litem* to several children in the foster care system; cooking and delivering meals to homebound AIDS victims through MANNA (Metropolitan AIDS Neighborhood Nutritional Alliance) and providing home cooked meals for up to 25 families staying at the Ronald McDonald House. See community service article attached.

Since moving to Seattle in 1997, I have continued to prioritize community involvement. Professionally, I have served on a number of committees and work groups on behalf of the local and state bar association (Professionalism Committee [WSBA 2002-2003]; Courts and the Judiciary Committee [KCBA 2005-2006]; and, Pattern Interrogatory Committee serving as one of a few defense attorneys who researched and drafted pattern interrogatories on behalf of the defense bar to be used in auto cases in King County Superior Court).

I presently serve on the King County Bar Association Domestic Violence Protection Order and Revision Squad which provides *pro bono* legal representation for victims of domestic violence who have had protection orders denied. Closer to home, I have been an active member of the PTA of my daughters' school where I have been a room parent since 2002. I am a volunteer coach for the local Boys and Girls Club and an active volunteer for the Youth Theater Northwest. I am in my second year as a member of the Board of Temple Beth Am, one of the largest congregations in the Pacific Northwest. Prior to serving on the Board, I taught Sunday School for three years. In May of 2007, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and since October 2007, I have become actively involved with a non-profit organization, "Check Your Boobies" (CYB) which is dedicated to prevention and early detection. I am very proud to be a speaker, facilitator and fundraiser for CYB. Like many people who have experienced a life threatening illness, I consider my work with CYB to be both a passion and a duty.

I believe all of my community service has prepared me well to serve the public as a Judge. Judges preside over matters involving people in many different life circumstances, often very difficult ones. Both my professional experience and community service have been extremely broad and diverse. This will serve me well and ensure that every one who enters my courtroom—no matter what their background or resources—will be treated fairly and with respect.

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

The most important duties of a Judge are to apply the law fairly and impartially. Judges must be good listeners, patient, thorough, smart, curious, humble, compassionate, free from bias and able to think and act decisively with little time to deliberate.

While all of the above duties are extremely important, the two most important duties are to be fair and impartial. If a Judge does no more than apply the law fairly and impartially, then he/she is serving the public well. It is these two qualities which form the basis of our entire legal system and upon which democracy depends. That said, a Judge can not apply the law fairly and impartially without listening well, being smart, patient, free from bias and thorough.

**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.*

Juris Doctor, Villanova University School of Law (1990); Bachelor of Arts, Psychology, Seattle University (1987)

**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.

I serve on the KCBA Domestic Violence Protection Order and Revision Squad which provides *pro bono* services for victims of domestic violence. Since 2002, I have been an active member of the PTA of my daughters' school. I volunteer for the Boys and Girls Club and Youth Theater Northwest. I am a Board member of Temple Beth Am where I taught Sunday school for three years. As a breast cancer survivor, I take special pride speaking on behalf of a non-profit organization dedicated to prevention and early detection.