



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: xx  Email     US Mail     Fax     Not Sending
- Resume (education, employment, and professional activities)**  
Sent by: xx  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    x  Not Sending
- Constituent Newsletters and other publications**  
Sent by:  Email     US Mail     Fax    x  Not Sending
- Photograph**  
Sent by: x  Email     US Mail     Fax     Not Sending

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

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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
Laura	Gene	Middaugh

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

**King County Superior Court**

3. Are you the incumbent?      xx  Yes       No

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

**29 years**

5. How long have you resided in King County?

**29 years**

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

7. If partisan, please indicate party:

### CAMPAIGN CONTACTS

Campaign Name: Committee to re-elect judge Middaugh  
PO Box 28516

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: Seattle, WA 98118

Campaign Phone: 206.769-7981

Campaign Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Campaign E-mail: reelectjudgemiddaugh@comcast.net

Campaign Website: [www.reelectjudgemiddaugh](http://www.reelectjudgemiddaugh) (in progress)

### 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)
<b>King County Superior Court Judge Position 26</b>	<b>elected</b>	<b>2001 - current</b>	<b>see attached resume</b>

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

Office Title	Year of Run

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## 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 have been a Superior Court Judge for almost eight years now. It is one of the most rewarding jobs I have had.**

**I spent the first two years after being elected concentrating on learning to be a judge. I had been a Family Law Commissioner before being elected judge, so I had experience with being a judicial officer, but being a judge was an entirely different matter. I was assigned to the criminal case calendar for my first two years, which is the type of case I had the least amount of experience with. I spent hours and hours in the evenings going over cases and evidence rules educating myself in this new area of law.**

**This is something every judge has to do because no judge comes onto the bench an expert in every area. I had experience in civil law and extensive experience in family law, so when I transferred to the civil calendar and then the family law calendar my learning curve was much less. I am now conformable in all areas of the law that come before the court, though I still continue to learn every day. Because of my experience in family law I am often the "go to" judge when other judges have questions in this area.**

**After two years I felt sufficiently comfortable in the job so that I was able to spend time on the other area of being a judge – service to the court system and to the community.**

**As you can see from my resume, I involved myself in many areas of management with the courts. I worked on committees at the local court level. I became involved in the management of the court system on the statewide level first as an elected trustee to the Superior Court Judges Association and then as an appointed chair to the Pattern Forms committee. I also continue to work on committees at the county level.**

**I brought my experiences and skills to the job when I was elected 8 years ago. I have grown and learned with the job. I have been of service to the courts and, I believe, to at least some of the people that appear in front of me. I contribute to the community by improving the courts and the ways the court can be of service to the community.**

**I am running for re-election to this office because I love the job, I am good at it, and I am of service to the court and the people it serves.**

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

**One of my most Important “ characteristics is also on of my most problematic – the ability to empathize. Because of this, and because I have strong analytic ability, I can see not just both sides of a issue, but also sometimes a side to an issue that the parties did not present , as well as potential future problems. It leads to some sleepless nights and sometimes long and involved decisions.**

**I am also very detailoriented and independent. This helps me to deal with complex issues and to make decisions.**

**Because of my experience in life I have developed that ability to make decision under pressure, when enormous issues are at stake and in the midst of high emotions.**

**I also inherently optimistic about people. I believe that with the right assistance most people are capable of managing their lives effectively. However, I do not let my optimism about people override my responsibility to protect those who cannot protect themselves and to enforce the laws.**

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.

**I am the chair of the Pattern Forms Committee. This is a committee created by the State Supreme Court. I was appointed as a member of the committee and then as Chair of the Committee by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Our committee is responsible for updating, and creating if necessary, forms that are used in the courts. Some of the forms that we develop, such as the criminal plea and sentencing forms, are used primarily by attorneys. Butmany of our forms, such as the family law forms, are often used by people representing themselves. Our system is confusing. Our requirements often complex. For people going through dissolution these forms can help –or hinder – them in getting access to the court and getting the correct information to the courts so that their case can be heard and decided fairly. I am proud of the work we do on these forms and the constant effort , within our limited budget, that we make to help people by making these forms more understandable and responsive to the needs of people. I know this doesn’t sound too exiting, but the work that we do on this committee is truly helping to provide access to justice for many. I am proud of the work I have done on that committee.**

**Early in my career practicing law I had a client who was fighting for custody of his children. His wife had substance abuse problems. His children were two little girls ages 4 and 5. My client was a rather rough man, worked full time, and had a prior history of problems paying child support for the children from his first marriage. His wife did not work outside the home, was very personable and, honestly, a decent mother during those times when she was not on drugs. This was an era where men were still not favored in the law a primary custodians, especially a man like my client . It took us many court hearings, and many discouragements when the court kept giving the children back to the mother, only to have her relapse and put the children in danger, but ultimately we were able to establish that my client was an excellent father and that the children were better off and safer with him. My client stuck with it and I am**

proud to say that one of the reasons that he did is that I stuck with him.

I am also proud of the work I did when I was an Intensive Care Unit Nurse I especially remember an older man who had sever complications after surgery. He was in the Intensive Care Unit. We all knew that it was just a matter of time before he would die. I worked with the doctors, the family and the patient to try and figure out what the patient's priorities and needs were. This was difficult because he was intubated (had a breathing tube down his throat) so he could not speak and was frequently sedated because of the pain. We ultimately reached the conclusion that what he really wanted, even though it might shorten his life, was to have the breathing tube removed and be allowed to spend as many of his last hours as he could with his family. We took out the breathing tube, moved him out of the Intensive Care Unit to a room that was more homelike. He spent his last few days visiting with his children and grandchildren and telling them good-bye. I worked hard convincing the doctors to listen to the family and the patient and allow his wishes to rule his care. Many patients could not be saved, but I feel strongly that we owed our patients not just excellent medical care but also respect and care for their psychological and emotional needs. I was proud to be able to provide that to this gentleman in his last days.

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.

**Many of my past activities in the community have been volunteer work for legal clinics and the Bar Association. I have attached my resume that lists these activities. These kinds of activities obviously honed my skill as a lawyer, but also gave me insight into the legal system and some of the issues that exist in our failure to adequately provide access to justice for many people of low, or even medium, income.**

**My political activities (working for candidates and political organizations) have helped me not just understand the system, but also to form bonds with many people and groups that are active in the formation of the policies and laws that run our county. Judges are required to report to the legislature on changes that they perceive are necessary to current laws. Because of the financial issues challenging our society we find ourselves more and more involved in politics on a local and state level. My experience and comfort in the political arena have been of use to the court.**

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

**As mentioned above, the obvious duties of a Superior Court Judge is to hear trials and other matters that are brought before the judge for decisions. This is our basic and ultimate duty. However, in order to do this effectively we must work to make the system better – better for the judges so they have access to the resources and information needed for an educated and just decisions; better for the litigants to be able to bring their matters before the court whether or not they are represented by a lawyer; and better for the public who has a right to rely upon the judicial system to protect their rights and person by enforcing the laws.**

**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.*

**JD cum laude Seattle Univ. Law School '83; AS R.N., DeAnza College '74; BA Psych,  
Univ. of CA, '71; AAJr. College '69**

**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.

**My community activities centered around providing access to the courts. As a lawyer I did this by volunteering in legal clinics and representing people who could not afford a lawyer. I represented children in crisis as a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate. I worked as a volunteer in the settlement program. I have continued this same focus as a judge by working on many committees at the Superior Court and state levels and volunteering my time for settlement conferences.**