

7/30/08

PRESS RELEASE - BAR POLL

The Spokane County Bar Association (SCBA) is pleased to announce the results of its 2008 Bar Poll as well as the report of the SCBA Judicial Evaluation Panel. The poll was conducted for Spokane County Superior Court for two positions. The candidates are:

**Department 1: Judge Annette S. Plese
 Attorney Mark E. Vovos
 Attorney Greg D. Weber**

Department 10: Judge Linda G. Tompkins

Participation in the SCBA's evaluation process is voluntary for each candidate and they share in the cost of the poll. Attorney David L. Stevens is a candidate for the Department 10 position but refused to participate.

The evaluation has two components. A poll that rates each candidate in five key areas of judicial competency was submitted to the SCBA membership. In addition, an eleven (11) member panel appointed by the SCBA's President conducted an in-depth evaluation and interview of each candidate.

This year's Judicial Evaluation Panel Chair, James McPhee, states: "Our evaluation provides a comprehensive evaluation of each candidate. The SCBA has combined the results of its membership poll with the legal experience of its members and two retired judges. The SCBA considers this evaluation to be a good process to make known its views on the qualifications of each candidate."

The Bar Poll is conducted for contested positions as a public service. The Bar Poll is prepared under the direction of Dr. David C. Brody of the criminal justice program of Washington State University, Spokane. The Bar Poll is a reflection of the personal views of individual members of the SCBA based on their first hand knowledge of the candidates. The poll does not represent an endorsement of any candidate.

The Bar Poll asks each SCBA member to rate five categories of character traits recognized by the legal profession as important to the qualification of a judge. The categories are: legal ability, judicial temperament, integrity, legal experience and suitability. The rating is on a scale of 1 to 4 with 4 being exceptionally well qualified and a 1 being not qualified. If the member is without sufficient information, the response is “can’t rate.”

The 2008 Bar Poll was sent to the SCBA’s 916 voting members. There were 346 responses. The results and demographics are significant and validate the results.

As a note of caution, in reviewing the results it is important to recognize that the results must be read considering both the rating and the percentage of responding members. For example, in the Bar Poll it is theoretically possible for an unknown candidate to receive a high rating of 4.0 from a handful of responding attorneys, while a candidate who receives many responses receives a rating of 3.2. It would be a mistake to judge the former as “doing better” on the Bar Poll than the latter.

In addition, an evaluation panel was also appointed. Its members were selected from prosecutors, defenders, civil plaintiff and defense lawyers, business lawyers and retired

judges. This panel considered the candidates' responses to a detailed questionnaire, examination of writing samples, and an approximate one-hour interview in conjunction with criteria recommended by the American Bar Association and recognized commentators. (The candidate's response to the questionnaires may be reviewed on the SCBA website at www.spokanebar.org.) This criteria includes but is not limited to the areas of impartiality, judicial temperament, diligent work ethic, ability to communicate, knowledge of the law and Bar Poll results, using rating categories of exceptionally qualified, well qualified, qualified and not qualified. The panel's evaluation is likewise published.

Questions can be directed to C. Matthew Andersen at 838-6131 or to James McPhee at 455-9077. The results of the Judicial Evaluation Panel and the Bar Poll are attached.

**The 2008 SCBA Spokane County Superior Court Judicial
Evaluation Panel Overall Evaluation.**

SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT 1

Annette S. Plese: Well Qualified

Mark E. Vovos: Exceptionally Qualified

Greg D. Weber: Qualified

SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT 10

Linda G. Tompkins: Qualified

David L. Stevens: Refused to Participate

The 2008 Spokane County Superior Court Bar Poll Results are reported as follows:

Note: The poll ratings are: 1=Not Qualified; 2=Qualified; 3=Well Qualified; and, 4=Exceptionally Well Qualified.

	Legal Ability	Judicial Temperament	Integrity	Relevant Legal Experience	Suitability
<u>SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT 1</u>					
Annette S. Plese					
Rating	2.75	3.06	3.01	2.85	2.84
Responding	288	267	259	268	266
Can't Rate	58	79	87	78	80
Mark E. Vovos					
Rating	3.24	3.06	3.14	3.39	3.12
Responding	309	285	280	292	292
Can't rate	37	61	66	54	54
Greg D. Weber					
Rating	1.82	2.00	2.09	1.94	1.81
Responding	121	96	86	109	112
Can't rate	225	250	260	237	234

SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT 10

Linda G. Tompkins					
Rating	2.92	3.11	3.13	3.02	2.96
Responding	319	305	292	298	297
Can't rate	27	41	54	48	49

David L. Stevens
Refused to Participate