Alaska Judicial Council Recommendation

Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger, Superior Court, Fairbanks

I. Judicial Council Evaluation. The Alaska Judicial Council, a non-partisan citizens commission established by the Alaska Constitution, finds Judge Steinkruger to be ***Qualified*** and recommends unanimously that the public vote **"YES"** to retain her as a superior court judge.

II. Summary of Evaluation Information. A survey of 2,927 attorneys in Alaska rated Judge Steinkruger on sixteen categories that are summarized in the adjacent graph. Attorneys rated Judge Steinkruger 4.1 on a scale of 5 on overall judicial performance. She scored 4.0 or better in all sixteen categories.

	Attorney Survey	Peace Officer Survey	Juror Survey	Court Employee Survey
Legal Ability	4.1	---	---	---
Impartiality	4.1	3.8	4.8	4.7
Integrity	4.2	4.0	---	4.8
Temperament	4.1	4.1	4.9	4.7
Diligence	4.2	4.0	---	4.7
Special Skills	4.2	4.0	---	---
Overall	4.1	4.0	4.9	4.8

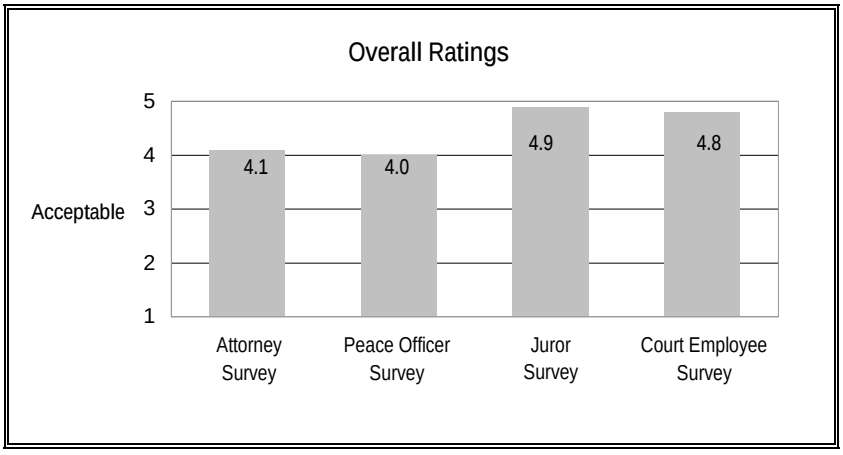
Ratings are based on a one to five scale. Five is the best rating and three is "acceptable."

Rating Scale
5.0 = Excellent
4.0 = Good
3.0 = Acceptable
2.0 = Deficient
1.0 = Poor

A survey of 1,495 peace and probation officers in Alaska rated Judge Steinkruger on twelve categories that are summarized in the adjacent graph. Peace and probation officers rated Judge Steinkruger 4.0 on a scale of 5 on overall judicial performance. She scored 3.8 or better in all twelve categories.

A survey of jurors appearing before Judge Steinkruger in 2002 and 2003 rated her 4.9 on a scale of 5 on overall performance. A survey of all court employees rated her 4.8 on a scale of 5 on overall performance.

The Council also completed a background investigation including a court records check, a disciplinary records check, a review of conflict of interest statements submitted to the court system and a review of financial disclosure statements submitted to the Alaska Public Offices Commission. Attorneys, peace officers, court employees and jurors were asked to submit written comments about the judge. The Council actively encouraged the public to comment, both in writing and in a statewide public hearing teleconference.



Recommendation: Vote "YES" to retain Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger

Contact the Judicial Council at 1029 W. 3rd, Suite 201, Anchorage, AK 99501 (telephone: (907) 279-2526)
for more detailed information, or review the information on our Internet site at:
www.ajc.state.ak.us

November 2004

alaska judicial council

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ALASKA
JUDICIAL COUNCIL

Alaska Judicial Council Questionnaire

Trial Judge
2004 Candidates for Judicial Retention

November 10, 2003

Niesje J. Steinkruger
Name

Fairbanks Superior Court
Court

1. Describe your workload during your present term.

a) 50 % Civil Cases + CP
25 % Criminal Cases
25 % Court Administrative
100 % Total

b) 10-20 # of trials/year
10-15 # Administrative Appeals

2. Please describe your participation on court/Bar committees or other administrative activities during your current term of office. ① Court Improvement Committee (CINA), ② Family Law Self Help Advisory Committee, ③ Family Rules Committee, ④ Presiding Judges ⑤ Rabinowitz Courthouse Facility Advisory Committee ⑥ Personnel Position Advisory Committee ⑦ Therapeutic Courts Advisory Committee

3. On a separate sheet of paper please assess, in one or two paragraphs, your judicial performance during your present term. Appropriate areas of comment could include: satisfaction with your judicial role, specific contributions to the judiciary or the field of law, increases in legal knowledge and judicial skills, or other measures of judicial abilities that you believe to be important.

I have just completed fifteen years on the Fairbanks Superior Court Bench. For the last two years I have served as the Presiding Judge of the Fourth Judicial District. The administrative work challenging. We have had almost half of our Bench turn over in that time. I have worked hard to provide mentoring and guidance to the newly appointed judges as well as administrative support. Bethel, the other Superior court site in our district, has had a large increase in caseload and it has been a challenge to provide judges to do the work. The hiring and personnel work has given me new areas to learn as I work with hiring and supervising magistrates, clerks of court and masters. I have tried to do long range work in the areas of jury selection, case assignment, clerk training and calendaring in Fairbanks and Bethel so that we can meet the changing caseloads. I have also tried to develop working relationships with the major players in the criminal justice and the CINA system ---Jeff O'Bryant, Paul Canarsky, John Franich, Karla Taylor-Welch, so that we can continue to do the cases with our tight resources without making it harder for each other in the process.

I continue to find my courtroom work to be the most enjoyable part of my job. I like the wide variety of cases that I have each day and the changing caseload. Because I now have some experience and am the presiding judge I have managed my caseload the last two years so that I can take the "spillover" when another judge is ill, has a family emergency, or is confronted with a particularly difficult scheduling problem. My goal is to run a credible calendar and have cases heard when they are scheduled.

I have tried to encourage lawyers of my age group to mentor and role model for young lawyers in and out of the courtroom. We have a large number of fairly new lawyers in Fairbanks and Bethel and experienced judges and lawyers have numerous opportunities to assist young lawyers in learning what methods are effective in assisting their clients. The number and difficulty of pro se cases continues to be a challenge in Fairbanks, particularly in domestic relations cases. I designed a Parenting Agreement that is now available on the court web site and have implemented a mediation program in Fairbanks. In addition I have started a pilot program with the court custody investigator doing some early settlement conferences with families in high conflict custody cases to try to work out a plan for custody.

I continue to find my work rewarding.

Niesje Steinkruger

5. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent jury cases tried before you, identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Jury Trial

1 **Name of Case:** SOA v. Michael Marley **Case Number:** 4FA-S02-3342 Cr.

Attorneys Involved

Name: Jeff O'Bryant
Address: Fairbanks District Attorney Office
455 Third Avenue, Ste 150
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Larry Reger
Address: P.O. Box 70508
Fairbanks, AK 99707

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

2 **Name of Case:** SOA v Lee Brown **Case Number:** 4FA-02-894 Cr

Attorneys Involved

Name: Gene Gustafson
Address: Fairbanks Attorney General Office
100 Cushman Street, Suite 400
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Beth Spaulding
Address: Fairbanks Public Defender Office
529 5th Avenue, Suite 1
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

3 **Name of Case:** SOA v Melissa Stewart **Case Number:** 4FA-03-351 Cr.

Attorneys Involved

Name: Gene Gustafson
Address: Fairbanks Attorney General Office
100 Cushman Street, Ste 400
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Jennifer Hite
Address: Fairbanks Public Defender Office
529 5th Avenue, Suite 1
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

4. During your most recent term as a judge, have you:

a) had a tax lien filed or other collection procedure instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities? *Yes* ____ *No* X.

b) been involved in a nonjudicial capacity in any legal proceeding whether as a party or otherwise? *Yes* ____ *No* X.

c) engaged in the practice of law (other than as a judge)? *Yes* ____ *No* X.

d) held office in any political party? *Yes* ____ *No* X.

e) held any other local state or federal office? *Yes* ____ *No* X.

If your answer to any of the questions above is "yes," please give full details, including dates, facts, case numbers and outcomes.

Please provide any other information which you believe would assist the Council in conducting its evaluations and in preparing its recommendations for the 2002 retention elections.

6. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent non-jury cases tried before you, identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Non Jury Trial

Name of Case | **Case Number**

1. Kornack v Kornack — 4FA-00-2411 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Kathy Kornack
Address: P.O. Box 58333
Fairbanks, AK. 99711

Name: Edwin Kornack
Address: 2211 W. Sitka Ct.
North Pole, AK. 99705

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

Name of Case | **Case Number**

2. Slater v Simard — 4FA-02-~~#69~~ 1169 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Joe Paskavan
Address: 714 4th Ave. Suite 301
Fairbanks, AK. 99701

Name: James Magoffin
Address: 1301 Turner Street
Fairbanks, AK. 99701

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

Name of Case | **Case Number**

3. Hess v Hess — 4FA-03-390 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Dan Callahan
Address: 250 Cushman St. #3D
Fairbanks, AK. 99701

Name: Terri Lynn Coleman
Address: 250 Eighth Ave
Fairbanks, AK. 99701

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

7. Please list the names and case numbers of the three most recent cases which did not go to trial, but on which you did significant work (such as settlement conference, hearings, motion work, etc.), identify the attorneys involved, and show their current addresses. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

1. **Name of Case:** SOA v Fox; SOA v Culliton — **Case Number:** 4FA-02-1347 Cr.; 4FA-02-1346 Cr.

Attorneys Involved

Name: Corinne Vorenkamp
Address: 100 Cushman Street, Suite 311
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Lori Bodwell
Address: 712 8th Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name:
Address:

Name: Paul Canarskey
Address: Fairbanks Public Defender Office
529 5th Avenue, Suite 1
Fairbanks, AK 99701

2. **Name of Case:** Booze v Safeway — **Case Number:** 4FA-00-1854 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Albert Parrish
Address: 214 4th Ave. Suite 301
Fairbanks, Ak. 99707

Name: Robert Groseclose
Address: 214 4th Ave. Suite 200
Fairbanks, Ak. 99707

Name: Joe Paskavan
Address: 214 4th Ave. Suite 301
Fairbanks, Ak. 99707

Name:
Address:

3. **Name of Case:** Dick v. Buist — **Case Number:** 4FA-02-1599 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Ward Merdes
Address: P.O. Box 71309
Fairbanks, Ak. 99701

Name: Paul Waggoner
Address: 632 Christensen Dr. Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99501

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

8. If you deem it helpful to the Council, please list the name, case number and attorneys' names and current addresses of any other cases during your judicial career in which you believe your work was particularly noteworthy. (Attach additional pages if necessary.)

1 ***Name of Case*** IMO: D T (Catherine T.) ***Case Number*** 4PA-99-289 CP
Supreme Ct No 1143 (10/1/03)

Attorneys Involved

Name: Karla Taylor-Welch
Address: Fairbanks Attorney general's office
100 Cushman Street, Ste 400
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: James Hackett
Address: 401 11th Avenue
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Marlin Smith
Address: P.O. Box 81
Wellsboro, PA 16901

Name: John Franich
Address: Fbks Office of Public Advocacy
100 Cushman St.
Fairbanks, AK 99701

2 ***Name of Case*** James v IRHA ***Case Number*** 4PA-96-2153 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Mike Stepovich
Address: 543 2nd Avenue, Suite A
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Name: Tracy Knutson
Address: 445 9th Ave
Anchorage, AK. 99501

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

3 ***Name of Case*** Borgstede v Goldline Express ***Case Number*** 4PA-02-1333 Civil

Attorneys Involved

Name: Wolfgang Borgstede
Address: 129 Reservoir Road
St. Rafael, CA. 94901

Name: Paul Stockler
Address: 705 Christensen Dr.
Anchorage, AK. 99501

Name:
Address:

Name:
Address:

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4. IMO: CAPA cases 4FA-02-1037 PR

- Robert Noreen, 402 7th Avenue
  Fairbanks, AK 99701-4932

- John Franich
  Office of Public Advocacy
  100 Cushman Street, Suite 502
  Fairbanks, AK 99701

- Jim DeWitt
  Guess & Rudd
  100 Cushman Street, Suite 500
  Fairbanks, AK 99701

- Dan Winfree
  Winfree Law Office
  301 Cushman Street, Suite 200
  Fairbanks, AK 99701-4629

- Larry Reger
  P.O. Box 70508
  Fairbanks, AK 99707

- Mike MacDonald
  Downes, MacDonald & Levengood
  1008 16th Avenue, Ste 200
  Fairbanks, AK 99701

- Gary Stapp
  715 4th Avenue
  Fairbanks, AK 99701-4416

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5. IMO: G.B. 4FA-01-104CP

- Karla Taylor Welch
  Office of Attorney General

- Robert Downes

- Sonia Mazurek
  Office of Public Advocacy

6. IMO: A.L. 4FA-02-140CP

- Gayle Gamiques
  Office of Attorney General

- Adam Gurewitz
  Public Defender Office

- Robert Noreen

- John Franich
  Office of Public Advocacy

(9)

I. SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE NIESJE J. STEINKRUGER

1. ALASKA BAR ASSOCIATION

Demographic Description of all Alaska Bar Association Respondents (N=254)

a.	Type of Practice:	Private, solo	19.3%
		Private, office of 2-5 attorneys	12.6%
		Private, office of 6 or more attorneys	16.5%
		Private corporate employee	1.2%
		State judge or judicial officer	15.4%
		Government	23.2%
		Public service agency or organization	3.1%
		Other	3.9%
		No Answer	4.7%
b.	Years of Experience:	5 Years or fewer	6.7%
		6-10 Years	7.5%
		11-15 Years	12.6%
		16-20 Years	20.5%
		21 Years or more	48.0%
		No Answer	4.7%
c.	Gender:	Male	64.6%
		Female	29.5%
		No Answer	5.9%
d.	Cases Handled:	Prosecution	5.5%
		Mainly criminal	5.1%
		Mixed criminal and civil	26.8%
		Mainly civil	51.6%
		Other	5.9%
		No Answer	5.1%
e.	Location of Practice:	First District	4.7%
		Second District	2.4%
		Third District	51.2%
		Fourth District	34.6%
		Outside Alaska	1.6%
		No Answer	5.5%

Summary of Findings:

Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger was evaluated by 221 Alaska Bar Association members who reported having direct professional experience with this judge. Of these 221 respondents, 106 (48.0%) had substantial and recent experience, 54 (24.4%) had moderate experience, 43 (19.5%) had limited experience, and 18 (8.1%) did not indicate level of experience. The mean score on the overall evaluation item was 4.1. The highest mean score was obtained on *conduct free from impropriety or appearance of impropriety* (4.3). The lowest mean scores were obtained on *legal and factual analysis* (4.0), *equal treatment of all parties* (4.0), and *courtesy, freedom from arrogance* (4.0). Details are presented in the two tables that follow.

Evaluation of Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger:
Alaska Bar Association Members

	Poor		***Deficient***		***Acceptable***		***Good***		***Excellent***		
	Num	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Mean*
Legal Ability											
Legal and factual analysis	4	1.9	15	7.1	31	14.6	90	42.5	72	34.0	4.0
Knowledge of substantive law	2	1.0	13	6.3	28	13.5	91	43.8	74	35.6	4.1
Knowledge of evidence and procedure	2	1.0	12	5.9	32	15.6	83	40.5	76	37.1	4.1
Impartiality											
Equal treatment of all parties	7	3.3	11	5.2	37	17.5	67	31.8	89	42.2	4.0
Sense of basic fairness and justice	4	1.9	12	5.8	33	15.9	64	30.9	94	45.4	4.1
Integrity											
Conduct free from impropriety or appearance of impropriety	4	2.0	6	2.9	24	11.8	69	33.8	101	49.5	4.3
Makes decisions without regard to possible public criticism	9	4.7	7	3.7	29	15.2	57	29.8	89	46.6	4.1
Judicial Temperament											
Courtesy, freedom from arrogance	13	6.1	14	6.5	32	15.0	60	28.0	95	44.4	4.0
Human understanding and compassion	3	1.4	12	5.8	28	13.5	59	28.5	105	50.7	4.2
Diligence											
Reasonable promptness in making decisions	4	2.1	5	2.6	40	20.8	64	33.3	79	41.1	4.1
Willingness to work diligently; preparation for hearings	4	2.1	4	2.1	29	15.1	67	34.9	88	45.8	4.2
Special Skills											
Ability to control courtroom	4	2.1	3	1.6	24	12.6	78	41.1	81	42.6	4.2
Settlement skills	4	3.3	4	3.3	23	18.9	39	32.0	52	42.6	4.1
Consideration of all relevant factors in sentencing	1	0.9	9	8.1	15	13.5	34	30.6	52	46.8	4.1
Talent and ability for cases involving children and families	3	2.2	3	2.2	15	11.0	34	25.0	81	59.6	4.1
Overall Evaluation											
Overall evaluation of judge	5	2.4	9	4.2	34	16.0	75	35.4	89	42.0	4.1

NOTE: Results are based on respondents who reported having direct professional experience with this judge.

Ratings on the "Overall Evaluation" Item for Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger: Alaska Bar Association Members

	Total		***Poor***	***Deficient***	***Acceptable***	***Good***	***Excellent***
Demographics	*n*	*Mean*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Basis for Evaluation							
No Answer	9	3.9	11.1	-	11.1	44.4	33.3
Direct Professional Experience	**212**	**4.1**	**2.4**	**4.2**	**16.0**	**35.4**	**42.0**
Professional Reputation	31	4.2	3.2	3.2	12.9	35.5	45.2
Social Contacts	2	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
Type of Practice							
No Answer	11	3.8	9.1	9.1	18.2	18.2	45.5
Solo	45	4.1	4.4	4.4	11.1	37.8	42.2
2 – 5 Attorneys	29	3.8	3.4	6.9	27.6	34.5	27.6
6+ Attorneys	34	4.1	2.9	2.9	17.6	32.4	44.1
Corporate	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Judge or Judicial Officer	29	4.7	-	-	-	27.6	72.4
Government	49	4.0	-	6.1	22.4	40.8	30.6
Public Service	8	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Other	5	3.8	-	-	40.0	40.0	20.0
Years of Experience							
No Answer	11	3.8	9.1	9.1	18.2	18.2	45.5
5 Years or fewer	15	4.5	-	-	6.7	33.3	60.0
6 – 10 Years	19	4.0	-	5.3	26.3	31.6	36.8
11 – 15 Years	26	4.0	-	7.7	15.4	42.3	34.6
16 – 20 Years	43	3.8	4.7	4.7	25.6	39.5	25.6
21 Years or more	98	4.3	2.0	3.1	11.2	34.7	49.0
Gender							
No Answer	14	3.6	7.1	14.3	21.4	21.4	35.7
Male	142	4.1	2.8	4.2	16.2	33.1	43.7
Female	56	4.2	-	1.8	14.3	44.6	39.3
Cases Handled							
No Answer	12	3.8	8.3	8.3	16.7	25.0	41.7
Prosecution	12	3.8	-	8.3	25.0	50.0	16.7
Criminal	12	4.2	-	8.3	16.7	25.0	50.0
Criminal and Civil	56	4.1	5.4	5.4	12.5	26.8	50.0
Civil	108	4.1	0.9	1.9	17.6	40.7	38.9
Other	12	4.3	-	8.3	8.3	33.3	50.0
Location of Practice							
No Answer	13	3.9	7.7	7.7	15.4	23.1	46.2
First District	7	4.6	-	-	-	42.9	57.1
Second District	4	4.8	-	-	-	25.0	75.0
Third District	101	4.1	3.0	2.0	18.8	37.6	38.6
Fourth District	84	4.1	-	7.1	15.5	34.5	42.9
Outside Alaska	3	3.3	33.3	-	-	33.3	33.3
Amount of Experience							
No Answer	18	3.9	5.6	-	27.8	33.3	33.3
Substantial	103	4.2	1.9	6.8	10.7	29.1	51.5
Moderate	52	4.0	3.8	-	23.1	34.6	38.5
Limited	39	4.0	-	5.1	15.4	53.8	25.6

I. SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE NIESJE J. STEINKRUGER

2. PEACE AND PROBATION OFFICERS

Demographic Description of all Peace and Probation Officer Respondents (N=67)

a.	Type of Work:	State Law Enforcement Officer	38.8%
		Municipal/Borough Law Enforcement Officer	25.4%
		Village Public Safety Officer	1.5%
		Probation-Patrol Officer	19.4%
		Other	11.9%
		No Answer	3.0%
b.	Years of Experience:	5 Years or fewer	19.4%
		6-10 Years	34.3%
		11-15 Years	20.9%
		16-20 Years	16.4%
		21 Years or more	6.0%
		No Answer	3.0%
c.	Gender:	Male	80.6%
		Female	16.4%
		No Answer	3.0%
d.	Location of Work:	First District	1.5%
		Second District	1.5%
		Third District	10.4%
		Fourth District	83.6%
		Outside Alaska	0.0%
		No Answer	3.0%
e.	Community Population:	Under 2,000	7.5%
		Between 2,000 and 35,000	26.9%
		35,000 or over	61.2%
		No Answer	4.5%

***Summary of Findings**:*

Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger was evaluated by 58 Peace and Probation Officers who reported having direct professional experience with this judge. Of these 58 respondents, 18 (31.0%) had substantial and recent experience, 14 (24.1%) had moderate experience, 24 (41.4%) had limited experience, and 2 (3.5%) did not indicate level of experience. The mean score on the overall evaluation item was 4.0. The highest mean scores were obtained on *human understanding and compassion* (4.1), and *ability to control courtroom* (4.1). The lowest mean scores were obtained on *equal treatment of all parties* (3.8) and *sense of basic fairness and justice* (3.8). Details are presented in the two tables that follow.

Evaluation of Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger:
Peace and Probation Officers

	Poor		***Deficient***		***Acceptable***		***Good***		***Excellent***		
	Num	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Mean*
Impartiality											
Equal treatment of all parties	1	1.8	1	1.8	17	30.9	24	43.6	12	21.8	3.8
Sense of basic fairness and justice	2	3.6	-	-	17	30.4	24	42.9	13	23.2	3.8
Integrity											
Conduct free from impropriety or appearance of impropriety	1	1.9	1	1.9	13	24.5	18	34.0	20	37.7	4.0
Makes decisions without regard to possible public criticism	1	1.9	1	1.9	12	23.1	21	40.4	17	32.7	4.0
Judicial Temperament											
Courtesy, freedom from arrogance	-	-	2	3.6	15	26.8	20	35.7	19	33.9	4.0
Human understanding and compassion	-	-	1	1.9	12	22.6	22	41.5	18	34.0	4.1
Diligence											
Reasonable promptness in making decisions	-	-	-	-	15	27.8	24	44.4	15	27.8	4.0
Willingness to work diligently; preparation for hearings	-	-	-	-	14	28.6	20	40.8	15	30.6	4.0
Special Skills											
Ability to control courtroom	-	-	-	-	12	22.6	23	43.4	18	34.0	4.1
Consideration of all relevant factors in sentencing	1	2.0	1	2.0	14	27.5	21	41.2	14	27.5	3.9
Talent and ability for cases involving children and families	-	-	2	5.3	7	18.4	17	44.7	12	31.6	4.0
Overall Evaluation											
Overall evaluation of judge	-	-	3	5.3	11	19.3	27	47.4	16	28.1	4.0

NOTE: Results are based on respondents who reported having direct professional experience with this judge.

Ratings on the "Overall Evaluation" Item for Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger: Peace and Probation Officers

	Total		***Poor***	***Deficient***	***Acceptable***	***Good***	***Excellent***
Demographics	*n*	*Mean*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Basis for Evaluation							
No Answer	9	4.2	-	-	22.2	33.3	44.4
Direct Professional Experience	**57**	**4.0**	**-**	**5.3**	**19.3**	**47.4**	**28.1**
Professional Reputation	8	4.3	-	-	12.5	50.0	37.5
Social Contacts	1	4.0	-	-	-	100.0	-
Type of Work							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
State Officer	21	3.9	-	-	33.3	42.9	23.8
Municipal/Borough	16	3.7	-	12.5	18.8	56.3	12.5
Village Public Safety Officer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Probation/Parole Officer	12	4.3	-	-	8.3	50.0	41.7
Other	6	4.2	-	16.7	-	33.3	50.0
Years of Experience							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
5 Years or fewer	11	4.0	-	9.1	27.3	18.2	45.5
6 – 10 Years	17	4.1	-	-	23.5	47.1	29.4
11 – 15 Years	13	3.9	-	7.7	15.4	53.8	23.1
16 – 20 Years	10	3.8	-	10.0	20.0	50.0	20.0
21 Years or more	4	4.0	-	-	-	100.0	-
Gender							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Male	46	3.9	-	6.5	19.6	47.8	26.1
Female	9	4.1	-	-	22.2	44.4	33.3
Location of Work							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
First District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Second District	1	4.0	-	-	-	100.0	-
Third District	6	4.2	-	-	-	83.3	16.7
Fourth District	48	3.9	-	6.3	22.9	41.7	29.2
Outside Alaska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Population in Community							
No Answer	3	4.7	-	-	-	33.3	66.7
Under 2,000	3	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
2,000-35,000	15	3.8	-	6.7	20.0	60.0	13.3
Over 35,000	36	3.9	-	5.6	22.2	47.2	25.0
Amount of Experience							
No Answer	2	3.5	-	-	50.0	50.0	-
Substantial	18	4.4	-	5.6	5.6	33.3	55.6
Moderate	14	3.8	-	7.1	21.4	57.1	14.3
Limited	23	3.8	-	4.3	26.1	52.2	17.4

I. SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE NIESJE J. STEINKRUGER

3. SOCIAL WORKERS/GUARDIANS AD LITEM/CASA VOLUNTEERS

Demographic Description of all Social Workers/GAL/CASA Respondents (N=10)

a.	Type of Work:	Social Worker	60.0%
		Guardian ad Litem	0.0%
		CASA Volunteer	20.0%
		Other	0.0%
		No Answer	20.0%
b.	Years of Experience:	5 Years or fewer	40.0%
		6-10 Years	30.0%
		11-15 Years	0.0%
		16-20 Years	10.0%
		21 Years or more	0.0%
		No Answer	20.0%
c.	Gender:	Male	10.0%
		Female	70.0%
		No Answer	20.0%
d.	Location of Work:	First District	0.0%
		Second District	10.0%
		Third District	0.0%
		Fourth District	60.0%
		Outside Alaska	0.0%
		No Answer	30.0%
e.	Community Population:	Under 2,000	0.0%
		Between 2,000 and 35,000	20.0%
		35,000 or over	60.0%
		No Answer	20.0%

***Summary of Findings**:*

Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger was evaluated by a total of 10 Social Workers, Guardians ad Litem, and CASA volunteers who reported having direct professional experience with this judge. Of these 10 respondents, 4 (40.0%) had substantial and recent experience, 2 (20.0%) had moderate experience, 4 (40.0%) had limited experience, and 0 (0.0%) did not indicate level of experience. The mean score on the overall evaluation item was 4.6. The highest mean scores were obtained on *human understanding and compassion* (4.7) and *ability to control courtroom* (4.7). The lowest mean score was obtained on *equal treatment of all parties* (4.4). Details are presented in the two tables that follow.

Evaluation of Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger:
Social Workers/Guardians ad Litem/CASA Volunteers

	Poor		***Deficient***		***Acceptable***		***Good***		***Excellent***		
	Num	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Num*	*%*	*Mean*
Impartiality											
Equal treatment of all parties	-	-	-	-	1	10.0	4	40.0	5	50.0	4.4
Sense of basic fairness and justice	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	37.5	5	62.5	4.6
Integrity											
Conduct free from impropriety or appearance of impropriety	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	40.0	6	60.0	4.6
Judicial Temperament											
Courtesy, freedom from arrogance	-	-	-	-	2	20.0	-	-	8	80.0	4.6
Human understanding and compassion	-	-	-	-	1	10.0	1	10.0	8	80.0	4.7
Diligence											
Reasonable promptness in making decisions	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	40.0	6	60.0	4.6
Willingness to work diligently; preparation for hearings	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	40.0	6	60.0	4.6
Special Skills											
Ability to control courtroom	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	33.3	6	66.7	4.7
Settlement skills	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	42.9	4	57.1	4.6
Talent and ability for cases involving children and families	-	-	-	-	2	22.2	-	-	7	77.8	4.6
Overall Evaluation											
Overall evaluation of judge	-	-	-	-	1	10.0	2	20.0	7	70.0	4.6

NOTE: Results are based on respondents who reported having direct professional experience with this judge.

Ratings on the "Overall Evaluation" Item for Superior Court Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger: Social Workers/Guardians ad Litem/CASA Volunteers

	Total		***Poor***	***Deficient***	***Acceptable***	***Good***	***Excellent***
Demographics	*n*	*Mean*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*	*%*
Basis for Evaluation							
No Answer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Direct Professional Experience	**10**	**4.6**	**-**	**-**	**10.0**	**20.0**	**70.0**
Professional Reputation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social Contacts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Type of Work							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Social Worker	6	4.5	-	-	16.7	16.7	66.7
Guardian ad Litem	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CASA Volunteer	2	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Years of Experience							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
5 Years or fewer	4	4.5	-	-	25.0	-	75.0
6 – 10 Years	3	4.7	-	-	-	33.3	66.7
11 – 15 Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 – 20 Years	1	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
21 Years or more	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gender							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Male	1	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
Female	7	4.6	-	-	14.3	14.3	71.4
Location of Work							
No Answer	3	4.7	-	-	-	33.3	66.7
First District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Second District	1	4.0	-	-	-	100.0	-
Third District	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fourth District	6	4.7	-	-	16.7	-	83.3
Outside Alaska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Population of Community							
No Answer	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Under 2,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2,000-35,000	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Over 35,000	6	4.7	-	-	16.7	-	83.3
Amount of Experience							
No Answer	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Substantial	4	4.3	-	-	25.0	25.0	50.0
Moderate	2	4.5	-	-	-	50.0	50.0
Limited	4	5.0	-	-	-	-	100.0

Table 12:
Juror Survey Results for Niesje J. Steinkruger
2004 Alaska Judicial Council Retention Juror Survey

Question	Excellent %	(n)	Good %	(n)	Acceptable %	(n)	Deficient %	(n)	Unacceptable %	(n)	Mean	Total returned = 61
Was the judge fair and impartial to all sides in the case?	84%	51	16%	10	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.8	61
Was the judge respectful and courteous?	87%	53	13%	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.9	61
Was the judge attentive during proceedings?	87%	53	13%	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.9	61
Did the judge exercise appropriate control over the proceedings?	87%	53	13%	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.9	61
How would you evaluate the judge's intelligence and skill as a judge?	90%	55	8%	5	2%	1	0%	0	0%	0	4.9	61
How would you evaluate the judge overall?	87%	53	13%	8	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	4.9	61

Table 11: Court Employee Survey Results for Niesje J. Steinkruger
2004 Alaska Judicial Council Retention Court Employee Survey

Question	Excellent %	(n)	Good %	(n)	Acceptable %	(n)	Deficient %	(n)	Poor %	(n)	Mean	Total returned = 70
Does this judge treat court staff with respect?	75%	51	15%	10	9%	6	2%	1	0%	0	4.6	68
Does this judge treat other people with respect?	74%	48	22%	14	5%	3	0%	0	0%	0	4.7	65
Does this judge manage the caseload and staff capably and effectively?	74%	40	19%	10	7%	4	0%	0	0%	0	4.7	54
Does this judge work diligently and act promptly on matters that need attention?	81%	48	10%	6	9%	5	0%	0	0%	0	4.7	59
Does this judge act with integrity?	79%	49	18%	11	3%	2	0%	0	0%	0	4.8	62
Does this judge act with fairness and impartiality?	76%	44	19%	11	3%	2	2%	1	0%	0	4.7	58
Does this judge have the ability to control the courtroom?	82%	41	14%	7	4%	2	0%	0	0%	0	4.8	50
Overall evaluation of the judge's performance.	81%	52	16%	10	3%	2	0%	0	0%	0	4.8	64

alaska judicial council

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Supreme Court

MEMORANDUM

TO: Judicial Council Members

FROM: Staff

DATE: April 22, 2004

RE: Comparison of Previous Survey Results - Niesje J. Steinkruger

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Judge Steinkruger is standing for retention in 2004. The table on the following page compares Judge Steinkruger's retention survey scores.

Judge Steinkruger previously stood for retention in 1992 and 1998. She was evaluated with the other non-retention judges in 1990, 1996 and 2002. She applied for and was appointed to the Fairbanks Superior Court in 1988.

Judge Niesje J. Steinkruger

Appointed to Fairbanks Superior Court 8/26/88

	2004 Retention		2002 Retention Preview		1998 Retention		1996 Retention Preview		1992 Retention		1990 Retention Preview	
	Bar	**PPO**	**Bar**	**PPO**	**Bar**	**PPO**	**Bar**	**PPO**	**Bar**	**PPO**	**Bar**	**PPO**
Legal Ability	4.1	—	3.9	—	3.7	---	3.5	---	3.3	---	3.6	---
Impartiality	4.1	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.8	4.0	---	---	3.6	3.3	3.8	3.6
Integrity	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.2	3.9	4.0	---	---	3.8	3.6	4.1	3.7
Judicial Temperament	4.1	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.1	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.8
Diligence	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.3	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.7	---	---	---	---
Special Skills	4.2	4.0	—	—	3.7	4.0	---	---	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.7
Overall Performance	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.7	3.5