



Tennessee Judicial Nominating Commission

Suite 600, Nashville City Center

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Nashville, TN 37219

APPLICATION FOR NOMINATION TO JUDICIAL OFFICE

Deborah C. Stevens, BPR #07241

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Tennessee Judicial Nominating Commission

Application for Nomination to Judicial Office

Rev. 22 December 2011

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INTRODUCTION

Tennessee Code Annotated section 17-4-101 charges the Judicial Nominating Commission with assisting the Governor and the People of Tennessee in finding and appointing the best qualified candidates for judicial offices in this State. Please consider the Commission's responsibility in answering the questions in this application questionnaire. For example, when a question asks you to "describe" certain things, please provide a description that contains relevant information about the subject of the question, and, especially, that contains detailed information that demonstrates that you are qualified for the judicial office you seek. In order to properly evaluate your application, the Commission needs information about the range of your experience, the depth and breadth of your legal knowledge, and your personal traits such as integrity, fairness, and work habits.

This document is available in word processing format from the Administrative Office of the Courts (telephone 800.448.7970 or 615.741.2687; website <http://www.tncourts.gov>). The Commission requests that applicants obtain the word processing form and respond directly on the form. Please respond in the box provided below each question. (The box will expand as you type in the word processing document.) Please read the separate instruction sheet prior to completing this document. Please submit the completed form to the Administrative Office of the Courts in paper format (with ink signature) *and* electronic format (either as an image or a word processing file and with electronic or scanned signature). Please submit fourteen (14) paper copies to the Administrative Office of the Courts. Please e-mail a digital copy to debra.hayes@tncourts.gov.

THIS APPLICATION IS OPEN TO PUBLIC INSPECTION AFTER YOU SUBMIT IT.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND AND WORK EXPERIENCE

1. State your present employment.

President/Managing Shareholder: Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, P.C.
One Centre Square, 5th Floor, 620 Market Street
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902

2. State the year you were licensed to practice law in Tennessee and give your Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility number.

I was licensed to practice law in Tennessee in 1980, B.P.R. #007241.

3. List all states in which you have been licensed to practice law and include your bar number or identifying number for each state of admission. Indicate the date of licensure and whether the license is currently active. If not active, explain.

Tennessee – 1980 – B.P.R. #007241; active

Kentucky – 1997 – Bar #86803; active

4. Have you ever been denied admission to, suspended or placed on inactive status by the Bar of any State? If so, explain. (This applies even if the denial was temporary).

No.

5. List your professional or business employment/experience since the completion of your legal education. Also include here a description of any occupation, business, or profession other than the practice of law in which you have ever been engaged (excluding military service, which is covered by a separate question).

1980 – 1981 Foley Bowers & Bell, Knoxville, Tennessee – Attorney

1981 – 1984 Gamble Law Firm, Wartburg, Tennessee – Attorney

1984 – Present Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, PC – Shareholder (1988) and President/Managing Shareholder (1990-1994, 1998-present), Knoxville and Nashville, Tennessee

6. If you have not been employed continuously since completion of your legal education, describe what you did during periods of unemployment in excess of six months.

Not applicable.

7. Describe the nature of your present law practice, listing the major areas of law in which you practice and the percentage each constitutes of your total practice.

For the past 25 years, my practice has been focused on general litigation with more specific emphasis in the areas of product liability (50%), professional liability (30%) and other civil litigation (20%). Additionally, for the past 15 years, I have had a substantial leadership role in the administration of a firm with offices in Knoxville and Nashville with approximately 58 lawyers and more than 60 administrative staff members.

8. Describe generally your experience (over your entire time as a licensed attorney) in trial courts, appellate courts, administrative bodies, legislative or regulatory bodies, other forums, and/or transactional matters. In making your description, include information about the types of matters in which you have represented clients (e.g., information about whether you have handled criminal matters, civil matters, transactional matters, regulatory matters, etc.) and your own personal involvement and activities in the matters where you have been involved. In responding to this question, please be guided by the fact that in order to properly evaluate your application, the Commission needs information about your range of experience, your own personal work and work habits, and your work background, as your legal experience is a very important component of the evaluation required of the Commission. Please provide detailed information that will allow the Commission to evaluate your qualification for the judicial office for which you have applied. The failure to provide detailed information, especially in this question, will hamper the evaluation of your application. Also separately describe any matters of special note in trial courts, appellate courts, and administrative bodies.

I estimate that I have tried more than 100 criminal and civil jury trials over the course of my career. Many of the jury trials extended over a period of 5-10 days, some for several weeks, and one that was tried over a period of several months. I have also argued numerous dispositive and evidentiary motions, and I have been involved in the mediation and settlement of hundreds of cases.

During my first year of practice, I was engaged in a general civil practice in Knox County. I handled detainer warrants in General Sessions Court and accepted Criminal Court appointments. My first criminal trial was an auto theft trial, and my second criminal trial was a manslaughter trial. I also served as an appointed Guardian Ad Litem in Juvenile Court and in the Chancery Court for Knox County.

After my first year, I began practicing in Morgan County, Tennessee. I was appointed to numerous criminal court cases in Morgan County and tried many cases to a jury. I was

appointed as one of several co-counsel in the case known as the "Brushy Mountain Seven" in which seven inmates were charged with taking prison guards hostage and killing an inmate. The case subsequently garnered national attention when one of the other attorneys in the case escaped with her client. In addition to criminal court appointments, oil and gas lease work and divorce cases, I began doing some bankruptcy and collection work for a local bank. As a result of my bankruptcy and banking experience, I was recruited to return to Knoxville and work for Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, PC (formerly known as Morton, Lewis, King & Krieg).

When I returned to Knoxville, Lewis King was representing the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) in numerous matters related to the collapse of the Butcher banks. While there were many Lewis King lawyers working on FDIC matters, I served as primary counsel for the FDIC in the bankruptcy discharge trials for several principals of United American Bank. On behalf of the FDIC, I prepared briefs and argued numerous matters in Chancery Court involving the Purchase and Assumption Agreement with First Tennessee Bank and served as co-counsel in the federal court trial regarding the disposition of the property known as "Riverview Tower." I also argued several cases in Tennessee's appellate courts and in the Sixth Circuit involving FDIC litigation.

In addition to the FDIC work, I also served as outside counsel for an entity known as Overlook Mental Health Center which, at the time, was the largest provider of outpatient mental health services in East Tennessee. In that capacity, I was involved in general corporate matters. I also handled employment matters and a multitude of issues involving Overlook's clients, including issues related to the protection of private mental health records. I also appeared before regulatory bodies at the state level on matters related to mental health services or mental health funding issues. I was further involved in the ultimate sale and transfer of Overlook to Covenant Health.

By 1990, the FDIC work began to wind down and I began to focus my practice in the area of product liability litigation. Lewis King had been asked to serve as "regional counsel" for Honda Motor Co. to oversee developing all-terrain vehicle (ATV) litigation. My first ATV jury trial was in Davidson County Circuit Court in 1994, and involved a young boy who was a quadriplegic with a severe brain injury. The case was tried to the jury for 10 days. Although the trial ended in a plaintiff's verdict, I was asked to serve as one of Honda's national trial counsel and tried many cases involving catastrophic injuries in federal and state courts throughout the southeast. Examples of the types of jury cases that I tried in my capacity as one of their national trial counsel are as follows:

- Trial in federal court in Oxford, Mississippi involving a brain-damaged 14 year-old girl. Tried to a defense verdict.
- Trial in federal court in Tampa, Florida involving a 24 year-old man who was severely injured in an ATV accident. Tried to a defense verdict.
- Trial in state court in Charleston, South Carolina alleging a defective motorcycle. Case tried to a defense verdict.

- Trial in federal court in Nashville, Tennessee alleging defective warnings in a collision between an ATV and a motor scooter, resulting in catastrophic injuries to a young boy. Tried to a defense verdict.
- Trial in federal court in Lexington, Kentucky, involving a claim of a defective motor-scooter resulting in catastrophic injuries to an 8 year-old boy. Tried to a plaintiff's verdict.
- Trial in state court in Sevier County alleging a defective seatbelt in an automobile accident, resulting in catastrophic injuries. After three days of deliberation, the jury announced that they were deadlocked and a mistrial was declared.

In addition to the trials of these cases, I have served as primary counsel in numerous cases, where my work involved extensive discovery, witness preparation, expert preparation and depositions, motions in limine, motions for summary judgment, and trial briefs.

Examples of some of the more recent cases I have tried are as follows:

- Federal court case in Knoxville, Tennessee alleging a defective throttle in an automobile. Tried to a defense verdict.
- Federal court case in Greeneville, Tennessee alleging medical malpractice of a nursing professional. Tried to a defense verdict.
- Federal court case in Jackson, Tennessee alleging a defective reverse mechanism on an ATV. Tried to a defense verdict.

Because of the complexity of these cases, many of the cases were tried over 7-15 days, generally with a co-counsel for the defense. In all of the cases cited above, I served as lead trial counsel and had primary responsibility for pre-trial motions, jury selection, openings and closings, and the direct and cross-examination of critical witnesses, including experts.

In October of 1990, I was elected by the shareholders of Lewis, King, to serve as the firm's President/ Managing Shareholder. To the best of my knowledge, I was the first female elected as President or Managing Shareholder of a large firm in Tennessee. In my administrative capacity, I have been responsible for the overall operations of the law firm, both in terms of the financial management and the strategic planning for a firm of more than 55 lawyers in Knoxville and Nashville.

Over the course of my career, I have always worked hard. It is not unusual during trial preparation, or during the course of a trial, for me to work 60-70 hours per week. I have thoroughly enjoyed being a trial lawyer and have worked hard to develop my reputation as a well-prepared lawyer with an excellent knowledge of the issues involved. It is a priority in my practice to maintain and continually refresh my knowledge of the Rules of Evidence. Even after more than 20 years of practicing law, I spend at least a day or two before each trial reviewing the Rules of Evidence to determine which ones may be applicable to facts and procedures at hand and reviewing any recent decisions related to those Rules. The privilege to practice law comes with an imperative responsibility to make our system of justice the best that it can be.

9. Also separately describe any matters of special note in trial courts, appellate courts, and administrative bodies.

Morris v. Johns Manville International, Inc, et al, 2010 U.S. Dist LEXIS 10103 (Sept. 24, 2010) As sole counsel for the Defendant, I filed a motion for summary judgment in this product liability action on the basis that the company that manufactured the equipment was also an employer, and therefore was shielded by exclusivity of workers compensation and confirming Tennessee's "dual capacity" theory for company acting as both employer and manufacturer.

Black v. Suzuki Motor Corp., 2008 US Dist LEXIS 43472 (May 30, 2008). I was primary counsel and author of a motion to render a settlement agreement null and void on the basis that before the settlement agreement was executed, I learned that plaintiff was being indicted for perjury for testimony given in the case at hand. The trial court agreed to void the settlement and continued the case pending the outcome of the criminal trial. The civil case was dismissed when the plaintiff was convicted of perjury.

Parish v. Marquis, et al, 172 SW2d 526 (Tenn. 2005). I was sole defense counsel for a co-defendant in this case involving a claim of malicious prosecution against several attorneys. The underlying action which was alleged to give rise to the malicious prosecution case had been dismissed because it was not timely filed and because the plaintiff lacked standing. I argued that the dismissal of the underlying case was not a dismissal on the merits and, as such, a critical element of the malicious prosecution case was missing. The Supreme Court agreed and dismissed the malicious prosecution action.

I have been involved in numerous other reported and unreported decisions in trial and appellate courts, but the above cases represent cases in which I was both primary and lead counsel, responsible for briefing and trial in matters involving interpretation of law that may have served as legal precedent in other matters.

10. If you have served as a mediator, an arbitrator or a judicial officer, describe your experience (including dates and details of the position, the courts or agencies involved, whether elected or appointed, and a description of your duties). Include here detailed description(s) of any noteworthy cases over which you presided or which you heard as a judge, mediator or arbitrator. Please state, as to each case: (1) the date or period of the proceedings; (2) the name of the court or agency; (3) a summary of the substance of each case; and (4) a statement of the significance of the case.

Not applicable.

11. Describe generally any experience you have of serving in a fiduciary capacity such as guardian ad litem, conservator, or trustee other than as a lawyer representing clients.

I have not had any recent experience in these areas. However, during my first five years of practice, I did serve as appointed guardian ad litem in Knox County Juvenile Court and Morgan County Juvenile Court.

12. Describe any other legal experience, not stated above, that you would like to bring to the attention of the Commission.

I have appeared in trial courts throughout the State of Tennessee and in many federal and state courts throughout the Southeast. I have appeared before excellent trial judges, and I have had the occasion to “cross swords” with some of the best lawyers in our region. I have learned that a good trial judge is respectful and courteous of all persons – lawyers, litigants and jurors – that appear in their courtroom. Good trial judges know and expect that trial lawyers are zealous advocates and know how to exert control over lawyers while treating the lawyers as professionals. Good trial judges take the time to explain the procedural items and inevitable delays of a trial to the jurors and litigants, who are unfamiliar with the legal system. Finally good trial judges provide structure without creating undue burdens.

13. List all prior occasions on which you have submitted an application for judgeship to the Judicial Nominating Commission or any predecessor commission or body. Include the specific position applied for, the date of the meeting at which the body considered your application, and whether or not the body submitted your name to the Governor as a nominee.

Not applicable.

EDUCATION

14. List each college, law school, and other graduate school which you have attended, including dates of attendance, degree awarded, major, any form of recognition or other aspects of your education you believe are relevant, and your reason for leaving each school if no degree was awarded.

1972 – 1976 B.A. Degree, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia. I received a degree in Political Science and a minor in Economics.

1977 – 1980 J.D., University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee. I was a member of the Moot Court Board and a Member of the Tennessee Law Review and served as Secretary for the Student Bar Association.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

15. State your age and date of birth.

Age 58; D.O.B.: March 17, 1954

16. How long have you lived continuously in the State of Tennessee?

I have lived continuously in the State of Tennessee since 1976.

17. How long have you lived continuously in the county where you are now living?

I have lived continuously in Knox County, Tennessee since 1976.

18. State the county in which you are registered to vote.

I am currently registered to vote in Knox County, Tennessee.

19. Describe your military Service, if applicable, including branch of service, dates of active duty, rank at separation, and decorations, honors, or achievements. Please also state whether you received an honorable discharge and, if not, describe why not.

Not applicable.

20. Have you ever pled guilty or been convicted or are you now on diversion for violation of any law, regulation or ordinance? Give date, court, charge and disposition.

No.

21. To your knowledge, are you now under federal, state or local investigation for possible violation of a criminal statute or disciplinary rule? If so, give details.

No.

22. If you have been disciplined or cited for breach of ethics or unprofessional conduct by any court, administrative agency, bar association, disciplinary committee, or other

professional group, give details.

Not applicable.

23. Has a tax lien or other collection procedure been instituted against you by federal, state, or local authorities or creditors within the last five (5) years? If so, give details.

No.

24. Have you ever filed bankruptcy (including personally or as part of any partnership, LLC, corporation, or other business organization)?

No.

25. Have you ever been a party in any legal proceedings (including divorces, domestic proceedings, and other types of proceedings)? If so, give details including the date, court and docket number and disposition. Provide a brief description of the case. This question does not seek, and you may exclude from your response, any matter where you were involved only as a nominal party, such as if you were the trustee under a deed of trust in a foreclosure proceeding.

Yes. Paul D. Hogan, Jr. v. George W. Morton, Jr., et al., Knox County Circuit Court No. 364790. This matter was filed on August 20, 1990. This was a suit by a former partner of the law firm against the other partners over distribution of partnership assets after the partner left the firm. The matter was resolved by a confidential settlement.

26. List all organizations other than professional associations to which you have belonged within the last five (5) years, including civic, charitable, religious, educational, social and fraternal organizations. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such organizations.

Pellissippi State Community College Foundation Board member, served as President of the Board 2008-2009.

YWCA Knoxville, member of Board of Directors, served as Secretary of Board 2011-12, President-elect for 2012-2013.

Knoxville Area Urban League, member of Board of Directors 2008-current.

Leadership Knoxville, Class of 2006, Curriculum Committee member 2007-2011, and served as Curriculum Committee Chair for the Class of 2010.

Knoxville Museum of Art, member of Development Committee 2008-2012.

I have been a member of the Knoxville Executive Women's Association since 2007; a member of Cherokee Country Club since 1995 (one of the first female members to be admitted) and a member of Club Le Conte since the late 1980s.

27. Have you ever belonged to any organization, association, club or society which limits its membership to those of any particular race, religion, or gender? Do not include in your answer those organizations specifically formed for a religious purpose, such as churches or synagogues.
- a. If so, list such organizations and describe the basis of the membership limitation.
 - b. If it is not your intention to resign from such organization(s) and withdraw from any participation in their activities should you be nominated and selected for the position for which you are applying, state your reasons.

No.

ACHIEVEMENTS

28. List all bar associations and professional societies of which you have been a member within the last ten years, including dates. Give the titles and dates of any offices which you have held in such groups. List memberships and responsibilities on any committee of professional associations which you consider significant.

Knoxville Bar Association.

Tennessee Bar Association—2011-2012, served as Chair of the President's Special Task Force for Women in the Profession. Many years ago, I also served as a hearing officer for the Tennessee Board of Professional Responsibility but I do not have a record of the exact dates.

Kentucky Bar Association.

American Bar Association – I am a member of the Committee for the ABA/ABOTA National Trial Academy, 2007 – current. Since 2007, I have served as a faculty member and mentor for the annual ABA TIPS/ABOTA National Trial Academy. The Trial Academy is a one week, intensive, interactive trial skills college for trial lawyers who are looking to improve their trial skills. The Trial Academy takes place at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada and is

taught by experienced and noted trial lawyers from around the country. I also served as the Director for the 2012 ABA/ABOTA Trial Academy.

Hamilton Burnett Inns of Court Chapter, Barrister, Master of Bench and currently Emeritus member, served as President 2010-2011.

Knoxville Bar Foundation, member of Board of Directors, 2010-current.

Defense Research Institute, member of Product Liability section.

ALFA International (a global law firm network), member of Product Liability Steering Committee 2008-2010; chair of Women's Initiative Practice Group 2011-2012; member of Board of Directors.

29. List honors, prizes, awards or other forms of recognition which you have received since your graduation from law school which are directly related to professional accomplishments.

TBA President's Award in recognition for "invaluable contribution of time and expertise serving as Chair of the Task Force on Women in the Profession" awarded by TBA President Danny Van Horn, June 8, 2012.

1996, National Law Journal, named one of Top Ten Litigators in the Country (National Law Journal, "Successful Strategies from Ten of the Nation's Top Litigators," May 13, 1996).

The Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers – I have been rated as an "AV Preeminent" Lawyer for 15 years by my peers through Martindale-Hubbell. I have also been included in the Martindale-Hubbell "Bar Registry for Preeminent Women Lawyers."

Super Lawyers of Mid-South. I was chosen by my peers to be included in Super Lawyers of Mid-South 2007- 2012.

Knoxville City View Magazine Top Attorneys 2012. I was elected by my peers as one of Knoxville's top attorneys in the following categories: Federal Court Practice; Wrongful Death-Defense; Product Liability-Defense; Medical Malpractice-Defense; Personal Injury, Motorcycle Accident-Defense.

30. List the citations of any legal articles or books you have published.

Not applicable.

31. List law school courses, CLE seminars, or other law related courses for which credit is given that you have taught within the last five (5) years.

ABA/TIPS National Trial Academy (program approved for 36-47 hours of CLE Credit depending on the State in which licensed) 2007-2012.

Knoxville Bar Association – panel presentation “Law Firm Revenue Generation: A Discussion with Managing Partners,” KBA Law Practice Expo, April 20, 2012.

ALFA International and American Corporate Counsel meeting, Chicago, IL, October 20, 2011 panelist at seminar entitled “Perception Becomes Reality: The Legal and Financial Implications of Implicit Bias.”

DRI, Product Liability Seminar, April 2011, New Orleans, LA – presented seminar entitled “Evidentiary Considerations and Practical Implications in Trial of Recalled Product.”

University of Tennessee School of Law, one-hour seminar presentation for law students sponsored by the Knoxville Legal Administrators, “The Business of Law for the New Lawyer: What You Really Need to Know,” presented annually 2010-2012.

University of Tennessee School of Law, 2012 course entitled “Lawyers as Leaders: Becoming a Leader and Leaving a Legacy.” Panelist at one of the sessions entitled Law Firm Management I on September 12, 2012.

32. List any public office you have held or for which you have been candidate or applicant. Include the date, the position, and whether the position was elective or appointive.

At present, I serve a two-year term as a Member of Business Advisory Counsel for the City of Knoxville, appointed by Mayor Madeline Rogero and approved by City Council, August 2012.

33. Have you ever been a registered lobbyist? If yes, please describe your service fully.

No.

34. Attach to this questionnaire at least two examples of legal articles, books, briefs, or other legal writings which reflect your personal work. Indicate the degree to which each example reflects your own personal effort.

1. Trial Brief, *England v Suzuki Motor Corp, et al*, United States District Court for Eastern District of Tennessee. While I may have had someone check the citations in this trial brief, the brief was written by me and based on legal research that I performed.
2. Trial Memorandum, *Royal Surplus Lines Insurance Co, v. Sofamor Danek Group, Inc.*, United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee. I served as co-counsel with several attorneys in this case, but I had primary responsibility for preparing the Plaintiff’s Trial Memorandum.

ESSAYS/PERSONAL STATEMENTS

35. What are your reasons for seeking this position? *(150 words or less)*

Being appointed as a Circuit Judge for the 6th Judicial District would provide me with the unique opportunity of giving back to my profession and to my community. I have been blessed over the last 25 years to be a jury trial lawyer. I understand the pressures that face the lawyers, and the investment that the litigants have in a fair and just outcome. Based upon my experience in courtrooms throughout Tennessee and around the country, I have come to appreciate that our jury trial system is one of the most important components of our system of government. I believe that I am now at the point in my career where I have the experience, the wisdom, the credibility and the temperament to become an excellent trial judge, and I would welcome the opportunity to use those skills to serve my community.

36. State any achievements or activities in which you have been involved which demonstrate your commitment to equal justice under the law; include here a discussion of your pro bono service throughout your time as a licensed attorney. *(150 words or less)*

I have always believed in supporting pro bono services with commitments of my time and/or money. In the last few years, I have spent more time raising public awareness of the need for access to equal justice and providing legal services to not-for-profit agencies. My involvement with the YWCA of Knoxville has included raising awareness of the plight of women who are victims of domestic violence and who are trying to find their way through a court system that is often confusing and frightening. I have advocated for funding for services for those victims who may feel even more disenfranchised due to language barriers. I strongly encourage attorneys within our firm to assist in equal access to justice by participation in pro bono programs such as the "Wills for Heroes" program, CASA, other pro bono programs, or through other financial support in both Knoxville and Nashville.

37. Describe the judgeship you seek (i.e. geographic area, types of cases, number of judges, etc. and explain how your selection would impact the court. *(150 words or less)*

I am seeking a position as a Circuit Court Judge for the 6th Judicial District located in Knox County, and in particular, the Division III Circuit Court served at present by the Hon. Wheeler Rosenbalm. Knox County has separate Criminal and Chancery Court Divisions. The Division III Circuit Court is one of three Circuit Courts in Knox County that primarily hears civil litigation matters, jury trials and other matters within the jurisdiction of the court. My selection would place an individual with extensive experience in general practice, civil litigation, pre-trial proceedings, discovery, and jury trials to a court that is primarily faced with these types of matters. In addition, because of my experience in trying cases in courts throughout the state of Tennessee and the southeast, I have a unique opportunity to share some of the best practices of many different judges.

38. Describe your participation in community services or organizations, and what community involvement you intend to have if you are appointed judge? *(250 words or less)*

The following is a list of community organizations in which I am currently involved. I anticipate that I will continue to participate in these community activities and others in the future subject to the time commitments of the court and any restraints of the Judicial Code of Ethics.

1. Pellissippi State Community College Foundation Board. I have served on this Board for more than eight years, and served as Chair of the Board in 2009.
2. Knoxville Area Urban League. I am a member of the Board and am involved in a number of community programs such as "Shoes for School," fundraising activities, and a member of the By-Laws committee.
3. YWCA Knoxville. I serve on the Board and I am a member of the Facilities Committee, the Executive Committee, and will serve as President of the Board in 2012-2013. I engage in supporting the YWCA through community awareness events and fundraising.
4. EWA (Executive Women's Association) Knoxville. Attend regular monthly meetings and events.
5. Leadership Knoxville. I am a member of the Leadership Knoxville Class of 2006, served as member of the curriculum committee from 2007-2011, and was Chair of that committee for the 2010 class.
6. Cancer Support Community. I have supported the Cancer Support Community for several years and have been asked to have my name placed in nomination for a position on their Board of Directors.

39. Describe life experiences, personal involvements, or talents that you have that you feel will be of assistance to the Commission in evaluating and understanding your candidacy for this judicial position. *(250 words or less)*

When the Lewis King law firm moved from being a partnership to our present corporate structure, our bylaws required the election of a "President." The President is charged with the overall operation of the firm, including law firm leadership and strategic planning. I was elected by my fellow shareholders to be the first President of Lewis King. I have been re-elected to the position of President by my fellow shareholders on seven occasions and have served more than 14 years in this office. I think I have been successful in this position because I am respected by the shareholders as an accomplished lawyer and because I am seen as decisive and fair. As is often the case in a law firm, there are "strong personalities" in a courtroom, and a trial judge has to have credibility and respect.

On a personal note, I am the oldest of five children, and my parents recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. My parents placed a high value on family, education, work ethic, respect for all, and a good sense of humor. I have been married to my husband, Hank Stevens, for 36 years. Hank is a civil engineer and currently works for Bechtel. We have one daughter, Katherine, who has her doctoral degree in Physical Therapy and now works in outpatient orthopedics. I am delighted that she chose to return to Knoxville after she completed her education, and am proud of the close and loving relationship that we share.

40. Will you uphold the law even if you disagree with the substance of the law (e.g., statute or rule) at issue? Give an example from your experience as a licensed attorney that supports your response to this question. *(250 words or less)*

If chosen to serve the citizens of Knox County as a Circuit Judge, I understand that I will take an oath to uphold the law and to faithfully uphold my duties. I understand the importance of doing so regardless of my personal beliefs. A lawyer is ethically bound to advise the Court if he or she is arguing a position that is contrary to existing laws, and then, as a zealous advocate, argue as creatively and passionately as possible with full understanding that ultimately, the judge will, or at least should, be constrained by the law. The role of the trial lawyer and the trial judge are very distinct.

An example of this distinction can be found in a product liability case that I tried a few years ago. The plaintiff was not wearing her seatbelt. The accident occurred on her mother's driveway. Under Tennessee law, the failure to comply with the mandatory seatbelt law is inadmissible, except in product liability cases. However, the seatbelt statute only requires you to wear a seatbelt while operating a vehicle on the "public roads and highways." I argued passionately that there is no basis for a distinction between operation on public roads and private driveways as it relates to the reason why the legislature determined that seatbelt use could be admitted in a products case. While the Court was sympathetic, the language of the statute was clear, and the trial judge ruled that evidence of failure to wear a seatbelt was inadmissible.

REFERENCES

41. List five (5) persons, and their current positions and contact information, who would recommend you for the judicial position for which you are applying. Please list at least two persons who are not lawyers. Please note that the Commission or someone on its behalf may contact these persons regarding your application.

A. **Harry P. Ogden**, Shareholder, Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, 265 Brookview Center Way, Suite 600, Knoxville, TN 37919 (865) 549-7000

B. **Pamela L. Reeves**, Attorney, Reeves, Herbert & Anderson, Tyson Place, Suite 130, 2607 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919 (865) 540-1977

C. **Richard W. Krieg**, Shareholder, Lewis, King, Krieg & Waldrop, PC, One Centre Square, 5th Floor, 620 Market St, Knoxville, TN 37902 (865) 541-5220

D. **Sharon Miller Pryse**, President & CEO, The Trust Company of Knoxville, 4823 Old Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37916 (865) 673-3560

E. **Robert E. Petrone**, CEO/Partner, B&T Distributing, 6520 Baum Drive, Knoxville, TN 37919 (865) 602-2233

AFFIRMATION CONCERNING APPLICATION

Read, and if you agree to the provisions, sign the following:

I have read the foregoing questions and have answered them in good faith and as completely as my records and recollections permit. I hereby agree to be considered for nomination to the Governor for the office of Judge of the Circuit Court of the 6th Judicial District of Tennessee, and if appointed by the Governor, agree to serve that office. In the event any changes occur between the time this application is filed and the public hearing, I hereby agree to file an amended questionnaire with the Administrative Office of the Courts for distribution to the Commission members.

I understand that the information provided in this questionnaire shall be open to public inspection upon filing with the Administrative Office of the Courts and that the Commission may publicize the names of persons who apply for nomination and the names of those persons the Commission nominates to the Governor for the judicial vacancy in question.

Dated: November 7, 2012.


Signature

When completed, return this questionnaire to Debbie Hayes, Administrative Office of the Courts, 511 Union Street, Suite 600, Nashville, TN 37219.



TENNESSEE JUDICIAL NOMINATING COMMISSION

511 UNION STREET, SUITE 600
NASHVILLE CITY CENTER
NASHVILLE, TN 37219

TENNESSEE BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TENNESSEE COURT OF JUDICIARY AND OTHER LICENSING BOARDS

WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

I hereby waive the privilege of confidentiality with respect to any information which concerns me, including public discipline, private discipline, deferred discipline agreements, diversions, dismissed complaints and any complaints erased by law, and is known to, recorded with, on file with the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Supreme Court of Tennessee, the Tennessee Court of Judiciary and any other licensing board, whether within or outside the state of Tennessee, from which I have been issued a license that is currently active, inactive or other status. I hereby authorize a representative of the Tennessee Judicial Nominating Commission to request and receive any such information and distribute it to the membership of the Judicial Nominating Commission.

Deborah C. Stevens

Type or Printed Name


Signature

Date

11/7/2012

007241

BPR #

Please identify other licensing boards that have issued you a license, including the state issuing the license and the license number.

Kentucky Bar #86803