

No Standing News

Since we have no standing, we stand with those left standing

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Election Commentary -- by Phil

THE PROSECUTOR'S RACE: ONE HAS A BAD RECORD - THE OTHER ISN'T TALKING. THIS IS A CHOICE?

Just when you have Steve Sowers nicely categorized as a moss-backed, ridge-running Republican, he writes a very well researched front page article which explains in devastating detail the incompetence of the Republican incumbent, Patrick L. King. Why doesn't Steve do more of this?

If you missed this excellent article on "Patrick the Unready", find the Wednesday, September 30, 1998 edition and read it carefully for three reasons. First, if you are planning to be a real American citizen and vote on November 3rd, you should look at this information before you vote. Second, you will see the kind of data you really need to form an objective opinion on the performance of a prosecutor. Third, you will wonder why this kind of factual data about the prosecutor has never been offered to the public before.

When you reach the third stage keep going and wonder why they never provided the same type of information on our circuit judges. The state agency that keeps statistical tabs on King also collects information on the performance of our overpaid and under-worked judges. King is not the only culprit in our local judicial machine. There are

many things Wiggins, Sheffield and Haslag can do to "teach" unprepared, indiscriminate prosecutors (and other lawyers) the folly of wasting the court's time and the tax payers' money. Go over to the second floor of the courthouse on any of the eight or ten days a month our circuit judges can be seen working. You'll see in living color, mumbled motions, defendants not notified of court dates, prosecutors and lawyers unprepared for long-scheduled court dates, cases being churned to fatten lawyer's fees, and other disreputable tactics. Judges who are paid \$87,235 to \$98,947 a year plus very generous state benefits can, and should do more than passively observe bad practices from their not-so-cheap seats.

Steve's question, "...can he do better?" under Ken Clayton's picture unfortunately remains unanswered. Will Clayton file cases without prudence or judgment? Will he also demand excessive bonds (which the judges sign obligingly) for petty offenses, keeping the jail unnecessarily over crowded? What does he think the most serious crime problems are in Phelps County? Does he have a more efficient method of case management or will we continue to pay for a bloated prosecutorial staff? Since Clayton has had privileged access to the defense files of all the pending cases represented by the Public Defender's office, how will he prosecute them? What will he do with the backlog of cases Pat has been sitting on, some for over three years? If elected as county prosecutor, will he also try to be elected prosecutor for the City of Rolla so he can continue Pat's disreputable practice of refileing city misdemeanor violations as state criminal misdemeanors to fatten county revenues?

So far, Clayton has said nothing at all of any value to voters. If he wins we'll just be swapping a pig-in-a-poke for a prosecutor who has been fumbling the job for too many years. Let's hope Ken's not relying on Steve's article, some yard signs, and a good Democratic turnout to get elected. Voters have their own way of teaching candidates not to take them for granted. Either speak up Ken, or hang on to your day job.

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