



The Boone County **Democrat**

June 2010

*A Joint Publication of the Boone County Muleskinners
and Democratic Central Committee*

Political Belief, Merit & the Bench

Is justice for sale in Missouri? It now appears that we will have a chance to vote on that question in November. After receiving \$675,000.00 from two Missouri businessmen -- David Humphreys and Stan Herzog - and \$975,000.00 in secret donations, James Harris and Show Me Better Courts filed signature petitions with the Secretary of State to place an initiative measure on the ballot in November that would end the Missouri Plan in favor of partisan judicial elections statewide.

With merit selection, our judges are accountable to the Constitution and law, not public opinion. We have a judiciary free from scandal and corruption because we select our appellate and metropolitan judges based on integrity, intelligence, and experience, but this was not always true.

In the 1930s, Missouri judges were hand picked by Tom Pendergast, the head



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Muleskinners in June

To give our speakers more time, introductions & announcements will begin at 12:15.

June 4: Tommy Sowers, Candidate, 8th Congressional District

June 11: Rep. Mary Still, State Representative, 25th District

June 18: Candidate Forum: Boone County Associate Circuit Judge, 5th Div., Larry Bryson & Kim Shaw

June 25: Wayne Brekhus, Democracy for America

Muleskinners now holds its Friday noon meetings in a dining room on the lower level of Stamper Commons on the Stephens College Campus on the SE corner of Broadway & College Ave. There's an optional buffet lunch. Parking is available in an adjacent lot off of Willis or in a lot off Walnut accessible by the pedestrian bridge to the north. Please use the spaces marked with yellow lines. The public is welcome and encouraged to stop by. If you have questions, please contact Scott Cristal at (573) 999-3871.

Visit us on the Web — <http://www.BooneCountyDems.org>

The Boone County Democrat

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June Calendar of Events

June 5, 12, 19 & 26: Regular Saturday Canvass for Kelly Schultz, 21st House District Candidate. Staged from Kelly's house, 10455 E. Mexico Gravel Road, at 12:30 p.m., usually finishing around 5:30-p.m. Please call Brian at headquarters (875-1245) to confirm when you'd like to knock.

June 3: Happy Hour in support of J Scott Christianson. 503 South Garth, 5 to 6:30 p.m. Please join hosts Lise Saffran, Ginny Muller, Linda Reeder and Dennis Sentilles in supporting Scott Christianson for Boone County Presiding Commissioner.

June 4-5: Anchor Fest in Centralia. Stop by our table or sign up for a volunteer shift with us. Contact Brian Goldstein for more information, kapp.gold@gmail.com or 875-1245.

June 9: Columbia/Boone County League of Women Voters fundraiser—a presentation of *Into the Woods* by Columbia Entertainment Co. Social Hour 6:30, curtain 7:30. Tickets \$25—contact Liz Schmidt at 445-0655.

June 10: Boone County Democratic Central Committee, 7 p.m. Boone Government Center, Commission Chamber. Contact Phyllis at (573) 445-5165 for more information.

June 13: PrideFest in Columbia. Stop by our table or sign up for a volunteer shift with us. Contact Brian Goldstein for more information, kapp.gold@gmail.com or 875-1245.

June 18 & 19: Hallsville Heritage Days. Stop by our table or sign up for a volunteer shift with us. Contact Brian Goldstein for more information, kapp.gold@gmail.com or 875-1245.

June 18: Juneteenth Celebration in Columbia, Douglas Park. Stop by our table or sign up for a volunteer shift with us. Contact Brian Goldstein for more information, kapp.gold@gmail.com or 875-1245.

June 20: NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet with 2010 Community Service Awards, June 20, 6 p.m., at the Courtyard Marriott. Speaker, Patrick Green, Mayor of Normandy, MO. Theme "2010 - If Not Now, When?" Ticket prices VIP \$50, regular \$30. Contact Liz Schmidt for tickets at lizschmidt@centurytel.net.

Please refer to the BCDP website & the listserv for updates & information about other events.

Campaign Events in particular are subject to change!

See the front page for Muleskinners' schedule.



Primary Preview

BOONE COUNTY PRESIDING COMMISSIONER

two Democrats in the Primary, one General Election Opponent



J. SCOTT CHRISTIANSON, 41, is a long-time Columbia resident and has been a local business owner in the computer and telecommunications field for the past eleven years. He has been involved in the local Democratic Party and served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the local Democratic Central Committee. In 2005, he was awarded the William J. Robb Distinguished Service Award for service to the Boone County Democratic Party, and in 2007 he was selected as one of Columbia's top 20 business leaders under the age of 40 by the *Columbia Business Times*. Scott also serves as an Adjunct Instructor in the Trulaske College of Business teaching Project Management at the graduate (MBA) level.

To Support Scott's campaign:

Website: www.Scott4Presiding.com

Mail: Christianson for Presiding,
300 South Garth Ave, Columbia MO 65203

Phone: 573-424-4254

Email: Scott@Scott4Presiding.com



JOHN SAM WILLIAMSON: *Why am I running for Presiding Commissioner of Boone County?*

I love Boone County. I was born here and have lived here all my life. I have traveled all over the United States and the World when I was in the Air Force. No place comes close to home. I have worked very hard as a private citizen to help the Boone County Commission, the Boone County Fire Protection District and Consolidated Public Water District # 1. I have been a leader in the community with 4-H, PTA and other groups too numerous to mention.

Now I want to move from the private citizen side of the table and over to the County Commissioner side. I ask for your support.

Put Me To Work for You.

Home phone: (573) 445-7636

Cell phone: (573) 999-4580

Email: jswmson200@aol.com

Web Site: <http://www.johnsamwilliamson.com>

Facebook: John Sam Williamson

Facebook: John Sam Williamson for Presiding Commissioner





Primary Preview



Associate Circuit Judge, Division 5

Two Democrats in the Primary, no General Election Opposition

JUDGE LARRY BRYSON is a lifelong resident of the Boone County community. He and his wife, Patti, have four children, Amity, Matthew, Caleb and wife, Laurie, Lucas and wife, Lacey, and 2 grandchildren, Grace & Evie. Judge Bryson and Patti will celebrate 40 years of marriage this August.

Judge Bryson practiced law 14 years and has been elected to 6 terms, 24 years, as Associate Circuit Judge.



He is a University of Missouri, Columbia graduate, bachelor of Arts, Political Science, 1970, and Juris Doctor, 1972. Before taking the bench in 1987 Judge Bryson was elected twice as Treasurer, twice as Vice-Chair, & twice as Chair of the Boone County Democratic Committee. Judge Bryson has a strong commitment to continue to serve the citizens of Boone County as Associate Circuit Judge.

CONTACT Judge Larry Bryson Re-Election Committee By:

Mail: 530 Orchard St., Centralia, Missouri 65240

Phone: 573-682-2323

Email: judgebryson@gmail.com

Web site: www.judgebryson.com

The extensive legal experience that KIM SHAW will bring to the bench includes:

- More than **twenty** years practicing as a licensed attorney throughout the State of Missouri, primarily in Mid-Missouri;
- Represented clients in well over a **thousand** cases in both criminal and civil matters;
- Experienced business owner through her **nine** years as a law partner in private practice;
- Handled **22** murder trials;
- **Advocated for abused and neglected children** while serving as a *guardian ad litem* for Boone County;
- Drafted and reviewed numerous legal documents such as contracts, articles of organization, wills, trusts, deeds, separation agreements, and parenting plans;
- Appeared in court for **countless** contested hearings and bench trials in both criminal and civil cases involving matters such as child custody and visitation, child support, termination of parental rights, dissolution of marriage, juvenile delinquency, child abuse and neglect, adoption, mental health commitments, preliminary hearings in criminal cases, professional licenses, local ordinance and traffic violations, and motion hearings arguing a vast array of legal issues.



For more information visit the website: <http://kimshawforjudge.org>

Or Visit KimShawforJudge on Facebook & Twitter

WICKERSHAM ON PEACE EDUCATION IN US

How can a "culture of peace" be built and sustained? What counts as a "just war"? What are some approaches to international peace? What are some of the principal obstacles that hinder the search for peace? These are just a few of the questions raised by Bill Wickersham, noted local peace educator and MU adjunct professor, who addressed the Muleskinner lunch on Friday, May 7.

The response to his address was so immediate and wide-ranging that Muleskinner President Wiley Miller suggested the organization might collaborate in providing some means for a longer, intensive exploration of the issues.

Opting for a "primitive," or simple, definition of peace as "non-destructive human interaction," he emphasized the broad concept of building a culture for peace, before explicitly addressing issues of war, disarmament, and defense. According to UNESCO, he said, "We need to foster a culture of peace through education by revising . . . curricula at all levels . . ." Such a culture would focus on sustainable economic development, respect for human rights, gender equality, democratic participation, dialogues and exchange of information to overcome enemy stereotypes, and a free flow of information." Finally, he concluded, a peace culture would promote peace "through nuclear disarmament, negotiation of peaceful settlements, elimination of production and traffic of arms and weapons, and achievement of humanitarian solutions to conflict."

Referring to the 1986 "Seville Statement," he rejected the inherited biological/instinctual theory of the causes of war. Among other possible theories, he listed the work of military-industrial complexes "which perpetually stimulate arms races," and economic factors, including the "unabated global reach of unregulated multi-national corporations."

Though he listed some seven approaches to international peace, the one that attracted the most attention and discussion was headed "global action to prevent war." This, he explained, would mean national military forces "strong enough to provide 'defensive defense' but not large enough or strong enough to unilaterally invade and conquer other countries." What is not needed, he said, are 700 military bases in 130 countries ("an empire of bases" as reported, for example, in Chalmers Johnson's *Sorrows of Empire*).

Among obstacles to peace, Wickersham emphasized the psychological "unreality of the dangers of war." For example, he reminded the audience that from 1963 to 1993 some 150 Minuteman Missiles had been deployed in thirteen west central Missouri counties, each with up to fifty times the power of the A-bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Consequently, Soviet missiles were likewise aimed at Missouri, making the state a prime target in case World War III were to break out. Yet when he brought this to the attention of civic clubs and church groups, he "noticed that many people's eyes just glazed over. They were experiencing a form of psychological denial. When a potentially horrific problem such as annihilation by suicidal weapons of mass destruction threatens one's very existence and all one holds dear, one may simply 'stick one's head in the sand.'"

Wickersham's handout for the Muleskinners, "The Meaning of Peace," listed, as examples of word traps that minimize the violence of war: "effectives" instead of soldiers; "casualties or collateral damage" rather than the death of combatants or innocent bystanders; "hardware" rather than weapons that simply "take out" cities; "birds" instead of nuclear missiles. Local problems often seem more important to citizens than the threat of international warfare, and personal security outweighs morality in people's reaction to deadly weapons such as nuclear warheads.

Questions and comments (of which there were many) focused

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Newsletter

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on such topics as ways to influence neighbors to adopt a more peaceable stance, local organizations and activities that promote peace, and the need for improved "civic education" in public schools.

Wickersham's recent book, *Confronting Nuclear War: The Role of Education, Religion, and the Community*, is available online at www.confrontingnuclearwar.com

R² = Recommended Reading

Will Bunch, Tear Down the Myth

In a Gallup poll not too long ago (February 2009), Americans ranked Ronald Reagan #2 as the greatest American president of all time, just barely behind Abraham Lincoln. Higher than those Founding Fathers, Washington and Jefferson. Higher than both Roosevelts, Teddy and FDR. How could that be?

Let's not fool ourselves: in the popular mind, Ronald Wilson Reagan has fast become a myth. But not without a lot of help from his friends. Of course, there's a Reagan myth machine, made up of neo-conservatives and funded by tax-warrior lobbyists. Grover Norquist and his media manipulators have done their job well.

Before this year's elections, voters need to be reminded of the facts and the fantasies of recent history. You might want to recommend that they read a new paperback, *Tear Down This Myth* (Free Press, 2010), by Will Bunch of the Philadelphia *Daily News*. The last half of the book is a fascinating account of how Norquist and his allies systematically went about spreading the myth, not to honor the man, but to establish their neoconservative ideal. "The guy ended the Cold War," Norquist proclaimed, "he turned the economy around." The only problem with both assertions is that they are both inaccurate.

Two central chapters in Bunch's book should be required reading for all voters: "Warrior Defused" and "An Untaxing Burden." One demonstrates that, in fact, Reagan was not a warrior president nor did his leadership bring an end to the Cold War. Bunch concludes, "There is a plotline where 'tear down this wall' bravado is a distraction from a real moral of the story because [the real moral] is all about accommodation and talking to enemies." Ironically, in this chapter Reagan becomes both more humane and somehow more effective as a president than the myth allows him to be.

Even more germane now is the chapter exposing the "tax-cutter." Reagan did, indeed, cut the income taxes of the wealthiest from seventy to fifty percent. But later he signed thirteen measures raising taxes. The tax burden of middle-income families actually increased. Bunch examines Reaganomics to show that "trickle-down" economics didn't trickle down, and big government didn't get littler.

Another chapter, "Prospero Unmasked," shows that during his tenure, Reagan was not even a particularly popular president. His overall approval rating ranks well below FDR, Eisenhower, and Kennedy, and even a bit lower than Lyndon Johnson, the elder Bush, and Bill Clinton, in spite of the bad vibes experienced during their presidencies. People liked his smile; but 62% of them were saying the country was headed in the wrong direction. What most people remember, and still quote, is Reagan's message to Gorbachev, "Tear down this Wall." It's time to "tear down this myth."

Boone County Democratic Party

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of the corrupt political machine in Kansas City. Pendergast wanted judges who would rule as he wished. If they failed in that regard, he replaced them. Elections didn't work because Pendergast committed widespread voter fraud, but our citizens voted in 1940 to abandon elections and instead adopt the country's very first merit selection system for judges.

If Humphreys and Herzog have their way, we will ask our judges to become politicians, raise campaign contributions and wage political campaigns. This subject has commanded a fair amount of my time in the last few years, and the question is often presented: We elect other government officials, why not our judges? After all, we live in a democracy. It is a simple question but the answer goes to the heart of our justice system.

The answer lies in the difference between what politicians do and what judges do. Judges are to be honest, impartial and competent and decide cases based on the law and the facts of the case. They are not to decide cases based on their political beliefs or their own self interest. They are supposed to ignore possible criticism and the identities of the litigants or their attorneys.

Politicians are free to follow their political ambitions, to serve interest groups and show kindness to their campaign contributors. Politicians are expected to behave based upon their self interest and their political ideology. This is the essence of politics but it is also the antithesis of judicial behavior.

Of course, many of our trial judges are still elected, but almost exclusively in counties where voters know them or know about them. Winning candidates are usually voted into office based on their legal abilities, not their political skills. Our elected judges have not been forced to raise big money or launch negative attacks on their opponents because the voters are already familiar with them.

While elected judges can demonstrate the highest judicial ideals, they can face challenges and obstacles that appointed judges do not. How difficult is it for an elected judge to ignore sizeable campaign contributions donated by a litigant or attorney? In Texas, a recent poll disclosed that half of their judges admit that campaign contributions had a significant effect on their decisions. How difficult is it – in an election year – for an elected judge to make a decision on the law and the facts rather than community sentiment? We ask our elected judges to set aside political aspirations and dispense justice impartially, and those who are able to do so are special public servants, but can we reasonably expect perfection? Our citizens deserve fair and impartial justice more than most of the time.

Fortunately, our elected trial judges seldom face significant political pressure because they usually do not engage in expensive campaigns. Appellate and metropolitan judicial candidates will not have this luxury, and if forced to wage political campaigns, these candidates will spend millions of dollars to launch attack ads that only demean the opposition. Then, once in office, they will inevitably be confronted with a case involving a campaign contributor, and recusal is uncertain.

In 1940, we found a way to protect the integrity of our courts from human shortcomings by adopting the Missouri Plan, thus ending the cronyism and corruption that tarnished our court system in the early part of the 20th Century. If we return to an elective system, our judges will return to the political hellhole that was Missouri over 70 years ago, where accountability was not to the Constitution, or even the public, but to a small group of powerful men with enough money to have their way.

Skip Walther
President, The Missouri Bar

The Boone County Democrat
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The Boone County Democratic Party is geared up to be a full-time, year-in, year-out, year-round organization—and that means we need your continued involvement. Please renew your membership for 2010. Your annual membership will help to provide the resources necessary as we work for further gains in 2010 and beyond.

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Sustaining Member	\$120/yr	\$220/yr
Building Member	\$240/yr	\$450/yr

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