I see by your February 15 issue that the Harold Stassen of Scott County politics, “Ole Hubcap” Rhomberg, has injected himself, à la that anachronism Jesse Jackson, into a tempest-in-a-teapot flap. (See “Cronyism Still Thrives in Scott County Government,” River Cities’ Reader Issue 568, February 15-21, 2006.)

If he had read the *North Scott Press* more than three times, he’d know Bill Tubbs aligns with him identically on every left-wing socialistic issue.

As to his hosting of an Air America radio show, that has as much staying power as his pathetic attempts to regain any kind of elected office. The views of these far-left kooks can be seen every night, veiled as news, on ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN, and MSNBC. Air America’s well-known failure at commercial sponsorship will relegate it to the trash heap of history soon.

T.J. Otting
Bettendorf

Environmental Forum Opposes Hog Plant

The Environmental Forum of the local citizens group Progressive Action for Common Good (PACG) is opposed to the building of the proposed hog-processing plant in East Moline. We oppose this plant because of effects of the operation on our environment and the likely explosion in the development of hog-confinement facilities (CAFOs) that will follow. We oppose this project and the extent of public financing for it on the basis that these jobs will likely start at slightly over $8 per hour – not even a living wage.

At recent public meetings, anti-immigrant statements have been made in opposition to this plant. PACG does not support any statement in opposition to the plant on these grounds. We deplore any attempts to stir up anti-immigration attitudes in our communities. We are supporters of the immigrant communities in our area and believe all people make great contributions to our communities, and especially those who bring ethnic and cultural richness to the Quad Cities.

PACG supports the promotion of progressive spiritual and moral values, including equal rights for all and economic justice for all. We oppose this plant strictly because of its likely effect on our environment and because we do not believe these are the quality of jobs and benefits that our workforce deserves. We dissociate ourselves from anyone who uses anti-immigrant statements in a misguided attempt to develop opposition to this plant.

In 1997, the board of directors of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference called for a moratorium on CAFOs. They based this opinion on the negative health, environmental, economic, and social impacts of CAFOs. In spring 2001, the Catholic Bishops of Illinois issued their statement on perspectives of rural life. Today we are seeing the industrialization of farming, which threatens to undermine the cherished institution of the family farm. It also poses a new threat to the critical natural resources in Illinois. These operations raise serious concerns for the quality of land, air, and water in our state. Each produces its own range of symptoms. New studies show that emissions from livestock factories can be dangerous and cause negative physiological responses if present in high enough concentrations. Children are more vulnerable

than adults to hydrogen sulfide for various reasons and are extremely vulnerable during their prime learning years because the impairment of mental faculties in a child amounts to a lifetime of harm.

Water pollution from CAFOs is the result of large numbers of animals on relatively small amounts of land. Agricultural runoff from hog and other factory-livestock operations continues to be the number-one source of nutrient pollution throughout much of the country. It is the largest contributor to pollution in impaired rivers and lakes in the United States.

There are good reasons to oppose this plant; anti-immigration and prejudice against any members of our community or labor force are not among them.

Cathy Bolkcom, President, PACG
Molly Regan, Chair, PACG Environmental Forum

Case Begs Important Question

The case of Naab v. Botsko, as described by Kathleen McCarthy, should be of interest to all that care about justice. (See “Civil-Rights Commission Continues Its Shenanigans in Botsko Case,” *River Cities’ Reader* Issue 566, February 1-7, 2006.)

It appears that Ms. McCarthy did an excellent job of “in-depth investigating” that should give us some important details of what is taking place in our tribunals.

One of the most important questions that comes to my mind is “jurisdiction.”

After Administrative Law Judge Kevin Visser handed down his decision, how did the Davenport Civil Rights Commission (DCRC) find jurisdiction to take further action?

It appears, to me, that this would be like having the district court review the decision of the Supreme Court.

Where did the DCRC find its authority to take jurisdiction after their decision had been appealed to the Administrative Law Judge?

Wasn’t the next step to appeal the decision of Judge Visser to the district court?

Would this entire episode have been over if Botsko had petitioned the district court to “expunge the void judgment”?

We should remember that a “void” judgment never becomes a final judgment regardless of the number of years since it was entered. The Illinois Supreme Court said: “Something that is dead does not come alive by the passage of time.”

It may not be too late to petition the Iowa Supreme Court to declare the judgment of the DCRC to be null and void and held for naught. If it does this, a petition to expunge the “void” judgment

might be in order.

James Madison explained that “just as we have a right in our property, we have a property in our right.”

If Botsko has a “property” in his right, does the cost of defending his property create a diminishment of the value of the property that requires just compensation?

This could be very interesting. Since Botsko is already in the Iowa Supreme Court, it appears that all that is necessary is to file the petitions. The court would, then, provide the answers.

This case is important enough that the public should express their views. Not on the facts, but on the law. “Jurisdiction?”

Richard M. Boalbey
Rock Island