Written by Mike Walton
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*(**Editor's note:** Republican Scott County attorney candidate Hugh Pries outlined his positions in the July 9, 2008, issue of the* River Cities' Reader*. Democratic candidate Mike Walton was given an opportunity to do the same.)*

Thank you for allowing me to address your readers as the current Scott County attorney and the Democratic candidate for county attorney in the election this November 4.

My many years of experience give me the confidence to state that I am the most qualified candidate for this office. Experience, however, is only part of the equation. Leadership to make desirable changes and vision to improve in the future are also important. I have made changes to the office. Some changes have been difficult and could have been put off or avoided, but I chose not to, regardless of the political ramifications.

I have been an attorney in the Scott County attorney's office for nearly 20 years. I have learned a lot through the years, and the experience has been rewarding. During that time I have prosecuted many major felony cases including murder, sexual abuse, kidnapping, assault, arson, drug crimes, and child abuse. I have acted as the on-call attorney to advise the police at any time during the day or night. I am able to use my many years' experience to

provide quick and accurate advice in these situations. My office provides training to local law enforcement on many different topics.

In addition to criminal prosecution, I have provided legal defense in several civil lawsuits against Scott County where millions of dollars were sought by the claimants. We were able to successfully defend these actions with zero dollars paid by Scott County.

On August 7, 2007, I was appointed Scott County attorney by a unanimous, bipartisan vote of the Board of Supervisors. Since becoming county attorney, it has been far from "business as usual." I immediately began the conversion of the office from part-time to full-time attorneys. I made personnel changes including elimination of an attorney position. I hired two new assistant county attorneys and an office administrator to fill vacancies. Through these actions and budget tightening I was able to reduce the annual operating budget for the office by more than $100,000. Using existing office resources, I increased services provided to victims. I increased resources applied toward juvenile court. I have made efforts to increase inter-agency contact and cooperation.

In addition, this office continues to recover thousands of dollars for local merchants through the check offender program. After I became county attorney, we adopted the fine payment program. This program allows individuals who cannot get a license because of unpaid fines to enter into a payment plan with our office and obtain a license as long as they are making payments. This generates revenue to the state and Scott County and allows these drivers to become licensed and insured.

We are in the process of obtaining new computer software to increase the efficiency of office processes. Updated software will keep the office current with technological advances such as online research and filing of documents. This will increase the efficiency of office staff and reduce costs.

Crime is a very real and serious problem, especially in certain areas of the county. I deal with it on a daily basis. Crime in Davenport however, is actually down 14.6 percent, which includes a 6.6-percent decrease in violent crimes such as murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault (Davenport Police Department 2007 Annual Report, April 10, 2008). Crime is a very complex issue requiring the dedication of hundreds of individuals from many agencies to address it on a daily basis. Tough-on-crime rhetoric sounds impressive but produces little to solve the problem. Knowledge, experience, and inter-agency cooperation are the best

resources to address crime.

My office is working with local law enforcement to focus on violent crime, particularly involving guns. We are putting extra resources into these cases to obtain convictions on the maximum sentence whenever possible.

I am a prosecutor, not a politician. I will not make claims that are not true or promises I cannot keep. I have always taken the duties of this office seriously. I would greatly appreciate your vote on November 4 so that I can use my nearly 20 years of experience to deliver and improve the numerous services provided to the community by the Scott County attorney's office. To learn more about me and some of my cases. go to WaltonCA.com . Thank you for this opportunity.

Mike Walton

Democratic Candidate for Scott County Attorney