

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remembering Judge Henry

It was six years ago that Geauga County tragically lost one of its most revered public servants.

The Honorable Charles E. Henry was the victim of a fatal auto/bicycle accident on that beautiful spring night, which suddenly turned cold in so many ways for so many people.

Judge Henry was a humble introvert whose primary aspiration was to do the right thing by the children and families of Geauga County. During his 18-year tenure on the bench as probate/juvenile judge, Judge Henry introduced the Court Appointed Special Advocate program to Geauga County; he spearheaded the Reclaim Ohio initiative statewide; he incorporated creative dispositional alternatives in his day-to-day rulings; he enabled staff to secure and utilize cutting-edge surveillance and drug testing techniques; he divested the operation of the county youth center to improve treatment services to youth; and his cooperative collaboration resulted in a greatly improved location for the probate/juvenile court and positive, productive relationships with all county agencies and administrators. These are only a few of his accomplishments.

Judge Henry was a quiet government servant who felt no need to broadcast what he perceived as simply upholding his judicial oath.

He was a fair, impartial and dedicated jurist, in addition to being a loving son, brother, husband, father and a Big Brother.

Most important, Judge Henry recognized that the role of a judge is to resolve controversies, not create them.

His demonstrative example of selflessness, dedication and ethics lives on.

*Michele Schroeder, Retired CPO
Gauga County Juvenile Court*

HB218 'The Skunk Bill'

It's back again with a new name. By now many of you have seen House Bill 218. It is nearly identical to language that was just tossed out of the budget bill. There it was called amendment 1793. Well they can call it what they want. You can rename a skunk, it still smells bad. I think this one does too.

This bill was introduced May 31 by Geauga County Probate Judge Grendell's pal Rep. Bill Seitz.

I got a chuckle when I read the "Constitutional Disclaimer" at the end of the bill. This bill is so bad it needs to claim that it is constitutional. Sorry, I don't think so. No, I suspect that instead it is a way to slap citizens with fines or potentially even jail time for criticizing or delving too deeply into park operations and expenditures.

It will seek to extract monies from a township(s). It will enable the court to tell a township to refrain from forming its own parks. The Probate judge will become investigator, prosecutor, judge/jury. He will even decide the penalties.

It's summer and you've likely got your windows open at night. If that distinct and unpleasant aroma wafts in, just think that if the "Skunk Bill" passes and becomes law, Ohio will smell like that all the time.

*Dave Partington
Munson Township*

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