



# The COUNTY PATRIOT

## FREE! TAKE ONE



### Inside 2007 Football Schedules 2007 SPECIAL EDITION

## Going ... Going ... Gone! by Patriot Staff

Going...going...gone! That's a phrase auctioneer Gary Criswell has spoken countless times in the past 35 years. But our college graduates going out of state has Criswell concerned. Criswell states that the majority of our college graduates leave the state within five years of graduating college, and that is a problem. "We are losing some of our best and brightest" said Criswell, "They don't leave the state because they don't want to live here.. They leave because they are looking for jobs, something that is in short supply in Oklahoma." Criswell wants to do something about the problem.

There are two issues that impede business in Oklahoma that contributes to the problem of quality employment. One is workers compensation and the other is lawsuit reform. "We need to further reform our workers compensation program in Oklahoma. We are one of only two states in the country that still use

the courts to settle workers comp claims. That reduces the payment to injured workers and increases premiums to employers."

Criswell suggests Oklahoma use an administrative board like 48 other states do. "We have been somewhat evasive about this issue for years and it's time this situation is taken care of."

Another issue that Criswell is passionate about is Oklahoma's aging infrastructure. "We only spend about 4% of our state budget on transportation - that's roads, bridges and administration," Criswell says. "When Oklahoma has the highest percentage of deficient bridges in the country - 27% - and rank #6 in the U.S. for poor roads, we need to start paying more attention to this critical area."

Criswell, who is retired from Halliburton and runs a successful real estate and auction business in Duncan plans to seek the State House of Representatives District #51 seat in

2008. The rural district encompasses five counties and runs from the Red River to south Oklahoma City.

Why is Criswell seeking the office? "I am running for my grandchildren," Criswell said. "I want them to have the opportunity to live in Oklahoma and raise their families around my children. I believe I can make a difference in the legislature." Criswell said.

Proud of his military service, Criswell was drafted into the Army in 1969 and honorably discharged as a Sergeant E-5 in 1971. Criswell served as a Duncan city councilman for ten years. He and his wife Betty have been married for 37 years. They have three daughters and four granddaughters. He is a Deacon in his church and has served on the Board of the Crisis Intervention Center (Women's Haven). In 1997, Gary was named 'Volunteer of the Year' by Halliburton. "The award was for Halliburton corporately," Criswell said.



Gary Criswell conducts an auction

"It involved over 60,000 employees. I was humbled to be chosen. It was quite an honor."

Criswell believes his experience in government and business qualifies him to represent HD #51 effectively. "I will be accessible to all citizens and will listen to their ideas and concerns. I would appreciate your support and vote," Criswell concluded.

## McKinney Considers Office by Patriot Staff

Methamphetamine, also known as "meth", "speed", "crank", or "ice" is a powerful and highly addictive stimulant that affects the central nervous system. Meth is a synthetic drug produced or sold as pills, capsules or powder that can be smoked, snorted, injected or swallowed.

Wayne McKinney, retired law enforcement and public servant, has seen his share of drug users, abusers, and manufacturers. "It (meth) takes a terrific toll on human lives and community resources, and is responsible for over 40% of all crime," said McKinney. "Seventy percent of all identity theft crimes nationally can be attributed to meth use."

McKinney knows about many facets of law enforcement. He has been a state trooper, a city police officer, a county deputy, and an inspector with the Federal Aviation Administration. He has organized and supervised criminal investigations and participated in Special Operations. He has organized drug enforcement operations and search and rescue missions. And, as a federal FAA inspector, he oversaw major federal investigations and audits to ensure safety for the public.

McKinney is considering running for the post of Stephens County Sheriff. "I've had numerous people who know my background in law enforcement ask me to file for the position" said McKinney. "We are carefully

weighing our options at this time and will make a decision in the near future. Meanwhile, I would love to hear from other county residents." You can contact him at 580-658-3638.

McKinney is also a successful businessman and efficient manager. "My wife Julie and I decided to "retire" and were looking for a small business we could get into," said McKinney. "The opportunity to take a small, disorganized Harley-Davidson Motorcycle dealership presented itself, and we were able to transform it into one of the most successful dealerships in the country, earning national recognition and awards from Harley-Davidson." Wayne knows how to meet a payroll, supervise employees, and efficiently manage resources.

Wayne and Julie live on and operate a cattle ranch in the Central High community. They maintain strong family ties with their two sons and their wives along with five grandchildren.

Wayne McKinney believes in the power of volunteerism and leadership to help strengthen a community and its people. Wayne serves on the Stephens County Fair Board and as a volunteer firefighter. He serves as an elder in his church in Duncan and is a member of the Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rite, Shrine, Marlow Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, the Duncan Optimist Club and the Duncan Gun Club.



## Striving for Peace and Freedom

by Senator Don Barrington

We are a nation that strives for peace and freedom through Democracy. I have found this statement to be more true than ever because of my own journey over the past three years as Senator of Oklahoma State Senate District 31. Oklahoma is rich with history, and as we reflect during this Centennial year, I am honored to serve our citizens that belong to a great state in such a great country.

This year I had the privilege of taking part in an historic opportunity for Oklahoma. Not only is 2007 our Centennial

year, but it also marks the first time in Oklahoma history that Democrats and Republicans had an equal say in the State Senate. Following the 2006 election outcomes, the Oklahoma State Senate resulted in a 24-24 split between the political parties. This historic tie in the Senate also provided opportunity for key legislation to be passed.

This past session, Senators labored together to accomplish the following: getting state government out of the abortion business, strengthening Oklahoma's illegal immigration laws, passing significant tax relief for Oklahoma families and small businesses, increasing funding for the Oklahoma Teacher Retirement System and providing further protections for our

children from the menace of sexual predators and child abusers.

I am encouraged as I look where we have come as a State. I also see how much more we can grow. I will keep doing my best to meet the needs of this district, and with your help we can continue to make Oklahoma strong.

I am honored to have been elected by the citizens of southwest Oklahoma and speak on your behalf. I encourage you to come visit your State Capitol and if you have any questions, please contact my office at 405-521-5563 or at [barrington@oksenate.gov](mailto:barrington@oksenate.gov).

## Common Sense - Conservative Actions - Great Potential District 50 Representative Dennis Johnson

It has been a great privilege to serve all of you as your State Representative this year at the State Capitol. You elected me in November 2006 under a platform of conservative values and experienced leadership. It was a great year for the citizens of District 50. Let me touch on a few reasons why.

### (1) OKLAHOMA STATE GOVERNMENT SPENT LESS MONEY THIS YEAR VS. LAST YEAR.

If we continue to collect excess revenue, I will work to return that money to you - the taxpayers. When you overpay your bill, you should get a refund. This year we had more dollars to spend than last year, but WE SPENT LESS. Fiscal conservatism won out. This next years budget spends less actual dollars than this past year. We paired cuts in spending with continued tax cuts. Income tax cuts were accelerated for working families and small businesses.

I am pleased to report, concerning the FY-08 budget, recent figures show an excess of \$227.4 million in general revenue above the estimate. The plan is working.

### (2) THE OLD RULES WERE CHANGED

In a year when we had a divided Senate, traditional wisdom suggested nothing could be accomplished. Instead, we saw a sharp divide between the agents of change and reform. Some wanted to protect the status quo. Our biggest obstacle: Governor Henry, could no longer rely on the Senate to act as a buffer to real reforms. Henry was forced to show his true colors, and we certainly saw them shine through. He was compelled to sign or veto issues he has never faced before in public. He had to walk the walk and we saw his talk and walk didn't always match up.

### (3) THE EXPANDED CONSERVATIVE AGENDA

Instead of having to narrow it down as the session progressed, we laid down some important markers for the next year. Issues like performance pay for teachers and lawsuit reform are important because they impact all of our lives. This years session was unique because we achieved the vast majority of the agenda we had established in January by sessions end. We tackled some difficult issues like illegal immigration, taxpayer funded abortions, internet predators, the teachers retirement system and prison funding.

I hope you will agree the progress we made this year benefited our District. That progress was made because of leadership that was not based on the same ideas of bygone years. That leadership had our state sliding sideways instead of growing. It was a leadership of new ideas built on conservative principles. It was a leadership that was willing to make tough choices and sound financial decisions. That leadership will pay big dividends in the long term future for us, our children and grandchildren. Thank you for affording me the honor of representing you and let me know if I can ever do anything for you.

