

Opinion: What's Going on with DA Katie Micks, Leaving or Not?

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Ordinarily, when a high-profile public official sells her home, it is a precursor for her to be moving on. Recently, in the pages of the Triplicate, District Attorney Katie Micks revealed her house has been sold, her husband and son are moving to Eureka, her home town, where her mother is losing her eyesight and she was moving into a Crescent City rental. So, what's up with Micks's change in circumstance? Staying or leaving?

Currently DA Micks claims to be staying to complete her six year term, expiring in January, 2029. Her family is relocating south to attend a family matter. Sounds more permanent than temporary, just saying. DA Micks claims to be moving into a local Crescent City apartment ostensibly to maintain her status as a resident of Del Norte County and retain her current position as District Attorney of Del Norte County. The first question to be asked, why sell the house to move into an apartment if you intend on staying as DA and already have a place to live?

While all this is intended to appear to be above board, it is difficult to believe DA Micks is intent on remaining separate from her family for three and a half years in order to retain a \$155,000 salary when alternatives in Eureka/Arcata or even further afield are much more likely. Two Jobs anyone? Driving from Eureka to Crescent City when necessary for appearance's sake?

Del Norte County seems to have a proclivity for elected officials to bend the rules for residency. Some get caught and pay a price, some do not. Better yet, the county seems perfectly at ease with employees who live elsewhere and still feed at the county's feeding trough. Alex Falman anybody? Alex Campbell? Randy Waltz? Or even Dr. Aaron Stutz.

While I do not pretend to know for certain what the future holds for Del Norte County District Attorney Katie Micks, her explanation for her change in circumstance is most certainly worthy of continued scrutiny. It is difficult to accept she is willing to be separated from her family for the remainder of her term for some sort of loyalty to a county where many residents' question her effectiveness in office.

There appear to be far too many instances, where questions of "Was justice served?" during her tenure in the DA's office. Instances where the same sets of circumstances elicited two different outcomes? Prosecutions not moved forward? Justice weighted by the dollar?

As with any department in Del Norte County, staffing and budget limitations often play into the role justice occupies. What may or may not be a prosecutable case is the DA's prime responsibility. Transparency is quite often the victim when judging both what is prosecutable and the effectiveness of Del Norte County's District Attorney in making such a determination. Katherine Micks is no stranger to how the game is played. Yet, her decisions regularly leave a bad taste in one's mouth.

Now, DA Micks has chosen to remain in Del Norte County without her family and live in a Crescent City apartment all to remain the County's District Attorney. The microscope will now be brought out. Will she spend her time in Crescent City or become a token resident? Is she in line for a future job somewhere else while collecting her Del Norte County salary in the interim? Time will tell when the letter of resignation appears, and DA Micks moves on to greener pastures.

Like many of the county's employees, very few are in it for the long haul. Most have their ears to the call of a better set of circumstances. It shouldn't be a surprise when Katherine Micks decides to "jump ship" in the near future. Her explanations sound remarkably similar to those attempting to evade residency requirements of their respective offices while continuing to receive a paycheck and anticipating the prospect of an upward career move.

Moving on DA Micks, or staying put? The community is watching.