

The Marshall City Sun

Sunday, November 2, 2008 p. 3

On the Beat

With Amelia Peat

Local Judge Charged With DUI

Traffic Court Judge Chris Dunkirk will soon be on the other side of the bench after being arrested Friday night for drunk driving. Happy Halloween, judge.

Ironically, “Top DUI Cop” Pat Davis, no stranger to the traffic courts, was the officer putting the pinch on the young, politically-connected judge. It seems the judge’s car was parked in the middle of the street with the engine running and all the lights flashing. Judge Dunkirk and a pal were watching the football game between East Marshall High and West Marshall High, and forgot about the car. Not a good idea on Halloween. Tempts the little goblins!

The judge is not answering calls from this reporter. Our crack investigative staff obtained a copy of the breathalyzer test showing that Judge Dunkirk had over the legal limit while operating a motor vehicle. A neighbor reports that the judge was in pajamas and arguing with the police when the police tried to issue a parking ticket.

“It’s OK. I’m Judge Dunkirk!” the judge kept telling the officer.

Minutes later, Davis returned to the scene and saw the judge trying to move the car. That’s when the judge couldn’t walk the line or blow the blow. Perp time!

Judge Dunkirk has apparently come under scrutiny recently for what some lawyers have called, “erratic behavior.”

Last summer Dunkirk’s spouse sued for divorce, citing emotional cruelty. Recently a neighbor has repeatedly claimed that the judge’s dogs bark all night and tear up the neighbor’s back yard.

Act II of this comedy: Dunkirk is scheduled to be in traffic court as a defendant on December 8 at 9 AM.

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Tuesday, November 4, 2008 p. 3

DUI Judge Sent to Bullpen

Traffic Court Judge Chris Dunkirk, arrested on Halloween night for drunken driving, has been given “administrative duties” until after the charges are cleared up, according to the Chief Judge of the Thompson County Circuit Court.

“This assignment is temporary,” a spokesperson for the Chief Judge’s office said in yesterday’s press conference. “Judge Dunkirk is presumed innocent at this time, and the assignment will involve a great deal of important administrative work for the Circuit Court of Thompson County.”

Judge Dunkirk was unavailable for comment. The judge has already been in court earlier this year, in a nasty divorce case involving sensational allegations of spousal abuse and waste of marital assets. The divorce settlement files are under seal.

Judge Dunkirk, sole child of the late Charles “Busy, Busy” Dunkirk, longtime Republican Committeeman of Thompson County, was elected to the bench in 2006. The judge was only five years out of law school, and there were rumors that potential opponents were paid off to remove their names from the ballot. Judge Dunkirk ran unopposed in the primary, and coasted to an easy victory in the general election.

Dunkirk’s father picked up the nickname “Busy Busy” because that was the answer he usually gave when news reporters tried to interview him.

Judge Dunkirk is a 1997 graduate of South Park College in Moline, Illinois, and a received a law degree in 2001 from Marshall State University Law Center.

From 2001 until ascending to the bench, Dunkirk was an attorney in the law department of the Thompson County Water Management Administration.