

Now you know.

Style separates candidates for DA

BY HURST LAVIANA
The Wichita Eagle



Bennett O'Connor

The two Republican candidates for Sedgwick County district attorney presented themselves Friday as conservative, get-tough-on-crime career prosecutors who are pro-life and have capital murder convictions under their belts.

The biggest difference between the two may be their style.

At a meeting of the Wichita Pachyderm Club, Kevin O'Connor, a former deputy district attorney, presented

himself as a fiery, aggressive fighter who has gathered experience as a prosecutor on the federal, state and local levels. He promised a "review

from the bottom up" of the district attorney's office if elected.

Marc Bennett, a current deputy district attorney, presented himself as an experienced, level-headed administrator who is the most

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Who's running for county offices and judicial seats in Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey and Sumner counties.

qualified to manage an office with 120 employees and an \$8 million annual budget.

"I believe I am uniquely qualified for this position," he said.

Both candidates drew applause from Republicans at the meeting.

The two will face off in the

August Republican primary in a race to replace District Attorney Nola Foulston, a Democrat who is not seeking re-election.

They are the only candidates seeking the office.

O'Connor told the group gathered at the Petroleum Club in the Bank of America Building that he left the district attorney's office more than two years ago because of differences with Foulston.

If elected, he said, he will make sure that all crimes are prosecuted aggressively.

"We talk a lot about the

big crimes, but I think we need to go back to the quality of life issues like car break-ins," he said. "We have to make the penalty more severe for chronic criminals. We need to look at the crimes that affect you on a daily basis."

Bennett said he wondered why O'Connor, who billed himself as a fighter, quit his job rather than stay and fight for what he believed in. If elected, Bennett said, he will set the standard for all prosecutors.

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Missing El Dorado girl found in Michigan

■ Police hold 12-year-old, Canadian man she met on the Internet

BY SARAH TUCKER
The Wichita Eagle

Police found a 12-year-old El Dorado girl in Michigan on Friday afternoon, a day after she had left home with a man she met on the Internet.

The girl, who had been missing since Thursday morning, was found after police stopped Kenneth McGill in a rural area in Eaton County, west of Lansing. McGill, 20, of Ontario, Canada, was arrested and was being held by Michigan state police on Friday evening.

The girl also was being held by police and appeared physically unharmed, said Michigan State Police Lt. T.J. Riegler. The Amber Alert issued in Michigan has been canceled.

Riegler said he doesn't think they were headed for the Canadian border, but he doesn't know where they were going.

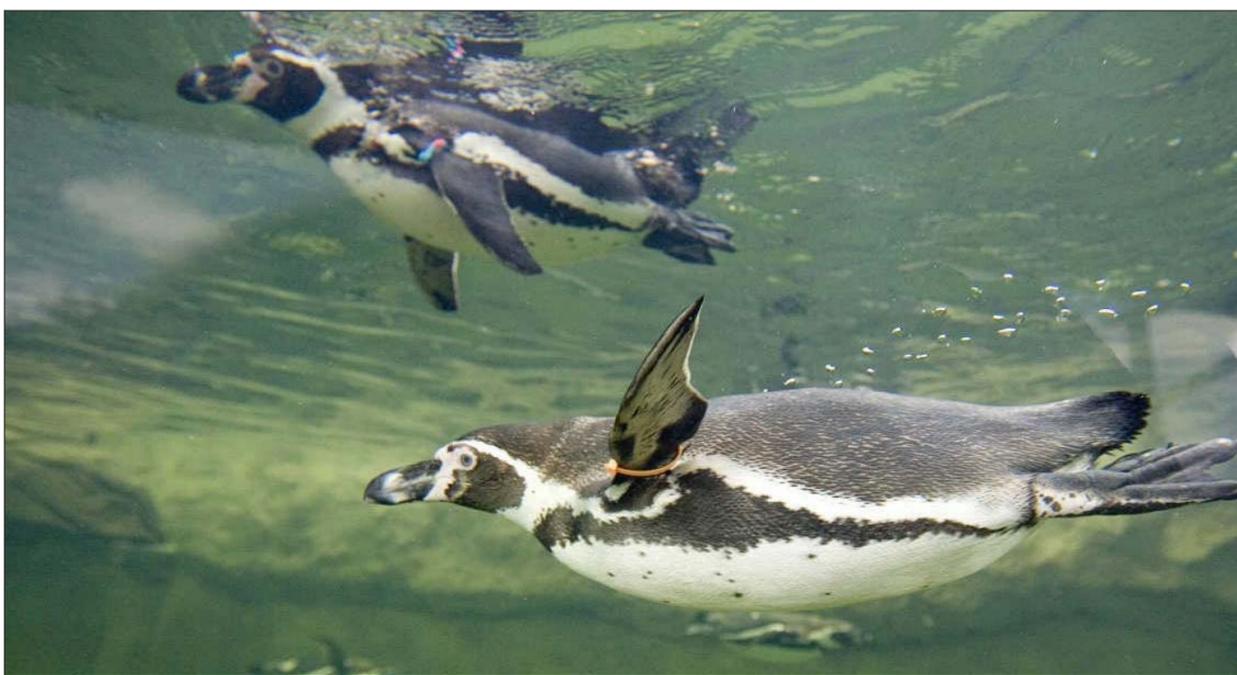
Police think the girl left home on her own to meet McGill, who had checked into an El Dorado motel early Thursday morning.

The car the two traveled in was spotted heading north on the Kansas Turnpike shortly before 8 a.m. Thursday and in south-central Michigan as of 3 p.m. Friday.

McGill was driving a white 2006 Chevrolet Impala with Canadian license plates that was previously reported stolen from his parents.

El Dorado Police Chief Tom Boren said earlier that the girl's parents told investigators they had last seen her about 2 a.m. Thursday. They reported her missing about 12 hours later.

Contributing: Associated Press



Travis Heying/File photo

Penguins are just one exhibit at the Sedgwick County Zoo. TripAdvisor, a travel website based in Newton, Mass., this week ranked Sedgwick County Zoo among the top 10 zoos in the country.

Zoo among U.S. 10 best

Travel site gives Sedgwick County Zoo high marks

BY RICK PLUMLEE
The Wichita Eagle

If you're looking for Travis and Katie Grover on a nice Saturday, you'll probably find them with their 2-year-old daughter,

Lillian, at the Sedgwick County Zoo. "Our daughter loves the elephants," Travis said. "Her room is plastered with animals, but she absolutely loves the elephants. The zoo is a great place."



Jaime Green/File photo

A Malayan tiger at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

Apparently, travelers from afar agree, according to TripAdvisor, a travel website

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TRIPADVISOR'S TOP 10 ZOOS

- Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium (Omaha)
- St. Louis Zoo
- Cape May County Park & Zoo (Cape May Court House, N.J.)
- Riverbanks Zoo & Botanical Garden (Columbia, S.C.)
- Memphis Zoo
- San Diego Zoo
- Sedgwick County Zoo
- Brevard Zoo (Melbourne, Fla.)
- Cheyenne Mountain Zoo (Colorado Springs, Colo.)
- Audubon Zoo (New Orleans)

Source: TripAdvisor, a travel website, rates the zoos based on reviews from travelers.

House Speaker O'Neal announces retirement

BY DION LEFLER
The Wichita Eagle



O'Neal

Kansas House Speaker Mike O'Neal, R-Hutchinson, announced Friday that he is leaving the Legislature and won't seek re-election to the office he's held for 28 years.

O'Neal made the announcement at the "sine die" ceremony in Topeka, which marks the end of the annual legisla-

tion session. O'Neal praised his House colleagues and the state for giving him the chance to serve in the most powerful position in the House - the second or third most powerful spot in

state government.

"The opportunities I've had here have been beyond my dreams," he said.

In this year's session, O'Neal has been the point man in the Legislature shepherding conservative tax policies and election reapportionment plans supported by Gov. Sam Brownback.

He has taken several controversial actions, including

passing into law a sweeping tax bill that the more moderate Senate had approved as a placeholder bill to open tax negotiations with the House.

He also blocked Senate-approved redistricting maps that would have favored moderate Republican Senate incumbents over potential conservative challengers. The action bucked decades of tradition of each house draw-

ing its own districts and has thrown the 10-year reapportionment of the state into a federal court, where O'Neal appeared as both lawyer and witness in hearings earlier this week.

O'Neal urged colleagues to be serious about the state's business, but "don't take yourselves too serious."

He indicated he plans to be active in state affairs in some

capacity. "Know that I plan to be close by," he said.

Late Friday, Gov. Sam Brownback issued a statement calling O'Neal "a great Kansas leader."

"As Speaker, O'Neal was passionate and principled, yet always willing to listen and consider new ideas," Brownback's statement said. "Speaker O'Neal will be greatly missed."

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