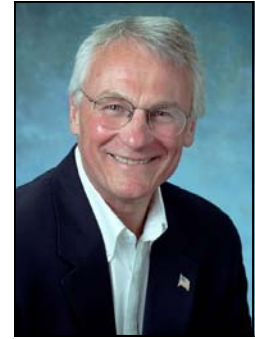


Attorney General candidate Mike Wheat visits the Tribes

By Alyssa Kelly



Mike Wheat

PABLO - Superior native, Mike Wheat, recently visited the Flathead Indian Reservation on his State General Attorney campaign trail to discuss various issues important to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Throughout his campaign, Wheat plans to assemble a meeting with the tribal councils of all seven reservations.

"My main purpose for visiting the tribes is to visit with their leaders and see what the American Indian communities of Montana find important," says Wheat. "I can always read about the tribes but I think it's important to personally hear from the people. It's the only way I could truly help. First I'm going to meet the tribes, then I'm going to build relationships and work with them."

The State Attorney General serves as the chief legal advisor to the state's government and chief law enforcement officers. In some circumstances, the State Attorney General also serves as head of the state's Department of Justice. Most recently, Democrat Mike McGrath served the maximum two terms.

Wheat is a third generation Montanan and a Vietnam War Veteran. Through both the University of Montana and Montana State University, Wheat earned his B.A. degree in political science, and a law degree. He has 29 years of experience providing legal service in both the public and private sectors.

The democratic candidate served in various political positions and says the experience will contribute to Montana's Department of Justice. Wheat began his career in law as a criminal prosecutor. In 2002, he was elected to the Montana State Senate where he says he's supported every bill proposed by State Senate District 8 representative Carol Juneau listed as important to the American Indian community. Juneau is from the Blackfeet Nation.

During Wheat's visit to the Flathead Reservation, he was very impressed with the Tribe's economic development and self-sufficiency, including CSKT's involvement in local law enforcement. He hopes to encourage the same for other reservations throughout Montana,

"I'm not going to be the guy to come in and say 'this is how you should handle these situations,'" says Wheat. "I want to bring various parties together for cooperation in law enforcement on and off the reservations. It's about government-to-government decisions and I'll be the one to assist that. I would like to assist all the reservations in creating a tribal law enforcement that establishes a level of confidence if that's what they desire."

If elected, Wheat plans to bring the current procedure for handling tribal issues in the state's Attorney General Office to new level. Rather than appointing an individual to accommodate to the tribes, he plans to create an entire division. "It might not seem like a lot but I think it would make a stand that we find American Indian issues important," he says.

For more information on Mike Wheat you can visit his website at: www.wheatforag.com or call 570-0097.