

Editorial: Keep Pierini as Douglas County sheriff



Ron Pierini

Publisher's note: *This is a version of the Douglas County sheriff's endorsement that ran before the June primary.*

On Nov. 4 Douglas County voters will have the opportunity to vote to retain the current sheriff or replace him with someone from the outside.

Dave Brady contends morale is not great within the department and a change in leadership is needed. If this were true, then we wonder why the Douglas County Sheriff's Protective Association endorsed Sheriff Ron Pierini. The bargaining unit represents deputies, investigators and sergeants in the Douglas County Sheriff's Office.

We concur with the bulk of the department's employees that Pierini should continue to be sheriff, a position he was first elected to in 1997. He started with the department in 1976 – having been a captain in Tahoe, undersheriff and now sheriff.

Brady had been a reserve deputy for the department before he declared his candidacy.

While it's not always in the best interest of a department to keep the status quo or to hire within, we also don't believe

in the need to change leadership for the sake of change.

Pierini has proven he is capable of weathering many storms. We believe he will continue to do so for the next four years. The sheriff's department's budget has been cut by \$2 million and 10 positions have been eliminated in the past few years. Despite the cutbacks, the department's arrest to prosecution rate is 38 percent. Nationwide the average is 22 percent.

He was at the helm when 9-year-old Krystal Steadman was kidnapped and killed in 2000 in Stateline. In 1980, he was a captain at the Tahoe substation when Harveys was bombed. While we don't wish crimes like that to occur, it is reassuring to know someone with that breadth of experience will be directing the troops to find the bad guys.

By the nature of the job Pierini spends the bulk of his time in the valley. But he has a connection to Lake Tahoe that the other candidate doesn't. This is another driving reason to keep Pierini in office. He works well with the other leaders at the lake – whether it is peers in other law enforcement agencies, fire personnel, casino executives or other business people.

Brady's financial background is intriguing and something often not seen in the ranks of law enforcement. But already the voters of Douglas County ousted him out of office when he was a commissioner.

We need a sheriff who can reach across the aisle. We need someone who is capable of making tough decisions. We need someone who is a leader in his department as well as the community.

That person is Ron Pierini.