

Letter: Time for DCSO Leadership change

To the community,

Sheriff [Ron] Pierini's campaign cheerleaders have been working hard to broadcast the mantra that the Douglas County Sheriff's Department isn't broken and doesn't need fixing. They wouldn't have to work so hard if the sheriff would just answer a couple of simple questions:

How come your department's budget went up fivefold in 28 years – from \$3 million to over \$16 million – yet you field the same number of patrol cars now as then? Before you answer, recall that in May 2013 you confirmed that DCSO currently fields five area cars, plus a supervisor, the same as in 1986, even though the county population has doubled.

How do you justify the \$192,460 your salary and benefits costs the county taxpayers when you have failed to proactively plan for completely predictable law enforcement challenges in our community?

The answer is that Sheriff Pierini doesn't have a good answer for either of these questions or any of the other issues the Brady for Sheriff campaign has raised. The incumbent would rather hide behind an ever-growing forest of political signs and hope to coast to re-election.

Both of these questions took on fresh relevance recently when, just two months into a new budget cycle, the sheriff placed an order for a brand new \$245,000 patrol boat (to be custom made in Canada) and discovered that he'd failed to set aside the full cost of this long known about expense in his \$16 million budget. So he sent his undersheriff to the Douglas County Commission a couple of weeks ago to clip the taxpayers for his \$100,000 shortfall. This type of amateur slip-up is

particularly ironic coming from this sheriff, who claims fiscal discipline is one of his strong points.

The escalation of gang activity and the hard drug trade may not be an issue for the majority of county voters yet, but street patrol resources – the tip of the street crime spear – are dangerously inadequate to address these growing problems.

The sheriff's campaign's response to all this has been to acknowledge that while Dave Brady's law enforcement experience is extensive, it's less than what the incumbent has. That misses the point: in spite of the incumbent sheriff's experience, Douglas County's law enforcement operations are not being properly managed and our taxpayer money is funding a budget that's out of control.

Dave Brady has a master's in public administration, a typical education requirement for the chief law enforcement officer for a department the size of DCSO. More importantly he has the financial training and experience to manage a large budget, the public sector experience to create and execute a proactive plan to meet upcoming law enforcement challenges, and the leadership skills to efficiently utilize the human resources within DCSO.

Lynn Muzzy, Minden