

## IN MY OPINION

Caroline Porter

# Steve Buck has earned his job

About 18 years ago Knox County Clerk Steve Buck was in the same position as Maytag employees — he lost his job of 22 years because Outboard Marine Corporation pulled out of town. A few years later, Buck landed in the county clerk's office, managing the office's critical election division. In July of 2001, he was appointed Knox County Clerk to replace Sally Blodgett, who retired.

Having worked in the county clerk's office full time for 13 months and part time for several years, I can attest to the myriad of transactions conducted in that office which are central to county government. In that amount of time, I didn't come close to learning how to handle many of the assignments that Steve and his competent staff handle every day.

Buck has continued to modernize office procedures and records begun during Blodgett's regime and within months of his appointment, was planning the first courthouse website to further make accessible to the public the huge amount of information emanating from that office. In 1998, Buck began to post election results on the internet and the first primary election results received 30,000 hits. The internet information is used by voters and news media all over the state.

With the upcoming election on Tuesday, November 5, Buck is being challenged by Marc Wong, who says it's time for a "change." In his campaign, Wong suggests the county clerk's office should have a website, when in fact there already was one. While Wong talked about involving young people in the process, Buck was traveling to area high schools to register voters. Wong, who already has a job, is politically ambitious and is cutting his political teeth with this campaign. We can't blame him for that, but there is too much at stake.

We have to ask ourselves, "Why would we fire the manager of a complicated, smooth-running and successful office?" It makes no sense.

Steve Buck, who is a husband, father and grandfather, deserves and is committed to continue in the job of Knox County Clerk.

Behind the scenes of the race for county treasurer is a situation I heard about secondhand and Democrat candidate Robin Davis has verified it, but would not give me permission to write about the report. I believe the incidents are so important in this election I'm going to discuss it anyway, with apologies to Robin. Davis has received several harassing phone calls



at her place of work from her opponent, Republican Ernie Miller. One phone call consisted of his yelling obscenities at her. The second call came after a letter to the editor was published supporting Davis. Miller called her at work again and asked, "Would you please call off your subjects?" Folks, this is very abusive behavior. Here is a man who already has a shaky reputation for his work place relationships with women, who is now confirming his continued lack of respect.

All of the employees of the treasurer's office are women. The election of Ernie Miller could create a hostile and upsetting atmosphere for them. It's time we stopped condoning this kind of behavior in the workplace. Davis was actually afraid to publicize her experiences because she needs her job and was afraid no one would believe her. Well, I do and I take full responsibility for challenging Miller's actions.

Democrat Robin Davis is a college graduate with degrees in Business Finance and Agricultural Business. She is a deputy county treasurer and already has the daily responsibility of overseeing a portfolio worth millions of dollars. She has demonstrated her concern for the office employees by working for their representation by the AFSCME union and has been endorsed by AFSCME Council 31. She also deserves your vote.

*Caroline Porter is a freelance writer from Galesburg who can be reached at [cporter@galesburg.net](mailto:cporter@galesburg.net). She also serves as chairperson of the Knox County Democratic Central Committee.*