
October 3, 2010

Perdue looks for respect

By [Phil Kabler](#)

TREASURER John Perdue stopped by to chat last week, primarily to talk about why the media is treating him as the Rodney Dangerfield of the circa 2011/2012 gubernatorial candidates.

(True, Perdue's announcement in July that he was running for governor generated practically zero news coverage.)

Perdue made a couple of good points during our discussion.

He said he probably has more experience for the office than the other hopefuls, having served as executive assistant and legislative liaison during the duration of Gov. Gaston Caperton's terms of office.

He pointed out that, when Caperton took office in 1989, the state was essentially flat broke, unable to pay its bills, and with doctors refusing to accept PEIA cards.

Perdue noted that many of the fiscal policies that now have allowed Gov. Joe Manchin to brag about how West Virginia is one of the few states in the nation not operating in the red, were put into place by the Caperton administration.

(Perdue said he remembers Caperton staring out of his Capitol office window about five days after taking office, saying, "Can you believe I paid three and a half million dollars for this job?")

To be sure, I was a rookie reporter back in those days, but if Perdue showed up in the back of a committee room, you could be certain that Caperton's legislation was about to get rolling.

Perdue said his other advantage over other gubernatorial hopefuls is that he has statewide name recognition, having run for and won election to statewide office four times.

*nn

I told Perdue the media would probably start taking his candidacy more seriously as soon as he starts raising some serious money.

To that end, Perdue's first fundraiser was Thursday, at the palatial home of Charleston lawyer Scott Segal, husband of state Supreme Court Justice Robin Davis.

Some of the notables in attendance, I'm told, included Tim Bailey, Jim Humphreys, John Cain, Nikki Barone, Patty Pope, John Poffenberger, and former state Democratic chairman Steve White and Chuck Smith, who was introduced as the campaign manager.

Perdue reportedly raised \$153,000, which would be a good start toward respectability as a gubernatorial candidate.

*nn

Speaking of fiscal responsibility, it's worthwhile to note that Manchin was one of only four governors (and the only Democrat) to receive an "A" in the Cato Institute's 2010 Fiscal Policy Report Card.

The report credits Manchin for cuts in the corporate net income tax, business franchise and

business property taxes, as well as the sales tax on groceries, while noting that the current general revenue budget has grown only 9 percent over what the state budget was when Manchin took office in 2005.

"Joe Manchin has been a popular governor for good reason," the report states. "The West Virginia economy has done well under his fiscal policies of business tax cuts and fairly frugal budgeting."

•nn

It never fails that every election cycle, lawyers for one candidate or another will make a big to-do about issuing cease-and-desist letters to broadcasters, demanding that they stop airing an opponent's supposedly defamatory campaign ad.

Of course, under section 315 of the federal Communications Act, if the recognizable voice or likeness of a candidate appears in the ad (a given for candidates for federal offices, since federal election law requires that they appear and state that they approve of the ad...) the stations are bound by the no-censorship rule.

That forbids any station from altering or removing from broadcast any candidate's ad for any reason - even if the spot contains inaccuracies, misrepresentations, or uses copyrighted material without authorization.

Not only can stations not censor candidates' campaign ads, but they risk losing their FCC licenses if they do.

•nn

It didn't mean much at the time, but back in December, former Gazette copy editor Paul Wallace sent along a clipping from the social notes section of The Palm Beach Post, his current employer, regarding a fund-raiser for The King's Academy, which he said is a swanky private school in West Palm Beach:

"An underwriting party for the annual dinner and auction raised more than \$90,000. The party was hosted by John and Liz Raese, parents of students at the school. The dinner and auction will be March 6 at the PGA National Resort and Spa."

(If the pre-fundraiser party raised \$90,000, I wonder what the actual fundraiser raised?)

Speaking of, Raese flew down to Palm Beach on his corporate jet on Thursday, his first visit since Labor Day weekend, and as of press time Friday had not made a return trip.

•nn

Finally, when House Speaker (and gubernatorial hopeful) Rick Thompson, D-Wayne, learned of Perdue's press room visit, he did one better: Not only did he make a personal appearance in the press room Friday, but he brought slices of his birthday cake. (Thompson turned 58 on Saturday.)

Reach Phil Kabler at ph...@wvgazette.com or 304-348-1220.