

Hang 'em high: Judge Biddle hits a low point

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Last week an attempt was made to bring former Judge Grafton Biddle before the bench for disciplinary action regarding his steamy sex escapades with a county prosecutor. He was a no-show.

I consider his impending disbarment a milestone, although YourHub doesn't have a category for such things. Too bad.

It seems that the local press has tired of writing about him, and moved on to other things. One last tribute to the right honorable Judge Biddle is in order before court adjourns.

Now, Biddle would only be fleeting entertainment for the masses if the circumstances surrounding his case, or shall we call it affair, were not so salacious. Not only was the guy porking the prosecutor while he was presiding over cases, he has quite a rap sheet. Married 1,2,3,4....who's counting now, an alcoholic, member of a band and ex-Marine makes him something of a man for all occasions.

I've had my own encounters with good old Judge Biddle. In this World where litigation lurks around every corner I had to appear before him on a civil matter. Being the respectful guy that I am, I wore a coat and tie.

That fateful day I am standing outside the courtroom, trembling, when this guy in jogging shorts and a sweaty Marine Corp T-shirt came prancing down the hall. Ten seconds later he transforms onto the bench in his robe with the jogging clothes under-neath.

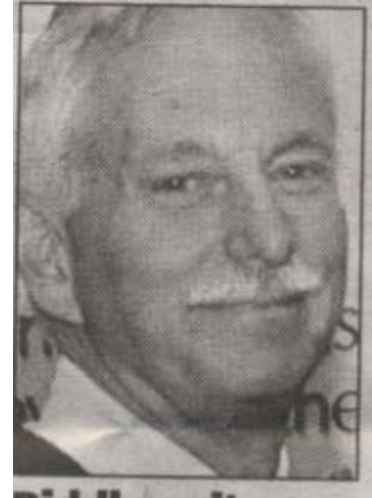
Now, like most ex-Marine officers he cannot conceal his disdain for the unfit, a category I admit to fit. You can tell it when the guy looks you up one side and down the other and grimaces.

But, maybe it was just because I was overdressed and he thought I was trying to use it as a ploy.

At any rate, Judge Biddle performed admirably that day, soliciting information in little sound bites where "yes" or "no" answers allows him to get to the quick of things efficiently, cross examination style.

Now, I am always intrigued by people in positions of authority. The judge who decides your fate, the employer who gives you an annual review, the military officer who inspects you while you are standing at attention in ranks; there seems to be no shortage of ego-maniacs who aspire to sit in judgment of their fellow man.

They are everywhere, lording over us, putting us in our place, and enforcing the rules of class distinction so that we commoners know our untouchable station in life. They almost always wear a uniform that is black, starched and pressed and exudes authority.



Former Judge Grafton Biddle, a man for all occasions

It is only when you see them, wearing tennis shoes and a polyester jogging suit at the shopping mall after they retire that you realize the guy was just a human and not God.

Judge Biddle will be disbarred, you can count on it. He has failed to appear before the "Bench".

He surely would have issued a bench arrest warrant for any one of the rest of us for being in contempt and not appearing before him. He now handles things by email and has suggested that a six month probation and suspense would be the appropriate sentence.

He is in denial and will never own the immensity of what he has done, typical of addicts, not yet recovered.

Now, there are a couple of things you don't do in this world. First, don't kill a cop. They will track you down if it takes a lifetime. Second, don't tarnish the hard-won image of the legal profession whose state of grace with the public is tenuous at best anyway.

It just animates the guys who want term limits for judges. Bringing shame on the high bench is frowned upon.

The oversexed Miss Muffet prosecutor who was slapped on the behind and told never to do it again (with a wink, I am sure) is off the hook for now, but not Biddle. His crime is tantamount to original sin and his fraternity brothers will allow him to walk the plank and he knows it.

So why should he even try to mount a defense? The only thing more ironic would be if the guy carrying out the execution was Judge Nottingham and Joe Nacchio was in the audience.

I suspect that when it is all done, Grafton Biddle, soon to be a civilian, will move to some sunny state and enter retirement. He is in his late 50s and has been in the system for enough years that I am guessing he has a full retirement coming and will not hurt financially.

His last wife gave him the boot, but he obviously still secretes enough testosterone to put us all to shame. By the time his motorhome hits Laughlin when he auditions for a new band by performing the Last Tango in Castle Rock, he'll be sure to find another Miss Daisy 25 years his junior, and you can bet this one will be his "soul mate".

The good citizens of Douglas County will pick up the debris from the tornado he caused and we will go on interfacing with the judicial system with new faces and personalities.

But the guys sitting in jail wondering whether his tongue slithering down the unbuttoned blouse of that prosecutor might have sealed their fate with a conviction they didn't expect might not be as quick to forget.

Tell me, was he whispering sweet nothings in her ear while she was whispering that she needed a few notches on her gun to get her career advanced? We will just never know. Soon, it will all be a distant memory like the shooting of the hole in the ceiling at the B & B Cafe.

After all, it's justice in Castle Rock at high noon, Douglas County-style.