



From the May 27, 2020 Rio Grande SUN:

Regardless of who voters want to be the new district attorney, almost everyone agrees the office is in turmoil, operating poorly and insiders say it feels rudderless. Both candidates in the race are a vast improvement over our current situation. In speaking with both candidates we focused on management, leadership, training and operations. We felt asking questions about treatment versus jail, repeat DWI offenders and fair treatment of indigents and homeless is pretty pointless if you can't get the cases filed, progressed through courts and actually get in front of a judge.

Mary Carmack-Altwies works in the office now and heads the special victim and violent crimes divisions. She sees the worst of the worst. She has a solid common-sense approach to operating her departments and while she never said it, in listening to her it sounds like she's working with at least a wrist behind her back.

Scott Fuqua was born in Portales and went to high school and college in New Mexico. He earned his law degree at the University of Chicago and still has the student loans to prove it. He got in the money working for a Dallas law firm but New Mexico called him back. He joined the Attorney General's Office under Gary King. Let's not hold King against him and look at his work while he was there for four years. What voters should focus on is time as director of the litigation division. He lead about 20 lawyers through what needs to be done daily in the District Attorney's office. In that capacity he argued about 40 cases in front of the New Mexico Supreme Court. He's litigated many cases, to include at the state's highest level.

Carmack-Altwies and Fuqua both want to run the DA's office in similar manners. Through the past half dozen district attorneys we've heard myriad ways of dividing the work load. It doesn't matter how the work and cases are divided. What matters is if there is a manager to lead, train and encourage low-paid lawyers, many with minimal experience, to get the cases over the finish line. Fuqua can do that. We believe he'll work with local law enforcement to bring better investigated and documented cases to the Office and through the bloated court system.

We must also admit to some bias. Fuqua loves to fight open records cases and has won some good ones locally. Anyone who will fight for a citizen who feels they weren't treated right by their government is truly someone working for "the people." **Vote for Scott Fuqua for district attorney.**