

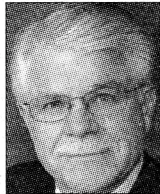
District Judge Scott Crichton launches Web site

By JOHN E. SETTLE JR.

In today's computer-driven information world, Web sites have become almost as common as phone book ads. Most learned professions have endorsed Web site marketing. One need look no further than Obama's successful presidential campaign for the new standard in computer political races.

Caddo District Judge Scott Crichton has recently launched his own Web site — judgescottcrichton.com — which sets a high standard for any members of the judiciary who want to go on the Internet. Crichton's tagline, "administering justice all day, every day," is descriptive of one of the area's hardest-working jurists.

The Web site has a total of nine pages with drop-down menus; in addition to the home page, one can view Court, Rulings, Biography, Ethics, Docket, Seminars, Community and From the Bench pages.



The Web site also has over 10 podcasts that may be viewed and a video gallery as well.

The home page, which touts that it is "the first of its kind for district judges," sets forth three primary information purposes. The first is to provide litigants, lawyers and the public with basic information about Caddo District Court, emphasizing procedural rules and the basics of which judges expect.

The second is to outline Crichton's professional background as a Caddo assistant district attorney and a lawyer in private civil practice.

Lastly, the Web site shares the crime prevention PowerPoint program "Don't Let This Be You," which Crichton created.

This Web site is sophisticated, yet easy to use and practical in design. It contains numerous photos of His Honor on

the various pages, along with a photo gallery. Unfortunately, his "winter" beard and famous "cowboy boots under the black robe" are not displayed.

By no means is the Web site a fill-in-the-blank template done on the cheap. The production of this classy "first of its kind" Web site for a district judge invokes several questions. Judge Crichton advises that costs of the Web site were paid from budgeted parish funds. He also says the Web page is educational, not political.

Crichton's name had been bantered about for years as a candidate for Caddo District Attorney; his announcement that he would not seek office last summer shocked political observers. Crichton has not denied any future political aspirations, and the Web page apparently confirms his thoughts of additional public service after the end of his Caddo judgeship.

Crichton could be positioning himself to run for the Louisiana Second Circuit

Court of Appeal — or maybe the Louisiana Supreme Court. There is speculation that former Bossier-Webster District Judge Harmon Drew, who now sits on the Second Circuit bench, may not seek reelection. (Judge Drew's wife, Jean, who is a Second Circuit staff attorney, has adamantly denied such rumors.)

Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Jeff Victory has been on the Supreme Court since 1995, and his second 10-year term ends in 2015. Victory has had some health issues, and there has been speculation that he might step down before his term ends.

How well Crichton gets out the word on his Web site is critical to his success. For those that know him, it's safe to assume that he will be leaving the Caddo bench in the foreseeable future — either for private practice or another judgeship. A good guess is that Crichton will want to continue wearing the black robe and his boots, but in a different venue.