



GOP attorney general primary worth your attention

APG-ECM Editorial Board

Early voting has already begun for the Aug. 9 primary. This year, with 45 primaries for legislative seats being contested – many of them in districts where the general election outcome is all but decided – voters will have plenty of reasons to go to the polls.

All four races for state executive offices: governor, secretary of state, state auditor and attorney general are expected to be competitive in the general election, but not so much in the primary – with one exception: the Republican attorney general primary.

Voters in the that primary will be choosing between this year's GOP endorsed candidate, Jim Schultz, and its 2018 nominee, Doug Wardlow. As in most primaries, the candidates agree on many issues, so the contest may well be decided on matters of style and character. Both candidates are pro-life, a prerequisite for all Republican endorsees these days; and they are concerned about election fraud and consumer protection. However, public safety is the primary focus of both campaigns. Notably, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association has endorsed Schultz.

Schultz, age 36, is a newcomer to politics. He grew up in South Haven in Wright County, received his bachelor's degree from the University of St. Thomas and then graduated from the Harvard University School of Law, where he received the Dean's Scholar Prize in constitutional law.

He has worked for a couple of Twin Cities law firms, specializing in regulatory, business and compliance law. His campaign web site lists several topics of concern, but few details as to what he

would do if elected. Schultz has been critical of incumbent Attorney General Keith Ellison, a DFLer, for enforcing COVID-19 regulations against small businesses and churches while allowing big box stores to stay open. He is opposed to vaccination mandates, teaching critical race theory in schools and allowing transgender biological males to compete in women's sports. At the state convention, he said, "A few elites – whether it be Keith Ellison or (Gov.) Tim Walz or (President) Joe Biden, the corrupt corporate media or big tech – are shoving down our throats a militant far-left secularism antithetical to what America is."

Schultz was called out by the DFL for saying Ellison is wasting tax dollars for "overstaffing county prosecutors," after previously calling for an increase in funding for the Criminal Division of the Attorney General's office.

Wardlow, age 44, was born in Eagan and lives in Prior Lake. He received both his bachelor's degree magna cum laude and his law degree from Georgetown. His undergraduate degree was in political theory with a minor in mandarin Chinese. He has studied Chinese law, and at one point was a law clerk in Taipei, Taiwan.

He was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives in 2010, but was defeated for re-election. In that one term, he unsuccessfully pushed for a "right to work" law that would ban unions from forcing employees to become dues-paying members. He worked for the conservative Alliance Defending Freedom before running for attorney general in 2018. During the years prior to running, he came

out against same-sex marriage and at a school board meeting, said that transgender students should not be allowed to use restrooms or locker rooms based on their gender identities. He lost by more than 99,000 votes to Ellison in 2018.

In 2020, he became general counsel for My Pillow, whose founder Mike Lindell has been a major promoter of unproven allegations that the 2020 election was stolen, and Wardlow also served on a team that advised Lindell on a possible run for governor. A third of the electorate, mostly Republicans, still believes that the election was stolen, so improving election integrity will be an issue this fall.

Wardlow's web site offers areas of concern similar to Schultz's, but has more details regarding crime fighting and election fraud. He would create specialized units for pros-

ecuting violent crime and human trafficking. He would also create an election integrity unit and ensure that all local government units and the Secretary of State's office administer elections in accordance with the law.

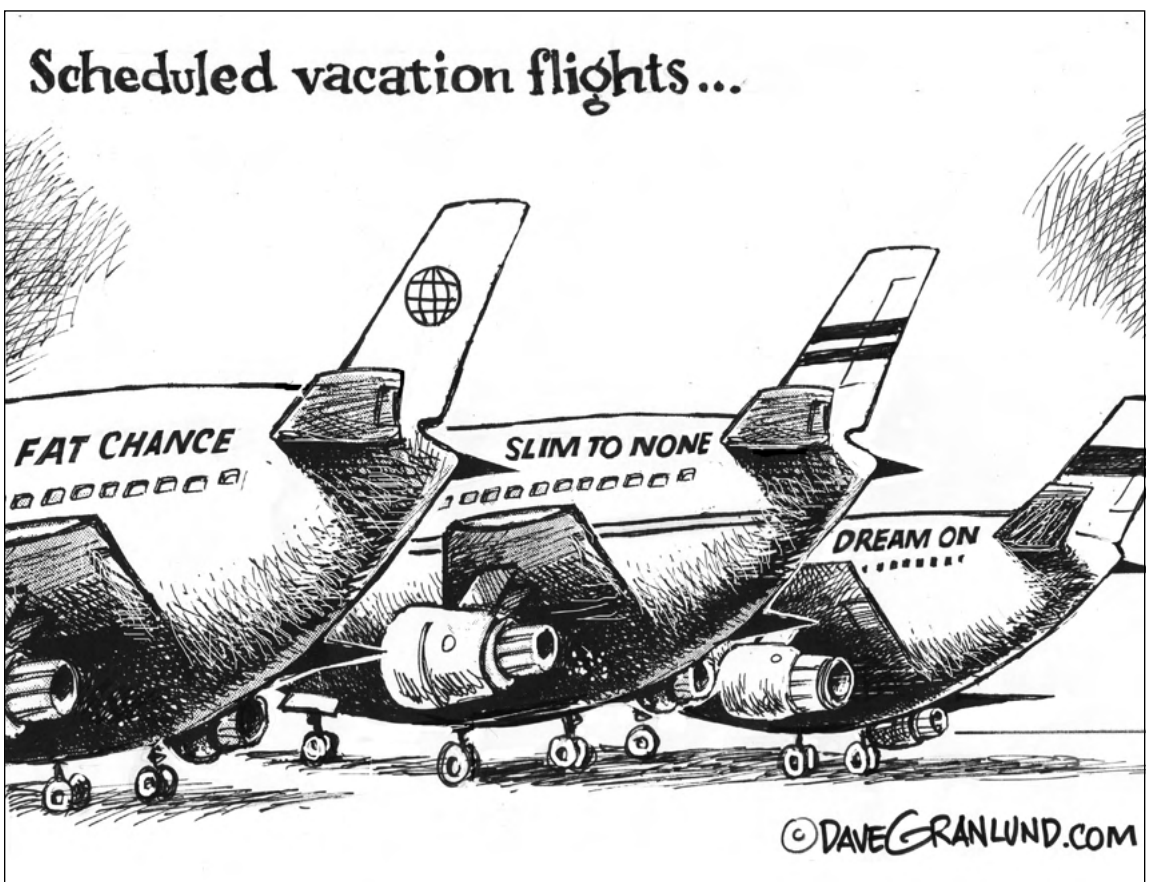
The biggest difference between Schultz and Wardlow is that Wardlow has committed a few ethical breaches. Early in his career, he was a law clerk for Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Barry Anderson, but simultaneously ran a conservative blog commenting on political issues, undermining the non-partisan nature of the state's judiciary. During the 2018 campaign, he exceeded campaign spending limits and was fined \$46,000 by the Minnesota Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board.

Perhaps the most notable concern, at least to Republicans, is that Wardlow prom-

ised the state GOP Nominations Committee that he would abide by the endorsement process, then reneged after Schultz won. Wardlow said in making the decision to enter the primary, "We should not tolerate politicians who lie and rig the game in order to subvert the people's will," but offered no further details. That probably doesn't sit well with the delegates to the state Republican convention who endorsed Schultz.

Although early voting has already begun, GOP voters need to pay close attention to this race. Republicans haven't won a statewide race in 16 years and an attorney general's campaign in 56 years.

This is an opinion of the APG/ECM Editorial Board. The Forest Lake Times is a newspaper of APG-ECM. Reactions are welcome – send to: editorial.board@apgecm.com.



Copyright 2022

Hannah Davis | News Editor | Hannah.Davis@apgecm.com | 763-233-0709
 Natalie Ryder | Staff Writer | Natalie.Ryder@apgecm.com | 763-233-0710
 Aaron Heckmann | Staff Writer | Aaron.Heckmann@apgecm.com | 763-233-0706
 All Classified Ads | class.ecm-inc.com | 763-241-3560
 Subscriptions | servicecenter@apgecm.com | 763-712-3544

Lori Ann Kofstad | Multimedia Account Executive | LoriAnn.Kofstad@apgecm.com | 763-233-0711
 Lorri Klajda | Multimedia Account Executive | Lorri.Klajda@apgecm.com | 763-233-0713
 Jerry Gloe | Advertising Director | Jerry.Gloe@apgecm.com | 763-712-3533
 Keith Anderson | Director of News | keith.anderson@apgecm.com | 952-392-6847
 Jeremy Bradfield | APG Regional President | jeremy.bradfield@apgecm.com | 952-392-6807

Forest Lake Times (USPS 205080) published weekly by Adams Publishing Group, 20 N. Lake St, STE 312, Forest Lake, MN 55025-2109. Periodicals postage paid at Forest Lake MN. SUBSCRIPTION TERMS: An EZ-Pay (Auto-Renew) subscription is considered a CONTINUOUS SUBSCRIPTION, which means it will automatically renew at the end of the initial term. Notice of cancellation must be provided before the end of this SUBSCRIPTION TERM to avoid charges for an additional term. Future SUBSCRIPTION TERM prices and publication days are subject to change. This subscription grants you a FULLY PREPAID, NON-REFUNDABLE license to receive and access the subscription materials for the duration of the subscription term. PRE-PAYMENT: If you choose the convenience of prepay, price changes, premiums and/or surcharges during the pre-payment term may apply. This could reduce or extend the pre-payment term. We reserve the right to issue refunds or credits at our sole discretion. If we issue a refund or credit, we are under no obligation to issue the same or similar refund or credit in the future. All subscriptions will automatically include up to 6 premium content editions. There will be a charge for these premium editions, which will shorten the length of your subscription. The publisher reserves the right to change subscription rates during the term of any subscription. A Maintenance fee may be added to subscriptions to accommodate for increased business expenses during the year. Log on to <https://www.hometownsource.com> for a complete list of subscription terms. Postmaster: Send address changes to Forest Lake Times, 4095 Coon Rapids Blvd., Coon Rapids, MN 55433.

