



Charles Brown

Photo by Andy Gumberg

## Brown wants second area judge

By KIM EATON  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer  
Charles C. Brown, Republican candidate for Centre County Common Pleas Court judge, said that in the future, Centre County will need a second judge. "The increase in the number of cases, both criminal and civil, points toward the need for a second judge," Brown said in an interview. Brown said that the second judgeship is not necessarily needed at this time, but that now is the time to start "the necessary political machinery" moving. "There are presently no backlogs in Centre County," Brown said. "But the County Commissioners can't just snap their fingers and get a second judge." Brown said that even if it were necessary for a second judge, it could be 1979 or 1980 before the judgeship were authorized. "Perhaps it would be expedient to be a part of proposed legislation now," Brown said, "so that the wheels of government will be turning when we need that second judge." Brown said that he had much experience as district attorney for the past 12 years. "I have been in the courthouse on

almost a daily basis and have kept current with the practices and procedures in Centre County's courthouse," Brown said. Brown said that as DA he was responsible for administering and keeping current a court calendar of almost 6,000 felonies and misdemeanors. Brown said he has only practiced law half as long as his opponent, Democrat Richard Sharp and through his job as District Attorney his legal experience has been intensified. "I have the experience in both criminal and civil law equal to my opponents in one half the time," Brown said. "My 12 years of experience as DA is a wealth of experience unique to my candidacy," he said. Brown said that he favors the death penalty. "Although the effectiveness of it (the death penalty) as a deterrent is constantly debated, I believe that capital punishment is indeed a deterrent," he said. Brown said that there are documented cases where criminals do not take weapons with them for fear that if

someone gets killed, they could receive the death penalty. "The public deserves the protection that the death penalty can give it," Brown said. Brown also said plea bargaining is a "necessary evil." "Plea bargaining is appropriate when it advances the cause of criminal justice," he said, "and not when it is used to relieve the duties of the district attorney, public defender, or any other defense council." Brown said that plea bargaining can be useful from both the defendant's and public's standpoint. Brown said that if he is elected, he will sever all ties with his private practice, his former clients, and also with the DA's office. "It is something that absolutely must be done," he said. Brown said that he sees the courtroom as a dynamic institution — one that is constantly changing. "I am at an age where I've had the necessary experience, yet retained the vitality and involvement to be a leader in the courtroom," he said. Brown said that he has spent \$10,000 to \$12,000 on his fall campaign.



Richard Sharp

Photo by Richard Hoffman

## Sharp favors the death penalty

By CHUCK SHEARER  
Daily Collegian Staff Writer  
Richard Sharp, Democratic candidate for Centre County judge, said while he favors making jail sentencing mandatory, he does not favor mandatory death sentences for specific crimes. Sharp said he agrees with the Supreme Court ruling which said society has the right to demand a life for the protection of the people in that society. Sharp said, however, that the death penalty is too strong a punishment to make mandatory for any one crime. "The death penalty is too severe to rubber stamp on certain crimes," he said. "The judge should be able to evaluate any extenuating circumstances," Sharp said. He said "parole is more than just a waiting period for prisoners before being totally free of the prison system. "Parole is the time for a prisoner to prove himself in society," Sharp said. He said he would give stiff sentences to parole violators. One of the major problems with parole, Sharp said, is the lack of parole officers in the county. "The National Association of Parole Officers says the average case load for a parole officer should be 30 to 35 cases. In Centre County the number is 60 to 65 per parole officer," Sharp said. The county

cannot afford to hire more officers, he said, so the officers have to do the best job they can in spite of the work load. Sharp also said the county has a shortage of judges. "As the county grows, he said, "there is also a need for more judicial growth." Judge Campbell sat before 850 cases last year, Sharp said. The Supreme Court Administration Office said the average trial judge in Pennsylvania sat before an average of 285 cases last year, he said. "We can safely estimate," Sharp said, "that Judge Campbell worked two-and-a-half times more than the average Pennsylvania judge." He said the Supreme Court Administration Office recommended that Centre County be given top priority for getting a new judge. The state legislature killed a bill that would have given the county a new judge last year, Sharp said. The bill was killed because other legislators tagged amendments on it giving their own districts new judges along with Centre County, he said. There is no question that Centre County needs a new judge, Sharp said, the question is will the legislators give one when it is needed. Sharp stressed, however, that he could handle the current caseload.

Sharp said he is glad that the law is now written so judges can give first time marijuana offenders a second opportunity. He said he would like to see the legislature remove the misdemeanor convictions of the people prosecuted under the old drug law. "Many of these people have proven themselves to be good citizens and should not have criminal offense on their record," Sharp said. He said he would like to see a uniform drug law that would eliminate the conflicts between the different state laws. "It is ridiculous that a person would receive a felony conviction for having marijuana in Texas and only receive a misdemeanor conviction in Pennsylvania," Sharp said. "A judge can not be a political creature so a judge's race should not be a political contest," Sharp said. The canons of judicial ethics have set up guidelines which do not allow candidates for judge to use sensational advertisements or to run in tandem with other candidates, he said. "It's impossible, however, to run a campaign without money," Sharp said. He said his campaign will cost approximately \$10,000, 90 per cent of which will come out of his own pocket.

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