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# GOP Gathers For Annual Lincoln Day Banquet

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GOP Gathers For Annual Lincoln Day Banquet

*By Annabeth Miller,  
ShowMe Times*

The Stoddard County GOP opened its doors Saturday evening, and a host of candidates running for office rush in.

The annual Stoddard County Lincoln Day Banquet was held at the Dexter Elks Lodge Friday, and candidates and their campaigns kept a steady stream of speaker at the platform. With an election year with an abundant crop of new candidates seeking statewide office, it appeared at times that the stream of speakers was never-ending.

Stoddard County Republican Party Chairman Wayne Jean was the host for the evening, and his job for the banquet was to be gatekeeper, host and timekeeper. More than 20 candidates were on hand hoping to speak to the crowd of county Republicans.

By coincidence, Scott County Republicans were holding their own Lincoln Day event, so many of the statewide campaigns were shifts candidates from Scott to Stoddard and visa-versa. More than 300 were on hand at the Elks Lodge on Two Mile Road in Dexter.

Several speakers throughout the evening spoke of the growth of the GOP in Stoddard County, from the days when Senate Leader and Dexter native Rob Mayer said that “Wayne Jean, Mike Keathley and Charlie Kruse met in a phone booth” for county GOP meetings, to a banquet attracting statewide candidates and filling a large banquet hall.

State Republican Executive Director Lloyd F. Smith told the party faithful that he placed great importance on the 2012 election cycle, and encouraged them to be informed and to take heed of the election.

"We have a rendezvous with destiny. Our kids and grandkids will depend on what we do this election. Don't wake up the Wednesday after the election and say 'oh boy, I wish I had talked to this person or made this phone call.' You are the boots on the ground; you will make the difference," Smith said.

Candidates speaking to the Dexter crowd included (\* denotes incumbent):

### **U.S. Senate**

- John Brunner
- Sarah Steelman

### **U.S. House of Representatives**

- Jo Ann Emerson \*
- Bob Parker

### **Governor**

- Bill Randalls
- Dave Spence

### **Lt. Governor**

- Peter Kinder \*
- Brad Lager

### **Secretary of State**

- Scott Rupp
- Bill Stouffer

## **State Treasurer**

- Ed Martin

## **State Senate – District 25**

- Doug Libla
- Billy Pat Wright

## **State House – District 159**

- Bob Thrower

## **State House – District 163**

- Kent Hampton \*

## **County Commission - District 1**

- Carol Jarrell \*

## **County Commission - District 2**

- Danny Talkington

## **County Clerk**

- Joe Watson (*not on ballot this year*)

## **County Prosecuting Attorney**

- Russ Oliver (*not on ballot this year*)

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