

# Gibbons tops Williams, thanks him for clean campaign

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**EDWARDSVILLE** - **Madison County's** top law enforcement official is one of few contested offices not changing hands.

**Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons** defeated former public defender, veteran and West Point graduate **Ron Williams** by a wide margin Tuesday evening. Gibbons, a Democrat, said he appreciated the nature of Williams's campaign, and described his former opponent as a "true gentleman."

"To everyone who won, I would wish them the very best," Gibbons said Wednesday morning. "To those in new positions, I look forward to working with them. I will continue to do everything I can to ensure Madison County is a good place to live, work and raise a family. I want to thank Ron Williams for really being a true gentleman and running a clean campaign. He is an extremely honorable man with a great record of service, and I wish him the very best."

Gibbons said he was "very pleased" with the results of his race, and is looking forward to bringing more changes to better the lives of county residents.

"It is an honor to know the citizens of Madison County have put their trust in me to ensure justice is done," he said. "I will work every day to do everything I can to keep our community safe."

One aspect of justice Gibbons would like to give attention is the financial exploitation of senior citizens, a crime that is often hidden and hard to find, he said.

"That is an area with a lot of reported theft and exploitation," he said. "They are very challenging to charge, even if they are discovered."

The restoration of an auto theft task force is also on Gibbons's to-do list. **The State of Illinois's** budget crisis specifically allocated funds to be used for a regional task force to investigate auto thefts. That task force was composed of several detectives from Metro East police departments.

"It will take a coordinated effort with our police officers and elected officials," Gibbons said.

Auto theft is not the only crime worth a task force to Gibbons. He is also wanting to reinstate a non-biased method of investigating official misconduct within public offices. In previous years, the Illinois State Police had an investigative unit for such matters, but that is no longer the case.

"We lost the **Illinois State Police Public Integrity Unit**," he said. "I think the state police did a great non-biased job."

If the state police do not reinstate that unit, Gibbons said his office would work to create a regional investigative unit to do the job.

Despite many upsetting surprises for his fellow Madison County Democrats, including the upset of **Madison County Board Chairperson Alan Dunstan** by **Madison County Treasurer Kurt Prenzler** for board chair, Gibbons is optimistic about the future of his office and the county.

"Kurt and I have been working together for six years," Gibbons said. "I will continue to do everything I can to ensure Madison County is a safe place for people to raise families and will do everything I can to keep our communities safe."