Missouri Republican Kurt Schaefer gets another $1.4 million from mega donor Rex Sinquefield

Kurt Schaefer is running for the GOP nomination for attorney general against Mizzou law professor Josh Hawley

Schaefer has taken more than $2 million from GOP mega donor Rex Sinquefield

BY JASON HANCOCK
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Three political action committees funded by retired St. Louis investor Rex Sinquefield cut checks to a Republican candidate for attorney general on Friday that totaled more than $900,000.

A week earlier that candidate — Republican state Sen. Kurt Schaefer of Columbia — got more than $500,000 from those groups.

That $1.4 million infusion of cash puts the total Sinquefield has invested in Schaefer’s attorney general campaign at more than $2 million.

Schaefer is running against Josh Hawley, a University of Missouri-Columbia law professor. The race has grown increasingly ugly in recent weeks, with both campaigns running negative attack ads. That follows months of allegation of corruption and unethical behavior that has resulted in complaints to the Missouri Ethics Commission and the U.S. attorneys office, as well as a lawsuit.

The infusion of cash will no doubt escalate the campaign attacks in the final weeks before the Aug. 2 primary.

Schaefer originally took $750,000 directly from Sinquefield. The latest donations, however, have been funneled through a trio of PACs fully funded by Sinquefield.
On Friday, he got $404,000 from a group called Great St. Louis; $253,000 from Missourians for Excellence in Government; and $248,000 from Grow Missouri.

For his part, Hawley has a Missouri benefactor of his own. Joplin businessman David Humphreys donated $500,000 to Hawley’s campaign in May. Humphreys sister cut a $250,000 check as well.

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

**Sinquefield groups dumped $4.5M into three Missouri races in the past month**

By Kevin McDermott St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 26 min ago

ST. LOUIS • The biggest political donor in Missouri history just had a really big month.

Between June 1 and July 1, groups funded by St. Louis-based conservative activist Rex Sinquefield donated almost $4.5 million to three candidates for Missouri statewide office, records show. More than $1.75 million of those contributions were made on Friday.

Those kinds of numbers would look like typos in almost any U.S. venue other than Missouri, one of the few places in America where a wealthy donor can still write any sized check he wants to any candidate. Even in the era of Citizens United, individual donations to individual candidates are still heavily restricted in all federal and most state-level elections.

At the federal level, for example, it is prohibited for one donor to give a candidate more than $2,700 in one election cycle. Missouri, by contrast, broke the $1 million mark for a single donation from an individual donor to a candidate almost two years ago — the donor being Sinquefield, a retired businessman who, by one estimate, has spent more than $37 million of his fortune trying to shape Missouri into his fiscal-conservative ideal.

The massive influx of Sinquefield-related cash in the past month is doubly notable because the candidates receiving it aren’t even their party nominees for office yet. Missouri’s state-level
The primaries are Aug. 2, and all the recipients are fighting in contested Republican contests that day.

The month's big recipients are familiar names on the Sinquefield roster:

- Former Missouri House Speaker Catherine Hanaway, seeking the Republican nomination for governor, received more than $2.3 million from Sinquefield-affiliated campaign committees during the one-month period examined by the newspaper — almost $850,000 of it on Friday. Hanaway has been Sinquefield's pick in the contentious four-way race for the GOP gubernatorial nomination from the beginning, taking in more than $1 million early on and relying on him for the lion's share of her funding. The fellow Republicans in the race at businessman John Brunner, former Navy SEAL Eric Greitens and Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder.

- Missouri state Sen. Kurt Schaefer, seeking the Republican nomination for state attorney general, received more than $900,000 from Sinquefield-affiliated committees on Friday, bringing his one-month total to more than $1.4 million. Schaefer is running in the GOP primary against Josh Hawley, a University of Missouri-Columbia law professor.

- Kansas City attorney and long-time Sinquefield ally Bev Randles received $691,850 last month in two donations from Sinquefield-affiliated committees.

Randles — the recipient of the record $1 million donation from Sinquefield in late 2014, a record that apparently still stands — is seeking the GOP nomination against state Sen. Mike Parson and political newcomer Arnie C. Dienoff.

The GOP primary winners for each office will face off with their Democratic counterparts in the Nov. 8 general election.
New policy aims to ensure students who transfer get credit

Tuesday, July 5, 2016 at 2:00 pm

JEFFERSON CITY (AP) — New statewide requirements for similar basic courses at Missouri public colleges and universities will help ensure students who switch schools get credit for completed classes, education officials say.

The law, which takes effect Aug. 28, especially could help students enrolled at community colleges, said bill sponsor, Rep. Travis Fitzwater, R-Holts Summit.

“We want you to get your education, we want to encourage you to get your education and we don’t want to put roadblocks in front of you,” Fitzwater said.

All community colleges and universities must implement the policy, which requires them to adopt similar lower-level curricula of 42 credit hours, starting in fall 2018.

Leaders at the state’s top community college and four-year university associations said most schools already have agreed to a similar program, but it is voluntary. According to the Higher Education Department, 12 four-year institutions and 13 community colleges have signed on to a transfer agreement.

The Columbia campus is the only University of Missouri system school that doesn’t participate but has programs in place to help transfer students.

“Transfer as a whole works well in Missouri in most cases, but there can be instances where a student struggles or a particular class isn’t accepted,” said Jon Bauer, president of East Central College and chairman of a leadership council at the Missouri Community College Association.

He said the legislation gives students confidence general education classes will be transferrable across the board.

“This smooths the waters,” he said.

Putting the force of law behind a statewide transfer policy means institutions can’t opt out, said Rusty Monhollon, assistant commissioner for academic affairs at the Higher Education Department.

Fitzwater said the goal also is to cut costs, both for students who won’t have to pay to retake classes and taxpayers who fund a two-year community college scholarship for qualifying students who might then transfer to four-year schools.
It’s up to the Coordinating Board of Higher Education to outline a recommended curriculum with the help of faculty from public schools by January 2018. The basic courses must cover math, life and physical sciences, humanities and fine arts, and social and behavioral sciences.

Students who transfer might need to take more lower-level classes outside the 42-credit-hour curriculum depending on individual schools’ degree requirements.

Colleges and universities still could deny credits but would need to notify students.

Students can dispute that, and it will be up to the state’s higher education commissioner to make a final decision as to whether students should receive transfer credits.

Understanding forest fire history can help keep forests healthy


For nearly a century, forest fires have been viewed by scientists and the public as dangerous and environmentally damaging disasters. However, recent research has shown that forest fires are vital to maintaining healthy forests. While people in the western portions of the U.S. experience forest fires often and know of their value, many people on the eastern side of the U.S. do not know of their importance. In a new study, University of Missouri researchers have studied tree rings throughout Oklahoma and Tennessee to determine the history of fires in those areas.

Michael Stambaugh, assistant research professor in the MU College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, says understanding this history is important for managing and improving the ecology of forests in the future.

"Many forest ecosystems are fire-dependent, meaning that in order to maintain their health and vibrancy, they must be subjected to fire on a regular basis," said Stambaugh, who is a member of the Missouri Tree-Ring Laboratory at MU. "By understanding how fire has maintained forest ecosystems in the past, we can determine the best ways to use fire to maintain those forests in the future."
To study the history of fire in Oklahoma and Tennessee, Stambaugh examined tree rings from 332 trees in eight different sites throughout both states. Stambaugh found 843 different fire scars embedded within the tree rings and was able to determine when and how often each site experienced forest fires over the last 300 years. He found that despite having a wetter, cooler climate, forests in Tennessee experienced higher fire frequency than Oklahoma. He also found that fires existed in those areas long before Euro-American settlement, showing that fire has been important to those forests for centuries.

"The history of fire in America also is the history of humans on this continent," Stambaugh said. "Humans have been here for more than 12,000 years and everywhere we see humans move, we see fires follow or be altered. This has been a constant for so long that forest ecology has become dependent on these fires, if they already weren't before humans arrived. However, many parts of the U.S., especially in the eastern half of the continent, have not experienced forest fires in more than 150 years because humans have worked hard to prevent those fires. Many of those forests are now suffering because of the lack of fire to help renew the ecology."

In order to understand the effects of fire around the U.S., Stambaugh and his fellow MU researchers are cataloging the history of fire by studying tree rings from trees throughout the entire country.

**MISSOURIAN**

**Weekend rains prove good for crops, leave muggy weather behind**

JUSTIN BOHM, 13 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Last weekend's rain quenched corn and soybean crops in mid-Missouri, but the resulting humidity made it uncomfortable for people.

Columbia Regional Airport received 5.47 inches of rain between Friday and Monday, according to the National Weather Service. Sanborn Field, the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station, recorded 5.98 inches of rainfall in Columbia this weekend.

The rainfall came after an unusually dry June. Even after the past weekend, Columbia was still 4.57 inches below average yearly rainfall on Tuesday, according to the National Weather Service. Before the weekend, farmers were worried that the rain would fall so fast that it would run off instead of soak into the soil.
Tim Reinbott, director of field operations at South Farm Research Center, said both corn and soybean crops turned out OK.

"The rain came slowly, so the soil soaked it up pretty good," Reinbott said.

Reinbott was most worried about the corn crops, which has the highest risk of damage during early summer. Corn pollinates in July, so any damage caused by extreme weather conditions could mean a significant decrease in corn production.

Luckily for corn farmers, the recent rainfall did not cause flash flooding in the fields, and instead the plants were able to soak up much-needed water.

"We still need more rainfall, but we'll for sure have corn," Reinbott said.

While the rain has proven helpful to local crops, Anthony Lupo, MU professor of Atmospheric Science, said the rain has also produced high humidity.

"We got an inordinant amount of rain, so there is a lot of moisture in the soil," Lupo said. "There's a lot of evaporation and a lot of humidity."

The National Weather Service issued a heat advisory Tuesday, and forecast a heat index of 103 Tuesday afternoon.

The hazardous heat is expected to continue throughout the rest of the week. The service forecasts heat index values could reach 101 on Wednesday and high temperatures are expected to be in the low 90s through Friday.

"You should take more breaks and have plenty of water," Lupo said. "You should also watch how you're feeling. Also, be sure to check on those who do not have adequate cooling, like the elderly."