

Downtown rally today

Special to the Courier

Originally Published: October 7, 2006 4 a.m.

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PRESCOTT Friends of Save Our Courthouse is launching a campaign to inform the public about the implications of moving the courts out of historic downtown Prescott.

The group will start its campaign with a rally at 11 a.m. today at the north courthouse steps.

The Board of Supervisors is looking for a location for a new judicial complex that could include the clerk of the court, most of the courts and judges, offices for the County Attorney and Public Defender, a juvenile detention center, adult and juvenile probation and the Sheriff's Office.

"We feel this decision by the supervisors is being made without public input and this is our effort to open up the public dialogue," said Skip Drinkard, general manager of The Hassayampa Inn and a founding member of the group. "We are very concerned about the impact this decision will have on the vitality of downtown Prescott."

Alex Vakula, a local lawyer and spokesman for the Yavapai County Bar Association, said that "moving the clerk and most of the courts from the historic courthouse will result in removing over 70 percent of the court system and more than 1,000 affiliated employees, not to mention the many jurors who frequent downtown businesses."

Friends of Save Our Courthouse believe that a weakened downtown business climate jeopardizes tourism in Prescott and will decimate the downtown area, just as

occurred in the Arizona communities of Globe and Holbrook when their courts were moved.

More information on FOSOC is available by calling (928) 717-0139 or e-mail FOSOC@cableone.net. Donations made payable to Friends of Save Our Courthouse can be mailed to P.O. Box 2600, Prescott, Ariz. 86302.

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