

State senate candidates square off at forum

The candidates for the 40th District of the Kansas Senate squared off Saturday in Oberlin at a forum sponsored by the Decatur County Farm Bureau.

Each of the three gave a short speech outlining what he would do for the area and the state if given the chance to serve.

Dan Rasure, Goodland, started campaigning in January. A Republican, Mr. Rasure, who has never held political office, was planning to go against the incumbent Sen. Stan Clark in the primary.

However, Sen. Clark's death earlier this summer in a traffic accident changed the complexion of the race.

Now Mr. Rasure is facing Rep. Ralph Ostmeyer of Grinnell in the primary. Mr. Ostmeyer is already serving in the Legislature as representative from the 118th district.

Democrat Tim Peterson, another newcomer to the electoral arena, will face the winner of the Republican primary in the Aug. 3 general election.

DAN RASURE

Mr. Rasure emphasized the declining population of the area and school funding as the two biggest areas of concern.

"We've got to have changes out in Western Kansas," he said.



Dan Rasure

He pointed to

Norton County as the only one in the area to have a population increase in the last census. Norton's economy, he said, while agriculturally based, has diversified with manufacturing plants like Natoma and New Age and is providing skilled workers for these industries.

Health care, he said, is vital to the area, both to keep seniors from moving and to lure younger couples into the area. He said there is a move to bring a Veterans Administration clinic to the district.

"We need to bring more people back to Western Kansas," he said.

The state needs to find ways to pay for education without increasing property taxes. Property taxes are the worst type of tax, he said.

Paying for schools needs to be done on a statewide basis, he said, or small districts — like Cheylin in Bird City — will begin to close and students will have to be on school buses more than an hour to get to other schools.

RALPH OSTMEYER

Mr. Ostmeyer pointed to his record. He has served in the state legislature as a representative for two terms, eight years as a county

commissioner in Gove County and 14 years as a school board member.

Mr. Ostmeyer said he is a fourth-generation farmer and rancher and the older brother of Randy Ostmeyer of Oberlin.

He pointed out that the problem of depopulation is not new.

"We were worried about people leaving town when I was a high school senior," he said. "I think communities need to pull themselves up by their bootstraps."

He said he helped pass economic development legislation last year that would help provide hunting opportunities and help for bed and breakfast businesses.

On education, he pointed out that the House tried to give schools more money last year but the Senate and governor blocked the effort.

"We held education harmless (did not cut its budget)," he said. "If we had cut the schools like everything

else, we could have balanced the budget."

Raising the sales tax to pay for education is not a business-friendly idea, he said. Every time sales taxes are raised, Kansas businesses lose more customers to out of state.

"We have to make sure when we take care of education we get the same bang out here in Western Kansas as they do in Eastern Kansas," he added.

While the state needs to pay for a basic education, it should not pay for extracurricular activities, he said. That should be done with local money if the community wants the programs.

TIM PETERSON

Mr. Peterson said that he has farmed in Logan County since 1980 and has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Kansas, but also has affiliations with K-State.

He said that he knows how bureaucracy works, having served on boards for various federal farm service programs.

"I'm running so that I can work for the Kansas families," he said.

There needs to be a reason for younger families to return to the

area, he said. While depopulation has been a long-standing problem, it is getting worse.

Health care is a big problem, he said, especially health insurance.

"In our family, we pay more for health insurance than for food and clothing combined," he said. "It's crazy."

The educational system needs strengthening, he said. Every child needs a proper education so that he or she can have all the opportunities available.

Right now, he said, our schools are doing fine but if a tax increase is needed, those dollars should go into the classroom, not into anything else.

"We can still cut waste and administrative costs," he said.

The area needs to start working together to encourage more people to live here.

"We're not just opponents on a football field," he said. "We're a region, we're an area. We have to work together."



T. Peterson

County uses grant for security

By Brandon Gay

The Norton County Commissioners received a report from Alvin Mapes, emergency preparedness coordinator, on how money was spent from an \$85,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Federal grant money was made available to all Kansas counties.

Of the \$85,809 allotted to Norton County, \$85,708 was spent updating city and county departments.

Receiving money were: The Norton Police Department, \$8,000; Norton County Sheriff's office, \$8,330; the Public Works Department, \$15,352; Emergency Preparedness, \$1,467; Public Health, \$817; Norton City Fire Department, \$14,737; Almaena Fire Department, \$8,641; Lenora Fire Department, \$10,343; Emergency Medical Services, \$5,697; and Norton Rural Fire Department, \$9,932.

Mr. Mapes said Norton County is eligible for another \$134,000 grant.

He also talked about proposals to name all county roads and give all residences exact physical addresses, making them easier to find in case of emergency. Mr. Mapes said the new addressing system was mandated by the state.

He suggested a number system that would indicate how many miles a road was from the county line.

The commissioners asked him to bring them a sample map of the proposed system. He said he would meet with other county offices and finalize a system for approval.

Mr. Mapes said he was also looking into a federal grant that would set up a system in Norton that would give emergency vehicles global positioning system readings.

House hopefuls give their views

Two Republicans and a Democrat gave their views on the important issues before the state House of Representatives at a forum held Saturday in Oberlin.

The forum featured incumbent John Faber of Brewster, a Republican, and two challengers, Republican Doug Sebelius of Norton and Democrat Bob Strevey of Norcatour.

Mr. Faber and Mr. Sebelius will meet each other in the Republican primary on Tuesday, Aug. 3, and the winner will go against Mr. Strevey in the general election in November.

DOUG SEBELIUS

Mr. Sebelius said that despite his connection to the governor (she is married to his brother), he is a Republican and has lived most of his life in Norton, where he attended school and where his children have gone to school.

Education is not an institution of big government, he said. The people are tired of the federal government saying how they should run things.

Education, he said, is an economic development tool. As the students out here join the work force, they need to be able to compete with the rest of the world.

Borrowing money to pay for education from other state budgets is not the answer, he said.

A sales tax with proper exemptions is the fairest type of tax, he said. It is possible to put more tax on cigarettes and alcohol, and set up a top-end bracket for income tax that would pay more. Since everyone out here is struggling, he said, it shouldn't hurt us.

Mr. Sebelius suggested that Kansas should "uncouple" its income tax structure from that of the federal government and go its own way setting up a deduction structure that is

best for the people of the state.

Education is high on his list, he said.

"Once your schools start going downhill, it's like losing a church or store on Main Street," he said.

The family farm is another issue, he said. The state needs to have an active antitrust policy to protect farmers, he said, noting that three companies slaughter most of the cattle in the country. This, he said, should be an anti-trust issue.

BOB STREVEY

Mr. Strevey, who said he has a deep attachment to Oberlin and Decatur County, noted that candidates put on lots of miles and invest innumerable hours in campaigning and talking to people.

He read an essay from *The Oberlin Herald*, by Andrew Dempewolf, in which the young man notes that the two political parties seem to be fighting all the time.

He assured Mr. Dempewolf and the audience that the two parties are not "sworn enemies," that everyone is working to solve problems.

"Each of us has to pitch in there and make things work the best they can," he said. Everyone has to work together.

He likened the area's outward migration to a lesson he had seen in the Vietnam War when a sleeping soldier on guard duty had been awakened by a shout to find his sergeant holding a gun between his eyes.

"We really need a great wakeup call," Mr. Strevey said. "We've got a lot at stake, and our area of the county's in jeopardy."

There are those in the state actively opposed to public education, he said, including some who believe in parochial schools, private

schools, home schooling and no schooling.

"There are people who would like to return Kansas to a class society like it was at the turn of the century," he said, "with the wealthy and everyone else."

He said he opposed high standards to get into the state's colleges because that put an unfair burden on small rural schools.

He warned that cutting income taxes, which has been done in the past, could lead to problems if property taxes keep going up. In the 1930s, he said, property became worthless because the taxes were more than the land would produce.

JOHN FABER

Mr. Faber, a former member of the Brewster School Board, said that he supports education and worked to get more money for schools last year as a member of the House of Representatives, but the state Senate refused to pass the bill without a tax increase.

"Sometimes you have to do what is possible," he noted, "not what needs to be done."

"This year, it broke my heart to come home without anything at all (for school districts)."

Johnson County, which provides

30 percent of the state revenue, would like to let its school districts increase the local option budget from 25 percent of a district's total spending to 30 percent, he said. The people there want to support their schools with property taxes. However, out here, that isn't feasible because our property tax base just won't cover the costs.

Mr. Faber pointed out that he has held his seat for eight years and he has worked on the education committee for six, although he is no longer on that committee. He is now the vice chairman of the transportation committee.

While a new person would have to take what he could get, Mr. Faber said, as an incumbent he has built up relationships and connections with other representatives.

Johnson County has 27 representatives, he said. In northwest Kansas, the 120th district covers five counties. The western half of the state has only 15 or 16 representatives for 50 counties.



John Faber

PUBLIC NOTICES

The Estate of Cale A. Sleffel

Published in The Norton Telegram on Tuesday, July 13, 20 and 27, 2004. (3T) IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF NORTON COUNTY, KANSAS

In the Matter of the Estate of CALE A. SLEFFEL, Deceased.

Case No. 2004-PR-02

NOTICE OF HEARING

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL PERSONS CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that a Petition has been filed in this Court by Sonya B. Montgomery, duly appointed, qualified and acting Executor of the Estate of Cale A. Sleffel, Deceased, praying that her acts be approved; that her account be settled and allowed, that the will be construed and the estate be assigned to the persons entitled thereto; that fees and expenses be allowed; that the costs be determined and ordered paid; that the administration of the estate be closed; that the executor be discharged and that she be released from further liability.

You are required to file your written defenses thereto on or before the 4th day of August, 2004, at 9:00 o'clock A.M. of said day, in said Court, in the City of Norton, in Norton County, Kansas, at which time and place said cause will be heard. Should you fail therein, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

Sonya B. Montgomery
Executor

R. Douglas Sebelius #09157

SEBELIUS & GRIFFITHS, LLP

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P.O. Box 10

Norton, Kansas 67654-0010

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Attorneys for Petitioner

The Estate of Florence Delp

Published in The Norton Telegram on Tuesday, June 29, July 6 and July 13, 2004. (3T)

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF NORTON COUNTY, KANSAS IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF FLORENCE DELP, deceased.

Case No. 2004-PR-21

NOTICE OF HEARING

The State of Kansas To All Persons Concerned:

You are hereby notified that a petition was filed in this Court by Virginia Anderson, as the sole intestate heir of Florence Delp, deceased, praying for determination of descent of the North Half (N/2) of Section Twenty-six (26), Township Four (4) South, Range Twenty-five (25) West of the 6th P.M. in Norton County, Kansas and in any other property interests; and you are required to file your written defenses thereto on or before July 21, 2004, at 9:00 a.m. of such day, in this Court, in the City of Norton, Norton County, Kansas, at which time and place the cause will be heard. Should you fail, judgment and decree will be entered in due course upon the Petition.

Virginia Anderson
Petitioner

William J. Ryan #05771

RYAN, WALTER & McCLYMONT, Chtd.

120 S. State - PO Box 364

Norton, Kansas 67654

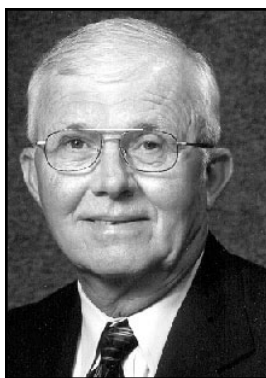
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Attorney for Petitioner

Ralph Ostmeyer

Fourth Generation Farmer & Rancher

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- ★ 8 Years County Commissioner
- ★ 14 Years School Board Member
- ★ 6 Years FLBA Board Member
- ★ 33 Years Active Member of KSHSAA
- ★ 6 Years on Soil Conservation Board
- ★ Member of Immaculate Conception Church, Grinnell
- ★ 3rd & 4th Degree K of C Member



"I have a common sense approach to governing in Topeka. I believe that a government closer to the people it serves, the better. This philosophy has guided me during my service in the House and will continue this record of leadership in the State Senate."
-Ralph Ostmeyer

Elect

Ralph Ostmeyer

State Senate - 40th District

Republican

Vote August 3 - Primary Election



Pol. Adv. paid for by Ostmeyer Campaign Fund, Lori Edwards, Treasurer

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