

VOTE IN TUESDAY'S ELECTION

Incumbent focuses on county's development

By VERONICA MONIER
Incumbent 3rd District Commissioner John Miller is running for a third term in office.

He said the commission needs to focus on economic development. "We have to work at bringing people back here and at finding jobs they'll come back here for," he said.

Mr. Miller said the commission also needs to keep an eye on the water situation, even though it is handled by the state.

Agriculture, he said, will continue to play a big role in the



John Miller

county. He said the county needs to bring in supplements to help farmers. Little farms, he said, are disappearing, while large farms are becoming more frequent.

As for the ambulance barn, Mr. Miller said the county didn't lose the grant because it was never applied for.

"We weren't totally prepared," he said. "But if we would have applied for the grant, then the fire department wouldn't have been able to apply for their grant. I think they need new equipment more than we need a new ambulance barn."

Also, Mr. Miller said with the grant for a new ambulance barn, the taxpayers would have had to pay \$25,000 to \$50,000 in matching money. The commissioners

weren't prepared to deal with that much money right now, he said.

During his two terms in office, he said, a lot of changes have been made, including in the budgeting process so money was spent more efficiently.

He said he really enjoys working in county government, because it can be seen when progress is made.

"Helping people makes you really believe in the process of county government," he said.

In the past eight years, Mr. Miller said no services have been cut, but things have become a lot more streamlined.

"We've tried to do the best possible thing for the county in all the actions we've taken," he said. "We (the commissioners) may not al-

ways like the things that need to be done, but in the end, it's what we felt was best for the people who live here."

Mr. Miller is a farmer and a cow/calf operator. He and wife Beverly have been married for 28 years and has four children and two granddaughters.

He is a certified county commissioner, which requires 40 hours of classroom work, is a member of the Republican Central Committee, and is on several boards and committees.

Mr. Miller will face Robert Clydesdale in the Tuesday, Nov. 2 general election. He defeated his Republican opponent, George Gassmann, by one vote in the primary.

Candidate thinks ideas need to be pooled

By VERONICA MONIER
Economic development will be Robert Clydesdale's focus if he is elected to the 3rd District commissioner seat on Tuesday.

Mr. Clydesdale said an economic development director is needed to tie everything together.

"We need to bring all of the entities that can help with economic development, like Rural



R. Clydesdale

Telephone, together so we can come up with some ideas," he said. "But then, we need an economic development director to tie it all together."

"In these tough times, everybody seems to be in a rut. We need to all work together and stay together for the betterment of the community."

He said he will also focus on healing the differences in the county. He said sometimes things just fester and then can only heal with a fresh start.

This is the first time Mr. Clydesdale has run for office and he said

he's running because he feels he will be able to relieve some of the tension and turmoil in the county.

He said he's also been asked to run by several people and so has stepped up to his civic duty.

Mr. Clydesdale is a farmer/rancher and lives 14 miles south of Norton. He and his wife Sally, who teaches second grade at Eisenhower Elementary, have three children and two grandchildren.

"I have roots in Norton County," he said. "I think it's time for my generation to step up and keep Norton County the good place it is

to live."

Mr. Clydesdale is a member of the United Methodist Church of Edmond. He is a board member on both the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Solomon Valley Rural Fire District.

He will face incumbent John Miller in the Tuesday general election.

He ran unopposed in the primary election as the only Democrat to file.

The poles will be open from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. this Tuesday.

Education finance is incumbent's top priority

By KIMBERLY BRANDT
As a former member of the Brewster School Board, Rep. John Faber says school finance is one of his top priorities.

Rep. Faber, who has served for the last eight years, said he isn't sure there is a good answer to the school finance problem. He said he believes the state should step in and eliminate local sales taxes going to school districts. For instance, every time someone buys something in Johnson County, part of the tax goes to that district.

There was a bill passed in the Senate last year, said Rep. Faber, that would have meant over \$200 a student more for education, but the House couldn't get it passed. Most of the packages that would provide increased school money also would raise taxes, he said.

Rep. Faber said he has never agreed with the local option budget, which allows district to raise the property tax to bring in more money. From the beginning, he said, he's felt the state should pay for schools. When Johnson County can get millions of dollars with just one mill, Decatur County can only raise \$20,000 with one mill. That isn't a good economical situation.

The school finance lawsuit, he said, scares him because the Supreme Court could cut the low-enrollment weighting which helps schools in this area.

He said he thinks the states revenue situation is going to be different in the next two years, and that may help us catch up on school money and other pro-



John Faber

grams. Another important area is rural economic development. He said there is \$2 million a year available for economic development. The money comes out of a bill for research units to be put around colleges and universities. Some of that money has been put aside to be used in this region.

Rep. Faber said Kansas needs to keep taxes in line with other states in the area. Kansas taxes are higher, he said, but the state has better roads and better schools.

Roads are a part of the economic development picture, too, he said. The highways need to be maintained to keep businesses coming here and people, too.

Rep. Faber serves on the Joint Committee for Information Technology and the Joint Committee for Economic Development. During the legislative session, he served as vice chair of transportation, which deals with all state roads, driver's licenses and truck regulations, and on the environment, agriculture and taxation committees.

Rep. Faber won the Republican primary over Doug Sebelius of Norton, 3,404 votes to 2,375. He will meet Democrat Bob Strevey in the general election.

Two years ago, the race featured it was the same line up for the 120th District House seat. Rep. Faber said he feels good about the campaign and the election. He said he thinks it will go pretty much like it did last time.

He said he has been out to Phillips, Norton, Rawlins counties and will be here and in Cheyenne County before the election.

Rep. Faber is a fifth-generation farmer in southwest Rawlins County.

The district includes Decatur, Cheyenne, Rawlins, Norton and Phillips counties.

Schools, economy are on candidate's political agenda

By VERONICA MONIER
House of Representatives candidate Bob Strevey thinks that he can make a difference for western Kansas.

Mr. Strevey, who is running in the 120th District, said he would like to be able to take part in decisions for the good of western Kansas, including school finance, economic development and whether to make U.S. 36 a four-lane highway.

"I want to be in a position to try and help with these things," he said.

Over the course of his campaign, Mr. Strevey said, he's seen some positive response to his ideas. The district covers a large area, he said, and people are concerned with different things. But, he said, everyone is worried about schools and the weakness in the agricultural economy. These are things he wants to do something about.

A major issue he would focus on is school finance, which represents close to half of the state's budget. He said it needs to remain "front and center" in the minds of the legislature.

"This should be our first concern," he said.

He said he hopes the Kansas Supreme Court will realize that it's the legislature's duty to raise money and decide how and where it's spent, not the courts'.

He said a lot depends on the economy. If it improves, then the state has some breathing room, and if it doesn't, then belts will have to be tightened again.

The development of U.S. 36 is one thing that could help the economy in western Kansas.

Another way, he said, is to develop wind energy. He thinks there is a lot of opportunity in the wind energy area and that the state should nudge it along.

Mr. Strevey said another issue is animal identification to control possible diseases. He said he didn't think the state should do animal identification until it's known what is happening at the federal level.

"I don't think the farmers should have to pay for something like this twice," he said.

Retired after teaching for 31 years, Mr. Strevey lives outside of Norcatour on the family farm with his wife Kay. They have three grown daughters, Trudi, Wendy and Hollie.

In addition to campaigning, he volunteers at the Norton Correctional Facility and farms. He is a board member of the U.S. 36 Highway Association and is president of the Norcatour Citizens Alliance. He served in the Army and Army Reserves, retiring in 1992 as a lieutenant colonel.

If elected, he said he would like to serve on committees for education, agriculture, corrections, or other that's important to the people in the 120th District.

This isn't Mr. Strevey's first run for the House. Two years ago, he was defeated by 178 votes, losing to incumbent John Faber 1,122 to 944.

No matter the outcome, Mr. Strevey encourages everyone to vote.

"However it turns out, it is important for people to participate and let others know what they want," he said.

Mr. Strevey will face Mr. Faber again on Tuesday, Nov. 2.

The 120th District includes Decatur, Cheyenne, Rawlins, Norton and Phillips counties.



Bob Strevey

Sheriff thinks about future of taxpayers

By VERONICA MONIER
Sheriff Troy Thomson said he has the taxpayers in mind when he thinks about serving another four-year term in office.

He said, if elected, he plans on continuing his search for grants to help pay for running the department, so that taxpayers won't have to dig deeper into their pockets, in addition to remaining within budget.

Sheriff Thomson said he also plans to continue working hard on keeping drugs out of the county, especially methamphetamines.

"I want to continue what the sheriff's office has always done — protect and serve," he said. "Serving is the Norton County Sheriff's office's big thing."

"We try to help out in the community whenever we can and not just show up somewhere when we're called," he said.

Some of the things the sheriff's office does, he said, are giving rides to doctors and emergency service workers during winter storms, having educational programs for the public like meth forums and Identikid, and putting together booths at post prom and the



Troy Thomson

county fair.

If elected on Tuesday, this will be Sheriff Thomson's second term. He was first appointed as sheriff in 1999 when nominated by the Republican Central Committee after the previous sheriff left for medical reason.

He said he accepted the nomination because he loved the job and was under-sheriff at the time. He then ran in 2000 and was elected. He's running this term because he still loves the job.

"Even with all the negative stuff that comes with the job," he said, "the positive far outweighs it. When you're able to help somebody you get a really good feeling."

Sheriff Thomson was born and raised in Norton; his family has belonged to the community for several generations. He and his wife, Chriselle, have been married for 14 years. They have three children.

He is the chairman of the Norton County Council on Alcohol and/or Drugs, governor of the fourth district Kansas Peace Officers Association, and a committeeman on the John Foster Scholarship Committee.

This Tuesday, Sheriff Thomson will face write-in candidate Travis Smith, whom he defeated in the primary.

Man feels patrols need to go more places

Travis Smith feels he has what it takes to be the Norton County sheriff.

That is one of his reasons for running a write-in campaign after being defeated by incumbent Troy Thomson in the Aug. 3 primary.

Public concern was another. He said people wanted to have another choice in the election.

"I want to be sheriff," he said. "I wasn't going to give up on just the primary."

Mr. Smith said he has seven years of experience working with the local law enforcement in the county. He spent four years as a deputy for the Norton County Sheriff's Department and three years as an officer on the Norton Police Department.

He was also a park ranger for the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for three years.

Mr. Smith said if he's elected, he plans on working on public relations.

"A lot of the smaller communities in the county need to see more of the sheriff's department," he said. "Also, the rural areas need to see more patrols."

He said he enjoyed his work in the sheriff's office and wanted to run for the top job to support his community. He said he has a special interest in helping children.

"I also want to work with the kids in our community and set up school drug and alcohol programs," he said.

He is also interested in community involvement and setting up neighborhood watch programs.

Right now, Mr. Smith works for the Kansas Department of Transportation and is a volunteer on the Norton County Rural Fire Department.

He is married to Laquita Smith and the couple has two children: Makayla, 7, and Jaden, 3.

When he's not working, he enjoys fishing, team roping and spending time with his children.

Mr. Smith will face Sheriff Thomson again in the general election this Tuesday.



Travis Smith

Polling places not all the same

Polls in Norton County will open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday.

Some of the polling places will be different than they have been in the past.

Voters in:

- Almena City and Almena Township vote at Almena City Hall.

- Center Precinct No. 1 and 2 vote in the lobby at the Norton County Courthouse.

- Harrison Township at Almena City Hall.

- Highland Precinct No. 1 vote at Lenora City Hall.

- Modell Township vote at

- Lenora City Hall.

- Highland Precinct No. 2 vote at the Norton American Legion.

- Highland Precinct No. 3 vote in the lobby at the Norton County Courthouse.

- Solomon Precinct No. 1 vote at the Norton American Legion.

- Old Belle Plain Township vote in the lobby at the Norton County Courthouse.

- Solomon Precinct No. 2 vote at the Norton American Legion.

- Norton Wards 1, 2 and 3 vote at the Norton American Legion.