

Five school hopefuls answer tough questions

SCHOOL, from Page 1

cation is one that works efficiently, productively and accomplishes the goals it sets fourth," she said.

Current board member Dick Short, president of Short and Son truck lines and Century Feeders, said a school board needs to help teach students skills to become more productive.

"We don't have any cookie-cutter kids," he said. "We have to find a way to be there for every kid."

Dr. Gary Smith, veterinarian at Prairieland Animal Clinic, said his philosophy on education is to simply educate.

"We need to proved the best education we can for each student," he said adding that if he is elected, parents and students can come to him anytime. "My door's always open."

Q — With limited school funding from the state, what programs would you cut first and how would you do it?

House said he would leave program cuts for a last resort by remaining creative and skimping on other areas.

"I can't think of any program I'd like to cut," he said.

Sederstrom said before making any decisions on cuts, she would have to research the programs, but she wouldn't be opposed to cutting sports or making them pay for themselves.

selves.

"As a board member," she said, "I strongly think education is first."

Short said in his tenure on the board, they have made many cuts along the way.

"I think we've cut to the point right now that if we cut a program, we'd hurt kids," he said, adding he wouldn't be opposed to closing a building. "I'd do what's best for kids, No. 1."

Smith said he would like to study the district's situation before making any changes, but some activities might have to find alternative sources of money.

"I'd make the fairest and best decision at that time," he said.

Friedrichs said, just like her household budget, if she was facing school cuts, she would find ways to save.

"Every program we have is important to at least one kid," she said. "I certainly would not cut any program unless it was necessary."

Q — Would you be in favor of closing a school building and how would you proceed?

Sederstrom said the decision would have to be made by the entire board after they were presented with the facts.

"We're making the best decision for our kids," she said, "for our school system."

Short said closing a building is

something no one wants to consider, but with declining enrollment, it might be the only option.

"We have to be realistic. If we have to close a building, I would vote for it," he said adding it would be a tough decision. "That's the last thing I want to do."

Smith said closing a building might be necessary.

"If it becomes more feasible for us to do that," he said, "I'd do it."

Friedrichs said she researched districts in Kansas with the same population as Goodland and found that we have the most buildings.

"That pointed out to me that if we in fact do have to (close a building)," she said, "it probably would be a wise thing to do."

House said when the community wanted to build a bigger, better athletic center at the Max Jones Fieldhouse, we found a way, and we can find a way on the school buildings, too.

"I think at some point in time closing a school building is inevitable," he said adding to keep up to date, some day the district may have to build new schools.

Q — How do you feel about the "One-to-One" initiative, a program that would give a laptop to each high school student?

Short said it is a wonderful theory, but there is no money to pay for it.

"We look at it as a goal in the fu-

ture," he said. "I can't support it because of funding."

Smith summed up his argument in the word "no."

"I think we can spend our money in better ways," he said.

Friedrichs said the idea is great for kids and should be considered.

"I think it's an exciting idea," she said, adding although the money would be a problem for the district, they should keep the plan in mind. "I think it should be a long-term goal for our school system."

House said when students spoke out about the technology plan, it was a sign to him that the program wasn't for Goodland.

"The feasibility is just not there at this time," he said. "I'm all for a great computer lab, but a one-to-one initiative does not fit."

Sederstrom said no to the initiative, too, saying kids are exposed to enough technology without the extra computers. Instead, she would like to see more and better labs in the grade schools.

"Financially right now, it's just not feasible," she added.

Q — What would you do to attract and retain teaching talent?

Smith said the district needs to provide the best environment possible and implement an incentive program for teachers.

"I think if you're a stellar teacher, you get rewarded," he said.

Friedrichs said community enthusiasm and adoption of new ideas from teacher will help keep people in town.

"I think it's up to all of us to attract new teachers, talented teachers," she said adding incentives pro-

grams help to retain good teachers. "We've got to let them know they're doing a great job."

House said before new teachers come to town, we have to market our community.

"We need to continue to look towards providing the kind of environment teachers want to live in," he added.

Sederstrom said to get new teachers, we have to sell the small-town aspects of the community, especially safety.

"We're proud to be in a small town," she said, adding that rewards for excellence will help keep talent in town.

Short said keeping Goodland's appearance up with things like clean and neat buses and offering competitive pay are important to attract teachers. He said the board has increased pay tremendously since he has been on and now the district ranks 45th for teacher salaries in Kansas.

"It's not just us as a board," he said, "it's everybody in town. They have to feel welcome, they have to feel needed."

Q — Should students be allowed to participate in sports if they are academically ineligible, and how should the rules be enforced?

Friedrichs said that right now, students who are ineligible can get help from teachers to work their way back into activities.

"Our primary reason for our school is to educate," she said, "and that has to be our priority."

House said he wasn't aware of any change in eligibility rules, but

he said the board empowers the school administrators to take care of any issues.

"If you are academically ineligible," Sederstrom said, "you should not participate."

Short said the board follows state guidelines, and although he knows the extracurricular activities are what keeps some kids in school, the students are responsible for having passing grades.

"If he's failing," he said, "he won't play."

Smith agreed that students should have passing grades to play.

"The policy and guidelines are there for a reason," he said. "I feel you are ineligible academically, you don't participate."

Q — Which areas do you think the district is the strongest?

House said the district's strengths lie in different areas because kids learn so differently.

"Every class of students is different," he said.

Sederstrom said although she isn't aware of everything the district offers, she finds that in first and second grades, students are strong in math and reading.

"I think the strongest class is the one that student is in at that time," Short said. "We have many strengths."

Smith said the schools have a lot of good programs and good teachers.

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Candidates agree on top issues

CITY, from Page 1

is at a crossroads, and we have to make decisions to help the city prosper and grow."

Farris said the rural areas everywhere have the same problems, and to survive, the city needs to get people and industry to come here.

Garcia said he was optimistic. He said the key is to market Goodland to bring people to the city.

"I believe in Goodland," he said. "We are still a regional trade center."

Golden said the recent drought reminded him of Goodland in the 1950s, and that he feels it will grow back as it did then.

"We have opportunities today," he said, "to encourage people to do things to create jobs. We need to have the infrastructure and great facilities."

Wood said he felt the best thing would be to expand the hospital and bring in more people. He suggested an ethanol plant to draw on the area's agriculture resources.

"We need to make Goodland a safe and clean community," he said.

"We need to make it attractive to bring people and business here."

Dechant said the goal should be to make the city the main stop-off from I-70, and to keep downtown up, support the ag sector and make the city clean and safe.

"The vision is clear," he said. "We are trying to be a good community."

The next question was about the city and county working together to improve services.

Farris said the services are pretty good. He said there might be some

services that could be combined, and that the city and county had to work together to explore these.

The other candidates agreed the county and city need to work together, and there was a suggestion about combining the law enforcement departments. Wood, however, said he was not in favor of this and felt the city should maintain its own police force.

The fourth question was about improving the area around the east exit off I-70, and about Pioneer Park.

Garcia said he agreed the east exit needs to be revitalized, and that it needed to be marketed to bring businesses to the area. On Pioneer Park, he gave an impassioned speech about the tough decisions the commission had to face. He said he felt the park was important to help make the community more attractive. He said it was important to use the state money available for the park, and did not want to send the money back.

"That was a heck of a talk," Golden said. "I am glad the city has done Pioneer Park."

"We need to encourage development at the east exit. I feel that will happen when we fill up the west area, and that in the future, it will mature. This needs to be encouraged by the Chamber and economic development people."

The others agreed the east exit needs to be developed, and the city needs to find ways to help businesses that want to locate in that area.

The fifth question was from the audience, noting that having com-

mission meetings at 5 p.m. made it difficult for citizens to attend.

Golden said he felt 5 p.m. was an ideal time, and that it was convenient for members and city employees who are required to attend.

The other five candidates said it was a fair time, and that most people who were interested were able to be there.

Wood said the meetings are accessible to the public, but that the commissioners need to keep the people informed. He suggested to help, the city manager could produce a monthly report for each department.

The final question, from the audience, asked what the commission could do about houses and yards that needed to be cleaned up, and improving neighborhoods.

"We need to have a safe and clean city," Wood said. "We need to make it possible for people to invest money without feat of raising property taxes. There are a lot of things we can do to support policies that encourage these improvements."

"Ugly houses and yards are an issue," Dechant said.

He reminded everyone that April has been declared cleanup month, and that the Chamber's beautification committee was doing its first citywide collection on Saturday.

The other candidates agreed the city needs to look at ways to clean up the town, and that everyone has to be involved to create a spirit of pride.

The forum was sponsored by Leadership Sherman County, the Sherman County Farm Bureau and KLOE/KKCI/KWGB.

Drunk driver pleads no contest

PLEA, from Page 1

of control just before the wreck.

Master Trooper Terry Stithem of WaKeeney, an 18-year veteran of the Kansas Highway Patrol, said that he stopped Adams twice for speeding within a 30-minute period along the same stretch of the Interstate, between mile markers 124 and 118 a few miles west of WaKeeney. After she was stopped the first time, he said, she went back to town to get gas and then headed west again.

Stithem said the first time he stopped Adams, he clocked her at 96 mph, and the second time it was 104. He said he wrote her tickets both times and asked the dispatcher to notify officers to the west to watch for her, since it appeared she was not taking the speed limit seriously.

Trooper Troy Smith of Goodland testified at the preliminary hearing that Adams consented to a search of her car. During the search, he found an opened bottle of Smirnoff Vodka in front of the passenger seat and an unopened bottle of beer in a

cooler behind the driver's seat.

Trooper Joe Greene of Goodland administered a breath alcohol field test, which Adams failed. She was arrested for suspicion of driving under the influence.

She was taken to the Sherman County Bastille, Greene said, where breath tests pegged her blood alcohol content at .265 percent, more than three times the legal limit of .08.

Burr signed a motion in January ordering Adams to pay \$5,000 for the funeral expenses of Aline Becker.

The hearing ended with Burr requesting a presentencing report and scheduling a sentence hearing for Wednesday, May 25.

As members of the Becker, Wyatt and Williams families left the courtroom, one of them stopped to shake the hand of Scott Showalter, a deputy county attorney.

Adams was joined by a man and woman who could have been her parents. While Adams, a teacher, was living in the Denver area, her family is from Bartlesville, Okla.

No identity confirmed for bones in field

MISSING, from Page 1

is. Ault's father, Marco Ault Sr., and step-mother, Yvonne Ornelas, say they haven't heard anything on him at all.

Ornelas said she wondered whether they were about to get an answer when people were saying a body was found Wednesday. But when they heard it was bones, she

said, she knew it wasn't Marco.

Though the "body" not being Marco leaves the family hope that he is still alive, they would like to have some answers about where he is.

"There has been nothing new," Ornelas said. "We're trying to figure out who to contact. We're banging our heads on the wall figuring out what to do next."

Police Chief Ray Smee said he hasn't heard anything new, either.


After an article on Marco appeared in the March 25 issue of *The Goodland Star-News*, Ornelas said, there was an outpouring of support.

"Complete strangers are coming up and asking if we've heard anything," she said. "People have been so nice."

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