

Six people file for seats on council

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Two former council members, one active council member, a retired veterinarian, a city employee and a former teacher have decided to seek seats on the Oberlin City Council in the April 3 election.

Filing were:

- Jay Anderson, a retired veterinarian who has been active in economic development issues.
- Judy Cathcart, a business woman and former council member.
- Phil Erickson, a retired science teacher.
- Stan McEvoy, an insurance man and incumbent councilman.
- Richard Russ, a contractor and former councilman.
- Jim Soderlund, a lineman for the city.

All six came in the deadline day, last Tuesday, with the last, former council member Judy Cathcart, just 15 minutes before the noon deadline. Not only did all the candidates wait until the last day, but each chose to pay \$5 instead of getting signatures on a petition.

On the council, three positions are up for election. Council members who hold those seats now are Leslie Bartels, Gary Walter and Stan McEvoy, who is the only member who put in for re-election.

Mr. McEvoy has sat on the council for the last four years. During this time, he has been involved in many changes and discussions, including the water issue, which he said the council will need to work on for many years. In a list that he said is too long to complete in four years, he included street improvement, working on updating equipment and keeping a control on spending as issues.

"I feel that we have accomplished a lot in the last four years," said Mr. McEvoy, "but I don't feel that we are done with things that I have contributed to over the last four years. I think I have been helpful in making positive changes for the city."

One of the former council members who has decided to run in April is Richard Russ, who had one term from 1993 to 1997. Mr. Russ said that his first four years were used learning the process, and now he would like to put that to use. He said he is running for council for several reasons.

"We need people on the council who are willing to take a good hard look at the needs and make those tough decisions," he said.

Included in these, he said, are what to do with the water system, the sewer plant, the streets and where to cut and (Please see COUNCIL on Page 10A)

School board members file for office again

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Oberlin School Board members who represent districts 4, 5 and 6 have all decided to seek another four years in the April 3 election. No one filed to run against them, so except for write-ins, there will be no contests on the ballot.

Bringing in their \$5, all three came in to file at least a week before the noon deadline last Tuesday, said County Clerk Marilyn Horn, county election officer.

With only district 4, 5, and 6 in the election, there will be people in many townships that won't vote, she said. Maps of the districts were published in last week's *Oberlin Herald* on Page 5A. People who live in townships or parts of Oberlin that fall in Districts 1, 2, and 3 districts will not vote in the school election.

Board members have many responsibilities, including hiring administrators, setting the budget, approving bills and hiring employees for the schools.

Representing District 6 on the board is Chris Bailey of Norcat. Mr. Bailey was appointed two years ago to replace

Gary Gawith. He said he decided to run for office in April for many reasons, one of them being the bond issue that the board has been working on since August.

He said that it would be hard for someone new to jump in and know where the board started and how they got where they are now. He also said he feels extracurricular activities are important at the schools, and he feels he can improve those by helping to hire the right people.

Mr. Bailey was reared in the Kanona area and now farms there and on the outskirts of Norcat. He graduated from Decatur Community High School and attended Fort Hays State University.

Up for re-election in the 5th District is DeWayne Jackson, who has been on the board for the last four years.

Mr. Jackson was born in Norcat and lived there all his life, attending the school there until it closed in 1970, when he transferred to Oberlin. As a board member, he serves on the North- (Please see SCHOOL on Page 10A)

Ex-city administrator gets 15 days, must pay

Former Oberlin City Administrator Victoria Gordon was sentenced last week to 15 days in jail and two years on probation after pleading guilty to four misdemeanor counts of presenting a false claim.

Originally, Mrs. Gordon faced 10 felony counts and a misdemeanor charge from when she was executive director of the Coffey County Housing Authority. The charges were later amended.

Although officials were expecting a week-long trial for Mrs. Gordon, her attorney, Thomas Bath, and Coffey County Attorney Doug Witteman worked out a plea agreement.

In the plea, Mrs. Gordon said she was guilty to the amended complaint of the four misdemeanors.

All four have to do with a trip she took to a national conference in 1997.

The counts relate to an inappropriate hotel upgrade, a Mystery Theater dinner expense claim and San Diego Zoo ticket that was said to be a meal expense.

The conference took place before Mrs. Gordon started as the city administrator here. She started in September 1998, but her contract was canceled in July of the following year after months of controversy over policy changes, her spending habits and a supposedly unauthorized vacation.

In Coffey County, District Judge Phillip Fromme sentenced her to one year in jail for each of the four counts, but instead granted a two-year probation and ordered to pay \$2,500 restitution to the county for legal costs. She was also sentenced to pay \$1,500 in restitution to the housing authority and serve 15 days in jail.



Mrs. Gordon



WRAPPING SANDWICHES for Super Bowl Sunday (from left above) were Jennifer Thomas, Rick Doeden and Deanna Castle. Mrs. Castle, helping the United Methodist Youth Fellow-

ship, showed Rhys Davies (below) how to place the tops and bottoms of the buns to be the most effective.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt

Youths make super sandwich for the big game

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Trays of cheeses, meats and bread lined tables in the basement of the Oberlin United Methodist Church early afternoon Sunday. Teens wore gloves and made sandwiches under the eye of adult volunteers.

The United Methodist Youth Fellowship made around 740 sandwiches, which the kids had sold and then delivered for Super Bowl Sunday.

Each sandwich cost \$3.50 or the group also sold combo packs which had four sandwiches, a two-liter bottle of soda and chips for \$15.

The group had sold the sandwiches weeks before the big game and then ordered their supplies from Raye's Grocery a little over a week ago. Jeanie Martin, high school sponsor for the youth group, said that the grocery has always worked well with them on the project. That included baking

about 740 buns the day before the event for them.

One member of the youth fellowship sold 102 sandwiches by himself. David Barth won top honors and received certificates for food and free movie rentals.

Mrs. Martin said that he got the church roster and started at the top, calling each person on the list.

The volunteers took about an hour to make all the sandwiches with two cheeses, ham, salami, bologna, lettuce and Italian dressing. They then spent about two hours delivering them before the game started.

Mrs. Martin said that she isn't sure how much money the kids raised, but that in the past the fund raiser has worked out well for them.

The youth group uses the money for trips that they take throughout the year. One trip they took with the money from last year was to Denver



to work in a homeless shelter. The group also traveled to Colorado Springs to work in a soup kitchen. (Please see LUNCH on Page 10A)

New officials report smooth sailing so far

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

She spends more time in the office doing a job she has learned over the years and he spends more time in the car traveling to different courts, all of which is part of the job.

At the beginning of the month, Register of Deeds Judy Gaumer and 17th District Judge Bill Elliott were sworn into office. Both say they haven't hit any bumps in the road yet.

Mrs. Gaumer, who had been deputy register, said that she hasn't had any problems in the office and has been able to use the knowledge she learned while she was the deputy.

"Pat Whetzel trained me in all the areas of the register of deeds office," she said, "so I am now just doing more of each thing."

Basically, the two have traded jobs. Mrs. Whetzel, who held the office for 26 years, has taken over the deputy position. Mrs. Gaumer said this has

made the transition much smoother.

The other office in the county that will see a change due to the election is the treasurer, but Pat Fringer will not leave office until Oct. 31 when the tax roll closes. At that time, Jean Hale, who is the deputy, will take over.

On Jan. 8, Mr. Elliott took office as judge of the 17th Judicial District after 25 years of practicing law.

Judge Elliott said that he has had some things to adjust to, including sitting behind the bench instead of standing in front of it.

"As an attorney, one is typically interested in representing the client," he said. "As a judge, one is required to listen to both sides as they are presented and stay out of any advocacy role either way."

Although he is still getting used to the job, he said there haven't been any big problems yet. There are cases that he is working on which were started when

Judge Charles Worden was on the bench. For those, he said, he has had homework to do and files to read to see what happened in them before January. This isn't unusual for judges to have to do though, he said; one case that he listened to recently started in 1991.

He said that on his desk sits six inches of folders for one hearing. Before he goes into the court, he needs to have all of those read.

"It takes quite a few hours," said Judge Elliott, "and will take more time until I become acquainted with all the cases."

Also as district judge, Mr. Elliott, who had been county attorney for Graham County, said he now spends more time traveling. He said that at the beginning of his law practice, he traveled a lot and decided that he wanted to stay in the same area more. Now he is back to driving. Last week, he spent time in Oberlin, Norton, Osborne and Hill

City.

Judge Elliott said that he is estimating three to four days a week he will be on the road, although he will still try to spend at least one day in the office. He said that he is starting to get used to the travel time. From Hill City, he said it takes about an hour and half to get to Oberlin after he stops to pick up other officials.

On the way to a case, he said he has time to review the day's docket, and on the way back he has the chance to visit with staff, take care of administrative matters and wind down.

Judge Elliott said that the clerks of the district court in each county have all been very helpful and easy to get along with, as well as the lawyers he has worked with thus far.

In Decatur County, Judge Elliott made one change, putting motion day on Tuesdays instead of Monday mornings.

Telethon gave to 20 organizations last year

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Last year, the Seeds of Hope Telethon gave 20 organizations in Decatur County \$600 each, and this year 21 organizations will receive money from the event, which will be 1 to 10 p.m. on Sunday at The Gateway.

Organizations from last year used the money raised in the telethon, auction and walk-a-thon in many ways. The Oberlin Lions Club will use the money for shingles for the shelter house at Sappa Park, said Lions member Jack Benton. Each square of shingles costs about \$100 to \$160, he said so the money will go to purchase anywhere from three and a half to six squares of shingles for the roof.

Mr. Benton, who also sits on the telethon board, said that this year they had some different organizations ask for money.

"Normally each year we have the same people put in for money, he said. "Although we get a few different ones, all of them are nonprofit groups in the county."

An organization which asked for money last year and didn't this year was the Elden Auker Park fund in Norcat. City Clerk Chris Dempewolf, who helped with the park, said that last year they asked for the money to purchase playground equipment. Although the \$600 didn't cover the entire expense,

it did help, she said. The equipment includes two slides, a rock climber and a tube for kids to play on.

Groups which asked for money this year and didn't last year include the Jennings Heritage Associates, Oberlin Cub Scouts, Oberlin Swim Club and the Oberlin Jaycees. Other groups that asked for a donation this year are American Family Radio, Decatur Area Theater Association, Decatur County Chamber of Commerce, Decatur County Ministerial Association, Decatur County Museum, Decatur County Stand Against Violence, Doorway Ministries, Forget-Me-Nots, Jennings City Library, King's Kids, Norcat preschool, (Please see SEEDS on Page 10A)

There won't be a primary election for area city councils or school boards

With the exception of two who are up for re-election, no one in Jennings, Norcatour or Dresden filed by last Tuesday for school board or city council in those cities.

Those who came in and paid their \$5 fee were Louise Cressler for the Jennings City Council and Sarah Coiner for the school board. Both are incumbents.

With no contests, there will not be a primary in February, said County Clerk Marilyn Horn, who is the county's election officer.

Ballots for the April 3 election in the Dresden, Jennings and Norcatour areas will be almost blank, she said, with areas for write-in candidates. The write-in who receives the top number of votes will win each position. Mrs. Horn said that there will be separate ballots for school and city elections to cut down on confusion.

Those positions that are up on the council in Dresden are held by Mayor Russell Rhodes, who took over after the former mayor resigned, and the position vacated by Mr. Rhodes, which was

taken over by Ron Jacobs. If they want to continue in the positions for the remaining three years of the terms, they will have to be elected.

Three other seats which are up for election are held by Don Sulzman, Don Ritter and Clifford Mowry, all two-year seats.

The Jennings City Council has three spaces that will be open, now occupied by Mayor Richard Rowilson, Mrs. Cressler and Bob Jones. All are four-year positions.

Norcatour has four positions up for

election, including one which is vacant now. The others are held by Mayor Doug Dempewolf, Linda Hunt and Colleen Ramsey.

On the Jennings School Board, positions up for election are held by Vickie Bailey, Rhonda Wildeman and Jeff Wahlmeier for four-year terms. There is also one two-year term which is now held by Mrs. Coiner. Seats in the Jennings district are elected at-large.

Mrs. Horn said that those who haven't registered to vote yet, may do so until 9 p.m. on March 19.

* School board needs 3

(Continued from Page 1A)
west Kansas Education Service Center board.

Similar to Mr. Bailey, he said that one of the main reasons he chose to run again is because it would be difficult for a new person to move into the position with the bond issue now. When he was elected, he said, the board was at an impasse with the teachers and although he didn't make any of the decisions leading up to it, he heard about it. Recently, the district and teachers have had a better relationship, he said. He noted that he has been in on the bond issue from day one.

Mr. Jackson said that as a board member, he is open to hearing from the people. He said that there have been times that suggestions from the public haven't been thought of in the board room, but he doesn't think that is the case today. For example, there was a time when a person asked him about a guard rail on the north side of the elementary school. The board hadn't thought of it before, he said, but decided it was a good idea and put one in.

For the 4th district, Delayne May, who was originally appointed to the board to take Ward Sauvage's seat, filed for re-election. Mrs. May's first election was in 1989. Mrs. May was too busy to talk during the times she was called at home.

None of the candidates thought that they would be doing any type of campaigning at this point.

* Seeds telethon Saturday

(Continued from Page 1A)
Oberlin Arts and Humanities, Oberlin Boy Scouts, Oberlin Girl Scouts, Oberlin Lions, Salvation Army and Teens for Christ.

Last year, the Chamber used the \$600 to help operate its office on Main Street, said Manager Helen Gee. This year, the money will go to the general operating budget.

The telethon committee has set a goal of raising \$12,000 for this, the seventh year, although the event raised \$12,400 last year. The show will be televised on the local access channel 7 on Oberlin cable. Those who don't get the channel can watch the show at The Gateway.

The day will be filled with interviews from each of the 21 groups, talent, food, an auction, a walk-a-thon and challenges. Challenges will be made the day of the telethon for certain people to donate money. For example, one could be made for all elected officials to donate \$2.

For those who want to participate in the walk-a-thon, forms can be picked up at the Hirsch and Pratt law office on Main Street. Across the street at the United Northwest Federal Credit Union, items that have been donated for the auction are on display.

* Lunch on for bowl

(Continued from Page 1A)
This year, a trip is planned is to a mission in Kentucky. The trip would be 11 days, including two on each end for travel, and then they would work a week doing light construction and clean up.

Mrs. Martin said that she has had a few kids express interest in this.

The fellowship has been doing the fundraiser for about eight or nine years, she said, and at one time made as many as 1,200 sandwiches.

The group is looking for a junior high sponsor, she added.

Going for two points



SAMANTHA COOPER DRIBBLED the ball down the court at The Gateway during the Kansas Special Olympics game against the Decatur County firemen. As a team member for the Northwest Wind, she helped rack up points for a final score of 100 to 40.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Brandt

* Council election sparks interest in half a dozen Oberlin people

(Continued from Page 1A)
where to spend money.

Mrs. Cathcart also sat on the council from 1991-1995. She said that she also ran for a seat two years ago but was not elected.

"The first four years were a learning experience," said Mrs. Cathcart. "I feel more aware of how it works now and what is needed."

There are many issues that she said the council needs to look at in the next four years, including the water project, health insurance and even the possibility of the school bond issue, which will take another bite out of the tax dollars.

"I am real concerned with the lack of unity that the council seems to have," said Mrs. Cathcart. "There are so many important things coming up, and if you aren't united, it will be difficult to move

forward."

Jay Anderson, a retired veterinarian, said he decided to run partly because he sees the work that needs to be done.

He said he thinks that everyone has duties and obligations. He said that he has no agenda, but can see that there is a long, hard process ahead for everyone.

"We have some very tough items that are coming up," said Mr. Anderson. "They will take a lot of hard and detailed work, such as the infrastructure and water system."

The fifth candidate for the council is Jim Soderlund, who has worked for the city for the past 13 years on the line crew and a volunteer fireman. Whether Mr. Soderlund can hold the position of councilman if elected is questionable. A ruling by the Kansas Supreme Court

ruled last year that a teacher cannot sit on the school board where she was employed because a person can't be both the employer and an employee. While the decision applied to schools, the court cited a common law principle that a person cannot be both employer and employee in a public agency.

Mr. Soderlund was unable to be reached.

Phil Erickson, a retired science teacher, said he decided to run because he felt it would be a good way to serve the community. In the past, he has been on the museum and mental health boards here.

Mr. Erickson said that he sees water and the higher cost of energy as two main issues.

With only six people running for the office, there will be no primary.

Police want to get junk cars out of city

The Oberlin Police Department has started sending out notices to people in town who have junk vehicles parked on their property, including those that are not tagged or registered.

Police Chief Wade Lockhart said that they started the notices because there had gotten to be way too many junk vehicles in town.

If you are served a notice, you have 10 days to remove the vehicle and then will get a summons to court.

The owner can face a fine not to exceed \$100 or be jailed up to 30 days or both.

On Friday night, officers arrested a young man after a routine traffic stop on U.S. 83. A citizen had called in reporting that the car didn't have any tail lights.

Chief Lockhart said that several officers were called to the scene because there were three people in the car.

Raul Acosta, Garden City, was taken to the Decatur County Jail because he was driving with a suspended license. His bond was set at \$500 and he hadn't made it by Monday. The other two were released and Chief Lockhart said they

left town.

There was one minor accident reported last week, the chief said. After the basketball game at Decatur Community High School on Jan. 16, Jake

Robinson, 16, was driving out of the parking lot on the north side when his car slid on the ice. The car ended up on top of a post in the lot, hanging from its bumper.

Get books through mail

The 2001 Mail-A-Book catalog is available from the Northwest Kansas Library System.

This service offers a large selection of new paperback books direct through the mail to residents of towns without libraries, to rural readers who live outside the city limits and to "homebound" readers.

Books for all ages and interests may be selected from the catalog and are

mailed with return postage included so that there is no expense involved for the reader.

It is available in Cheyenne, Decatur, Gove, Logan, Norton, Sheridan, Sherman, Thomas, Trego and Wallace counties.

For details or to receive a catalog, call the Oberlin City Library at 475-2412, or call (800) 432-2858, or e-mail ILLOAN@ruraltel.net

Camera class starts soon

Mike Walinder will teach a class on digital cameras from 9 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday at Walsh/Brady Hall, room 103, at McCook Community College.

The workshop will provide all information needed to use a digital camera.

For details, call (800) 658-4348 extension 235.



Wagner/Ford

2 x 21.5
obh/adv

sent to gdl