

Polls open Tuesday for election

The polls will be open Tuesday for the general election which will determine the next Oberlin mayor and fill mayor and council seats in all four Decatur County cities.

During the primary election at the beginning of the month, the mayoral candidates were narrowed to three: Bill Riedel, Judy Scott and Rhonda May.

Polling places will be open in Oberlin, Dresden, Jennings and Norcat from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The general election will also include:

- Jim Miesner, Tim Bowen and Rusty Addleman, for two seats on the Oberlin City Council. While both Janice Guthrie and Nolan Johnson will appear on the ballot, they have pulled out of the race.

- Dan Nedland, Dan Grafel, Monte Moore and Jerry Chambers for the four at-large seats on the Oberlin School Board. All are incumbents.

- Peggy Pratt and Cathy Anthony for the two seats open on the Twin Creeks Extension District board.

- Wava Reames, Jerry Hill and Jim Plotts for the three open seats on the Norcat City Council. All are incumbents.

- Scott Taylor for mayor and Erma Jean Spreser and Margaret Rhodes for Dresden City Council. All three are incumbents.

- No one filed for the three spots open on the Jennings City Council. Those are currently held by Rick Foster, Pat Hall and Stann Hartzog.

Candidates give answers at city forum

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Around 25 people gathered last Tuesday to meet the three candidates running for two seats on the Oberlin City Council.

The forum, sponsored by the Decatur Professional Women and paid for by a donation from the Bargain Box Plus, was held at The Gateway. Each candidate had a chance to answer each question.

Both Janice Guthrie and Nolan Johnson, who filed for the council, have withdrawn their names from the race. Neither was present at the forum.

Decatur Professional Women member Diane Barret moderated the forum with Cynthia Haynes as timer. The questions came from a committee of club members.

The questions, and answers, from the candidates Rusty Addleman, Tim Bowen and Jim Miesner follow.

"Given multiple issues that need to be addressed in Oberlin, name the top three you feel need immediate attention."

The current council, said Mr. Miesner, has a pretty good agenda lined up. The next project coming up is the water treatment plant, he said, and the water mains. That deserves a lot of priority. At \$6 million, it's the most money Oberlin has ever spent on one project.

Second, said Mr. Miesner, there's been lots of delays on the airport. He said when he was a kid, Dr. Brewster used to fly in to see patients. This area might be progressing back to that stage before long.

The third priority, he said, is the streets. Some of the brick ones have taken a real pounding, said

Mr. Miesner.

Mr. Addleman said the airport project is his top priority. Good people who know what they are doing have been working on that project for some time, he said. Hopefully it will help improve the economy here.

Second is the city's infrastructure, he said, especially the electrical and streets.

Third, said Mr. Addleman, is The Gateway. It's important to see if there is anything that the city can do to make it profitable or at least close to that.

Mr. Bowen said the airport is water under the bridge since it's already proceeding. The streets, he said, need to be addressed, possibly by re-routing some of the grain trucks from downtown.

Also, said Mr. Bowen, it's important to work toward getting some new businesses in town and get the downtown back up and going again.

"What life experiences have you had that prepare you to be a member of the city council?"

Mr. Bowen said he joined the Navy when he was 17 and retired 15 years later. He said he had 30 people working for him at one time. He said he took an early retirement and worked in maintenance for large businesses. He said he has learned to schedule things, work under deadline and with budgets.

Mr. Miesner said he left Oberlin to get a college education in geology and also served in the Navy. When he worked for a large energy company, he was designated as the company pilot and has his license, although he can't use it now. Mr

(See FORUM on Page 8A)



Center puts on a party

AT THE LEGION hall on Saturday night, Jaime Sauder (above) held up a wreath during the live auction at the Good Samaritan Center's annual Hoedown. Sid and Cheryl Metcalf (right) spun around the dance floor. The center sold all 140 available tickets. Money raised at the event may go to purchase an exercise bike for the residents.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



Herndon man remembered for his pizza

By MARY LOU OLSON
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If you enjoyed pizza and wanted to have a good time, the place to go in Herndon was Pooch's Pizza.

The owner of the business, Harold "Pooch" Portschy, served up his famous pizza for many years before retiring in 2001. Mr. Portschy, 88, died at the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center in Oberlin on March 15.

A lifelong resident of Herndon, he moved to the center five years ago, and said the place became a "second home" to him.

"After moving there earlier to try it out, he decided to return home," said his niece, Cheri Kastens. "However, after being home a short while, he told me, 'I've got to get back there; I'm missing all the fun!'"

And when he returned that time, home it was. He enjoyed visitors any time, but they were

warned by the staff never to come during the "Dr. Phil Show" because that was his favorite television program.

After moving to Oberlin, he even prepared his pizza at the nursing home for a big crowd at a fund raiser in the fall of 2007.

"Pooch was a friend to all the staff and many of the residents," Administrator Janice Shobe said. "His room was near the back door, and he always said, 'Good night' to the staff as they left. He was a great guy who gave the whole place an atmosphere of vitality and interest."

He was born on a farm near Herndon on Jan. 12, 1923, the son of John and Frances (Moser) Portschy. He attended Martin and Stoney rural schools, then graduated from Herndon High School in 1940. He was always a big baseball fan and served as umpire all over northwest Kansas, but especially at games in Herndon, Ludell and Atwood.

"I used to sit with him in the hitter's box at the games in Herndon" said Don Grafel, "and he was always pulling tricks or shenanigans on others, which he would get a kick out of."

Mr. Portschy served in the U.S. Navy from 1944 to 1946. He did his boot camp training in San Diego, then was sent by train to Lido Beach, N.Y., on Long Island. Later he was stationed at Norman, Okla., where he also umpired baseball games.

His father hauled eggs to Denver for Jesse Matchett of Herndon, and when he was no longer able to do it, Pooch took over his route. When the egg distributor in Denver sold out, he decided to buy the former Escher Grocery building, and he and his wife, the former Irene (Hartner) Hafner, who he married in 1973, opened up the pizza business in 1975.

Arian Arnold said she remembers when she

(See HERNDON on Page 8A)

Owner wants the OK to keep boa in town

The Oberlin City Council put off a request from an Oberlin woman to make an exception or give her permission to keep her seven-foot-long boa constrictor, Goliath.

Aiyya Eaton asked the council during the public forum time on the agenda for permission to keep her pet in her home on York Avenue.

City Administrator Karen Larson said the ordinance on exotic animals says that boa constrictors aren't permitted inside city limits.

Ms. Eaton said the boa is her pet and she would like an exception made so she can keep it. She said Goliath, a red-tailed boa, lives inside a cage in her home.

Mrs. Larson said the animal con-

trol officer got a call when the people at the housing complex found out Ms. Eaton had the snake.

Mrs. Larson said she was told that the cage is well built and has a padlock on it.

The council decided to table a decision until its next meeting on Thursday, April 7, at The Gateway.

Ms. Eaton, said Mrs. Larson, said just because the snake isn't a good pet, doesn't mean it isn't a fuzzy pet, or that she doesn't love it or care for it.



City Council

Long time resident wants projects done

Saying he'd like to see some projects come to fruition, Rusty Addleman decided to run for a spot on the Oberlin City Council.

Mr. Addleman said when he filed for the seat, hardly anyone was signed up to run, and that concerned him. He said he would like to see the city's airport project finished. It's what the people voted for.

Mr. Addleman was born and raised in Oberlin, went to college in Emporia and then on to the University of Kansas for pharmacy school. He then served in the Air Force for a little over nine years.

In 1976, he and his wife Sharon, also an Oberlin graduate, moved back to Oberlin. For a little under a year, he served as the director of a program helping in underserved medical areas.

After that, he took over the family drug store on Main Street. Since he closed the store he has done relief work as a pharmacist.

Mr. Addleman said he's concerned about the city's infrastructure, or physical plant and facilities, including the electrical service and streets. It seems that the water problem is about to be solved with the new treatment plant.

The town has an excellent school system and health care, he said, although we need more doctors. Oberlin has a great location, being at the intersection of two major

highways and between two Interstates, and that should benefit the new airport.

The Gateway is an asset for the city, said Mr. Addleman. The new recreation and senior center on Main Street, with the up-to-date theater and bowling alley, is state of the art. He added that the impression he gets is that the bowling alleys in other area towns are getting run down, so the new one might be a pull for people to come here.

Mr. Addleman said it's important for Oberlin to be attractive for recruiting people to come here. The town needs recreation facilities for everyone. He said he's a golfer, and the country club is strictly done by volunteers. He would like to see some support from the city and county. It's an excellent course and it wouldn't take a whole lot to make it a premiere course.

Mr. Addleman said he has been a member of the Oberlin Rotary Club since 1977, is a member of the American Legion, the Country Club board, the United Church, the Oberlin Business Alliance and the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Addleman said he is open to participating in council member training.

Mr. Addleman and his wife have three grown children, two daughters and a son, and six grandkids.



R. Addleman

Newcomer wants to make a difference

Saying he has a desire to make a difference, Tim Bowen filed for a seat on the Oberlin City Council.

Mr. Bowen, originally from South Dakota, moved to Oberlin two years ago. He said his parents, Marlin and Charlotte Bowen, moved here first.

Real estate prices are lower here, he said, and so are the grocery prices.

Mr. Bowen said he's always been interested in city politics. Hopefully, if elected, he said, he can make a difference. It would be nice to see the city have some new businesses and growth, at least enough to fill up all the empty houses that are for sale.

Some of the city's selling points, he said, are the lower prices people pay for real estate here, Sappa Park, The Gateway and, of course, the friendly people. It doesn't get much better than that, he said.

Mr. Bowen said his main concern is just getting some businesses to move back into Oberlin. It's important that people start moving back.

Another idea is to hold more festivals, in addition to what we have, to bring in people to visit.

Mr. Bowen said he has a new perspective to share if elected on the way things are done. He said he's not saying anything bad about the old ways things were done at the city, but it did get the city where

it is now.

He is retired from the military. Mr. Bowen said he also has been in charge of apartments and owned

his own business, a handyman service, for the past two years in Oberlin. While in the military, he worked with maintenance and budgets.

He said he's not interested in whether an idea belongs to a Democrat or Republican, but in looking at each issue and coming up with a

solution. If elected, he said, he would be open to taking part in the council member training. It's important to learn all the rules and ins and outs of the job.

He said he just joined the Decatur Tomorrow organization.



Tim Bowen

Friends urge man to run for office

After several friends urged him to run for the Oberlin City Council, Jim Miesner said he decided to file for a spot in the upcoming general election.

Mr. Miesner, who graduated from Decatur Community High School in 1956, said since moving back home, he thought he should do something for the community. Serving on the council is a way to do that, he said.

Mr. Miesner and his wife Ruth moved to Oberlin three years ago.

He said they decided to move here because they wanted a change in lifestyle from hectic to more laid back. They were also looking for somewhere a little more affordable.

Mr. Miesner added that he has always liked the people here. The people here, he said, are one of Oberlin's greatest assets.

Another asset to the city is Sappa Park. It needs to be updated, he said, so that it can be used to its full potential.

The brick streets are really a draw for people, he said. Anyone who comes to Oberlin and hasn't been here before really is impressed by the brick streets.

Mr. Miesner said he is a level-headed person. If elected to the council, he plans to look at all sides of things and consider all the options before making any

decision. He said he understands there is a class for new council members about the Open Meetings Act and other areas and he would participate in that training.

The city's airport project needs to really get started, he said. The current council has already started on a water treatment plant, which is another big project.

Mr. Miesner said the city needs to continue to make sure it gets the most efficient use out of all tax dollars.

He and his wife have three sons, the oldest lives in Manhattan, the middle one in Denver and youngest died in February. They have one grandchild.

Mr. Miesner serves as the adjutant of the Oberlin American Legion Post and on the board of elders at St. John's Lutheran Church. He has also served on the board of the Sunflower Chapter of Pheasants Forever.



J. Miesner

*Forum offers council candidates place to be heard

(Continued from Page 1A) Miesner is a retired petroleum geologist.

Mr. Addleman said he also left Oberlin for school and served in the Air Force for a little over nine years. During that time, he was involved in projects of \$1 million and more. He said he was a clinic administrator several times. He also owned his own business for over 30 years here.

"Is there an alternative to industry that could be financially beneficial to this community?"

It seems the community has looked at the industrial end of things and hasn't been successful, said Mr. Addleman. Hopefully, he said, the airport addition will bring in some industry and businesses. Also, he said he feels the city needs to fill up the empty businesses downtown. He noted that he is at fault as much as anyone on that, but he said, the city needs jobs and reasons for people to move back here.

Getting Sappa Park up and going is important, said Mr. Bowen, so that people can be camping out there. The town needs more businesses, he said, and should work on getting The Gateway used more. Back several administrators ago, he said, The Gateway was a busy building. It's important to find out why that changed, he said, and get it going again.

Oberlin, said Mr. Miesner, needs to think outside the box. There are lots of great opportunities here. Sappa Park is one of them. This area isn't blessed with a whole lot of water or with the best transportation, but it does have assets like Sappa Park and great hunting. That needs to be promoted.

"What steps should be taken to address the financial issues that plague Oberlin? If you had to make cuts in the city budget, what would

you cut and how?"

Mr. Bowen said he's not familiar with the city's current budget, which makes it hard to say where he would cut.

Mr. Addleman agreed. While in the service, he said, he was involved with budgets and thinks they are an important part of city government. Mr. Addleman said he would maybe look at a replacement program for heavy equipment and whether the city needs all the facilities it has. He added that he thinks the council has done a good job with the work force the city has and hiring contract labor where needed.

Mr. Miesner said he agreed with both men. He added that he thinks they need to find a way to stop "the bleeding" at The Gateway, and find a way to promote the facility.

"Do you believe beer gardens at local events would be an appropriate way to make us more competitive with neighboring communities who promote them, in an effort to draw more participants at their annual festivals and events?"

Mr. Miesner said he's certainly not against them, but it would need to be in a tightly enclosed area and have security.

Mr. Addleman said he's not against them, either.

Beer gardens, said Mr. Bowen, are a good marketing tool.

"In your opinion, what would make the greatest impact on our town to turn it from a good town into an excellent town to work and live in?"

It's already a nice town, said Mr. Bowen, but getting more business here would be good. Other than that, it's really a great place to live.

It's already an excellent town, said Mr. Miesner. One idea is to make it more affordable, which is one of the reasons he moved back here. In the near future, he said, the

city is going to have to raise water rates and the electric rates have already gone up. It's important to keep expenses down.

Mr. Addleman said he thinks the majority of the people don't realize what we have here. It's important to support local businesses, he said, adding that he is concerned about the health-care system. There are definitely plenty of churches, he said, but he wishes they could all be filled. Oberlin has good schools and it's a good community, but it can be better.

"What ideas would you explore to make the Boys Ranch property and Sappa Park a more lucrative venue that might bring in money to support city projects and services?"

Mr. Miesner said he hasn't seen the facilities at the former boys ranch because of the "no trespassing" signs. Maybe it could be turned into a lodge, he said. It's always been looked at as a place for kids who are in trouble, but maybe it could be used for kids who do exceptionally well as a camp or something like that.

Mr. Bowen said he's never been out there, either. It might be a good place for a hotel or a Scout camp or Bible camp.

Mr. Addleman said he has seen the facility. He said he's not sure if the project to have the military use it a regional training hub is completely out the window. It would be a nice place for camps in the summer or something in the winter.

"If elected, how would you work and/or interact with citizens to learn of any new or different ideas that might be pursued to benefit the area?"

Mr. Bowen said he would like to see the television camera back in the council meetings and get people more involved that way. He said maybe the city should have an

e-mail program where people can contact a council member.

Mr. Addleman said he's willing to have an open-door policy. People can call or come see him when he's out and about. Maybe the city needs to have a "town hall meeting" once a quarter. It's important for the council to listen to the people, he said, because some have a lot of good ideas.

Mr. Miesner said he thinks council members need to listen to everyone. He said he's noticed that since he announced he was running for council, he's already had several conversations about the city. He agreed an open-door policy is important.

"If elected to the council what priority would you assign to the north/south runway rehabilitation and subsequent proposal for the 5,500 foot realignment?"

Mr. Addleman said it would be his first priority.

Mr. Miesner agreed that it's a priority, saying it's sad that work hasn't started.

If he understands things correctly, said Mr. Bowen, the money isn't here yet for the projects. When working with the government, he said, there can be a lot of waiting. Also, more land is needed. He added that he knows there's a lot of people who are working hard on the airport.

"What do you see as the most important trait of a community leader and why?"

Mr. Bowen said you have to listen to people. It's important to not do things for the few when the majority is saying something else, he said.

It's important, said Mr. Addleman, to have an open mind and to research and get as much information as possible. It's also important to get input from the staff.

Mr. Miesner agreed, saying that

the council is working for the people. When it comes time to act, the council needs to act. They also need to keep in mind that any time a new law or ordinance is passed, it takes a little bit more of a person's freedom away.

The candidates talked a little about the importance of replacing the streets and the need to do something about the smell from the sewer lagoons. None of the candidates thought there were any programs or projects that they would discontinue.

Each was given four minutes to summarize their thoughts.

Mr. Bowen said he would really like to see the city market itself to bring in more people and businesses. It would be good to find ways to pay for the airport and water projects without having to raise utility prices or taxes, he said.

Inevitably, taxes will have to be raised and so will prices, he added, but hopefully those can be kept to a bare minimum.

U.S. 36 is going to be four lanes some day and the way people talk, U.S. 83 could be, too. It's going to be important to market the city, said Mr. Bowen.

Mr. Miesner said he agrees with

Mr. Bowen. All three of the candidates, he said, are essentially saying the same thing. It's a priority to bring in business. He said he would like to see small businesses come in and people with them.

The city needs to spend its money wisely and efficiently and get the most value out of each dollar, he said.

Mr. Addleman said he was born and raised here and chose to move back to Oberlin. He would like to see people continue to be able to move back here.

He said he doesn't have all the solutions, but hopes that he can work to be part of the solution to some of the city's problems.

The council has a tough row to hoe, he said, and lots of hard decisions to make. Mr. Addleman said he appreciates the work the present council and Mayor Joe Stanley have done.

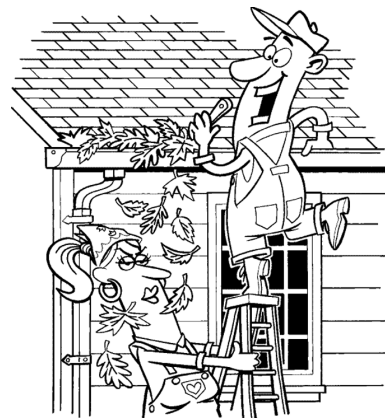
It's important with this job to have a sense of humor, too, said Mr. Addleman. A council member should take the job seriously, but with a grain of salt.

Please clip out this ad and save for handy reference.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The burning of vegetation, limbs and other organic material will be permitted (no rubber tires):
Friday, March 25,
through
Monday, May 9
provided adequate safety measures are taken, and being mindful of wind conditions.

By order of
City Mayor
Joe Stanley



Please Help Keep
Oberlin
LOOKING CLEAN!

*Herndon man was a friend to many

(Continued from Page 1A) and her husband Steve took her cousins, Sven and Ingali Lindqvist and Peter of Stockholm, Sweden, to eat at Pooch's, the visitors left with one of his bumper stickers, which advertised Pooch's Pizza all over Sweden.

In 2001, Mr. Portschy suffered a debilitating heart attack, and he later closed the business.

Survivors include a

brother, Virgil "Pete" and Eileen Portschy; a sister, Martha and Nick Korbe Sr.; a brother-in-law, Billy T. Henderson; a daughter, Beth Chartier-Hraha; a son, Robert and Julie Hafner; 13 grandchildren; and 24 great-grandchildren.

He was also preceded in death by his parents; an infant sister, Janice Lee; a sister, Hazel Henderson; a brother, Charles and Virginia Portschy; a son, Richard Hafner; and two

sons-in-law, Richard Chartier and Francis Hraha.

Mass of Christian Burial was held Saturday, March 19, 2011, at St. Mary Assumption Catholic Church in Herndon with Father Nick Parker officiating. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Memorials were established in

his name to the nursing home or the church. Contributions may be sent to Williams Funeral Home, 109 N. Second, Atwood, Kan., 67740.

Spring Fashion Soiree

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