

Six bid for labor, school positions

By **LESLIE RATLEY**
Of the Emerald

Every four years the governor's race receives much attention in Oregon, but voters are also asked to decide on two other state-wide races — superintendent of public instruction and labor commissioner.

Three people have currently filed to run for superintendent of public instruction, which is a non-partisan office.

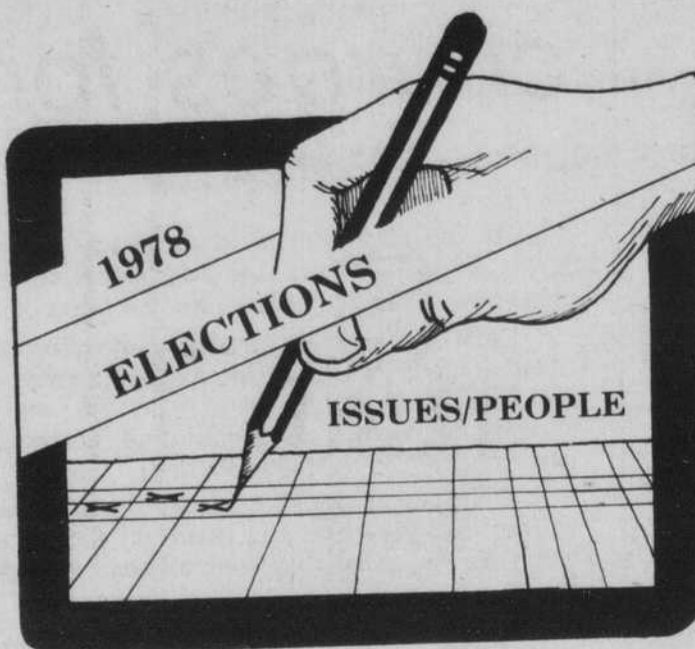
State Sen. Fred Heard of Klamath Falls and Ruth McFarland, a biological sciences instructor at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, are challenging incumbent Verne Duncan, Milwaukie, for the position that supervises educational decisions from kindergarten to community colleges.

According to reports all three candidates stressed the need for more emphasis on learning basic skills in the primary levels so people will be prepared for a vocation or higher education.

Heard criticized the incumbent for not providing enough coordination between districts and letting the communities "drift."

He cited the controversial minimum graduation requirements for high schools, saying "The state mandate is in a shambles, there is no effort to find programs that are good and spread the ideas around to other schools."

In response Duncan felt "the state shouldn't be dic-



tatorial. I think the districts should run their own show. We just hand down general rules, but we do make an effort to coordinate the programs, and I think the coordination is fantastic. Oregon is way ahead of other states."

Duncan felt the charges leveled at him were just "political rhetoric."

Duncan said neither of his two opponents could qualify for a position as a principal — an experience he feels is vital for properly fulfilling the duties of the office. He emphasized that everyday he deals with situations where he draws on his experiences as a principal, as well as service in various other county positions.

However, Heard feels uniquely qualified for the position due to his "vast experience in all levels of committee work in the Legislature."

McFarland was not available for comment.

In the race for labor commissioner, two Republicans and a Democrat have currently filed.

Democrat W.R. Shuck and Republican Emery Hutton were unavailable for comment, but Republican John Smets expressed great concern the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF, workman's compensation). He said the fund is not managed properly adding the attitude taken is one of "Well, the money's there, so why not use it?"

Smets emphasized the need to protect manufacturers from "rip-offs" from SAIF. He said every time a claim is made the insurance rates increase, affecting business by either putting them out of business or driving their prices up — causing higher consumer costs.

He also stressed the importance of developing summer jobs for city and farm children. He said "Kids ought to be allowed to work in the fields during the summer to keep them out of mischief."

Incumbent to seek District 39 re-election

By **TOM JACKSON**
Of the Emerald

State Rep. Grattan Kerans, D-Eugene, Tuesday announced he will seek re-election to the Oregon House District 39 seat, and he also announced a plan to ease Oregon taxpayer's burden by about \$75 million annually.

Kerans, 37, revealed a plan to allow taxpayers to deduct up to \$400 from their taxable income to

combat the effects of inflation.

Citing a legislative surplus in general fund money that was used during the 1977 legislative session for increases in the state's Homeowner-Renter Relief Program and a new elderly weatherization tax credit, Kerans said the surplus is obtained by the state taxing people for more money because of cost of living pay increases.

The plan, which would allow up to \$40 in reduced taxes would be

available to Oregonians at all income levels.

"We've been getting tax revenue in this way for years," Kerans said, "and it's nice to have. But it just isn't fair."

Kerans' plan would make the tax deduction dependent on the Portland Consumer Price Index (CPI). According to Kerans, the proposal would add two lines to the state tax form allowing voters to subtract their total taxable income by whatever is the increase in the Portland CPI.

"Each of us in the labor force gets increases to keep up with in-

flation," Kerans said. "That increase leaves you exactly even as far as purchasing power is concerned."

Because the state taxes the increase in pay, the taxpayer can't keep up with inflation Kerans, a two-term legislator, added.

"It's doubly bad when you're not quite keeping up with inflation and still being taxed," he said.

Kerans said a Republican plan to use the budget surpluses caused by inflation to fund school finance plans is "a rank piece of political chicanery and is the most transparent sham I've ever seen."

Kerans, the owner of a Eugene publishing company, said his proposal would force the legislature to "have a tighter budget."

Citing his legislative record in property tax relief, school support, energy conservation, criminal justice, senior citizen legislation and government accountability, Kerans said, "I believe an examination of my record and the approach I will be taking on the issues recommend me for re-election."

Kerans is the only democrat who has yet filed for the office.

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'Public utility' threatens PP&L

By **KATHLEEN MONJE**
Of the Emerald

County residents started a campaign to replace Pacific Power and Light (PP&L) with a publicly owned utility company Tuesday.

The Committee for an Emerald People's Utility District (CEPUD) hopes to collect enough petition signatures to get a citizens' initia-

tive on the November 1978 general election ballot.

They plan to circulate petitions in eight separate areas of the county now served by PP&L — Cottage Grove, Creswell, Veneta, Coburg, Junction City, Lowell and Dexter, and two rural areas.

"We know we'll have tremendous opposition from PP&L," says Douglas Still, Cottage Grove CEPUD member. "We expect quite a fight from them, but we think we can win."

Still says a recent Supreme Court ruling that no industry or private utility has preferential rights over a public utility to cheaper federal power encouraged the committee to make its petition drive.

Richard Eymann, CEPUD co-chairer says "Reallocation of the cheap federal hydropower is the top priority of the U.S. government

for the Pacific Northwest. We should have the same priority, because if we are going to have public power in Oregon, the time is now or never."

A CEPUD statement said the Oregon Department of Energy concluded that an Emerald public utility district was feasible after hearings held in 1976. The department also said power for such a district would be available from the federal hydroelectric system by 1983, if not before.

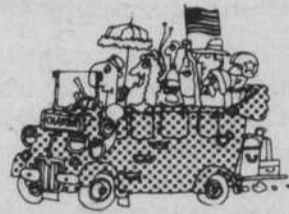
"PP&L rates are already 50 percent higher than public utility rates, and they will continue to rise as more thermal power is used," Still says.

Petitions are available in the University Survival Center, which is supporting the effort.

"Public utilities are definitely the way we have to go in this state," says Janet Gillaspie, Survival Center director.

"The large corporate companies don't have the best interests of their customers at heart," Gillaspie says. "Public utilities put decisions back in the people's hands."

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