

lane county assessor's race

Bill Bain

Real estate and fee appraiser Bill Bain says one of his major qualifications for the post of county assessor is his "ability to be agreeable."

"I can disagree without being disagreeable," he says, pointing out that the assessor must deal effectively with county commissioners, officials, and the public. He says his opponent, Ken Bylund, has "real problems" with his inability to cooperate with the county commissioners and officials.

The 40-year-old appraiser has also blasted Bylund for hiring "cronies," favoritism in valuing homes of friends, and lying.

When Bylund typed up a press release to counter these claims, a Bain campaign worker, Kent Anderson, filed a complaint with the secretary of state's office, saying Bylund was using county time for political purposes. The secretary of state upheld Anderson's contention and reprimanded Bylund.

One of Bain's major contentions is that Bylund is an incompetent manager. Bain says he would shape up the assessor's office by using "sound management practices" such as promoting internal employees and avoiding bringing in too many new employees. Bain has worked

as a manager for 18 years.

Bylund has contended that he has an insufficient budget to run his office. Bain says that it's Bylund's "lack of cooperativeness with two commissioners" that resulted in his slim budget and that Bylund had to "swallow a bitter pill."

Bain says that he could run the office within the budget, saying that despite Bylund's claims Bylund now has 50 percent more money to do his work with than his predecessor did.

The State Department of Revenue recently upheld Bylund's contention he received insufficient funds to run the office, and ordered the county to allocate the assessor's office more funds.

If either of the two property tax measures on the ballot pass — Measure 6 or 11 — the assessor will have more work to do. Bain supports Measure 11.

Bain is opposed to Lane County Ballot Measure 13, which would make the assessor's post an appointed position by the Board of County Commissioners.

An issue in the non-partisan county assessor's race is campaign contributions. Showing up on Bain's list are large contributions from the owners of Delta Property Company, W.H. Shields, a chief investor in Valley River Center, and other real estate and timber interests.



Bylund has appealed the county Board of Equalization's appraisal of Delta Property Company's north Eugene property and of Valley River Center. Bylund feels both have been vastly underassessed.

Bain says that the contributions are symbols of displeasure over Bylund's performance and is adamant that there are no connections between who gives him

funds and the job of assessing.

A native Oregonian, Bain formerly worked for Citizens Bank where he managed the real estate loan department and was branch manager of two savings and loan associations in Eugene and in Lebanon.

Bain, a Republican, has been endorsed by the Lane County Young Democrats.

Ken Bylund

County Assessor Ken Bylund's term of office has been one filled with turmoil, but he says he still has a "broad base of support" in the community.

"I've gotten good feedback. Little things are easier. Even the ease of putting up a lawn sign has increased."

Several mishaps in the assessor's office within the past weeks may have slowed Bylund's tempo a bit however.

The Register Guard printed an article criticizing the fairness of property taxes in Lane County. Bylund says the houses examined in the article were last physically assessed under his predecessor, John Parkhurst.

Every year one-sixth of Lane County property is reappraised by a tax appraiser. The other five-sixths receive an across the board percentage increase.

On the same day Bylund responded to the Guard article 79,000 tax statements had to be shredded at the assessor's office because the new timber severance tax had not been added in.

Bylund also received a stern reprimand from the secretary of state's office for using a county employee for "political purposes." Although Bylund did violate election law by using his secretary to type up a rebuttal to charges levied against him — it was "unintentional" according to the state office.

Bylund has also received some good news from the state. He has contended for some time that the county commissioners underfunded his office. He claims a lack of funds has forced him to overwork his appraisers and to continue with "sweatshop" working conditions.

The state Department of Revenue re-

cently agreed in part with Bylund and ordered the county to extend extra funds to the assessor's office.

Bylund says that a main reason behind the lack of funds was his strained relationships with members of the Board of Commissioners.

County Commissioner Archie Weinstein has appealed his property assessment twice for being "too high."

"We were right, it wasn't politics," Bylund says.

When asked how he felt about the recall of Commissioner Weinstein that will appear on the Tuesday ballot Bylund says he's "happy" it's on the ballot.

Although Bylund originally endorsed Ballot Measure 6, which would freeze property tax values at 1.5 percent over their 1975 values, he switched his sup-

port to the Legislature's alternative to 6.

He is concerned about what will happen to renters if Measure 6 passes, and says, "In California landlords are taking advantage of windfall profits."

Bylund says he might consider posting what would be equitable rents, using property taxes as a base, if Measure 6 were to pass. Bain opposes the posting of equitable rents saying he doesn't think it's within the bounds of the assessors to inform tenants or landlords of what the "correct" rent is.

Ken Bylund is a native of Lane County. Prior to his election as county assessor he worked as a retail clerk and in a sawmill. He has served two terms as Executive Secretary of the Lane Labor Council.

In his campaign contribution report Bylund lists his wife as his sole contributor.

state senate races

James Pack: Republican

James Pack, a Republican Investment counselor, opposes state-funded abortions for low-income women, supports bringing back a restricted death penalty in Oregon and supports Ballot Measure 6, with a few restrictions.

Measure 6 would reduce tax assessments to 1975 levels and limit increases to 1.5 percent annually.

"I think it's wrong for the state to fund abortions," says Pack. "It's not a question of whether there's going to be an abortion, but of who's going to fund it. I think if a woman thinks about changing diapers and all the rest that goes along with another baby, she'll be able to get the money together for an abortion."

Pack also says the death penalty should be brought back for the most vicious

murders — those people who act without provocation and who are determined to be a continuing threat to society. The key word is punishment. People want these kinds of criminals punished."

Pack also supports Ballot Measure 10 which would turn the Land Conservation and Development Commission into an advisory board. "I'd even go farther than that. I think the local people should have control over where they live."

Pack graduated from the University in 1972 in the School of Community Service and Public Affairs. He got a job with the Lane County Welfare Division and later worked three years in a micro-film business. He now sells insurance and is an investment counselor.

Ted Kulongowski: Democrat

State Sen. Ted Kulongowski, D-Junction City, is seeking his first full term in the Senate since his appointment to replace Betty Browne. Previously, Kulongowski represented House District 38 for four years.

During his years in the House Kulongowski has been particularly influential in labor issues. Last session he was chair of the House Labor Committee. As an attorney in private practice he represents a substantial number of labor unions.

He has not always supported labor, as exemplified by his support of a bill passed during the 1977 legislative session which cut back workman's compensation benefits.

On other issues, Kulongowski is generally considered a liberal legislator. He opposes the death penalty, supports land

use planning and, though he opposes abortion as a Catholic, he supports state funding of abortion because he refuses to assert his beliefs on others.

In response to the charge made by his Republican opponent, Jim Pack, that he is a big spender Kulongowski responds that he is in fact one of the "most fiscally conservative members of the State Legislature."

Kulongowski says that most of the bills Pack cites are merely authorizations for the spending of federal funds or of fees collected by the state, neither of which comes from state tax dollars.

In the next session, Kulongowski hopes for an appointment to the Senate Agriculture Committee. This is a new emphasis for him and is one closer to the interests of his primarily rural constituency.