

## Resign ...

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that first, this proposal has been wisely turned down by voters in the past.

"Overall it's an effort to diminish the influence of our commissioners," said the chairman, "and that's precisely what it would do. And especially important is that it would diminish influence and authority of our county commissioners on the state and federal levels.

"It's one of the most important aspects of our jobs," said Brock, "as nearly 70 percent of the county is public land. We spend a lot of time on lobbying efforts in Salem and Washington, D.C." He noted that had it not been for such efforts, the county would not be receiving \$11.5 million in O&C (timberland) funds, but would have received a lot less.

"It's a big concern," said Brock. "We don't want to diminish the influence of Josephine County outside its borders, and you're not going to get volunteers to influence legislation."

Brock said that the authority and influence of government in Oregon has "a history of evolving over time. It is a form of government," he said, "that represents the history of Oregon." Having a county manager, he added, wouldn't maintain that history, as neither that person nor volunteer commissioners would be able to maintain legislative influence.

Brock, in his second term, said that better efficiency and cost-effectiveness would not result from a new charter, as backers of the planned change say. Regarding efficiency, he said that it's been difficult to find people to run for three seats, let alone seven. He said that the county board works to treat Illinois Valley as a special place, and that a seven-member board, even with one person specifically elected to represent the valley, would not do as good a job as currently.

In addition, Brock said that voters need to be aware that under the charter proposal, they would not be able to vote for three of the seven commissioners. Other concerns given by Brock, speaking for himself and his two fellow commissioners:

\*Under a county administrator, citizens would not have good access to register complaints as now, because the administrator would be in charge of hiring and firing; not the commissioners.

\*Citizens would not have much say in the hiring or firing of a county manager.

\*The change in the charter would serve to maintain and even foster the status quo, rather than allowing flexibility that exists now.

\*A new bureaucracy would result, costing possibly more than the current three commissioners. A county administrator would need an assistant, secretaries and likely other staff, Brock said.

\*The quality of volunteers would not be so good because of the nominal pay. "The retired, the wealthy and those with special interests would come forward," said "leaving out young entrepreneurs like me and Jim Riddle."

\*Because the charter change proposal was "conducted in secret," it left the public out, and it would have better to have public input. "It's just a straight power play," said Brock.

\*The brochure put out by the group seeking the charter change contains misinformation.

A tiger's paw prints are called pug marks.

## Charter change plan

(Continued from page 1)

he can determine from checking county records, there has been no charter review committee as stipulated by the current charter.

Another of the committee's major "selling points," Smith indicated, is that each commissioner now receives annual salary and benefits totaling \$94,118 or a total of \$282,356. If the charter changes are OK'd by voters, each of the seven commissioners would be paid \$6,000 annually (\$500 per month) and there would be no benefits. No changes could be made without voter approval, said Smith.

Other employer costs would result in a total of \$45,297; with a total annual outlay for the seven commissioners of \$87,297. This would result in an annual saving of \$195,059 when compared with the salaries and benefits under the current charter.

Smith said that the administrator's salary would be set by the board, "but the estimated annual savings should be at least \$100,000."

He said that, "The current charter initially was adopted in 1981 and no longer reflects the priorities of the citizens of Josephine County. Many surveys and studies conducted through the years showing what we, the citizens, consider important, but those recommendations have been mostly ignored.

"Fiscal irresponsibility, inefficiency and politics should no longer be allowed to exist in our county government. The new charter will give the citizens a stronger voice in how our county is administered," said Smith.

The committee, he added, asks, "Has our money been spent according to the priorities we have shown, in one survey after another, to be most important to us?"

The county's fiscal year budget is approximately \$102 million, said Smith. "About \$15 million is now put in a discretionary fund under the complete control of the commissioners," he said.

"Currently," he continued, "no one person is responsible for putting together the entire county picture. An administrator will provide consistency, efficiency and financial stability. The person hired as administrator would serve at the will of the commissioners, with a selection committee consisting of three commissioners and four non-office holding citizens.

"The administrator's contract would be for no more than three years, and his or her performance would be reviewed annually. We need more expertise to administer our tax-funded multimillion dollar business."

Some are questioning whether a sufficient number of qualified persons could be found to run for the seven commission seats. However, Smith noted that organizations including Three Rivers School District, Rogue Community College School District, Grants Pass School District, and Grants Pass City Council have no difficulty in that area, and that those volunteers receive neither pay nor benefits.

Each of the current board members, including Jim Riddle, elected last year, would complete their terms; Harold Haugen and Jim Brock will need to run for re-election next year.

The four new commissioners, to comprise the seven-member-body, each would serve four-year terms. At the expiration of their terms, two of the district commissioners would run for two-year terms, and two of the at-large candidates would run for four-year terms, said Smith.

"The people are out there," he said. He indicated that many qualified persons, including retired persons and those in business, would rather serve their communities part time, rather than the current full-time situation now.

He said that besides ignoring the "wants" indicated by citizens to commissioners, either past or current, they have "wasted money" on such surveys. Smith said that the county has no central purchasing plan, which means that money that could be saved through group-buying is lost.

He said he found that a Hood River organization, hired approximately two years ago, was "fired with only 65 percent of its work finished." He stated that the dismissal was due to the fact that in its preliminary report, the organization noted "a lack of professional certification" among commissioners, and that it noted they could be "a more-effective team if they didn't gang up on each other." In addition, he said, the group was aiming for better fiscal management and streamlining in areas including personnel.

"We keep hearing that more money is needed to run the county," said Smith. "We do not believe that. Instead, we believe that efficiency, better accountability and common sense are needed. We and others believe that the county long overdue for a drastic change.

"Our commissioners have wasted millions of dollars foolishly and idiotically," Smith said. "Our parks are deteriorating, the sheriff's office and other county operations take major financial hits: This continuing process has to end. We need a new charter to accomplish these aims," he concluded.



**POTTERY OPEN HOUSE** - Stephanie Friedman (left) held an open house on Saturday, May 3 at her new Cone Ten Pottery Studio & Gallery. Among those attending and working with clay were Briana Bode, 11, (center) and Kia Parrish-Haim, 8. The new business is in the former Goodwill building, at 360 Caves Hwy., across from Pietro's Italian Restaurant. Classes are offered, and items are available for sale. For more information phone 592-4646.

**Come Celebrate the**  
**Illinois Valley Child's Fair**  
**& Pet Parade**  
**Saturday, May 17 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
**Jubilee Park**  
**The more we get together**  
**the happier we'll be!**  
**Activities:**  
**Macaroni Necklaces, Salmon Habitat,**  
**Sensory Table, Children's Guitar Music,**  
**Free Books from 'Books First', Butterfly Mobiles,**  
**Ride the I.V. Lions' Train, Honeybee Choir,**  
**Sing with the Karaoke Machine, Finger Painting,**  
**Kite Making, Seed Planting,**  
**Hands Are Not For Hurting, Face Painting,**  
**Wildlife Images Birds of Prey, Playdoh Fun**

Bring your favorite pet to the  
**7th annual PET PARADE**  
 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
 Registration from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
 Don't forget to dress up your pet!

**FREE food & drinks in the pavilion!**

Co-sponsored by Illinois Valley Early Childhood Coalition Family Foundation, Early Head Start & Head Start of Southern Oregon, Commission for Children & Families, Early Intervention, Dome School, Project Baby Check, I.V. Safe House Alliance, Dept. of Human Services and Self Sufficiency. With help from: Karen's Child Care, Southern Oregon Public Television, I.V. Lion's Club, Wildlife Images, Oregon Caves, Key Club and Kiwanis.  
 For more information phone Suzan at 592-3259



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 Assorted Varieties - 6.8 oz. - 13.5 oz. - \$1.50 - \$2.50

\*Clairol 'Nice 'n Easy' Hair Color  
 Assorted Varieties - \$3 each

\*Vidal Sassoon Hair Care Products  
 5.1 oz. - 8.5 oz. - \$1.25 each

\*Crest Toothpaste

multi-care, tartar control, extra whitening,  
 baking soda & peroxide, rejuvenating effects  
 3.75 oz. - 8.2 oz. - 50-cents & \$1.75 each

\*Pampers Mega Packs - Size 2 Swadders  
 84 pack - \$15

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 12.6 oz. - \$1 each

\*Super Moist cake mixes  
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