

Lily Morgan is ready to serve county

Annette McGee Rasch
IVN Senior Contributing Writer

Lily Morgan made quite a splash in the primary campaign for Position 3 on the county board, earning 45.38 percent of the vote (her closest competitor earned 15.41 percent) and she’s hoping to ride that momentum into office. And she’s a good sport too - Morgan made a literal splash into the Illinois Valley



Lily Morgan

High School’s Cheer Team dunk tank during the recent Labor Day festival at Jubilee Park. “I really enjoyed the festival, talking to people and finding out what’s important to them,” Morgan said. “I met people from the local business community, the churches, the fire district, the Kerbyville Museum, the quilters, the Rotarians and lots of other local residents. The Lion’s Club team did a fantastic job, they were gracious and joyfully interacting with everyone while meeting the needs of the community - what a great turn out!” Currently the parole and probation program supervisor at Josephine County Community Corrections and twice elected to the Grants Pass City Council (GPCC), Morgan believes in public service and says the county is on the cusp of much change and wants to help guide sound decision making to protect the interests of current residents. She notes a variety of serious issues connected with the fast-changing cannabis industry. “On the one hand, there’s economic growth potential through legitimate businesses, but also, the money that benefits the Illinois Valley right now is largely coming in from the black market,” she said. “There’s an also genuine concern over water rights and property values. The first time homebuyer in the I.V. has to compete with out-of-state interests with deep pockets. More growers are clear cutting

properties and putting up greenhouses. So while there’s economic potential with this influx of new cannabis operations, I’m hoping we can find a balance that preserves our current local cultural identity. “Some are trying to develop their cannabis businesses in a good way, wanting to be good neighbors and providing jobs, but while the medicinal and recreational regulations are sorted out, there’s going to be many growing pains. For the most part, we’re organic farmers in JoCo and we want to be mindful about the return of farming as an industry. Also, there’s other opportunities with hemp - we should begin competing with the huge hemp markets in Canada by providing products to expand the potential industry here.” Morgan wants to bring in broad band internet service county-wide “so we can compete with businesses globally while enjoying the beauty of rural living. To create or grow businesses, people need access to the same level of high-speed instant service that everybody else has. This would help provide jobs and business opportunities for our high school graduates, so they aren’t forced to move away.” And she’s concerned about Valley businesses. “The I.V. has been hit hard, just this year there’s been about \$300,000 in losses

from property crimes due to theft, vandalism, burglary and arson,” she said. “So how do we turn the economy around while that’s going on? That’s really what we have to bring to the table.” About the latest public safety levy, she says that even if passed, it won’t fix all the problems and that solutions must be found for each individual rural neighborhood that “currently experiences long response times, if any response at all.” Morgan possesses a strong background in public safety, having started her career working in private security in 1993, and later, as a 911 dispatcher in Grants Pass. She also volunteered with the JoCo Sheriff’s Office, rose to the rank of reserve sergeant, and spent most of her patrol time in the I.V. “We must go into the rural neighborhoods to find out what people want,” she said. “If they want to handle public safety themselves, we need to address liability issues by facilitating cooperation with existing public safety resources and training citizens to organize effectively and safely. I’d love to see a resident deputy working in cooperation with community response teams like CJ Patrol, so that criminals are held accountable.”

SEE MORGAN ON A-10

Bill Hunker says he is the guy for you

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In the race to fill Position 3 on the county board, Bill Hunker says he’s the guy to replace the seat currently held by outgoing Commissioner Walker. Hunker, a former television producer and businessman who moved to Merlin eight years ago with his wife, Dordie Lamphier, became involved in local politics after joining his local neighborhood watch group. “I attended county board meetings and became more aware of what was going on,” Hunker said. “That was about the time the nuisance ordinances were in the press a lot. I followed that issue and then got involved in anti-levy campaigns for the last three efforts. Now, I’m running for county commissioner because I want to bring transparency,

accountability, and trust to our county government. “I’m an anti-levy candidate. While I’m very much for public safety, with my background in business, I see that the levies are too vague,” he explained. “If you went to the bank with a proposal like that and asked for 42 million, the banks would never consider it. I see the tax payers as the bank and they’re owed the same level of accountability and business plan detail that a bank would require. In general I’m against any new property tax levies and as a commissioner, I’d be against them in the future. I did 20 years worth of research and there has been an 80/20 split of reported crime in the county. Eighty percent in Grants Pass and 20 percent in the others areas. That has been true regardless of the amount of money in the public safety budget for all these years.” On the one hand Hunker said, “I am a firm believer

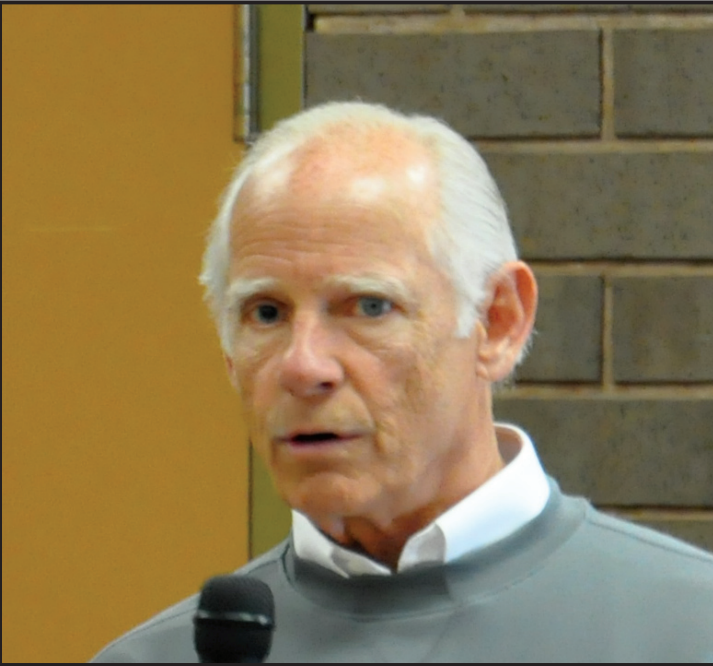
in what Daniel said he’d do when he went into office, that he’d fully support neighborhood watches and patrols. But Cave Junction needs resident deputies as well.” Hunker said the county could have had more patrols: “There was a 1.5 million on the table that could have been used, but Daniel didn’t push for that potentially available money.” Hunker also says there’s potential revenue locked up in county timber resources that is currently under utilized. “We have 30,000 acres that has not been thinned for 20 years. We can go in there and take out the fire hazards and be good stewards. Right now, the amount of logging on JoCo’s county lands basically just pays for six county salaries.” He says Douglas county “logs sustainability on 4,200 acres and they take out a million dollars worth of timber a year” and he wants to explore

that potential in JoCo. Regarding the cannabis industry, Hunker said it’s a “very complex issue” and that while he’s in favor of the economic potential, he’s also concerned about “these people coming in with large amounts of money that are here for the new gold rush and many don’t seem to care about becoming productive community members. I believe the real problems are going to come from good neighbor issues. That’s going to be the big thing in the next few years and that includes water and land use issues. It’s very difficult to manage a gold rush. I do believe we’ll see a noticeable shift when California legalizes marijuana, it won’t be over night, but I believe we’ll see a shift. “I also believe that we’ll see a shift in Salem, where our legislators are going to be coming back to the table to re-cut the pie,” he added.

“The retail sales are occurring mostly in the northern part of the state and that’s where the bulk of the tax money is ending up. Yet down here, in JoCo and Jackson counties, we’re the biggest supplies. There needs to be some equality there. These issues

will be worked out, but it’s going to take time. There’s no magic way to get from here to there and it’s going to take patience as well. Hopefully we’ll create a better deal than what we have now.”

SEE HUNKER ON A-10



Bill Hunker

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