



Stanfield council appoints new mayor

Whelan credits McCann for having been a positive force in the community, says she has big shoes to fill

By ERICK PETERSON
Hermiston Herald

Susan Whelan will be sworn in as Stanfield's mayor at a city council meeting on Tuesday, May 3. Whelan, a Stanfield city councilor since 2017, was selected April 18, from the council to replace Mayor Thomas McCann. McCann died April 16 of a heart attack.

"I will do my best," she said. Whelan said she admires McCann a great deal. They knew each other for several years, she said, and their families were close. According to Whelan, their children played together, and she misses him. But then, she said, many people in town have the same feelings.

"He was an icon in the community, well-loved and well-respected," she said. "It will be hard to fill his shoes."

McCann, she said, "really knew how to run a meeting." She attributed his authoritative presence to his history as a police officer; he knew how to command respect. She said it will be difficult for her to be like him in the same way.

At the city council meeting in which she was selected, she recalled that Councilor Jason Sperr nominated her to the vacated mayoral position. She said, no one else was nominated. Before the other councilors voted, she asked them if they thought she could do it. They said that she could, and then they unanimously voted in her favor — 5-0, with Whelan abstaining.

Asked why she was selected, Whelan joked that it was "the only way they were going to get her off the council."

The incoming mayor is light-hearted by nature, she said, and she likes to laugh. She said she feels that "humor makes things go easier" and "life is short." Also, life can be "hard for people," she said. A sour attitude makes things worse.

A wife, mother to three, grandmother to five and great-grandmother to two, Whelan said she has recently been the subject of teasing within her family. Family members are asking her if they should call her "mayor" rather than "grandma."

She said, she is happier with her grandchildren calling her grandma, just like she prefers to be called "Susan" around town.

She is not doing this job to satisfy her ego, she said. Nor does she have great plans to "make her mark" on the town, she added. Instead, she said she is focusing on the job itself.

"God doesn't care if I'm mayor, and I'm not trying to impress anyone," she said.

That said, she did say that there are things she wants to do in town.

One of her goals is making city business more accessible to the public. According to Whelan, evening city coun-

See, Whelan/Page A9

'IT WILL EVENTUALLY TAKE A TOLL'

ONE LOCAL STUDENT'S EXAMPLE HIGHLIGHTS THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECTS OF BULLYING



Marc Martinez and Melissa Strong, Hermiston residents, pose for a photo Monday, April 18, 2022, after playing basketball together at Martinez's school, Sunset Elementary. Martinez said he is having trouble with bullying.

By ERICK PETERSON • Hermiston Herald

When 11-year-old Marc Martinez goes to school, he is not always able to concentrate on education.

Martinez said he goes to school with a different worry. Like some of his classmates at Sunset Elementary in Hermiston, and other students everywhere else, he said he is

greatly concerned with being bullied.

This is an issue of interest at schools, including the Hermiston School District, at which Martinez attends.

Services to address bullying

Dan Greenough is the Hermiston School District's director of student services. He said he is not certain of how much bullying there is within the district, but there is enough to warrant concern. And the district has "a number of prevention pieces" to address bullying.

For instance, he said, counselors deliver lessons about bullying to students on a monthly basis, and students take surveys so the schools can better understand their experience

See, Bullying/Page A9



The Hermiston School District building, photographed Tuesday, April 26, 2022, is located at 305 S.W. 11th St. The district has policies regarding bullying, which include investigating reports.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

INSIDE

A3 ▶ Morrow County commissioner candidates speak at forum

A4 ▶ A closer look at the cost behind city projects

A6 ▶ Cinco de Mayo to be celebrated locally

A6 ▶ Upcoming event to bring awareness to domestic violence