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Several locals pull papers for Yucaipa City Council seats

By RACHAEL M. GUSTUSON
Editor

Two of three Yucaipa Council incumbents have filed for re-election. In 2016, the city council went from an at-large to district-based election.

Councilmember Bobby Duncan, District 3, filed and completed his qualification papers. "I need four more years to continue the work we have been doing," said Duncan. "This will be the last election that I run in."

Duncan is running against Clifford Gericke, who has turned in his qualification paperwork and Lee Kaberlein,

who has not submitted qualification paperwork. In District 4, incumbent Denise Allen said she will not seek re-election. The two candidates vying for Allen's seat are Stacey Chester and Justin Beaver. Chester has submitted her qualification paperwork.

For the last open seat, in District 5, Councilmember Dick Riddell has qualified and filed.

"The health, welfare and prosperity of all Yucaipa residents continues to be my top priority," said Riddell, the city's longest serving (26

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Dick Burger, No. 1, Chad Harper, No. 9, and Olympic gold medalist Connor Fields, No. 11, battle for the \$1,000 Pro-am prize money at Yucaipa BMX state qualifier.

Photo by Doug Earnest

Davis, Molina, Clark, Hewitt pull election papers in Calimesa

By KAREN DASILVA
Staff Reporter

There may be a Hewitt on the ballot again in Calimesa.

Wendy Hewitt, the wife of former Calimesa Mayor Jeff Hewitt, who is now the 5th District Supervisor for Riverside County, has pulled papers to run for one of four at-large council seats in the November election.

Hewitt joins Mayor Bill Davis, Mayor Pro Tem Linda Molina and Councilman Ed Clark as those pulling papers for the three council seats open for four-year terms.

The remaining fourth at-large council seat is for two years and is held by appointee Jeff Cervantez, who, as of Monday, July 27, had made an appointment to pull papers to run for a council seat but had not done so, local elections official Darlene Gerdes said.

The seat is for the remaining two years of the late Councilman Jim Hyatt's four-year term. Hyatt passed away unexpectedly in April 2019 and Cervantez, who narrowly lost his council bid just four months earlier, was appointed to fill the seat until the next election, which will be the general election on Nov. 3.

With the Aug. 6 deadline looming to submit papers, Gerdes confirmed no one had officially submitted their elec-

tion papers.

"No one has returned their documents as yet," she said.

Those interested in running for a Calimesa City Council seat have until close of business on Thursday, Aug. 6, to file their papers with Gerdes at Calimesa City Hall, which is closed on Fridays.

Calimesa is governed by five at-large councilmembers. Only Councilman Larry Smith is not up for re-election.

At-large seats mean those elected represent the entire city and therefore the seats are open to all residents. In contrast, neighboring Yucaipa elects its councilmembers by district, meaning candidates represent specific areas in the city and must live in the district where they are running for election.

Clark and Molina are completing their first terms on the Calimesa City Council, while Davis has served continuously since being elected in 2004.

While Hewitt does not have any council experience, she has been active in the community for many years, volunteering at local events and as a board member with the Calimesa Chamber of Commerce.

The Calimesa City Council meets the first and third Mondays of the month at the Norton Younglove Senior Center, next to city hall, on Park Avenue.

Big Day for BMX: Olympic gold medalist shines

By OBREY BROWN
Special to the News Mirror

Nineteen-year-old Riley Shea had his eye on Olympian Connor Fields during a special day at Yucaipa BMX Park last Sunday.

"I like his aggressive style," said Shea, who is a four-time national qualifier on Cruiser (24-inch wheel) and once on his 20-inch. "I personally like to ride his style a lot."

Shea then referred to Corben Sharrah, another USA Olympian, "who has a completely different style. He doesn't look like he's doing anything on his bike. But he's just as effective."

All styles were on display on Sunday's 76-moto event that took five hours in 90-degree heat after two previous shut-downs - March 1 (weather) and an April 27 delay because of COVID-19 precautions.

Track announcer Mike Miller might have summarized on a full day of 436 BMX racers over 76 motos for a packed house that totaled hundreds of onlookers.

"Where else," Miller asked, "can you find an event with local heroes in the same event as an Olympic gold medalist?"

It was a perfect setup for Fields, a 2016 Olympic BMX gold medalist, to claim victory in the Pump Lap Main (no bike chain) with \$1,200 on the line.

There was no mistaking how the 2016 Olympic gold medalist at Rio de Janeiro claimed his spot on that squad: A combined points system, coach selection plus head-to-head outcomes.

"It's really complicated," said Fields.

Complicated, perhaps, even though Fields sped through 24 separate events to get his shot at the Rio Games.

"You have to be a complete rider," said Fields, noting everything counts from starts to line placing to turning to decision-making. "There's a lot going on out there."

Shea said, "This is one sport where there's no such thing as a perfect lap."

Fields countered: "Oh, I've had perfect runs, but it's not common to have a perfect run. It's like golfing. You're always

looking for that perfect game."

There was no money on the line for dozens of other racers, most of whom saw state berths as the result of top-flight efforts.

Crashes? Yes. There was a confirmed broken ankle and two broken wrists, at least, as a result of a few handfuls of crashes. Shea himself fell in a bid to claim a spot in the featured Pump Lap Main against Fields.

"Merry Christmas," Shea kiddingly told Calimesa's Christopher Grisham (21-25 Expert), who took advantage of Shea's fall to claim a spot in the finals.

Call it a playful exchange in a sport that lined up dozens of racers - all ages, colorful uniforms, way-out helmets (some with cameras), expensive bikes - packed into a smallish stadium dwarfed with sponsorship banners.

"There isn't another sport," said Shea, "where amateurs get a chance to race against an Olympic champion."

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