

Boosalis, incumbents among winners in primary

City Council Chairman Helen Boosalis headed the list of vote-getters as more than 23,000 Lincolniters went to the polls Tuesday in the city's primary election.

Boosalis, who will try to unseat two-term Mayor Sam Schwartzkopf in the May 6 general election, finished with 12,258 votes, better than 53 per cent of the vote in the race for mayor. Schwartzkopf placed second with 9,293 votes (40 per cent), while social worker and volunteer policewoman Jo Bragg was third with 1,433 votes (6 per cent). Only the top two candidates, Boosalis and Schwartzkopf, will compete in the general election.

Bill Davidson, Lancaster County election commissioner, said 23,533 Lincoln residents cast

ballots compared with 53,608 who did not. That means about 30 per cent voted. Davidson had expected about a 20 per cent turnout.

City voters also narrowed the list of City Council candidates from 15 to eight, with four of those to be elected in May. Also qualifying were candidates for the Lincoln Board of Education and the Airport Authority.

"Overwhelmed"

Boosalis, 55, said she was "overwhelmed" with her showing in the election.

"It was better than I had hoped for," she said. "I thought Sam (Mayor Sam Schwartzkopf) and I would be more neck and neck. I am very happy, although I realize I am only half way there."

She said she is not sure of the general election outcome and that she was "not overly confident at this stage" that her showing will insure a victory in May.

Boosalis said she would decide within the next few days what form her campaign for the general election will take.

But, she said, her campaign will try to meet the people and bring the issues to the people of Lincoln.

The main issue, she said, would be the need for more visible, forceful, and responsive leadership in the mayor's office.

Schwartzkopf said he was not surprised at the outcome of the primary.

"There was nothing I would have rather done over in my campaign, except possibly getting more people out to vote," he said.

The voter turnout of 23,533 was about normal, he said.

Third term

Chances for capturing an unprecedented third term in the general election look very good, Schwartzkopf said.

"If people want to continue with our present accomplishments, such as improvements in sewage treatment, public transportation, police and fire departments and public housing, I feel I have a very good chance of winning," he said.

Schwartzkopf said Lincoln faces a series of challenges, not one urgent problem.

"We have quite a few challenges facing us, such as the redevelopment of downtown, more urban housing, and the updating of the community development plan," he said. "It is crucial to maintain a balanced budget with maximum service to the taxpayer."

It is hard to predict which mayoral candidate will receive the votes gathered by primary loser Jo Bragg, he said.

Bragg said she also was not surprised with the election results.

"It was my first time around, and I thoroughly enjoyed it," she said. "I have four years in which to consider my next campaign, but I have made my entrance into Nebraska's political arena."

Money deciding factor

Bragg said she thought Helen Boosalis would win in the general election due to her financial ability to run a more extensive campaign.

"Helen has the money, and that will be the deciding factor," she said.

Lack of campaign money and early organization hurt her own campaign, Bragg said.

"The person with the money always seems to win," Bragg said. "I'd like to see it possible for a person without the money to be able to win."

One way to equalize each candidate's potential to win, she said, would be an equalization of television and radio time. Bragg said Omaha television stations offer free time to the candidates.

Bragg said she will consider running for office again.

"I wasn't afraid to raise the issues this time, and I won't be in the future," she said.

Incumbent City Councilmen Steve Cook and Bob Sikyta headed the list of eight candidates qualifying for the council general election. They were followed by Robert Jeambey, incumbent Richard Baker, Steve Tiwald, William Theirstein, Jim Carson and Mary Rogge.

Cook gets most votes

Cook said he felt "very great" about finishing with the most votes in the primary.

Continued on p. 14



Photo by Steve Boerner

Helen Boosalis, center, finished first in the mayoral primary election.

Spring blizzard takes cattle toll

By Don McCabe

Opening spring like a lion, the late season blizzard in western Nebraska two weeks ago killed hundreds of cattle and caused untold damage to the winter wheat crop.

High winds with the March 27 and 28 blizzard left 10 to 18 foot drifts in some areas and blew considerable amounts of topsoil away.

Hardest hit was the spring calf crop, as the blizzard swept across the Panhandle area during the annual calving season. Some estimates of losses range as high as one third of the calf crop.

Dr. Ivan Rush, livestock specialist at UNL's Panhandle Experiment Station in Scottsbluff, said he would not be surprised to find a 10 per cent loss of all cattle in the region.

Lost 350 head

He said cattle losses were suffered over most of the area, with the northern counties of Sheridan, Cherry, Box Butte and Gardner hardest hit. He said he knew of a Rushville rancher who lost 350 head of cattle.

See related stories and photos, p. 11

Mickey Stewart, executive secretary of the Nebraska Stockgrowers Association, said that approximately 30 per cent of the calves born on the day of the storm were lost.

"Most ranchers are operating on a very small profit margin already," he said, "with a two calf loss cut out of every 100 as the entire margin." With a 30 per cent loss, the rancher will be operating at a loss the entire year, he said.

Stewart compared the March storm with the 1949 storm that left large numbers of cattle dead. He said some ranchers told him it was the worst storm they had ever experienced.

April 10 reports

The extent of the cattle losses will not be accurately known, however, until the snow melts and county emergency boards can make reports on the losses. They will file the reports by April 10 with the Nebraska Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) office in Lincoln.

Locating wandering cattle on the larger ranches was a major problem, although according to Stewart, most ranchers have by now found the strays.

"Those cattle that can't be located," Stewart said, "are probably dead."

A second snowstorm of last week, which dumped as much as 12 inches of snow in some areas,

hampered ranchers in locating strays, he said. The Nebraska Army National Guard was called up by Gov. J. James Exon to aid ranchers in finding and feeding many of the cattle.

Needed dry areas

Stewart said the second snow would not have been a problem, except that cattle were in a weakened state and "desperately needed dry areas to lie down."

In addition to losing cattle, most ranchers are faced with the problem of saving surviving cattle, according to Rush. The snows covered available forage, he said, and also weakened cattle to the point where they are more susceptible to pneumonia and other sicknesses.

"Many cattle have frozen feet and other cows are still wandering looking for their dead calves," he said.

The high winds also left their toll on the winter wheat crop but to what extent is not exactly known. Charles Fenster, agronomist at the Scottsbluff station, said producers will not be able to determine the damage until the snow melts.

Snow covered with dirt

However, he said the high winds did move some of the topsoil because the snow was covered with dirt. Fenster said much of the wheat in the region was already thin and short because of a lack of moisture throughout the winter.

He added that the second snow was probably beneficial for the wheat because it came without high winds.

Meanwhile, Gov. Exon is seeking federal assistance for the storm-stricken farmers and ranchers. Bill Hoppner, administrative assistant for Exon, said the governor has requested help from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Agriculture Secretary Earl Butz.

Ranchers and farmers could become eligible for federal low-interest loans, Hoppner said, if Butz declares the Panhandle area a disaster area. Exon already has declared a 13-county area a disaster.

Poor market prices

Cattle producers are already suffering from poor market prices before the storms. Now many will be operating at a loss, according to Stewart.

The effects of the losses on the cattle market may not be felt until next fall, he said. The losses, however, will have an effect on the general economy, especially of western Nebraska, he noted.

"The cattle industry effects everyone out in western Nebraska," he said. The farmers and ranchers will not be buying the usual products that they have in the past, Stewart said, and businesses in the western cities will reflect this.



Photo Courtesy of The Omaha World-Herald

Arthur-Rancher Waldo Haythorn, with one of the many head of livestock he lost in the year's second big spring blizzard.