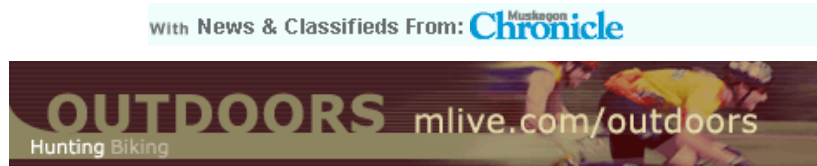




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Mayor, council races draw 9 candidates to Tues. ballot

FLUSHING

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION
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By Ken Palmer
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FLUSHING - Call it a return to the wilder days of city politics, when election fliers filled mailboxes and rhetoric flew like autumn leaves.

After years of relative quiet, nine candidates are on Tuesday's ballot for four open seats in a wide-open campaign involving taxes, building projects and other issues.

Mayor Janice Gensel, seeking her fifth consecutive two-year term, faces a challenge by firefighter Daniel Owen.

Incumbent City Councilmen Michael Szukhent and John Gault also have opposition. In Gault's case, three challengers are after his at-large council seat.

The only unopposed candidate is former Councilman Mark Brock, recently appointed to the District 3 seat resigned by Paul Gentine.

A three-candidate slate targets Gensel, Szukhent and Gault on a platform of "no new taxes" - with the backing of state Sen. John J. Gleason, D-Flushing (see story, A10).

"We know we need all three of us to win to make an effective change on that board," said Owen, a first-time candidate.

The tax slogan refers to the ballot proposal to renovate the former City Hall building on E. Main Street as a new home for the public library.

Voters will decide if they want to pay an extra 0.7 mills to fund the estimated \$1.6 million-project.

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QUICK TAKE

Janice Gensel, 51

- Work: Sales director for Mary Kay Cosmetics.

- Education: Powers Catholic High School graduate.

- Community Involvement: Flushing Rotary Club; Flint Area Convention and Visitors Bureau board; Community Foundation of Greater Flint trustee; Flushing Area Community Fund board; active in Flushing Area Senior Center; and Chamber of Commerce.

- Family: Single, two children.

The only thing I see right now is that we need to fulfill some of the projects on the capital improvements list that we haven't completed. We are in the process of updating some ordinances.

The top priorities will be working with the state on revenue sharing, working with the administration on budget constraints and ways to work around them. Depending on (library vote) that will continue to be a priority.

Daniel Owen, 41

- Work: Lieutenant in

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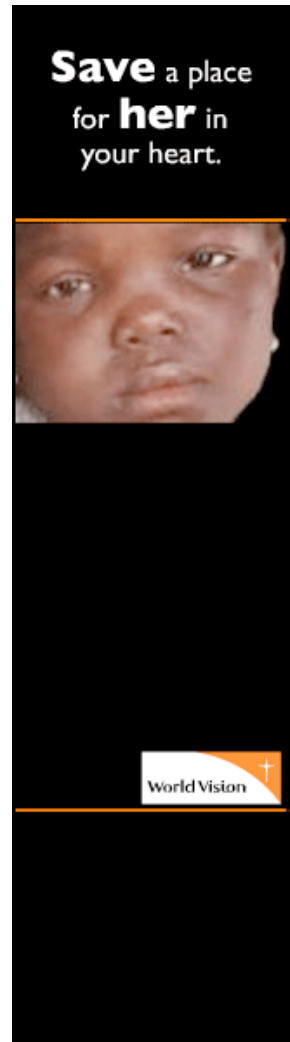
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● Education: Powers Catholic High School graduate; associate's in fire science from Lansing Community College.

● Community Involvement: Coached youth baseball; active in fire department and the firefighters association.

● Family: Married, 4 children.

The DPW, fire, and police departments are run quite well. I feel we have to just maintain what we have and slowly make capital improvements on the business district, streets, and sidewalks.

I would like to get a handle on city finances and where we're going. I would take a look at Tucker Pool and evaluate things there. I'd like to change some street lights, see if there are any grants.

Paul G. Connors, 47

● Work: Policy advisor for Michigan Senate Republicans, primarily for seniors, veterans and transportation issues.

● Education: Doctorate in American history from Loyola University; master's in European history from University of Detroit; bachelor's in communications from Northern Michigan University.

● Community Involvement: Leader in Cub Scouts Pack 302; education committee at St. Robert's Catholic Church; chaired boosters club annual raffle.

● Family: Married to Valerie Newcomb, two sons.

I see three big problems facing the city: municipal health care, pensions for municipal employees, and police services. We should look at consolidating our police services with Flushing Township.

I would pool municipal health care with other municipalities so we can reduce costs. I would look at the

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pension system for municipal employees. Flushing still has the antiquated defined benefit program.

Joseph R. Karlichek,
35

- Work: Vice president and co-owner of STAT EMS, an ambulance company; paramedic instructor/coordinator for the state.

- Education: Flushing High School graduate; attended Mott Community College.

- Community Involvement: Member of the fire department for 12 years. Provided ambulance stand-bys for city festivals and youth tackle football; member of Genesee County Medical Control Authority.

- Family: Married to Melissa, two daughters and a third on the way.

City government needs leadership and accountability. We have to have long-term strategic goals to avoid future tax increases.

I would support our police department and public safety. We need to establish better ordinances to address blight and provide code enforcement. We need to provide some oversight.

Michael T. Szukhent,
48

- Work: Vice president of industrial operations for Goodwill Industries in Flint.

- Education: Flushing High School graduate; bachelor's in business administration from Northwood University.

- Community Involvement: Flushing Lions Club; Flint Rotary Club; coach for AYSO and Flushing Little League baseball; coach and assistant athletic director at St. Robert's Catholic Church; long-time president of Flushing Chamber of Commerce; various other city and church events and activities.

- Family: Married to Terri, two sons.

One thing I wish we had is a better working relationship with

Flushing Township. I wish the library issue was something we would have agreed upon before we went to the ballot.

The number-one concern for anybody in any community is state revenue sharing. Over the last 8 years, our revenue has been cut in half.

David A. Lewicki, 48

- Work: Driver for Penske Logistics; lieutenant in Flushing Fire Department.

- Education: Flushing High School; attended Mott Community College

- Community Involvement: Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee; co-founder of Movies in the Park program; founder of Boy Scouts Explorer Troop 659; Flushing Candlewalk committee; Walleye Festival committee; co-founder of Pumpkin Path Family Walk; Flint River Watershed coalition; chairman of MDA Shriners Pancake Breakfast.

- Family: Married to Cindy, no children.

I think there needs to be a little more definition as to how the council operates. There should be more follow-through in responding to residents' wishes.

My goal is to keep Flushing as family friendly and safe as possible. I want to continue working toward that. We get people out walking the streets in the evening, and we need to provide a safe environment.

Casey Tafoya, 33

- Work: Deputy/paramedic in the Genesee County Sheriff's Department; part-time registered nurse.

- Education: Nursing degree.

- Community Involvement: None.

- Family: Single, engaged to be married.

The city needs stronger leadership. The security of

residents are of the utmost importance. We need to strengthen neighborhood watches and prevention programs.

Community programs and safety. I want to preserve the small-town atmosphere. People move to Flushing because of the sense of community. They want to feel safe.

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