

Two vying to lead Ward 1

By Frank Armand Albano
Sentinel-Voice

Lois Tarkanian, Ward 1 Las Vegas City Council member, has announced she will seek re-election in the upcoming 2007 election. Also announced, Metro Police Officer, and recent candidate for sheriff, Laurie Bisch, will challenge Tarkanian to represent the ward.

Both women say they will bring their special skills to bear, to do a better a job than the other in representing the area's diverse ethnic population and local business interests.

With recent redistricting, Ward 1 has been carved up, losing many of its business development areas that have gone into Ward 3. Adjacent to the predominantly African-American Historic Westside neighborhoods of Ward 5, Ward 1 holds about a 7 percent Black population

Bisch, a 13-year police veteran and mother of Tristan, 9, and Lindsey, 16, became more widely know when she ran for sheriff in the primary election. Bisch spoke exclusively with the Sentinel-Voice about what the area can expect from her administration if she's elected.

"They can expect an all out reduction in neighborhood crime," she said, "including gang violence and robberies."

Bisch named some of the things she proposes to do and how she would involve the community.

"It's a group effort. We'll be out there, listening to the issues."

She said she would have "an open door policy. Also, (See Ward 1, Page 3)

Visions

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[adjacent area to the south], to further enhance cooperation and share issues."

Weekly concluded, "I will take no breaks, no vacations, to give the community what they deserve."

North Las Vegas Mayor Pro Tem, appointed in 1997, and Ward 2 City Council member, since 1983, William Robinson spoke in an interview from his North Las Vegas City Hall office. Robinson leaned back in his chair, in a modest office, looking at the awards and plaques that covered one wall.

"I have so many of these things," he said, "I could fill up four walls."

When he spoke about his visions for his last re-election bid, he said the thing that most saddens him is that he won't be able to run again after 2007 due to recently enacted term limits.

"However," he said, "I'm mentoring my son, to carry on."

Robinson continued, "When people ask me what I've accomplished in my 26-year tenure, I say, oh nothing, except I built a city. When I first got here, there



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

City Councilman Lawrence Weekly poses with singer/songwriter, Grammy nominee and Rancho grad, Ne-Yo.

were about forty-thousand people in North Las Vegas. Now, [the population there] is over 200,000, and we are the second fastest growing city in the country."

"What I'm working on is a regional Mall for North Las Vegas residents," he said.

"I would also like to see a major new car dealership, so people can shop in their own town," he added.

Robinson described the demographics of North Las Vegas as "one-third, one-third and one-third." In general, Ward 2's population is divided evenly in three parts between Caucasian, Blacks and Hispanics.

A major shopping center

at the 215 Beltway and traffic control are also top priorities for Robinson. "We need to synchronize the traffic lights so traffic can move without stop and go," he said.

Robinson recently had cataract surgery, but is recovering well, and he waxed religiously, as the interview ended.

"God has placed me in a position to do the things I have done," he stated.

Clark County Commissioner Yvonne Atkinson Gates did not return calls for a personal interview, however, she did issue comments through her communications office and had written news releases about ongoing

projects in which she is involved.

Among them, The Martin Luther King Early Childhood Center, located at the southwest corner of Martin Luther King Boulevard and Carey Avenue. It is currently under construction, scheduled to be completed in February 2007 at a cost of \$4.9 million.

In addition, there is a proposed tennis court complex planned for the northeast corner of Lake Mead and Allen at a cost of \$5.8 million.

A spokesperson for Atkinson-Gates read her statement by phone: "It's really important to me that the county do all it can to improve the quality of life for our residents. Building the Doc Pearson Community Center and partnering with the Urban League to run it is a big step in the right direction.

"It really is going to be a facility that the entire family can enjoy. The programming will range from recreation and computer literacy to education, remediation, job skills training and arts and crafts."

The representative said that Atkinson-Gates "is very pleased to be able to contribute positive solutions to some of the urban inner-city issues facing this community."

Kwanzaa

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choose Kwanzaa as a way to recognize and connect with their African-origin roots and culture. Some choose to celebrate Kwanzaa because they feel Christmas is a "White man's holiday," referring to the European origins of the holiday icon, Santa or St. Nick, and sometimes the Anglo depiction of Christ.

Others will choose to celebrate both, attaching no religious significance to Kwanzaa, thus presenting no conflict to honoring Christian Christmas. And there are some that reject Kwanzaa altogether, perhaps from misunderstanding its origin or wanting to avoid perceptions of religious conflict.

Commencing on December 26 and lasting until January 1, each of the seven days represents one of seven specific, core principles of Kwanzaa. In order, they are: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. Each principle has a corresponding Afrocentric term.

Each night, the principles are celebrated through storytelling, ceremony, discussion, song, prayer, libation, greetings and other practices culturally specific to the community, such as dances and certain foods. It

can be a household celebration or a communal gathering. Many of the public events and ceremonies are open to all supporters of the principles.

Aside from food and drink, Kwanzaa festivities include music, dance, conversation, laughter and ceremonies.

Elders, especially the eldest present, are recognized and honored. The big feast, held on the eve of the closing day, symbolizes the solidarity of family and community growth.

The Seven Days of Kwanzaa and principles

UMOJA (Unity) (oo-MOE-jah)

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.

KUJICHAGULIA (Self-Determination) (koo-jee-cha-goo-LEE-ah)

To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.

UJIMA (Collective Work and Responsibility) (oo-JEE-mah)

To build and maintain our community together and to make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and to solve them together.

UJAMAA (Co-operative Economics) (oo-JAH-mah)

To build and maintain our own stores, shops and other

businesses and to profit together from them.

NIA (Purpose) (nee-AH)

To make as our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

KUUMBA (Creativity) (koo-OOM-bah)

To do always as much as we can, in the way that we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than when we inherited it.

IMANI (Faith) (ee-MAH-nee)

To believe — with all our hearts — in our parents, our teachers, our leaders, our people and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

Kwanzaa terms

MKEKA

A traditional straw mat where ceremonial items are placed.

KINARA

A candle holder for seven candles

MISHUMAA

The seven candles—three red, three green, the center one black

MUHINDI

Ear of corn

KIKOMBE CHA UMOJA

Unity cup for libations

ZAWADI

Gifts

KARAMU

The big feast on Dec 31, the eve of Imani