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Title: SEMPER FI TO IDEAS, ISSUES PETE SHAUB SHUNS POLITICAL BATTLES IN HIS CAMPAIGN FOR COMMISSIONER.

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Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles profiling the three Republican candidates for county commissioner.

Howard "Pete" Shaub, former Marine, is a man with a mission. He wants to unify the battling divisions of the Lancaster County Republican Party.

It might take a whole corps of Marines to win that objective, but Shaub is undeterred: If he's elected county commissioner, he says, he will use his position to start peace talks between the party's social conservatives and moderates.

Mostly, Shaub would rather talk about ideas than politics. Ask him about the challenges (he prefers that word to "problems") of running in a three-way race with incumbent Paul Thibault, and he replies, "My emphasis is going to be focusing on the issues and presenting those issues to the voters."

Shaub, 44, is teamed with the GOP's other endorsed candidate, Jere Swarr, in the race for two Republican commissioner nominations in the May 18 primary. Thibault, the commissioner chairman, is running unendorsed for a second term.

Shaub is the only candidate with no government experience, but he isn't daunted by that either. He doesn't believe in career politicians, he says: "I think it's very, very healthy to bring people in who do not have specific government experience because they don't come with any preconceived 'we can't' or 'we have to' type of attitudes."

After 22 years in business (he's a project executive for Wohlsen Construction Co.), Shaub figures he can bring his eye for the bottom line to county government.

With a \$175 million budget and the fourth-largest workforce in the county, he notes, "Lancaster County is a big business."

Shaub, son of a rural, working-class family from southern Lancaster County in which he was the first child to go to college, is proud of his roots.

In addition to his Wohlsen job, he works part time for his father's auction business, Shaub Family Auctioneers, shifting from planning multimillion-dollar construction projects one day to selling tools or

antiques to everyday folks the next.

That's an asset for an aspiring commissioner, he says: "Unless you can relate with people and they trust you, you're not going to be able to be effective."

Shaub was a Republican committeeman in Providence Township before he and his family - his wife, Shendra, and their two children, Jason, 20, and Jessica, 17 - moved to Manor Township. Now he's a state committeeman.

"I consider Pete Shaub to be a friend," says one of his key supporters, state Rep. John Barley, R-100th District. "He's a good, solid person."

Shaub is an intense, carefully prepared candidate who comes to an interview with pages full of notes, and who pauses to write down a thought before it slips away.

His greatest strength, he says, is his business background and his experience in controlling costs. It's what countians have told him is their biggest concern - "They cannot take any more tax increases."

And his weakness? "Sometimes I try to do too much in one day," he admits. "... I drive pretty hard, and I'm very task-oriented."

He certainly has a full agenda for his campaign. A sampling of his positions:

•Traffic congestion: He supports a soon-to-be-released recommendation by the Lancaster Intermunicipal Committee for formation of a traffic authority to help bring county road projects to fruition.

•Intermunicipal cooperation: He thinks working together on traffic solutions might be a way to initiate more cooperative efforts among local governments, and he also wants to see more coordination between the county planning commission and the municipalities whose land-use procedures the commission oversees.

•Farmland preservation: Shaub advocates incremental payments to farmers for their development rights instead of one lump sum, allowing the county's preservation board to enroll more farms with the same amount of money each year.

•Suburban sprawl: He proposes strengthening the county's urban growth boundary program by cutting red tape inside the UGBs, permitting more streamlined development. But he prefers manufacturing or

technology industries to shopping centers for better use of the land inside the boundaries.

"The first urban growth boundary I would really promote would be the city," he says.

Replacing Barnes Hall: He says the county should not build its new juvenile detention facility in Sunnyside because it's a poor use of waterfront land. No matter where it's built, the new center should be smaller and more utilitarian than the proposed one.

The commissioners now plan to construct a 72-bed detention hall, with room to expand to 144. Shaub, however, would rather spend more money on training and rehabilitation for troubled teens.

A hotel tax: Shaub says he hasn't studied whether a hotel room tax should be imposed to pay for the local share of a convention center downtown. The state is expected to provide \$15 million, but that money needs to be matched.

Y2K readiness: He advocates a contingency plan for essential services, including police, fire, water and health, in case the Year 2000 computer bug bites harder than anticipated.

The commissioners say Lancaster County government will be Y2K compliant, but "I really have not seen or heard the county talking about contingency plans," Shaub says. "... If you don't have those in place, then you're really going to need a Marine."

On the question of unifying the GOP, Shaub thinks he can bring together the warring social-conservative and moderate factions.

He points out that his own supporters include such traditional conservatives as Barley, state Sen. Gibson Armstrong, R-13th District, and city Mayor Charlie Smithgall, as well as staunch social conservatives.

"I want to get these issues on the table with an action plan so that we don't wait every four years to bring the skeletons out of the closet," Shaub says. "Our differences should be discussed in an open format so people can be held accountable for what they do and say."

Shaub has been critical of Republican commissioners Thibault and Terry Kauffman for allowing Democratic commissioner Ron Ford to oversee the county's social-service budget, but he pledges he will continue the current board's practice of working with the Democratic representative.

"To be effective, you have to be a team player," he says.

Running for commissioner poses another challenge for Shaub - a career change. And it will not be a profitable change, at least financially.

"It's a very big sacrifice - we'll just leave it at that," Shaub says.

But there's a reason for doing it.

"We've been blessed with a wonderful quality of life here," Shaub says, "and I want to maintain that quality of life for my children and my grandchildren."