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**Former marshal makes Senate bid**

**By Katharhynn Heidelberg**

**Montrose Daily Press Senior Writer**

NORWOOD — Norwood's former town marshal says he offers a "true conservative" choice for state Senate District 6. "I'm a genuine conservative," Boehler said Friday. "I believe we need to shrink the size of the government. Government needs to stay out of the individual's life as much as possible. We need to get spending under control."

He filed candidacy papers for Senate District 6 on Wednesday with the Colorado secretary of state. Boehler will be in Montrose today for the Republican county assembly.

"What we're asking is the delegates put him on the ballot," said Harley Brooke-Hitching, chairwoman of the San Miguel County Republicans and county clerk candidate there. "We're asking the delegates to put him on the ballot and let voters decide."

District 6's current senator is Bruce Whitehead, D-Hesperus. Whitehead is seeking election after being appointed to the seat last year, when fellow Hesperus Democrat Jim Isgar resigned to accept a federal post with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Also running for SD 6 is state Rep. Ellen Roberts, R-Durango.

Whitehead said he is "fine" with Boehler's candidacy. "I guess we'll just see who the opponent is. I'm confident I've done a good job for the district and will continue to do so for years to come," he said Friday.

Boehler, 56, has been a Norwood resident since 1976, minus a few years working in Russian orphanages and finishing his college degree. He owns a construction business and was Norwood's marshal until a 2007 controversy over one of his deputy marshals cost him the job.

Boehler was placed on administrative leave Nov. 30, 2007, for objecting to the suspension of the deputy, and for declining to make a "personal" promise concerning statements to the media, he said that year.

The deputy reportedly made inappropriate comments about the sports uniforms of high school girls but apologized, and, according to Boehler at the time, the girls and their families accepted the apologies.

The deputy also took heat for saying a 12-year-old girl was "going to be a heartbreaker," but Boehler said in 2007 that the remark was made because older teens were flirting with the girl, and the deputy wanted to make sure they knew how young she was.

An independent investigation found nothing, Boehler said in 2007, yet he was asked to fire the deputy before having the chance to implement a disciplinary plan.

Friday, Boehler said he wasn't at liberty to discuss his subsequent removal by the town board, because of a settlement agreement.

"He thought that somebody was being railroaded, and he stood up," said Brooke-Hitching. "He was told not to talk about it, so he was removed for insubordination. He wouldn't toe the line. That's the kind of guy I want (in office)."

She said Boehler's campaign has support. "He's not a politician. He's just fed up," Brooke-Hitching said. "He's a good speaker, a good campaigner, a family man."

Boehler says he has debt-trimming plans, and the state should abide by the intent of the 1992 Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR). The series of constitutional amendments cap local and state governments' revenues; voters have agreed to lift or limit TABOR restrictions in several cities and other governmental entities.

"Just as families have to make cuts to get by, the government needs to make cuts," Boehler said. "The government cannot continue to expand in a shrinking economy. "

Boehler said essential services, such as police, fire and education, should be last in line for budget cuts, and threatening to cut these services is a scare tactic.

"If we get back to essential services, there's a lot of excess spending we can eliminate," he said.

Boehler and Brooke-Hitching said they are reaching out to Republican leaders in SD 6 (Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel, La Plata, Dolores, Montezuma, San Juan and Archuleta counties). He will need support at the April 17 district assembly in Ridgway for his candidacy to proceed.

"I feel the 6th could use a genuine conservative choice," said Boehler.