

3 seek vacant seat on Scotts Valley council

By Terri Morgan
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Three candidates are running to fill the Scotts Valley seat left vacant by the resignation of former Mayor Michael Caffrey.

Caffrey resigned his council seat in February to pursue a new business venture and spend more time with his family.

Longtime Scotts Valley resident Jennings Eugene Dodrill, 58, former city Councilman Ed Lang, 52, and Scotts Valley Planning Commissioner Michael

Shulman, 32, hope to fill the seat for the remaining 12 months of the term. The city will hold a special election June 4 for the city's 5,550 registered voters.

Solving the city's budget woes is a key issue, agreed two of the three candidates at a forum sponsored by the Scotts Valley Chamber of Commerce earlier this week. They disagreed sharply, however, on how that can be accomplished.

Lang, a computer consultant who moved to Scotts Valley with his wife and two daughters in 1976, says the

city's deficit can be reduced by trimming staff. Noting that \$3.5 million of the city's \$5 million annual budget goes toward salaries, he suggested not replacing employees lost through attrition.

"The last thing any of us wants is more taxes," Lang said. "I do not support any utility, entertainment, or new taxes for this community."

Lang, who founded Santa Cruz County's first computer company when he started Applied Micro Computer Technology in 1977, is on the city's Cultural Preservation Commission. The past

president of Scotts Valley's Exchange Club, Lang has also served as director of the city's chamber of commerce.

Lang supports establishing an independent financial review commission to oversee the city's expenditures.

Shulman, a product safety engineer with Underwriters' Laboratories Inc. in Santa Clara and a Scotts Valley resident since 1986, said the city's voters should be allowed to decide whether to levy an entertainment tax. A 5 percent tax on video rentals, he said, could raise

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3 Scotts Valley candidates stake out positions on issues

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the city as much as \$400,000 annually. He also supports a "very limited" utility tax to raise city revenues.

"We have a responsibility to leave those tax choices up to the citizens," Shulman said. "Increased revenue is necessary to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Scotts Valley."

Shulman is on the homeowners board of directors at Hidden Oaks, where he resides with his wife, and serves on the city's housing task force.

Dodrill was called out of the county on a minor emergency, said forum moderator Martin Yabroff. He is a 25-year Scotts Valley resident and semi-retired builder.

Dodrill, who is married and has three adult sons, ran unsuccessfully for city council in 1976 and 1988. His civic activities include involve-

ment in the Baptist Church, the Exchange Club, Little League baseball and scouting.

According to his candidate statement, Dodrill supports the establishment of affordable housing, responsible growth, addressing problems faced by the city's elderly, and restoring the city's fiscal health.

"If we make city hall more efficient, prioritize spending, get a dollar's worth for a dollar spent, we could soon be fiscally sound as a city," he wrote.

Lang and Shulman both said they support a high school in Scotts Valley, and forming an assessment district to help pay for improvements to Scotts Valley Drive. They also agree the city should be involved with child care, but disagree on how that can be accomplished.