

## Council could rise above politics

From the notebook: • With Republican Chuck Sigerson's resignation from the Omaha City Council, the Democratic 4-2 majority sits poised to replace him with a Democrat — but shouldn't.

Sigerson represents a GOP-dominated district and is stepping down for health reasons. It's up to the other six council members to name his successor.

In this era of ultrapartisanship nationally, how refreshing would it be for the council's Democrats to step above that and name someone more or less like Chuck — although, with only one woman on the council, another female voice would be great.

In city government, which provides basic services, what is the philosophical difference between a Democrat and a Republican? One fills potholes from the left, the other from the right?

If the Dems appoint a Republican to the seat, it would be a shocker. But I'm just being consistent.

Seven years ago, I criticized the 5-2 Republican majority on the Douglas County Board for replacing a Democrat who resigned as county attorney with a Republican. (Stu Dorman, a very good man and attorney.) The GOP majority rejected Democrat Don Kleine, who was the assistant county attorney and a highly regarded prosecutor. He later won an election as county attorney and still holds the job.

People say they hate politics as usual. But unless some members of the City Council rise above that, the appointment will come down to politics — as usual.

• Walter Olson appeared in numerous roles at the Omaha Community Playhouse, but his most memorable was that of Willy Loman in "Death of a Salesman."

Walter — not a salesman but a longtime accountant for Northwestern Bell — died 15 years ago from Alzheimer's. His family wanted to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his birth on Feb. 18. What to do?

That's when they noticed what was opening at the Playhouse next week: "Death of a Salesman."

"What better way to celebrate his life," said daughter Chris Gilmore of Omaha, "than to attend a play at the playhouse where we were all practically raised?"

Chris and husband Rick will join Omaha siblings and spouses Bob and Nancy Olson, and Mary Ann Olson and Kirk Beisel; and Dick and Rose Olson of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., and Jane and Dennis O'Connor of Birmingham, Ala.

• As Jiminy Cricket sang, "I'm no fool, no sirree. I'm gonna to live to be a hundred and three!"

On Monday, Florence Young of Omaha turns 103. She is said to have appeared in the first play ever staged by the Playhouse, "Enchanted Cottage," in 1925.

For many years, she was one of the top sellers of season memberships, and still is a regular attendee at plays. • Followup to last Saturday's item about Brittany Jeffers, Miss Nebraska, finishing in the top 10 in the Miss America pageant: Bernadette Hupp of Omaha notes that her grandmother, as Myrtis Roach, finished fourth in the Miss America pageant in 1925.

Myrtis appeared not as Miss Nebraska but as Miss Omaha. At the time, contestants could represent cities. She later married and, as Myrtis Garvey, was first violinist in the Omaha Symphony. She died in 1988 at age 81.

• We know that Warren Buffett, the Oracle of Omaha, is the world's No. 1 investor.

But did you notice this numeric oddity? On Monday, "A" shares in his Berkshire Hathaway holding company closed the day at \$111,111 each, up from the previous trading day's close by \$1,111.

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