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The Messenger

Recount of absentee ballots changes Webster totals

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A recount of absentee ballots in Webster County Wednesday showed a significant change in all the totals, but made no difference in the outcome.

It was necessary for County Election Commissioner Virginia Gudmonson to recall the absentee ballot board to recast the ballots on the voting machine when a glaring discrepancy was noted. What called the error to Mrs. Gudmonson's attention was the number of votes cast in Washington Township for senate district 22 and house district 43 candidates. The total recorded in those two races far exceeded the number of persons registered to vote in the township.

Mrs. Gudmonson said the board apparently was confused on instructions in using the straight party ticket lever.

In regular precincts voting machines those races which do not apply to that precinct are blocked out. But on the absentee machine they are not because absentee ballots reflect every precinct in the county. However, when the straight party ticket lever was pulled, instead of casting each vote individually, some persons received votes who should not have.

In the recasting of ballots completed by the absentee board

Wednesday, Ronald Reagan gained three votes, President Jimmy Carter gained two, but John Anderson lost two. Also Charles Grassley gained three votes and John Culver lost two. Clarence Carney gained two, Berkley Bedell lost nine. The winners statewide were Reagan, Grassley and Bedell.

The races that caught Mrs. Gudmonson's eye, that of Senate District 22 and House District 43 reflected, of course, the most change: John Nystrom who it had been reported had 119 votes, went down to two; Doris Vansickle who had 115 votes, went down to one; Sonja Egenes who had 119 went down to two; and William Peltz who had 114 lost them all in the recount.

Other changes were House District 45 John Rowles had 349 absentees, now has 276; Dale Cochran who had 343 now had 284; House District 46 Rebecca Kudron who had 272 now had 238; and Rod Halvorson who had 338 now has 279. Cochran and Halvorson won the race.

In the race for county sheriff Steve Johnson picked up six votes while Charles Griggs lost nine. Griggs was elected in the total county vote.

The unofficial returns which were prepared late Tuesday night in order to report them to mail route cus-

tomers of The Messenger as early as possible reflected one error, pointed out by Roy Hedeon, a Republican. Heeden noted the totals carried in that original chart reflect a much larger number of votes than is possible in his township, Burnside. The total shown in that early chart had Burnside voters casting 265 votes for Reagan, 366 for Carter and 32 for Anderson. The totals shown accurately in the next printing are 125 Reagan, 77 Carter, 7 Anderson.

Other totals in Burnside were 121 Grassley, 75 Culver; 49 Clarence Carney, 149 Bedell; 65 Kudron and 129 Halvorson; 57 Wilbur Strootman and 120 for Patricia McLoud in the clerk of court race; 118 Steve Johnson and 89 Charles Griggs in the sheriff race; 83 for James Cormack and 116 for Elmer Pliner, for supervisor form district four.

The tabulation had inadvertently omitted the Burnside totals and picked up the Precinct at Hillcrest School twice.

Other races which were not reported earlier were for Regional Library Board: Susanne Berkland 2,148; Betty Helgevold 2,447; soil district commissioner: Irene Dencklau 2,891; Randy Pelz 2,958; and Don Seltz 2,649.

Supreme Court judges total votes were W. Ward Reynoldson 7,172 yes,

1,991, no; Harvey Uhlenhopp 7,239 yes, 2,153 no; Robert Albee 6,886 yes, 1,992 no; Jerry Larson 6,965 yes, 1,892 no; Arthur McGiverin, 6,723 yes and 1,988 no; Janet Johnson, judge of the court of appeals received 7,252 yes votes and 1,760 no votes.

For District court judges the votes were as follows: James C. Smith 7,013 yes and 1,846 no; George Fagg 6,512 yes and 2,170 no; Russell Hill

7,399 yes and 1,848 no; and R.K. Richardson 7,136 yes and 2,161 no.

The final totals for the equal rights amendment were 5,806 yes and 10,443 no; and on the constitutional convention 5,862 yes and 10,344 no.

Mrs. Gudmonson said the election canvass will be at 9 a.m. Monday. She pointed out that the absentee errors would have been caught at that time had they not been caught earlier