

William J. 'Bill' Elfering (born August 18, 1941) is an American politician in Umatilla County, State of Oregon, USA. He is an elected County Commissioner in Umatilla County. He resides in Hermiston, Oregon with his wife, Yvonne.



Early Life

Elfering was born in Long Beach, California to John C. and Goldia (Branstetter). He lived with his parents in Torrance, California for the first two and a half years of his life at which point his family moved to Vale, Oregon. He was raised there on the family farm. His father was a three term county sheriff and his mother was very active in community affairs.

Educational Background

He attended school in Vale, Oregon. He played on three of the Vale state championship football teams in his four years at Vale High School. Upon graduation, he attended College of Idaho in Caldwell, Idaho for a year before transferring to University of Portland in Portland, Oregon. He graduated Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and a minor degree in Spanish language.

Family

He married the former Yvonne Smith (August 31, 1963) in Pendleton, Oregon. They are parents of five children: Kori Kountz, John Elfering, Patti Voelker, Mark Elfering and Mary Groesbeck

Business Career

During college, he worked part-time at Foster Sporting Goods to pay for his education. His senior college year, he worked full time managing the sporting goods store on N Lombard Street in Portland at the same time attending college full time and achieving a 4.0 GPA. In 1964, Elfering began his career with State Farm Insurance Company in Salem, Oregon, as an auto underwriter in the Idaho/Montana division. He began as an agent in 1965 building a State Farm agency in Vale, his hometown. Two years later, he was back in Salem as an assistant superintendent of the Agency Department. With a strong desire to return to Eastern Oregon, he and his family moved to Pendleton in 1970 acquiring an agency in Pilot Rock. The following year, he acquired an agency in Pendleton and merged the two. By this time, they had moved to Pilot Rock where they lived the next sixteen years. In 1980, State Farm selected him to become their NE Oregon District Manager where he developed the agencies for the next five years. In 1985, he was transferred with State Farm to Lynnwood, Washington to take charge of the North Seattle/S. Snohomish county district. Loving Eastern Oregon

and wanting to return, he acquired the Hermiston, Oregon State Farm agency in 1990. The family settled onto a 66 acre farm just outside of Hermiston. He retired from his 41 year career with State Farm in 2005. For a short time after retiring, he assisted in management with the Simmons Agency in Hermiston.

Political Career

Elfering was elected to the non-partisan position of Umatilla County Commissioner in the May Primary Election of 2012. To be elected in the May Primary, it was necessary to receive more than 50% of the votes cast. In the election, he received 68.6% of the vote compared to 31.1% divided among his two major opponents.

Community Involvement

The following are among Elfering's activities and achievements:

- o Our Lady of Angels Church, Hermiston, Oregon
 - Chairman of Lectors
 - Member of Finance Committee
 - Member of Liturgy Committee
 - Member of Choir
- o Knights of Columbus (National Catholic Men's Fraternal Organization)
 - Past Grand Knight of Pendleton 1673
 - Past Grand Knight of Hermiston 3999
 - Co-Founder of the Annual "Pig-Out" fundraiser
 - Past District Deputy for District 15 – Oregon
- o Good Shepherd Health Care System
 - Member of the Board of Trustees since 2005
 - Treasurer since 2010
 - Chairman – Finance Committee
 - Chairman – CEO Evaluation Committee
 - Serving on
 - Governance Committee
 - Bylaws-Credentialing Committee
 - Strategic Planning Committee
 - Joint Conference Committee
- o Hermiston Rotary Club
 - § Member of Rotary since 1987
- o Hermiston Chamber of Commerce
- o National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors
 - Past President – Blue Mountain Association
 - Past President – Oregon
 - Past National Committeeman – Oregon

- Oregon's H.G. "Bud" Horn Award recipient (lifetime achievement) 2010
- o Hermiston Sports Booster Club
 - Past Treasurer
 - Past Chair Big Sky Basketball Tournament (4 years)
- o Public Address 'Voice of the Oregon AA Basketball Tournament' (since 1992).
- o Pilot Rock School District Board of Directors
- o Pilot Rock City Planning Commission
 - Chairman during the Comprehensive Plan formation
- o Umatilla County Republican Party
 - Precinct Committeeman
 - Past Alternate Chairman
 - Past Party Chairman
- o Umatilla County Parks and Recreation Commission
- o Oregon Jaycees
 - Past President – Salem Jaycees
 - Past Vice President – Eastern Region
 - Past President – Oregon State Jaycees
 - Junior Chamber International Senator
- o Pioneers, Retired State Farm Agents of the Pacific Northwest
 - Executive Secretary