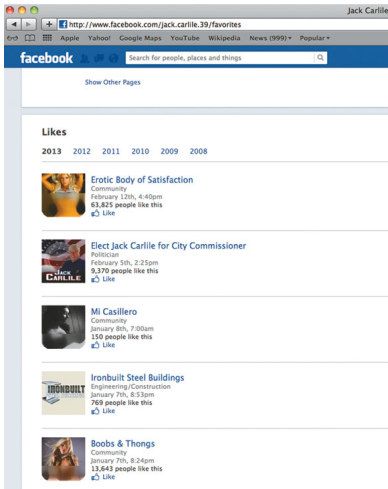


## Did candidate Jack Carlile pay to be liked on Facebook?

Tuesday, 12 March 2013 09:47



This screen shot indicates Seward County Democratic Party Chairman and Liberal City Commission candidate Jack Carlile's personal Facebook page and his likes in 2013. This image, taken Friday, shows Carlile has liked "Erotic Body of Satisfaction," "Mi Casillero" and "Boobs and Thongs," near pornographic sites showing scantily clad women. The images were blurred to make them suitable for printing. Anyone with access to Facebook can view this information. L&T screen shot image

By LARRY PHILLIPS • Leader & Times In a town of 20,000 people, running for public office usually involves yard signs, ads on television, radio and the local newspaper, and now candidates are starting to use social media. A review of a candidate's social media pages can shed some insight.

For example, disc jockey Joe Denoyer's Facebook page shows he has 'liked' a number of political Facebook pages as well as singers.

Dave Harrison's Facebook page shows he has liked local organizations and even Dean Aragon's city commission candidate page on Facebook.

Most candidates pages show similar likes.

But candidate Jack Carlile's has two pages; a campaign page and his personal page.

Carlile's personal Facebook page has 189 friends. However, his campaign page has 8,929 likes, a number that has been dropping steadily over the past few days but at one time totaled 10,000.

Carlile's likes came and went, quickly. Around Feb. 5, his number spiked from near zero to 10,000. A week later, the number dropped backed to near zero, an indication that either 10,000 simultaneously liked and then unliked Carlile, or that a purchase for likes was for about one week. Facebook takes a monthly average, which is what has kept Carlile's number appearing to be 8,929. A quick spike and fall in likes is usually an indication of buying likes for a certain period of time. Without knowing that these likes were purchased, voters may get the impression that Carlile is extremely popular. Carlile recently finished fifth in the Liberal City Commission primary and was only seven votes away from fourth. The top four in the general election will serve as city commissioners.

Some companies, such as fblikesmart.com, sell likes. According to its web site, 10,000 worldwide facebook likes cost \$189.95.

In comparison, Kansas Governor Sam Brownback's page has 4,258 likes. Either Carlile is twice as popular as the Kansas governor, or those likes were purchased.

Last Friday, Carlile was called and asked if he could explain the number of likes on his Facebook campaign page.

"Paul is handling that," Carlile said. "Let me have Paul call you."

He said the Paul he was referring to was Paul Hoag, a local Democrat Party Precinct Committeeman.

Late Friday night, Hoag e-mailed the Leader & Times.

"I have received a message saying you want to interview me about administrative details of the Jack Carlile for City Commissioner campaign," Hoag wrote. "Now I presume your request is for research on a news story, and I have three reactions to your request.

"First, why would I discuss with you the vendors, consultants, volunteers, costs, strategy or any other internal particulars of a campaign," he noted. "Or, for that matter, any other private business?"

He also made it clear who was in charge of Carlile's campaign.

"As campaign manager of the Jack Carlile for City Commissioner campaign I am an employee of Jack Carlile – an unpaid volunteer to be sure, but in one sense, an employee because unlike

other volunteers, I make many of the important decisions,” Hoag wrote.

Several times he also referred to a civil suit Carlile had filed against his fellow owners of the Leader & Times, which is still in the courts, and seemed to infer a civil lawsuit prevented him from disclosing anything about Carlile’s Facebook campaign page.

He received this response from the Leader & Times.

“Hello Paul, Respectfully, I’m not included in any lawsuit and my questions have nothing to do with that. Your candidate is involved in a ‘public’ campaign and his Facebook campaign page is very ‘public.’

“I am simply asking did you or did you not buy ‘LIKES’ for that page and buy followers on his Twitter account? And, if so, did Jack OK that or was it just your idea?”

That was Saturday morning at 8:09.

At 1:03 a.m. Monday, Hoag answered, “I have received your e-mail note in which you write you are ‘not part of any lawsuit.’ That is not true. It is true you are not a named lawsuit participant, at least not presently.”

That last sentence was seemingly an attempt at intimidation or an indirect threat to quit asking questions about Carlile’s Facebook page.

“Nonetheless,” Hoag continued. “It is true you are a senior employee and therefore an agent of Seward County Publishing which is being sued by Jack Carlile for fraud. While this lawsuit is pending and I could be considered an agent of Jack Carlile, we two agents should not be in contact regarding anything concerning the parties for whom we are agents, save for the most superficial and arms-length matters.”

Again, Hoag refused to answer a simple question about the Facebook campaign page.

Carlile’s Twitter account is equally impressive with 33,000-plus followers. The posting on Carlile’s facebook candidate page states, “Become one of our 30,000+ followers on Twitter ...”

Again, when compared to the governor, Carlile’s 33,000 followers eclipse’s Brownback’s total of 6,809.

The wildly popular Kansas senator, Garrett Love, the youngest senator in Kansas history who grew up in a generation of social media, has 12,126 Twitter followers.

Carlile, who is older than 50, has almost three times as many followers, which again indicates an overwhelming popularity or that those followers were purchased.

Carlile’s personal Facebook page’s likes include “Boobs and Thongs,” a near pornographic site, as well as “Erotic Bodies of Satisfaction.”

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Screen shots of Carlile's likes were captured, but due to the graphic nature of the images, they were not suitable for print. They are available at the Leader & Times office as verification for those over the age of 18, or simply go to Carlile's page on Facebook and click on the image (not the word) that indicates his likes.

Carlile's likes may not sit well with female voters.

A local woman who has been involved with the women's right's movement since the late 1950s said that liking that type of material would make a difference.

"It would influence me greatly," Shelby Worthey said. "He would never get my vote."

Worthey said the women's movement was an effort to bring equal pay for equal work and for women to be given respect "for what we knew, not what we looked like or how we dressed.

"That would not be the type of candidate I would be looking for," she said. "I would do everything I could to campaign against that person."

It was unclear how many of those supporting Carlile were women, or if his preference for scantily clad or nude models would have an effect.

"I am greatly offended by that," Worthey said. "We are far more than a pretty face."

Another like included a near-pornographic Facebook page entitled "Mi Casellero" with a Hispanic woman exposing her breasts.

These likes are not from an exuberant childhood. These are pages Carlile has liked in 2013 within the past 75 days.