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Only 850 cast ballots

Trustee incumbents have easy day at the polls

By MARY GNIEWEK

Incumbent Farmington School Board trustees James McGlinchy and Helen Prutow were re-elected to four-year terms Monday by a scant 1.6 percent of the district's registered voters in the annual school election.

McGlinchy was the top vote getter with 579 votes and Mrs. Prutow netted just one less, 578, while challengers Ray Koteras and Lynn Morgan fell far

behind with 130 and 128 votes, respectively.

Just 805 out of 49,823 voters in the district cast ballots at the polls Monday — an even poorer showing than the sparse turnout in the last few school elections.

"We're very disappointed that the interest in the school board election is so small," said Lewis Schulman, superintendent of Farmington Public Schools.

"I think part of the reason may lie in the fact that there is no great issue at this time."

McGlinchy was elected to his first one-year term last June. An active PTA parent, he was first appointed to the school board in 1978 to fill the seat of resigning trustee Dr. Mervyn Ross.

Helen Prutow has served one four-year term which included a year as school board president. She anticipated the small voter turnout following a

poorly attended candidates' forum last week.

Koteras, a school teacher in Detroit, and Morgan, a real estate salesman, were first-time challengers.

In the Oakland Community College board of trustees race, incumbent David Hackett topped a field of 10 candidates with 14,651 votes to secure one of three available six-year terms.

Also elected to six-year terms were Margaret MacTavish with 12,759 votes

and Richard Pappas with 12,519.

The only other incumbent in the race, Barbara Willing, finished fourth with 11,948 votes.

A tax shift proposal which would have transferred 0.2 mill out of debt retirement into the college's operating budget failed 32,385 to 20,833.

Total votes casted in Oakland County were 94,517.

Clarenceville voters re-elected two school board trustees who ran unop-

posed: Richard Wood who secured 261 votes and Michael Manore who garnered 192.

Voters left unresolved a one-year, one-mill tax hike question 173 yes votes to 173 no. The Clarenceville school board will decide June 25 if another election will be called to decide the millage question.

If the board votes for another election, it won't be held before September.

Suspects arraigned in North arson case

By MARY GNIEWEK

Two North Farmington High seniors arraigned last Saturday on arson charges stemming from a June 1 vandalism spree at the school are scheduled to appear in 47th District Court June 18 for a pre-exam conference.

Phillip Rusinowski, 18, and Kenneth Smith, 18, both of West Bloomfield, are

charged with burning of property, a felony and a curfew violation, a maximum 10-year prison term on conviction.

The two pleaded guilty to the charge, but District Judge Michael Hand entered a plea of not guilty for the duo who are free on \$5,000 personal bond.

The case is expected to go to trial in Oakland County Circuit Court sometime after next Wednesday's scheduled

hearing between attorneys for the youths and a court-appointed prosecutor.

Farmington Hills Police Detective Dennis Rochford said the youths were arrested on information from eyewitnesses who will testify at the trial. No other suspects are being sought on the arson charge.

The fire which destroyed a double door on the north side of the school building caused \$2,700 worth of damage, by far the worst destruction in the \$3,300 vandalism spree undertaken by an estimated 200 graduating seniors.

FOUR OTHER North Farmington seniors were arrested by police — three for possession of stolen property and one for reckless driving — and police are still seeking suspects in damage caused by a television set flung through a window.

Farmington School Superintendent Lewis Schulman said if convicted, the students and their parents will be asked to pay for the damages.

"Our position is to go after restitution, not turn the other cheek," he said. "If they are the ones involved, we want them to pay, absolutely."

North Principal Clayton Graham said the diplomas of the two seniors charged with arson will be withheld until restitution is made. The two were the only students barred from participating in senior year-end activities — including honors night, prom and commencement.

"The parents have already been in contact with us about making good the damage," Graham said. "They feel bad about the whole thing."

Both Schulman and Graham believe the vandalism spree at North will be a turning point for student behavior in future years.

"The district is not tolerating this and students are accepting greater responsibility," Schulman said.

In the future, there won't be decorating of the school building, a senior custom this year's end, according to Graham.



Fending off the sharks

It has been raining so much lately that some are saying that it's raining sharks. Layne Harrington found himself fighting the wet stuff recently when he fulfilled his duties as batboy for the Harrison

High School team which was competing in the regional playoffs. For results of the game against Saline High School, turn to the sports section. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

Brotherton supports welfare reform bill

State Rep. Sandy Brotherton, R-Farmington, has come out in support of a bill which, if passed, would deny public assistance money for three months to welfare applicants who turn down employment opportunities or refuse to work on work relief and work training projects.

Last week, the bill was passed out of the House appropriations committee. It is being debated on the House floor this week.

The legislation is included in Governor William Milliken's recommendations for cutting \$37 million out of the remainder of this year's budget.

"It's time we eliminated the dead wood that is dragging down all taxpayers in this state," said Brotherton.

"I think we should require these people who are able to do some productive work to contribute before we hand money over to them," he said.

If signed into law, the bill would save Michigan taxpayers \$7 million a year, according to the 45th District legislator.

The measure is sponsored by State Rep. Ralph Ostling, R-Roscommon.

The bill would eliminate recipients from the state's welfare rolls if they refuse to accept employment "from

which wages not less than the usual rate paid by that employer for the particular kind of employment being offered."

The applicant would be ineligible for public assistance for three months from the date his or her case was terminated by the state Department of Social Services.

After the three-month ineligibility period, persons could apply for relief.

Under current state law, county social services officials must require employable persons to work on a work relief or work training project — if one is available — in return for public assistance unless they are physically or mentally unable to work on a project.

Before persons can receive welfare relief, they must work on one of the projects and:

- register with the Michigan Employment Security Commission and investigate all bona fide employment opportunities.
- not refuse to accept available employment for reasonable wages.

Currently, there is no state statute penalizing welfare recipients who refuse to work or accept employment.

Ohio housing suit could set national pattern

Editor's note: This article was written for the Observer by a reporter in Parma, Ohio. Considering the battle which has carried on between opponents and proponents of the Farmington Hills community,

we feel it holds significance for this area.

By GERALDINE M. STROZIER

In a decision expected to cause re-

percussions around the nation, the federal district judge in Cleveland ruled last week that the city of Parma, Cleveland's largest suburb, has practiced deliberate and continuing racial discrimination in its housing policies.

U.S. District Judge Frank J. Battisti said Thursday that the city has violated the 1968 Fair Housing Act "because the evidence clearly demonstrates that Parma's actions were motivated by racial bigotry."

He gave Parma 60 days to come up with steps to remedy its segregated housing pattern.

The suit against Parma, filed by the Justice Department in 1973, charged that the city engaged in a series of acts intended to prevent blacks from renting or buying property in Parma.

The decision is extremely important, said Robert Renskin, chief of the general litigation section of the civil rights division of the U.S. Justice Department and the man in charge of the case.

The government will use it, he said, to attack alleged segregated housing policies throughout the nation's suburbs, including Birmingham.

In 1971, the government charged, Parma denied a building permit for two apartment buildings — Parma Towers — that would have been federally-subsidized for low- and middle-income senior citizens.

THE JUDGE found the city guilty of discrimination by not issuing the permit to the subsidized housing. He also used the refusal, together with other acts by city officials, as evidence that the city maintained a deliberate overall policy

of discrimination. The remedy required of Parma is certain to be more than simply having to approve future subsidized housing.

Experts in Cleveland predict that Parma will be required to present the court with a comprehensive plan to advertise and encourage blacks to move into the city, to actively seek them out and to advance their assistance in moving.

Parma Law Director Andrew Boyko says he expects the city will appeal the decision.

"We are not going to sit back and let the government push us around," Boyko said.

BATTISTI FOUND the city in violation of the law because of:

- Consistent refusal to sign an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Housing Authority to allow low-income persons to rent and eventually own property in the area.
- Opposition to any form of public or low-income housing.
- Passage of certain zoning ordinances that made it impossible to build subsidized apartments.
- Failure to pass an open housing ordinance.
- Failure to present a plan for low-income housing when the city applied for federal community development funds.
- Refusal of the Parmatown Woods permit.
- Racial remarks made by city officials.

ALL ARE violations, he said, be-

cause they were intended to prevent racial integration in the city, which is 99 percent white.

In its defense, the city argued that municipalities are free to decide their own zoning ordinances. Battisti rejected this argument, he said in his 96-page opinion, because race was a factor in Parma's decision.

Even if a race is only one of several considerations, the judge said, it still renders the zoning ordinance illegal. Parma's other argument that it should not be singled out because many other suburbs are just as guilty of discrimination "has been made and re-

jected too many times to warrant a serious response," said Battisti.

This decision also has implications for cross-district busing, said Avery S. Friedman, an attorney and fair housing expert. In the Detroit cross-district busing case, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the concept of cross-district busing because segregated housing policies on the part of the suburbs were not proved, Friedman said.

When a city has been found guilty of housing discrimination, he said, it is possible that it might be required to participate in a metropolitan-wide school desegregation plan.

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