

Starrett makes first bid for school board seat

By Tom Bass
staff writer

The author of "Miss Fifi Duvall" and "A Doggie's Tale" is plotting a happy ending to yet another saga — his campaign for a seat on the Farmington Board of Education.

Edmund V. Starrett, longtime elementary-school teacher and creator of books and games for children, is one of five candidates who'll be on the ballot in the June 11 school election.

"I'd like to give something back to education," said the 53-year-old Starrett, a 27-year teaching veteran. He'll serve a four-year term if he's one of the top two vote-getters in the election.

Starrett, a fourth-grade teacher in Taylor, has lived at 28075 Wellington in Farmington Hills for about a year. Edmund and Monica Starrett are the parents of Mark, who attends Farmington Harrison High, and Theresa, a sophomore at Central Michigan University.

"I DON'T think there's anything wrong with the educational system (in Farmington), but there are a lot of little things," Starrett said.

"I don't have any axes to grind, but I'd be concerned about the academic standards in high school. Several people have mentioned this to me."

"I think honesty is the best way to improve everything. I think educators have a tendency to make everything sound like it's great."

"And I think some of the other candidates would pretty much go along with the status quo and maybe not admit that some things need a little looking into."

A SPECIFIC concern? Placing the wrong kind of students in vocational education programs.

"I would make sure that kids are not channelled into vocational education programs when what they really need are things like English and spelling and arithmetic."

"I think kids who are low achievers get channelled into vocational education programs and get lost in the shuffle. I think we have a responsibility to teach them to read and write."

Starrett, who began his career by teaching the children of migrant workers in New York state, admits he's not been the most active of the five campaigners.

"I REALLY haven't run a very strong campaign. I will make my presentation. If people like it, they'll vote for me. If they don't, they won't."

Teacher Starrett said he's not disappointed that he didn't receive the endorsement of the Farmington teachers union. Union support went to incumbent Helen Prutow and challenger Roxanne Fitzpatrick.

"I want the support of the teachers, not their union. I know that statement'll cost me a few votes, but I'm not saying things to please people. I'm just

school board race

trying to be honest.

"If I win, I'll be because some of the other candidates like me enough to ask their friends to vote for me."

RAISED IN Detroit, Starrett graduated from the University of Illinois with a major in philosophy. He's also earned a master's degree in education administration and supervision from the University of Detroit and a doctorate in education with emphasis in linguistics.

Starrett has written several children's books, including "Miss Fifi Duvall" ("It's recommended reading for libraries in Wayne County. I don't know about Oakland") and "A Doggie's Tale." He also created a children's phonics game called "Tik-Ack-Occ."

Starrett is "very much committed to elementary education." He's taught just about every elementary grade level as well as classes for gifted and retarded children.



Edmund V. Starrett concerned about standards

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License procedures debated

Continued from Page 1

Despite the fact that the medical boards are comprised of physicians, Fishman said he believes they will be favor of HB 5093 as well as many of the other proposed changes.

Problems that have been encountered with some physicians are "deliberately dispensing and selling drugs" and "manipulating the system" so Medicaid (taxpayers' money) pays for diagnostic tests that were never made, Brotherton said.

"In the law, it's anything that's a violation of the law which involves the use of a doctor's practice," Brotherton said.

These practices, as well as being "found by his peers to be practicing faulty medicine," he said, are the cause for the revocation or suspension of physicians' licenses.

Because of budget cuts, the licensing and regulation department now has fewer investigators working on complaints about physicians, Brotherton said. Adding to the fewer investigators is the practice of allowing the investigators to choose which cases they wish to investigate.

most interesting and attractive case rather than the one needing the most immediate attention.

The panel will try changing the investigation process by allowing the complaints to first come before the medical boards. That way, he said, the members can decide which cases need the most immediate attention.

Once determined, the cases would then be assigned to investigators.

Another change the panel is considering, Brotherton said, is providing members of medical boards with immunity from law suits by physicians who have had their licenses revoked or suspended.

Because a physician can sue the medical boards or a particular member, the boards are often hesitant in their actions against a physician, Brotherton said.

The panel will also consider trying to amend the law which allows a physician to practice under more than one license. Because a physician, such as a psychiatrist, might also have a license as a medical doctor and/or a marriage counselor, when the physician's revoked, as a psychiatrist has been license, he

can still continue practicing under another license.

"We're trying to amend the law so they cannot practice under any license," Brotherton said. "There are all these little loopholes and flaws that doctors can get through."

"We're trying to find out what it is going to take to tighten it up," he added.



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