

# Opinion

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## Abernethy, Prutow best in Farmington race

SOMETHING OLD. Something new. That's the way we advise voters in the Farmington School District to view the upcoming school election.

Five candidates — an incumbent and four challengers — want a chance to serve the community as trustees on the Farmington Board of Education. Only the top two vote-getters will survive the trial by election next Monday, June 11.

We urge voters to use their ballots to see to it that those survivors are incumbent Helen D. Prutow and newcomer James J. Abernethy.

Prutow is the "something old" mentioned at the beginning of this editorial, and we're certainly not referring to her age. (She'll turn 44 on election day.)

Rather Prutow, who's seeking her third four-year term, is old stuff in an organization which seems to have made steady advancement toward peace and progress after the brawls, backbites and overall nastiness of the mid-1970s.

Prutow, the current board president, has been an integral part of this seeming progress and deserves to be retained.

In a recent interview, she spoke of "watching the pendulum swing complete-

ly the other way" from the relevancy-in-education days to the current back-to-basics craze. She also sees the need to "find the middle ground."

We'd like to believe that statements like this indicate a wisdom born of experience.

Although she claims that "we (the present board members) have everything in hand," Prutow doesn't impress us as a stand-patter on the school board. "There's always room for improvement," she says, ticking off the areas she'd like improved.

AND JUST TO MAKE sure that the Farmington Board doesn't stand pat, there's Abernethy — or there should be.

Abernethy, the challenger, certainly isn't afraid to voice his concerns about education given by the Farmington Public Schools. For one thing, he has said that "expectations and standards" need to be raised in the district's classrooms.

A 17-year resident of Farmington, Abernethy, a college professor, has a long and consistent history of involvement in his community. He currently is a member of the city's planning department and has served on the zoning board of appeals.

While each of the five candidates possesses attributes which make them viable candidates, we feel that Prutow and Abernethy are the most qualified of the lot.

We urge all voters, whether or not they agree with our choices, to cast their ballots in Monday's school board election.

We'd like to see a huge turnout, but we'll probably be disappointed considering the typical voter apathy concerning school elections in general. An example of this apathy could be seen at a recent meet-the-candidates night when the board hopefuls very nearly outnumbered the spectators.

And, finally, we'd hope that the three candidates we don't win will continue their interest in the Farmington Public Schools.

## Discover Michigan by Bill Stockwell

DID YOU know that genuine Michigan maple syrup, made from the sap of Michigan trees, is as precious as it is delicious? The tapping of a single maple tree in spring can produce up to 50 gallons of sap, but boiled down this results in only one gallon of maple syrup. Nearly 50 gallons is a lot of weight to gather and handle for a single gallon of syrup.

## Tessier to open up outlook at OCC

IN A COUNTY of one million people, it is odd that campaigns for the Oakland Community College Board of Trustees are much like those in a rustic village. A few insiders make decisions and pass them along by word of mouth.

The result has been a board heavily populated with present and former educators, almost a closed club. It's not a nasty closed club because its members are genuinely interested in the good of students. But it is a club that needs different outlooks and, particularly, business experience.

Two trustees will be elected June 11, at the same time as K-12 school district trustees. OCC trustees serve six-year terms without pay. In a field of five candidates, one newcomer and the incumbent stand out.

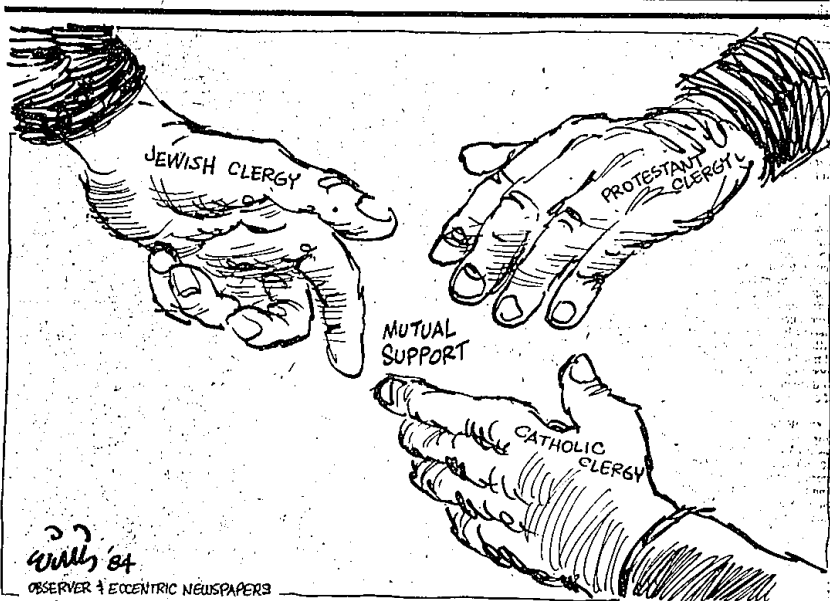
DESPITE SOME rough edges, Vern Tessier of Avon Township has demonstrated he could be a worthy addition to the board inasmuch as attorney David Preston isn't seeking election.

Tessier has been with the Taubman Co. in Troy for 10 years in property appraisal. Previously, he was controller of a construction company and before that taught at the college level. He has two degrees — in business and economics — from Michigan State University.

That background stands out on a board that includes four professional educators, one has recently become a political professional, two attorneys and a retired law officer. As community colleges play an increasingly important role in Michigan's economic redevelopment, a business outlook becomes critical to the college board.

Moreover, Tessier is the only candidate who has raised anything resembling an issue. And he has raised some good ones.

Observer & Eccentric Newspapers



## Clergy need ministers, too

WHO MINISTERS to the minister?

That question has bothered the Rev. David Strong for many years. Strong is pastor of St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Livonia. He recently published a booklet on the subject. The material came from his doctoral dissertation completed earlier this year.

"For many years, I have been distressed as I watched friends leave the ministry," he said in an interview earlier this week. "Some of my best friends became very isolated in their work, and no one seemed to know they existed." Strong has been a clergyman for 25 years.

"We operate under a double standard. People come to a minister with their problems, but if the minister has problems, they don't want to hear about them."

BETWEEN MARCH and May 1983, he sent a questionnaire to 211 clergymen in the Detroit metropolitan area. He received responses from 122 persons. The majority were Methodists, but several other Protestant ministers and Catholic priests also took part.

- A few of Strong's conclusions:
- 81 percent experienced isolation.
- 48 percent felt a desire to leave the ministry.
- 56 percent responded to stress by



Nick Sharkey

emotionally isolating themselves.

The feeling of isolation, Strong wrote, "hits a pastor in the face when he walks into a barber shop and suddenly because the men know he is a minister, they become quiet. Men feel awkward drinking and telling dirty jokes with a minister around."

A clergywoman said, "I feel isolated from friends I used to have who are not affiliated with the church."

A middle-age Protestant minister said, "Isolation, yes. You sense you are all alone. There is no one you can talk to."

SO, WHO does minister to the minister? Strong's study indicated that most of the support comes from a spouse. But he urges caution: "Spouses get over-used. They can burn out over the years."

Besides, the role of a spouse is changing. For example, his father-in-law was a clergyman, so his mother-in-law worked

the equivalent of a full-time job in her role as "minister's wife." She greeted churchgoers after services, attended church dinners and bazaars. She was a close adviser to the minister.

Strong's wife has a full-time job outside the home. She has neither the time nor the energy to be a "minister's wife. When she returns home, she needs his support from the stresses of her job."

INSTEAD, STRONG concludes that clergymen need to determine what kind of support they need. Then they must find several sources to fill that need.

Strong himself belongs to an ecumenical group of ministers who meet to discuss mutual problems. He also gets support from members of his congregation.

Others responding to his survey said they receive support from laymen, clergymen of the same denomination, counselors and church leaders.

"It is unrealistic and unwise to ask too much from any one person or group," he writes.

Strong's conclusions are not limited to the clergy. His study says much about how we relate to those who advise us — be they social workers, psychologists or guidance counselors. Copies of his study can be bought for \$2.50 through St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Livonia.

## In C'ville: Manore, Wood, Ahnert

THE CLARENCEVILLE School District is on the threshold of exciting changes.

The small urban school system located in parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford Township has for years been known as an able provider of basic education to thousands of students. In the meantime, it has offered the advantages of a close-knit community.

In the past few months, Clarenceville has hired two new administrators who both show promise for stimulating ideas into the district. With the addition of a new school superintendent and principal at Boisford Elementary School, the district should prove worth watching as the district combines a mix of new ideas with valued experience.

And so it is timely that a school board election approaches in which we have the opportunity to re-examine the performances of two elected officials and consider the election of another.

After an examination of the five candidates vying for two four-year terms and a one-year seat on the school board, the Observer endorses Michael Manore and Richard Wood for the two four-year terms. Linda Ahnert, the sole candidate for the one-year term, is virtually assured election.

Manore is the outstanding candidate. As a novice board member, he proved to be hardworking and intelligent. This year, as board president, he further demonstrated his capacity for quiet and capable leadership as he directed the board in its hiring of a new school superintendent. The process went smoothly and was characterized by his careful attention and deliberation — all results of which Manore should be personally very proud. In addition, he understands school issues. Manore merits a second term.

For the second four-year spot, we believe Richard Wood is an acceptable choice. Wood has been a trustee for 20 years. Life-long trustees aren't necessarily

good for a district, and it would be better to see a mix of candidates from communities other than Livonia represented. But in light of other expressed changes, a relatively stable board may be helpful.

We urge Wood to become more questioning and thorough at the board level.

Ahnert is seeking to fill the one-year vacancy that was created when trustee Lee McDowell retired earlier this year. Ahnert has been a candidate for school office before and was considered to fill the same spot last year. More importantly, she has worked as a school volunteer for 13 years and in this commitment she has become familiar with the district's needs and concerns.

## Movie critic tells too much

To the editor:

Although Robert Redford can do no wrong in my eyes, I readily concede Dan Greenberg's right, indeed his responsibility, to criticize "The Natural." What Greenberg should not do is to reveal the entire plot of a movie in his review.

A quick glance at the movie critiques in the Detroit News and Free Press, which are usually excellent, will prove that

## from our readers

something is always left for the movie fan to anticipate in the way of a story line. Greenberg would do well to follow suit.

Alice S. Barnes  
Detroit