

# Squaring off

## 3 in hunt for 2 school terms

THREE CANDIDATES, including two incumbents, are vying for two Farmington Board of Education seats.

Nominating petitions, signed by at least 20 registered district voters, had to be filed by April 16.

The annual district election will be held from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday, June 9.

Voters will fill two four-year terms on the seven-member school board. The 10,300-student district has 52,000 registered voters.

Trustees whose terms are expiring are Janice Rolnick and R. Jack Inch both elected in 1978 and re-elected in 1982.

Joining them in the school board race is newcomer Paul Blizman.

BOARD MEMBERS are paid \$30 per public or committee meeting attended, up to one meeting per day and 52 meetings per year. They also are reimbursed for expenses incurred at the board's direction.

### election '86

Trustees regularly meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month in the board meeting room of the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, 32500 Shilawasse, Farmington.

Trustees consider recommendations from the salaried administration and set all policies for the district.

Other board members continuing in staggered, four-year terms are Susan Rennels, current president serving her first four-year term; Helen Prutow, current vice president and former president serving her third, four-year term; and James Abernethy, John Cotton and Helen Ditzhazy, all trustees serving their first four-year term.

Farmington Public Schools encompasses most of Farmington and Farmington Hills, and a portion of West Bloomfield Township extending a half mile north of 14 Mile, between Inkster and Middlebelt.

THE DISTRICT has three senior highs, four middle schools, 11 elementary and six special service buildings.

Absentee ballots are available in the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center.

The district has four voting precincts:

- Precinct 1 — Farmington Training Center, 33000 Thomas, Farmington.

- Precinct 2 — Dunckel Middle School, 32800 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.

- Precinct 3 — Warner Middle School, 30303 14 Mile, Farmington Hills.

- Precinct 4 — East Middle School, 25000 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills.

## Paul Blizman

### Farmington Hills

Address: Herndonwood.

Age: 45.

Education: Grosse Ile High School, 1958; Wayne State University, bachelor of arts, 1966, history major, master of social work, 1969; Detroit College of Law, juris doctor, 1980.

Occupation: Attorney for Melman, Blizman & Dalley, P.C., Southfield.

Government involvement: Member, Farmington Hills Energy Commission, 1984-86; Farmington Hills Historic Districts Commission, 1981 to present. Served on committee for making recommendations for development of Heritage Park (Spicer property), Farmington Hills.

Community involvement: Charter member, Farmington Hills Optimist Club, vice president, 1986-87. Member, Forestbrook-Plebbelbrook Subdivision Association.

Length of residence in district: Since 1974.

Family: Wife, Leah; daughter, Alexis, a student at Warner Middle School.

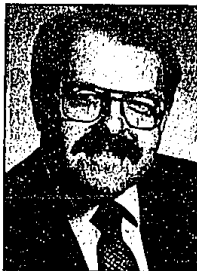
#### CAMPAIGN COMMENTS:

1. **COMPETENCY** — I do not believe that we need student competency testing in Farmington. Students should be regularly tested during their school years in their classes and the grades they receive should reflect their performance. High school diplomas from our district should reflect that students have achieved competence through passing grades.

Competency testing, in itself, is so vague in what it measures that it does not answer our needs; often, it diverts attention from education to teaching yet another standardized test.

I do not believe that teacher competency testing answers this district's need for quality teachers. Transcripts should be evaluated when teachers are hired. These should provide the needed information about a teacher's academic preparedness. If this is insufficient, then additional expectations, such as in-class supervision for non-tenured teachers, may be necessary.

Peer and supervisory evaluation of classroom performance can determine competence to teach our young people. Opportunities for in-service training and refresher course work should be encouraged so that teachers strengthen their skills and enhance the familiarity with



newletters to the residents, newspapers and local cable TV programming.

4. **CREDITS** — I do not support the concept of tax voucher or tuition tax credits because I believe they undermine the financial support of the public schools. Competition with private schools is probably good for the public schools, but competition for limited tax dollars might have the effect of gutting the public schools and only providing meager programs for a multitude of private schools.

5. **ETHNICITY** — Ethnic variety in the district can be an opportunity to broaden programming and encourage an awareness and sensitivity to the diversity of the world in which we live. Sensitivity in selecting textbooks in order to eliminate negative stereotypes, and using supplemental texts and materials to enhance the curriculum should be part of the district's goals in this area. In-service training for teachers and other staff may also be necessary to improve the district's ability to cope with change.

6. **RENOVATIONS** — The district's proposed budget for 1988-89 provides for an extra million dollars for capital expenditures, much of which is for facility improvement. The interest on the district's deposited funds is, I understand, the source of most of this budget item.

The funds on deposit, which come from the sale of school properties, and which amount to over \$6 million, can also be used if they are needed. If health and safety are at issue, if deterioration of a building or buildings is severe and immediate action is needed, then I would support using the funds on deposit.

7. **WOMEN** — The board and the administration in the district have to be sensitive to the issue of promotion and to opportunities for promotion for women. Active recruitment of administrators outside the district is one possibility, but giving women within the district opportunities to gain administrative experience, possibly through interim appointments, might encourage applicants from within the district.

8. **GIFTED** — The gifted program serves a small minority of the district's students. With parental support, the district has expanded the program through additional coordi-

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# Candidate questionnaire

1. Should Farmington Public Schools embark upon student and teacher competency testing? If so, how often should it be done? Should student competency testing be a condition of promotion or graduation? Should teacher competency testing be a condition of pay increases?

2. Do you view classroom overcrowding at some district schools as a critical concern? If so, what specific measures would you recommend to help ease the situation?

3. How could the school board further improve its communication with the governments of Farmington, Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield and with the residents of those communities?

4. Do you support the concept of tax vouchers or tuition tax credits for parents who choose to send their children to non-public schools? Elaborate.

5. How will the ethnic changes in the Farmington area affect the schools, particularly with regard to curriculum programming?

6. How would you like to see a districtwide program for facilities renovation and improvements be financed?

7. Could the district do more to encourage the elevation of women to key administrative posts? Elaborate.

8. Do you feel the district's gifted education program is adequate? If not, where is it lacking?

9. What effect will the new school employees retirement law have on the district?

10. Are there graduation requirements you would like to see toughened or otherwise changed? If so, name them.

11. To what degree should computer education be taught in the schools?

12. Where do you see the future of funding of public education headed?

13. What should be the first priority of the next school board?

14. Why should voters support your candidacy? What special qualities would you bring to the school board?

support a system of tax vouchers. With the present changes that may take place in the federal tax code, it would be difficult for me to evaluate the future of tuition tax credits.

5. **ETHNICITY** — The first change that should take place in curriculum would be to make textbook manufacturers conscious of the need to include material meaningful to the new minorities. Stories that highlight the flavor and color of these minorities would be the quickest way to allow the transition of a student to a warm, educational experiment.

Backup work, such as workshops for staff, would allow the school system to present meaningful material to the new minorities in a comfortable manner. A long-run plan to set goals for the district, so that this can be an enriching, rather than an embittering experience, is needed at once. A Task Force for the Farmington Public Schools of the '90s."

6. **RENOVATIONS** — The program envisioned by Assistant Superintendent Mike Flanagan, if allowed to develop for the next five years, should allow for facilities' renovation and improvement. This program is a pay-as-you-go renovation program, which allows for \$2.5 million per year to be spent out of our operating budget. By allowing individual buildings to set priorities as to capital need requests, we are able to reach our goals in a much more direct manner. By using current income, we, the members of this board, will not saddle future boards and residents with debt fees incurred to bring facilities up to an acceptable standard.

7. **WOMEN** — An evaluation of what we want in future administrators. The starting of a series of workshops that would allow future administrators to understand the responsibilities that go with promotion. An invitation by the present central office to all women who wish to be considered for promotion, to attend these workshops.

A chance for those women who wish promotions to visit women in other districts — to gain insight into administration. A training program under an experienced administrator — the year prior to promotion, to ensure success.

8. **GIFTED** — I feel the purpose and goals of the gifted program, 1-11, need to be redefined by the

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## R. Jack Inch

### Farmington

Address: Meadowlark.

Age: 55.

Education: Wayne State University, bachelor of arts, 1953, history major, master of education, 1957, University of Illinois, master of science, 1968, economics major. Attended as a graduate student, 1958, University of Michigan, 1964, North Texas State, 1980, University of Dayton, 1983, Christian Brothers College, Memphis, Tenn.

Occupation: Professor, Economics Department, chairman, Economics and Political Science, Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge Campus, Farmington Hills.

Community involvement: Flanders Elementary Parent-Teacher Association president, 1971-72; Farmington Board of Education trustee, since 1978.

Government involvement: Farmington Board of Education, treasurer, 1965-66; president, 1969-71; vice president, 1973-84, 1979-80. Member, Farmington School Organizational Structure Study Committee, 1976-77.

Length of residence in district: 27 years.

Family: Wife, Sandy; sons, Terry, 28, working in California, Christopher, 16, a student at Farmington High School, and Patrick, 14, a student at Power Middle School; daughter, Amy, 22, a registered nurse at Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital, Detroit.

#### CAMPAIGN COMMENTS:

1. **COMPETENCY** — The danger of testing as a condition of student promotion or graduation is that the test, which takes a few hours, becomes more important than all of the hours that the student has spent in the classroom. The test is the final arbitrator of the success of a student — not the person who has guided them through the work. If the test becomes the criteria for promotion or graduation, we will find teachers teaching the test. We already rank school districts on the basis of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, which was one of the things promised not to happen when it was instituted.

Teacher competency testing should be based on the classes and the grades the teachers received in them while they attended college. The real test of competency of a teacher is a yearly evaluation of that



teacher by his/her administrator. If the administrator in a building has doubts about the competency of a teacher, an outside expert in the field should be called in to aid in the evaluation.

2. **OVERCROWDING** — I view overcrowding as a matter of critical concern that should generate both short- and long-range plans to attack this situation. The first step would be full utilization of the building for the basic program. Bring in temporary buildings — if that would expand the building in the short run. After consulting with parents and staff, consider the alternative of transferring students to vacant classrooms in other buildings, if they are available.

The long-run answer might well be new construction in the form of an addition to a current building or the construction of a new building on a different site.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS** — At the present time, we have a board member who is supposed to attend the meetings of Farmington and Farmington Hills. Perhaps the expansion of the member attending into a liaison who would meet with similar liaison representatives from the city government would allow better communication between the bodies of government.

There must be attempts made to communicate with all residents of communities within the Farmington School District. An open meeting, once a month, for the sole purpose of allowing the public to visit their schools and voice their questions might open the way for better communications.

4. **CREDITS** — As long as a private school has the privilege of refusing to service a student, I cannot

## Janice Rolnick

### Farmington

Address: Applewood.

Age: 44.

Employer: Vice president of Credential Clerk.

Education: Bachelor of science, elementary education, Wayne State University, graduate course work in career education, Michigan State University; psychology, University of Michigan; metropolitan problems and urban change, U-M; computer science courses, Oakland Community College.

Community involvement: Member, PTA, 1976 to 1983; Farmington Youth Assistance, 1984; Boosters of North Farmington, Farmington Families in Action, Farmington Association for Children with Exceptional Talent, currently.

Government involvement: Member, Farmington Board of Education for the past eight years.

Length of residence in district: 9 1/2 years.

Family: Husband, Michael; son, Jayson, 16, student at North Farmington High School; daughter, Jessica, 14, student at Dunckel Middle School.

#### CAMPAIGN COMMENTS:

1. **COMPETENCY** — Competency testing of students, if used as a remediation tool, not a condition of promotion, would be a good idea. The results of a yearly test could be used to plan appropriately for meeting the needs of each student.

Qualifications of teachers, as defined by North Central accreditation, is appropriate. Expertise in a content area, although important, is not an indicator of successful teaching methods.

2. **OVERCROWDING** — Classroom overcrowding is a concern in a few rooms in the district. I would recommend additional staff, teacher's aides, to help alleviate problems incurred. We are bound by contract regarding pupil-teacher ratio: elementary, 25:1; middle school, 22:1; high school, 24:1.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS** — Communications could be improved by the establishment of communication councils made up of representatives of each unit, with scheduled meetings for dialogue exchange.



4. **CREDITS** — We must maintain a free, public, comprehensive educational system whose unique quality of universality remains untampered with.

Issues of tax vouchers and tuition tax credits are real threats to our present vital system. A democratic, literate society depends on public schools. Each citizen benefits from a quality school system.

5. **ETHNICITY** — Our curriculum needs to reflect the needs of our students. An intensive course in English for foreign-born students should be developed. More course offerings in geography, which would include the study of different cultures, is needed.

Psychology classes, dealing with feelings and differences of people and their cultures, would be beneficial. Staff development programs, to raise the level of sensitivity and awareness of the culturally different, needs to be instituted.

6. **RENOVATIONS** — A process should be developed whereby systematic input regarding building needs can be obtained from staff members: maintenance staff, aides, drivers, support personnel, teachers, administrators, clerical, etc.

These needs should be financed by a capital needs account. This account would contain monies from the sale of district land and a determined yearly allocation established by the board.

7. **WOMEN** — I would want the administration to aggressively solicit and seek those women qualified to apply for available positions.

8. **GIFTED** — Our present program in gifted education does not

meet the need of gifted students to be together for a portion of the school day. Gifted students learn and think differently.

They need the feeling of freedom to discuss issues and ask questions among those who understand. They need the stimulation of each other, the feeling of belonging. Many gifted students are not high achievers, therefore, they are not involved in advance placement classes.

Staff needs to be trained in gifted education. We need a gifted coordinator at each building. We need extracurricular activities for gifted students. We need to recognize and understand their differences and needs.

9. **RETIREMENT** — Many staff members are taking advantage of the new pension law. The district will see a tremendous change in staff and administration.

An appropriate plan for a smooth transition will need to be implemented. In-service, staff development and updating content skills must become more extensive, relevant and available to all employees.

10. **GRADUATION** — I would like to see the addition of a graduation requirement in public speaking.

11. **COMPUTERS** — I am pleased with the level of computer education this district offers. I would like to see an increase in computer-aided instruction.

12. **FUNDING** — I would like to see the funding of education remain as it is. I believe it is headed in the direction of a state equalization formula, whereby local dollars will not be retained locally.

13. **PRIORITY** — The first priority of the next school board should be implementation of a curriculum development plan.

14. **QUALIFICATIONS** — My background in education as a student and a teacher provides insight of student as well as teacher needs. My previous school board experience provides the knowledge of educational issues and the procedures necessary to affect change.

I have the background, experience, interest and commitment. I also have two children in our schools. I believe these are qualifications one would desire in a board member.