

Rochester official takes on L. Brooks

By WAYNE DEAL
STAFF WRITER

Thomas Werth, a Rochester city councilman and former mayor, seeks to be the man who takes on L. Brooks Patterson this fall.

Werth, 51, will announce his candidacy for county executive today, in anticipation of this weekend's county Democratic party convention.

His campaign promises to sound an already-familiar theme: restoring people's confidence in government.

"The feeling is government always takes care of the big guys," he said. "I seek to be a county executive who will represent all the people."

Though former Michigan First Lady Paula Blanchard had been a rumored candidate, county Democrats appear to be rallying around Werth.

"He's the kind of guy we need," said Lawrence Perlick, chairman of the county commission's Democratic caucus. "He has experience in local government and he'll bring a clear head to county government."

County Republicans, however, were barely containing their glee at the prospect of not facing another Blanchard.

"You always take the races seriously, but I'd say we would have been much more concerned if Paula Blanchard were the nominee," county GOP chief James Alexander said.

A Rochester councilman since 1973, Werth said his candidacy was sparked by recent controversy over the county incinerator — narrowly approved by voters last year.

Many Rochester-area residents protested the incinerator site in Auburn Hills, which Werth called a potential financial and environmental nightmare.

Werth said he was especially bothered by how the pro-incinerator campaign was conducted.

"I think if people knew that Westinghouse (which would have built the incinerator) was behind the literature they were receiving they never would have approved it," Werth said, conceding he might not be running for county executive if the measure had failed at the ballot box.

Current executive Daniel Murphy and likely GOP nominee Patterson supported the incinerator, though Westinghouse subsequently pulled out of its contract to build the trash burning plant.



Tom Werth: Dems rallying around him.

This is the first time Werth has sought higher office since an unsuccessful early 1970s run for the state House.

Though he acknowledges he's open to charges of being a small-town politician, Werth said that's not all bad.

"I happen to think Rochester is one of the most beautiful, vibrant places around and I've worked hard to make it so," he said. "I'd tell you-

ple that I can do the same for the county."

Ten years ago, Werth was among the city officials who drafted plans for Rochester's Downtown Development Authority, credited with revitalizing the city's commercial district.

Werth has spent six non-consecutive one-year terms as mayor, a largely ceremonial post. Administrative duties are handled by a city manager.

Still, Werth has earned a reputation as a serious, thoughtful local leader whose interests extend beyond the city and county.

He served as Michigan Municipal League president in 1987, after an earlier one-year stint as president of the Michigan Conference of Mayors.

Werth is also among 25 municipal leaders who serve on the National League of Cities Human Development Study Committee, currently investigating health care issues.

County parks schedule amateur photo contest

Amateur photographers are invited to participate in the 1992 Oakland County Parks Photo Contest.

Contest categories are open to adults and youths 14 and under. Prizes will be awarded for color slides and black and white photographs.

Entries are limited to photos shot within county parks. Judging is based upon quality, composition, creativity and general interest appeal.

Entries must be postmarked before midnight Friday, Aug. 14.

Adult prizes include \$100 cash and an Oakland County Parks Summer Fun Passbook, a \$50 value, and annual parks vehicle permit, a \$20 value.

The top youth division prize is a 1993 pass to the Red Oaks and Waterford Oaks water parks.

Judges include photo columnist

Monte Nagler of the Observer & Eccentric newspapers, Tony Spina of the Detroit Free Press and representatives from DDB Needham Advertising, Detroit and the Camera Mart, Pontiac.

Winning entries become property of the county parks and may be used in parks displays and publications.

Beginning Aug. 15, the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission will also collect entries for a statewide amateur photo contest running through Dec. 31.

The statewide contest is sponsored by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Recreation and Park Association and Kodak.

Additional information about each contest is available by calling Mary Zednik, 858-0900.



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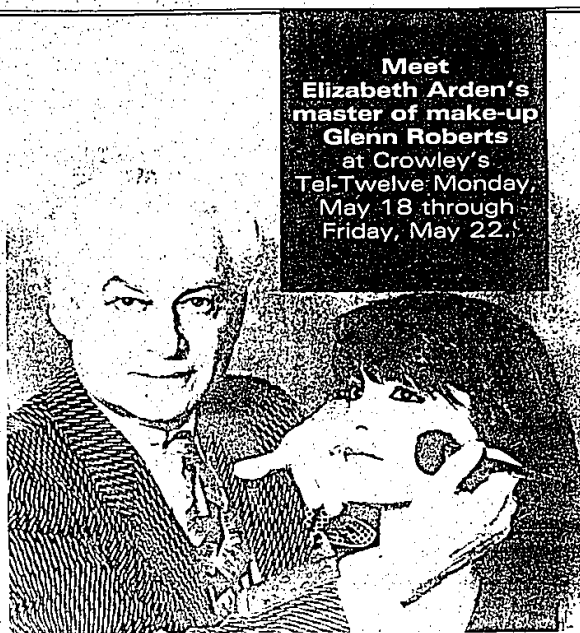
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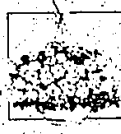


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