

Making music strikes chord with hopeful

He's a practicing attorney, a fledgling software entrepreneur, and an aspiring school board member.

When it comes to spare time — what little of it there is — music strikes a chord with Ken Stein. He plays the cello, piano and guitar.

Stein was in orchestra and band at all three Farmington area schools he attended: Wood Creek Elementary, Warner Middle School, and North Farmington High.

He also played the cello with the Metropolitan Youth Symphony of Southfield and the Livonia Youth Symphony, and attended Interlochen Music Camp for a number of years.

"When I got into my middle teens, I realized you just can't jam on the cello," Stein said. "So, I picked up the guitar."

Stein spends a good deal of time on the computer. He and some friends are forming a company, which plans to produce educational software.

"The goal of the company is to provide assessment capabilities, not only for teachers but for people who want to do home-based education. I know that's becoming more and more of an issue as people are becoming less and less satisfied with public schools."

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SHARON LEMUS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Stein's way: When he's not practicing law or running for the school board, Kenneth Stein can be found with a musical instrument or a computer.

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provides \$640 million to schools for such a purpose. "I can speak the lingo of technology," Stein said. "I would feel extremely comfortable going to IBM, going to Compaq, going to Apple and developing joint programs to bring things into the schools."

Though he's engrossed in computer technology, Stein has a grasp on other issues.

Stein believes Farmington schools need to teach the fundamentals to maintain success. He also has strong views on teacher negotiations, how they will be affected by the law that fines teachers for striking.

He thinks the bill goes too far. "Basically, they've taken away

too much bargaining power from the teachers," he said. "It's the honest to goodness truth."

"If a board fails to bargain in good faith, the teachers union doesn't have the means of arbitration. The school board can make a final offer, and that's it."

He's also against cutting benefits.

"I don't think you can cut costs by taking things away from teachers. They are the ones who provide the education. Let's face it. If you have a bunch of unhappy teachers, you're going to have a bunch of unhappy students."

The stance is somewhat different than last year's election. Then, Stein questioned the ability to evaluate teachers' perfor-

mances, saying tougher standards were needed.

Since then, he's worked with a number of teachers in the past year. He chalks up the change to learning experience.

"Last year, it was very interesting for me, and I learned a few things," he said. "One, is the primary responsibility of being on the board is being a consensus builder, and I'm trying very hard this year to hear as many people as possible."

"I much better understand the position of teachers this year." A thing or two has also been learned about campaigning, Stein said. He'll spend between \$250-\$300. He won't accept contributions.

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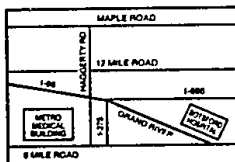
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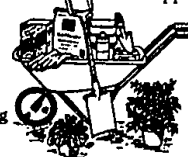
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