

# COUNTY COMMISSIONER 2 YEAR TERM VOTE FOR ONE

Issues  
Candidates for County  
Commissioner were asked to  
respond to each question in 75  
words.



The candidates  
Candidates for County Commissioner  
were asked to summarize their  
biographies in 75 words.

## 1ST DISTRICT

### RUTH JOHNSON

Republican, 30  
Education: Oakland University, B.S., Cum Laude, 1975;  
Wayne State University, Masters Degree, Summa Cum  
Laude, 1985.  
Occupation: Full time Commissioner  
Background: Currently, Vice-Chair of Oakland County  
Board of Commissioners, Chair of the County Alternative  
Committee, Chair of Economic Development and a mem-  
ber of Parks & Recreation Commission, Planning &  
Building, Zoning Coordinating, two lake improvement  
boards, Quality Assurance, Charter Oakland Club, citizen  
on Board of Review, and recipient of the Theodore  
Roosevelt Conservation Award from President Bush.

## 2ND DISTRICT

### DEAN MERSINO

Democrat, 48  
Education: Graduated from Waterford Township High  
School, 1964, attended Oakland Community College in  
early 1980.  
Occupation: Currently employed with the Road  
Commission for Oakland County.  
Background: Born July 25, 1948 in Pontiac, Michigan.  
Married in November 1984, no children. Served two years  
in U.S. Army 1966-1968. Vietnam Veteran.

### DONNA R. HUNTOON

Republican, 64  
Education: Degree in Business Administration,  
Accounting.  
Occupation: Commissioner.  
Background: 1978-1988 ran District Office for State  
Representative; 1984-1990 Trustee White Lake Township;  
1987-1990 Oakland County Commissioner appointed by  
Borchardt; 1990 is present Oakland County  
Commissioner; 1992 IWCA Board member; 1993 is pres-  
ent Mobile Home Commissioner appointed by Engler.

### MICHAEL L. ODETTE

No Party Affiliation - DID NOT RESPOND

## 3RD DISTRICT

### DOUGLAS BROWN

Democrat, 34  
Education: Oakland Community College, two Associates  
Degrees; Oakland University, Bachelor's Degree, working  
on Master's at Wayne State University.  
Occupation: Substance Abuse Therapist  
Background: Born 2 February 1960 in Pontiac, Michigan.  
Grew up in Waterford Township, moved to Rochester at  
age 15, moved to Auburn Hills at age 18. Used in the  
Upper Peninsula for one year while attending Michigan  
Tech University. Moved to Orion in 1985.

### LAWRENCE A. OBRECHT

Republican, 52  
Education:  
Occupation: Retired Businessman.  
Background: Successfully owned business for 20 years.  
Entrepreneur experienced in start-up businesses as well  
as turning around bankrupt operations into successful  
businesses. President and Board of Director, Member of  
Businessmen's Association for six years; Served on  
Committee to Declare National Forest a "Natural Beauty  
Road"; Chairman Indianwood Lake Board; Chairman  
Cranberry Lake Board; Chairman Oakland County Public  
Services Center; Vice-Chairman Oakland County Finance  
Center; Board of Directors Area Agency for the Aged.

Thursday, October 27, 1994

League of Women Voters

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## SOLID WASTE PLAN

What is your opinion of the cur-  
rent Oakland County Solid Waste  
Plan, and what changes, if any,  
would you like to see?

I have recommended, worked for, and con-  
tinue to support legislation that will elimi-  
nate the need for additional landfills, a  
county waste-to-energy incinerator, and  
reduce foreign waste importation. This leg-  
islation, generated from Oakland County,  
should pass this session to change Act  
641. The mandated solid waste capacity  
will go from twenty years to five years. I  
support the emerging county solid waste  
plan that encourages recycling, regional-  
ism, and mirrors these significant Act 641  
changes.

I myself do not want to see our community  
turned into a dump site and therefore I'm  
opposed to the County's Solid Waste Plan  
as it exists today. More public education as  
to recycling should be a priority.

It is getting better. May 24, 1994 legislation  
was passed to change landfill capacity  
from mandated 20 years to mandated 5  
years. This will help control all out of coun-  
ty waste from filling us up. We need com-  
plete control of condition and disposition of  
garbage to conform with what our people  
have to do - recycle, etc.

I feel that better recycling can be utilized to  
condense the amount of solid wastes  
which need disposal. I feel that certain  
forms of waste should not be allowed to go  
into landfills or disposal units and better  
management should be utilized.

At this writing, May 25, 1994, the county  
solid waste stands a great chance of being  
taken over by the state MDNR. Hopefully,  
by the time this questionnaire is released I  
will have been successful as a Special  
Solid Waste Committee member in chang-  
ing the 641 Act Law in Michigan to a 10-  
year mandated plan with a 5-year interim  
setting, triggered from the current 20-year,  
10-year which is currently in force.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES

In what areas do you see new  
opportunities for collaboration  
between Oakland County and the  
City of Detroit?

I do not support financial subsidies from  
Oakland County to Detroit. SEMCOG par-  
ticipation, the Eight Mile Road revitalization  
project, and the clean up day shows  
improving communication and cooperation.  
Currently large areas of Detroit are auto-  
matically precluded from mortgages and  
reuse due to contamination up to 5 miles  
away. We must strive to revitalize decayed  
areas by working together to change poli-  
cies that preclude redevelopment by "red-  
lining" of entire areas of Detroit.

Regional mass transportation, improved  
working relationships between Law  
Enforcement Agencies. Water and road  
problems can be explored with greater  
opportunities for success.

Information exchange. Transportation pos-  
sibilities. Expansion of water and sewer  
hook-ups. As long as plans are equally  
beneficial to both counties, I'm for it.

I think that both Oakland County and  
Detroit can work together with keeping our  
cities, towns, and rural areas clean, crime  
free and prosperous. But only if we work  
together - it is a two way street.

There are some areas of regional coopera-  
tion which can be achieved which will ben-  
efit Oakland County as well as Detroit. The  
8 Mile Road Task Force and the  
Woodward Avenue Revitalization Program  
are two projects which would not have  
been possible under the previous Detroit  
administration. However, my position will  
remain that any cooperation must benefit  
Oakland County and clearly cannot be a  
burden to the Oakland County taxpayers  
for the benefit of only Detroit.

## GOALS

What are the three most impor-  
tant goals you would like to  
achieve if you are elected to the  
position of Oakland County  
Commissioner?

Government Accountability - Protect  
Quality of Life - Reduce Crime. Continue  
to improve contracting and bidding poli-  
cies. Put limits on campaign contributions  
to local candidates. Reduce the County's  
budget. Improve and streamline children's  
services. Establish intervention programs  
that work collaboratively within the system.  
Continue to fight to keep out unnecessary  
landfills. Continue to push for plans to put  
offenders to work doing gardening, laun-  
dry, and clean-up tasks which will enhance  
employability and reduce recidivism.

Improve relationship between the Board  
and the County Executive. Restore the  
concept that government is to serve the  
people and not to dictate. Get the public  
(customers) more involved in the process  
of resolving concerns in their communities.

Inner communication between seven law-  
enforcement departments - would save  
untold hours of repetitive work. Reduce  
recidivism - we have many fine programs  
that help in this direction, but they need to  
be expanded and new ones added.

Improvement of mental health/substance  
abuse treatment for all who need it, better-  
ing our parks and recreational areas, and  
improvement of our primary and secondary  
roads.

One of my goals is very near completion -  
the permanent solution to Oakland  
County's solid waste problems. My second  
goal concerns matching a county govern-  
ment of services and costs which address  
the needs of all residents of the county  
without an overbearing and burdensome  
tax on those residents. This goal was par-  
tially achieved by the Board of  
Commissioners with the \$21 million cuts in  
expense without significant cuts in services.