



Concerned resident: Kathleen MacDonell speaks with Hills mayoral hopeful Paul Sowerby, who was canvassing votes in Kendallwood subdivision.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Canvassing cookies: Farmington Hills resident Jed DiMaio greets mayoral candidate Aldo Vagnozzi, who was campaigning in the southwest portion of the city. DiMaio gave his visitor some homemade cookies to munch on.

Big day nears

Candidates pound pavement, raise funds to win

BY BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

As election day nears, Farmington Hills candidates were trying to make sure their message was out and their supporters would show for Tuesday's election.

Mayoral candidate Paul Sowerby, who admits at times he has had to put his law practice on hold, said he was trying to balance door-to-door campaigning with telephone and literature drops.

"I've done a lot of fund-raising," he said, while walking the Kendallwood subdivision north of 12 Mile. "I've put up two more yard signs in the last half hour."

Sowerby had a more than a lit-

tle help from a friend and political ally, Rep. Joe Knollenberg, who joined him for some weekend campaigning and has appeared at several of Sowerby's fund-raisers and other events.

His opponent, Aldo Vagnozzi, is using mailings and lawn signs, but has relied heavily on his one-to-one, door-to-door campaign style. He hit his target of 7,500 homes, 1,500 more than he went to two years ago when he won reelection to the city council.

"I've come back to some of these residents for the fourth time," he said.

One of those, Egidio "Jed" DiMaio, a resident of the city since 1936, received Vagnozzi warmly. "The first time I came here,

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this road was dirt and mud," said Vagnozzi.

"But now we have a nice road," said the retired Detroit Diesel engineer.

Vagnozzi, 70, is much junior to DiMaio, but looks forward to the visit.

"In every subdivision there is at least one or two residents who I always look forward to visiting. Jed is one of them."

The two not only talk about politics and the city, but their grandchildren, Jed's art work and their respective tomato growing skills.

Council candidate Terry Sever did some door-to-door, including subdivisions in the Middlebelt and 12 Mile area where the controversial Timbercrest development is being built.

"I wanted to go back there and make sure there are no hard feelings and that people understand my positions," Sever said.

Council candidate Nancy Bates said she would have one more literature drop.

"I don't think you should take any election for granted," she said. "I've gotten a real positive community response. I'm hoping that will be the case Nov. 7."

Vicki Barnett, who is making her first run for the council, said

the campaign trail has been hard but rewarding.

"I don't think I've ever worked as hard in an election in my life," she said.

Barnett said she has had to step up fund-raising late in the campaign but expects to wind up in the red by at least \$1,700. She's hoping volunteers can help with her latest literature drop of 5,000 or more pieces before election day.

"But I love door-to-door campaigning," she said. "It's the closest people can get to a candidate and to their government."

Council candidate Dennis Fitzgerald said as a "rookie," he's depending on a little help from his friends.

"I'm trying to create a little phone chain," he said. "If I can get everybody that I call to call someone else, that's going to help."

Fitzgerald said there is strong support for the public safety millage among residents he's spoken with, but many people are puzzled by the timing.

"There are some questions about why all of a sudden there is this issue," he said. "People wonder why the council didn't bring it up sooner."

Council candidate Ben Marks said he's gotten a good response in his campaign.

"The issue I'm hearing is who is best qualified to do the job," he said. "There don't seem to be that many issues dividing the candidates."

And Marks, who has a long history of community involvement both politically and civically, said he's counting on that record to win the day Tuesday.

"Nobody has given more to this city than I have," he said.

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