

In Farmington Keep Svoke; add Brouillette

Smile, Joe Svoke and Priscilla Brouillette. You've just received our endorsements for terms on the Farmington Board of Education.

Incumbent Svoke and challenger Brouillette seem to be the most qualified in a good four-person field this year. The winners in the Monday, June 10, school election will serve four-year terms.

Brouillette (pronounced "Breyet") has a business and technological background that would serve the district well, we think.

The 43-year-old has worked as a national account manager for AT&T and owned a software business with her husband, Barry.

Brouillette's skills could be useful in a district that's spending \$3.4 million to connect all its buildings to the Internet. The Farmington Hills resident also seems very sincere and

approachable. She has a long involvement as a volunteer for school activities at Hillside Elementary and O.E. Dunkel Middle School.

Svoke, a 52-year-old Farmington Hills resident, is seeking his second term. He's grown to fill the job, in our opinion, and he's now more concise and thoughtful.

Svoke puts in the time, as every successful school candidate must, and has enjoyed a good year as board president.

Svoke attends many community functions and always serves as a goodwill ambassador for public education.

The Farmington Board sets policy for a district with about 11,000 students and has an operating budget of \$129 million. The district includes Farmington, most of Farmington Hills and a portion of West Bloomfield Township.

In Clarenceville Gasser, Aldrich deserve seats

Farmington Hills residents living in the Clarenceville School District will help elect two people to the school board when they go to the polls Monday, June 10.

There are two incumbents and three challengers running for two four-year seats on the board in Clarenceville, which includes northeast Livonia, northwest Redford Township, and southeast Farmington Hills.

The incumbents are Gary Gasser and Wilson Bowden. Challengers are Brian Silvernail, Thomas Aldrich, and Beverly Guertin.

The Observer invited all five candidates to provide biographical information and answer three written questions. In addition, all five were invited to endorsement interviews.

After careful consideration, the Observer recommends Gary Gasser and Thomas Aldrich. Choosing a challenger to endorse was not an easy task because both Silvernail and Guertin made a strong impression and both are involved in Clarenceville.

Gasser, 48, is a sincere, bright person who obviously cares about education. He knows the district, has experience on the board, and has a broad perspective on public education and the needs of students. Counting partial terms, Gasser has six years experience as a trustee.

A resident of Clarenceville for 22 years,

Gasser is a supplier development engineer for Powertrain headquarters for GM in Pontiac. He has been involved with Edgewood and Botsford PTOs, Edgewood Cub Scouts, and as a T-ball and baseball coach.

In addition to serving Clarenceville residents on the school board, Gasser is a member of the legislative committee of the Oakland County Schools Board and is the Clarenceville board's designate to the Oakland County Schools Board.

Aldrich, 40, has lived in Clarenceville eight years.

He ran unsuccessfully for the board last year and demonstrates his commitment to the community by returning to the fray this year. Aldrich is an honest, concerned individual who will speak out for what is best for kids. His frankness is an asset.

Locally, Aldrich has been involved in the PTO for four years — as a father vice president for three years and publicity chairman.

He has served Clarenceville as a member of the 1995 bond issue committee and 1996 millage committee. He has served on the School Improvement Committee for three years.

We urge Clarenceville residents to vote June 10 for Gasser and Aldrich for trustee.

In Walled Lake Onder, Flammer best suited

Walled Lake voters — including those in northwest Farmington Hills — Monday will pick two of five candidates for a pair of four-year terms.

Some of those candidates have been spending time pointing fingers and — yes — even throwing a little sludge at their opponents. These candidates have been at odds before; the district has tried three times to pass a bond issue.

The election picture is muddy in the Walled Lake Consolidated School District.

Deciding which candidates to endorse is becoming stickier and stickier every year, because of those continuous bond issue proposals and controversial issues and decisions the board is making to deal with never-ending enrollment growth.

Yes, there is no denying Walled Lake needs more school buildings. And there also is no denying that the way recent bond issue campaigns have been handled by officials has left something to be desired. According to some, questions and viewpoints have been met with either defensiveness or abruptness.

But, in our opinion, the two incumbents in this year's race are not the ones to really blame. Voters on Monday should re-elect incumbents David Flammer and Alp Onder.

His opponents might not agree, but the truth is, since Flammer has been on the board, great strides have been made under difficult circumstances.

For example, following the last bond issue defeat in February, 1995, Flammer and his board colleagues helped come up with an alternative plan that has worked so far: the leasing of Meadow Lake Elementary School out of the Birmingham District.

Flammer is astute, dedicated, and a parent of children who have had good experiences attending school in the district.

He also is owner of a small business and has extensive background in technology, the latter which will continue to be an important resource as the district moves into the 21st Century. He deserves another term.

The second endorsement goes to Onder, who narrowly wins the nod over enthusiastic challenger David Carlisle, who we hope stays active in promoting the district.

Onder really hasn't been on the school board long enough to accurately judge. But his strength is in dealing with finances.

With the change in public education funding, that expertise will be relied upon.

Meanwhile, critics aren't entirely wrong about the communication gap between the district and its public.

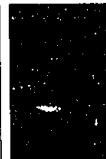
The board, including Flammer and Onder, must do everything in their power to make sure any mud is cleaned out of its collective ear when citizens speak out.

A public that knows it is appreciated and respected is much more likely to vote in favor of a controversial bond.

COMMUNITY VOICE

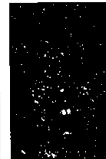
QUESTION:
What does your future hold?

We asked this question at the Mercy graduation.



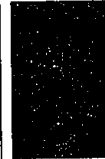
I have a full scholarship to U of D-Mercy. I hope to be involved in local politics.

Erica Powell



I really don't know. I'm going to U of M. I've got too many options.

Andrea Stodulski



I want to go into psychology. I'm going to stay home and work my first year and go to a community college.

Carrie Sheridan



Studying elementary ed at Auburn University in Alabama. Children are our future.

Laura Ridenour

For OCC Tower, Wangler for trustee

In the public's mind, there's one overriding issue in the June 10 Oakland Community College board of trustees race: Why did the board majority fire Chancellor Patsy Calkins after her successes at winning new revenue and putting OCC on the industrial map?

The board majority simply bought out Calkins' contract for \$200,000 and change, never making its reasons clear. The whole deplorable affair has left a bad taste in the public's mouth, hurting OCC's reputation, fund-raising efforts and business relationships. We share the widespread sentiment for a change on the OCC board.

Sandra Ritter, the 18-year trustee who led the dumping of Calkins, is seeking re-election. Faculty members made no endorsement this year, against the advice of union leaders. Another trustee who voted for the ouster is retiring.

There is just one way to send the OCC board a message: Elect two new trustees.

Several of the other eight candidates would be good trustees. The political reality is that two have mounted a first-rate campaign.

They are Jeanne Towar and Dr. John Wangler. We endorse them, confident they have the objectivity, knowledge of business operations and experience in union negotiations to form a new majority that will make all of us proud of OCC once again.

Their campaign is backed by a bipartisan coalition that includes L. Brooks Patterson, Don Tucker and Jim Alexander; Reps. Maxine Berman, Penny Crissman, Jan Dolan and Shirley Johnson; two incumbent trustees and prominent members of the OCC Foundation. Absolutely no candidates for any office in Oakland County ever have built up such an endorsement list.

Jeanne Towar, of Royal Oak, has business experience in advertising sales, newspaper

publishing and magazine publishing. She has been a union bargainer. She has demonstrated her love of OCC by serving 10 years on the foundation. She has been in service clubs. Everywhere Towar has worked and served, she has won the respect of her peers. We recommend that voters give her that same respect.

John Wangler, of Bingham Farms, was a school dropout who came back to earn a doctorate. He has been a farm operator, truck driver, salesman and builder. Mostly Wangler is known for teaching at OCC, from which he is now retired. He has been a school, community college and university administrator. He has been on a health care board. He, too, has been a union bargainer.

Their life experiences suggest they will pay attention to the long-term issues of keeping tuition rates low, providing good value in campus facilities, and bargaining fairly with unions.

No one is suggesting that Dr. Calkins be reinstated. That's water over the dam. The board has hired a first-rate chancellor with a reputation throughout the Midwest as a thinker, planner and administrator — Richard T. Thompson. Towar and Wangler, as trustees, know Thompson and will be able to work with him.

Two other candidates deserve mention, in case the board should need to fill a vacancy in the next two years. Dr. Thomas Sullivan, a dentist from Oakland Township, has corporate board experience, a knowledge of OCC and respect for the college. James Doyon, a former Oakland County commissioner, has considerable political skills and the ability to make deals when deals need to be made.

In political reality, Jeanne Towar and John Wangler have not only the credentials but the political base to win the campaign and build a new majority on the OCC board. They merit your vote in the June 10 election.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Say yes to Ellen

I have had the pleasure of knowing Ellen Bouchard for over five years.

Our contact has been through numerous educational committees, local and district-wide programs, volunteer activities, and other kid-centered pursuits.

If a parent meeting on a frozen January evening yielded six parents, one of them was Ellen. I have never known Ellen to say "no" to any request for assistance, guidance, or input. She is an unwavering supporter of the end-

product of our educational system: the students. She asks the hard questions, and insists on a clear answer.

She understands the financial implications of state-level decisions.

Her voice on the Farmington School Board will speak for all the residents of the district, because she considers every resident her constituent.

Please join me in saying "yes" to Ellen Bouchard.

Lauri Skinkind
Farmington Hills

Farmington Observer

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— Philip Power