

Races abound for Oakland's county commission seats

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners is something of a political training ground, judging by the four incumbents who are leaving for better things.

"As the filing deadline — 4 p.m. Tuesday — a total of 78 candidates (including one expected to withdraw by today) filed nominating papers with the Oakland County Clerk's office. The hopefuls were listed as "unofficial" until the election division of the clerk's office can certify them as candidates.

The candidate most likely to withdraw is Dennis N. Powers, R-Highland, who earlier this week was named by Gov. John M. Engler as a judge in 62nd District Court, Walled Lake.

Powers, who is finishing his third two-year term, had filed nominating papers before Engler named him to the judgeship Monday.

"I was as surprised as anyone, when I was named," Powers said. "But I'm very, very happy."

Powers was expected to withdraw his name from the August 4 primary ballot by the end of the week. He expects to resume his new duties early next month.

Two other incumbents leaving the board — Gilda Z. Jacobs, D-Huntington Woods, and Ruth A. Johnson, R-Holly — are running for state representative.

Jacobs is running in the 35 District (Ferndale, Oak Park, Berkley and Huntington Woods) and Johnson is running in the 46th District (the northwest corner of Oakland County).

The other incumbent not seeking re-election is Don L. Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, who — in addition to continuing at his job with Detroit Edison — will continue to work with U.S. Rep. Joseph Knollenberg, R-Bloomfield Township.

The candidates in other Observer & Eccentric area county commission districts are:

■ District 1 (Oxford, Brandon, Groveland, Holly and Rose town-

ships): Rep. — Lynne Anne Huff, Orionville, William R. Patterson, Oxford, and Steve Tolliver, Holly, Dem. — Tom Athanas, Oxford.

■ District 2 (Springfield and White Lake Townships and part of Commerce Township): Rep. — David N. Gallows, White Lake, and Donna R. Hunan, Clarkston, Dem. — Michael Kohl, Clarkston.

■ District 3 (Oakland, Orion and Addison townships and part of Independence Township): Rep. — Doug Brown, Lake Orion, and Lawrence A. Obrecht, Lake Orion, No Democrats.

■ District 4 (Clarkston and parts of Independence and Waterford townships): Rep. — Frank H. Millard, Clarkston, and Jennifer A. Fichera, Waterford.

■ District 5 (Parts of Waterford and West Bloomfield townships): Rep. — Fran Amos, Karen E. James, James G. Keough and Gene Seets, all of Waterford. No Democrats.

■ District 7 (Part of Pontiac and Auburn Hills): Rep. — Bob Gray, Auburn Hills, Dem. — Jeff Kingzett, Pontiac, and Tim Melton, Auburn Hills.

■ District 8 (Rochester and northern Rochester Hills): Rep. — Sue Ann Douglas and Donald T. Mazure, Rochester Hills. No Democrats.

■ District 9 (part of Rochester Hills and Troy): Rep. — Thomas J. Del Pup and John Garfield, both of Rochester Hills, Dem. — Tim Dewan, Troy.

■ District 11 (Wixom and Commerce Township): Rep. — Nancy Dingeldey, Wixom, and Daniel P. Munro, Walled Lake, Dem. — Bob Donaldson, Commerce.

■ District 12 (parts of Bloomfield and West Bloomfield townships): Rep. — Don Eby, West Bloomfield, Jeff Matto, West Bloomfield, and Shelley Goodman Taub, Bloomfield, Dem. — Ilene Singer, West Bloomfield.

■ District 13 (parts of Bloomfield and West Bloomfield town-

ships and Franklin, Bingham Farms and Beverly Hills): Rep. — Karla K. Esad, Hartley Harris and Thomas A. Law, all West Bloomfield, Dem. — Joan Richards, Beverly Hills.

■ District 14 (parts of Bloomfield Hills and Troy): Rep. — Dan Devine, Bloomfield Hills, Dem. — Gary Kohut, Troy.

■ District 15 (Birmingham and Berkley): Rep. — Donald W. Jensen, Birmingham, and Alan L. Kroll, Berkley, Dem. — Marilyn V. Stephan, Berkley.

■ District 16 (Clawson and part of Troy): Rep. Charles E. Palmer, Clawson, No Democrats.

■ District 17 (Novi and Walled Lake): Rep. — Kay Schmid, Novi, Dem. — Shawnee Speden, Walled Lake.

■ District 18 (north Farmington Hills): Rep. — Linda Jolicœur, David L. Moffitt and Lainie Wine, all of Farmington Hills, Dem. — Ryan J. Gesund, Farmington Hills.

■ District 19 (south Farmington Hills): Rep. — Ben Marks, Farmington Hills, Jo Anne F. Molin, Northville, and Terry Sever, Farmington Hills, Dem. — Deborah J. Goldberg, Farmington Hills.

■ District 20 (north Southfield and Lathrup Village): Rep. — Linda M. Kurkechian, Southfield, Dem. — Vincent Gregory, Southfield.

■ District 21 (south Southfield): Rep. — Mary Kathryn De Cuir, Southfield, Dem. — Eric Coleman, Southfield.

■ District 22 (Royal Oak and part of Troy): Rep. — Sherry Cormier-Kuhn, John P. McCulloch, Doug Warren and George S. Willard, all of Royal Oak, Dem. — Andrea Berry, Royal Oak.

■ District 23 (parts of Huntington Woods, Oak Park and Southfield): Rep. — James M. Hardin, Southfield, Dem. — Michelle Friedman Appel and Bruce Klein, both of Huntington Woods, and Nathaniel Warshaw of Oak Park.

Familiar names fill up county's judicial ballot

Court races may be nonpartisan, but two of the leading candidates for the open Oakland Circuit Court seat are well known in the Democratic and Republican parties.

Steven Kaplan and Richard D. Kuhn Jr. have either run for or held highly visible partisan offices — as a Democrat and Republican, respectively.

The third candidate in that race, Colleen O'Brien also brings a high degree of name recognition to the Aug. 4 nonpartisan primary election.

Kaplan, Kuhn and O'Brien are running for the judgeship to be vacated by Robert C. Anderson, 72, who faces mandatory retirement when his current term expires Dec. 31.

In other circuit court races, five incumbents are unopposed. They are Jessica R. Cooper, Richard D. Kuhn, John J. McDonald and Joan E. Young who are running for six-year terms.

In probate court, three incumbents are unopposed. They are Eugene A. Moore, Sandra G. Silver and Linda S. Hallmark.

The Kaplan, Kuhn and O'Brien race is expected to generate some excitement. Kaplan, a West Bloomfield resident, ran strong races for Oakland County prosecutor in 1992 and 1996. An assistant prosecutor in Macomb County, Kaplan narrowly lost to

incumbent Richard Thompson in 1992.

Four years later, he lost an even closer race to David Gorecky. As the votes were tabulated on election night in 1996, Kaplan was mistakenly declared the winner. When the mistake was discovered, Gorecky was named the winner.

Kuhn is the son of incumbent Circuit Judge Richard D. Kuhn (also seeking re-election) and an Oakland County commissioner for eight years. He was a research attorney for Circuit Judge Rudy J. Nichols and for the last three years has been in private practice.

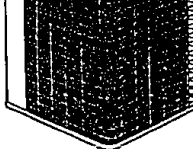
O'Brien has been an attorney for 17 years and is a past president of the Oakland County Women's Bar Association and a member of a hearing panel for the Attorney Discipline Board. She also serves as a mediator in the Macomb, Oakland and Wayne circuit courts.

In the District Court races, many of the incumbent judges are running unopposed. They include:

- 46th in Southfield: Stephen C. Cooper.
- 47th in Farmington: Marla Parker.
- 48th in Bloomfield Hills: Edward Avdenko.
- 52-3 in Rochester Hills: James P. Sheehy.
- 52-4 in Troy: Michael A. Martone.

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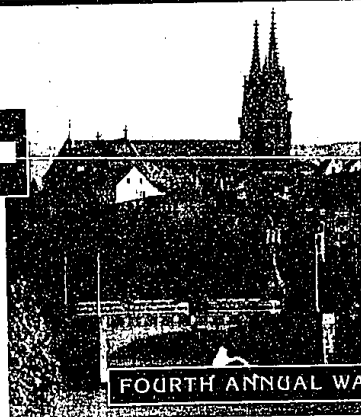
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