

## FARMINGTON BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Election '98**

Farmington Public School District voters will elect two school board members on Monday, June 8. The five candidates seeking election were asked to answer the following questions in 75 words or less.



**Name:** Jack Ingh  
**Age:** 57  
**Occupation:** Professor, Oakland Community College - Orchard Ridge Campus.  
**District resident:** 39 years  
**Community:** Flanders PTA president, 1971-72; Middle School Study Committee, 1975-77; Farmington Schools trustee since 1978.



**Name:** Melody Jaske  
**Age:** 39  
**Occupation:** Part-time sales assistant for SCS Detroit; monthly newsletter editor, First United Methodist Church.  
**District resident:** 13 years  
**Community:** Treasurer, Farmington PTA Council; Flanders PTA legislative chair; Families in Action member; Girl Scout Troop leader; OM coach.



**Name:** Jackie Katz  
**Age:** 31  
**Occupation:** Homemaker. Previously owned and operated a state licensed pre-school and child care center.  
**District resident:** 1 1/2 years  
**Community:** Chelsea Crossing Subdivision representative to Forest School PTA; assisted husband, Steve, coaching city and YMCA soccer.



**Name:** Anwar Mahmood  
**Age:** 63  
**Occupation:** Physician, Henry Ford Hospital, West Bloomfield  
**District resident:** 21 years  
**Community:** Member of Farmington Hills Commission on Children, Youth & Families; teaches foreign language program for community children; parent volunteer.



**Name:** Cathy Webb  
**Age:** 46  
**Occupation:** Retail advertising artist.  
**District resident:** 20 years  
**Community:** Farmington School Trustee, 8 years - two as president; 1995 Citizen of the Year; Commission on Children, Youth and Families; Community Foundation on Children, Youth and Families.

## QUESTION 1:

1. What is (or will be) your strongest attribute as a school board member?

Having taught for over 40 years in many different educational settings, I have the ability to evaluate and frame the boundaries of a problem from all sides. My experience as a parent of four children allows me to know the role of the educational experience as a consumer. I bring to the school board a straightforwardness and my consciousness that I represent all residents of the district. I believe in what I have done...

I have worked with the children in the after school program at my church and I've seen what children need to succeed. They need good adult role models in the home and classroom to reach their fullest potential. Hiring qualified teachers is imperative to give children the best chance to succeed. I have listened to the concerns of parents at PTA Council and regular PTA meetings. I feel I can effectively represent parents when I am elected.

My strongest attribute is as an educator and a parent of four young children which are in or going to be entering the Farmington Public Schools. As an educator, I understand and know the needs of teachers to help them reach their potential in teaching their students and what they need to individualize instruction effectively. As a parent of very young children, I help balance the board with the concerns of parents with younger children.

I have the ability to listen and respect colleagues' opinions, gather information, draw conclusions and respond. I communicate well and am prepared to work as a member of the team to serve and contribute to educational program and achievement of all the students in the district.

During the past eight years of my service on the school board, it has been expressed that my organization skills, knowledge about the district, involvement within the community, active listening and ability to grasp and effectively address issues have identified me as a trustworthy, responsible leader who has the proven ability to make a positive, effective contribution to education in the district.

## QUESTION 2:

How should the school board use the \$9.5 million settlement from the so-called Durant lawsuit? (This issue has since been decided - board members voted 6-1 to use 81 percent to cut bond issue taxes and using the other 19 percent for special projects.)

The Farmington school board should reduce the millage on the debt fund from the bond issues of 1997. The entire \$9.5 million should be used for the purpose of reducing the debt load on the homeowners.

I attended the special public hearing about this issue and 40 percent (the majority response) clearly stated to return the money in the form of a check or reduced taxes. I favor using the full amount to shorten the phase II bonds to 11 years which reduces taxes \$25 per year per household. Taxpayers are crying out for relief and I think the school board should listen since they are elected by the people.

First, we should reduce per mill to thank our residents for supporting our last bond and to give something back to them. Any left over monies should first go to special education.

There is no easy answer to it. My suggestion would be to invest and use part of the funds on a yearly basis, e.g., one million a year for special pilot programs for the enhancement of technological improvements, math and science curricula, and teaching of foreign languages.

The administration identified significant needs that can't be provided unless a portion of Durant funds are used: remedial tutoring and summer programs, bringing playgrounds up to required handicapped access codes, improvements in athletic and parking facilities at the high schools. By funding these important education and safety needs, and still returning 80 percent of Durant to the taxpayers, the board remains fiscally responsible, addressing the concerns of many who support either investing or returning the funds.

## QUESTION 3:

Name the two issues you will focus on during your term on the school board.

The first issue that I would focus on would be a dedicated science room in every elementary school. The Detroit school system had a dedicated science room in each elementary school in the 1940s and Farmington should have one in the millennium. A second issue would be the development of individualized educational programs for every student in the Farmington school system. Our educational program should have the flexibility to produce a program for each student...

Create more openness on the board by taking school board meetings to the schools at least once a month and by creating an ombudsman position so parents, teachers and students have someone to take their concerns to and can expect a fair and equitable response. We need to service all our special needs children, including the talented and gifted. Allow students to progress based on ability and support them as needed through the DELTA department.

In order to individualize instruction in the classroom, we need smaller classes so our students are better able to develop their individual gifts and talents. Increase science achievement by changing the curriculum in early elementary grades to include more hands-on real-world activities. We need to make better use of computers/technology early on, so elementary students can master keyboarding, spreadsheets, word processing, and programming skills to be prepared for job opportunities in the next century.

I would like to focus on the following: Schools to provide challenging and stimulating environments for our students. The students should feel that they are wanted and they are stimulated and challenged to their maximum potential and their achievements be openly recognized and rewarded. We should continue enhancing the technological support for learning as we are in times of rapidly advancing technology and we want our children to be best prepared for the year 2000 and beyond.

Continued improvement of student achievement is a top priority, which includes academic attainment, character development, career preparation, responsible citizenship. Expectations must be communicated to staff; students must be accountable for their performance; parents, business employees and residents without children must assume the responsibility of being partners in educating youth. Limited financial resources require the prudent use of revenues in achieving the district vision. I must continue to promote assessment and accountability to ensure positive results.

## Volunteers set to pitch in for Rouge River rescue

On Saturday, they'll put on fatigued flannel shirts, diminished dungarees and battered boots to make a river look spiffy. Anywhere from 200-300 volunteers are expected to take part in Rouge Rescue '98. This year's event is 8-11:30 a.m. at the corner of Belfast and Westminster, west of Middlebelt and north of Eight Mile.

Unlike some of the tattered clothes worn for clean-up, the Rouge Rescue itself never goes out of fashion.

"I don't see the interest waning," said Jean Barrett, assistant to the director in the Farmington Hills Special Services Department. "We have a very good core group that comes out no matter rain or shine."

This year's goal in the annual project is to remove the accumulation of log jams and debris in the river, which in itself indicates progress.

When the Rouge Rescue started, workers removed tires, shopping carts, metal barrels and other man-contributed pollutants. Natural obstructions cre-

**■ 'We're outdoors people and we like to make a contribution for clean waterways.'**

**Pam Wright**  
-regular volunteer

ated by fallen willow trees and branches are the main culprits now.

Dan Harrison of Farmington Hills grew up on the Rouge River and still lives on along the waterway, which drives his annual participation.

Harrison has a special set of Rouge Rescue footwear, a pair of hiking boots. He'll wear old jeans and his favorite Rouge Rescue T-shirt.

"Rivers are high maintenance things; you have to stay on top of them," said Harrison, who lives on Nine Mile. "You can't just do it once and you're done."

"The other reason is I like to play in mud."

Camaraderie among volunteers is another appeal. "There's

people I see only once year, but you've seen them 10 times," Harrison said. "It's like a little club. It's fun."

City staff handles the chainsaw and heavy equipment while others provide the manual labor.

Pam Wright, who is a secretary in the Hills City Manager's Office, joins in on the "log brigade." Volunteers form a human chain to pass the dead wood from the river to the Dumpster.

Pam is typically joined by her husband, George, and sometimes by her daughter, Katie.

"I like making a contribution to the community," Wright said. "We're outdoors people and we like to make a contribution for clean waterways."

Participants are asked to wear long sleeved shirts, pants and boots. Gloves are provided. Those interested in taking part can call Barrett at 473-9521.

A free lunch will follow the event.

"It's not really free. We make them work all morning for it," Barrett said.

## Top grade

### Superintendent gains accolades, pay increase

Once again, Clarenceville School District Superintendent Tom Tattan has earned accolades for his job performance in an evaluation done by the school board.

"Dr. Tattan did an outstanding job, exceeded standards, has a strong leadership ability, and a vision and commitment for the future," said board president Linda Brandemuhl.

The evaluation is the second done by the trustees since Tattan, the former Plymouth-Canton Community Schools' executive director for instruction, assumed Clarenceville's top job July 1, 1996.

He also received a 2.3 percent salary increase retroactive to July 1, 1997, plus a 2.3 percent pay hike for 1998-99. It is the

same pay raise rate given for the two years to Clarenceville teachers and administrators.

Tattan's current salary is \$94,600.

The trustees also extended Tattan's current contract one year, to June 3, 2003. His original three-year contract would have expired June 30, 1999. After his first outstanding evaluation, the trustees extended Tattan's contract five years, to 2002.

A five-year contract was a big change for the district, which in the past had offered only three-year contracts.

The trustees evaluated Tattan on how well he did on the following five goals set by the board:

■ Develop better communication within the district.

■ Up the number of graduates

who have the skills necessary for success in the next step of their lives.

■ Develop programs that challenge students in their areas of interest.

■ Keep the district's budget balanced and build up the fund equity.

■ Make improving the appearance of buildings an on-going priority.

■ Work with the Clarenceville community to develop quality programs and services.

The Clarenceville district serves students in the communities of Livonia, Redford and Farmington Hills.

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