# SMART millage rolls on

The mood was cautiously optimistic as election returns were posted at UAW Amalgamated Lord 417 in Troy.

The union hall at Stephenson Highway and Maple is the home local for SMART maintenance workers and a logical site for supporters to gather as the all important election results trickled in from Oakland, Macomb and Wayne counties.

"I've got my fingers crossed," said Doug Noaker, superintendent of maintenance at the SMART garage in Troy. "We've done our job, and I had a good feeling going into the election, said the Addison Township resident." But elections can be unpredictable."

That cautious optimism proved warranted.

warranted.
Early returns from all three counties indicated that voters favored Proposal S — the ballot question on renewing the property-tax to support the regional

Unanimous support

As more returns trickled in, the margin of support grew... and grew.

By midnight, the optimism turned to jubilation. Voters in Oakland, Macomb and suburban Wayne counties gave unequivocal approval to the four-year renewal that will cost the owner of a \$100,000 house about \$16.50 actually. SMART General Manager Richard C. Kaufman suid he was pleasantly surprised at the mar-gin of victory, especially in Oak-land. "The figures aren't final," he said. "But it looks like we got close to 70 percent approval in each county."

close to 70 percent appearance each county.
"Getting close to 80 percent in Oakland was really encouraging," said Kaufman. "We really didn't expect kind of overwhelming support."
One likely explanation, Kaufman said, was that voters recognized that SMART delivered on the numbines it made three years Unanimous support In Oakland the support for the SMATT millage was unanimous. It was approved by margins of 2 to 1, or better, in each of the communities that voted on the renewal, according to uncertified results.

The "yes" vote was 73,575, compared to the "no" vote of 19,616. The percentage margin was 79 to 21.

Officials attributed at least

Brooks Patterson and organiza-tions such as the Troy Chamber of Commerce.

nized that SMART delivered on the promises it made three years age. In 1995 — when the indebt-det transit system was fighting for survival — officials promised efficient, user-friendly service if voters approved the property tax hite needed to provided \$20 mil-lion in operating revenue annu-ally.

"The work we did over the last three years made this election easier," Kaufman said. "Voters realize that we kept our promises," said the former Wayne Circuit Court judge. "It's exciting

es, "said the former Wayne Circuit Court judge. "I've exciting
and gratifying."
One SMART employee who
expressed relief at the millage
approval was Sharon Masske of
Troy, who hired in at the transit
system last month as a scheduler. "I was confident the millage
would pass," she said. "But I
knew SMART couldn't function
without the millage."
Kaufman said hiring a new
schoduler is an indication of
SMART's commitment to continued good service. "We made a lot
of route changes three years
age," he said. "But it deenst end
there.

"If a banquet hall on Big
Benver calls us about a shift
change," Kaufman continued,
"it's our job to adjust the service.
People depend on us."

### The Oakland vote:

Here is how local Oakland County communities voted on the one-third mill SMART proposal:

Auburn Hills

. 1,286 yes; 399 no

Southfield

E Trov

Birmingham 2.589 ves: 440 no

6,696 yes; 1,997 no ■ West Bloomfield

Bloomfield Twp. 6,186 yes; 1,528 no

8,831 yes; 2,541 no

9.113 yes; 2,057 no

**■** Farmington 1,609 yes; 453 no

■ Southfield Township (includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms and Franklin Village)

■ Farmington Hills 10,893 yes; 3,324 no 2.088 yes; 411 no

Source: SMART

## Circuit court race focuses on O'Brien, Kaplan

The real work is just begin-

The real work is just beginning.
That's what Steve Kaplan and Colleen O'Brien said Wednesday after briefly savoring their primary victories in a tight, three-may race to become the newest judge on the Oakland Circuit Court.
O'Brien of Rochester Hills and Kaplan of West Bloomfield finished first and second, respectively, in the primary election to replace retiring Judge Robort. Adderson. Finishing third was Richard D. Kuhn Jr., of Waterford,

#### In the lead

Mine lead

Mine pulled 49,199 votes, or
35.5 percent of the total, according to uncertified results from
the Elections Division of the
county clock's office. Kaplan
pulled 46,283 votes, or 33.5 perent of the total, and Kuhn got



"I was pretty confident most of the night," said O'Brien, who watched election returns with friends and supporters at her home in Rochester Hills. "But I didn't realize I was going to finish first until about 3 a.m. I was clated."

O'Brien, 42, credited her strong showing to voters, who she said recognized that she has the diverse background required to be a good circuit judge.

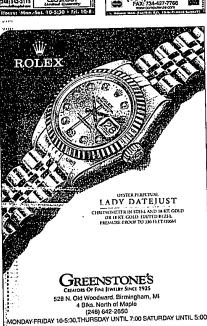
That's also an essential part of her strategy going into the Nov. 3 election, she said. "I'm going to continue to talk to voters and to educate them about what a circuit judge does and why I'm the best candidate."

O'Brien, a member of the

was 79 to 21.
Officials attributed at least part of that strong showing to endorsements from officials like Oakland County Executive L.

best candidate."
O'Brien, a member of the Cummings, McClorey, Davis & Acho law firm, said she planned to take a couple days to unwind, after which she would resume efforts to contact voters.





Dame, S., Oyaler, Cross Perpakan and Dampan and Park

Kaplan, 45, said he was happy about finishing second. "I'd rather have finished first," he said. "But with a difference of fewer than 3,000 voters, it really doesn't matter who finished first or second. What really matters is what happens between now and November."

#### Just work harder

Close elections are nothing new, Kaplan told supporters at Snocker's Pool and Pub in Royal Oak. "It just means we have to

work harder," he said.

Kaplan took Wednesday off, but planned to be return to his job as a Macomb County assistant presecutor on Thursday. But there won't be much time away from the campaign. "Ive got a "friend-raiser" Sunday in Ferndale," he said.

Kuhn, who spent election night at the home of his parents in Waterford, said he had no regrets about his campaign. "he said, "we just came up a little short."



O'Brien



Kaplan

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