

Candidates share views at forum

By SUE BUCK
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Six Farmington Public School board candidates have begun to share their views on a variety of topics, including how better to work with the district's diverse population.

Their first public debate was held Wednesday, May 16, at the Farmington/Farmington Hills Democratic Club's forum. All six candidates attended the event at Farmington Hills City Council chambers. Each seeking one of the two, four-year terms open, they are:

■ Pam Christian, a stay-at-home mom and former emergency room nurse

■ Pam Charleston-Lyons, a counselor in the Avondale High School

■ Terence Elsey, a senior systems analyst for Henry Ford Hospital

■ John Goshorn, a planning and distribution manager for recreational vehicles and commercials sales at Ford Motor Co.

■ Phil Neuman, a contract attorney

■ Incumbent Frank Reid, an engineering operations manager for Johnson Controls Automotive Group in Plymouth Township

The election is June 11. Polls are open from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. Christian believes the community's strength includes diversity. "The diversity committee knows there are ways to engage

all parents. We need to look at multiple perspectives," she said.

"Schools have a diverse population, and it's one of the good things going on in the schools," Elsey said. "We need to look at ways to handle that diversity, to involve parents who might not be comfortable going to the school board. I don't think there is anything I can do, personally, on the subject. We have a diverse population. It is something we have to deal with."

There's a strong diversity program in the district, Goshorn said. "We need to get more people involved in the educational process. My only comment is that as we enrich our diversity and enhance it, we need to remember the large group as

well as the small as we go about our diversity process."

Neuman was more direct. "We need to promote the Multicultural/Multiracial Council and its efforts through schools and community and publicize it as much as possible," he said.

The district sets a good example, Reid commented. "The transportation supervisor translated instructions in how to utilize the transportation system into the languages we serve. We have strong inservice training for all of our staff."

Charleston-Lyons said she is proud that Wood Creek Elementary School, where her son attends, is diverse. "The more diverse we are, the better community we can be," she said.

Hyphen or no, candidates impress small crowd at City Hall

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Farmington school board candidates Pam Christian and Pam Charleston-Lyons hope that a hyphen doesn't separate each from a potential victory.

Both have the same first names, of course, but only one uses a hyphen. They are the only women among the six candidates who also include incumbent Frank Reid, Phil Neuman, John Goshorn and Terence Elsey.

Christian, who noted during

an interview she thought about hyphenating (using her maiden name, Buck, followed by her married name) but decided against it.

Each made a point of mentioning the hyphen, or its absence, during the Farmington/Farmington Hills Democratic Club's candidate forum held Wednesday in the Farmington Hills council chambers.

The forum, which was broadcast live on the school channel, drew a small crowd and some questions via telephone.

Farmington teacher Kurt Campbell, a Livonia resident who lived in Farmington for 28 years, came to see how candidates performed on their feet.

"One of the things I do is debate," said Campbell, an English teacher. "I read about it. I wanted to see the real world applications."

Campbell planned to discuss the forum with his students, who are seniors and juniors.

"Pam Christian was polished and Frank Reid did a solid job," Campbell said. "John Goshorn was polished as well."

Others thought similarly. "Frank Reid did a marvelous

job," said Vicki Barnett, a Hills councilwoman. "There were some really strong candidates. I never heard John Goshorn before. He has a good grasp of the issues. Phil Neuman was on top of all the issues, budget and parent relationship issues. Impressive."

Deborah Goldberg, whose husband, Gerald, headed up the forum, also commented.

"John Goshorn and Phil Neuman are articulate, knowledgeable and not out of line with I think the Farmington/Farmington Hills school district should be," she said.

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