

Stirling, Brennan Resign Conservatives leave board

BY DAN MCCOSH

FARMINGTON — The Farmington School Board Tuesday will face, for the first time in its history, the problem of filling a second and third seat in a 12-month period.

Trustees Mrs. Elizabeth Brennan and Mrs. Kathryn Stirling resigned Wednesday. The two were the last remaining board members from the conservative faction which dominated the board before the last election.

Mrs. Brennan cited the last school board meeting, when she failed to get a motion on the floor as one specific reason for her resignation.

"I will not serve on a board that denies me my right to speak freely," she said.

Mrs. Stirling echoed many

of Mrs. Brennan's complaints.

"My voice is not heard in legitimate school matters and is seemingly not necessary even in matters of extreme importance," she said.

Dr. Ross, reacting to the announcement, said, "I am disappointed at what they did, how they did it, and the reasons they gave."

The two resignations were the third since the last election, which saw Kenneth Perin deposed as trustee and board president.

Ronald Emmitt resigned last fall, and runnerup Rev. Hugh Stewart, who ran in the most recent election, was appointed by the board.

Dr. Ross said there was "no precedent" to the resignations in a single year. There is a 20-day period for the board to decide on re-

placements before the intermediate board steps in.

Mrs. Brennan pointed mainly to the board's response to her efforts to get a legal opinion on whether Trustee William Corliss was acting properly by consulting with his advisors before acting on board business.

At the most recent meeting of the board, she attempted to make a motion requesting a legal opinion on what she called "the creation and utilization of a personal advisory staff by a board member that includes, among others, representatives of the bargaining units with whom the board of education negotiates."

Dr. Ross refused to recognize the motion, which prompted an appeal to the board, which supported the chairman 4-3, with Mrs. Emma Makinen supporting

Mrs. Brennan and Mrs. Stirling.

Both the resigning trustees pointed to the incident in their letters of resignation.

Mrs. Brennan had first raised the issue in December. Dr. Ross said Mrs. Brennan had "put the item on the agenda without back-up material."

He also said the board had discussed the matter several times, and the last time he had spoken to Mrs. Brennan, she was going to obtain copies of the Michigan School Code to support her argument.

"The legal item takes precedence over the ethical question raised by Mrs. Stirling," Ross said.

Mrs. Stirling referred to the same incident in her letter of resignation.



ELIZABETH BRENNAN

KATHRYN STIRLING

Both had further complaints. Mrs. Stirling said, "In general, the voting of this board is 4-3 or 5-2 on most issues, and it is my personal opinion that objective considerations have gone by the wayside."

She also criticized the board for interfering in the administration of the district.

Mrs. Brennan also cited a "dictatorial attitude adopted

by the chair" and interference with the administration.

"Perhaps these are excuses, not reasons," Dr. Ross said.

"I found the allegations somewhat disturbing."

About the kind of appointments he would seek, Dr. Ross said, "I think they

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Naturalists kick off a new series

FARMINGTON — The Farmington Area Naturalists group will contribute to the city's sesquicentennial celebration with an eight program series on "The Natural History of Farmington."

The free public programs will run from Feb. 24 to Sept. 23. The schedule includes: "Farmington Long Ago" with Paul Schreiber and Dr. Robert Douglass on Feb. 24; "Our Rolling Land," dealing with the impact of glaciers on Farmington on March 25; "Plant Life in the Farmington Area" with Betty Frankel on April 22;

Also "Animals Without Backbones in Farmington" on May 20; "Fish, Amphibians and Reptiles in Farmington" on June 24; "Bird Life in the Farmington Area" with Rita and Joseph Dodd on July 22; "Mammals of Farmington" on Aug. 26, and "Impact of Man on Nature in Farmington" with a panel group on Sept. 23.

Farmington Area Naturalists meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 8 p.m. in the Farmington Community Center. Those interested are invited to attend.



'I feel compassion'

JOHN MAXWELL (left), holds Mary Maher, 11, one of the students who will benefit when a new whirlpool bath is financed for Cloverdale

developmental training center. Fred Parker, director of the center, and Patrolman Norman Rose, look on. (Photo by Ralph Evert)

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