

# Candidates talk about their voting records

By Susan Buck  
staff writer

Here's what Farmington school board candidates said about their voting records in district elections when questioned at a recent candidates forum.

The forum was co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the West Bloom-

field/Farmington Area and the American Association of University Women-Farmington Chapter.

• Robert Ranney: "I've lived in the district for over two years and I failed to vote for the first eight months."

• Allen Warner: "I'm not clear what this question is asking. I moved to the district in October 1988 and I voted in the school board

election last year."

• Cathleen Webb: "I have lived in the district for the last 10 years and have participated in elections for the last seven and probably missed two."

• Richard DeVries: "I've lived in the district for the last 10 years and have probably voted in every election. In the last four or five years prior to that, some of them I did,

some of them I didn't. I'm 40 years old and short-term memory is the first to go."

• Jack Inch: "I've been a resident of Farmington for 32 years and I vote in every election I can find. I practically beat my children to vote in every election, particularly any one that I am running in."

• Laura Myers: "I've been a resident for eight years. I presume I've voted in every

one. But again, if I realize it's election day, I go. But I wouldn't know."

• Sharon Rands: "I've been a resident of Farmington Hills for the last 10 years and I've voted in as many elections as I can remember."

Candidates Kim Jaske and James Barnes did not attend the candidates forum. Inch is the only incumbent among the nine. He has served for 12 years.

# Board candidates have varying voting records

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comment on the importance of voting in district elections.

HERE ARE what voting records show and the candidates' responses:

• Sharon Rands is assistant director/coordinator, and an community education, Redford Union Schools. Since 1986, she has voted in no Farmington school elections.

"I make a concerted effort to vote," she said. "If the city says go, (that she didn't vote), I guess it is. Qualifications and experience should be a determining factor. Voting records are not a criteria or a qualification for a school board member."



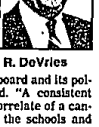
S. Rands

"It's ludicrous to base a vote on this. That should not be held against you. People's lives change and their focus changes in five years. My job is set. I want to give back to the community. Everything I do is for education."

• Richard DeVries, a 10-year

Farmington Hills resident, first registered to vote in May 1980 and again in February 1987 following a transitional home-building period in 1986 when he lived in Novi. DeVries is a structural optimization engineer for Ford Motor Co.

City and school records show he voted in the last four of seven district elections. But DeVries maintains he also voted on two other dates, Feb. 9, 1988, and June 8, 1987.



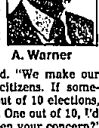
R. DeVries

"Voting is the only chance a citizen has to directly affect the composition of the school board and its policies," DeVries said. "A consistent voting record is a correlate of a candidate's interest in the schools and community."

"Having voted in local elections more often or longer, however, does not a priori make one candidate better qualified than another. If a long voting record is a prerequisite, you'd exclude 99 percent of the community."

• Allen Warner has lived in Farmington Hills for 18 months. He registered to vote in March 1989.

Warner is a faculty member for the Wayne State University Department of Accounting. He voted in the June 12, 1989, district election, the only such election he was eligible to vote in.



A. Warner

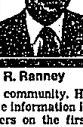
"I think voting is very important, besides credentials," Warner said. "We make our voices known as citizens. If somebody made eight out of 10 elections, I'd say that's good. One out of 10, I'd say, 'Where has been your concern?' I guess I'm batting a thousand."

• Cathleen Webb, a 10-year Farmington Hills resident, registered to vote in May 1983. She has voted in five of seven elections. She is a self-employed, free-lance retail hardlines artist, representing CHW Advertising Art.

"If they're interested in the district, I would think they would participate in elections," Webb said.

"It's an indication of interest in Farmington schools, people elected and bond issues. It's important for all of the community to participate. It's another way of being involved."

• Robert Ranney, a Farmington Hills resident for two years, registered to vote in April 1988. He is a consulting engineer for Michigan Consolidated Gas Co. The city said he voted in one, the last election, out of a possible four district elections.



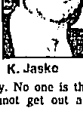
R. Ranney

Ranney felt it is unfair to evaluate him on his first eight months in the community. He said he received little information in the major newspapers on the first two elections. At the time of the third election on Jan. 31, 1989, he learned that polling places are different for school and city elections.

"I'd look at the whole picture," Ranney said. "Everyone should vote. I realize now the full importance of it. Voting shows a particular interest in school affairs."

• Kim Jaske, a Farmington resi-

dent for 30 years, registered to vote in September 1988. Since then, Jaske has voted in one of a possible two district elections. Jaske is a tax accountant for Electronic Data Systems.



K. Jaske

"I think every election is important," Jaske said. "It's our civic duty. No one is that busy that you cannot get out and vote."

• Incumbent R. Jack Inch, a Farmington resident for 30 years, registered to vote in 1960. Since 1986, he has voted in the last five of seven school elections.

Inch is an economics professor, economics-political science chairman, Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge Campus.

"This is a policy determining board," Inch said. "Voting provides

an opportunity to deal with the largest capital outlay in any city or town. The greatest asset is their (a resident's) home. The school system enhances or degrades a community. I don't miss voting very often."



R. Myers

"As a rule, in theory, everyone ought to vote," Myers said. "It would concern me if they hadn't voted in elections that were pivotal, like a school bond issue. On the other hand, there may not be a whole lot of people interested in school elections because people are satisfied with the status quo."

Candidate James Barnes said he is no longer campaigning for a school board seat. He withdrew from the race too late to have his name removed from the ballot.

# Voters head to the polls to fill 2 school board seats

Continued from Page 1

• Incumbent Richard J. Inch, Meadowlark, Farmington.

• Challenger Kim Jaske, Larkspur, Farmington.

• Challenger Laura Myers, Shilwaukee, Farmington.

• Challenger Sharon Rands, Fredericksburg, Farmington Hills.

• Challenger Robert Ranney, Greening, Farmington Hills.

• Challenger Allen Warner, Perry's Crossing, Farmington Hills.

• Challenger Cathleen Webb,

Rutgers Drive, Farmington Hills. Barnes did not run an active campaign, saying he intended to back out of this year's race but did not remove his name from the ballot by the required deadline.

TERMS ARE ending June 30 for incumbents Inch and Janice Rolnick. She chose not to run for a fourth term on the board because her daughter is graduating from high school this year. Both seats are for four-year terms.

The Farmington Public Schools' business office in the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center will be open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to handle last-minute absentee voter

ballot requests. The center is at 32500 Shilwaukee, at the corner of Farmington Road.

As of Tuesday, 109 voters had

registered to vote in the district. Last year, the number topped 52,000.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8

p.m. on Monday, election day. Precincts are different than those used for city or other elections. Refer to the precinct map in today's Observer to determine where you vote, or contact the school district.

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