

OPINIONS

Let's 'Monopolize' those Great Debates

WHO WE ENDORSE

On Tuesday, the Farmington Observer recommends the following candidates and ballot proposals:

47th DISTRICT COURT (NONPARTISAN)
Jack McDonald

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Democrat: Walter Briggs

STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 37th DISTRICT
Republican: Jan Dolan

OAKLAND COUNTY COMMISSION, 18th DISTRICT
Republican: David Moffitt

OAKLAND COUNTY COMMISSION, 19th DISTRICT
Republican: Donn Wolf

OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE
Republican: L. Brooks Patterson

OAKLAND COUNTY SHERIFF
Republican: John Nichols

OAKLAND COUNTY PROSECUTOR
Republican: Richard Thompson

OAKLAND COUNTY CLERK
Republican: Lynn Allen

OAKLAND COUNTY TREASURER
Republican: Hugh Dohany

OAKLAND COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONER
Republican: George Kuhn

STATE BALLOT PROPOSAL A

Constitutional amendment to limit annual increase in homestead property assessments to 5 percent or the rate of inflation (whichever is less), until property is sold and provide separate tax limitations for different property classifications.

NO

STATE BALLOT PROPOSAL B

Constitutional amendment to restrict/limit the number of times a person can be elected to congressional, state executive and legislative offices.

YES

STATE BALLOT PROPOSAL C

Constitutional amendment to exempt property from a portion of school operating property taxes and limit annual increases in all property tax assessments.

NO

STATE BALLOT PROPOSAL D

Legislative amendment to modify Michigan's auto insurance laws.

YES

Forget the debates. I've got a better way to help TV viewers decide who they think should hold the highest office in the land: Monopoly.

Yep, I'm talking about that Parker Brothers game that has sold more than 80 million sets since it was introduced in 1935. Is there a person reading this who has not at some time in his life played the game?

So here's my plan. Instead of the presidential candidates sitting or standing on stage for 90 minutes, trading well-rehearsed one-liners and thinly veiled insults, they should just sit down at a card table and play Monopoly — in front of the TV cameras.

The games would be limited to 90 minutes and whoever had the most money and property at the end of that time would be declared the winner.

The only spin would be that there would be as many games as there were candidates, and each candi-



JACK GLADDEN

date would be allowed to set the house rules for one game.

With Ross Perot setting the rules, he'd use his own money. And when he passed "Go" he would not collect \$200, but would give it back to the bank.

George Bush would insist that the \$200 amounted to a welfare payment and would reduce it to \$100. Bill Clinton would agree with the welfare aspect of the payout, but would raise it to \$400.

Under the Bush rules, any player

landing on "Chance" would have the option of drawing a "Chance" card or passing the turn to the next player. While other players could take a chance if they chose, Bush, himself, would not. "Wouldn't be prudent," he'd reason.

Bush would cut the Luxury Tax payment from \$75 to \$25 and would reduce the Income Tax from 10 percent to 4 percent — but only for properties on Boardwalk and Park Place. Clinton would double the Luxury Tax and also the Income Tax on any properties costing more than \$300.

If Andre Marrou, the Libertarian candidate, were allowed to join the game, he'd eliminate the Income Tax altogether. Of course, there would be no money in the bank under his rules. There wouldn't even be a bank.

As far as the playing pieces are concerned, Bush would choose either the thimble or the iron — symbolic of traditional family values.

Perot would probably choose the rider on horseback, while Clinton would take the motorcar, but only after determining that it was non-polluting and got more than 40 miles per gallon around the board.

Monopoly might not provide the insight to the candidates' stance on foreign policy. But if the networks and the candidates could spare another 90 minutes, let them sit down to a game of Risk. Bush would insist on using air strikes instead of ground forces, Perot would use his own civilian army and Clinton would probably decide to sit that one out.

Character questions? Ninety minutes of Scruples.

As for the vice presidential contenders, I'm still working on that. I can't decide whether they should play Trivial Pursuit or Outburst.

Jack Gladden is a copy editor with Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Health care reform: What does it mean?

Millions and millions of words spewed by election candidates and the media inundated us during the recent campaign. A fair share of the verbiage focused on health-care reform, but what does it all mean?

With the specter of catastrophic illness greater since people live longer and with Medicare being cut deeply, where are we headed? The stress of caring for the elderly takes its toll and the pressure of the health-care system is the heaviest burden for many.

We can live with tax hikes on booze, cigarettes and other luxury items to help control the whopping federal deficit. But any proposal to cut Medicare is downright sinful.

While health-care costs take an increasingly big chunk out of family budgets, inadequate or no insurance is as life-threatening as a fatal disease.



JACKIE KLEIN

According to a survey by the American Association of Retired Persons, more than two-thirds of Americans would strongly support a government-sponsored program to provide in-home and nursing home care.

There so far has been no solution to the long-term health-care problem. Nearly 75 percent of those surveyed said nursing home costs would wipe out their savings. The survey showed that most

Americans would be willing to pay as much as \$50 a month for the right package of long-term care benefits. AARP has been working for reform of the current health-care system to control costs, improve quality and guarantee access to insurance coverage.

Also on the AARP agenda is creation of a comprehensive, across-the-board system to finance and deliver long-term care services to all Americans. Any proposed Medicare chopping goes for the jugular of the low- to moderate-income elderly.

Less than a century ago, life expectancy was just 47 years. A half-century ago, people thought it was nifty to live to the age of 60. Now life expectancy is up to 80 years.

But Medicare has been steadily cut back on what it will pay hospitals which are now exclusively places for acute care. Medicare reimburses a flat rate for illness

with one price tag for a heart attack and another for gall bladder surgery.

While people used to look at long life as a blessing, now they're apt to question, "When do we stop keeping Dad alive?" They look for ways to protect their life savings from catastrophic illnesses and nursing homes.

The graying of America indicates that one out of five people ages 65 to 75 will be confined to a nursing home at some time. After age 75, the number becomes one out of two.

There are only three ways to pay for nursing care — out of your pocket, by nursing home insurance or Medicaid. If you're destitute, you can receive Medicaid by giving your money to your kids before seeking nursing help. But that's not ideal.

Jackie Klein writes a weekly column for the Southfield Eccentric.

"STEVEN KAPLAN would do a better job, bringing more civility to the prosecutor's office without sacrificing the toughness that county voters expect and need." Detroit Free Press

OAKLAND COUNTY NEEDS A SMARTER, TOUGHER PROSECUTOR!

"We face a greater danger to our personal safety from convicted criminals, like serial-killer Leslie Allen Williams, than from Dr. Jack Kevorkian.

My opponent, Richard Thompson, could have, but did not, use the courts to block Williams' early parole. Williams' early release by the Parole Board led to horrendous personal losses for his victims' families and a tragedy for us all.

The incumbent prosecutor should not have wasted taxpayers' money prosecuting Dr. Kevorkian when Michigan law does not make assisted suicide a crime.

I'm proud that my record and my experience have earned for me many, many endorsements, including law enforcement individuals and organizations, such as the Police Officers Association of Michigan and the Michigan Association of Police. They know I will enforce the law, wisely and effectively."

Steven Kaplan



Smarter. Tougher.

Elect Assistant
Prosecutor
STEVEN

KAPLAN

Oakland County Prosecutor

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ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR
LEGAL SCHOLAR
COMMUNITY LEADER

- Assistant Prosecutor, Macomb County, since 1986, Felony Trial Division, successfully prosecuted 24 capital cases.
- Staff Attorney, Court of Appeals, 1985-86
- Research Attorney, Michigan Court of Appeals, 1982-83
- Judicial Clerk, Oakland County Circuit Court, 1978-82
- Adjunct Assistant Professor, Mercy College of Detroit, 1985-90
- Trustee, Oakland County Law Library Foundation, 1984-90
- Bd. of Directors, Wayne County Neighborhood Legal Services, 1985-86
- Hearing Officer, Attorney Discipline Board, 1987-present; Master, 1989-present
- Board of Directors, HAVEN Domestic Violence Shelter, Pontiac
- Board of Directors, Common Ground, Birmingham, 1986-87
- Trustee, Southfield School Board, 1987-present; President of the Board, 1990-92
- Board of Directors, Students Against Drunk Driving, 1987-1992
- Board of Directors, Substance Abuse Inf. Center, Fraser, 1990-present
- Author of twenty-four published articles in legal and educational journals
- Juris Doctor, Honors Graduate, Detroit College of Law, 1981

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