

Board from page 1A

"If someone would run that has some sort of credentials, personal and academic, that's willing to put some energy into being on the school board, I'd probably support them and not run myself," said DeVries, who is a member of the watchdog group Citizens for Quality Schools.

"However, if we have people like this who are going to run, which in my view, are totally unqualified for the job, and I don't want them making decisions regarding my children's education, I might very well run."

DeVries said school officials are encouraging candidates. He named Steve Kaplan, Laura Myers and Dave York as possible candidates.

"They're basically people who have rather weak educational credentials and professional credentials," DeVries said. "And

'(Asking someone to run is) not a common practice. I don't think it's wrong one way or another; I don't know if it helps one way or another.'

*Helen Prutow
school trustee*

because of that they're the type of people they like on the school board. They won't ask questions. They tend to be low-energy people who won't go out after the facts."

Kaplan and Myers said they're not running at this time; York is undecided.

"I don't think it's appropriate to comment at this time," said York, who is a member of Advocates for Excellence in Education.

All three said they were not asked by officials to run. Added

Kaplan: "I didn't know that was the function of the school board."

However, Feldman said she was asked by some board members. She declined to name them, though.

Debbie Cornwell, a district president for PTA, said she was approached last year by school board members about running. Cornwell added she's not a candidate this year.

"It's not a common practice," said Trustee Helen Prutow. "I

don't think it's wrong one way or another; I don't know if it helps one way or another."

Robert Rannoy, another member of Citizens for Quality Schools, ran in 1989 against Cotton and Dilzary. Rannoy said he hasn't given much thought to running.

Myers said she's busy in numerous activities at Farmington High, including the North Central accreditation process.

"Oh, yes, I have (thought about running), and I will be back," Myers said. "I can't see it this year."

Cornwell has served as district president for the PTA. Like Myers, volunteer school activities consume her time.

"They have approached me a few times," Cornwell said. "I prefer to do activities with the children. . . ."

Pits from page 1A

The putrid smell of Chanel 10W-40 and auto exhaust are constant companions.

Forte will perform several other tasks of routine maintenance. Once a fresh five quarts of oil are injected, he'll yell something undiscernible to a coworker above.

The auto will leave and another car will pull overhead. The process starts over.

Forte has been working at Instant Oil Change for 2½ months. He did sandblasting work before.

Forte said he likes the hands-on nature of the job.

"I've been working on cars and motorcycles all my life," said Forte, 18, who lives in Howell. "I work on my cars; I work on my friends' cars."

And those of many people he doesn't know. An average of 50 to 70 cars a day roll through Valvoline Instant Oil Change. At Carousel Oil Change in

'I've been working on cars and motorcycles all my life . . . I work on my cars; I work on my friends' cars.'

Carl Forte

Farmington Hills, some 250 to 300 autos roll in a week.

That's why the pit man is easy to suss out. At Carousel, the person is wearing oversized canvas overalls.

Workers at Instant Oil Change got 11 sets of uniforms and two jackets. They also go through two to three cases of papers towels a week, drying their hands after countless washings.

Hand soap — a pumice, lanolin and lemon mixture — comes in industrial-sized drums.

"If I go out with my wife, I always use Comet on top of that," Smolen said.

Oil change places are considered dirty of the environment. All waste oil is recycled at both places. Later, it will be refined into heating or industrial oil.

At Instant Oil Change, even the oil filters are compacted to squeeze out the remaining oil.

Their job is not glamorous. Nor is it easy.

In addition to changing the oil, transmission and differential flu-

ids are checked as well as an assortment of other tasks.

Not every day is drudgery, though. Once in a while some driver will misjudge the distance to the pit and end up parking in it.

"I seen it happen here once," Smolen said. "She didn't speak any English; she spoke Chinese. Everyone kept yelling, 'Stop! Stop!'"

"I turned around and her car and everything was in the pit. . . . It happens."

"No matter what job you have, you get tired of it after a while," said Bonnie McQueen, manager of the Valvoline Instant Oil Change in Farmington. "That's why there's vacations."

Farmington Observer

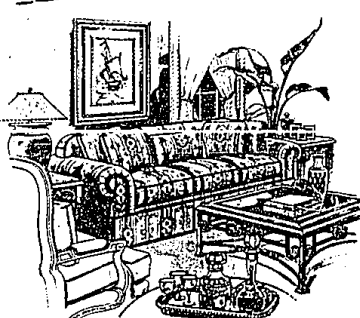
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