

Model dad: Farmington council candidate Arnold Campbell likes to build models of Ford Motor Co. cars. His son, Andrew, 14, shares his father's interest in the hobby.



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Campbell 'builds' strong family ties

A hobby can be the glue that keeps a family together, especially when it's building model cars.

The activity is one of several Farmington council candidate Arnold Campbell participates in with his two boys, Andrew, 14, and Bryan, 10.

Campbell, who works as a quality associate for Ford Motor Co., likes to construct plastic replicas of the autos Ford has produced through the years. He has amassed somewhere between 100-150 models.

"It brings in the boys," Campbell said. "They each have a model to work on."

Campbell also goes on camps with his children, who are involved in scouting. They like to go fishing and swimming together.

He's active in the Farmington Soccer Club and the South Farmington Baseball program, which have been sports his sons have played.

He bought his wife of 17 years, Betsy, a bike so she could join the family on rides through the neighborhood.

What hobby keeps Campbell busy outside of family interests? Woodworking.

Candidate from page 1A

"I'm a listener. I'm not a reactionary," said Campbell, who's married and has two boys and lives in Farmington Meadows. "I like to listen to what people have to say and make sure they have an equal voice."

The last two years on council have been eventful.

Longtime city manager Robert Deadman retired, leaving the council to find a replacement. Public safety director Frank Lauhoff was chosen, creating another vacancy to be filled from within.

Also, the \$13-million sewer improvement project was completed this June within budget.

Aside from the clock-tower skirmish, though, there have been few raging issues before council.

"I wish I could say there were some terrible, hard issues in the city," Campbell said. "I think the biggest job is to maintain the level of services in the city and make sure we respond to (the residents) on what we're doing."

And that might be the hard part. Campbell is aware of problems that may be out of the city's control.

For one, there's a potential loss of revenue sharing to cities through a proposed plan by Gov. John Engler. Farmington receives \$700,000 in revenue sharing. A drastic cut could wreak havoc on the city's budget, Campbell said.

"It's scary . . . You're wondering where in the general fund you can pick up that kind of money," he said.

Day-to-day issues — maintaining a vital downtown, grappling with parking problems, and consolidating city services — are under the council's purview, though, Campbell believes the council

has to continue to listen to business owners' concerns, not just in downtown, but throughout the city.

He admits there are some parking limitations downtown, especially on the north side of Grand River. He thinks the city can work on the problem, though, perhaps reinforcing the notion of employees parking farther away.

As for consolidating services with Farmington Hills, Campbell points out it's already being done in several instances, especially in the area of public safety.

Most of all, Campbell wants the council to continue being responsive to residents.

He's an advocate of the city's newsletter to inform them, suggesting that a focus group of residents be brought in to lend their advice to the project. Likewise, he'd prefer to see more interest in city government.

Campbell recalls his own days as a council watcher. He attended meetings for three years and would report back to his homeowners association.

"To me it's said," he said. "Occasionally, I would go to the meetings and report back to the association about what was going on."

"I'm not seeing that. The last couple of elections, the new people come to a couple of meetings, but you don't see any interest beforehand."

For this campaign, Campbell plans to walk the neighborhoods. As a resident of Farmington Meadows, he feels he has an insight to the concerns of those who live in the outlying area. He's quick to add, though, he has all residents in mind on the council.

Said Campbell: "When we spend a dollar, it's my dollar too."

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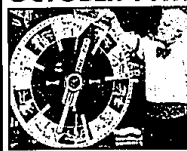
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