

Board candidates support district's money requests

BY MARIE CHESTNEY
STAFF WRITER

Both challengers seeking a two-year term on the Clarenceville Board of Education back the two bond issues Clarenceville Public Schools is requesting June 12.

In fact, Thomas Aldrich, an insurance inspector who lives on Brentwood in Livonia, said he toured Botsford Elementary and Clarenceville Middle and found both to be in dire need of repair. The bulk of the money from the two bond issues would be used to make repairs at school buildings.

"It's a big project that's badly needed," Aldrich said. "This is

not for the extras, but the basics."

Scott Wood, the second challenger for a two-year term, said he wished the bond proposal went even further, to include more of the district's technological needs.

"But I guess we have to approach one problem at a time," Wood said.

The two other candidates on the June ballot, incumbents Vernice Dunklee and Ronald Silve, will keep their seats come July because they are running unopposed for two four-year seats.

In the annual school election, Livonia, Redford Township and Farmington residents living in the

Clarenceville School District will vote on the two ballot proposals, as well as the trustees' rate.

If approved by voters, the two bond issues will raise \$6.6 million over the next 10 years.

Wood, a raw materials manager who lives on Salisbury in Farmington Hills, wants to help run the district from which he graduated in 1981. He has lived 29 of his 31 years in Clarenceville.

"My biggest beef is that Clarenceville has been viewed negatively by the Livonia community and I take offense at that. It does a nice job of providing a quality education. It gave me a lot

of opportunities I may not have gotten at another high school. I got a baseball scholarship to go to college."

Aldrich, a seven-year resident of Clarenceville, said he had no complaints about the management of the district. "I'm not running to fight the past. They've done quite good in the past. I just want to add to it."

Dunklee, a 23-year resident of Clarenceville who lives on Maplewood in Livonia, has three children who have graduated from the district. She has served eight years on the board.

Silve, an engineer who lives on

Osmus in Livonia, is seeking his first four-year term. He now holds the two-year seat. The trustees appointed Silve to fill until June 30 the term left vacant by Lisa Burr when she resigned. He has lived in Clarenceville since 1991.

The two questions on the June ballot are:

■ A 2.10-mill bond issue that would generate \$4.4 million over 10 years.

■ A 0.75-mill sinking fund that would generate \$2.1 million over the next 10 years.

The \$6.6 million raised by both proposals is significantly less than the \$19 million, 30-year

bond issue for repairs rejected by voters in 1991.

"This is a much scaled-down version of that question," Wood said.

If the bond issue passes, Clarenceville will buy equipment and do the most-needed repairs with the \$4.4 million generated by it.

If the \$2.1 million generated by the sinking fund is approved, Clarenceville would have the money to space out less-critical repairs over the next 10 years. It also will have a fund to tap into for emergency needs, such as a new boiler or roof.

Candidates answer questions about district's future

Editorials, 18A

The Livonia League of Women Voters has provided a Voters Guide to inform residents of Livonia about school board candidates.

The annual school election is Monday, June 12.

Clarenceville Board of Education candidates for two four-year terms are Vernice Dunklee of 19942 Maplewood, Livonia, and Ronald Silve of 20101 Osmus, Livonia, and candidates for the one two-year term are Scott Wood of 30492 Salisbury, Farmington Hills, and Thomas Aldrich of 19303 Brentwood, Livonia.

The League asked each candidate four questions and asked each to limit their answers to 60 typed words or less. Wood did not respond to the League questionnaire. The questions and answers follow.

1. What is your position on the statement that there should be a statewide study to establish a standard curriculum for all schools?

Aldrich: I would not object to a standard curriculum for all schools.

Dunklee: Absolutely essential for schools to have high achievement standards. The study

should recommend a standard curriculum and then allow districts to decide how they will achieve that standard. The diversity of input offers a better opportunity to set quality standards which genuinely meet students' needs as they approach the year 2000.

Silve: I don't believe the state should establish standard curriculum. There are already too many "going-in" regulations. The state may wish to establish minimum objectives at various levels and allow the individual school systems to determine the best route for them to get there. "There are many paths through the forest."

2. What is your position on charter schools? Home schooling? Voucher system?

Aldrich: I don't know enough about charter schools to make comment.

I feel that daily interaction with your peer group is an important part of a well-rounded education. I do feel, however, that people should have the option to home school within existing guidelines.

I need more information to form an opinion on the voucher system. However, I am concerned about how this would impact community and school interactions.

CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOLS

Silve: Charter schools can offer some interesting options. However, I have some concerns about state funding and other regulatory issues. I believe that given the freedoms that charter schools are allowed, the public school system need to be addressed. I'm not sure home schools can be well enough equipped to provide education to the broader bases that are evolving.

Home schooling also may provide some interesting alternatives. Yet teacher qualifications, instruction standards, and funding are still issues that would need to be addressed. I'm not sure home schools can be well enough equipped to provide education to the broader bases that are evolving.

I don't believe in the voucher system without at the very least trying to find availability to the same requirements and standards as the public school system. Where public funds are applied, the recipient must be held publicly accountable.

Dunklee: Charter schools which concentrate on specific academic study, vocational/technical training or alternative programs could be extremely successful. Why not provide the opportunity and financial backing to districts so that they can seriously consid-

er and formulate creative ways to incorporate these programs into their districts?

If a parent chooses to home school they certainly should be allowed. Those children should meet the same standards as public school system students. I personally don't feel home schooling is a good choice. Children miss opportunities for social interaction and broadened curricular and technical programs.

Opposed to voucher system. Public funds should be used for the public school system.

3. What is your opinion of the emphasis placed on the MEAP test as being the "key" measurement of learning as it relates to diploma certification? Accreditation?

Aldrich: Since the MEAPs are here, recognition of doing well via diploma certification and accreditation would seem appropriate.

Dunklee: If MEAP is the standard that determines what students must know for certification, then it must be a "world-class" standard which reflects and measures authentic academic

achievement of a high school graduate.

Presently, 66 percent of students must score satisfactory or above for three years for the school to be accredited. "Satisfactory" is correctly answering 50 percent of the questions of the test. These percentages must be raised. But recognize schools cannot achieve that standard overnight.

Silve: It's a good beginning. Assessment tools other than an overall grade point average are long overdue. Additionally, at least on an annual basis, the assessment procedure should be evaluated for adequacy and acceptance levels raised. If it doesn't work it should be modified. We need to continuously raise the chinning bar if we expect to achieve ongoing improvement.

4. What do you envision as the district's three top priorities that should be addressed to promote continuous educational improvement?

Aldrich: Staying abreast of current technology to ensure our students are well-prepared for entering the job market; continued staff development and fostering of parental involvement; accreditation of all four schools.

Silve: 1. We need to complete the realignment of our curriculum to coincide with MEAP requirements more naturally; 2. We must meet or exceed the minimum requirements for state accreditation as quickly as possible and continue to improve from there; 3. We must pass the bond and sinking-fund ballot proposals in June to allow us to repair and improve the environment in which our students and teachers work daily as well as provide needed technology.

Dunklee: 1. Set high standards of performance, focus on them throughout the district, support and incentive staff with various instructional models, listen to each other; 2. Teach students to be accomplished, successful, resourceful, self-reliant and self-confident. These students will learn the academics; 3. Provide classroom experiences, tools and technologies to meet the standards.

The League of Women Voters seeks to encourage voter participation in grass roots democracy. It does not take stands on candidates but will, at times, take stands on ballot proposals.

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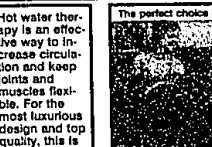
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