

# Gatekeeper for police chief brings close to 24-year career

When it came to law enforcement, JoAnn King had a ringside seat.

"During her 24 years in the department, the Farmington Hills police administrative assistant acted as the benevolent gatekeeper for three chiefs, including Bill Dwyer. The chief and the department said goodbye to the longtime city employee, who retired last week.

"The move didn't come soon enough for King's two children, who are now grown but groused about their mom's occupation that made her cautious.

"The children would say, 'I want to do this' or 'I want to go here.' I'd say, 'Oh no, you can't do that,'" said King, who was feted during a reception in Farmington Hills council chambers Friday.

"They'd say, 'Why can't you do something else, like work for an insurance company?'"

"Her somewhat overprotective ways were a product of crime she saw her bosses grapple with daily. After all, said King while sitting in her office, "This is the real world."

"Her view of crime's less than savory aspects came by accident.

A co-worker went on an interview at the department, but said they were looking for someone older and suggested King go for it. She did.

Then, the department had 40 officers and very few women working inside — a far cry from the 117 officers today.

King started out as a clerk, who was lost in the alphabet soup of law enforcement lingo. "I was the greenest person in the world," she said. "I didn't even know what a B&E was."

King understood how to break ground on new friendships, though. She quickly grew into what Dwyer terms as a "trusted advocate."

If someone in the department had marital or other personal problems, they'd likely turn to the chief's assistant. Dwyer recalls how King once helped a dispatcher who was going through health and finance difficulties by putting her in touch with the benevolence association.

Her compassion has been noted. King earned the department's Employee of the Year Award in 1991 and '95. She also received a citation for her help during the papal visit in 1987.

She also untangled the wires leading to the chief's office, which often includes media, police personnel and residents. She could answer their questions and put them through to the right person, diverting the onslaught from her boss.

"They know her as much as they know me," Dwyer said.

King learned quickly about working for high profile bosses. She was secretary to former Hills chief George Halverson, who was also former Michigan State police director. Former Detroit police chief and mayoral candidate John Nichols followed Halverson.

Dwyer, a former Detroit police narcotics officer, succeeded Nichols, who is now Oakland County sheriff. She offers a sly grin when asked to compare the styles of the former Detroit cops.

"Each one is an extremely dynamic individual in his own way," said King, who describes Nichols and Dwyer as "two of the greatest bosses."

"They are complete opposites, but they bring so much to the law enforcement field."



King and chief: JoAnn King has worked directly with Farmington Hills Police Chief Bill Dwyer for 14 years.

# Sever legs out victory in 19th District race

Waiting for election results at Farmington Hills City Hall Tuesday, Terry Sever's legs hurt.

The pain, he said, was from walking door to door during the campaign and was the reason he won the Republican slot in the 19th District for the Oakland County Commission.

Sever will face Democrat, Deborah J. Goldberg in the election Nov. 3.

"We ran a hard-nose, door-to-door, grass-roots campaign," Sever said.

"After he and his supporters went door to door they went back a second time and reached 70 percent of the district. He credits his supporters, mainly his family, daughter and campaign manager, Jennifer, 22; son, Aaron; daughter, Melissa and wife, Linda, for a campaign well run.

"I went through two pairs of shoes and plenty of blisters," Sever said.

He won 56.13 percent of the vote. His Republican opponents, Ben Marks got 32.76 percent voter support and Joanne F. Molin earned 10.67 percent of the electorate nod.

Sever said the first thing he would do if elected in November is to study the county budget "and see where our community should be in competing for more county government services."

"I have to give Ben credit," Sever, 47, said. "He worked hard and made it a tough campaign. (Marks, 75) worked harder than someone half his age."

Sever, a 13-year Farmington Hills City Council veteran, was endorsed by four of his Farmington Hills colleagues as well as a majority on the Farmington Council.

He said he couldn't imagine returning to local politics; however, he added that he wanted to see after two years as county commissioner "if it fits my character and ability to accomplish things. If it's too partisan oriented, I won't stay."

The 19th District seat was vacated by longtime commissioner Donn Wolf, who endorsed Marks in the campaign.

Marks sat watching election

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results at what was to be a victory party at Ginopolis Restaurant.

When asked what his plans were, Marks said: "I'm going to keep on living. This is not terminal. I plan on staying active, concerned and productive. If the occasion arises that I think I can make a contribution, I will, but there's nothing I can foresee."

Recapping the campaign, Marks said, he believed the candidates conducted themselves honorably and he wouldn't have changed his tactics.

"The electorate has spoken," Marks said. "I hope (Sever) serves the county in an even-handed way. He is a dedicated man and he has big shoes (Wolf's) to fill."

Marks, who is director of Longacre Community House, served on the Farmington Hills City Council from 1983-92 and a term as mayor in 1987. He also served a term as president of the Michigan Municipal League.

Molin, an interior decorator, has never held a political office.

After the results were in, Molin said, she thought she would garner a higher percentage of votes.

Whether she will seek another political office, she said: "We'll sit and regroup and think about it."

Molin said she spent less than \$1,000 on the campaign.

The district includes all of Farmington and a southern portion of Farmington Hills. The Oakland County Board of Commissioners is composed of 25 commissioners elected to two year terms. The job is considered part time; however, commissioners are expected to attend twice-a-month board meetings and periodic committee meetings.

Commissioners are paid \$25,111 annually and are entitled to the same fringe benefits available to other county employees, like life insurance; health care including dental and optical; as well as retirement benefits.

# Moffitt squeezes by Jolicoeur in 18th District GOP runoff

During the final week, David Moffitt's campaign run turned into a full sprint.

The Farmington Hills attorney prevailed in a highly contentious primary for the 18th District seat on the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, nipping Farmington Hills businesswoman Linda Jolicoeur by 107 votes — 2,292 to 2,185 — Tuesday.

The incumbent faces Democratic challenger Ryan Gausand in the general election Nov. 3.

"Undoubtedly, Mrs. Jolicoeur worked hard," Moffitt said. "We had a late swell of grass-roots support that came to a crescendo in the last week and we had more calls from volunteers than we ever dreamed were out there."

Jolicoeur had a different spin. Surrounded by supporters at Ginopolis Tuesday night, she pined over the results at a table with 19th District candidate Ben Marks.

Third candidate Laine Wine didn't campaign but still pulled 125 votes, which further inked the runner-up when the final totals came in.

Moffitt had denied published reports that the Farmington Hills woman, who had been a client of his law practice, entered the race to split the women's vote.

"I guess his strategy worked," said Jolicoeur. "She didn't even run a campaign and she still got

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