

ENGAGEMENTS

BALLENTINE-WILLIAMS

Mr. and Mrs. Gary Ballentine of White Lake announce the engagement of their daughter, Katherine, to Charles H. Williams III, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Bodeh of South Lyon and the late Charles H. Williams II. An April wedding is planned in Farmington.



CHWALIK-FOX

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Chwalik of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter, Barbara, to Bret Fox, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Dennis Fox of Canton, Ohio.

The bride-to-be is presently working on her bachelor's degree in therapeutic recreation at Eastern Michigan University.

She is employed by the Ann Arbor Public School System.

The groom earned a master's degree in electrical engineering from the University of Akron.

He is currently working for an engineering consulting firm in Beverly Hills.

The couple is planning a July wedding at St. Fabian's Catholic Church in Farmington Hills.

OVERALL-SWEENEY
Carol Overall of Walled Lake and Gary Overall of Highland

announce the engagement of their daughter, Gena Dee, to James H. Sweeney Jr., son of James and Beverly Sweeney of Farmington.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Walled Lake Western High School and Michigan Technological University.

She is employed as a software documentation writer for Compuware Corporation in Farmington Hills.

The groom is a graduate of Harrison High School and Michigan State University.

He is employed as a systems engineer for Unigraphics Solutions in Livonia.

A May wedding is planned at Brentwood Country Club in White Lake.

50TH ANNIVERSARY

WILLIAMS 50TH

The Rev. L.S. and Clara Williams of Farmington Hills will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on April 8.

The couple was married in Detroit on April 8, 1950, and have been residents of Farmington Hills for 20 years.

Williams has been the pastor of Goodwill Baptist Church in Detroit for 37 years and Clara is a homemaker as well as assisting her husband in his ministry.

They have four children, Reginald, Duane, Yvette and Tink; and eight grandchildren.



Free marriage seminar set

The First Baptist Church of Farmington is sponsoring a seminar entitled "Marriage by the Book" on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25, at First Baptist, 33400 Shawnee Road in Farmington.

Well-known Christian authors Kent and Barbara Hughes will be the speakers. This seminar is free. To register call 474-0350.

Bates from page B1

protest, Bates obtained a grant to do gerontology research and set up a workshop. A survey of Hills senior citizens provided an interesting look at their needs, community services and resources.

"I went to the City Council and asked them to form a Commission on Aging," she recalled. "I went from there to knowing city officials."

After becoming involved in a couple of campaigns, because of her background in public relations, Bates learned an important lesson, one that literally propelled her to action.

"The way things finally got done, it seemed to me, is political access," she said. "That's when I got involved."

She served as Mayor in 1993, when that position was council-elected, and began her current term after last fall's general election.

Value of networking

Campaigning on her own behalf has shown her the value of networking, and Bates places tremendous importance on the contacts that she made through community involvement long before she sought a political office.

"It's crucial," Bates stressed. "People like a face on a name. And the people you have around you are important."

While she has never been fond of fund-raising, Bates said citizens who have supported her goals and ideas have been "very kind." She has been

careful, however, to avoid conflicts in the realm of campaign finance.

"I have returned many checks," she said. "They understood. People expect you not to have even the appearance of impropriety."

Being a woman in politics has never been an issue; in fact, Bates said women have done quite well in local public service. Character counts here, as do issues surrounding children and families, from which Bates has never shied away.

Strong political agenda

While women might be criticized for seeking out those issues — as though they were "softball" or stereotypical concerns — she has made children and families a strong, consistent part of her political agenda.

"I've owned two businesses," she said. "I've done the other side of it, too."

Bates encourages any woman with even a peripheral interest in politics to first get involved in her community, whether it's city committees and commissions or civic and special interest groups.

"It's rare, unless there's a really hot topic, to be elected the first time around unless you've been involved in the community," she said. "As you begin to form your opinions on issues, it gives you a background of where the community has been and where it's headed."

Smith from page B1

actually cost her an election.

"It was a nasty campaign," she recalled. "The opposition put out nasty, nasty stuff."

It's the price public officials often pay for stepping up to the plate of government service, but Smith doesn't regret a minute. She got politically involved during the height of protests over the war in Vietnam, and never looked back.

"I discovered the only way to make things move in this country is by being political," she said.

A resident of Farmington Hills since 1956, Smith was asked to get involved in local politics by attending a county Democratic committee meeting. She landed a spot on the committee and eventually became the local

club's first woman president.

Smith was approached to run for city council after Farmington Hills became a city in 1972. She lost by 37 votes.

"It was very different than it is now," she said of the campaign. "The League of Women Voters sent out a questionnaire to answer, and they had one candidate night. I think there were 27 candidates."

Still interested in local issues, Smith took a seat on the zoning board of appeals, then ran for council again in 1975.

"I was the highest vote-getter," she recalled. "I beat the incumbents."

The most important element of any political campaign, and the secret to her success in politics, has been honesty. While it

wasn't easy facing angry citizens and trying to communicate and educate people about controversial projects, Smith found most residents to be blessed with common sense and civility.

"You're asking citizens to believe you," she said. "Sometimes, it comes across like you know better than they do, but sometimes, you do."

She urges women to give public service and politics a go, but to do their homework before setting out on what can be a difficult, but rewarding, road.

"Be informed," Smith stressed. "And no crying after you run and get elected. If you can't say when it's over with you're glad you did it, that's a very sorry position to be in."

Enberg from page B1

ton Families In Action and the schools."

"I started with simple things ... planting bulbs and pulling weeds in front of the school. It's very additive. That evolved into parent advisory boards and district committees."

When she decided to run for a school board seat in 1995, Enberg asked others who had done it before. She read materials, asked friends, neighbors and school buddies for opinions.

Getting up to snuff

"I had to bone up, get up-to-date on the background of issues," she said.

In that first election, she spent \$2,600. Oakland Community

College had a ballot proposal that June and it brought more voters to the polls. The second time she ran for office — last year — she ran unopposed.

"It's invigorating being a woman in politics," she said. "The advantage of running for school board is that it's non-partisan. You don't have to play the political games played at higher levels. I'm free to be me, to state my opinion."

When Enberg first moved here, she was pursuing a master's degree in business administration. Her two sons were in elementary school.

"I was a pack mother for Pack 45 at Longacre Elementary and involved in my church, Orchard

United Methodist," she recalled.

When she earned her degree, her sons were at Power Middle School and she became involved in the parent advisory board there as well as Farmington Families in Action.

As the boys progressed through Farmington High School, she was president of the FIS parent advisory board and active behind the scenes in areas like swimming and marching band.

"Their activities became my activities," she said.

Now in her second term on the school board, Enberg states, "I'm working as part of a team to make this district better."

Barnett from page B1

1984, it was the Democrat's turn to run for the state House against popular veteran and Republican Sundry Brotherton. She lost. In 1994, she ran for the state Senate. Again, she lost.

Her own election attempts weren't her only foray into politics. Barnett ran campaigns for former state Sen. Jack Faxon of Farmington Hills and state Supreme Court Justice Marilyn Kelly, as well as a state petition drive for the public funding of schools.

Learned the ropes

"It was with Jack Faxon that I learned the ropes of big campaigning," Barnett said.

Quite honestly, Barnett said, she also had guidance from former Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagozzi when it came to political campaigns. "He taught me the ropes of campaigning. It scared the heck out of me going to door-to-door," she said. "I relied on the kindness of strangers. I sent out letters. Actually, we did the best we could with limited resources."

Her jump from high school student government to adult community politics was prompted by some landscaping work — and financing — the city of Farmington Hills wanted to do along Orchard Lake Road. Barnett and her husband, Mark Steckloff, lived in nearby condos, whose residents had already landscaped their share along the thoroughfare.

"I felt I had something to contribute to the community. I believe in open government, accessible government. I think there's room for people who listen and want to help," she said.

Being a woman in politics, Barnett said, just brings a different perspective to a discussion and possible outcome. "I think women tend to be more nurturing. We tend to seek positions that bring conflict to a reasonable close through conversation."

"Conflict to us is not a win or lose situation. We try to work toward solutions that make all sides come ahead. That's when government works at its best — when the solution is more than who comes up with the idea."

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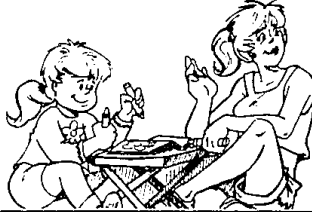
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