

# LETTERS

## True volunteer

Pam Christian, a candidate for the school board, is a true volunteer who gives 100 percent of her efforts to children and families.

Pam Christian doesn't have a cheerleader at North Farmington High School, yet she has continued her support of the sport and, she has been very busy organizing an extensive community service focus for the cheer team for next year.

As a mother of a former cheerleader, I am very grateful. In addition, as a Forest parent, I know that Pam is the leader of a Girl Scout troop that she does not have a daughter in. Pam spends endless hours contributing as Forest PTA's secretary.

Pam Christian is a person who truly advocates for all children. She will be a wonderful addition to the Board of Education.

*Hill Fried Farmington Hills*

## Convictions

Who do I want representing our community on the Farmington School Board? Someone who assures that the best interests of our children will be the unwavering priority on the agenda. Someone who has the conviction to speak his conscience, someone who has the integrity to voice a dissenting opinion; someone who will not compromise ethics for expediency.

Phil Neuman exemplifies those qualities that have earned him the endorsement of this paper and make him the strongest candidate for the upcoming school board election.

By his example, he has encouraged active, meaningful school-parent partnerships and places a premium on parental input to help guide school growth and vision. An independent thinker, Phil loves to brainstorm creative solutions, especially critical as school districts face the pressures of new financial exigencies and government mandates.

But what I admire most about Phil is his commitment to uphold the core values of our district, our country. Phil appreciates that pluralism and diversity make this country strong

and great. He also realizes that no institution can grow without question and challenge.

Phil has demonstrated that he will be that school board member who is not afraid to stand up to promote educational excellence for our children.

*Linda Stulberg Farmington Hills*

## Christian soars

We were so pleased to read your comments about Pam Christian. Like you, we are "very impressed with Pam Christian - with her demonstrated capacity for leadership, her determination to soar above the crowd and her strong support from the community."

While both of us, as lawyers, agree with your comments that Phil Neuman's background in contract law may be helpful, we could also hope that the school board is already receiving effective legal counsel, as needed.

As was the case with another Forest parent and Observer letter writer, we also received the unsolicited e-mail from Mr. Neuman encouraging us to engage in a letter-writing campaign to the school board because of his opinion that there were inaccuracies in the proposal to redistrict Section 8. We e-mailed him then next day. Our note went unanswered. We are concerned that this indicates a tendency to follow a personal agenda while discounting other knowledgeable viewpoints.

Our own personal experience leads us to believe that Pam Christian is more likely to take a balanced approach for the ground of working collaboratively to ascertain what the real problems are and work as a member of a team to positively solve them will serve her well as a member of the school board.

On June 11, we will be proud to cast our vote for Pam Christian. Thank you.

*Theresa Orlaake-Rich & Brian Rich Farmington Hills*

## Stands out

Phil Neuman stands out in an exceptional group of school board candidates this year.

More than any other candidate, Phil Neuman wants to involve parents in all aspects of educational services, keeping what works and questioning what might need improvement. For example, Neuman worked cooperatively with concerned parents and Forest School staff to modify certain aspects of the school schedule.

This cooperation resulted in a greatly strengthened parent English and writing program, which has won high marks from an overwhelming majority of parents at Forest. Neuman will truly ensure that parents' voices are heard on the board.

Neuman has also shown a strong grasp of school financing issues and the budget difficulties we must face over the next few years, largely as a result of Proposal A. As Superintendent Maxfield has repeatedly cautioned, difficult decisions lie ahead in such an era of belt-tightening.

Phil Neuman has earned our vote for School Board on Monday, June 11.

*Mark Steckhoff Farmington Hills*

## Supports Elsey

I am writing in support of Terry Elsey's campaign for school board. I have known Terry for more than 18 years, during which time he has been my banker, painter, legal counsel, carpenter, auto mechanic, psychologist, cheerleader, jailer and father.

In these various roles I have seen his dedication to quality, his personal integrity, his intelligence and creativity, and his willingness to fight for what's best for his children and family.

The center of his campaign has been a commitment to provide the best education possible to the children of the Farmington district, he has emphasized gifted education because that is where, in his experience with my brother and myself, our school district falls short.

Though he recognizes that issues like the budget and school-related legislation are important ones, he has not allowed them to distract from his primary focus on Farmington's children. He supports

returning to the fundamentals: making English, math and science the core of our children's education and improving scores on the standardized tests. My father differentiates himself from the other candidates in two important ways. First, he has listed specific, concrete ideas and goals for the school system. Second, he has expressed dissatisfaction with the current school

board and a willingness to express dissenting opinions.

My father consistently encouraged me to seek educational opportunities when I was an FPS student, supporting my attempts to find appropriate correspondence and community college classes, and last year suggesting that I apply to Harvard. He was always there to help with homework, look at report

cards, and give advice. It has always been clear in my home that education is a high priority. If my father is elected to school board, he will make sure that it is one for the Farmington School District as well.

Please join me in voting Elsey for education on June 11.

*Teresa Elsey Farmington Hills*

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