

# Teacher Unions Pick 8 Winners; Lose 4

Observant teacher unions adopted a low profile in this month's board of education elections in contrast to some years when their campaigning has approached the hectic.

What support was offered generally took the form of manpower rather than money.

Education associations representing teachers in two districts, Redford Union and Garden City, failed to endorse candidates at all.

In other districts, there were eight winners and four losers among 12 candidates backed by teacher unions.

In some places, teachers split among themselves with some actively campaigning for candidates who lacked formal union endorsement.

With two incumbents running for re-election unopposed in the Redford Union

district, the local education association remained out of the race entirely.

The South Redford Education Assn. (SREDA) endorsed two candidates but provided minimal financial support for their campaigns. However, the SREDA did send out letters in their behalf to area residents and teachers.

One of the endorsed pair, Mrs. Mary VanAlsten, a former substitute teacher, was elected. The other, Mrs. Betty Splatt, ran fourth.

The Plymouth Education Assn. (PEA), which has endorsed candidates since 1970, saw one of its candidates lose for the first time, and then by only 18 votes.

The PEA's major contribution continued to be circulation of its endorsements through the "Plymouth Educator," mailed to every home in the school district.

The Farmington Education Assn. (FEA) endorsed both winners in the race, Gary Lichtman and Emma Makinen, but did it quietly.

They distributed literature election day and mailed out their endorsements to MEA members in the district, supposedly about 200 Farmington teachers living in the district and another 200 who live in Farmington but teach in other districts.

Another factor was a split among FEA members on two of the candidates, Lichtman and the Rev. Hugh Stewart. With both men having about an equal chance of election, strong endorsement of either would have been a political gamble.

With only three candidates for two board seats campaigning in a very mild election, Garden City Education Assn. (GCEA) made no public endorsement.

In the Wayne-Westland district, the two candidates receiving education association endorsement finished fourth and fifth in a field of seven candidates.

Winners outpiled the union's choices by nearly 2-1.

However, many teachers including the union's president, openly opposed the association's choices and worked for other candidates.

Livonia, frequently the site of intense teacher union politicking, was relatively calm.

Proposition C would have better chances of support for future political activity.

The MEA did "get a lot of flack" from certain legislators following the last general election, one union official said privately, because of its "flamboyant" support of certain congressional and legislative candidates.

"They felt it was inappropriate for the MEA to

try to affect the outcome of elections," he said.

That reaction, he speculated, might have "sensitized" locals to the risks of entering school board elections "on too grandiose a scale."

He and others also mentioned latent hostility still lingering from the MEA's all out drive to secure passage of Propositions C and D on last November's state ballot. Both were turned down by voters in a landslide.

Proposition C would have virtually eliminated local property tax for school operations and substituted a statewide 20-mill property tax plus the option of an additional six mills at the local level for educational enrichment.

Proposition D would have removed the state constitutional ban on a graduated income tax.

Finally, the nature of this year's school board elections, themselves, may have made it more practical for local unions to refrain from attention attracting campaigns.

Unlike some former situations, none of the elections threatened to bring about a philosophical change in board attitudes distasteful to the unions, such as a swing in board majority from liberal thinkers generally supportive of the school administration to one dominated by ultra-conservatives suspicious of educators.

"I guess there was an awareness that it's not a good idea to become a publicly dominant force in a community school issue unless the stakes are so high that the risk is worth taking," the union officer said.

"It's just asking for trouble."

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## Teen Shoplifters Rebel, Rationalize

ANN ARBOR Karen, 15, was caught leaving a large department store with a set of earrings in her coat pocket.

She had enough money in her purse to pay for five pairs. There was no economic motive for her crime.

Like most teenaged shoplifters, she was more interested in taking a risk than taking the merchandise.

"Teenagers also shoplift as a means of rebelling against authority or to win the attention and approval of their peers. Many do not consider it a criminal offense nor regard themselves as thieves," said Dr. Marcella M. Thall.

These are the major findings of Dr. Thall's pilot study on "Behavioral Components of Adolescent Shoplifting," conducted at The University of Michigan School of Education. Part of the data comes from questionnaires administered to 39 boys and 31 girls in state training homes and a "non-delinquent" group of 42 junior high school students.

"Two items, 'law violating arousal-seeking behavior' and 'rebellion against authority' were consistently linked to shoplifting and delinquency," Dr. Thall reported. "On a more limited scale, peer group influence was also important."

Her most revealing information unfolded during 15 weeks of discussions with

youngsters at a neuro-psychiatric institute at a large hospital. The group talked about the reasons behind shoplifting, the methods and ethics involved. "The discussions were quite uninhibited," she said, "and some interesting attitudes became evident."

"The general opinion of these young people was that most people would steal if they could get away with it. It seemed to them that personal threat, rather than moral considerations, was the main deterrent."

These youngsters - who were being treated for various emotional troubles - had not developed the kind of inner controls needed to participate satisfactorily in society, the research showed.

"Their general attitude was that society had too many rules to follow and it was unrealistic to expect adherence to all of them. To them, 'rules' seemed to include ethics as well as code of law."

"They quieted their guilt feelings further by rationalizing that the merchants they stole from were equally dishonest, 'higher-ups' - their term for authority figures - always get away with illegal things. 'That's how they make it,' one boy said. There seemed to be a feeling that no one ever really achieved status through ability or hard work."

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