

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Chromy, Johnson will bring new ideas, solutions to MTSD School Board

To the editor:
An important perspective missing from the Mequon-Thiensville School District School Board is moms with school-aged children. The board is currently comprised of moms whose children graduated years ago, and dads with school-aged children, but we do not currently have moms with school-aged children serving on our board. Moms with young children can bring a fresh and unique perspective to any school district. They have knowledge and experience that is unique and necessary when making decisions that affect students and families.

Jill Chromy and Scarlett Johnson would be this fresh perspective. Jill's two children are both currently at Lakeshore Middle School and she has spent nine years actively volunteering in the district as Lakeshore PTO President, Area Council member, Destination Imagination coach, and substitute teacher. She has worked closely with teachers, administration, parents and children. Scarlett is a mother of five children, two that recently graduated from Homestead High School, and three other school-aged children, all of which have spent some time in the district and have hopes of returning one day. Scarlett has been a very active and engaged parent in her five children's education and brings dedication, advocacy and commitment for all children and parents.

These moms have had hundreds of conversations with parents in the district and understand what is working, and what isn't. They're not afraid to admit there are challenges that need to be addressed. We can't have board members who merely praise the district and aren't willing to challenge policies. Jill and Scarlett are open to exploring ideas and solutions.

Let's vote for moms who will put the needs and interests of our children first, and will bring diversity of thought to the MTSD board. Please vote for Jill Chromy and Scarlett Johnson!

Kim Stankowski
Mequon

Melotik backs Ross for re-election to County Board

To the editor:
Bruce Ross is doing a great job representing Cedarburg as an Ozaukee County Board supervisor.

He is thoughtful, articulate and hard-working. I've enjoyed working with him on the County Board and I support his re-election!

Paul Melotik
Ozaukee County Board supervisor
Cedarburg

Bruce Ross: A startlingly clear choice for Ozaukee County District 19

To the editor:
Tuesday offers a stark choice to the voters of northwest Mequon. Do you want to re-elect Bruce Ross, who has been building a better Ozaukee County? Or hire a highly partisan activist focused on past elections? I hope we'll choose a proven leader — by re-electing Bruce Ross.

After three decades of U.S. military service around the country, Bruce chose to settle in Ozaukee, and took up senior private-sector leadership positions. For these 20 years, he also volunteered and led local conservation organizations to help sustain Ozaukee's quality of life.

When elected to the County Board four years ago, he vowed to help maintain that quality of life. Ross has been impressive: lower taxes, more and better parks, lower debt load, greater farm partnerships, and more efficient county services. His business experience, strategic perspective, and practical leadership helped the County Board stay focused on results that matter to residents. Check out more at his website: bruce-ross.com.

The alternative is an opponent focused on the past: overturning the 2020 elections while challenging election integrity without any consequential proof — for what purpose one can only wonder. I encourage you to Google "Attorney Dan Eastman and Frankspeech" and consider for yourself who you think will better focus on the practical issues Ozaukee faces in this nonpartisan job. The difference is shockingly clear.

I hope you'll join us in casting your vote for forward-looking Bruce Ross.

Cheryl and Mark Brickman
Mequon

Leach, Stroebel & Charland will focus on education in Cedarburg schools

To the editor:
The incumbent candidates for the Cedarburg School Board election, Rick Leach and Laura Stroebel, joined by Elizabeth Charland, are running on a platform of continuing and building upon the excellence in education the Cedarburg School District is deservedly recognized for.

Their challengers, Hani Malek, Ryan Hammett, Kate Erickson and Jamie Maier, are running mainly on a platform that our schools and community are not welcoming. How ironic considering the campaign they are running, oftentimes by some of their vocal supporters and anonymous social media, is one of marked divisiveness and disparagement.

It's popular among those looking to disrupt Cedarburg, the community as a whole, as well as its schools, to make sweeping statements about racism and discrimination here.

Those claiming Cedarburg is not safe or

welcoming are knowingly driving a damaging agenda.

The April 5 School Board election is integral to maintaining the community I've been proud to be a part of. Please vote for the candidates that prioritize what schools are for: the education of our children! Vote Leach, Stroebel and Charland.

Bob Fisher
Cedarburg

McCraw will represent community well as county supervisor

To the editor:
Sarah McCraw is an incredibly enthusiastic, intelligent, dedicated candidate for the District 14 Ozaukee County supervisor position.

I've had the pleasure of getting to know Sarah throughout my many years of community involvement in Ozaukee County. She will listen to her constituents without bias, build a strong line of communication, and advocate for change where needed to better our community. Sarah would ensure all voices are heard and provide a fair and balanced representation of the residents.

As a county supervisor, she will be proactive in finding creative solutions to increase aid for much-needed community programs that provide public, mental and veteran health. Additionally, she is passionate about supporting local businesses to improve the economy and favors infrastructure improvements to help bolster tourism, driving revenue to the county. Sarah will focus on the responsible spending of tax dollars and allocating funds to local projects.

Sarah has been a board member and marketing chair for various nonprofit organizations in the area. Her 16 years of experience in communications has served her well as she now works at the Grafton Area Chamber of Commerce. Because of Sarah's qualifications, she will be an asset to the District 14 residents and the other county supervisors she would be collaborating with, should she be elected.

Sarah would be a refreshing addition to the board, move Ozaukee County forward, and make it an even better place to live. Vote for Sarah McCraw on April 5 for District 14 Ozaukee County supervisor!

Jo Maehi
Grafton

Duey Stroebel responds to recent letters

To the editor:
I encourage robust public debate and attention to detail. It is ironic that attention turns negative and hostile right before my wife happens to be on the ballot for school board. Nevertheless, I want to directly address two letters from Tuesday's News Graphic.

I categorically deny any personal or business dealings with the Cedar Gorge project. My efforts to secure Stewardship funding are a matter of public record. The baseless allegation of corruption is extremely disappointing, particularly in a community where we have usually been civil, even when we disagree or are disappointed.

Regarding the funding implications of the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program, my critic did not refute the relationship of enrollment and revenue limits to a school district's budget. He did demonstrate a scenario where a school district would increase enrollment on paper because parents chose to send their children to a school that better met their needs. Revenue limits are the cap, not the floor. Revenue limit authority turns into property taxes IF, and only if, the local school district chooses to impose that tax. If a school district wants to raise property taxes, even though it isn't providing any education for those choice students, I believe the culpability is on the district and not the state. Apparently the only time some public school advocates don't like more taxing authority for school districts is when exercising that authority highlights how the district lost a student but wants the tax dollars anyway.

I believe the public interest is best served when children get the best possible education. Sadly, some of our public schools don't provide this. I will agree to disagree with those who believe providing this choice is a waste of taxpayer resources.

State Sen. Duey Stroebel
Saukville

Chromy most qualified candidate for MTSD School Board

To the editor:
I have known Jill Chromy for over two decades and have watched her craft a tremendous, well-rounded career that without a doubt casts her as the most qualified person currently running for a Mequon-Thiensville School District School Board position. As a mother of two school-aged children in MTSD, teacher, volunteer, businesswoman, Jill has done it all. In all she does, Jill exemplifies honesty, fairness, thoughtfulness, passion, integrity and class. She has already brought these qualities forward in listening sessions with teachers, administration, students, parents and citizens.

Jill will shine her voice on the priorities so desperately needed as the district positions itself for the future, attracting and keeping the best students in the area by creating a stronger environment of academics and extracurricular activities. MTSD needs Jill. Please vote Jill Chromy on April 5.

Boyd J. Miller
Mequon

Ross has demonstrated commitment to country, county

To the editor:
Want a real patriot? Re-elect Bruce Ross. After 28 years military service, Bruce Ross settled in Ozaukee. For the past four years he's continued to serve his community as northwest Mequon's County Board representative.

On Veterans Day 2019, his exemplary military service was profiled in this very newspaper, revealing his exploits with the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy over nearly three decades of service. He risked life and limb and led teams into harm's way to save others, or arrest felons at gunpoint. Seven months in the Persian Gulf meant he missed the birth of his twin girls. He captained ships and military bases and managed first responder organizations.

How is this relevant to a County Board re-election? A group called the Patriots of Oz has opposed his re-election based on a stand he took on an issue they brought before the County Board for purely political reasons.

It started as a resolution to make Ozaukee County a so-called "Second Amendment Sanctuary." Of course, the county has no authority to declare any such thing, so when the county's attorney agreed, it was converted into a "support the Constitution" resolution.

Bruce denounced this as political theater; not appropriate for the nonpartisan County Board; it did not represent serious governance; and it would have absolutely no impact on county business. He worried this same group would use his vote against him later. He was right on all counts.

Who would you rather have represent you? People who self-label as "patriots," or someone who has actually demonstrated, over a lifetime (and occasionally to his own detriment) a commitment to his constitutional principles that make this country singular and gave us four years of thoughtful county supervision?

Re-electing Bruce Ross will be better for Ozaukee County

Joseph and Karen Branch
Mequon

Vote Johnson, Chromy in MTSD School Board race

To the editor:
After reading Jamie O'Connor's letter (March 24) I am compelled to respond. She spoke of a "proven leader" and extolled the virtue of "experience." Well! It was not that long ago we elected a president who had no experience in the political theater. And just recently, we elected a president who had over 40 years of experience in the Senate. My question: Under which leader did life seem happier and a lot less stressful to the family budget?

Were you happy with low inflation, reasonable food prices, affordable gas, inexpensive clothing and low rent? Or are you happy with skyrocketing inflation, rising food prices, filling your gas tank while emptying your wallet, and skyrocketing clothing and rising rent increases? A reasonable person could only answer this question one way.

Furthermore, it's a good thing that most women decided to start a family though they had no experience, otherwise, you and I would not be here. It's a decision that required a tremendous commitment, but no experience.

I think that both experience and requiring a proven leader are not the criteria that should decide who to vote for in any election. Sometimes, you have to look at not only what is being said, but whether the person who says it can be believed and trusted to do what they say they will do.

I trust Scarlett, but do not trust any chief financial officer or chief operating officer of an educational services company who could easily benefit from decisions they make while being in a position to do so. Scarlett, on the other hand, has no such conflict, and nothing to gain. She only has passion for kids, just as well as hers, and those who reside in the Mequon-Thiensville community. She deserves your vote, as does Jill Chromy.

Rich Kozinski
Mequon

Don't allow partisan politics to taint local government

To the editor:
As an alderperson, I am proud to work with city staff and my fellow council members to make Cedarburg the best it can be. The decisions we make for Cedarburg are always rooted in what we feel is best for the residents, the city and our local businesses, regardless of political leanings.

Partisan politics are counterintuitive to our mission. We are better stewards of the community when we are considerate and listen to those that think differently. We are better representatives when challenged to step out of our comfort zone and have hard conversations. Communities need different voices and ideas to come together in working toward a common goal. Residents are entitled to representation that is reflective of the community as a whole.

This is why I find partisan messaging from some Cedarburg school board candidates disappointing. CSD is high-performing and is one of the reasons families want to live here. However, the outside world is changing, the workplace is changing, college admission requirements are

changing. CSD needs to recognize we can't solely rely on test scores to measure success. A board that is diverse in their thinking will better serve our students, preparing them for a future beyond Cedarburg. We need officials that are committed to open conversations and transparency and dedicated to retaining our stellar teachers and putting the needs of all students first.

Disregarding candidates' professional qualifications, contributions made to the community and involvement in the district as CSD parents, simply because a political label was arbitrarily assigned, is a disservice to Cedarburg. We deserve better and our kids deserve better.

I am honored to represent this great community and when you cast your very important vote on Tuesday, I hope you'll join me in not allowing partisan politics into our local government.

Kristin Burkart
District 3 alderperson
Cedarburg

The cost of the recall

To the editor:
In recent weeks, MTSD School Board candidates Scarlett Johnson and Jill Chromy have neglected to mention that the failed recall attempt, which they both actively supported and participated in, is diverting district budget away from the educational experience of our children to the tune of an estimated \$58,000.

Nor do these candidates acknowledge that MTSD is one of only three of Wisconsin's 421 public school districts to hold the top Aaa ranking from Moody's bond rating agency, denoting continued excellence in fiscal strength and performance. This rating is based, in part, on the general good health of the district's finances.

Only two candidates, Paul Buzzell and Jason Levash, have a deep understanding of operations, finance, facilities and human capital necessary for our district to navigate a path to ongoing success. I am voting for Buzzell and Levash on April 5 to preserve the integrity and quality of our district and I encourage my fellow community members to do the same.

Rebecca Konya
Mequon

Hobble Putin with clean energy

To the editor:
Russia's invasion of Ukraine "is a war underwritten by oil and gas, a war whose most crucial weapon may be oil and gas, a war we can't fully engage because we remain dependent on oil and gas," writes activist Bill McKibben. Harvard economist Jason Furman notes Russia's economy is "incredibly unimportant in the global economy except for oil and gas," which account for 60% of Russia's exports and \$500,000,000 revenue daily. Putin is calculating the prospect of \$5/gallon gasoline will prevent the West from cutting oil and gas imports and hitting Russia where it really hurts. It took two weeks for the U.S. to finally ban Russian fossil fuel imports. Europe continues to purchase Russian oil.

This ongoing oil dependence not only empowers Putin, air pollution from burning fossil fuels kills millions yearly and is rapidly heating the planet. Crystallizing the connection, the latest dire Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report was released within days of Russia's invasion.

Rapidly adopting clean energy — whose prices have plummeted over the past decade — would hamstring Putin's ambitions while cleaning the air and stabilizing the climate. A West that drove electric vehicles powered by solar, wind, hydro and nuclear energy and heated buildings with ultra-efficient electric heat pumps would not be pulling its punches and continuing to fund Russian aggression.

Support the brave people of Ukraine by encouraging your elected officials to speed clean energy deployment. In the face of Putin's tyranny, consider if your patriotic duty.

Dan Herscher
Birchwood

Election letters deadline

The deadline for receiving letters to the editor and Sound Offs related to the April 5 election HAS PASSED.

LETTERS POLICY: Letters should be signed and include phone number and address so that we may verify authenticity. Neither phone number nor address will be printed when letters appear. We reserve the right to edit letters. Please keep letters to no more than 300 words. Generally, letter writers are limited to one letter every 30 days. Letters might appear in multiple Conley Meese publications when challenged to step out of our comfort zone and have hard conversations. Communities need different voices and ideas to come together in working toward a common goal. Residents are entitled to representation that is reflective of the community as a whole.

Email: letters@conley.net.com

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