

Three Candidates Compete for Two Spots on School Board

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school is the number one priority, but providing a good special education program is right up there, as well.”

Mrs. Kleber said the board has to begin preparing for the issues of tomorrow, which she believes are staffing and salary adjustments and housing incoming teachers.

She also believes the school will have to continue advancing its curriculum, especially in arts and technology, and improve the preparation of students for life after high school.

With no guidance counselor to go to for advice on advanced education, and because it is getting more challenging for high school graduates to get accepted into college, it is important that the board and school staff do what they can to help each student make the right choices, she said.

“For those students who want to go to college, I see the school as doing a good job,” she said. “I would hope the high school students are getting good guidance and support in the school selection, application preparation, and meeting timelines.”

The board has many ways to increase parental involvement in improving and promoting their children’s education and in school board affairs, as well, partly by inviting people to make presentations before the board.

“Different groups of students could be encouraged to make presentations to the board at each meeting,” she said. “Because most of the board members work full-time, some of them may not be able to get to the school during school hours as I might be able to do, and so brief student presentations of

work and achievement could be planned for each meeting, which would encourage parents, as well as students and community members, to attend.

“Have some of the kids who went on the Honduras trip come to a meeting and tell the board about it,” she added, “or have the preschoolers sing a song. Maybe the board can bring in players from the basketball team and recognize them for winning the post-season basketball tournament. Public recognition is always appreciated.”

Mrs. Kleber agrees with school board trustee Leanne Brodeur’s suggestion to hold public comment at the end of the board’s meeting agendas.

“The public participation portion should be at the end of the meeting and more welcoming to new ideas, suggestions, and questions from the audience,” she said. “The parents and community members should be encouraged to feel comfortable and free to address the board with issues, questions, and comments.”

BEN MOSLEY

Education: 1984 graduate of Oregon-Davis Township High School in northern Indiana; completed farrier trade school training in Howell.

Occupation: Professional farrier and stable manager for Grand Hotel.

Family: He and LouAnn have four children, Ben, Karlana, Shayleen, and Shelbie. The girls are students at Mackinac Island Public School. Ben was graduated in 2006. The Mosleys are in the process of adopting three boys, ages two, three, and four.

Involvement: Member of the Island Fire Department and water rescue team; has been a member of the school board for 12 years, serving as president for the past five years.

Residency: He started working summers on the Island in 1984 and became a year-around resident in 1987.

Ben Mosley points to his 12 years of experience on the school board as his qualification for reelection. As president of the board, he prides himself for keeping a level head and running a smooth meeting.

Mr. Mosley supports the school’s athletic teams and missed only one home game during the boys basketball and girls volleyball season.

He said he is always avail-

able to the public and encourages residents to contact him with any school-related concerns or ideas.

“I hope the public realizes that the board members are available,” he said. “My phone number is in the book.”

Working as board president, Mr. Mosley said he tries to look at the whole picture of an issue first, rather than approaching it on a personal level. That way, he explained, decisions will be made based on rational thinking.

Maintaining the school building and improving morale and communication among administration, staff, and board members are what Mr. Mosley feels are the top issues facing the board.

Repairs to the roof and building exterior will be costly, he said, but are needed, and can be paid for from a healthy fund balance, that contains about \$1 million.

“The school needs serious work on the building, itself, and we have to eliminate those maintenance problems now so we can avoid any bigger problems in the future,” said Mr. Mosley.

As for dealing with conflicts between staff and administration, “Everybody has to realize that students are the reasons why they are there,” he said. “We have one chance to educate these kids, and if we bring adult issues into the school, we’re not giving these kids enough attention.”

Much of the tension, said Mr. Mosley, may be the lingering teacher contract negotiations, which he believes has created an “us-versus-them” attitude between the board and teachers.

“We’re all on the same team,” he said. “We need to work as a team for the kids.”

Mr. Mosley would like to provide more vocational classes, such as carpentry, and expand the school’s business classes.

“Not every kid is going to be a college-bound student,” he said. “A person can make a good living on trade skills, and I think the school can do something with that.”

He would like the school to establish apprenticeships for high school students interested in local business or trades.

Finding a special education teacher and offering more foreign language classes are also important, he said.

“Our biggest expense is personnel, but that is also the one area where we need more,” he said. “I believe the school is doing a good job of cost saving. We have to continue to spend wisely as we look for more quality personnel.”

Retaining young families and solving the school’s declining enrollment is a project the business community can help solve, according to Mr. Mosley.

“The school could be used, or should be used more as a marketing tool for businesses for attracting employees,” Mr. Mosley said. “I feel with a good school, it should actually draw people by itself. If it’s rated high as a good school, people will look for it, and I believe we provide a good enough education for parents to want to come here. We just need to perhaps promote it better.”

The school needs to do a better job of encouraging parents to attend school board meetings, he believes.

“With a more diverse crowd,” he said, “there are more diverse answers or solutions for school-related issues. We need to send out more letters, perhaps, or do a better job of publishing notices of meetings.”

Mr. Mosley also suggests the board purchase a gavel for the president.

“I’ve been using my carpentry hammer,” he laughed. “Perhaps the school’s wood shop class could make one.”

1st Geocaching Spring Fling To Be Held on Island April 28

By Ryan Schlehuder

More than 80 members of the Michigan Geocaching Organization will attend the first Spring Fling geocaching hunt on Mackinac Island Saturday, April 28. The treasure hunting is open to the public and is free of charge.

Armed with handheld Global Positioning Systems (GPS), participants will meet in

the Grand Hotel lobby at 10 a.m. to go over the day’s agenda, then break into small groups and begin scouring the interior of the island for treasures.

The targets are strategically-placed caches filled with small trinkets and notes left from previous hunters.

Registered geocachers locate each hidden cache by entering the coordinates into their GPS device, then following the navigation screen. Coordinates are gathered from the international geocaching Web site, www.geocaching.com, which is where people can register.

Geocaching is a trendy activity that combines outdoor exploration with technology, which provides for fun for the whole family, said organization member Madelyn LePage. The sport is growing and could become an excellent marketing tool for Mackinac Island’s summer tourism, she said.

Mackinac Island Tourism Bureau has posted the geocaching event on its Web site, www.mackinacisland.org.

Mrs. LePage said those who

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