

Daily Herald

Big Picture . Local Focus

Dist. 15 vote split between two sides

By **Ashok Selvam and Chad Brooks**

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You couldn't tell by Lisa Neal's enthusiasm that she had placed dead last among the six candidates vying for spots on the Palatine Township Elementary District 15 school board.

"We ladies beat the union machine and didn't resort to negative or nasty tactics," Neal said.

Sue Quinn, who like Neal was not happy with the last teacher contract, was the only woman who won Tuesday. The victory, coupled with the election of three strong anti-tax, anti-union board members two years ago, apparently gives the board a new taxpayer-driven focus.

Yet, with 100 of 102 precincts counted Tuesday, Quinn was not the top vote-getter. Based on unofficial totals, that honor went to James Ekeberg, with 6,798 votes. Quinn was second with 6,635 votes. Former District 211 Superintendent Gerald Chapman appeared Tuesday night to have won the third seat, with 6,588 votes.

Losing were Richard Bokor, who ran with Chapman and Ekeberg and got 6,202 votes; Mary Vanek, with 5,570 votes; and Neal with 5,520 votes.

Quinn stressed that she will not make policy strictly along so-called party lines.

"I want the board to work together and put the politics aside and really do what's right," she said.

Chapman said he is confident he'll help the district.

"I don't think it's about having majority on the board," he said. "It's about the best interests of the community and the best interests of the students."

Three incumbent board members -- Scott Boucher, Paula Mikula and Linda Silverman -- didn't run.

Ekeberg said electing a board president will be the new board's first task.

Bokor, 59, of Palatine, is a former teacher in both District 15 and District 211. He is currently a part of the adjunct faculty at National-Louis University.

Though they aren't going to be sitting on the board, Vanek and Neal saw Quinn's victory as a win for all three because it swings the balance of power on the board.

Chapman, 63, of Inverness is now an educational consultant and member of the Palatine Rural Fire Protection District board of trustees.

Ekeberg, 58, of Palatine, has been in practice 30 years with Northwest Family Physicians in Arlington Heights.

Neal, 45, of Rolling Meadows, is employed in the business office of Arlington Orthopedics and Hand Surgery Specialists. She is also active in the Hunting Ridge PTA.

Quinn, 41, of Palatine, is a stay-at-home mom and former scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado. Quinn has also served on several District 15 committees.

Vanek, 45, of Palatine, is an attorney who is a stay-at-home mom. She is also a Sunday School teacher and Girl Scout leader.

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