

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Francour is honest, experienced, objective**

To the editor:  
As a 24-year resident of Mequon-Thiensville and parent of three MTSD graduates, I deeply value our public schools as a community asset. I've had the opportunity to serve in roles ranging from classroom volunteer, PTO president, co-founder of the Alliance for Strong Mequon-Thiensville School (ASMTS), a legislative advocacy group and chair of the task force that researched options for addressing the school funding deficit. Based on the committee's findings, the school board made the difficult but necessary decision to close Range Line where my children attended.

Through these experiences, I met and worked with incumbent Wendy Francour, who has been an integral part of numerous endeavors to support MTSD. Her energy and dedication were and still are, contagious! I was thrilled when Wendy first ran for school board in 2014 because she brings a wealth of experience and dedication for educating ALL students in our community. Wendy is objective, analytical and insightful; collaborative, respectful, driven and not afraid to ask difficult questions or make difficult decisions. Wendy is approachable and accessible. She is boots on the ground, showing up to school events and activities, supporting both students and staff.

Serving on a school board is hard work. Unlike some school districts, there is no monetary compensation, this strictly a volunteer job. There is a significant learning curve to understanding the relationship and boundaries between the board, administration, staff, local and state government. I've heard criticisms that reflect a lack of understanding, unfairly blaming school board members as well as administrators for decisions and issues over which they have no jurisdiction. Sadly, we've lost excellent board members as a result of an increasingly divisive environment. I am so appreciative of those board members who continue to serve. Please re-elect Wendy Francour!

Nanci Schilman  
Thiensville

**A pledge to support entire MTSD community, without divisiveness**

To the editor:  
My name is Kate Barikmo and I'm running for Mequon-Thiensville School District's (MTSD) Board of Education. I've been subject to scrutiny in this election, like anyone who runs for public office. I'm taking this opportunity to provide additional information on who I am and why I'm running.

I'm a proud middle school teacher, holding a Master's degree in curriculum and instruction. Outside of the classroom, I am a dedicated EMT helping others in our community.

Supporters of the failed recall against the MTSD Board have torn apart my back-ground. I'm young, I'm a renter. I don't have kids.

However, I believe these attributes make me a reliable candidate and an asset to the board. Yes, I'm young. However, I would bring much-needed representation for young professionals living in Mequon and Thiensville to the board.

Yes, I'm a renter. Using that against me implies that only wealthy people should hold public office. Is that what we believe—that to be elected to a public office, you must be wealthy?

No, I'm not a parent. However, I show up every day for the children in my classroom. I make sure that when they walk into my classroom, they feel safe and valued as if they were my own. Further, having a child is a deeply personal journey—it's not to reinforce the stereotype that a woman is less than if she isn't married with children.

If elected, I promise to support our incredible teachers and administrators, and ensure ALL children have what they need to succeed in the classroom. Simply put, I promise to get the work done without engaging in the divisive rhetoric that tore our community apart. I am ready and willing to be your school board representative and I hope you vote for me.

Kate Barikmo  
Thiensville

**Avoid dirty politics and vote for Erickson and Kincaid**

To the editor:  
I received a flyer in the mail today from the two male candidates running for Cedarburg School Board. (We live in the Cedarburg School District.) I was not only disappointed but appalled by the cheap tactics and the inflammatory language they used. Talk about political ideologies (of which they accused Connie Kincaid and Kate Erickson holding) theirs came right out of the Ron DeSantis playbook. They accused Connie of supporting the teaching of "hate and indoctrination" of our students." Shame on them.

Why would these men, who would have us believe they are viable candidates for School Board, stoop so low as to use this kind of regrettable language. Kate Erickson has been a teacher for 10 years. Connie has been a weekly classroom volunteer for seven years. They both have attended School Board meetings for the past three years to listen and to engage in meaningful conversation. They are both well-qualified. They deserve our votes for many reasons, not the least of which may be principle.

Don't let the loaded language to the two male candidates sway you. I encourage you to vote for Kate and Connie.

Chuck Turbin  
Grafton

**Fitzpatrick driven by Cedarburg's continued prosperity**

To the editor:  
It's critical as citizens of our great city to elect officials with the singular focus to drive the continued growth of the Cedarburg community. It's the basis of my endorsement of Jim Fitzpatrick as the best fit to represent the District 2 residents of Cedarburg on the Common Council.

Jim's unique skill set will allow him to bring significant value to this position. Jim has 20-plus years as a Chartered Financial Analyst, which will provide the community with the professionally certified experience of understanding complex financial trends and the ability to maximize the impact of taxpayer dollars. He served as treasurer of the Cedarburg Athletic Booster Club for three years and provided strong financial navigation during the COVID pandemic. I have seen first-hand that his leadership style is both collaborative to encourage new ideas and pragmatic to ensure results are delivered. I have always been impressed with how direct his communication methodology is and how he has been able to focus on identifying and addressing the top priorities of an organization.

Jim is pursuing this role to support the continued prosperity of the Cedarburg community. All of us feel a tremendous sense of pride when we tell others why we choose to live in Cedarburg and we must continue to elect representatives in the community who are driven to competitively position our city as the best location to support our families. As you cast your ballot for Jim Fitzpatrick, you can rest assured that you will be doing your part to support the great tradition of Cedarburg.

Chris Haasch  
Cedarburg

**A plug for positivity: Vote Barikmo and Francour**

To the editor:  
I intensely dislike negative campaigning. I strongly urge you to question anybody that focuses on what's not great about someone, rather than focusing on what is good. Let's promote positivity in our society.

I researched candidates through a variety of means, taking all media sources with a grain of salt, as you need to do today. I also considered sources of funding, because there are a variety of groups and organizations out there, and even if they claim not to be biased, sometimes their sources of funding are.

I am grateful to all the candidates that took the plunge to run for office. It is daunting.

The League of Women Voters of Ozaukee County put together a wonderful School Board candidate forum, which strongly influenced my choices. If you cannot access the video, Charley Hanney wrote a nice overview in the 3/23 News Graphic.

I will be voting for Wendy Francour and Kate Barikmo for Mequon-Thiensville School Board. I believe they are the candidates on this ballot that will do the best job for our schools; they believe in the value of public education.

I will also be voting for Jodi Habush-Sinykin for State Senate, for the same reasons; she believes in the value of public education and will fight for the shared revenue funding that school districts (and municipalities) deserve and need from our state budget.

Nancy Urbani  
Mequon

**Support parental rights, vote Sidney and Kubichka**

To the editor:  
I am writing in support of Scott Sidney and Corey Kubichka. I am a firm believer in parental rights. As a mom I know every child is different, and a parent or legal guardian should always be the one to make the final decision for their child. These two candidates also believe the same, and they want to continue advancement for the students as well as the taxpayers of Cedarburg. Scott has expressed his interest and the importance to looking into a classical education curriculum, and he would also like to be in the know with what Dr. Clark means with an alternative to SEL. Corey has also expressed that there is a gap between parents and teachers communication, and he would like to help close that gap and increase communication and parental involvement.

I know that the parents of Cedarburg students care, and I know that all we want is what is best for the children. These two candidates have the time and interest to work with parents and keep Cedarburg schools on the right path.

Heidi Rath  
Cedarburg

**Support for UWNO is appreciated and needed**

To the editor:  
Thank you for your many year's of support to the United Way of Northern Ozaukee County on an annual basis. It is your dedication to continually answer the call when others are in need that we wanted to share with you an update of our current campaign.

Today I had the privilege of participating in our on agency visits. It is one of my favorite days of the year as a UWNO Board member. We get to hear the stories of success and struggles from all our agency partners. It is apparent that as individuals and families are learning to adjust to new household budgets with today's inflationary challenges, so too are our local non-profit partners. Unfortunately for our community

partners, this just means the need to help others is growing in Ozaukee County.

The United Way helps those in our communities who need it most—our elderly, our mentally and physically challenged, our neglected, our abused and our children. Locally, the United Way of Northern Ozaukee provides financial support to 15 local programs provided by 12 agencies.

Your generosity and support of the United Way will help ensure our neighbors receive the help they need. Together, with your help we are helping build and support a stronger community.

To help us reach our goal of over \$400,000. Please consider donating to our 2023 campaign by contacting Barbara Bates-Nelson at 262-613-7655, unitedwayno@gmail.com or visit our website, www.unitedwayno.org. Let's get ready to Live United!

Tony Matera  
UWNO Board Member and Past President  
Port Washington

**Habush-Sinykin is clear choice in state senate race**

To the editor:  
Following State Sen. Alberta Darling's resignation last December, the April 4 election takes on special significance for voters of the 8th Senate District. It provides a clear choice between one candidate who stands for good, representative government, and one who panders unapologetically to special interests and corporate sponsors. That's why I'm throwing my enthusiastic support behind Jodi Habush-Sinykin.

My opposition to her Republican challenger Rep. Dan Knodl is a matter of record. He's a right wing extremist who tried persuading Vice President Pence to illegally decry the results of the November 2020 presidential election, and who is an unabashed servant of ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council.

Much of the organization's agenda is highly controversial and runs contrary to the public interest. This includes bills aimed at privatizing education and health care, rolling back environmental regulations and limiting the right to unionization. Most recently, ALEC adopted a policy aimed at repealing the 17th Amendment, which provides for the direct election of U.S. senators.

I've lived in the 8th Senate District much of my adult life. I worked as community and governmental relations liaison in UWM's Division of University Relations, and as a legislative aide in Wisconsin's 7th Senate District. As such, I feel qualified to say that Rep. Knodl is an ineffectual legislator, and a regressive candidate who can only be counted upon to continue favoring the wealthy, powerful and privileged as Sen. Darling did for nearly three decades. Don't we deserve better?

Jodi Habush-Sinykin is a respected environmental attorney and small business owner who cares deeply about creating and retaining good paying jobs, ensuring public safety and protecting women's reproductive rights. Unlike her challenger, she can be counted upon to work for the betterment of all district residents—not just those with deep pockets, or who lean heavily to the right!

Kiernan Butz  
Germantown

**Sidney and Kubichka for Cedarburg School Board**

To the editor:  
Many argue that school board elections should be nonpartisan, and I would tend to agree. However, the contrast between the Democratic and Republican parties has become quite distinct. A recent example is the passage of H.R. 6056, the Parents Bill of Rights, in which no Democrat voted for the bill.

The bill's main goal is to make lesson plans and school curricula more accessible to parents thereby increasing the transparency of school curriculum. Which party a candidate supports or which party supports a candidate is a great indicator of a person's ideology. Ideology is the foundation for a person's belief structure, heavily influencing their decision-making process, which is very relevant in deciding who you vote for.

In the Cedarburg School Board race, you have two candidates that are aligned with the Democrats and two that are aligned with the Republicans. There is no disputing that the "woke" ideologies that have caused much of the decay in our country, local communities and institutions are at the core of the Democratic party.

The Cedarburg School District is one of the most highly sought after school districts in Wisconsin, which is why many families aspire to move here, even those with "left" ideologies. The past and current school boards have fought hard to keep this school district focused on education vs. "woke" social justice programs. Many communities are finding themselves in a similar position of their schools with the goal of achieving what we already have here in Cedarburg.

Please vote for Sidney and Kubichka to stay the course and protect what so many other communities wish they had. No matter who you vote for, please vote because not voting is as insulting as seeing "Americans" who do not stand for the flag.

Scott Rishel  
Grafton

**No one more qualified than Wendy Francour**

To the editor:  
Wendy Francour is a tremendous asset to the Mequon-Thiensville School District and our community as a whole. She has served selflessly in several capacities for over 20 years and has demonstrated competent leadership as a member of the board for almost a decade. As a homeowner, parent of three

and educator in the district, I can think of no one more qualified to continue in this role than Wendy.

Ernie Millard  
Mequon

**Do your homework before upcoming election**

To the editor:  
Over a decade ago, I had a reputation in the community for harassing the Mequon-Thiensville School Board and administrators, long before it became a national fad.

And like those who do it today, I had the arrogance to think I knew best. Little did I know, I was groomed by a small and very active group of people in our community, people I had trusted for many years, who were helping with my husband's mayoral campaign. I did not realize they were trying to kill two campaign birds with one stone.

What a shameful time in my life. I had fully and unwittingly spread their lies and disinformation. We were a propaganda machine, much like the one we have going across our country today.

The picket fences of our great community have turned into picket lines. In reality, we possess award-winning schools and the most dedicated administrators and school board members.

Like board member Wendy Francour. My first face-to-face meeting with Wendy was nearly 10 years ago, while I was still in attack mode. She had been newly elected. I thought of her as the enemy. But her kindness and acceptance threw me off guard. I liked her instantly, and she liked me too. She didn't judge me.

Wendy Francour welcomes all parents to voice concerns; she relies on her vast knowledge, professionalism, and compassion to allay fears and misconceptions. Wendy knows that parents are the strongest advocates for our children. She trusts and respects us, even the mean and angry ones like me.

Wendy Francour's dedication and skills are unsurpassed. We are blessed to have her on our Mequon-Thiensville school board.

I fully support Wendy Francour for re-election. I hope all citizens take the time to research the candidates and vote to keep partisan politics out of our schools.

Bridget King  
Mequon

**Bach's endorsements show he is the best choice for District 5**

To the editor:  
There is only one candidate for alderman in Mequon's 5th District who has been endorsed by five former Mequon mayors living in Mequon: John Wirth, Dan Abendroth, Curt Gielow, Christine Nuernberg and Connie Pukaite. That candidate is Gregg Bach.

John Wirth said in his endorsement regarding the rezoning of Port Washington Road north of Highland, "There was a neighborhood meeting to hear from residents, Gregg Bach was there. The incumbent was not. There were a dozen committee meetings, Gregg Bach participated. The incumbent did not, and he did not provide the committee with input..."

In Connie Pukaite's endorsement she stated, "I have had the opportunity to observe and work with both candidates who seek to be alderman for Mequon District 5. Gregg Bach is the only candidate who has all of the values and characteristics dear to me, and more..."

Dan Abendroth delivered this endorsement: "Gregg is a good listener, consensus builder, and defender of our residential neighborhoods. He will make a great alderman."

The complete mayoral endorsements and other endorsements can be found on Gregg's website: www.bachmequon.com/view-endorsements

Based on these endorsements and having known Gregg for over 25 years, it is my opinion that Gregg is far and away the clear choice for alderman in Mequon's 5th District.

Kay and Wayne Brogelman  
Mequon

**Kelly cannot be trusted**

To the editor:

Once again we have an election that presents a choice between an extreme Republican and a rational and intelligent candidate, Janet Protasiewicz. Let's remember that Daniel Kelly was appointed by Scott Walker in 2016, not elected. When Kelly did run for Wisconsin Supreme Court in 2020, he lost to Jill Karofsky. Since then, Kelly was paid \$120,000 by the Wisconsin Republican Party and the Republican National Committee for work as a consultant. Kelly also was involved in the fake elector scheme in Wisconsin, part of Donald Trump's illegal cut when Trump tried to remain in power after losing the 2020 presidential election. Daniel Kelly cannot be trusted as a judge on our Supreme Court.

Please vote for Judge Janet Protasiewicz for Wisconsin Supreme Court. And while we're at the polls, those of us in Cedarburg should vote for two competent, experienced candidates for the Cedarburg School Board, Kate Erickson and Connie Kincaid. Vote early or vote on Tuesday, April 4.

James Korthals  
Cedarburg

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