

4 candidates run for at-large MHCC position

Four candidates are competing for Position 6, the at-large position, on the Mt. Hood Community College District board. Bonny McKnight resigned from the board in late January because she moved out of the district.

The candidates are Charlie Gilbert, Rod Girtman, Leonard Pflaum and Fred A. Sanchez. Sandy voters will be able to cast ballots for position.

The March election is being conducted by mail in Multnomah and Clackamas counties.

Rod C. Girtman

Good schools are of "paramount importance" to all parents and to the state's economy, according to Rod Girtman. Girtman, 69, of 644 N.E. 153rd, Portland, is a real estate broker and part-time real estate instructor who has served on the college's vocational technical advisory board and foundation board.

"One of the first questions asked of a real estate person by a relocating family is about the quality and stability of the school district," he said. "Our state is getting a bad reputation around the nation."

"We cannot afford to have school closures in our state," Girtman added. "The Legislature must pass in some form a safety net measure to keep our schools open."

Teachers "are certainly not overpaid" and their incomes must be kept in line with other states to attract and keep a well-qualified teaching staff, Girtman said.

"A regular re-evaluation of all the courses offered in the schools is necessary, particularly in the elective areas," he said. "Electives are often attractive to the student, but are they really important in basic education?"

Sports in the public schools could be supported by fund drives and private industry, Girtman said.

"On the community college level, the state has decreased its support," he said. "Where can we pick up that difference? The taxpayer has indicated by rejection of tax increases that (he) cannot afford to continue to pay more and more."

"Our tax base must be widened," Girtman continued. "Millions of



Rod C. Girtman
Says schools of "paramount importance."



Leonard F. Pflaum
Looks for "challenge and opportunity."



Fred A. Sanchez
"Excited" about direction college is taking.

dollars of 'undercover' money is earned in this state on which no taxes are collected, and yet our voters have rejected a sales tax numerous times."

Girtman believes a sales tax is needed. He feels voters would support a sales tax if property taxes and state income taxes are reduced, the sales tax could not be changed without legislative approval, and "basic essentials" such as food, lodging, medical expenses and services are excluded.

Private industry could contribute more to schools, particularly on the community college level, Girtman said.

"We could do more for private industry by finding out their needs for training employees, then offer courses that they would support with contributions to the college," he said.

Leonard F. Pflaum

If elected to the board, Pflaum said the next four years would provide him with "a challenge and the opportunity" to "support and encourage" the college administration, faculty and support personnel in their continuing efforts to provide students an "education with excellence."

Pflaum, 56, of 2535 N.E. 164th St., Portland, said he is interested in promoting educational opportunities

designed to "upgrade, update and/or retrain" individuals who have been or may be displaced in their career fields and jobs due to plant closures, foreign competition or technological changes.

"Support must continue to be provided to the educational programs identified by the community in the areas of recreation and adult enrichment," Pflaum said.

Cooperation must be "initiated, promoted and sustained" with employer, employee and labor organizations in "actively working together and involving themselves" with appropriate college staff members "to identify, promote and support" new or revised educational programs, according to Pflaum.

These programs should meet today's and tomorrow's needs of the community at large, he said.

"The school funding problems we have today do not allow school districts 'the luxury' of any discretionary spending, Pflaum said.

"Priorities must be established, reviewed and revised on a regular basis consistent with the needs and requirements of the educational institution," he said.

Pflaum is vice president and manager of employee relations at Anodizing Inc. in Portland.

district, according to Sanchez. He promises to "continue to lobby" the state Legislature to provide leadership in reducing the dependence of educational systems on property taxes.

"I believe the board can and must represent the taxpayers' best interests," Sanchez said. "The budget must be scrutinized line by line with savings and duplications dedicated to property maintenance and repair."

Sanchez said he would encourage courses and activities "that call for full-time enrollment" since services and expenses of the college for full-time students are "less" than for part-time students.

"On-going and continuing assess-

ment of business and industry training needs also should be utilized to provide courses with job potential and growth for East Multnomah County — thereby increasing our taxable base in the district," he said.

The state should bear more responsibility for state funding while still allowing local control, Sanchez said.

Sanchez, 44, of 820 Seidl Road, Troutdale, is a member of the Corbett School Board.

Charlie Gilbert
Gilbert did not respond to a questionnaire sent to the candidates by the Gresham Outlook and Sandy Post.

This article was compiled from responses to the questionnaire.

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