

NEWS RELEASE

Know your candidates

Awareness key to making good decisions on election day

September 20, 2006 - The Association of Manitoba Municipalities (AMM) and the Manitoba Association of School Trustees (MAST) are encouraging Manitobans to exercise their democratic right on October 25. That's the day voters across the province head to the polls to elect the municipal council and school board members that will represent them for the next four years. Nominations for these positions closed yesterday, and in some jurisdictions, competition will be stiff.

"Voting can be daunting when presented with a long list of candidates," said Ron Bell, President of the AMM. "We recommend voters get to know their candidates by attending public 'meet the candidates' events, reading campaign literature, and asking questions. Only by talking with and listening to the candidates will you know who shares your values and beliefs, and who can best represent you."

Ruth Ann Furgala, President of MAST, agrees. "Public schools and municipal services are integral parts of our communities. Their quality affects our quality of life. As residents and ratepayers, we need to be confident that the people we elect—school trustees and municipal officials—share the vision we hold for our communities. And the only way we can learn who shares our vision," concluded Furgala, "is by getting to know the candidates."

While municipal and school board elections do not often receive the same level of attention as do those at the provincial and federal levels, these bodies make decisions that have direct impact on private citizens. "Municipal governments balance the essential services that citizens rely on with the need to build strong, vibrant communities," notes Bell. "School boards look after the education of our children, our future, and are major employers in our communities. These are issues that affect our daily lives, and that is why it is so important we educate ourselves about each candidate, and that we go to the polls on October 25."

-30-

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