

Candidates for Brockport Trustee respond to Westside News questions

• Special election for trustee post June 20 •

Part II -- Part I of coverage was printed June 4

Westside News Inc. requested the information listed below. Candidates' answers to those questions printed at right of each question.

Name, address, age, family, education, employment, community service and involvement, other elected and/or appointed offices held.

Hanny Heyen, 66, retired. Prior work: District Representative, Monroe & Orleans Counties, Office of Congressman John LaFalce (1986-2002); Director, Sweden Senior Center (1982-1986). My husband, Bill, and I met in 1959 at SUNY Brockport, where we received our B.S. in Education degrees. During the late 1960s and '70s, focused on raising two children, Billy and Kristen, teaching and coaching in the Brockport Central School District, volunteering with such organizations as Lakeside Hospital Twig, sports and band boosters, and the International Special Olympics (1979), the same year earned a M.S. in Education. Founding member of the Brockport Breast Cancer Support Group and a lifetime member of the Western Monroe Historical Society. Currently, serving on the SUNY Brockport Government Relations Committee, and the Brockport Village Advisory Committee. Four grandchildren. This special election is my first attempt to be elected to public office.



Mary Jo Nayman, age 63, 5 Carolin Drive. Family: son, Michael, a graduate of Brockport Central School and St. Bonaventure University, his wife, Kenda, and two grandchildren, Parker and Paxton reside in Georgia. Graduated in 1964 with a bachelor of science in education from Rosary Hill College (Daeman) in Buffalo. Retired in 1999, after 34 years of teaching in the NYS Public School System. Resident and taxpayer in Brockport village for 41 years. During the early 70s, family owned and operated Brockport Sporting Goods on Main Street. As a member of Twig, did volunteer work for the benefit of Lakeside Memorial Hospital. Brockport Youth Baseball was also a large part of involvement with the community: soliciting funds, raking fields for little league games - whatever was needed. Current involvement includes: village trustee; member of BISCO; Liaison for: the DPW, Parks and Playground Committee and Seymour Library; member of Church of Nativity; member of V.F.W. Ladies Auxiliary Post 202. Credentials over 41 years of residency: wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, merchant, volunteer, tax payer; not a "Politician."



Taxes and Services—How would you approach the challenges of keeping taxes in check while still providing the services residents have come to expect?

Are there services not offered that should be? Could services be funded in ways other than direct taxation?

We must aim for a budget that stabilizes taxes while maintaining important services. To achieve these ends the village board needs to lay aside politics and personal agendas and begin constructive discussion of the budget. I would conduct in-depth, line-by-line reviews of expenditures and revenues. This must not be done in the eleventh hour, but months before the budget is due. You will never hear from me that there was not ample time to prepare for a budget, and, if I do ever vote "no" on a budget, I will have either an alternative budget, or options showing actual savings. In dealings with our employees, we must look to negotiate, not litigate. As recent events have shown, "take it or leave it" confrontational actions not only result in contention and division, but significant avoidable expense. A positive approach is vital in the upcoming Stetson Club (police) contract negotiations, where good faith and firm but fair dealings would bring about cost savings and preserve this vital service. We can also do a better job of bringing state and federal dollars back to our community. My sixteen years of established working relationships with state and federal leaders and agencies would prove invaluable in this effort.

Keeping taxes in check while still providing services taxpayers expect is perhaps the greatest challenge we face. Unfunded mandates imposed on us by various governmental agencies, and contractual demands make our taxes the second highest in Monroe County. Also, urged by special interest groups, the past administration embarked on several costly projects that required the taxpayers to shoulder the burden of large matching grants. Special projects are not free. We must pay half of the cost, and we should not sacrifice the necessities to pay for these amenities. One sure way to hold the line on spending is to avoid these kind of unnecessary projects that we cannot afford or need. I believe residents have the right to determine what services they most want, and what they can afford to pay for them. I would research various alternatives, and share the information with taxpayers, to help them select the services that are cost-effective and useful to the majority of residents. Services could be funded by creating new partnerships with neighboring municipalities to increase efficiency and reduce costs. We already share some expenses with our neighbors, such as the cost of the Fire Department and Library, but much remains to be done in this area.

How do you rate the quality of life in Brockport? What are the village's assets? What could be improved/enhanced?

The quality of life in our historic village is very good. Our close-knit neighborhoods, unique downtown shops, restaurants, schools, housing choices, public safety, parks, and cultural opportunities, make us proud to call Brockport our home. With all it has to offer, however, Brockport's most important asset is its people. We are fortunate to have many service organizations such as BISCO, our volunteer fire department, community organizations such as the garden club, our youth, college, and senior citizen groups, outreach services like the Brockport Food Shelf, Rural and Migrant Ministries, and many more whose members contribute to our historic community. Volunteerism is alive and well in Brockport, but deserves more recognition. Hundreds of volunteers show their enthusiasm, dedication and commitment. They improve our quality of life - and yes - save us money. They deserve to be recognized and thanked.

I believe quality of life in Brockport is the best in Monroe County. The Village offers residents excellent services. The priority of this administration is maintaining and improving our infrastructure. The public school system and SUNY Brockport allow residents opportunities to enhance their knowledge, and to attend the many cultural and athletic events they sponsor. The hospital provides residents needed care and emergency assistance. Our many churches are an important source of togetherness, prayer and essential programs to assist families. Without a doubt, Brockport's residents are the village's major assets. Many wonderful things are accomplished thanks to the efforts of our many volunteers. In my 41 years in Brockport, I had the privilege to serve the community as a volunteer with many of the local organizations, and I have experienced first hand their great accomplishments and potential. My most sincere appreciation to our many dedicated volunteers. The area that is my greatest concern is high taxes. We must continue to work to make our village more affordable. All things considered, I have been a Brockport resident for 41 years because our community has more to offer than any other village in the county.

Could there be more town/gown collaboration with SUNY Brockport as a way to reduce costs to the village of a college population?

In my congressional work from 1986-2002, I had an excellent relationship with SUNY Brockport's administration. In 2004, I was a consultant on the college's Lake Ontario Natural Research Center project. Recently, I spearheaded the successful \$20,000 Class of '62 scholarship drive. I also serve on the college's Government Relations Committee. I've seen first-hand the positive relationship established between the village and SUNY Brockport. Events such as the Mardi Gras parade, holiday tree lighting ceremony, canal clean-up, the Good Neighbor Committee, and the support for our fire department, exemplify the ongoing successful town/gown collaboration. Local initiatives like the Farmers Market and the tree board began as SUNY Brockport student intern projects with village government. As college officials have stated in the past, having a vital, safe and prosperous village benefits the college. While there are many benefits to the village (both to residents and merchants), there are also costs. In the near future, we should investigate compensation options for services rendered, as have other college communities. My proven interpersonal skills in working with college officials on many issues would be an asset in dealing with town/gown matters.

SUNY Brockport is one asset with vast potential that is largely untapped. We must do more to benefit from the wealth of knowledge and experience available from the university, by making the college our partner, as we build our future together. The village/college relationship is one of openness and collaboration. We meet regularly to discuss village/college issues. There are many partnerships we already enjoy. The SUNY Police Department will assist the Brockport Police Department when needed. (But even more could be gained by planning and working together with the university, Sweden and Clarkson for a brighter, more prosperous future for all. A Master Plan that includes all of us should be crafted). "The best way to predict the future is to create it." I am convinced that together, and by utilizing the experience and expertise available at the university, coupled with our great community volunteerism, we will create the best future possible for the residents of Brockport, Sweden, Clarkson and SUNY Brockport. Perhaps we could form a coalition of college municipalities to seek more funding from the state. Finally, I must mention that the university is the largest employer in our area, and a multimillion-dollar enterprise that greatly benefits Brockport.

What do you want the voter to know about you? Why are you running for office? What do you hope to accomplish if elected?

The voter should know what my friends and neighbors already know: I am an honest, hard-working, and positive individual who is passionate about our village. My standards are very high, I do my homework, and I treat people with respect. I am running for office to bring my wealth of experience to work for a better Brockport, a Brockport that is: affordable; promoted as the treasure it is; no longer notorious for the constant dissention at village board meetings, which replays on local television and in the press.

It will be my mission to scrutinize the budget, look at cost saving measures, and prioritize necessary expenditures. I will bring my problem-solving skills, along with reason and civility, to our village board. I believe it is time our village leaders reflect the positive nature and character of our people.

I am not a politician, and became involved in village government as a grassroots spokesperson for residents of Carolin Drive. I am and will be fiscally responsible, and I have and always will listen to people's concerns and opinions with respect and professionalism. I am running for office because I deeply and passionately care about the community that has been my home for the past 41 years. I have always tried to give back to my village, first by a lifetime of volunteerism, and now by serving as your trustee. I will always put residents first, and will make sure our hard earned money is directed towards services village residents deserve and need. I will work to create a master plan that includes the college and the other municipalities. One of my priorities will be to make village living more affordable for residents, and to encourage people to move here. We need to balance the budget and stick to it. I opposed the 2006-2007 budget because I believe it did not solve our spending problem. I hope to be able to convince the board that being the second highest taxed village in Monroe County is not a distinguishing accolade.