New members . . .

Places in the heart — and head — for Bradley

When church or community groups go looking for someone to take charge, a lot of people duck the offer by saying, "No, but I'd like to help."

"I'm exactly the opposite," said Rep. Fran Bradley (IR-Rochester). "I love to lead. I love to organize. I have a propensity to be involved in a lot of community activities."

Rep. Fran Bradley

During the past three decades, Bradley has accepted more than a few offers to lead community efforts.

He has served as a board member for the Youth Employment Project and as a member of the Winona State University Foundation scholarship committee.

He also has worked in the youth ministry and served on the religious education board and parish council for his church.

But, until seeking the District 30A House seat in 1994, Bradley's experience in public office was limited to a six-year stint on the Oronoco City Council in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Still, he does not consider his decision to run for the seat left vacant by former Rep. Gil Gutknecht, who was elected to the U.S. Congress, a great departure.

"I think it's a fairly natural extension of a keen interest in the community and a desire for the chance to make a difference," Bradley said.

His involvement in IR politics stretches back to the 1970s, when he chaired the First District volunteer team for former congressman Al Quie.

Bradley served in that role during Quie's successful 1978 gubernatorial campaign and still considers him a "statesman mentor."

A longtime member of the Jaycees, Bradley said his most valuable campaign trail experience occurred when he mounted a successful run to become state president of the 10,000-member organization.

Before entering the 1994 House race, Bradley spent six weeks considering his options and discussing the possibilities with his family.

Once he decided to run, Bradley built a campaign around calls for welfare reform and for improvements in education and the economy. He set out determined to avoid negative campaign tactics.

"I was going to win or lose based on the way I live my life," Bradley said. "That is based on optimism."

Reforming workers' compensation, controlling taxes and taking other steps to create jobs in Minnesota, he maintains, could help solve some of the toughest problems facing the Legislature.

"The greatest welfare reform initiative I see is a very strong economy," he said. "There is nothing to take the place of being able to go out and find a good job."

The Ivanhoe, Minn., native doesn't put much stock in political labels, and adds that he doesn't easily fit into one category.

He describes himself as a "fiscal conservative" and as "pro-life." But he considers himself "progressive" when it comes to expanding opportunities for women and people of color and says he is not the kind of person "who makes [abortion] the only issue."

Bradley promises an understanding approach to even the most divisive issues that come before the Legislature. "I think we can have healthy differences of opinion and still respect each other," he said. "I hope we can debate, even sometimes get angry, and still respect each other."

A graduate of South Dakota State University, Bradley said he had "probably 10 different careers" during his 30 years with IBM. He worked most recently as a senior engineer-manager before retiring in August 1994.

He and his wife, Mary, have four children: Al, 30, Michelle, 28, Scott, 27, and Chris, 10.

In his first term in the House, Bradley is counting on his engineering background and his "deep spiritual values" to help him analyze both the technical and ethical issues that legislators' face.

"I tend to be driven in making decisions by a balance of heart and head," he said.

— Nick Healy

District 30A

Population: 32,969
Distribution: 99.41 percent urban; 0.59 percent rural
County: Olmsted
Largest city: Rochester
Location: southeastern Minnesota
Unemployment rate: 3.09 percent
Residents living below poverty level: 4.61 percent
1992 presidential election results:
Bush/Quayle .... 42.48 percent
Clinton/Gore .... 33.17 percent
Perot/Stockdale .... 23.59 percent
Other: .... 0.76 percent

Minnesota State Agencies

Agriculture 297-2200	Human Rights 296-5663	Public Service 296-7107
Commerce 296-4026	Toll Free 1-800-657-3704	Revenue
Corrections 642-0200	Human Services 296-6117	Taxpayer Assistance 296-3781
Education 296-6104	Economic Security 296-3711	Toll Free 1-800-652-9094
Employee Relations 297-1184	Labor and Industry 296-6107	Trade and Econ. Development 297-1291
Job Information 296-2616	Military Affairs 282-4662	Office of Tourism 296-5029
Finance 296-5900	Natural Resources 296-6157	Transportation 296-3000
Gaming	Public Safety 296-6642	Veterans Affairs 296-2562
Gambling Control Division .. 639-4000	Driver and Vehicle Services .. 296-6911	**State Information 296-6013**
MN State Lottery Division 635-8100	Fire Marshal 643-3080	
Toll Free 1-800-475-4000	Liquor Control 296-6159	House Information 296-2146
MN Racing Commission 341-7555	State Patrol 297-3935	Senate Information 296-0504
Health 623-5000	Pollution Control 296-6300	