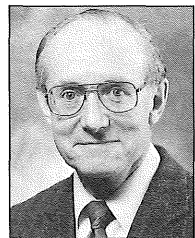


# Family ties lead second Dempsey to House

It's a bit unusual, but perhaps not too surprising, that Rep. Jerry Dempsey (R-Hastings) is following his older brother, Terry, into the Legislature.



Rep. Jerry Dempsey

"When I was growing up, my family always talked about the responsibilities of citizenship and how important it was to be involved," Dempsey said. "That just kind of carried through in all the people in our family."

His brother, who left his post as minority leader last session after being appointed a district judge, served 14 years in the House. Dempsey finds that inspiring, not daunting. The insightful brotherly advice hasn't hurt, either.

"He didn't overtly push it or anything," he said of his fraternal chats. "He did say you should consider it, that it's a very noble kind of thing."

Prior to redistricting, Dempsey said he had never considered running, since his area was well served by Reps. Dennis Ozment and Steve Sviggum, fellow IRs who have been re-elected. But the new District 29A between Hastings and Red Wing was carved out of those old districts, creating an open seat — and an opportunity for Dempsey.

"I think people can make a difference. I think people can make changes," said Dempsey, a former school administrator and bank director.

Voters in his district are concerned about the state budget and education funding, but Dempsey also will be involved with some local issues that have taken on statewide significance.

He supports the temporary storage of spent nuclear fuel rods at Northern States Power Co.'s Prairie Island power plant near Red Wing until a nationwide, permanent repository for them can be found, he said.

Since power generated at the plant is used in other states, he added, those states also should be involved with resolving the issue. Environmental groups and residents of the Prairie Island Mdwakanton Reservation near the plant are fighting the storage plans.

Dempsey opposes a plan to build a new airport in Dakota County, estimated to cost between \$5 billion and \$15 billion. The price is too steep, and there are more viable alternatives, Dempsey said. The current airport could be expanded, or smaller satellite facilities could be built.

He also hopes funding will be provided this session to construct a secure cottage for juveniles housed at the Minnesota Correctional Facility-Red Wing, a proposal that was discussed last session. The program in Red Wing emphasizes

rehabilitation for juveniles, and is not designed as a prison, he added. But the need is apparent.

Dempsey is impressed with his fellow first-term members.

"I can see why they got elected. They're intelligent people," Dempsey said. They have a good grasp of the issues, and are anxious to tackle problems facing the state.

"I think they're people that are going to engage in productive and sound deliberation of the issues," he said. "And I like that approach."

—Jim Anderson

## District 29A

Population: 33,172

Distribution: 90.8 percent of residents live in urban areas, 9.2 percent rural.

Counties: Dakota, Goodhue

Largest city: Hastings

Location: southeastern Minnesota

1992 presidential election results:

Bush/Quayle: 32.2 percent

Clinton/Gore: 41.5 percent

Perot/Stockdale: 25.5 percent

Other: 0.8 percent