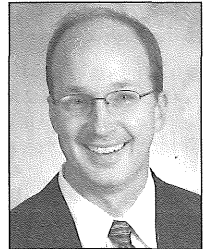


Suburban rejuvenator

Morgan wants to take advantage of where the 'I's cross

By **LEE ANN SCHUTZ**

Rep. Will Morgan (DFL-Burnsville) wants the area he represents to be the best place to work and raise a family. But as with other "aging" suburbs, it faces issues with its "aging" business centers, housing stock and population.



Rep. Will Morgan

As a House member, he sees his role as one of helping city and school leaders facilitate the goal of "rejuvenation" — revitalizing business areas, improving the transportation corridor and maintaining property values. Morgan said that Burnsville's strategic location within the Twin Cities metropolitan area makes it a desirable place to locate. Quoting Burnsville Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, and referring to the intersection of

Interstates 35E and 35W, he said, "It's where the 'I's cross. We are the first city south of the river. And as we plan for the future, we need to really take advantage of that, especially for business redevelopment."

But it is the people who make up any community, he said, and it takes more than a good location to attract and keep residents. It takes a diversified, well-maintained housing stock, a good transportation system and good schools.

Morgan is pleased with his committee and division assignments: House Governmental Operations, Reform, Technology and Elections Committee, where he serves as vice chairman; and the House Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health; K-12; and Transportation finance divisions.

"They really tie together. Good schools make sure that families have good home values; public health means kids are showing up ready to learn; transportation means

DISTRICT 40A
2002 population: 36,882 Largest city: Burnsville Counties: Dakota and Scott Top concerns: Property taxes, education, health care and transportation

people can get to and from work easily. ... I just like the idea of working on the whole community, particularly in those areas," he said.

A physics and chemistry teacher at Burnsville High School since 1991, Morgan said quality education, along with retaining quality educators in the schools are obvious concerns. He has been active in his local teachers union, acting as chief negotiator for the last three contracts.

This was Morgan's second run for a House seat. "All my adult life I have been a public servant. This is an opportunity for me to serve the public in a different way."

An educator with passion

Swails continues her public service

By **PATTY OSTBERG**

Not many people can say they grew up just streets away from a former U.S. president, but Rep. Marsha Swails (DFL-Woodbury) can.



Rep. Marsha Swails

As a junior high school student in Independence, Mo. her school bus drove by Harry Truman's house every day. Looking out the left side window she would see him sitting at his desk in front of his picture window writing or reading.

That accessibility left a lasting impression. "I never felt that public service was something odd to pursue," said Swails, who believes the greatest thing a person can do is serve others.

A teacher for 22 years, including as an

Advanced Placement English instructor since 1999, her political aspirations emerged when she attended her first district caucus during the 2004 elections. Surrounded by neighbors with similar political passions, she said they encouraged her to run for office. Swails didn't want to give up teaching so she spoke with several legislators who were also teachers. They convinced her it's possible to do both.

"All my life I've felt that serving others was what I should do ... I see this as an extension of that core value," said Swails, the 2004 Woodbury Chamber of Commerce Teacher of the Year.

After hours of door-knocking and meeting thousands of constituents, she defeated incumbent Rep. Karen Klinzing, also a teacher, by 2.3 percent of the vote.

Swails said the issues most important to her district include quality education for children, affordable health care and transportation.

DISTRICT 56B
2002 population: 36,683 Largest city: Woodbury County: Washington Top concern: Education

There are simple fixes for transportation, even if that means rescheduling a few bus routes. "They don't have to be multimillion dollar road projects or light-rail, but we can implement short-term solutions to make lives better," Swails said.

Her background as a teacher makes her well-suited for her seats on the House E-12 Education Committee and the K-12 Finance Division.

Her other committee assignments include Housing Policy and Finance and Public Health Finance Division, Labor and Consumer Protection Division, and she is vice chairwoman of the House Ways and Means Committee.