

A community leader

Slocum reluctantly becomes state politician

By PATTY OSTBERG

A middle school teacher for nearly 20 years, Rep. Linda Slocum (DFL-Richfield) was ready for a sabbatical when the opportunity to run for her district seat presented itself.



Rep. Linda Slocum
said.

Always active behind the scenes, whether managing campaigns, door-knocking or handing out literature, she never thought she'd actually run for state office. She was raised in a DFL family who believes you are to be involved in your community.

She earned years of experience working

on the Richfield Community Service Commission, served as vice-chairwoman of its Human Services Commission and served on the Minnesota Commission on Crime Prevention and Control.

After some encouragement by others, she reluctantly charted her course. She drove the district boundaries several times before she finally decided to run, she

“They saw me at their door, I’m a nice teacher, and I talked about health care and taxes and fees ... and my goal is to do something about them,” she said.

Funding special education, the school funding formula, and accountability through school testing are her top issues.

“Fair state funding for early childhood

DISTRICT 63B

2002 population: 36,821
Largest city: Bloomington
County: Hennepin
Top concern: Education

education, school readiness programs and K-12 public education is the cost-effective and right thing to do,” she said.

Other major concerns facing her district include those related to the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, including the new runway, and representation on the Metropolitan Airports Commission. With large Latino and Somali populations settling in her area, immigrant assimilation in schools and the local community is another.

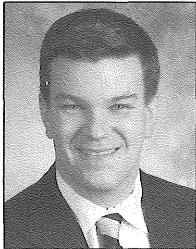
Her passion and background will serve her well on the House E-12 Education Committee and the House Higher Education and Work Force Development Policy and Finance Division. Her other committee assignments include the House Energy Finance and Policy and the House Transportation Finance divisions.

Building for all

Winkler wants to give everyone the chance to succeed

By SONJA HEGMAN

Rep. Ryan Winkler (DFL-Golden Valley) might have a law degree, but he is probably also skilled enough to renovate just about any house on his own.



Rep. Ryan Winkler
contractor by trade.

Winkler's favorite house architecture is 1950s ranch-style. He and his wife, Jenny, have worked together on house projects, but won't get into the cycle of buying, renovating and selling. They are slowing down a bit with a newborn in the family. Isaac joined 2-year-

old Edward five days before Election Day.

With a bachelor's degree in history from Harvard, Winkler is a history buff and likes a movie “if it's good, not boring,” also preferring movies with more of a historical spin. He also travels to Sweden at least once a year to visit his wife's family.

Coming from a long line of Norwegian farmers who homesteaded in Bemidji in 1908, Winkler said he “grew up with a strong sense of community” and felt that would be a benefit as a representative. He said his background in public policy issues gave him another reason to seek the seat vacated by two-term Rep. Ron Latz, who successfully ran for the Senate. Winkler managed Latz's 2004 House campaign.

A lawyer for the last six years, Winkler worked with the Metropolitan Council on transportation issues and has also represented watershed districts, inner-city projects

DISTRICT 44B

2002 population: 36,939
Largest city: St. Louis Park
County: Hennepin
Top concerns: Education, transportation and health care

in Minneapolis and works as a software company's lawyer. He plans to sponsor bills related to education and technology.

Education, transportation and health care are the areas Winkler wants to work on for his district. He said they all are equally important. With a lot of redevelopment in his district, Winkler sees the light rail system as an integral part of the “quality of life in Minnesota.” The state's economic growth is also vital, he said, and education, transportation and health care are all a part of that.

“We need to make sure all Minnesotans have the opportunity to succeed,” he said.