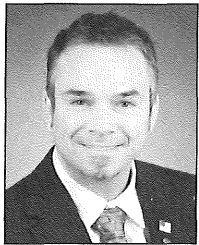


Snapshot of Delano leader

McDonald follows in his father's footsteps

By SUE HEGARTY

Six years ago, Joe McDonald found himself across the table from former Rep. Tom Emmer in Delano. Emmer agreed not to run for the Legislature if McDonald did, according to McDonald. He decided it wasn't his time yet, so he told Emmer, "In six years you better get done what you want because I'm running."



Rep. Joe McDonald

He did and he won. That was against his father's wishes.

McDonald's dad, K.J., served 14 years in the House from 1977-1990 and advised him not to run for office. "He said if you want to ruin your business and your family, run for office. So he wasn't the first

person I called, but he's proud and very supportive."

The younger McDonald has been a Republican Party activist for 13 years. He's moved through the ranks of Delano leadership from president of the chamber of commerce to mayor of the city, where he owns a photography studio with his wife, Rachel. A master photographer, McDonald has photographed many of his constituents.

"It's a great career knowing the art I produce will outlive me and give years of pleasure to the families," he said.

Time will tell whether the legislation he produces gives him that same satisfaction. McDonald serves on the House Health and Human Services Finance and Reform committees, the House Property and Local Tax Division and the House Public Safety and Crime Prevention Policy and Finance

DISTRICT 19B

Population (2009 est.): 56,487
 Largest City: St. Michael
 Counties: Hennepin, Wright
 Top Concern: Help reduce unnecessary spending

Committee.

He's particularly sensitive to the needs of local government. Cuts in state aid and statutory limits on how much cities can levy tie the hands of local government, he said. "I just don't believe that the state has any business capping the levy for communities."

When he's not representing Wright County, McDonald said he can be found at work in the community and participating in the many groups he belongs to, when time permits. After all, he has to save time to jump on the trampoline with his three sons and to challenge them to a Wii game.