

# Two Guilderland Educators Vie For One-Year Town Board Term

BY BOB HAGYARD



JOHN F. RYAN



THOMAS A. VAN BUREN

A major contest in local politics will be resolved on Election Day, Nov. 2, when Guilderland voters will select either John F. Ryan or Thomas A. Van Buren to fill the Town Board seat vacated when Councilman Alton U. Farnsworth resigned in July.

The board named Ryan, a Republican, to fill the vacancy until next January, when the elected councilman will be sworn into office to serve the one year remaining in Farnsworth's term.

No Democrat has been elected to town office in this century. Yet the proportion of votes garnered by Democratic candidates in the town has increased dramatically during the past decade.

Here's a summary of who the candidates are, and where they stand.

John F. Ryan, the Republican, said, "but that's not

crats can be represented on the town board."

The candidate would like the town to consider replacement of the Town Youth Commission by a professionally - staffed youth bureau. "In this area," he said, "Watervliet and Cohoes have successfully instituted youth bureaus partly funded by the federal government through the State Division for Youth. Colonie has, or may soon, institute one of its own.

"I see three reasons why a professional youth bureau would be an improvement (over the GYC): when you pay, you get better service; it can be written up for federal funds and can better solicit community support; and, with federal funding, it would cost about half as much to the town as a similar service operated by one town alone."

On "spot" zoning: "The Town Zoning Board acts as it wants to to suit business. They have a master plan, but when they grant variances, they appear to have no overall goal. Businesses seem to pop up all over — town government should allow no more on Western Ave. Good land could be sought for light industry off Western Ave. There is plenty of land in the western end of the town that would be suitable for light industry."

Townwide refuse collection: "The Town Board should do a real cost-analysis on townwide collection. I pay about \$70 a year for it, on the average, each year. If, by having a single collector do the job, the rate could be cut to, say, \$50 a year, it would be worth raising taxes that much and save people money. If I am elected, I would initiate a strong investigation into the possibility."

John F. Ryan, the Republican candidate, currently serves as pupil personnel services administrator at Guilderland Central High School, supervising the school's guidance, psychological help, attendance-monitoring, and other non-classroom services.

At Guilderland, he has previously served as guidance counselor, guidance department chairman, and as high school vice principal.

Besides his duties at the school, Ryan, 44, has been an active member of the Town Youth Commission and chairman of the Guilderland Narcotics Guidance Council for seven years, a position he resigned in February when he was appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals. After serving five months on the appeals board, he left to accept the Town Board vacancy.

The town narcotics council, described by Ryan as "an educational and prevention" body, designed and provided Guilderland schools with programs for students, teachers, and parents, evening information programs, small-group sessions, and co-sponsored a "health fair" recently on a wide range of physical and mental health problems in the community.

These community service projects, in Ryan's opinion, "has given me the experience necessary to be a town board member. I will continue to be willing to give of my time to make Guilderland a better place to live" whether he wins or loses this election, he added.

The candidate described the town's open meeting held Oct. 6 as "very enlightening. When Supervisor Walters asked for a show of hands on whether the town should encourage business to locate in the town to expand the tax base, or maintain Guilderland as a 'bedroom community,' the vote was split 50-50.

"It's easy to say, 'no spot zon-

ing,' Ryan said, "but that's not realistic. Businessmen have a right to earn a living. The level of services provided by the schools and town government can be maintained only by broadening the tax base. There's no simple answer to the problem.

"The town has done an excellent job in seeing that the (zoning) laws are adhered to," he continued. "It has monitored development well, especially along Rt. 20; not allowing it to develop into a 'honky-tonk' area while allowing people in the town to make a living."

Ryan dismissed the idea of electing town board members on a district basis. "You could get into real hassles, with board members fighting for the interests of whatever section of town they represent," he noted.

"The school board used to have its members elected on an informal district basis," Ryan continued. "This system was abolished a few years ago by referendum because many qualified people could not run for vacancies outside the 'district' in which they lived."

This is the first time John Ryan has run for public office.

He lives with his wife and five children at 18 Sherwood Forest Road in Westmere.

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Thomas A. Van Buren, the Democratic and Conservative candidate, is an assistant to the principal at Giffen elementary school in Albany. He previously taught junior high math and in the fifth and sixth grades in the Albany public school system. He is also an active member of the McKownville Improvement Ass'n, and is on that group's board of directors.

"My reason for running," Van Buren explained, "is that it's time for citizens of the town to be heard. The town can be run better if both Republicans and Demo-

vestigation into the possibility."

District representation on town board: "I would investigate the possibility. I would initiate a survey of the town as to citizens' feelings on this."

"Mini" parks: "First, I would like to see Guilderland (not all in one calendar year) establish mini-parks in each area of town - Altamont, Ft. Hunter, Westmere, McKownville, and other areas within the next two to four years."

"Teenagers," Van Buren stated, "from 12 to 18 years, are not provided with adequate programs. The teenage population is growing; yet the problems of our town's youth have outgrown town problems."

"I'm not looking to tax the town out of existence," he said. "Town Board members should, however, move the town into areas not investigated before."

Thomas Van Buren has previously run a number of times for Guilderland town supervisor, as well as for the Town Board.

He lives with his wife and three children at 10 East Dillenbeck Drive in McKownville.

## History Group To Meet

The Guilderland Historical Society will meet at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 21, at the Frederick House in Guilderland Center.

"The Hamlet of Fullers" will be the topic discussed by a panel moderated by Mrs. Merwin Anthony. The session will be taped.

The 1977 calendar, titled "Down Memory Lane," will be sold at \$1.50 each. A coffee hour will follow the program.

New York City, base of operations for 90 of the nation's top 500 firms, was by far the leading home-office center. The next six cities were: Chicago, 29; Pittsburgh and Cleveland, 15 each; Los Angeles, 14; St. Louis and Houston, 11 each.