

# SENIOR LIFESTYLES

## Three inspectors reflect on divisive 2000 election

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Because this story went to press Dec. 12, it may not include the latest developments in the presidential election.*

Three women who attend St. Jerome's Church and served as election inspectors for the Village of East Rochester Nov. 7 embody all the differences of opinion this year's election squabbles have revealed among voters.

Doris Swagler, 66, is a eucharistic minister who raised five sons with her husband of 37 years, Paul. The couple has 14 grandchildren. Although she's a Democrat, she expressed dismay that her party's candidate, Vice President Albert Gore, had pressed his battle to win Florida as far as he had.

"I'm losing respect for him," she said. "I think he's pushing it too hard."

As the mother of two sons who have served in the military, she said she was upset that the Democrats challenged the legitimacy of some military absentee ballots in Florida that may not have been properly postmarked.

"I think it's a slap in the face to the military or to anyone who votes absentee," she said.

But Swagler's friend, Mary Ethel Smith, said she could understand why Gore pressed his fight so far, even though she felt he was "beating a dead horse." A Republican who raised two kids with her late husband of 48 years, Don, Smith attributed her benign attitude about Gore to her age.

"When you're older, you get more mel-

low," said Smith, 79, who served as St. Jerome's parish secretary from 1944-84.

Smith's Republican friend Stella Vogler, 86, however, noted that the fate of neither presidential candidate was worth her worrying, and pointed out that she voted for Green Party candidate Ralph Nader.

"I didn't like either man," she said of Bush and Gore. "To me, they weren't presidential."

Mother of two, grandmother to eight and great-grandmother to 10, Vogler has been a volunteer in the village senior citizens center, as well as an elections inspector for the past decade. Like Swagler and Smith, she said she couldn't understand why Florida still uses cardboard ballots that compel voters to indicate their choices by pressing the now infamous "chads." All three women added that the machines New Yorkers use to vote are easier for voters to use than are the Florida ballots. Voters can push back the small levers on the voting machines if they mistakenly vote for the wrong candidate, they said. After pulling down all the small levers to indicate his or her choices, a voter can then pull back the large lever with confidence that their selections have been recorded properly, they noted.

"You can't take back your vote with the chad," Swagler said.

Smith expressed some sympathy for older voters in Florida's Palm Beach County who may have found the "butterfly" ballot confusing. After the election, some voters blamed the ballot's design for causing them to mistakenly vote for candidates they did not support. However,



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Election inspectors (from left) Stella Vogler, Mary Ethel Smith, and Doris Swagler are all parishioners of St. Jerome's in East Rochester.

Swagler noted that the ballot had been used before in Florida, and did not share Smith's sympathy for the "confused" voters. Vogler was even more pointed in her criticism of the Palm Beach voters.

"I don't think they should be voting if they don't know how to do it," she said, though she added: "I imagine there were some good people who were confused ..."

She pointed out that the voters who came to her polling station could ask for help from workers like herself and could also view a sample ballot posted on the wall before they entered the voting booth.

All three women agreed that this election was significant in many ways that may reverberate beyond the inauguration of the next president. For example, Swa-

gler and Vogler both said that this election has convinced them it's time to get rid of the Electoral College, the indirect system whereby voters select electors who vote for the president.

"If they had gone by a popular vote, Gore would have won," Swagler said. When asked whether the college should be kept in place to enhance the voice of states with smaller populations relative to the larger states — one of the Founding Fathers' intentions in creating the college — Swagler responded that states' voices are heard through representation in the U.S. Congress. The president is a national candidate, she noted, and should be selected by a majority of the nation's citizens.

Smith said she also believed that the popular vote should determine the presidency, but emphasized she had no strong feelings on the matter. Vogler, however, said it's not fair that the electoral college can override the majority of the citizens' will, and agreed with Swagler that the candidate who gets the most votes nationally should become president.

"That's the people's choice," she said. Whatever their feelings, all three women noted their desire to have the election resolved soon.

"I don't think it's good to keep it up in the air," Vogler said. "One is as good as the other, so why don't they get in and get on with it for the good of the country?"

When Interest Income Counts,  
It's time to call Gen-See.

8.71%  
Annually

Earn More,  
Worry Less

Go with experience  
you can trust...

Because Gen-See cares about your retirement money!

Since 1975  
GEN-SEE investors have  
done better for 5 great reasons:

- Regular monthly checks
- No fees or commissions
- Low minimum initial investment ... \$5,000.00
- Term 3, 4, or 5 years
- Guaranteed rate of interest for term of Certificate



Make the phone call that will earn you 8.71% annually.

Call 716-881-0696  
1-800-507-4393



Gen-See Capital Corporation

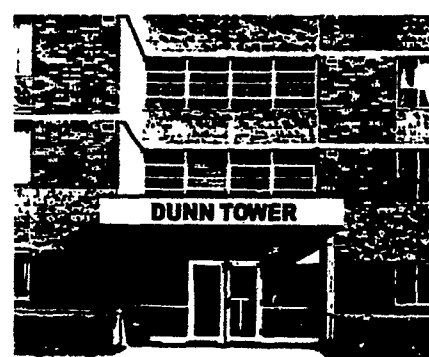
### THE HURLBUT Three Generations of Caring

We are a full service medical facility providing the following services for the comfort of our patients and residents:

- Comprehensive rehabilitation services for short term stays
- Specialized care services in the form of infusion therapy, wound care and management, tracheostomy, colostomy, ileostomy, and gastrostomy tube care, hospice care
- Skilled nursing care and rehabilitation for those in need of long term placement
- Physical, occupational, speech therapy

Admissions and tours  
available 7 days a week

1177 E. Henrietta Rd. Rochester, NY 14623  
(716) 424-4770 Fax (716) 424-1922



### DUNN TOWER APARTMENTS

Now taking applications for our two distinct different styles of one bedroom apartments to suit your financial needs. Rents start at \$280. This is housing for seniors 55 and over and people with disabilities. Utilities included; cable ready; intercom; laundry; activities; on bus line. Supervised by NYS Div. of Housing & Community Renewal.

EHO 716-429-5520



## Blossom View Nursing Home

COUNTRY LIVING AT ITS BEST

Serving Wayne & Monroe Counties & The Fingerlakes

Quality Service Since 1973

- Outpatient Rehab Services seven days a week
- 24 Hour Professional Nursing Care
- Physical Occupational and Speech therapy
- Recreational Activities program
- Country gourmet meals with selective menus
- Telephone and Cable accessible rooms
- Private and Semi-private rooms
- Enclosed, landscaped courtyard
- Environmentally controlled heating & air system
- Private lounges with TV and Telephone
- Beauty and Barber shop
- Security system
- Chapel
- Medicaid & Medicare approved

315-483-9118

6884 MAPLE AVE., SODUS

www.catholiccourier.com