

STAR

Competition for Lansing library seats

4 candidates air issues

By Stewart Warren

One incumbent and three newcomers are vying for two six-year seats on the Lansing Library Board this year.

Incumbent Eric G. Samuelson, Mary E. Kern, Robert L. Lauer and Michael A. Bibro hope to be elected to the board April 20.

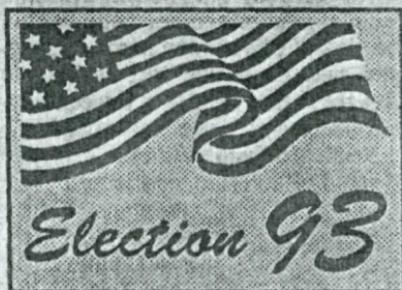
As the sole incumbent in the race, Samuelson, 77, a six-year member of the board and the president of the LTV Retirees, said his experience managing buildings and grounds would be an asset to the board.

Selecting the most qualified candidates is the most difficult issue voters face during this election, Samuelson said.

One of the candidates works in a library. Kern, 55, has logged 12 years as a library clerk at Lansing's Coolidge Elementary School. "I have a good understanding of what a library should provide, especially in the area of children's needs," she said.

She said she felt the existing board has done an excellent job guiding the library, but that more money should be budgeted for book purchases.

Another candidate, Lauer, said his experience as a financial planner would help the library. Lauer, 38, is an investment broker with A.G. Edwards in Merriville, Ind.



"I feel my background in accounting and finance would be beneficial as these areas become more important in today's tough fiscal environment," he said.

Lauer said voters should elect Library Board members who make long-range plans to improve and maintain library facilities.

Bibro, 41, a Lansing mason, said his strong organizational and budgeting skills make him a good candidate for the Library Board.

"Those chosen to participate in spending public funds must recognize the responsibility to monitor and allocate monies more like a private sector business," he said.

He said it's important that the library's money be carefully spent. "Programs must be chosen that we, the taxpayers, can afford — not every special interest that is self-serving and narrow," he said.