

# Fairfield Minuteman

## Which Way Will Easton Go?

**By Larissa Lytwyn**

July 26, 2007

Elaine Spicer's reason for entering this fall's First Selectman race is simple. "I absolutely love Easton," the nearly 20-year resident said. "We have a lot of special resources and intelligent, creative people who make this town unique." Spicer and incumbent Selectman Robert Lessler were unanimously endorsed at the Democratic Town Committee's (DTC) July 18 caucus.

A former Selectman who served from 1993 to 1995, Spicer is currently a member of the Easton Library Board. Spicer has also served as an alternate on the Planning and Zoning Commission. Following her tenure as Selectman, Spicer served on the Charter Evaluation Committee, which studied Easton's unique governmental structure.

"We have a real democracy in the form of the Town Meeting, which is very powerful," Spicer said.

She holds a Masters in Business Administration from the Wharton School of Business. "I've had a lot of experience teaching on the collegiate level as well as a strong managerial background," Spicer said. "I've been used to being the only woman in the room - or in this case, the race."

Spicer has also served the Notre Dame of Easton Church as Lector, group study leader, parish council member and religious education teacher. She is also a founding member of the state-wide Committee for Children with Lyme Disease.

"This has become such a crucial issue to so many Easton residents," Spicer said. Those affected include her 21-year-old son. While he has almost fully recovered, the experience affected Spicer and her family profoundly. "[Lyme disease] is a significant problem in this state, including Easton," she said. "There is still a lot to be done in addressing its proper diagnosis and treatment."

Spicer said her leadership strengths lie in "unification." Noting the political divisiveness that has plagued Easton in recent years, Spicer said she was committed to "bringing people together." "I'm about building consensus," she said.

Lessler first served on the Board of Selectman from 1997 to 2001. He was reelected in 2003 and has served ever since. "[Lessler] and I share a commitment to preserving Easton's unique character, supporting its excellent school system and reducing the tax burden," Spicer said.

As First Selectman, Spicer said she would have the ability to treat the position as a full-time job. "I would be involved, accessible and available at Town Hall with regular hours for the same salary [as opponents working fulltime]," she said.

"[Herrmann and Selectman Scott Centrella] have fewer than two years total experience [as selectmen]," Lessler said in a recent statement. In contrast, Lessler and Spicer cumulatively have almost 10 years of experience.

DTC Chairman Ron Kowalski said he was "excited" about this year's Democratic slate. "They reflect the makeup of our town. These candidates have the right mix of skills, experience and fresh perspective to bring our community together and find solutions to the challenges we face," he said.

Additional Democrats running this fall will be incumbents Alan Katz and Elin Cohen for the Easton Board of Education; A. Reynolds Gordon for Board of Assessment Appeals; Ray Ganim and Patricia Berlin for Zoning Board of Appeals; Rita Seclow for Library Director; and Gloria Bindelglass, Mark D'Augelli, Richard Greiser and Irv Silverman for Constable positions.

Those running to become new members of town boards are Claire Gold and Wiley Mullins for the Board of Finance; Henry Egan for Town Treasurer; and Roberta (Bobbie) Cable and Robert Schrage for the Region 9 Board of Education.

A fourth candidate joining the First Selectman's race is Paul Skritch. He is unaffiliated with any party. An actuary and volunteer fireman with the Easton Fire Department, Skritch said he is running as the "nonpolitical" candidate. "I simply became interested in running because I saw there were things that could happen to make the town better," Skritch said.

A self-described "fiscal conservative," Skritch said one initiative would include giving tax credits to Easton taxpayers sending their children to private schools. "Why should those taxpayers have to pay twice?" Skritch asked.

Akin to a voucher program, Skritch said initiatives like those were necessary, thinking-outside-the-box ways of making Easton an "even better" place to live.