

August 21, 2007

Dear Editor:

Based upon my experience running for municipal office in Wyckoff in last June's primary, the article, "Women aren't equally present in government," August 20, was particularly timely. Numbers reflect the few women in government, however, most troubling is the existence of an "old network," not necessarily the "old boy network." Diversity of thought and ideas is not necessarily welcome in this network, whether a man or woman. As a lifelong Republican, I offered Wyckoff a choice for a fresh perspective and was encouraged to run for office many. As a fiscal conservative, my beliefs are consistent with republican values. Unfortunately, with no apparent support from anyone inside our township Republican organization, I fell short of votes in the primary. As a novice to politics, it often takes more than once to get elected. I was hopeful that with my experience and near victory, I would be "invited" into the network or gain some respect from local leadership, despite my strong views on open space preservation. It is clear that if I am not "one of the boys," I am not able to participate, or even have an open dialogue. I will gladly run for office again and encourage other Wyckoff citizens who care about their community to run for local office. Women add diversity to our governing bodies, but diversity of thought and open government is essential to a community. The voting public will ultimately choose, and active citizens should step up and give the public a real choice each election day.

Sincerely,

Diane Sobin  
Wyckoff