

District 1 Candidates Meet for Farm Bureau Forum

Three of the six candidates vying to become the next District 1 Nebraska State Senator answered questions on a wide variety of issues during a forum held Tuesday evening at St. Peter's Lutheran Church near Tecumseh. The Nebraska Farm Bureau hosted the forum, which lasted for a little over an hour.

Alvin Guenther, Jerry Joy, and Dan Watermeier gave short opening statements then answered several written questions from the audience.

Guenther is a retired teacher who lives on a farm in near Dunbar. He said he believes the state has pursued some shortsighted policies in the past, and he favors what he calls a fair tax policy (play audio :37)

Jerry Joy, of Stella, is making his second run for the legislature, having run unsuccessfully for the 1st District Legislative seat against Lavon Heidemann four years ago. He touted his leadership abilities, as a former teacher, coach, and college administrator, and current president of the Stella Village Board. (play audio :38)

Dan Watermeier, of Syracuse, is a farmer and current member of the Nemaha NRD Board of Directors. He said he hopes to follow in the footsteps of current Senator Lavon Heidemann and former Senator Floyd Vrtiska in representing southeast Nebraska in the Unicameral. (play audio :14)

Questions during the forum touched on topics including the voter identification bill, term limits, animal rights groups, property tax relief, privatization of the state's child welfare system, and funding for road construction.

Three other candidates – Bruce Berhad, Douglas Bohling, and Neal Schatz – did not attend Tuesday's forum.

The top two candidates in the May 15th primary election will advance to November's general election for the chance to represent the 1st District in the officially non-partisan legislature. Current Senator Lavon Heidemann cannot seek a third term in legislature.