

# Nicollet County's 1st District keeps Dranttel, Conlon in the running

By Mark Fischenich

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**ST. PETER** — Marie Dranttel, a St. Peter accountant making her first run for public office, won nearly half the votes in the three-way primary election race for the 1st District seat on the Nicollet County Board.

Dranttel and secondplace finisher Tom Conlon, a rural St. Peter farmer, will advance to the Nov. 2 general election. Eliminated by Tuesday's results was Lake Prairie Township resident Terry Genelin, an insurance and financial services agency owner.

Dranttel, who captured 423 of the 851 votes cast, dominated the two St.

Peter precincts but was competitive at all five of the 1st District's polling places. Conlon, who totaled 261 votes, won Lake Prairie Township and tied Dranttel in New Sweden Township.

Genelin, with 167 votes, did best in his home township, finishing eight votes behind Conlon.

Dranttel, who won Traverse Township, and Conlon had identical combined vote totals in the three townships, but it was the two precincts in St.

Peter's Ward 1 that determined the outcome.

St. Peter residents provided 606 of the 851 ballots cast, and they strongly favored Dranttel. She beat Conlon two-to- one in Precinct 1 and nearly matched that margin in Precinct 2.

"Not really surprised," said Conlon. "I knew Marie Dranttel would have a pretty good presence in St.

Peter."

Primary election results don't always foretell the outcome of a general election, when voter turnout will be four or five times higher.

"From my perspective, I hope it doesn't," Conlon said.

The good news for Conlon is that he has an extra month, compared to the traditional mid-September primary date, to try to make up ground in St. Peter. " There will be some time to plan some strategy and try to garner some votes," he said.

Dranttel, who couldn't be reached for comment late Tuesday, has a variety of experience beyond her accounting work. She operates a vegetable and melon farm, selling the produce at the St. Peter Farmers Market, serves on the county planning and zoning board, is a member of the Board of Adjustments and Appeals, and has been involved in the chamber of commerce, the historical society and the food shelf.





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Marie Dranttel ( left) and Tom Conlon will advance to the Nov. 2 general election for Nicollet County Board 1st District.

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