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Mom and son keep Moffitt name a county mainstay

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When Oakland County Commission candidate Linda Jolicoeur lost to David Moffitt in the Republican primary, a well-wisher tried to soften the blow by reminding her of the difficulty in unseating a 14-year incumbent.

"It's more like 20," said Jolicoeur, referring to the long-standing Moffitt name in county political circles.

Actually, the Moffitt name has been a mainstay on the county commission for 26 years, dating to 1972 when Lillian Moffitt served her first term. She remained a commissioner for 12 years until 1984 when her son, David, succeeded her.

David Moffitt is seeking to continue the legacy in the Nov. 3 general election. He is running



against Democratic hopeful Ryan Gesund in the district, which serves northern Farmington Hills.

David fondly recalls sitting at the dinner table while his mother carefully crafted response letters to her constituents. Invariably, mother and son would end up talking about issues.

Before long, Lillian had her son in tow to commission meetings where he met some of the county's main players.

"She offered me a great deal of insight on how a lot of things came into being and a perspective of the personalities

involved," said David, who is an attorney.

Before he was elected, David already had a grasp of enduring county issues such as transportation, the rivalry between developed versus undeveloped regions and the relationship of commissioners and the county executive.

Of course, Lillian served when Dan Murphy was county executive. Most of David's 14 years has been spent with L. Brooks Patterson at the helm.

Mom's and son's political styles are similar, both said.

"We were both strong advocates but deliberate and thorough," David said. "Both of us would want to study the issues thoroughly and offer all sides an opportunity to contribute."

Mom agreed.



Lillian Moffitt

him in his first election in 1984, which was preceded by a five-candidate GOP runoff.

David's father, O. Brent Moffitt, also served as the Republican director of the 65th Legislative district. O. Brent and Lillian are retired and live in Florida.

However, Lillian said she never steered her son toward county politics. That stemmed from his insatiable interest in

"I knew he gathers the facts," Lillian said. "I think he looks at things from a legal aspect. He is very good at that."

David admitted his mother's name helped

GOP happenings.

"I told him he'd have to run in a regular primary and let the people decide," said Lillian from her Florida home.

While she's provided valuable insight, Lillian said she only offered her input on one particular issue. The matter involved instituting automatic step pay increases - opposed to merit raises - for some county employees.

Lillian was dead set against the measure, which still passed with Democratic support. David voted "no."

As for her son's longevity as a county commissioner, Lillian sees that as a testament to his service.

"I'm proud of what he's doing," Lillian said. "I think he is doing an excellent job as a commission-



David Moffitt

er." Mother kudos aside, Moffitt's opponent is unphased about running again such as we know name.

"I'm finding

doesn't have the name recognition of Congress or other offices; county commission is kind of low on the totem pole Ryan Gesund said. "I don't know if it's Moffitt's fault or it's countywide. It just seems that name recognition is not as important

Besides, the Democrat has found a way to skirt Moffitt name recognition.

"When I go door to door, I just say, 'My Republican opponent.