

In Pine Lake, opposition is few and far between

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For many politicians, the lack of opposition in an election is a blessing. But two **Pine Lake** city councilmen, who have run unopposed for the past three terms, say it wouldn't hurt to have a little competition now and then. "I was actually looking forward to running a campaign and stimulating some dialogue," said Councilman Richard Newman, who will breeze into a third term that begins in January.

Brad Rosselle, who has been on the City Council since 1986, said he was surprised to learn a few months ago that his term was almost up.

"I didn't think my [three-year term] was up," he said. "I was convinced it was somebody else's turn to run."

Both councilmen, who serve on a volunteer basis, say they aren't surprised by the lack of interest in things political in the small town of about 900 residents. **Pine Lake** has not held an election since 1982.

"If things are going well enough, [people] may ask, 'Why get involved?' They only get involved if things are really annoying," said Mr. Newman, 32, who works for an accounting firm.

It was, in fact, while attending a council meeting to complain about something that Mr. Rosselle, 35, was asked to serve an unfinished council term 4 1/2 years ago.

"The [council] approached me and said, 'You've been to a couple of meetings. Would you be interested in joining the council?'" he recalled.

Mr. Rosselle, a customer service engineer for Xerox, said he believes the public is satisfied with the way city affairs are handled.

"People figure the job's getting done," he said.

During the city's monthlong qualifying period, it looked like there would be elections after all when a resident began asking about the position, according to City Manager Judy Griswell.

"She didn't think she would have any opposition [until] I told her the incumbents had qualified," Ms. Griswell said. "She took the application form home and never came back."

Despite the joking, city officials say they are concerned that more residents don't take part in city matters.

"It does bother me," Mr. Newman said. "We do occasionally get negative feedback, but people who have opinions aren't there to let us know what they feel. We're just five council people and the mayor trying to run a small government."