

# Demo rides Crossgates issue to win

By SHARON GAZIN

Knickerbocker News Reporter

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GUILDERLAND — Democrats say the \$85 million Crossgates shopping mall proposed for the Pine Bush area of Guilderland is the issue that helped them elect their first member of the Town Board in more than 100 years.

Virginia Horan was elected to the board, defeating her Republican opponent, incumbent Pauline Porter, by 316 votes, on a platform which included opposition to the mall.

Mrs. Horan said Tuesday night she was convinced Crossgates was a deciding factor in the campaign.

"Crossgates acted to galvanize people into action. I think people took another look at the power they have. The closeness of the vote demonstrates that when it comes close to home you can get them to stop and think."

Concerned Citizens Against Crossgates, a town group, pledged to "support whoever is against Crossgates." And that opposition undoubtedly helped the Democrats, who campaigned heavily against it.

The Republican-controlled Town Board recently rescinded a section of the tax law which would have given Crossgates a tax break. But town Republicans refused to make the mall an issue in the election, preferring to campaign on their record.

Among those who were gathered at Democratic headquarters at the Governor's Motor Inn on Western Avenue were two strong opponents of Crossgates, Greg Bell of Save the Pine Bush, and Donald Reeb, president of the McKownville Improvement Association.

Said Bell: "People finally got a little concerned when their town is about to be destroyed."

Crossgates is proposed by the Pyramid Crossgates Co. for construction on 170 acres of Pine Bush land between

Continued on Page 4-A

# Democrat rides the Cross

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Western Avenue, Rapp Road and the Thruway. The project has been vigorously opposed by environmentalists who contend it would harm the Karner blue butterfly, an endangered species that makes its home in the Pine Bush.

Town Supervisor Carl Walters, a Republican who was re-elected by about 600 votes according to the unofficial count, said Crossgates was a factor in Mrs. Horan's election.

"I guess it apparently was an issue. As far as I'm concerned, they made it

an issue. People bought it without the facts coming out," he said.

Anne Gaffney, a Democrat who defeated Republican incumbent Donald Munn as county legislator from the 33rd District, said the Town Board's unresponsiveness to opponents of the proposed \$85 million mall upset voters.

"Crossgates is a symptom of lack of attention to the concerns of the people," said Mrs. Gaffney, who opposes the mall proposal. "The Republican town of Guilderland ignored the people. Why do we have public meetings, when they

# gates issue to victory ...

turn around and do what they want anyway?"

Town Democratic Chairman Donald P. Lawrence called the party's win "a victory for the people in the town of

Guilderland."

He said Democrats plan to seek a recount in the town's other race for councilman, in which Pearl Kurland was defeated by John Smircich.