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## NEWS LOCAL

# Three fresh faces heading to council



By Mike Verdone, Sault Star  
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SAULT STE. MARIE - Nine city councillors were returned by local voters to city hall in Sault Ste. Marie during Monday night's municipal election.

But three new faces will join newly elected mayor Christian Provenzano in chambers when the new council is sworn in Dec. 1, for a four-year term.

Matthew Shoemaker and Judy Hupponen were elected in Ward 3 Monday night, as was newcomer Ross Romano in Ward 6.

Neither of the three have held public office before.

Shoemaker and Hupponen did not go up against any incumbents in Ward 3. Brian Watkins and Pat Mick decided not to stand for re-election.

Romano will take the seat that veteran councillor Frank Manzo held. He also decided not to run again.

Shoemaker said it feels great to be heading to city hall.

"It means a lot, I put in a lot of time and a lot of effort," said the 25-year-old, who received the most votes of five candidates in the race with 2,705, over 800 more than Hupponen.

Shoemaker will focus on keeping taxes below, or at the rate of inflation.

"Which is one of the big campaign issues I heard about at the doors when I spoke to people," he said.

The city should begin working on synchronizing traffic lights on local roads as well, he added.

"And I'd like to see more transparent government. I think people want to know where the money is going, how it's being spent."

Hupponen garnered 1,864 votes. She was more than a little excited Monday night.

"I'm doing great. I am ecstatic," she said when asked about earning a seat at the Civic Centre.

"I'm very happy, I'm very happy ... I'm thrilled to pieces."

Hupponen said she looks forward to working with Shoemaker over the next four years.

"I'm looking forward to moving forward with him with a lot of the issues."

She is also eager to get her feet wet, "and to see how everything works."

"I know what the ward needs, I know what the issues are with all the different subdivisions, but I have to get myself in there just to get orientated so I can understand and take it from there," said Hupponen, who has been a small business owner for more than three decades.

Romano was also excited when reached by cellphone after the results were in.

"It's a great opportunity to try to make some changes in our community and I'm looking forward to getting in there and hitting the ground running," he said.

His top priority will be taking a hard look at the city budget.


"And trying to see if we can be more creative on how we spend our money."

Other goals will include minimizing any tax increases.

Incumbent Joe Krmpotich received the most votes in Ward 6, with 2,085, while Romano received 1,643.

Ozzie Grandinetti was a distant third with 979 votes.

Romano is a lawyer who has practised law in the city since 2005.

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