

## CAMPAIGN 2008

## Candidates clash over ties to community

*Both candidates said party affiliation should not be the top priority in making decisions in Harrisburg.*

By **CHRIS ENGLISH**  
STAFF WRITER

Stronger community ties will make him a better state representative, Republican challenger Frank Farry told a debate audience Thursday night at the Pennswood Village Retirement Community in Middletown.

Not true, countered Democratic incumbent Chris King, D-142.

Farry is the former assistant township manager in Middletown and does work for a local law firm. A Neshaminy High School graduate, he's been chief at the Langhorne-Middletown Fire Company for several years.

King, running for a second twoyear term, is also a Neshaminy grad who grew up in Middletown. After graduating from Millersville University, he worked for several Democratic committees in Harrisburg before unseating longtime Republican state representative Matt Wright in 2006.

"I have dedicated my heart and soul to this community," Farry said. "I've stayed around while Mr. King, after college, chose to work for a partisan political caucus and I believe he has to be beholden to that caucus. That's a stark and distinct contrast between myself and Mr. King. My priority is the community and not the party, and I have no problem voting against my party if it's in the best interest of the community."

King denied being "beholden" to anyone except residents of the 142nd District, and said he agreed with Farry that party interests should not be the first priority.

"I have supported my Republican colleagues in the Legislature on a number of issues," said King. "When I go into a voting booth, I'm voting on the individual first and not the party and I hope that's the way people will make their decisions on this race."

on energy, health care and other issues in a debate that was open only to Pennswood residents and invited guests from the affiliated Newtown Friends School and George School. Debates at Pennswood are usually open to the public, but administrators said construction at the facility limited parking and accessibility there for this debate. The event was organized and moderated by the Bucks County League of Women Voters.

In a debate mostly free of barbs and rancor, both candidates said they opposed the proposed lease of the Pennsylvania Turnpike to a private company.

"From the numbers I've seen so far, I don't think it would be a wise investment but I say that with the caveat that we must do something about our infrastructure," said King.

"I think that lease would have a big impact on our community in terms of higher turnpike tolls," added Farry. "In view of high gas prices and the state of the economy, I oppose putting that added demand on the residents of our district."

King represents Langhorne, Langhorne Manor, Hulmeville, Penndel, most of Middletown and most of Lower Southampton.

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Frank Farry



Chris King