



FILE PHOTO

House call: West Bloomfield Republican state Sen. Dave Honigman paid many visits to homes in the 11th District. Here, he's at the home of Farmington Hills resident Richard Sprader and 3-year-old granddaughter Danielle, during his summer campaign for the U.S. Congress.

'93 looks a lot brighter for Honigman

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Still recovering from back surgery, state Sen. Dave Honigman leaned on a cane and limped over to the living room couch of his West Bloomfield home.

Although the 37-year-old Republican still is feeling pain from the removal of bone fragments near his spine, everything's starting to feel better as the new year kicks in. Everything.

"That includes his state of mind after losing the August Republican primary to Joseph Knollenberg in the hotly contested 11th District Congressional race, probably the most visible political battle Michigan saw in 1992.

"Honigman's war of words — and TV spots — against Knollenberg and Alice Gilbert put him in the spotlight for several months. The Detroit Country Day School alumnus, who described himself as formerly being "the shortest (track) hurdler in the state of Michigan," didn't want to discuss the four-month campaign leading up to the Republican primary, other than to say he wouldn't have done anything differently.

"That includes the use of TV advertisements slamming Gilbert. He had to respond

"It was a tough situation to be in," Honigman said. "We did almost everything we could have done. It was kind of an oddball campaign."

"The veteran legislator defended the so-called "negative" TV ads he employed against Gilbert during the campaign, emphasizing they were done only after the Gilbert camp had done several against him.

"If there were a hundred points of negative ads, I accounted for about five points," he said. "When everybody attacks you that's the worst part about it. If you say nothing, everybody assumes it's true and you're kind of forced to respond."

As far as negative campaigning is concerned, Honigman said the tactic is justified as long as candidates keep their attacks limited to issues.

"But when these attacks got so personal, when they impugn your integrity . . . I don't know how many people believe it but you always worry."

"Then Honigman turned to other presumably less painful topics of discussion.

Other topics

He wished both Knollenberg and Gilbert "the best of luck," and said he'd have to wait a while before discussing with his wife Joann whether to take another crack at winning a political post in Washington, D.C. (his current term in the state Senate expires in 1994). He pointed with pride to recent legislative accomplishments he helped make.

In 1992, Honigman spearheaded the Michigan Industrial and Occupational Safety and Health Act (MIOSHA) to protect employees from hazards in the workplace. The bill was adopted early in the year.

"It (MIOSHA) sets up a whole regulatory infrastructure," the

senator said. "For different industries you have different regulations."

Honigman also managed an achievement to help shield something he is very concerned about, specifically, the environment.

"I preserved the right of local units of government to protect small wetlands which were at risk," he said.

His next effort

Meanwhile, according to Honigman, something he put a lot of energy into during 1992 might see the light of day early in 1993. It's an urban renewal program for major Michigan cities, that will intend to bring new educational opportunities, safer neighborhoods and lower taxes to city residents.

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Recreation: It can supplement the demand for open space, passive and active recreation.

Economic development/redevelopment: Through land banking and parcel consolidation, it can spur economic growth and help prevent deterioration if possible.

Minimize litigation: It can protect the integrity of the city's master plan and avoid suits over use and zoning.

Mitigation: It can help a city meet state and federal regulations for capital improvements.

Municipal uses: It can provide additional public uses such as public safety, tree banking, community gardens and open spaces.

Although the program can become somewhat self-supporting as land is sold for agreed-upon development and the money goes back into land acquisition, Farmington Hills would have some initial cost, Call said.

"We'd have to look at a millage as one possible way to finance it,"

Rick Lampl, the city's community development coordinator, said the plan is just one example of Year 2000's Ideas to improve the city.

The committee, which originated in 1989, had input from 130 citizens, business and civic leaders. The committee's goal has

been to make Farmington Hills "the most livable city in Michigan."

"We wanted this to be real broad-based," Lampl said. "It's like a master plan of what we want in the future."

Lampl said many of the committee's goals have already been achieved. He added that the committee is ongoing. Call said that was an important aspect when the Year 2000 project was launched.

"We didn't want it to just be a report and forget it," he said. "As we accomplish these goals and as things like technology change, so do some of the goals. This gives the city feedback and helps us avoid duplication."

Lampl said the committee is looking at human services as an area of improvement.

"We don't have a department of human services, but we can assist Oakland County," he said.

He added that the response to Year 2000 has been a lot of talent.

"We have a lot of talent in this city," he said. "I think they (members of the advisory committee) are amazed at the number of things that are actually accomplished."

There has been no formal recommendation, but Call said the idea is one the city council will probably consider this year.

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not something that was discussed lightly.

Even some of those who have opposed millage increases in the past are not ready to shoot this one down.

"There's only a slight increase baked into this," said Patrick Anderson, an economist who works for Richard Headlee's Alexander Hamilton Insurance Company. "I think it's only a minor factor."

"A major factor is that the school district has taken the Headlee rollbacks into considera-

tion, and that's the honest thing to do."

Resolutions passed by both city councils commend the consolidation of elections. Those motions don't include officially supporting the renewal itself.

"Normally we haven't gotten involved in this type of thing in the past," said Farmington councilwoman Shirley Richardson. "If we can save our community some money by combining the election, the community is far better off."

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