

Lewand lines up Blanchard team step at a time

By Suzie Rollins Singer
staff writer

Tom Lewand has his eye on western Detroit.

From his office window on the 20th floor of the Michigan Plaza Building downtown, Lewand, director of the governor-elect's transition team, can see the highway signs leading to Lansing.

Nestled in the offices which once housed Gov. William Milliken's Detroit bureau, Governor-elect James Blanchard's top advisor talks about the challenges he is experiencing so close to power.

"It's very exciting to put together the system by which the governor will operate," Lewand said. "I can watch the governor develop his own style, and that's very rewarding."

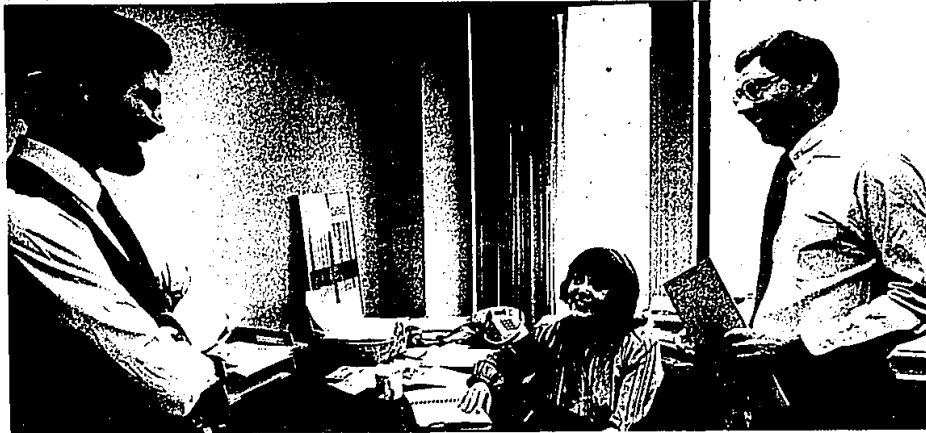
DURING HIS 18-hour work days, Lewand, 34, said he's amazed by the volume of telephone calls filtering into the transition office.

"There are so many requests for meetings with the governor-elect. It's really remarkable. But then it is the first change of administration in 20 years," he added.

It's no secret that not all 55 paid transition staff members will be hired on the governor's payroll, but Lewand won't disclose who will remain or when permanent appointments will be made.

"The governor can only appoint 200 people — 59 on his executive staff and 11 department heads. The others are on various boards and commissions," he explained.

The changing of the guards won't happen all at once, the Royal Oak resident promised.



JOHN STANDI/staff photographer

In their 20th-floor office in Detroit, transition director Tom Lewand (right) discusses the day's events with transition team director of communications Betty Howe, former Oakland County Democratic

chairwoman and an MSU trustee, and legislative director Shelby Solomon.

"People in business have told us that a transition is crazy. Their businesses could never survive if everyone changed at one time."

"Jim is replacing only key department heads to start. The stress of getting the governor's office set up is enough, and he'll let things continue as they are for a short period of time," he added.

Blanchard has said publicly that he won't follow in former President Jimmy Carter's footsteps and rush into making appointments. Instead, he'll pattern himself after President Reagan and begin getting a firm grasp on one department before moving on to others.

THE TRANSITION team works in eight divisions, each dealing with various forms of government ranging from legislative affairs to communications. Lewand and the department heads hired the other staffers.

The \$1 million transition budget must be used to pay off all the people in state government whom Blanchard will lay off, travel expenses, state cars, supplies, phones, and rent.

The vast majority goes to salaries.

In addition, money will be needed for the inaugural, even though a committee is working on raising money for the event," Lewand said.

BECAUSE THE budget is limited, Blanchard has asked Michigan's business leaders to lend him employees to help improve the state's economy.

"It's not uncommon for industry to lend government talent. We've got lawyers and accountants and have one person on loan from Ford Motor Co.," Lewand said.

Milliken has been extremely helpful in making the transition easier, Lewand said.

"George Weeks (Milliken's executive secretary) has been very helpful in suggesting ways for us to organize," Lewand added.

A lawyer, Lewand is a political protégé of Blanchard, a four-term congressman from Pleasant Ridge. Lewand served one term as a county commissioner before making an unsuccessful race in 1980 for county executive. He managed Blanchard's successful campaign for the Democratic nomination and the executive office.

Speculation is that Lewand is in line for the executive secretary post. The transition staff is laced with suburban Democratic workers who have helped either Blanchard or retiring Congressman William Brodhead over the years.

AMIDST THE hoopla, Lewand promised there was one issue the governor and his staff would not lose sight of — jobs.

"We will definitely set up a program to create jobs. There are other state crises the state will face right away and we're studying the budget. The forecasts tell us that \$200-500 million will have to be cut from the budget, but we're still committed to the jobs program," he said.

Lewand noted that jobs could be created without raising taxes if revenue

bonds are sold.

"Congress is already passing some legislation to help the state's and the governor and lieutenant governor have tremendous Congress experience so we're confident we'll get through this," he said.

BLANCHARD will be sworn in as Michigan's 45th governor at 10 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 1, on the steps of the Capitol Building in Lansing.

Administering the oath of office will be state Supreme Court Justice G. Mennen Williams, himself governor from 1949-60. With his wife Paula holding the family Bible, Blanchard will become the first Democratic chief executive in 20 years.

Dr. John A. Hannah, president emeritus of Michigan State University, where Blanchard earned two degrees, will be master of ceremonies. Among other duties, Hannah will introduce Jay Blanchard, the governor's 12-year-old son, who will lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also sworn in, after the Democratic sweep of Nov. 2, will be Lt. Gov. Martha W. Griffiths, Secretary of State Richard Austin, Attorney General Frank Kelley, Supreme Court Justice Michael Cavanaugh, and two members each of the State Board of Education and governing boards of the University of Michigan, MSU and Wayne State University.



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INSIDE ANGLES

CONGRATULATIONS GO OUT TO Farmington Hills resident Forrest Strand who has been named to the board of directors of the Southeastern Michigan American Lung Association. He also will serve as a member of the environmental and occupational health, public information and membership committees.

ATTENTION LIBRARY patrons. The Farmington and Farmington Hills branches of the Farmington Community Library will be closed on Dec. 24-25 and Dec. 31-Jan. 1 in observance of the Christmas and New Year holidays.

AT EASE TOP. Army Reservist John Nielson, whose mother lives in Farmington Hills, has made her very proud by being promoted to first sergeant. He is with the headquarters company, 300th Military Police Command (U.S. Army Reserve) in Inlet, Nielson's civilian employment is as a dispatcher with the Detroit Metro Water and Sewerage Department.

TWO FOR THE PRICE of one always sounds good. And that's what the Albion College swim team has in the talents of brothers Mark and Mike Grover who are members of that school's swim team. They are the sons of Ned Grover of Farmington Hills.

A LITTLE CHARITY sure goes a long way in these hard times and is deeply appreciated. More folks should take the lead of the employees over at Young Cleaners. The group got together and for six months each employee donated a \$1 a week. The results is that two families in need will be the recipients of food, clothing and toys for the holidays. We think such thoughtfulness should be noted. Those participating in this were Rita Raffin, Shirley Ruffenburg, Debra Cook, Leonard Baylor, Bertha Boykin, Dorothy Murray, Raymond Kennedy, Beverly Hurley and Angela Clipper.

ANOTHER GROUP TO BE RECOGNIZED, this time for their math prowess are those students from North Farmington who finished in the top six percent on part I of the annual Michigan Mathematics Prize Competition. They are: Plato Chen, Tom Ferrer, Eric Kohl, Dave Mark, Dan Ryan, Jonathan Samuels, Dan Sperling, and Greg York. Great going.

YET ANOTHER PAT on the back for Barbara Balmforth, secretary for Farmington Hills City Manager Larry Savage. Seems that folks up at city hall plum forgot about having the official pho-

tograph of the 1982 Miss Farmington, Rosene D'Acecco, taken with the reigning mayor, Barbara caught the mistake and the honors were taken care of at this week's council session. The portrait will join the others on the city hall wall.

SOME OTHER NOTABLES WHO HAVE done their good deed are those who recently participated in the children's book week at Middlebelt School. Each volunteer acted as guest readers. They were: Larry Freedman, Farmington schools assistant superintendent; Graham Lewis, special education assistant superintendent; Jill Locke, of the Farmington Community Library; Hope Nakstoll, of the Farmington Players; John Nichols, Farmington Hills chief of police; school trustees Helen Prutow and Janice Rolnick and School Superintendent Lewis Schulman.

SOME HOLIDAY TIPS. While holidays can be fun, some precautions are suggested by our friends over at Henry Ford Hospital.

- Holiday plants such as holly and mistletoe have berries which are poisonous. Poinsettia leaves also are poisonous. Be sure to place such plants out of reach of children and animals. If poisoning occurs, call your local poison control center or hospital emergency service and be ready to identify the substance ingested.

- A fire in the fireplace, lots of candles and decorative lights help add to the festive mood at holiday time. But fires can spoil the mood if things get out of hand and someone gets burned. If the burn is serious, don't use salve or home remedies, but rather keep the victim lying down with his/her feet slightly elevated and call for help. Burns are often more serious than they appear. For less serious burns, cool the burned area with cold water.

- Drinking all too often is part of holiday parties. When drinking guests are ready to drive home, trouble threatens. Do yourself a favor. Serve non-alcoholic beverages. If alcohol is served, offer guests hearty hors d'oeuvres. Close the bar and offer coffee or another non-alcoholic beverage the last hour or two of the party. If a guest is inebriated, call him/her a cab or insist that he/she spend the night. Don't allow your guests to create an emergency on the way home.

THE NORDIC SKI PATROL at the Independence Oaks County Park is looking for 40 trained volunteers to work the trails in snow. Those interested should call Jim Meloche at 879-8820 or 825-8388. The patrolers, trained in first aid, emergency care and search-and-rescue training, help skiers who need direction or help.

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