

Abraham lines up key GOP moderate

Spencer Abraham moved closer to the chairmanship of the Michigan Republican Party as a moderate leader joined conservatives in backing him for the top post.

Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy announced his support for Abraham Monday, three weeks ahead of the state GOP convention.

"After losing an election, we need some revitalization," Murphy said at a press conference Tuesday. "I think Spencer is going to bring some new young blood to the party."

Abraham, 39, of East Lansing, is a lawyer and served as Richard Headlee's pollster in Headlee's campaign for governor last year.

CONSERVATIVES have been lining up behind Abraham in recent weeks.

Robert J. Huber, who ran second in the 1982 U.S. Senate primary, last week revealed Spencer is the No. 2 choice of precinct delegates who answered a poll made by his organization, Michigan Citizens Supporting the Presidency.

Of 381 persons who answered the survey, there were 264 points for former state Sen. Jack Welborn, 252 for Abraham, 168 for Headlee, 157 for Huber and 93 for Oakland Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson.

Since neither Welborn, Headlee, Huber nor Patterson is a candidate for the chairmanship, that leaves Abraham as the conservatives' top choice.

Asked why he believes Abraham is more qualified than the other two candidates, Murphy said, "We need a change from the organization we've had."

"Randy Riecker is a great lady and a great Republican. But she doesn't represent a change."

"Dick Chrysler would be a change. He's a high-caliber Republican who would be very competent to do the job if elected."

OCC hosting 'College Fair'

Thirty-nine Michigan colleges and universities will be participating in a "College Fair" sponsored by Oakland Community College on Feb. 15.

Representatives will provide information on programs, tuition, admission policies and financial aid.

The fair will be from 11 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. and 5:30-7:30 p.m. in G-Building of the Auburn Hills Campus, 2900 Featherstone, Auburn Heights.

There is no admission charge.

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Ford chief:

Car market bottomed in late '82

The long-awaited improvement in car and truck sales appears to have begun and should continue on an upward trend for the remainder of the year, a Ford Motor Co. executive said in Grand Rapids.

Louis E. Latali, Ford Division general manager, told the Grand Rapids Economic Club he is optimistic about the outlook for the auto industry and the nation's economy in general. "I foresee a real improvement in automotive sales, and 1983 should be the start of the long-term recovery of the industry," he said.

Latali projected sales of 8.8 million cars and 2.9 million trucks for the industry in 1983, increased from 8 million cars and 2.6 million trucks, respectively, in 1982.

CONFIDENCE in the sales outlook is being expressed by production hikes of 30 percent on cars and 8 percent on trucks for the industry in the first quarter of the new year, he pointed out.

Latali cited several sales facts that indicate the industry "bottomed out" toward the end of 1982 and began gaining momentum.

"There was strong industry growth in the final three quarters of last year, especially the fourth

Ford to recall 900 at Wixom

Ford Motor Co. will add a second work shift at its Wixom Assembly Plant, resulting in the recall of about 900 hourly employees now on layoff.

The western Oakland County plant will begin recalling small numbers of workers as early as mid-March. The full complement will be back at work for the second shift starting May 2.

The addition of the 900 employees will bring the work force at the Wixom plant to about 3,200 employees.

The Wixom plant produces the Continental, Lincoln and Mark VI luxury passenger cars.

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