

Murder spurs death penalty petition drive

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(O&E)

By Kathy Parrish
staff writer

this time he expects his efforts to be successful.

Five years ago, L. Brooks Patterson toured the state to kick off a petition drive to reinstate capital punishment for murder. The unsuccessful effort took three years and cost \$22,000 — including \$11,000 of his own money.

His aim is to gather 400,000 signatures by June 1988 to get 304,001 valid signatures. Last time he needed 309,000 signatures but the Board of Censors ruled there were insufficient valid signatures.

Last week the Oakland County Prosecutor hit the same trail again. But

"I said I wouldn't do it again unless an angel came along. And it did," explained Patterson, who now has as-

"We don't put a premium on human life in this society. Capital punishment is necessary to deter would-be killers. It is a just punishment; a punishment that fits the crime."

—L. Brooks Patterson

sured funding for the effort.

Friends of John Gray, a Bloomfield Township man murdered Feb. 9 in his home, have raised \$5,000 for the effort. They have pledged \$50,000 for the campaign, which Patterson expects to cost \$30,000.

"THESE ARE successful businessmen who were close friends of Mr. Gray who are adamant in their position that his senseless death will not have been in vain."

The two men accused of murdering Gray are scheduled to go to trial May 21 before Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Robert Anderson.

Along with funding, Patterson also has 7,500 circulators already in a cam-

pany. "Last time, we had to build an organization from scratch," he explained during a press conference in his courthouse office.

As well as Pontiac, he kicked off drives in Alpena, Grand Rapids, Warren, Eastland and Flint.

The prosecutor also sent out 10,000 letters asking for support.

"I feel confident support is increasing around the state," Patterson said.

UP FOR RE-ELECTION this year, Patterson said his capital-punishment drive is not timed as a campaign issue.

In fact, the prosecutor believes it will hurt him with some voters.

Storm causes \$10,000 in damage to traffic signals

One-fifth of the traffic signals on the Oakland County road system were knocked out of service during Monday's high winds, but none was ripped down.

Estimated cost of the nearly 700 person hours devoted to storm emergency responses approaches \$10,000, said John L. Grubba, managing director of the Road Commission.

"I think our people did an exceptionally fine job under the circumstances," he said. "We're proud, also, that signal installations were strong enough to withstand these unusually trying conditions. We know many motorists were concerned about that as signals strained their harnesses."

Winds reaching 63 miles per hour scattered

debris on roadways throughout the county — including an uprooted tree which was slammed across a car on Millford Road in Highland Township.

The Oakland County Road Commission's traffic-

safety department crews working 16 hours restored traffic signals at all major intersections by 11 p.m.

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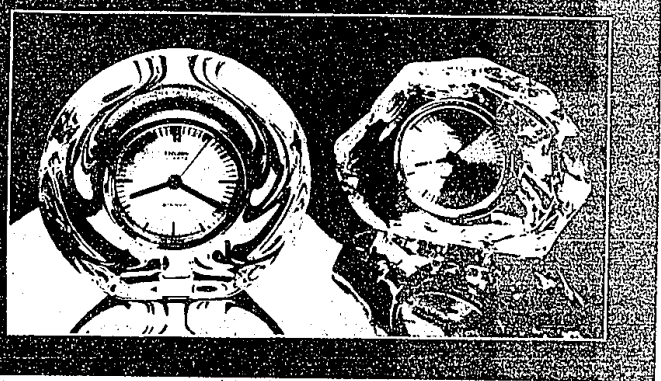
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