

Dems meet: 'won't forget' middle class

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Michigan Democrats this weekend will begin the party rebuilding job after their heavy defeats of last Nov. 8. This time the leadership is vowing not to forget the white middle class.

"We learned that our message didn't appeal to middle-class Americans — and those who aspire to the middle class. We've got to change that," warned Richard (Rick) Wiener, who is seeking a second term as chair of the Democratic State Central Committee.

"The public sees us as just the sum of our parts, and it doesn't like that," said Wiener, pointing party workers toward "new young workers, professional people, small business people and retired people."

BUT THE dominance of two parts — the United Auto Workers union and the Michigan Education Association — still showed up as suburban Democrats announced their sites for Saturday's district conventions. The sites:

- 2nd Congressional District — Wayne County portion: 9:30 a.m., Livonia Education Association office, 29750 Munger (south of Six Mile, west of Middlebelt). The district includes Plymouth and Northville.

- 14th Congressional District: 9 a.m. (registration), UAW regional headquarters, 12000 E. Twelve Mile, Warren. The district includes part of Troy.

- 15th Congressional District: 10 a.m., UAW Local 900, Michigan Avenue west of Newburgh, Wayne. The district includes southern Livonia, Garden City, Westland and Canton Township.

- 17th Congressional District: 10:30 a.m. (registration), Southfield Civic Center, 28000 Evergreen. The district includes Southfield, Lathrup Village and Bedford Township.

- 18th Congressional District: 1 p.m., Birmingham Community House, 380 S. Bates. The district includes Birmingham-Bloomfield, greater Rochester, most of Troy, West Bloomfield and greater Farmington.

Attending will be elected precinct delegates and party members (\$10 basic; \$2 for senior citizens; \$3 for students). They will elect delegates and alternates to the Feb. 9-10 state convention in Detroit.

THE STATE convention will pick party officers Feb. 10 in Cobo Hall.

Wiener, who was Gov. James J. Blanchard's selection for the chair in 1983, so far has no announced opposition. He used a full page in the January issue of *The Michigan Democrat*, the party's general publication, to cover his record, his candidacy and his goals.

Wiener directed field efforts for Democrats in three major campaigns — U.S. Sen. Donald Riegle in 1976, U.S. Sen. Carl Levin in 1978 and Blanchard in 1982. None was an incumbent.

The 37-year-old lawyer also is running for president of the Association of State Democratic Chairs. The last Michiganian to hold both posts was Morley Winograd of Troy, he was state chair from 1973-79 and national association president in 1979-80.

Congressional district caucuses will elect district officers and members of the Democratic State Central Committee, governing body of the party between conventions.

DESPITE THE Reagan landslide of 1984 — in which Michigan Democrats lost the presidency, all eight state education seats, a congressman and a half-dozen state representatives — Wiener saw these bright spots in the picture:

- Levin won a second term.
- Two outstate Democratic congressmen whom Republicans had targeted — Howard Wolpe and Bob Carr — won reelection.
- Democrats hung onto a majority in the State House of Representatives.
- Democrats "helped defeat Proposal C (Voter's Choice) and helped save our state and its people from economic disaster."
- "We developed a computerized database second to none in the country."
- "We added 15,000 new small donors to broaden our financial base."
- "We launched the most successful voter registration drive in 20 years."

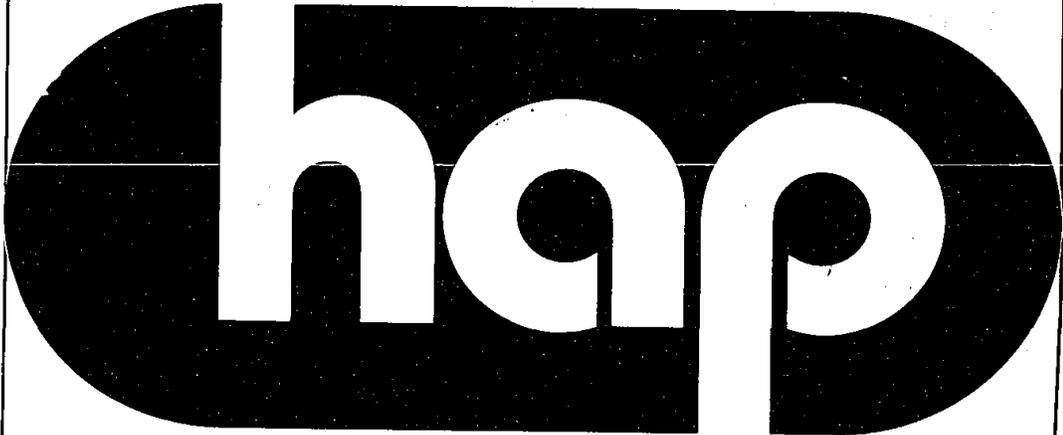
Robot love

Someone who collects butterflies is a lepidopterist. A coin collector is a numismatist. He who collects stamps is a philatelist.

But what do you call someone who collects robots? Peter Grunbaum owns 1,000 joy robots, and keeps 200 of them in his apartment. Grunbaum says his fascination with the space-age toys is a reflection of their enormous popularity starting in the early 1950s.

Grunbaum, a marketing executive for an American firm in Switzerland, has astronaut robots, warrior robots, robot rockets and flying saucers. Some of the little automatons are worth \$150 or more.

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