

'Others' have their agenda in Atlanta

ATLANTA — This story is about "others."

You know, 5,000 Democratic delegates and alternates, 13,000 media folks and several thousand others.

"Others" are in the street pressing the flesh, in the Michigan delegation enjoying the spectacle, or making contacts from across Democratic America.

KEITH GEIGER is now a Virginian and not even a delegate.



DOUG ASHLEY

West Bloomfield resident Ron Thayer, an aide to Gov. James Blanchard, and Democratic National convention whip Ann Beser use a monitor to keep pace with the convention proceedings.

"I'm with the National Education Association national leadership. We're part of the caucus system," said Geiger, who looks much as he did when he taught at Livonia's Stevenson High from 1967 to 1977, except for some dignified gray strands.

"We have 400 delegates and alternates," Geiger said.

Like AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) and other unions, NEA keeps tabs on its people and wants

everyone conscious of the teacher union's message.

Geiger, the former Michigan NEA president, was shaking hands busily at a Sunday night reception for his old and new friends in the Michigan delegation.

"I'm a vice president of NEA now. I do a lot of traveling — speaking engagements, teacher groups at school visits," Geiger said.

He is seeking a bigger job. Mary Hatwood Futrell can't seek the NEA presidency again, and Geiger is campaigning for next year.

The president is eligible for three two-year terms, or six years in the post.

Geiger's message: Will America choose to educate every child or just 70-75 percent? He advocates quality improvements: day care, latchkey kids programs, lifelong learning and alternative schools for low achievers.

"It's going to cost more. We've done a good job of tightening standards, adding math and science," he said.

"I'M FUND RAISING," said Lana Pollack.

The two-term state senator from Ann Arbor attended the same party, but her fund raising was done downtown.

Pollack would like to unseat U.S. Republican Congressman Carl Purcell of Plymouth, and already she has raised \$147,000, assuring the 2nd Congressional District will be one of the hottest contests in America.

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DOUG ASHLEY

Southfield's Larry Chunovich always keeps an ear open for educational issues. He's president

of the Michigan Education Association. With him is Gail Nolin of Sylvan Lake.

Big surprise: Republicans shun Dukakis

By Rich Perlberg
staff writer

As far as news goes, it is about as surprising as we dreamed following Tuesday. But area Republicans are making it clear this week they don't think much of the Democratic candidate for president.

"Some polls have shown Michael Dukakis is beating George Bush, but those same polls also indicate people know very little about Mr. Dukakis," said L. Brooks Patterson, Oakland County prosecuting attorney and leader of the the Bush campaign in Michigan.

"The more they know the less they'll like it."

Patterson made his remarks Monday at a Southfield press conference called by the Republican State Committee. Similar press conferences are planned throughout the state this week in an attempt to steal some thunder from the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta.

REPUBLICANS ALSO are trying to paint a picture of Dukakis as a Massachusetts governor who is soft on crime and drugs but strong on taxes.

Patterson, perhaps the state's best recognized law-and-order advocate, criticized Dukakis for commuting the sentences of 37 convicted murderers and supporting a prison weekend furlough policy "that allows drug dealers, rapists and murderers to leave prison unsupervised."

Patterson quipped that Dukakis was the governor of "Taxachusetts," and that under his leadership the

'The last time they ran a Democratic governor, it took us four years to learn from his mistakes.'

— L. Brooks Patterson

state's tax burden has risen from the 22nd to the fifth highest in the nation.

"The last time they ran a Democratic governor, it took us four years to learn from his mistakes," said Patterson. "We won't make the same mistakes twice."

REPUBLICAN SPOKESMAN Rusty Hills said the press conferences were designed to inform the public about Dukakis. He also conceded the public needed to learn more about Bush in light of a recent poll that indicated voters think Dukakis has more leadership qualities.

Hills also winced at the fact that Bush has to fight a wimp image. "I'm not sure that many people know that Bush flew over 50 combat missions," he said.

Southfield resident Lori Packer, state director of the Pat Robertson campaign, was also part of Monday's press conference as part of a show of Republican unity.

She said she still thinks Robertson was the better candidate, but now that Bush is going to be the party's nominee, "I don't have any problem backing the ticket."

Convention jumper can crack the whip

By Tim Richard
staff writer

ATLANTA — For Gail Nolin, it was jumping from one convention to another.

The 18th Congressional District Dukakis delegate arrived here a bit tired after the National Education Association conclave in New Orleans — tired but eager for more politicking.

"I'll be working the phone for Dukakis for the Michigan delegation," said Nolin, whose title is whip.

"I have to make sure that Dukakis delegates know the Dukakis position on the platform and all the other votes. I tell them 'It's important you be in your seat for this one'."

The work has been constant, particularly during Tuesday's platform debate, but she had it tougher four years ago.

"I was the at-large whip," said the fifth grade teacher from Sylvan Lake. That meant she rode hard on

the party big wigs for Moodle. She said she treats party big wigs and fifth graders the same — as people.

SHE REPORTS to U.S. Rep. Dennis Hertel, D-Harper Woods, Dukakis leader from Michigan. Active in Democratic politics since 1971, Nolin is at her fourth national convention.

The NEA convention was in New Orleans where Republicans will gather next month. She does political work along with other business in the teacher's union and represents that potent block in Democratic circles.

"NEAPAC (its political arm) endorsed Dukakis," she said proudly. "I was working on raising money for political activity. Then we elected Edith Swanson (Ypsilanti teacher) to the national executive committee."

"We elected Edith one day and started work on Keith Geiger's campaign the next," she said. Geiger, a former Livonia teacher, is an NEA vice president and is running for president next year.

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