

'One of us' to change Democratic Party

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Tom Lewand will make two changes now that he is Democratic state chairman.

One will be to hire an executive director to manage day-to-day affairs.

The other is "to involve more young people in this party — as Ronald Reagan and George Bush have (on the Republican side)."

Lewand, 42, of Bloomfield Township Sunday was elected to a two-year term as head of Michigan's majority party. A longtime associate of Gov. James J. Blanchard, Lewand will bring an Oakland County style into the operation.

THE OAKLAND style is to have a part-time policy-making chair and a detail person as executive director.

"Tom will be a catalyst to do things," said Larry Delich, a Birmingham attorney and party treasurer for the last two years.

"The Oakland County Democratic Party is a fine organization, a model for anything," Delich said. "And Tom's one of us."

"It works very well," said current two-term Democratic chairman Louis Miller of Franklin. "It allows the chair to step in and pull all the pieces together. There is more freedom on the part of the chair to promote universal Democratic interests."

KAY PENNER, former executive director in Oakland and now chief of staff in Blanchard's labor department, said:



"It's our responsibility to convey their message to our youth. They should be motivated by the same sense of justice and fair play that brought me into the Democratic Party in the 1960s."

— Tom Lewand
Democratic state chair

"The chair and elected officers establish the policy and goals and direction. My job was to make those things happen."

Added Mary Ryan Taras, former county Democratic chair and a Birmingham high school teacher:

"I would talk to Kay two or three times a day. I made the contacts with the officers and candidates. Her job was putting it together and causing it to happen."

"And you have to like people. I wanted people to feel they were glad they had called (party headquarters). They need to be treated well."

Penner was a high school English teacher who left education to raise

children and later found teaching jobs gone when she tried to return.

SOME DEMOCRATS, used to full-time executives, raised eyebrows at the notion of having a part-time party chair.

Treasurer Delich had no qualms: "If I know Tom, he'll end up doing two jobs full time."

Frank Garrison, president of the state AFL-CIO, sought to pacify the labor caucus before the convention. As labor leaders waited 10 minutes for Lewand to arrive and speak, Garrison said:

"I've known Tom Lewand a good many years. This guy doesn't know what part time is. There's no ques-

tion we will get a full-time chairman. His law practice will be scaled down."

Lewand, a former Oakland County commissioner and 1980 county executive candidate, made a point of his ability to juggle several jobs at once. As a law student, he said he edited the law review, had a family and managed Sen. Carl Levin's first campaign for the Detroit City Council.

THERE'S NO job description yet, and no pay scale, for either the new chair or executive director.

"The jobs pay in the \$60s (thousands) now. All that's going to change," Lewand said in an interview in a Cobo Hall corridor. He said he expected to be paid less than retiring chair Rick Wiener, 41, of Lansing.

Marya Sieminski, Wiener's chief aide, has left and today is scheduled to be appointed to a new \$50,000 post as fiscal adviser to the Wayne County Board of Commissioners.

On an interim basis, the chief staff person in the old brick house on Townsend Street in Lansing is Ann Beser, but Lewand said, "She doesn't want to stay. I offered her a chance to stay on."

"She's a true executive. She could run many organizations. She's good with people, good in politics."

THE STAFF job may be extremely demanding.

Bryan Amann, 31, an assistant to Wayne County executive Ed McNamara, said he had been approached by Lewand about the job, but wasn't interested because of the long hours required. "I have two



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— Louis Miller
Oakland Democratic chair

young children," said Amann.

Amann of Wayne chairs the 15th Congressional District party organization. For McNamara, he handles criminal justice programs. Previously, he was a deputy to Wayne County clerk James Kilteen and ran Sheriff Robert Ficcano's unsuccessful campaign for executive.

Wiener, whose relationship with Blanchard appeared to have cooled after six years, campaigned for the national chairmanship of the Democratic Party but withdrew last week when he saw he couldn't get the votes.

AFTER PAYING homage to labor and civil rights leaders in his accep-

ance speech, Lewand departed from his text to touch on his youth theme.

He introduced a high school student whom he recruited to serve on a committee on making the Democratic Party more appealing to students.

"It's our responsibility to convey their message to our youth. They should be motivated by the same sense of justice and fair play that brought me into the Democratic Party in the 1960s," Lewand said. The theme was applauded by the 18th District chair, Birmingham attorney Don Tucker. He said young people should be motivated by the Democratic ideal of public service rather than the Republican ideal of private profit.

Dems pick their district officers

Michigan Democrats elected local party leaders, as well as a state chairman, during their weekend convention in Detroit. Here are Observer & Eccentric-area officers by congressional district:

14TH DISTRICT

The district is mainly in Macomb County and stretches to the southeast corner of Troy.

Gaylen McDonald of Troy was elected to the Democratic State Central Committee. Charles Henry of Troy was elected to the district executive committee.

District chair is Joyce White Lalonde of East Detroit.

17TH DISTRICT

Chair, Dan Paleto, Dearborn Heights councilman. Vice chair, Vicki Goldbaum, Southfield councilwoman. Recording secretary, Karen White. Wayne County second and third vice chairs, Freeman Hendrix of Detroit and Gerry Gajewski of Redford. Oakland County second and third vice chairs, Sheila Pollack of

Huntington Woods and Don Falkenburg of Royal Oak.

Democratic State Central Committee members (10): John Dewan of Madison Heights, Sam McKnight of Royal Oak, Barry Lepler of Huntington Woods, Ed Piaweck of Dearborn Heights, Larry Lewis of Detroit, Dorothy Mick of Berkeley, Martha Kinney of Pleasant Ridge, Artissie Evans of Southfield, Grace Hampton of Inkster and Catherine Starks of Detroit.

18TH DISTRICT

Chair, Don Tucker, Birmingham. Oakland vice chair, Gerald Freedman of Farmington Hills. Recording secretary, Aldo Vagnoni of Farmington Hills. Corresponding secretary, Nellja Pomeranz of Troy.

Democratic State Central Committee (Oakland only): Don Lindemeyer of Northville, Roger Winkelman of West Bloomfield, Duane LaMoreaux of Union Lake, Linda Lash of Rochester, B.J. Griffin of Auburn Hills, Kelly Allen of Birmingham and Vicki Barnett of Farmington Hills.

Democratic quotes

What they said at the Democratic State Convention Sunday in Detroit's Cobo Hall:

U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, describing President George Bush's inauguration:

"The limousines, the diamonds, the Republicans."

Retiring Democratic state chair Rick Wiener, on what he'll do next:

"I'm going to take my kid to Disney World."

Wiener, on his job prospects:

"I'll let you know in 90 days."

Wiener, on his three terms as party chair:

"The best six years of my life." Arthur Featherstone, a black who was nominated to run against Tom Lewand for state chair but dropped out before a vote could be taken, complaining about party leaders' failure to consult black Detroiters while engineering Lewand's election:

"Plantation politics . . . smoke-filled rooms."

Wayne County Executive Ed McNamara, after promising the public a new jail, a new golf course, a cleanup of the Rouge River, found only one of his pledges applauded by Democratic State Convention delegates:

"A new day care center for county employees."

Chair-elect Tom Lewand, on the task facing governmental officials in the 1990s:

"How do we balance the ideals of Roosevelt and Reuther, King and Kennedy with the tight budgets that have been forced on us . . . ? Democrats don't have to be 'big spenders' to be big achievers."

Attorney General Frank Kelley, addressing the convention:

"We have a vice president who thinks the Declaration of Independence is telling his dad he's taking the keys to the family car tonight."

OU, hospital in new lab deal

Oakland University will pay \$100,000 to Ford Hospital for a facilities use agreement and to help support the establishment of a neuromagnetism laboratory. OU physics faculty and some students would have access to the lab for research.

The OU Board of Trustees approved the one-time payment Jan. 11. Total cost of the facility will be more than \$400,000.

University officials said the agreement continues a collaboration with Ford Hospital. Already the agreement has provided support for eight OU doctoral graduate assistants in medical physics.

The hospital has made laboratories with several million dollars in equipment available to faculty and students.

THE NEW neuromagnetism laboratory will be added to existing facilities in the Department of Neurology.

The relatively new field of neuromagnetism is said to show promise in clinical diagnosis and for basic research in the neurosciences.

OU officials say Ford will gain the expertise in biomagnetic measurements and instrumentation available from OU faculty.

Faculty and graduate students will gain access to a neuromagnetism laboratory that the university could never hope to establish on its own.

TRUSTEES WERE were told the hospital and university benefit from the collaborations.

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