

Howe, Patterson square off on issues facing county

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER



Election '92

Candidates for Oakland County executive appeared ready to shift gears this week as they prepared for two debates — the only face-to-face public appearances scheduled so far before the Nov. 3 election.

Democrat Elizabeth "Betty" Howe and Republican L. Brooks Patterson are scheduled to debate in Royal Oak today and again at noon Thursday in Southfield. The latter has been moved to the Atrium Gardens of the Southfield Radisson Hotel by its sponsors, the Southfield Optimist Club. Cost of lunch is \$10 per person.

"These will probably be the only two debates," said James M. Alexander, chairman of the Oakland County Republicans. "That should be enough."

The Patterson camp has rejected a suggestion from Democratic County Chairman Donald F. Tucker for additional debates, with television and/or radio coverage.

Howe Friday said she is preparing for this week's debates by intensifying her campaign . . . and hounding her message. As an example, she pointed to a breakfast meeting earlier in the week sponsored by the Alliance for the Mentally Ill at the Kingsley Inn.

"I came away from that meeting astonished," she said. "There was a chilling report about mental health services in Oakland County. About one-third of those who need it are getting mental health services."

"Ironically, there were people from Community Mental Health in the audience, and nobody could deny those statistics. I was astonished."

Howe has repeatedly tried to poke holes in what she says is the myth

that Oakland County government — possibly the least visible of all political entities — is efficient.

Mental health services are an example, she said. Oakland isn't getting its fair share of state money earmarked to help the mentally ill.

In his campaign last week, Patterson outlined a 10-point economic program to eliminate bureaucratic red tape or other obstacles that might stand in the way of companies — and jobs — coming to

Oakland County.

During a press conference at Long Manufacturing in Rochester Hills, the former Oakland County prosecutor said Oakland has become complacent about attracting new businesses.

He vowed to form a "Business Roundtable," composed of local business leaders, to advise him on economic development and on maintaining a government more receptive to industry.

George Gallup at OU

Tickets still remain for the Thursday, Oct. 1, lecture at Oakland University by pollster George Gallup Jr., speaker at the annual business forum. Gallup will speak on "Forecast

2000" based on opinion leader surveys of the major events.

Tickets for the noon program at OU are \$30 each. Tickets are available at the door or in advance by calling 370-3286.

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