

GOP senators win important legislative posts

By TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Area Republicans are moving up in the Michigan Senate hierarchy with the departure of Vern Ehlers, R-Grand Rapids, to the U.S. Congress.

Sen. Michael Bouchard, R-Birmingham, won Ehlers' old seat on the budget-writing Senate Appropriations Committee, "one of the

most important functions in state government," in Bouchard's words.

To get that post, Bouchard had to give up the chair of the Education Committee, a policy panel, and a seat on the tax writing Finance Committee.

Bouchard's other committee posts will be (1) Energy and Technology and (2) Corporations

and Economic Development.

Sen. David Honigman, R-West Bloomfield, was named "temporary" chair by Senate majority leader Dick Posthumus, R-Alto. Honigman already chairs two committees — Labor and Local Government. In addition, Honigman was assigned to the Family Law, Mental Health and Corrections Committee.

Sen. Mat Dunaskiss, R-Lake Orion, will move to the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs. In this new committee assignment, Dunaskiss replaces Ehlers as vice chair.

"We've been fighting for a long time to ensure that the Waterford Hills landfill remains closed for good, and we've been waging a battle to prevent the construction of a solid waste incinerator in Auburn Hills," Dunaskiss said.

Dunaskiss gave up his seat on the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules (JCAR) but considered it a good swap. "Oakland County has a large population of outdoor lovers, and they are always keenly interested in environmental issues," he said. Dunaskiss will be on the panel looking at a package of bills to rejuvenate Michigan's 100 state parks.

Dunaskiss continues to chair the Senate Energy and Technol-

ogy Committee and to serve on the Health Policy Committee.

Bouchard's new post means the Observer & Eccentric area will have three seats on Appropriations. The chairs are held by Robert Geake, R-Northville, and Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills.

More musical chairs may occur when voters in the Grand Rapids area fill Ehlers' Senate seat in a special election in April.

Scholarship deadline is March 31

Oakland County Executive Brooks Patterson has established an annual scholarship program to be administered through the county's Community and Minority Affairs Department.

This year two \$750 scholarships will be given in the name of the late Martin Luther King Jr. The money comes from Patterson's political campaign fund.

High school seniors who have at least a 2.5 grade point average and are active in community service are eligible for the scholarships. To enter, write a 200-300 word essay about King's famous speech called, "I Have A Dream."

Entries must be typewritten, double-spaced and postmarked by March 31. Only one essay per student is permitted.

Winners will be picked by April 30. The money may be used for tuition at any college, university or vocational training school of the student's choice, in Michigan or out of state.

Mail entries to Oakland County Community and Minority Affairs, Rebecca Holowicki, 1200 N. Telegraph, Dept. 409, Pontiac 48341-0409.

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