

# Area delegates accept Gen. Powell's message

BY TIM RICHARD  
STAFF WRITER

SAN DIEGO — Michigan Republicans say Gen. Colin Powell unified the entire GOP by raising the toughest issue — his pro-choice stand on abortion — and then getting it out of the way.

"He said it and moved on," said Oakland County Republican chair Cathy Longo of Troy. "We knew someone would have to deliver that message."

"There was some boing when he said he was pro-choice," said Wayne County GOP chair Edward Haroutunian. "But what you heard was that we are a party that's big enough that we can disagree. The entire body got up."

Powell, who chose against being a presidential contender, closed Monday's program before a pro-life party by mentioning that several big-state governors like Pete Wilson of California and William Weld of Massachusetts had been prevented

from saying: A significant minority of the GOP is either pro-choice or doesn't want abortion to be a litmus test issue.

"Powell was courageous," said Steve Ragan, 13th District delegate from Plymouth Township.

There was a small scattering of boos for a woman's right to choose. I sat next to Sen. (Loren) Bennett, who is conservative, and he applauded. I was surprised. The mood is not as intolerant as expected.

"It's good those issues come up now and we get them out of the way," said Nanig Manoukian, at-large delegate for Buchanan from West Bloomfield.

Certainly we're conservative, but there's room for differences," said her alternate, husband Ben Manoukian. "There are extremes on both sides."

"Wonderful!" said Peg Sippola, an 11th District delegate from Livonia. "I've never heard him talk that way before." Husband Art agreed: "There were a few boos, then it (the audience) went 'yeah! Yesterday was upbeat.'"

"Great," said Troy mayor pro-tem Bob Gosselin. A 12th District Buchanan delegate, Gosselin visibly shrugged when he said, "He's pro-choice."

"He talked unity and togetherness; stability," said U.S. Rep. Dick Chrysler of Brighton. "We're a big tent party. We want to reach everybody. The Democrats would kill to have Powell. He chose the Republican Party."

"This party goes from Buchanan to Powell," said Joe Fitzsimmons, Ann Arborite who is the nominee in the 13th Congressional District. "The divisions are under control. We are united."

"Uplifting," said Jim Willoughby, retired Ford employee from Bloomfield Township who drives to every convention. "I happen to be pro-choice. I don't think the government should be in it at all. That (Powell's reference to being pro-choice) didn't turn me off any more than the stuff Ralph Reed (director of the Christian Coalition) comes up with."



PHOTO BY DODO ARLETT

Shared moment: Elaine Donnelly, Ronna Romney of Bloomfield Hills and Cathy Longo, Oakland County party chairwoman share a light moment at the convention.

U.S. Sen. Spencer Abraham bashed media types who say the GOP is divided. "In one night, we put that to rest."

Word spread that Secretary of State Candice Miller was told by presidential nominee Bob Dole that Powell may be available to stump for him in Michigan. The unanimous reaction: Good news.

## OCC hosts 2-day virtual reality seminar for engineers, students

On Aug. 27-28, Oakland Community College will host a two-day clinic exploring the latest manufacturing applications for

virtual reality. The event will feature experts in the field, demonstrations of state-of-the-art prototyping equipment at

OCC's Advanced Technology Center and a tour of the EDS Detroit Virtual Reality Center.

Sponsored by OCC, the Society

of Manufacturing Engineers and the Oakland County Business Roundtable, the conference will show how virtual reality allows the user to identify defects and problems before product launch.

The two-day clinic is preceded by an optional tutorial Monday evening, Aug. 26. Conducted by Ronald Pavlak, professor of Computer Information Systems

at OCC, the tutorial will provide a basic introduction to virtual reality.

Pavlak will also conduct the opening session at the clinic Aug. 27. Additional sessions include "Commercial Applications of Virtual Reality," "Virtual Environments for Automotive Design Evaluations" and "Prototyping in Virtual Reality."

Participants will have the opportunity to visit with virtual reality vendors.

Cost to attend the two-hour Monday night tutorial is \$125. Registration for the two-day clinic is \$545 for SME members and \$645 non members. A special student rate of \$95 for the tutorial or clinic portion is available. For registration information call SME Customer Service at 1-800-733-4763.

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## The voice of public education The Making of Champions

As I watched the closing ceremonies in Atlanta, it occurred to me that training to become an Olympic athlete is a process not unlike education. It requires a commitment of body, heart and brain. It is a commitment measured in years, not in semesters...a commitment on the part of the trainer as well as the athlete...the teacher as well as the student.

Currently, a new instrument in Michigan's public high schools is capturing a great deal of attention—from students, educators, parents, lawmakers and the community at large. It is the High School Proficiency Tests (HSPT).

These tests assess what students should know and be able to do by the end of the 10th grade in the areas of math, science, reading, writing and social studies. Students who attain proficiency in one or more of the content areas will receive the appropriate endorsements on their diplomas and transcripts.

To achieve the promise of the new HSPT requires dedication, time and effort. But what makes this particular testing instrument so exciting to many of us is this: The HSPT goes far beyond gauging "the basics"—it requires that the student also be able to apply that knowledge in conjunction with critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

It's a focus I see in many innovative classrooms around the state, but to have it mandated for all students is a quantum leap forward in preparing our children for a future of constant learning, change and adaptation.

The members of the MEA have been working with the legislature for several years to bring about education reform, including a statewide mandated core curriculum. It's gratifying to see high standards put into place. We have every confidence that these standards, when met, will enrich and reward not only the student but the entire community as well.

When the scores of the first Proficiency Tests are released next month, there will no doubt be mixed reactions from educators, parents and the statewide education community. Many school districts will rank low in terms of the percentage of students who achieved proficiency status.

However, let's put the results in proper perspective. The HSPT is a rigorous

test designed to assess the cumulative effect of education from kindergarten through 10th grade. Just as it takes time to create an Olympic athlete, so will it take time for our schools to adapt to new methods of teaching and learning in order to effectively prepare our students to meet the challenges of a new testing process.

There is much work to be done. Testing data will be used as guideposts for change and improvement. The ultimate success of this effort will depend on a shared commitment from parents, school boards, administrators, teachers, students and the media.

Teachers—across all discipline areas—must work together to align methods of instruction with the model core curriculum. Our teaching staff will need substantive, ongoing professional development training to be able to provide students with new subject matter and testing skills.

Parents and students must consider the test an important endeavor and assume the hard work and discipline needed for mastery.

A positive statewide press corps can assist by helping to educate and build public understanding of the new assessment tool.

It would be unfortunate for a program with such great promise to be hamstringed before it gets out of the starting block. School employees, for

their part, are eager to meet the challenges of preparing students for successful future employment. They are supportive of change and have proved their commitment to innovation and public school success.

However, whether it is MEAP or HSPT, a test is only one of many ways to evaluate a child's accomplishments. Leadership and social skills, athletic or artistic ability—each are important aspects of a child's education. Above all, the most important commitment we can all make is that every child be given the chance and support to become a champion.



Julius A. Maddox  
MEA president

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