

Engler set to preside over 'no surprise' GOP gathering

By TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Republicans almost don't need to have a state convention Friday night and Saturday in Grand Rapids.

Gov. John Engler has told delegates well in advance the 13 names he wants on the Nov. 3 ticket. "These men and women are proven leaders, hard workers and team players," he announced.



Gov. John Engler

It's common for a gubernatorial candidate to pick his running mate and perhaps a couple of other offices on the slate, but Engler is shooting for 100 percent domination.

Once, he failed to get his way. That was in 1996 when he endorsed Grand Rapids civic leader Judy Frey for the University of Michigan Board of Regents. Delegates, prompted by Right to Life, rebelled at Frey,

who is pro-choice on the abortion issue, and nominated Rochester Hills attorney Mike Bishop.

Some 1,500 Republicans, elected from county and district conventions, have been chosen from the ranks of precinct delegates and officeholders. How many will show up, when Engler has left them so little to do, is the question.

No surprise

It was hardly news that Engler picked his long-time friend and understudy, Dick Posthumus, for lieutenant governor. Posthumus, 48, an Alto farmer, is a four-term state senator and followed Engler in 1990 as Senate majority leader. Previously he had worked for the Michigan Beef Industry Commission and the Farmers and Manufacturers Beet Sugar Association. They've been chums since high school.

If nominated, Posthumus will replace two-term incumbent Connie Binsfeld, who is retiring.

Secretary of State Candice Miller, 44, is a shoe-in for a second term. She was an Engler

pick in 1994, though many county politicians backed the Ottawa County clerk anyway. Miller was elected Harrison Township supervisor in 1990 and Macomb County treasurer in 1992.

Some Republicans see her, rather than Posthumus, as the gubernatorial candidate in 2002, when Engler is term-limited out.

G. Scott Romney, 57, is Engler's choice for attorney general, but he faces a battle from John Smietanka, the 1994 nominee and former U.S. attorney for western Michigan. Romney is the son of the late former governor and has been in private practice with the Detroit law firm of Honigman Miller Schwarz and Cohn since 1976.

Ed board picks

Eight education candidates will be nominated. Engler, in his 1994 landslide victory, was able to carry just five of eight education nominees with him. With

presidential nominee Bob Dole heading the 1996 ticket, all eight GOP nominees lost. The governor's picks:

■ **State Board of Education** — Gary Wolfram, 47, political economy professor at the private Hillsdale College. Appointed in 1993, he now runs for a full eight-year term.

■ **University of Michigan regents** — Eileen Loppin Weiser, Chelsea, executive director of the McKinley Foundation in Ann Arbor, where she headed a statewide arts research project to see what techniques could be replicated in schools.

■ **Wayne State University regents** —

David A. Brandon, 46, retired president and CEO of Valassis Communications, a Livonia company that prints ad inserts. For almost two years, he has been an Engler-appointed board member at Central Michigan University, the state's biggest grantor of charters for public school academics.

Jessie Dalman, 66, of Holland, four-term state representative and 12-year veteran of the Ottawa County board. In the House, she served on the Education and Colleges-Universities committees.

■ **Michigan State University trustees** —

Dolores (Dee) Cook, Greenville, incumbent, elected in 1990. One of the few Englerites with a background in public education, Cook served eight years on her local school board and is listed among the founders of Montclair Community College.

David Porteous, 46, a Reed City attorney. He was appointed to the MSU board in 1996 by Engler but lost in the Democratic sweep that year.

■ **Wayne State University regents** —

Elizabeth P. Hardy, incumbent, lawyer in the firm of Kienbaum, Operwall, Hardy & Pelton in Birmingham.

Vernice Davis-Anthony,

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incumbent, Southfield resident and senior vice president of community health at St. John's Health Systems. A registered nurse, she has headed the Wayne County and state public health department. Engler reappointed her to the WSHU board in 1997 after she lost a 1996 election bid.

Supreme court

Maura Corrigan and Jeffrey Collins are to be nominated for full eight-year terms, while Justice Clifford Taylor is seeking the remaining four years of an unexpired term.

Corrigan, is currently chief judge of the Court of Appeals. Collins has been a Wayne County circuit judge since his election in 1996. Taylor was appointed to fill a vacancy last year and must run for the remaining four years. He was the 1990 GOP attorney general nominee.

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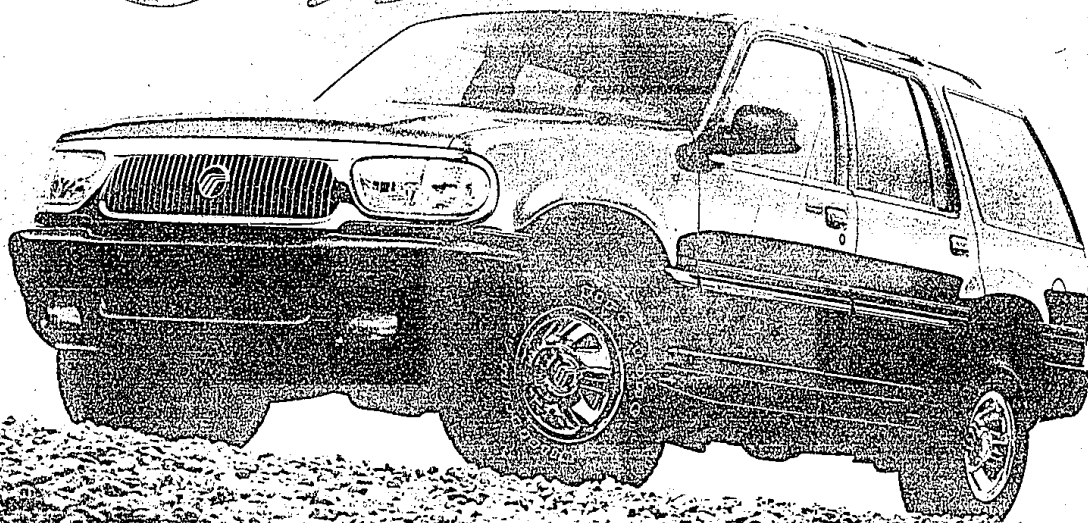
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