

# Leader from page A1

cone, with a number of firsts.

He's the first from the Farmington area to hold such a high post in the State Capitol since Fred Warner was governor nearly 90 years ago. Raczowski is the youngest person to hold the majority leader's job.

Raczowski is the first Republican from southeastern Michigan to hold a top House majority post since Bob Waldron of Grosse Pointe was speaker in 1957-68.

Raczowski was up against Michael Green, R-Mayville, and Mary Ann Middaugh, R-Paw Paw, who was predicted to become the next GOP floor leader. But much like his 1996 pri-

mary campaign when he defeated heavily favored Cathleen Webb, Raczowski emerged to the forefront.

Raczowski, who was re-elected to a second term Nov. 3, will serve as floor leader for the 1999-2000 session.

"I didn't anticipate in taking it on the first ballot," Raczowski said. "I was viewed as an underdog. The rumor is I took 76 percent of the ballot."

The floor leader directs the House agenda, firms up caucus positions and monitors parliamentary procedures. His first task will be to make newly elected Republican lawmakers are "up to snuff" on state House

operations.

His extra duties won't keep him away from Farmington Hills, either. He sees his floor leader position as paying dividends for both communities.

"This will allow Farmington and Farmington Hills to have a seat at the policy making table in terms of leadership," he said. "It heightens the cities' visibility in making sure we get our fair share back, which is extremely important."

Raczowski, who termed his election as an "honor and huge responsibility," pledges to continue work on tax cuts for working families, providing more money for schools and welfare reform.

Since he was elected in 1996, Raczowski served on Health Policy, Labor and Occupational Safety, Public Utilities, Urban Policy and Economic Development committees.

The Perricone-Raczowski

ticket breaks up the stranglehold on House GOP leadership positions of the Grand Rapids-Holland bloc. "We have full balance right off the bat," said Raczowski Wednesday morning. "And we have a better male-female balance than the Democrats."

Speaker pro tem will be Patricia Birks of Saugatuck. Two associate speakers pro tem will be Judith Seranton of Brighton and Bruce Patterson of Canton; assistant floor leaders will be Middaugh, a first-term member who succeeded her husband, and Paul DeWeese of Williamston.

Caucus chair will be John Pappageorge, a freshman from Troy; and assistant caucus chair will be Charles LaSata of St. Joseph.

Rep. Gerald Law, R-Plymouth, who hosted a reception for the 1999 group, said voting numbers would not be revealed. "You can see why," he said - suggesting that it would keep those who lost from developing grudges.

Visitors to the House gallery in the north wing of the Capitol next year will see a lot of Raczowski, who will present the calendar of what will be taken up each day. "It's a high visibility job with the ability to help other candidates with their legislation," he said.

"The job is more than a traffic cop," Raczowski went on. In the inner sanctum of planning, Raczowski will meet with Perricone and Democratic floor leader Mike Hanley of Saginaw.

He and Perricone are sworn not to duplicate Democratic floor tactics of stretching out sessions so that the big bills are brokered in the closing days of early July - a "calendar of constipation," he called it.

Paul Hillegonds, the GOP speaker in 1995-96, made long steps toward keeping up a flow of legislation throughout the early months of the session.

Raczowski has come a long

way from his early days in politics when he was called "Cocky Rocky" and known more for coltish enthusiasm than subtlety of thought.

Perricone and Raczowski are known as hard-nosed partisans, but Raczowski said he has a friendly relationship with the Democratic floor leader, Rep. Kwame Kilpatrick of Detroit.

"We were classmates at Detroit College of Law," Raczowski said. "In our first session, we were the youngest in our parties."

"We've had a good progression of what people perceived we were going to do," Raczowski added. "We won our second term with 65.6 percent of the vote. We're very proud to be majority floor leader."

And with that, the Army reservist was off to nearby Kenbrook Elementary School for a Veteran's Day presentation to students.

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## Police-Fire from page A8

### VANDALISM

#### In Farmington Hills:

Someone smashed the back window of a 1992 Ford Explorer parked at the Macaroni Grill on Northwestern Highway Nov. 7, causing \$250 damage.

Vandals moved down at least two mailboxes on Whitlock the night of Nov. 7-8, causing \$75 damage.

### DRUGGED DRIVER?

#### In Farmington Hills:

Police arrested an 18-year-old Hills man who was driving a 1989 Lincoln on the soft-

ball diamond at Harrison High at 10:30 a.m. Nov. 8. When stopped, the driver babbled incoherently. Officers found 17 tablets that looked like LSD in the man's pants pocket.

### EMBEZZLEMENT

#### In Farmington Hills:

Police arrested a 23-year-old Garden City man after several pieces of equipment were stolen from Lucky's Collision on Industrial Park Nov. 6. The employee, who was working his last day, admitted putting the body frame repair kit, jam clamps and frame anchor in his car.

A former employee at a Farmington Hills law firm is believed to have embezzled \$41,861 in checks between February 1994 and September of this year. The woman wrote checks to vendors, which were cashed by her. She quit the law office of Wood, Kull and Herschfus and hasn't been heard from since.

### THEFT

#### In Farmington Hills:

Someone stole a 1997 Decathlon Rock Rider men's bike from a garage on Valley Side Drive Nov. 2.

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