

# Candidates are squaring off

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—The first real issue developing in the race for elec-

ed county executive is how the candidates view the new office.

Democrat Eugene Kuthy has assumed the role of reformer. Having worked to get the county to approve the county executive system, he has pledged to wield the powers of the office to untangle and reform county operations.

Republican Daniel Murphy, who has been chief administrator of the county for the past 11 years, opposes much of the reform envisioned by Kuthy. His pledge is to continue to run the county as he has in the past, assisted by the added power of the elected county executive.

The candidates adopted these positions last week during the taping of the Pro and Con Show, televised Sunday by WWJ-TV. Facing cameras and studio lights, the candidates differed in style as much as substance.

MURPHY, WHO admitted he was an administrator, not a politician, spoke slowly, glanced downward and had several lengthy pauses as he defended his record against the attack by a more aggressive and at-ease Kuthy.

Although low key, Murphy came out against a strong implementation of the county executive system.

"We don't need another layer of government," Murphy said. "We have enough government. We're into the taxpayers' pockets deep enough now."

Murphy said he preferred to use the new power of the office to deal with the Oakland County Board of Commissioners to implement the proposals he submits.

"I want to look at the realistic approach, to be together both sides of the aisle," Murphy said, "not to antagonize."

KUTHY COUNTERED by saying a strong county executive is necessary.

"He ought to be a leader," Kuthy said, "not just an administrator. Seeing to it that the machinery of county government is humming is not enough."

Kuthy said he and his party were the leading advocates of the county executive system and should be given the chance to carry out the intent of reform from inside county government.

"We want a change, a reform to make things better," he said. "We want to end the duplication and uncoordination and stop running the county by committee."

COUNTY GOVERNMENT had been administered by a three-man board of auditors, headed by Murphy. The board of commissioners was the chief decision-making body.

Under the county executive system, approved by voters in August, the executive will function in the county much as the governor does in the state.



FARMINGTON HILLS--Tim Dennison, a Farmington Hills volunteer fireman, shovels the rubble out of an abandoned house, 21344 Rensselaer, Farmington Hills, which was destroyed by fire late Wednesday evening. The Hills police who investigated the fire have sent evidence to the state crime lab in Warren to determine if arson was the cause of the blaze. According to the police the house, which is owned by John Busch, 21516 St. Francis, has been abandoned for a long time.

Photos by Ralph Evert

## Conservation department says wolf experiment isn't working

Two of the four eastern timber wolves, an endangered species transplanted from Minnesota to Michigan in March of this year have been killed—one by a car and the other by gunshot, according to Lynn A. Greenwalt, Director of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service.

Both were males, leaving two females on their own in separate areas of Upper Michigan.

The transplant and follow-up monitoring of the wolves has been a cooperative effort among the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the States of Michigan and Minnesota, the Huron Mountain Club, the Audubon Society and Northern Michigan University.

BIOLOGISTS BECAME suspicious when signals from the wolves' radio collars, monitored from aircraft, showed the animals in the same location on two consecutive flights several days apart. The hit-and-run victim was found by biologists in mid-July on a road in Iron County, Michigan. This

animal had been the pack leader of the four wolves transplanted from Minnesota.

In late July the second dead wolf was found in a wooded area of Dickinson County, Michigan, after radio signals showed no movement by the animal in a week. It had died from three small caliber gunshot wounds in the body and head.

Federal agents have initiated an investigation into the killing of the wolf which is protected under the Endangered Species Act. A private citizen, Dr. Harry Frank of Flint, Michigan, has offered a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of the offender.

The original pack of four wolves was released together in the wild and roadless Huron Mountains on the southern shore of Lake Superior last March, but they soon split, with the two males and one mature female moving west some 100 miles. These three then headed back toward the southeast where they appear to have established a 250 square mile range in northern Iron County about 50 to 60 miles southwest of the original release point.

THE FOURTH WOLF, an immature female, never strayed far from the release point and today she ranges in a 200 mile area near the release point.

Additional transplants of wolves would require a permit under the Endangered Species Act. If another male

is trapped in Minnesota, he may pair with one of the two females by next February when the breeding season begins.

Despite the loss of the two male wolves, biologists remain positive about the experiment. Dr. William Robinson of Northern Michigan University stated, "We have learned quite a bit. It is possible to conduct transplants such as this. That's the important question that needed answering. The wolves did not return to Minnesota as we thought they might when the three headed west. The direct mortality by man is a significant factor also. This is particularly true when the animal population is so low. Each member is extremely valuable." Robinson remarked.

AS TO the future, Robinson reports, both females seem to have adapted to their new environment. They may

meet and join individual wolves that occasionally roam into Michigan from Canada. Their food supply, which has been analyzed from droppings, is mainly deer.

Biologists hope to learn more of wolf behavior under transplant conditions when winter arrives and snow cover affords a better opportunity for close surveillance. Since the release last March, biologists have been flying two to three times a week to spot and track the wolves. This effort will be maintained through the coming winter as aircraft monitor the radio-collared females.

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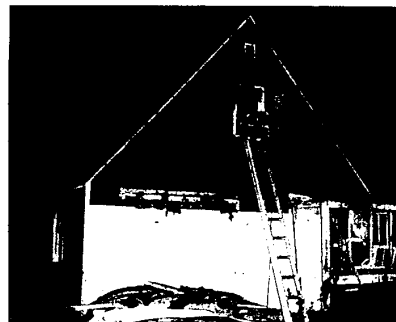
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by Robert H. Bergstrom, CPCU

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