

Suburbs cloutless at Dem conclave

Thursday, August 31, 1978

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By TIM RICHARD

If Zolton Ferency again lost a Democratic State Supreme Court nomination to a man who had been a candidate for only one day, it wasn't the fault of suburban Democrats.

Four suburban congressional district delegations gave the party's happy radical majorities at Sunday's state convention.

Ferency, 56, a former party state chairman who split from the party in 1972 and rejoined the fold in 1976, lost the supreme court nomination to Saginaw Circuit Judge Gary McDonald.

McDonald, 38, had been recruited by party leaders only a day earlier after State Sen. Anthony Derezinski of Muskegon bowed out.

Ferency had run fourth second in the Aug. 7 gubernatorial primary. Derezinski had run fourth in the U.S. senatorial primary.



Democratic top-of-the-ticket nominees were Libby Maynard and William Fitzgerald. (Staff photo)

urban areas and those with university orientations tended toward Ferency.

IT WAS A DAY when the suburbs of metropolitan Detroit had little impact on a Democratic convention in terms of candidates.

Gubernatorial nominee William Fitzgerald of Detroit picked Olivia (Libby) Maynard, the party's 42-year-old state vice-chairman from Midland, as his running mate for lieutenant governor. Ms. Maynard was nominated by acclamation.

Secretary of State Richard Austin was applauded into a try for a third term without opposition.

Sylvia Hart, a Detroit lawyer who lives in Southfield, placed in nomination the name of Attorney Gen. Frank Kelley for a seventh term, though the nomination was hardly in doubt. Mrs. Hart has had chairmanships in several Jefferson-Jackson day dinners, the party's major annual fundraising event.

She praised Michigan as "the first state to establish a consumer protection division in the attorney general's office," adding: "Companies have received record fines and penalties" for violating consumer laws enforced by Kelley.

ANNETTA MILLER of Huntington Woods was unopposed for a second eight-year term on the State Board of Education.

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17th district delegates blunt punch-card protest

A Democratic Party platform denouncing punch card voting was blunted Sunday when state convention delegates from the 17th Congressional District got the language softened.

"We recommend that the deficiencies in the punch card system of voting be eliminated," said the final platform, which was approved by a 3-1 margin.

Redford Township, Farmington Hills and Southfield delegates, all in the 17th District, argued it would be expensive to replace the punch card systems in their communities.

Instead, they sent platform committee members John Shepherd of Southfield and Gerri Feder of Detroit

to the full committee meeting with instructions to get a modification. They won.

The original platform language, according to delegate Aldo Vagnozzi of Farmington Hills, called for complete elimination of punch card voting. It was put forward by State Sen. Jack Faxon of Detroit.

Detroit uses punch cards for absentee voting. Vagnozzi said there was merit to Faxon's arguments. Voters could inadvertently vote in both parties' primaries, thus invalidating their ballots, or perhaps over-vote—cast ballots for three candidates when only two votes are permitted. Elderly voters had problems reading small type on some punch cards.

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