

Murphy stays away

County Dems' speech irks GOP

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Democratic members of the county board of commissioners gave their assessment of the state of the county last week, but it fell on the deaf ears of the Republican majority and the Republican-dominated administration.

County executive Daniel T. Murphy and his department heads skipped Democratic caucus chairman Lawrence Pernick's speech. Murphy had been scheduled to deliver his own "state of the county" address. He canceled it after he found out that the Democrats were also going to deliver a "minority opinion," saying the speech's fine points were not yet ironed out.

To the bitterly-divided 27-member board, Pernick's speech was just another salvo fired in the feud between Democrats and Republicans. The feud began in December when Republicans, who hold a 16-11 majority, restructured the board's committees and laid plans for replacing Democrats on all appointive commissions.

The Republican plan was — and, according to some high-ranking Republican commissioners, still is — to reduce Democratic influence on county policy decisions.

"Bipartisan government in Oakland County is dead," said Pernick, who represents a part of Southfield.

"The political make-up of the county is not overwhelming Republican, as some would like to believe. And it is supremely arrogant for any party to assume a mandate that was never given them," the Democratic caucus leader said.

"Republicans may stick their collective head in the sand and pretend we Democrats do not exist. But we do exist," he continued.

TO PUT AN end to the feud, Pernick suggested, Democrats should be given seats on the board's standing committees. Last year, they were allotted 40 percent of the seats. This year, the Democrats' share was trimmed to 33 percent.

And he asked that Democratic commissioners be given a vice-chairmanship on each of the board's six standing committees.

Pernick asked that appointments to independent commissions be made to "reflect a bipartisan cross-section."

OUTSIDE OF the Democratic caucus, there was little support for any of Pernick's requests.

The Republican caucus, which several weeks ago was in shambles,

appeared to have regrouped. And influential Republicans such as Finance Committee Chairman Dennis Murphy of Novi and long-time Commissioner Paul Kasper of Bloomfield Hills—both of whom are spokesmen for a group of "hardline" GOP commissioners—shunned the Democrats' requests.

Other Republican commissioners said any changes in committee structures or appointments to independent commissions were "highly unlikely."

WHILE PERNICK spent much of his time offering Democratic solutions to the partisan rift, he also pointed to other areas that he felt needed improvement.

Specifically he asked:

• That the county set up "service centers" housing branch offices of the county clerk, treasurer, friend of the court and circuit court. The county branches would be located in southern and western Oakland County.

• That the Oakland County Organized Crime Strike Force, which is now controlled by Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson, be restructured to give the county sheriff's department and local police agencies more power. Currently the strike force is under Patterson's direction and is monitored by an advisory committee composed of the board of commissioners, the county executive administration, local police organizations and the media.

• That a solid waste disposal program be implemented in the next two years.

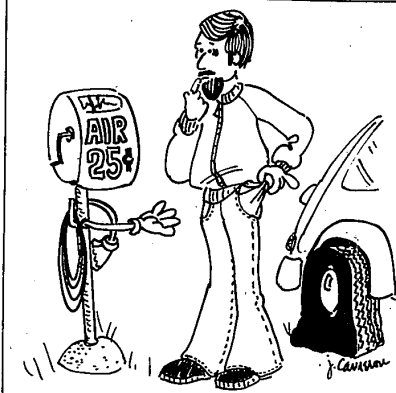
LIT enrollment starts Feb. 26

Registration for the Lawrence Institute of Technology's third term will begin Feb. 26 and continue through Feb. 28.

Registration will be held each day from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the LIT campus, 2100 W. 10 Mile Rd. near Northwestern Highway in Southfield.

Degree programs offered at LIT include architecture, mechanical and electrical engineering, industrial management, chemistry and physics.

Third term classes begin March 1. For information regarding registration and admission procedures, call the registration office at 356-0200.



Free air becoming endangered species

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Free service station air pumps may be going the way of 35-cent-a-gallon gasoline.

Despite concerns expressed by the Automobile Club of Michigan (AAA) and Joan Claybrook, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the trend seems to be to eliminate free air hoses at area service stations.

Even though no statistics have been assembled, service station association representatives said free air hoses are slowly being eliminated. Spokesmen for AAA and the highway traffic safety administration say cutbacks in the service could mean inadequate tire maintenance and more traffic accidents.

Some newer stations, especially the new, self-service outlets, just do not install the compressed-air pumps. Some older stations, however, diverting to pay pumps — four minutes of air for 25 cents.

SERVICE STATION managers who previously provided the free service complain that more people are flocking to the self-serve stations for a cheaper fill up, but turn to full-service operations for the free air.

Asked if he had considered charging for the air pumps, Tim Zielinski, manager of Tim And Rod's Union, 76 service station in Westland, said, "If we knew how, we would."

"A lot of people we've never seen before come in just for air. They're not regular customers. They come in and block our driveway and make it tough for our regular customers," he said.

CHARLES SHIPLEY, head of the Michigan Service Station Dealers Association, is more vehement.

"A lot of people we've never seen before come in just for air. . . . They come in and block our driveway and make it tough for our regular customers."

"What you are seeing," he said, "is an outgrowth of the number of self-service stations that do not provide the service. Service station managers are tired of providing a very expensive service for people who don't patronize their stations."

"Air is not free when you have to compress it," Shipley said.

He was especially critical of AAA and Ms. Claybrook.

"If AAA will provide free travel information to anyone who wants it, then I'd say they can voice their opinion. If I walk into one of their offices and want a map or something, the first thing they want to know is 'Am I a member?' and 'Do you have a membership card?'" Shipley said.

As for Ms. Claybrook, who has become known as a thorn in the side of the automobile industry, Shipley said, "She has never been known to let reason interfere with the operation of her vocal chords."

EVEN THOUGH the trend appears to be catching on in metro Detroit, major gasoline distributors do not favor any cutbacks in service station service.

A Detroit spokesman for Mobil Oil Corp. said the company wants dealers who will provide full-service gas stations. After the dealership is granted, he said, the dealers are free to do as they wish.

THAT WAS the focus of Pernick's speech.

Irate GOP leader will remain at post

Oakland County Commissioner Robert Gorsline (R-Milford) will continue as chairman of the board of commissioners' Republican caucus.

Two weeks ago Gorsline quit that position, saying he no longer held the implementation of hard line, partisan policies adopted by the caucus. As caucus chairman he was put on the spot for decisions to reduce the number of Democratic commissioners on the board's standing committees and to place Democratic members on all appointive commissions.

But after meeting later with a group of the board's Republicans, Gorsline last week said he had reversed his decision.

"I'm willing to give it another

whirl," he said. "We're going to work on our problems."

He said that even though he was going to continue as caucus chairman, it did not mean that he condoned the caucus' actions. "I recognize that it's probably more effective for me in meeting my goals if I remain (as caucus chairman)," he said.

"When a person has goals," he said, "it's better to work within the system. It's better to improve communications within the system."

Since the Republicans began restructuring the board's committees and replacing Democratic appointees with Republicans, the board of commissioners has been bitterly divided, with roll call votes on routine matters yielding partisan splits.

Oakland frosh seek money, survey finds

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

The 1979 college freshmen wants to be an achiever — especially financially.

According to results of an Oakland University survey, freshmen going to college right out of high school are far different from freshmen in the late '60s and early '70s. Women, in particular, are more achievement oriented.

The OU survey is part of an annual national poll of "first-time" freshmen. "There isn't a great deal of difference between OU and students in general," said David Beardlee, OU's director of institutional research. The survey analysis, said Beardlee, sounds the official death knell of the "Age of Aquarius."

Beardlee said that never since 1966, when the surveys began, have more students aspired to "being very well off financially," "becoming an authority in my field," and "having administrative responsibility for the work of others."

"The survey was made only of freshmen entering college directly from high school. Transfer and graduate students were not included.

"THE LARGEST increase was in the category of "being very well off financially." It was checked as "essential" or "very important" by 64 per cent of first-time freshmen in fall 1978, compared to 33 per cent in 1966, Beardlee said.

Over the same time span, the OU administrator said, "the importance attached to 'developing a meaningful philosophy of life' and to 'keeping up with political affairs' declined 20 to 30 per cent."

And, he said, the percentage attaching importance to "writing original works" and "creating works of art" dropped about 10 per cent.

In the mid-'60s, though, the top-ranking life objective was developing a meaningful philosophy of life. Survey results accumulated over the past 12 years show that in 1968, 87 per cent of first-time freshmen listed the life philosophy as "essential" or "very important."

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A decade later, it had dropped in importance behind "becoming an authority," "being very well off financially," "helping others," and "raising a family."

WHILE FRESHMEN were becoming more achievement-oriented, women were surpassing men in the quest for achievement.

"While the trend for men is clearly one in which success, achievement and recognition have grown in importance," Beardlee said, "one can see this as a return to a fairly traditional male set of goals. The 1960s appear in this light as an exception."

"The data for women do not," he said, "display a return to traditional female values, but quite the opposite."

More women, Beardlee said, now express "masculine" values, but the "traditionally greater female concerns" have not declined.

"Men today are retreating to traditionally male choices. However, while today large numbers of women enter traditionally male fields, many others still choose courses of study that have been standard female choices for a long time."

"Women are enrolling in fields in which women once were rare," Beardlee said. "Fifteen years ago, a woman in engineering was a freak almost."

THE SURVEY is more than a conversation piece for OU administrators and faculty. "When students change their orientation, that's something we should be aware of," Beardlee said.

The poll results, he said, will be used in charting the Rochester-based university's future. "We depend on it to adjust programming and staffing," the admissions director said.

"Some of our faculty are very uncomfortable with these changes," Beardlee said. "In light of the analysis, we're talked about how we should be staffing our programs and what sorts of pressures we should be putting on some of our instructors."

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