

# Is it time to cut political conventions to 2 days?

By Tim Richard, staff writer  
DALLAS — They're in a minority, but there are two Republicans who say their four-day national convention is twice as long as necessary. And they think it's a costly burden on the middle class.

"It's 80 percent a media event," said delegate Michael Legg of Livonia, "and when you get to the point where the media aren't covering it any more..."

"Joking about fat cats aside, most of us are middle-class Americans. It was expensive for me," the 52-year-old lawyer said.

"It could be done on a Friday-Saturday," said at-large delegate Richard Headlee of Farmington Hills. "I'm not worried about the rich or poor. The middle class has a hard time. The president of Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co.



LIKE ALL conventions for decades, the 33rd quadrennial Republican National Convention ran from Monday morning through Thursday night in the convention center while searing 100-degree heat kept people off the streets of Dallas.

Monday morning there were welcoming speeches from the mayor of Dallas, a Dallas businessman, a Texas congressman, a former governor of Texas and others, followed by speeches from such constituent groups as ethnics, blacks, women and youth.

Monday night were the keynote speeches. Tuesday morning was devoted to committee reports and display of U.S. Senate candidates in five pivotal states. Tuesday night was for the platform and former President Gerald Ford.

Wednesday night was given over to leadership speeches and the nomination of the national ticket candidates. Thursday night was used for their acceptance speeches.

TV now covers only a fraction of it, with executives saying they can't afford to turn over "our" time for political propaganda.

"MOST OF the work is done in committees before the convention," Headlee said. "Committee work combined with the convention costs some-one 10 days at \$100 a night for a hotel."

"We could reduce the whole thing to a week — Monday through Thursday

**'For most of these people, it's the most exciting thing they will do on behalf of the Republican Party in their lifetime.'**

—Dan Murphy  
Oakland County Executive

for committees with the convention on Friday and Saturday."

"IT COULD be condensed to a couple of days," said Legg, in a separate interview. "Traditionally, there was more

meaningful bartering," he said, referring to the pre-1970s conventions when a candidate rarely came to town with a majority. States supported "favorite son" candidates and traded off their votes for cabinet appointments.

Later television gave paid-to-gavel coverage, but today's delegates are aware that only two cable networks do that any more. Commercial networks are losing viewers and advertisers to movies and ball games. Headlee pointed out, so there is little free publicity to be gained.

Legg called even some of the committee work "hard to justify as meaningful activity."

BUT HEADLEES and Legg's views are in a minority. All other Michigan Republican delegates and all Democrats like the four-day convention the way it is.

"There is a certain tradition in history," said Spencer Abraham, attending his first national convention as a dele-

gate and as state party chairman. "More goes on than convention sessions. There are strategy meetings. There are fund-raising sessions. There is the exposure of nominees to party leaders," he said.

"If you wanted to do it in one day, you could," said Mike Caste, a Southfield law student attending his first national gathering.

"But it's just a few days, twice a decade, to get together with people from other states," said the at-large alternate.

"IT'S THE AURA of the thing," said Daniel T. Marzary, Oakland County executive and an 18th Congressional District delegate.

"For most of these people, it's the most exciting thing they will do on behalf of the Republican Party in their lifetime!"

The president's gonna be there, and you've gotta be there — it's like the Superbowl!"

# GOP love affair — from Ike to Dutch and still going

DALLAS — They took different political roads, but Stephen and Charlotte Bruce of Farmington wound up in the same place — as alternate delegates to the Republican National Convention.

It was a coincidence that each one's 32 years of work for the party paid off in the same year.

"Charlotte was appointed at at-large alternate by the state organization," said Steve Bruce, 57, owner and manager of Bruce Products Corp., a Howell manufacturer of lubricants for the metalworking industry.

"I ran for delegate from the 18th Congressional District, withdrew and ran for alternate."

"I was a little concerned (about the appearance of nepotism), but Paul Gadola (Reagan campaign chief in Michigan) said 'no problem.'"

Both had attended more district and state conventions than they could count, but this is their first national convention.

THERE ARE many political couples from Michigan at the convention — Senate Majority Leader John Engler and his delegate wife, Rep. Colleen Engler; Sen. Alan

**The Bruces were single when they started campaigning for Eisenhower in 1952, though they actually met at a bingo game. They talked politics on dates.**

Crosby of DeWitt and his delegate wife, Erika.

But the Bruces are a rarity by both being elected to the group of 77 delegates and 77 alternates.

"I've been working at the Ronald Reagan headquarters for years, from the time it opened up to election day," said Mrs. Bruce, 58, who is also secretary of the Oakland County Republican Club.

"I do fund-raising work with Spence Abraham (state GOP chairman) and attend a lot of meetings," said her husband, who wears a gold "18" pin for being on the board of the district GOP committee.

In 1980 Bruce spent two weeks ferrying Republican VIPs between Metro Airport,

hotels and television stations. He drove former Treasury Secretary William Simon, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole, Sen. John Chafee of Rhode Island and presidential daughter Maureen Reagan.

His careful planning of routes enabled Maureen Reagan to make two TV guest appearances in one morning and get to a luncheon speech with 15 minutes to spare. He was touched when his Miss Reagan said, "Oh, thank you. At last I have 15 minutes to myself."

THE BRUCES were single when they started campaigning for Eisenhower in 1952, though they actually met at a bingo game. They talked politics on dates.

They were married in 1953 and moved to Farmington 27 years ago. They love the old city too much to move. Mrs. Bruce served 12 years on the city's planning commission and five on the city beautification commission.

They are a folksy, grandparently, soft-spoken couple. "We hunt together, we sit together, we're trying to play golf together," said Mrs. Bruce.



Charlotte and Steve Bruce, the only husband-wife team in the Michigan delegation.

## U-D starts fall registration

University of Detroit will hold fall term registration Aug. 29 through Aug. 31 in Caliban Hall on the U-D McNichols campus. Students who have not been admitted previously to the university are advised to contact the admissions office.

Fall registration for evening business and administration classes at the school's Renaissance Campus will be held 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.-7 p.m. Aug. 29 and Aug. 31. Classes begin Sept. 4. For more information call 927-1245.

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