

17th District chief sees contest

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Democratic Congressman Sander Levin may not be beaten in 1986, but he'll have to work harder and spend some money in the 17th District if he wants a third term.

That's the pledge of Michael Cassa, who was elected chairman of the 17th District Republican organization at last weekend's state convention in Grand Rapids.

"I don't have a candidate, but I'm going to look as hard as I can, everywhere I can," Cassa said in an interview.

AT 25, the Wayne State University law student from Southfield is already a veteran political operator.

Cassa attended last year's national convention in Dallas as an alternate de-

legate at-large. He headed a Patterson for Governor youth campaign and has been vice-chair of the Oakland Young Republicans political action committee. At the University of Detroit, he headed the Republican club.

"I have three priorities," he said. "First, finance. We raised \$4,000 last year. I'd like to double or triple that."

"Second, candidate recruitment. We have good campaign people but not enough of them."

"Third, membership. We need to organize city clubs and communicate through a newsletter."

IN 1982, Republicans failed to field a candidate against Levin, of Southfield.

Detroit lawyer Gerald Rosen, who retired as 17th District chairman, gave Levin a run in 1982, but in 1986 the

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— Chairman Michael Cassa

GOP nomination was won by a mental patient with the same surname as the Oakland County prosecutor — much to the party's embarrassment.

Cassa doesn't promise to beat the two-term congressman with the politically potent name. "We're going to make Sander Levin spend his money and his time in our district. That's the least we can do. We've been giving him a free ride. That's going to stop."

Other officers are: Vice-chairman

Charlotte Buchanan of Redford Township, Secretary Sheila Molnar of Lathrup Village and Treasurer Dennis Pellidori of northwest Detroit.

Elected to the Republican State Committee, governing body of the party between elections, were Constance Richards of Royal Oak, James V. Stewart of Huntington Woods, Henry Dodge of northwest Detroit and Patricia Barbour of Dearborn Heights.

CASSA WAS also a winner on a convention issue when he successfully argued that the Michigan Republican Party should continue polling delegates on issues but not write a formal platform.

The vote was 919 to 678 against returning to the platform format, which Cassa called "exclusionary. We might force a candidate to run on an issue he's not in favor of."

18th District dumps 3 leaders

Chairman Alan May won re-election to head the 18th Congressional District Republican organization, but three members of the Republican State Committee weren't so lucky.

A conservative group in the caucus at last weekend's Republican State Convention dumped the four state committee members and elected their own slate.

"It was vicious. There are a lot of long faces and frowns this morning," said May, a Bloomfield Hills attorney, in an interview the next day.

ELECTED TO the state committee, governing body of the party between conventions, were Dallas Haun of West Bloomfield, Robert Dalton of Bloomfield Township, Irene Mitchell of Oakland Township and Yvonne Strother of Rochester Hills.

Defeated were former state Rep. James Delebaugh, Art Salzman and Mary Lou Benethum, all of Bloomfield Township.

Re-elected were vice chairman Emily Sutton of Bloomfield Township, secretary Kay Schmid and treasurer Steve Bruce of Farmington.

The caucus reportedly lasted until 1 a.m. and featured bitter shouting, highlighted by an impassioned pitch from state Sen. Richard Fessler of West Bloomfield.

"They're going to miss Jim Delebaugh on the state committee," May said. Indeed, one of the boasts of state party Chairman E. Spencer Abraham was that his regime had gained six seats in the Michigan House of Representatives and came within 3,000 votes of winning control of the entire Legislature.

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— Chairman Alan May

"But Jim isn't the kind who will walk away from the party," May added.

BUT STROTHER, elected to the state committee after serving on it in office as representative of the Republican Women's Federation, denied it was an ideological battle.

She pointed out that she was supported by state Sen. Kirby Holmes of Utica, one of the most conservative members of the Legislature, and Ellen Templin

of Bloomfield Hills, former state vice chairman.

Templin's name appeared prominently in a leaflet promoting a "Moderate Republican Conference" for April. Moderates, generally followers of former Gov. William G. Milliken, are regrouping after seeing a conservative takeover of the party by followers of 1992 gubernatorial nominee Richard Leakey of Farmington Hills.

Among speakers at the moderates' conference will be former state Rep. Ruth McNamee of Birmingham; Mel Larsen, former state representative from Oxford and former state party chairman; Dorothy Beardmore, new State Board of Education member and Rochester Hills resident; and U.S. Sens. Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas and Robert Packwood of Oregon.

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RADIO VOICE — The OCVB needs a person to broadcast volunteer opportunities on local radio stations. Could be done live or on tape from home. Also needed are experienced volunteers for face-to-face or on-phone interviews of potential volunteers. Phone 642-7272.

PHONE COUNSELOR — Contact Lifeline needs volunteers, over 18, to answer phone in crisis-counseling center. Four hour shifts, eight hours per month. Training session to begin Thursday, Feb. 28. Phone 642-7272.

MEDIA CENTER AIDE — West Bloomfield High School needs someone for the media center to do audio-visual equipment scheduling, filing, typing, preparing materials for file, shelving books, etc. Time flexible, weekdays. 642-7272.

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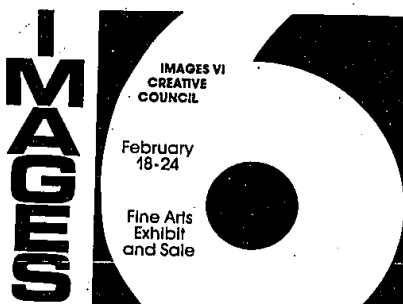
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