

Will Robertsonites stay active in GOP?

By Tim Richard
Staff writer

Everyone knows the Kemp and Robertson people banged up at the Republican State Convention last weekend to embarrass "mainstream" supporters of George Bush for president.

But the real question is: Will the newcomers supporting TV evangelist Pat Robertson stay on as active GOPers as once they realize their man hasn't a shot at the 1988 presidential nomination?

"Some will, some won't," answered Joe Knollenberg, a doubter. The former Oakland County Republican chairman from Bloomfield Township said that with Robertson supporters "it's all out 190 miles an hour with them, or shut the motor off."

"THE KEMP people used the Robertson people to elect themselves," said state Senate Majority Leader Tony Engler, a Bush supporter.



Dallas Haun
18th District chair

And he had a point: In the 2nd and 17th Congressional Districts, supporters of U.S. Rep. Jack Kemp, R-

N.Y., did indeed win chairmanships with the backing of Robertson delegates.

"But that's not relevant to Feb. 3 (1988) in Grand Rapids," said Engler. "That's when we elect the national convention delegates."

"We took a bath. I give them credit," said Rhys Lewis, a longtime loyalist from Redford Township. He was sporting both a duPont for president pin and a "mainstream" sticker.

"Some (Robertsonites) will drop out as soon as they see their candidate can't do it," Lewis predicted.

THE CONSERVATIVE coalition, which captured an estimated two-thirds of the Republican State Committee seats at the Lansing convention, felt differently.

"I've been trying to help out some of the newer (Robertson) delegates, show 'em the ropes," said Elaine Donnelly, a Kemp loyalist from Livonia. She will seek the chairmanship of the party's issues committee



Andy Anuzis
17th District chair

when the new GOP State Committee meets next month.

"The Bush forces had the party regulars and got complacent," said Paul Welayda, a political pro from Farmington Hills and Kemp supporter who won election to the state committee. "My heart's not bleeding for the Bush folks."

Steve Mitchell, one-time legislative candidate from Livonia and now a political pollster and consultant in Lansing, thinks the new Robertson group will stay active. "They have a social agenda. They have a lot of power," said Mitchell.

And he summed up the convention when he said that Vice President Bush, who carried Michigan in the 1980 presidential primary, thought he had 50 percent support this year, "but he had only 40 percent."

"THIS IS NOT my calling. I did not want this," said Anthony Story, a Robertsonite who topped Canton teacher Terri Bennett as chairman in the 15th Congressional District.

"But there are some in this caucus who wanted more conservative leadership, and the mantle fell on me," said Story, pastor of the Full Gospel Church in Westland. Once a Kemp supporter and still a Kemp admirer, Story thinks Robertson is "the most electable."

One prominent Bush supporter who kept peace with the conservative coalition was U.S. Rep. Carl Pursell, R-Plymouth, whose 2nd District sprawls from Livonia to Hillsdale.

"We don't have any problems. I gave a speech to the caucus and got the best reception of my life," said Pursell, whose district caucus had a 70-40 majority for Kemp-Robertson over Bush.

And Robertson loyalist Misy Caulk of Ann Arbor acknowledged that there is no effort to dump Pursell in the 1988 primary. "I support Carl Pursell. I don't know of any challenge to him."

"We made a coalition with Mike Legg (district chairman and a Kemp delegate). We have the same ideas and conservative agenda in mind," said Caulk, an activist for 1 1/2 years.

ABOUT 90 percent of the potential 1,900 delegates turned out for the Friday night district caucuses, many of which were post-midnight

bloodbaths, and Saturday's five-hour convention, at which state chairman E. Spencer Abraham unanimously won a third two-year term.

And nearly all stayed until the end, when the sixth vice-chairman was elected. Usually, only 20 percent of the delegates hang around that late in the day.

Apparently the reason was that "mainstreamers" feared the Robertson delegates would try a second time to amend convention rules to take up a divisive resolution opposing state-sponsored random commercialism on TV. As soon as the last agenda item was completed, Bush-ticker Knollenberg was at a floor microphone to move adjournment.

An effort to conduct a straw poll of presidential preferences also was scuttled down by party regulars.

Peter Secchia, the flamboyant GOP national committeeman from Grand Rapids, sought to smooth over the ruffled feathers of the Friday caucus by complimenting the newcomers. Quoting former President Gerald Ford, Secchia urged them to "disagree without being disagreeable."

A typical guess placed Bush's support at 40-45 percent, with the majority going to the Kemp-Robertson coalition.

"My candidate has 50 percent," said Harry Greenleaf, a former 2nd District chairman from Livonia and a Bush mainstreamer. "It was a 'stop Bush' thing."

New GOP leaders picked

Besides electing state party officers, delegates to the Republican State Convention also elected congressional district officers.

Statewide, Kemp backers went for district chairs. Robertson supporters, by their own estimate, captured two-thirds of the seats on the Republican State Committee, governing body of the party between elections. The RSC has four delegates from each of the 18 congressional districts.

Supporters of presidential candidates George Bush, Jack Kemp and Pat Robertson are indicated by (B), (K) and (R) respectively.

17TH DISTRICT

"We had a coalition of supporters of Kemp and Robertson who tended to support each other," said Andy Anuzis (K), the new chair. He defeated Sheila Molnar (B) by 16-33.

Anuzis, a frequent campaign manager himself, was the Republican candidate for state representative last year in the 34th House District.

He is an account executive of Amstaff, a staff leasing firm.

Other district officers are: Marilyn McMaster (K) of Southfield, vice chair; Tony Visconti (leaving K) of Dearborn Heights, secretary; and Pat Feeney (K) of Royal Oak, treasurer.

State committee members are Lowell Rupenthal (K) of Ferndale, Tony Suddut (R) of Redford, Wilma Anderson (R) of Detroit and Lori Packer (R) of Southfield.

18TH DISTRICT

One of the few places where Bush supporters maintained any strength was the 18th Congressional District, which sprawls across Oakland County

ty and touches parts of Livingston and Macomb.

Dallas Haun (B) of West Bloomfield is the new district chair, defeating Bob Fredericks (K), the deputy county drain commissioner, by a 4-3 margin.

For vice chair, Emily Sutton (B) of Bloomfield Township overcame Charlene Stevens by the same 4-3 margin.

Kay Schmid of Novi was uncontested for secretary, as was Steve Bruce of Farmington for treasurer.

State committee members were split 2-2: Joe Knollenberg (B) of Bloomfield Township and Yvonne Strother (B) of Rochester Hills; Paul Welayda and Jean Fox, both (K) of Farmington Hills.

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March
CALENDAR
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THURSDAY, MARCH 5
7 p.m. Spring Suit Show - See a wide range of silhouettes including this season's fuller, longer lengths, classic styles, plus coats and rainwear. Coat Salon.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7
12 noon-4 p.m. Visit our Bridal Salon for informal modeling of Milady Bridal fashions.

MARCH 13-MARCH 17
Have your child's profile snapped by silhouette artist Sally Newcomb. Please note these special times. Saturday, March 13, 12-7 p.m. March 14, 16, 17, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. For your appointment, call 644-6900, extension 325. Children's Store.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14
12 noon-4 p.m. See Illsa bridal fashions informally modeled. Bridal Salon.

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
7 p.m. Petite Fashion Show - Join us in the Petite department. View the latest spring fashions for the woman 5'4" and under.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
12 noon-4 p.m. Informal modeling of Jena bridal fashions in our Bridal Salon.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26
7 p.m. Children's Spring Fashion Show - See fashions for the young individualists...for dress-up, school and play. Children's Store.
7 p.m. Activewear Fashion Show - Don't miss the newest looks for today's active woman! Top of the Escalator.

FRIDAY MARCH 27
7 p.m. Clairewood Fashion Show - Dresses, suits, separates and coordinates for the fuller figured woman. Clairewood Room.

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