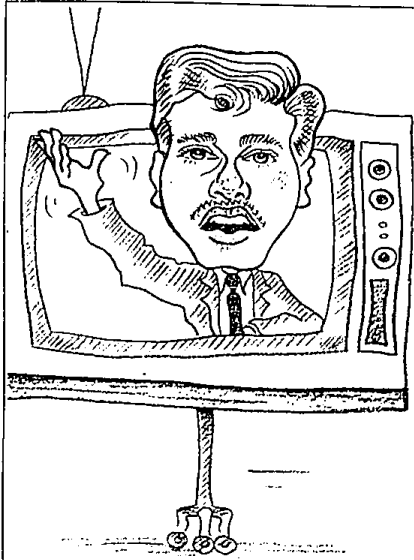


Official stars in TV program about Oakland



TAMMIE GRAVES/staff artist

County commissioner Mark Chester will have a politician's dream — a television show of his own.

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Drum roll, please . . . a la Johnny Carson.
H. . . e. . . r. . . e. . . s Mark.
Nobody could blame Oakland County commissioner Mark W. Chester for envying the day he will get the kind of introduction Johnny Carson gets on the Tonight Show.
Maybe not right away. But then Carson didn't start at the top either.
The 37-year-old, first-term commissioner from Troy is scheduled to begin taping his own television show later this month.
Chester, who is up for re-election this fall, considers the show, entitled "Oakland County Update," to be a golden opportunity.
"I'm really excited," he said. "The first taping is March 26, although we haven't decided when it will air."
The show initially will appear on Cable Channel 11, which goes into about 10,000 homes in Madison

Heights and Hazel Park, according to Evi Sauer, production coordinator for Continental Cablevision of Madison Heights. "But we hope to work something out with United (United Cable Television of Oakland County) so it can be broadcast in Troy and other areas."

CHESTER ACKNOWLEDGES that's a modest beginning. But one with potential.
"I've always felt a commissioner should keep in touch with the people," he said. "And this is a good way to reach a lot of folks."
Chester said the possibility of having his own television show came up last month when he was addressing a local chapter of commerce. "A Continental Cable executive was in the audience, and things took off from there."

Chester, a 1971 graduate of Doro High School in Royal Oak, said he doesn't have a background in television communication and is a year

short of a degree from Central Michigan University.
His job as a senior purchasing expediter for the General Motors Corp. — where he worked for 17 years — has prepared him for some things. But being a talk show host isn't one of them.
Even so, Chester said he knows what makes good television viewing. "There's really a lot of things going on in Oakland County," he said. "Each week I intend to take a public issue and give it a full airing."
His first show is a sure-fire winner, Chester said. It features former Oakland County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson talking about the Patterson-Anderson tax proposal.
Patterson is in private practice now, and is co-sponsor of the tax proposal, which is aimed at reforming the property tax system while providing more money for public education.
Chester realizes that a television show likely will enhance his chances

for re-election and, conceivably, lead to better political opportunities.
But it will also guarantee Chester something he might not otherwise have to endure — a bona fide opponent.
If another candidate wants a show similar to Chester's, the cable television company would likely be obligated to agree, said Sauer.

THAT'S QUITE AN incentive for any would-be challenger — Republican or Democrat — who might otherwise be deterred by the expense or effort required to reach the voters.
That's okay, said Chester, who added he's not afraid to run on his record. He maintains office hours (9 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of the month at the Madison Heights library) to keep in touch with voters. And he had a 100 percent attendance record at county board meetings last year.
If Chester's afraid of anything, it might be bad ratings.

Enter Earth Day writing contest

Students ages 13-18 are invited to participate in the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers' Earth Day 1990 writing contest.
Theme is "What Will the Earth Be Like 20 Years From Now."
Those entering the contest should submit an original essay of no more than 300 words. Essays must be received in the O&E's Livonia headquarters no later than 5 p.m. Friday, March 30.
First, second and third place

prizes will be awarded in two age categories — 13-15 and 16-18. First prize is a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond, second prize is a \$25 bond and third prize is \$15 cash.
The six winning essays will be published in the O&E on Thursday, April 19. A picture of the winners along with a short story about them will appear along with the essays.
Essays should be mailed or delivered to: Earth Day Writing Contest, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, Mich. 48150.



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