

Quayle's visit exciting event for students

By Helen Niemiec
staff writer

Three area elementary school students long will remember the day Vice President J. Danforth Quayle visited Oakland County.

Scott Alexander and Michael Counihan of Bloomfield Hills' Way and Ted Counihan of Bloomfield Hills' Hickory Grove elementary schools were front and center at Roma's of Bloomfield Monday afternoon to present Quayle with Detroit Pistons' T-shirts. The three youngsters walked up to the stage to deliver the present after Quayle finished his 20-minute speech.

Afterwards, the youngsters again had the opportunity to meet the vice president behind closed doors.

"It was really exciting," said Ted Counihan. "I got to shake his hand." The Counihan boys also were looking forward to going to school Tuesday and telling their classmates about the afternoon.

QUAYLE SPOKE at Roma's as a part of a campaign tour that took him later that day to Grand Rapids. He was speaking in favor of Republican politics in general, and in favor of John Engler for governor and Bill

Schuette for congress in particular. Local Republican candidates for state senate, state representative, county commissioner and non-partisan judges races used the time before the official program to talk to friends and supporters. Each of the candidates was introduced at the start of the formal program by Oakland County Republic Club chairman Jim Alexander.

The crowd of 300 rose to their feet as Quayle entered the banquet room at 1 p.m.

Ronna Romney of Bloomfield Hills, Republican national committee member, introduced Quayle, calling him a man of "quiet dignity."

AFTER BEING welcomed to the home of the "World Champion Pistons," Quayle, who hails from Indiana, reminded the crowd that the Detroit team started as the Fort Wayne Pistons.

Quayle called Michigan "a priority state" in this year's elections and said that there is a good chance of "a constructive change" with Republican victories outnumbering those of the Democrats.

He alluded to a Democratic fund raiser that evening for Gov. James Blanchard.



STEPHEN CANTRELL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ronna Romney of Bloomfield Hills and a member of the Republican national committee introduced Vice President J. Danforth Quayle (right) to the crowd of 300 assembled at Roma's of

Bloomfield. Seated next to Quayle is Kevin Counihan, who was the general chairman of the luncheon.

"They should enjoy partying tonight. In November, it will be the Republicans' time to celebrate our victory and their defeat," Quayle said.

He likened the Blanchard campaign to the now-defunct television show "Eight Is Enough," explaining that "it's time to send John Engler back to Lansing, only this time as your governor."

He laid down the gauntlet to Michigan Republicans in the race to elect members of their party to federal office.

"IN INDIANA we have two Republican senators. It's high time that Michigan has at least one," Quayle said.

He added that the Republican Party could pick up U.S. senate seats in a number of Midwest states, including Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois. "It's possible to return to the majority party in the U.S. Senate, a position we have not enjoyed since 1986," the vice president said.

And should the Republicans make gains but not sufficient to become the majority party, Quayle is hoping

the 100-member Senate is equally divided between Democrats and Republicans.

"It would give me great pleasure to break every tie vote for George Bush's agenda," Quayle said.

The vice president also touched on the recently concluded summit between Bush and Soviet Union president Mikhail Gorbachev, government spending, education and national security.

In closing, Quayle told those gathered that the ultimate condition of the country lies with them.

"YOU ARE THE ones who have made a difference in the past and will in the future," Quayle said.

As he returned to his seat at the head table, the crowd rose again for a standing ovation.

Those who came for the speech gave Quayle great praise.

Wilhelm Kast of Bloomfield Hills was pleased by the support Quayle gave to Michigan Republicans in his speech and his general understanding of local politics in Oakland County.

"It was a very good speech. He's really grown," Kast said.

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