

Barbara bush repays debts to Engler, GOP

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

With one brief stop in Troy Wednesday, Barbara Bush repaid two debts. One to the Republican Party of Michigan and the other to John Engler, the party's candidate for governor.

"Back in 1988, Michigan wasn't exactly Bush country," Mrs. Bush told a packed audience during a \$100-per-plate fund-raiser at the Northfield Hilton. "Those were dark days."

But John Engler — then, as now, a state Senator from Mt. Pleasant — turned that around, Mrs. Bush said. Engler helped her husband overcome a huge deficit in state polls, and Bush eventually won election to the country's highest office.

Her primary reason for stumping for Engler was that he would make a "great" governor, Mrs. Bush said. "He's got the vision, the leadership and the energy."

BUT SHE'LL never forget how Engler helped during a politically difficult period. "I'd do anything to help him . . . now it's our turn."

The first lady was equally enthusiastic about other Republican candidates in the Nov. 6 election, including Judy Miller of Bloomfield Township, running for secretary of state, and Connie Binsfeld, formerly of

Birmingham, the GOP candidates for lieutenant governor.

"You've got some fine candidates," she said.

While the party faithful cheered Bush's five-minute political endorsement, they were equally interested in the next part of her talk.

"Let me tell you about our vacation," Bush said, referring to early August, when Iraq invaded Kuwait. "That was some vacation," she said referring to the respite the president took with his family at Kennebunkport, Maine, as Saddam Hussein was solidifying his hold on Kuwait.

"WE HAD 12 grandchildren, nine parents, two dogs and countless cousins," Mrs. Bush said. As the crisis continued, "we also had all the military advisers, half the cabinet, one king, one crown prince and one prime minister and family . . . although his family didn't stay."

"When the kids went to the beach, we told them they had to stay come hell or high water," the first lady said in her characteristically folksy style.

It's true her husband played golf and did some fishing, Mrs. Bush said, but he was mindful of the criticism he incurred from those who thought he should have been in the Washington.

"But it (recreation) was always

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DAN DEAN/staff photographer

First Lady Barbara Bush is introduced to state Rep. Judy Miller, who is gubernatorial hopeful John Engler's running mate for Secretary of State.

Mail pours in to local reps

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By Pat Murphy
staff writer

"Voters are angry and frustrated. But they apparently don't know who to blame, according to Oakland County's contingent to the U.S. House of Representatives."

Oakland residents have been writing and phoning their congressmen since President Bush urged them to do so in a nationally televised message Oct. 2.

Less than three days later, the House voted down the deficit-cutting measures negotiated by Bush and Congressional leaders in both parties 234 to 179.

The offices of Oakland's representatives — Sander Levin, D-17th; William Broomfield, R-18th; Dennis Hertel, D-14th; Bob Carr, D-6th, and Dale Kildee, D-7th — have reported heavy contact from constituents.

"I can't give you an accurate figure," said Terri L. Hauser, press secretary to Broomfield, whose district includes much of Oakland County. "But my desk is covered with letters."

MONDAY WAS Columbus Day, a federal holiday, so congressmen didn't get mail from constituents.

Oakland's representatives hadn't yet received feedback on how voters perceived the budget wrangling or the President's flip-flop Tuesday on accepting a tax hike on wealthy Americans in exchange for a reduction in the capital gains tax.

Bush had apparently agreed to accept a hike — despite his "Read my

lips" pledge — in order to get budget negotiations back on track. But he backed off on any such compromise late Tuesday after meeting with GOP leaders.

Congress is now charged with producing a new budget plan by Friday, and taking final action a week later — or face new government shutdowns.

The object, of course, is trimming some \$500 billion from the deficit by enacting a combination of new taxes — like the 12-cent-a-gallon on gasoline — and cutbacks in federal programs like Medicare.

VOTERS DIDN'T like the original budget proposal, according to mail that poured in Tuesday. Nor did they seem to like the spectacle of their officials being unable to deal with the budget.

"We had three times the mail we normally get," said a spokesperson in Hertel's Washington office. "We haven't begun to sort it all."

Hertel's district includes Hazel Park, Madison Heights and the southeast part of Troy.

Most of the mail was quite reasonable, according to Hertel's press secretary Ray O'Malley. "Most of it was

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Incineration foe draws big crowd

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Like Moses warning against idolatry, a nationally-known critic of incinerators this week sounded the alarm in Oakland County.

"Burning is the very worst thing" that can be done to trash, warned Paul H. Connett, who urged the estimated 300-member audience to fight the 2,000-ton-per-day incinerator proposed for Oakland County.

Incineration releases gases and metals toxic to humans as well as animals that pass them along in the food chain, said Connett, an associate professor of chemistry at St. Lawrence University, as small private college in Canton, N.Y.

His three-hour talk was sponsored by RAIL (Residents Against Incineration and Landfills), an Orion Township based activist group trying to mobilize public sentiment against the \$176 million incinerator proposed in Auburn Hills.

The talk drew a near-capacity audience to the auditorium at the county complex on North Telegraph Road. It was the same place in which Oakland County commissioners last summer approved a controversial \$500 million solid waste program calling for recycling and incineration.

CONNETT BASICALLY agreed with the recycling and composting

programs proposed for Oakland County as early as next year.

But with the zeal of an evangelist, he urged residents to reject the incinerator and any politicians who advocate any form of burning.

Instead of burning about 50 percent of Oakland's waste stream as proposed, residents can eliminate much of the need for incineration by cutting back on the amount of trash generated, he said. Then recycle and recycle again.

Trash that can be repaired, reused or recycled should be compacted and placed in landfills, said Connett.

Landfills are not an attractive answer, he said. But they're preferable to incinerators.

There's no such thing as a safe incinerator, said Connett who is a member of the New York Senate Solid Waste Advisory Council. Any science claiming incinerators are safe "is bad science."

Health risk assessments showing incinerators to be safe "are as crooked as a cork screw," said Connett, who this year was named Conservationist of the Year by the Detroit Audubon Society.

RISK ASSESSMENTS showing incinerators to be safe have either been based on faulty or questionable data or deliberately altered by the

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