

Judge advocates June elections

BY RALPH R. ECHTINAW
STAFF WRITER

Considering that Michigan judicial campaigns draw little attention when held simultaneously with partisan contests, state Appeals Court Judge Clifford Taylor is advocating June judge elections to spur public interest.

Speaking to a roomful of judges and attorneys at Wednesday's gathering of the Oakland County Republican Committee at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham, Taylor said Michigan TV and newspaper reporters are "so busy with the much more spicy partisan races" that the equally important judicial races are virtually ignored.

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers alone, Taylor said, covered last year's judge campaigns with any vigor.

Although Taylor believes that a system whereby judges are appointed rather than elected "may be better, the electorate has been adamantly opposed to it." Therefore, the judge said, spring elections are the remaining viable option.

One of the growing problems with judges, Taylor said, is that an increasing number of them are trying to make law, as opposed to interpreting it. This phenomenon might partly be attributed to the lack of publicity in judicial cam-

Do you agree with Appeals Judge Clifford Taylor (right) that holding judicial elections in spring would increase media and voter attention? To vote YES: 901-4723 To vote NO: 901-4724 Feel free to give your reasons, your name and community. Both touch-tone and rotary dial phones can be used.



palms, Taylor said. When voters who have heard little about judicial candidates cast their ballots, "they can unwittingly get a judge who sees himself as a super legislator."

Taylor urged his audience to think about his idea, then perhaps someday the Michigan Constitution could be amended.

Of the nine guests surveyed after Taylor's speech, four favor spring judge elections, three are undecided and two said it doesn't make any difference.

"I think (spring elections)

would put more emphasis on the candidate's background," said Oakland County Probate Judge Barry Grant. "Voters would have more time to analyze the candidate."

Michigan Appeals Court Judge Michael Connor agreed. "Who knows judges?" he asked rhetorically. "Nobody really knows their judges."

Michigan Supreme Court Judge Conrad Mallett Jr. is one of the fence sitters. Although he has "great respect for Cliff Taylor," Mallett would "like a chance to

think about (the plan)."

Other guests pointed out the drawbacks of June judge elections. James Alexander, the Oakland County Republican chairman, said voter turnout would probably be lower than it is for fall elections, therefore making it "a lot easier to get a special-interest candidate" to get elected.

Michigan Court of Appeals Chief Judge Martin Doctoroff said he favors the appointment system used by 38 states already. As for spring elections, Doctoroff doesn't "have any view."

Oakland County Prosecutor Richard Thompson is undecided on spring elections, but thought Taylor's warning about judges who act like lawmakers was right on the money.

"Too often they are making the law instead of interpreting it," he said. "I think (Taylor) was scoring a lot of points with the lawyers, because they want to be able to tell their clients what the law is," said Thompson.

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson seemed to favor Taylor's idea. A former prosecuting attorney, Patterson noted that many voters never get to the bottom of the ballot where the judicial candidates are named.

"That's a tragedy," he said, "because they have so much impact."

'Linda' B. Patterson swaps jokes with judge

BY RALPH R. ECHTINAW
STAFF WRITER

Although state Appeals Court Judge Clifford Taylor had some serious things to say at last week's meeting of the Oakland County Republican Committee,

the gathering featured some world-class levity as well.

In a devastating introduction of Taylor, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson piled one humorous insult upon another. Patterson, an old friend of Tay-

lor's, began by saying, "What can you say about Cliff Taylor that hasn't already been said about Lani Guinier?"

The former Oakland County prosecutor went on to say that Taylor told his two sons to date

only homeless girls because after the date is over you can drop them anywhere.

Taylor rebutted Patterson's remarks, alleging that Patterson's first initial stands for Linda.

AROUND OAKLAND

O&E nature columnist guest at Humane Society meeting

The Michigan Humane Society will hold its 1993 annual meeting for both members and non-members, at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Troy Marriott Hotel.

Guest speaker will be Tim Nowicki, naturalist at the Independence Oaks Nature Center in Clarkston and columnist for Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. His topic will be wildlife issues.

Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be served. MHS board members and staff will be available to answer questions regarding animals, protection issues, and the MHS' many programs.

Attendees who are not yet

members of the Michigan Humane Society are welcome to join during this time. Several furry friends in search of new homes will be on hand. An assortment of MHS merchandise will be on sale with all proceeds benefiting the homeless and injured animals sheltered by the MHS.

The Troy Marriott is at 200 West Big Beaver Road (just east of I-76) in Troy. For information contact MHS, call (313) 852-7420. The Michigan Humane Society is a non-profit organization serving animals since 1877 with three full-service shelters and charitable animal hospitals in the metropolitan Detroit area.

OU program targets families rocked by divorce process

Families reeling from a recent divorce may find help at Oakland University. The Oakland University Continuum Center has designed two programs, "Divorce Transition" and "Divorce Transition For Children," to be held simultaneously from 7:30 p.m. June 28 on the Rochester campus.

The programs will deal with the emotional changes triggered by a divorce. The program costs \$29 for adults (\$21 if a child attends the workshop for children), and \$19 for children (\$12 if a parent attends the workshop for adults). For information, please call 370-3033.

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AFFAIR TO REMEMBER II

A Black-tie Optional Occasion

Saturday, June 26 8:00 pm-Midnight

On the Grounds of the Historic Burgh Site Civic Center Drive at Berg Road in Southfield


Put on your best summer attire for this elegant evening on the exquisitely landscaped grounds filled with splendid turn-of-the-century buildings. Enticements include dancing to a band in the historic church, delicious hors d'oeuvres, a sweet table, gourmet coffees and a cash bar. Stroll under the stars to the soothing sounds of a string quartet in the Gazebo. A magician will mystify and entertain.

Not only will you receive a corsage or boutonniere, but a photographer will capture this special night with a portrait which will be given to you before the evening has ended.

Tickets are \$35 each or \$65 per couple. They may be purchased at the Parks and Recreation reception desk in the Southfield Civic Center Complex located on Evergreen Road south of 11 Mile. You can also charge your ticket order on your VISA or MasterCard.

Call **354-9362** to order tickets or for more information.

The first 50 ticket purchasers will be able to have a free caricature rendered that evening. Proceeds benefit SRO Productions, a non-profit civic theater. Sponsored in part by Trowbridge, a rental retirement community.



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Friskies Canine Frisbee Disc Championships - 10:00 am

Open to all veteran and novice dogs that can catch a flying disc. All contestants receive an official Friskies Canine Disc and a certificate of achievement. Additional prizes will be given for first place and runners up. Registration is on-site and is limited to the first 50 registrants. There is no entry fee.

Part-rifici Pet Show - 12:00 Noon

Sponsored by Hillside Veterinary Hospital. Kids ages 16 and under can show off their favorite pets. Trophies will be awarded in fun categories such as best dressed pet and owner, most unusual pet, largest pet and more! The **GEW** Best Root Beer, McMurri the Cane Dog and the Cookie Monster will be judged! There is no entry fee.

World Jr. Frisbee Disc Contest - 1:30 pm

Boys and girls 18 years old or younger can demonstrate their Frisbee skills in this free competition. The local contest consists of events in distance, catching and basic throwing. Boys and girls with qualifying scores advance to the world contest!

For more information, including registration procedures, call **354-9603**.

