

First Lady fan visits Washington

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

What a difference two years can make.
In 1994 when she organized the Oakland County chapter of the Hillary Rodham Clinton Fan Club, West Bloomfield resident Ilene Singer was a singular figure.
She wasn't exactly lonely. Singer recalled, although the chapter could almost hold its conventions in a phone booth.
Today, however, as the Clintons' popularity approaches new heights, it's a different story.
"I've had four new applications

(to Hillary's fan club) this week," Singer said Friday as she and other admirers were preparing to fly to Washington to meet with Mrs. Clinton.
Singer and others are scheduled for a VIP tour of the White House and a private meeting with the First Lady. "It's really quite exciting," said Singer.
In 1994, the Oakland unit of the First Lady's fan club was about 40. But that was about the time she and her husband were the butt of some divisive and often tasteless jokes stemming from their attempt at a national health care plan.

During the depths of the Hillary bashing, Singer received some tasteless material aimed at Mrs. Clinton in the mail. "It was so bad, I don't want to talk about it," she said.
Now, two years later, the fan club has more than 300 members in Oakland County, 2,500 in Michigan and 23,000 nationally. "Many people really admire her," said Singer. "But some of her popularity may be a reaction to the unfair criticism."
Contrary to talk show rhetoric, the First Lady's popularity in some cases is bipartisan, said Singer. "A lot of people —

Democrats and Republicans — admire her."
Being a charter member of Mrs. Clinton's fan club netted Singer another pleasure last week when the President came through Oakland County on his whistle-stop campaign to Chicago.
Singer boarded the 21st Century Express in Royal Oak and accompanied the President and his entourage as the train deliberately chugged slowly through Oakland County en route to East Lansing.
It was a pretty heady experience, she said. "There were all



STAFF PHOTO BY DAN DEAN

Supporting Hillary: West Bloomfield resident Ilene Singer poses with a cardboard image of the First Lady until she can pose with the real woman next week.

these dignitaries . . . and then there was me." Perhaps the most lingering image, Singer said, was the overwhelming response along the way. "People were standing on their roof-tops just to get a glimpse of the President's train."

Kaplan campaigns hard, Gorcyca paces himself

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

If the campaign for Oakland County prosecutor can be compared to a horse race, Democrat Steve Kaplan is first out of the starting gate.
But the Nov. 5 finish line is two months away, and Republican David Gorcyca is hardly standing still.

Kaplan last week issued the first piece of campaign literature — a comparison post card focusing on the candidates' respective experience.

Kaplan's literature notes, for example, he has tried more than 150 felony cases before a jury (compared to Gorcyca's 6) with a conviction rate in felony jury trials at 80 percent (compared to Gorcyca's 33 percent).
The point Kaplan is trying to make, of course, is that he has more experience than Gorcyca, and is thus more qualified to replace incumbent Richard Thompson.

Gorcyca last week insisted Kaplan's literature is misleading and, for the most part, irrelevant. "It doesn't take into consideration my experience in juvenile or district court," he said.
Equally important, Gorcyca said, is my overall experience as a lawyer, an administrator and a leader. "Voters in Oakland County want a tough leader who will set policy and go from there," he said.
Kaplan, 43, is a West Bloom-

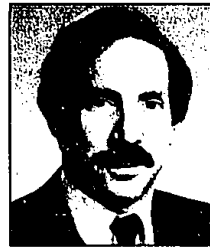
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field resident who has been a Macomb County assistant prosecutor since 1988. His literature notes he has won convictions in 13 out of 14 homicide cases.

Gorcyca, 34, is a Royal Oak resident. An Oakland County assistant prosecutor from May 1988 until July 1990, he is now in private practice.
Much of that time was spent in juvenile and district court, he said. "I did a lot of work in the legal trenches. I know how that office works, and I know how that should work."

Both candidates have already met with the staff of the Oakland County prosecutor's office.
"Basically, I wanted to ease any fears and anxieties they might have had about the future," said Gorcyca, who called a meeting Aug. 16, less than two weeks before his upset victory over Thompson.

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Kaplan



Gorcyca

claimed that morale within the office was extremely low, something they insisted diminished overall efficiency.

The first joint appearance between Gorcyca and Kaplan is scheduled for next Thursday, Sept. 12, when the Metro Detroit Chapter of Parents of Murdered Children will host the prosecutor candidates from Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties. It will be at St. David's Episcopal Church, 16200 W. 12 Mile.

In the meantime, both candidates have been organizing fund raisers and drafting campaign strategy. Kaplan had a fund raiser Tuesday at Big Daddy's Parthenon in West Bloomfield.
The timing was hectic for Kaplan. Earlier in the day, he

was scheduled to appear with President Bill Clinton as his whistle-stop campaign stopped in Royal Oak — an opportunity he relished . . . and maximized.

"I was scheduled to be on the platform with President Clinton," he said. "But I passed that up. Instead I shook hands in the crowd."

Gorcyca said much of his efforts since the Aug. 5 primary have been focused on "grunt organizational work." He expects to hold as many as 12 fund raisers to raise the estimated \$150,000, or so, needed for an effective campaign.
Gorcyca's first scheduled fund raiser will be Sept. 19 at Mitch's II in Waterford.

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