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# Candidates tough on pleas

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

## PROSECUTOR

Oakland voters can expect a heated battle over the next three weeks as each prosecutor candidate tries to project a "tough" image on plea bargaining.

The latest hint about plea bargaining as a major campaign issue came last week at a press conference where Sheriff John F. Nichols endorsed fellow Republican David Goreyca.

Goreyca, who is vying with Democrat Steven Kaplan in the Nov. 5 election, said he was pleased with the endorsement from Nichols, and he again promised "tough justice," something he has touted throughout the campaign.

Then Goreyca said, "There will be no liberal plea bargaining (under his administration) as there is in Macomb County."

Earlier in the campaign, Kaplan, who has been a Macomb assistant prosecutor, predicted his opponent "will try to out-tough me on plea bargaining."

Thus, Kaplan has been specific about three sets of circumstances he would consider plea bargaining — providing the victim and the detective in charge approved:

• One, when a first-time offender is accused of a non-violent crime. "I would try to

resolve these cases before they went to court," Kaplan said.

• Two, when offering a plea to an accomplice would lead to testimony that would help convict somebody with deeper involvement. The classic case, Kaplan said, is offering a plea to a drug runner in order to get evidence and a conviction on a supplier.

• Three, when the prosecutor's case is weak — because of unreliable or reluctant witnesses or insufficient evidence. "I'd prefer half a loaf, rather than no loaf," he said.

In his primary campaign, Goreyca criticized incumbent prosecutor Richard Thompson for being too rigid in his approach to plea bargaining. Goreyca promised a "common sense" approach under which he would evaluate cases individually.

The distinction between the two positions may be subtle, but Goreyca sees it as a defining difference. "In Macomb County, plea bargaining is a way of life. We don't want that in Oakland County."

The endorsement of Goreyca by Nichols was not unexpected, although the sheriff had

endorsed Thompson in the primary. Both are Republicans in a strong GOP area.

But Nichols was accompanied by a number of chiefs of police from Oakland County.

One of them, William Dwyer of Farmington Hills, said he likes the policies Goreyca

has outlined, including a willingness to use a "common sense" approach to plea bargaining.

"We (police chiefs) don't normally get publicly involved in endorsements," Dwyer said. "But this is a race for the top law enforcement position in the county."

Ironically, the rank-and-file members of the agencies headed by Nichols and Dwyer have both endorsed Kaplan. The Oakland County Deputy Sheriff's Association and the Farmington Hills Police both support the Democrat, who has endorsements from five other agencies, including the Police Officers Association of Michigan.

Among those other agencies endorsing Kaplan is the Royal



David Goreyca



Steve Kaplan

Oak Police Department. Royal Oak, of course, is represented by city commissioner Goreyca.

Asked about police from his community endorsing his opponent, Goreyca said it was probably a result of tough contract negotiations. "We (the city commission) didn't give police the pay raise they wanted," he said.

Goreyca, 34, is a former Oakland County assistant prosecutor who currently lives in Royal Oak and practices law out of Birmingham Farms.

Kaplan, 43, lives in West Bloomfield and was a member of the Southfield Board of Education for almost 10 years.

Both are graduates of the Detroit College of Law, which is hosting a joint appearance Tuesday in Troy.

## Temple Israel has parenting forum

Rabbi Steven Carr Reuben, Ph.D., author, composer and dynamic speaker, presents his views on "Raising Ethical Children" at the 18th annual Alicia Joy Techner Parenting Conference, scheduled at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 15, at Temple Israel, 5725 Drake Road, West Bloomfield. This event is open to the public and there is no admission charge.

Reuben holds the perspective that parents shoulder much of the responsibility in nurturing children to become caring, compassionate and honest adults. His philosophy is based on constant communication between parents and children in which personal values are the cornerstone of these relationships.

The Alicia Joy Techner Memorial Parenting Conference was developed by David and Ilene Techner in memory of their daughter Alicia. The conference represents their deep commitment to the value of parenting and their concern for improved family life.

Reuben holds degrees in philosophy, political science, education, aging and human development and religion. He has participated in civic and community activities in his native California, including the Governor's Task Force on Civil Rights, AIDS Interfaith Council, PATH (People Assisting the Homeless), Los Angeles Family Housing Corp., and is the founder of the Valley Shelter for which he received the Micah Award.

Reuben is nationally known through is lectures, books and contributions to publications. He has authored teacher guides and albums of original music.

## GRE workshops set for Saturdays

Registration is under way at Oakland University for GRE (Graduate Record Exam) preparation workshops beginning Oct. 20 for the December exam.

The GRE workshop sessions will be conducted Saturdays, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2-23 on campus near Rochester, with the first session from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuition is \$265. The next GRE exam is Dec. 14.

An optional two-hour workshop to develop techniques and strategies for taking the computer-based test will be conducted from 1:30-3:30 p.m., Nov. 23, on campus. The fee is \$35.

For details, contact the Continuing Education office, (810) 370-3120; e-mail, oucee@oakland.edu.

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