

# Expect airwaves to be filled with nasty ads in final days

Election day is next Tuesday in what has turned out to be one of the most hotly-contested gubernatorial primaries in recent Michigan history.

So I called my old friend, Craig Ruff, head of Public Sector Consultants and a seasoned observer of things political to talk about what readers might be looking for as the races for both the Republican and Democratic nominations come down to the wire. Here's my report. Schwarz vs. Posthumus: State Senator John ("Joe") Schwarz is the poster child for moderate Republicans (an oxymoron in recent years) and the overwhelming favorite of editorial writers and miscellaneous political insiders. He's smart, knowledgeable, candid, experienced, articulate. His message — that the right-wing "moral absolutists" now in control are taking the GOP into the abyss of defeat in November — is almost certainly right on.

But, barring an almost unimaginable turn of events, Joe's very likely to lose next Tuesday. He doesn't have much money to spend on TV ads and the entire Republican apparatus is lined up in lockstep to support Lt. Gov. Dick Posthumus, who keeps insisting there's nothing wrong with Michigan's desperate budget situation that a tax cut won't cure. It's too bad for Schwarz that the Democratic primary race is so close and is attracting so much public interest; otherwise, he'd have a shot at attracting independents and moderate Democrats who regard Posthumus as nothing more than Engler lite.

With Dan Pero, an able guy who used to flock for Gov. John Engler, now managing the Posthumus campaign, expect the Lt. Gov. to go on the offensive during August. He'll have lots of money left over and he'll want to spend a lot of it dominating the news while his Democratic opponent is trying to catch his/her breath and bind up the wounds inflicted in the primary.

Blanchard vs. Bonior vs. Granholm: This race is turning out to be a whole lot closer than most people figured. Attorney Gen. Jennifer Granholm is bright, charismatic, beautiful — a fresh face in politics if you ever saw one. She has raised a ton of money — more than \$4 million — and most insiders figured she'd be far in the lead by now, if only because she had the financial muscle to out-spend her male opponents on TV.

But it hasn't turned out quite like that. Former governor Jim Blanchard has mounted a very energetic and effective campaign, so much so that some are wondering how come he didn't

do it back in 1990 when he was upset by Engler. U.S. Rep. David Bonior was originally written off by the pundits who figured he'd never break out of his Macomb County base. But Bonior is a smart, tough, high-energy campaigner, and he's got big time backing from his enigma in the UAW.

Both Blanchard and Bonior have put together so-called "independent" committees to raise money that has gone into ads in the UAW. Both Blanchard and Bonior have put together so-called "independent" committees to raise money that has gone into ads in the UAW. Both Blanchard and Bonior have put together so-called "independent" committees to raise money that has gone into ads in the UAW.

Clair County Democratic Party which is going after Granholm on TV. Blanchard and Bonior, both ostensibly in favor of political reform, have a lot of explaining to do about these committees that clearly violate the intent if not the letter of campaign finance law.

And because the race is so close, you can expect the airwaves will be filled between now and Aug. 6 with very nasty attack ads on all sides. Blanchard and Bonior are going after Granholm for having supported, in her job as Attorney General, Gov. Engler, the Democrats' favorite hate object. Both of them know perfectly well that Granholm has been simply performing her statutory function as AG and that the charges are phony. But that won't prevent them from cutting the ads.

If the race turns out to be close going into the weekend, look for Bonior to gain a real advantage when it comes to getting out the vote. Organized labor really learned how to get the troops out for Al Gore two years ago, and no one figures they've forgotten how to do it this time around. I'd guess neither Blanchard nor Granholm have much of a field organization.

The General Election: Posthumus is supposed to be toast against Granholm and in trouble against both Blanchard and Bonior. But both Craig and I think that after Posthumus gets through dominating the headlines in August, he'll go into Labor Day weekend only 10-15 percent down. Given how volatile the times are, that's not insurmountable. Stay tuned!

Phil Power is the Chairman of the Board of the company that owns this newspaper. He would be pleased to get your reactions to this column either at (734) 953-2206 or at ppower@home.com.net.



Phil Power

## Leib's qualified

Our compliments to your editorial board for endorsing Larry Leib for 47th District Court Judge.

Not only is Larry well qualified, thoughtful, even-tempered and personable, but he has the best list of bi-partisan endorsers we have ever seen.

Larry has been endorsed by, among others, the Michigan Association of Police (over 10,000 members), Congressman Joe Knollenberg, Secretary of State Candice Miller, former Attorney General Frank J. Kelly, County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, County Prosecutor Dave Goreya, County Sheriff Mike Bouchagl, County Clerk Bill "Doc" Cadell, County Treasurer Hugh Dohany, Chief Oakland County Circuit Judge Joan E. Young, Michigan District Judges Association President Judge Leo Bowman, Farmington Hills Firefighters Association, the Teamsters Union, the Carpenters Association, the Realtors Association, Bar Association Presidents, 38 Judges and over 450 practicing attorneys.

Thanks for recognizing Larry Leib as the outstanding candidate for 47th District Court Judge.

Frank J. Spadafora  
Patricia Spadafora  
Farmington Hills

## LETTERS

zations. He has written and lectured for the State Bar of Michigan, American Bar Association, Oakland County Bar Association and the Institute for Continuing Legal Education. He has lectured on how to practice in District Court. Barry is a lawyer that other lawyers go to in order to become better lawyers.

With an increasing caseload, we need someone who is a hard worker and an independent and innovative thinker like Barry. He has ideas that will increase judicial efficiency, but will still allow everyone his day in court.

When selecting a new judge, we want someone with maturity, integrity, devotion to our communities and experience in the District Court. We urge you to vote for Barry Brickner, someone you know, who has proven that he has the energy and dedication to serve us well. On Aug. 6, make the responsible choice, elect Barry Brickner to the 47th District Court.

Aldo Vagnozzi  
Former Mayor of Farmington Hills  
Vicki Barnett  
Farmington Hills City Council  
Cheryl Utherie  
Farmington Hills City Council

## Look at total record

I was disappointed to read that some Farmington area residents will not be voting for Aldo Vagnozzi simply because he is pro-choice.

While I myself am not a Catholic, my Catholic friends (who I make no claim represent) will be called upon to make many important decisions. One of those decisions will be to select a new judge in the 47th District Court for the first time in ten years.

While there are several candidates running for this position, we believe that Councilman Barry Brickner stands above the rest. We have watched Barry develop into one of the outstanding leaders of our community as a Planning Commissioner and currently, as a member of the Farmington Hills City Council.

He continually impresses us with his fair, honest and ethical behavior. His easygoing, friendly and even-tempered nature, and his great sense of humor make him very approachable by all citizens. Even more important is his ability to listen to citizens' concerns, analyze the issues and develop reasonable and practical solutions to many problems.

Barry has further served our community on the Committee to Increase Voter Participation, the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the Eight Mile Boulevard Association. He also participates in the Rouge River Rescue and is a donor at the city-sponsored Red Cross blood drives.

Barry has been in the general practice of law for over 25 years. He has handled every type of case that comes before a District Court Judge. As a dedicated practitioner, Barry is active and has taken leadership roles in several bar organi-

Brianna Knoppow  
Farmington Hills

## Support Brickner

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