

"The politician in my country seeks votes, affection and respect, in that order." —Edward R. Murrow

campaign notebook

Kelley's ad counters jabs at Granholm

Befitting state Attorney General Frank Kelley goes solo in a 30-second television ad promoting Democrat Jennifer Granholm, who's running for Kelley's job. And Kelley pulls no punches at Republicans and their TV spots that denigrate Granholm.

He calls the latest GOP ad "garbage" and a "one job. He accuses Granholm's GOP opponent, John Smetanka, of running a dishonest campaign. He calls Granholm a "person of integrity" who has not drug dealers and child pornography in prison.

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spotlight: county commissions GOP banks on Fieger fallout

Dems guard themselves, stressing independence

When November's election is over, it might be dubbed Fieger fallout. It's a theory that glowing Macomb County Republican are flouting this election year.

They are Democratic voters disgusted with controversial top-of-the-ticket candidate Geoffrey Fieger, and say that will trickle down to Democrats at the bottom of the ticket. The GOP says that will allow Macomb County Republicans to steal seats from Democratic candidates for the Macomb County Board of Commissioners.

County GOP leaders say this is the first time they've paid for what is widely referred to as contract pieces — more commonly known as attack ads.

Three mailings, each criticizing a single Democratic candidate, list the candidates as Fieger, calling them the "Extreme Team."

The 11-by-8½-inch glossy colored cards were expected to arrive Tuesday in about 20,000 mailboxes in Sterling Heights, St. Clair Shores, Eastpointe and Clinton Township.

The cards are emblazoned with a close-up and double-headed picture of Fieger next to each candidate: incumbent Robert Mijac; serving Sterling Heights, incumbent Thomas Barrows, who represents St. Clair Shores and Eastpointe; and George Fitzgerald, who's running against Republican Levin Drake for the District 16 seat that represents Clinton Township.

The ads say, "If you like Geoffrey Fieger, you'll love..." followed by the candidate's name.

The ad against Fitzgerald contains the headline, "Coleman Young supported George Fitzgerald," next to a picture of the late Detroit mayor.

Raynos, who said he refused to stand for Fieger at a Democratic fundraiser, said Tuesday that he had spoken with Mijac about the campaign literature. He said they decided not to respond with similar negative mailings, which he called "the lowest form of politics."

Fitzgerald and Mijac could not be reached for comment.



If the voters don't like Fieger, they won't vote for lower ticket Democratic candidates — so go the thinking among Republican strategists and campaign copywriters.

THE BOARD'S JOB

The Macomb County Board of Commissioners sets the county tax rate and allocates funding to county departments.

■ Budget: \$269,446,014. ■ Oversees: Budget for the prosecutor's office, health department, sheriff's department and jail, county hospital, animal shelter, juvenile detention center, county parks and recreation, county library and a committee that studies economic development.

The 25-member part-time board appoints members to standing committees and ad hoc committees.

In this year's race, four commission seats are uncontested, including that of board chairman John Hertel.

Republicans are eyeing the seats of 6th District incumbent Jim Flynn, Mijac's 9th District, 11th District incumbent Linda McFarland and Raynos' 21st District. In addition, they want Districts 16 and 21, which are open because incumbent James Bierard ran for state House and failed in the primary and Michael Sotakakis is running for the House.

■ Pay: \$22,454 a year plus \$35 per meeting, up to 125 meetings. County commissioners serve two-year terms. One commissioner is named chairman by the board for each two-year session. There is no county executive in Macomb County.

The board meets at 7 p.m. on a different Thursday each month on the second floor of the county building, 40 N. Main in Mt. Clemens.

Major turnover expected on Wayne board

THE BOARD'S JOB

The Wayne County Board of Commissioners will have at least four and as many as six new faces come January, its biggest turnover in 15 years.

Depending on the outcome of two hotly contested races, the 15-member board could end up with a majority of voters the first time. The number of black commissioners is expected to drop from seven to six, and there almost certainly will be three experienced state legislators joining the board.

Three board members opted to run for higher office. They'll likely be trading jobs with the legislators who are barred from running again by term limits. A fourth incumbent lost an primary race.

"It's going to be different," said Bernard Parker, a Democratic commissioner from Detroit. "Four or five new commissioners, that hasn't happened before. A delicate balance exists among the seven Detroit commissioners, seven from the rest of the county and one whose district covers city and suburbs."

The Detroit commissioners usually vote together and sometimes pick up support from one or two suburban commissioners. New commissioners will determine whether the balance tips to the suburbs, Parker said.

Others aren't so sure new faces will equal change. Susan Hubbard, a Democratic commissioner from Dearborn, said she expects the traditional split to continue, as well as tension between the commission and the county executive. "We'd have to see change in the executive's office for there to be real

change in county government," she said. Edward McNamara, who beat Democratic opponent Sharon McPhail 21 in the primary, is expected to win easily over his Republican challenger, Edward Romanowski.

Lyn Bankes, a Democratic legislator who is expected to win a county board seat in the 10th District representing Livonia, said some issues, like the airport and mental health services, are so big they should transcend any Detroit-suburban split.

The three commissioners who are hoping to win state legislative seats are William O'Neil, D-Allen Park; Bruce Patterson, R-Canton Township; and Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia. Kimberly Cockerel, who replaced her husband, Ken, after his election to Detroit City Council, was defeated in the primary by Rep. Bona Varga. She is expected to win in the heavily Democratic 5th District in Detroit.

Rep. Joseph Palamara, D-Allen Park, is expected to win O'Neil's 18th District seat, and Bankes is expected to win McCotter's 48th.

Palamara and Bankes served in the Legislature for 14 years each; Varga was a legislator for 12 years.

Patterson is likely to be replaced by his wife, Republican Melissa McLaughlin, in the 11th District in western Wayne County. The legislators swear they won't be bored on the county board. Detroit stadium and the expansion of Metro Airport are two big-ticket economic development projects, and pushing regional economic development is important, Palamara said.

The former legislators would represent more people as commissioners than they did in their House districts — an average of 135,000 people compared with 85,000, Palamara said.

There are now six women on the board. But with Bankes and McLaughlin expected to win, women would become a majority.

■ Tax Lam can be reached at 1-313-223-4497.

advertising watch

■ Campaign: Attorney general.

■ Target: Democratic candidate Jennifer Granholm.

■ Sponsor: Michigan Republican State Committee.

■ Ad schedule: Began Monday, scheduled for one-week run.

■ Ad lengths: 30 seconds.

■ Creative: Murphy Dink Gaudier Hodson (Washington, D.C.)

■ Audio/video: Video begins with black and white, slow-motion footage of Geoffrey Fieger pounding a podium during a speech. Next is a photo of Fieger and Granholm standing side by side, giving thumbs-ups.

They see Granholm's face with Fieger in the background. Back to the side-by-side, thumbs-up pose of the two of them, which gets bigger and bigger.

Meanwhile, a man's voice says, "Geoffrey Fieger. We know his liberal ideas are dangerous. Like releasing thousands of criminals from prison. So what about

Jennifer Granholm, Fieger's inexperienced choice for governor's general? The person best able to help Geoffrey Fieger get elected? A Fieger campaign rally, she even asked the crowd, 'Will you get radical?'

Jennifer Granholm. Liberal like Fieger. Jennifer Granholm. Inexperienced like Fieger. Jennifer Granholm. Fieger like Fieger.

■ Analysis: Fieger cooled Granholm has a bad case of it, according to this ad.

Once again, the state Republican Party is attempting to use Fieger to bait another Democrat. And typically, the GOP uses "liberal" as a pejorative term, coupling it with the words "dangerous" and "horrid."

With polls showing Fieger trailing by a large margin, this might seem to be a straight attack on Granholm using guilt by association. Fieger's image is in screen the entire 30 seconds. His name is mentioned eight times; Granholm's name five times.

But the ad has a larger purpose: discourage Democratic voters so much that they simply don't turn out to vote. Democrats interrupted the same thing in 1996 by linking U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., to other GOP candidates.

The statement that Fieger would release criminals from prison is a partial truth made to sound almost mad. Fieger has said that diverting 7,000 people convicted of drug and property crimes to alternative punishment and rehabilitation would free money for crime-prevention programs. He didn't say they should be simply released to the streets.

Granholm did embrace Fieger as the Democratic Party's top candidate. But she disavowed his crime platform. No matter: In the two-dimensional world of campaigns, it's her plan because it's his plan.

By Chris Christoff

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political calendar

ROCHESTER: The League of Women Voters Rochester Area has rescheduled tonight's forum between 10th District U.S. House candidate Dale Abner and Tom McMillan to Friday, Oct. 23. The candidates will meet at 7:30 p.m. at Rochester Hills City Auditorium. Mayor Kenneth Swift will moderate and take questions from the audience. The program will air live on the city's Channel 35 and will also feature a phone-in for live questions from home viewers.

WEST BLOOMFIELD TWP: Area township organizations will hold a candidates forum on Sunday, Oct. 25, at 6:30 a.m. at a banquet house in West Bloomfield. Invited speakers include Alan Hibel Moore, Jr. who will endorse candidates for government, the 11th and 12th District Congressional seat and state House seat. The event is held on Maple west of Lakeview Rd.

spotlight: congress

Bonior homes stir complaints; backers stand firm

BY JENNIFER MAY

Two Republican state leaders went to Mt. Clemens on Tuesday to stand in front of Democrats, Congressman David Bonior's condominium and accuse him of being an outsider, while at least two dozen Bonior backers showed up to back their senator.

"David Bonior is out of touch with his constituents," said Betty VanVels, chairman of the Republican State Committee. "He claims two principal residences. This brings up the lack-

of a tax break." DeVos had a copy of a paper from the Mt. Clemens City Treasurer's Office showing Bonior has a homestead exemption of \$17,400 on his condo. She also had copies of legal papers where Bonior called his home in Port Republic, Md., his principal residence.

But she didn't have anything showing he got a tax exemption for the Maryland home. DeVos said she's asking the House Ethics Committee to investigate. She never mentioned Brian Palmer, the Republican who is

running against Bonior on Nov. 3. DeVos charged outgoing Macomb County Commissioner Bobby Hill, a Democrat. "I've about three blocks south of here," he said. "Bonior helped us with a Habitat for Humanity house about a block from here, and