

IRs lose their independents

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By LaVonne Barac

The times, they are a'changing. Carver County's Independent-Republican Party has lost its independents. In the future, it will be known as the Carver County Republican Party.

Some 70 delegates made that decision by amending their constitution during the county's off-year convention at Hazeltine Golf Club last Saturday. There is no indication that either the Third District IR Party or the State IR Party will follow suit.

According to outgoing Chairwoman Ursula Dimler, Chanhassen, the delegates took their action in a movement of "unity with the rest of the nation." Dimler added, that saying Independent-Republican was more "cumbersome" than Republican.

That may be, but the party sought to broaden its base in this state by adding the word "Independent" after a plunge in people identifying themselves as Republicans following the Watergate episode and subsequent fall of Richard Nixon nearly two decades ago.

Of the two major parties in Minnesota, only the IRs hold off-year conventions. They use the off-year gatherings for their internal organization, electing local officers and State Central

delegates.

Dimler, outgoing party chairwoman, did not seek re-election. She had in fact moved up from first vice chairwoman when the chairwoman, Kathy Engebretson of Chanhassen resigned. Neither did incumbent Chairman Don Hoese seek re-election to his former office.

A nominating committee presented a slate of candidates to the convention, seven of whom were elected. Kathi Anderson, Mayer, failed to be elected second vice chairwoman. In part that may have been because Anderson was unable to attend the convention and did not have anyone make a formal statement on her behalf, Dimler said.

On the other hand, Anderson was also denied election to fill a vacancy for first vice chairwoman at last year's convention. Although then-Rep. K.J. McDonald and his wife, Barbara, spoke on Anderson's behalf she was turned down by the delegates. Those speaking last year, including Kathy Klemp who defeated Anderson on Saturday, pointed to Anderson's pro-choice stance as the justification for exclusion.

The only other contested office was for chairman where Scott Jensen, a

Waconia physician, barely defeated Darwin Lafrenz, a party newcomer from Waconia.

Others elected were: Lois Peterson, Chanhassen, chairwoman; Lenada Rahe, Camden Township, first vice chairwoman; Klemp, Cologne, second vice chairwoman; Jensen, chairman; Jon Carlson, Chanhassen, first vice chairman, Hoese, Mayer, second vice chairman; Dorothy Comer, Chanhassen, secretary; and Sheri Carpenter, Mayer, treasurer.

Elected to the State Central Committee, the governing body at the state level, were Anita Mittelsted, Carver, and Jim Mullin, Chaska, the current chairs of the Third District IR Party, Dimler and Peterson.

The delegates also passed resolutions supporting various political positions. None appeared to differ from recent past positions on issues.

This year the delegates also called for a maximum of two consecutive terms for governor, three terms for U.S. senator and six terms for U.S. representative, the latter two totalling 18 and 12 years. The delegates voted down a resolution calling for abolition of the endorsement process.

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