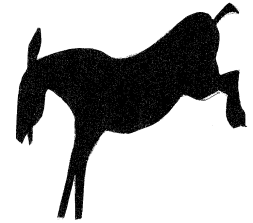


The *Benzie Kicker*

The Benzie County Democratic Newsletter



The Benzie County Democratic Party is a dynamic part of the community working inclusively and creatively for the betterment of all

Spring—2007

Visit our Web site: www.BenzieDemocrats.com

Volume 11 Issue 2

Executive Board

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County Commission Report By Anne Damm

. We (County) are hiring Mark Wykoff and his cohorts at the MSU Extension to review our planning and zoning process, personnel, etc. He was instrumental in working with the community on the 20/20 Plan, and knows our situation well. After the death of Don Swartz, the planning and zoning activities were not fully staffed. Coordination of staff and various commissions suffered, and the county was at more risk of lawsuits. We decided unanimously to have a consultant help us get our growing county back on track. I was honored to take on completion of the writing of a grant to the **MICHIGAN MUNICIPAL RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY RISK AVOIDANCE PROGRAM**, to help pay for this analysis. We agreed unanimously as commissioners that we would pay for this with or without the grant, but hope to minimize cost. The primary question we described for the grant was: What are the project goals and plan of action to resolve the risk exposure?

The following describe our goals:

Recommend clear responsibilities and effective hierarchy for planning and zoning for the County Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, County Administrator, Planning Director, Zoning Administrator, support staff, and involved citizens such as those instrumental in developing the 20/20 Comprehensive Plan.

Create tools to determine and measure goals, and define appropriate participants in the process.

Determine optimum staffing to reach goals

Develop effective tools to measure progress of individuals, boards, commissions, employees and others involved in oversight and progress towards the common goals.

Develop effective communications within the county government, the departments and with the public.

Avoid litigation through proper training, legal advice, and awareness of pending legislative issues.

Attract townships back into the process.

Other findings and recommendations of the MSUE team.

We expect for this process to take one to two months, and I am very excited that we chose this option for professional advice to get us back on track with our planning department, zoning department, and ordinance writing, as well as clarifying the various roles that have been pinch-hitting to keep momentum going in an increasingly busy area of responsibility for all involved.

News from the Chair

Hope you all enjoyed our two days of spring. As I write the weather has gone from warm, glorious and sunny to grey, cold and depressing. So what's new; it's Michigan.



I've just finished reading Barack Obama's The Audacity of Hope. He speaks of a new kind of politics, "a politics for those weary of bitter partisanship. A politics rooted in the faith, inclusiveness and nobility of spirit at the heart of our democracy." It is an inspiring book. Perhaps those of us who have lived here for awhile have survived because of the hope of another spring day is always with us. Perhaps we know that change for the better is possible if we just work together.

Harrison, my two year old grandson, brought me a purple crocus. It is a reminder of spring to come. It is a reminder of hope.
Susan Pyne, Vice Chair

Helping Holly:

Holly Nelson is the 26-year-old daughter of Chris and Diane Nelson, owners of Platte River Printing. Holly is battling a rare form of cancer and faces ongoing treatment at the Mayo Clinic.

Chris and Diane have served as the printers for the Benzie Democratic Party for many years, and are part of the Democratic family in Benzie County. Holly is a talented photographer, and she and her sister Erin have a gallery on U.S. 31, connected to Platte River Printing.

Chris and Diane are conducting a raffle to help raise money for Holly's medical expenses. Prizes are three of Holly's photographs. Tickets can be purchased at the Gallery east of Honor, or from Joyce Skinner or Carroll Volpe.

On July 7, there will be a gathering at Gallery 31 from 5-8 pm, with local wines, refreshments, door prizes, and raffle drawing. The public is invited. (You do not need to be present to win.)

If you have an opportunity, stop in to Gallery 31 to view Holly's wonderful photographs!

MDP Seeks Public Comment on Draft Delegate Selection Plan for 2008:

Plan features voting at voting centers, by mail and by Internet; sets February 9, 2008 date

LANSING- The Michigan Democratic Party (MDP) today published for a 30-day public comment period its draft Delegate Selection Plan (DSP) for its 2008 Presidential Caucuses.

The DSP features three voting methods:

- Voting at voting centers throughout the state on Saturday, February 9, 2008 from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. A voter can vote at any voting center in the county where they reside.
- Voting by mail, also known as no-reason absentee voting, during the 30 days prior to February 9th.
- Voting by Internet during the week prior to and on February 9th.

"This mixture of voting methods made the 2004 MDP Presidential Caucus the most accessible election in Michigan history and Democratic voters enthusiastically embraced voting by mail and over the Internet," said MDP Chair Mark Brewer. "Based on that successful experience, we intend to offer those voting options again in 2008."

"We welcome public comment on all aspects of the draft plan during the next 30 days," continued Brewer. "The plan is available on our website at <http://www.michigandems.com/mdpdsp.pdf> and comments can be submitted to jmoon@michigandems.com. We will also mail a copy of the plan to anyone who requests it by phone (517-371-5410) or fax (517-371-2056), and we will take written comments by fax (517-371-2056) or mail (606 Townsend, Lansing, MI 48933)."

The Democratic State Central Committee will consider the draft DSP and any public comments submitted at its April 28, 2007 meeting. The final DSP adopted by the Committee will be filed with the DNC by the deadline of May 1, 2007.

The February 9th date will be changed to earlier if any other state violates the DNC scheduling rules.

Taken from the Michigan Democratic Party Website

Fundraising Committee

The Fund Raising Committee met on a Saturday afternoon on January 7, at Mary Robling's house to plan and strategize for this election cycle (two year period).

We have set an ambitious fund-raising goal for this election cycle of \$18,000.

We will hold three 'anchor' events plus 1-3 others each year. In addition, we are working on an exciting new idea for bringing in donations—for which you'll have to "stay tuned!" The fund raising events coming up this year are:

The Garage/Yard Sale – This is our Memorial Day Weekend big blowout yard sale, to be held Friday through Sunday, May 25, 26, & 27 at the Sheets pole barn in Benzonia off Love Road. Chloe McGehee is the Chairperson, call 882-9446

Annual 4th of July Chicken Barbecue – This is always held the Saturday before the 4th of July. This year it will be on Saturday, June 30, in Maley Park in Honor. Rosalie Pelch is the Chair call 882-4780.

Carl Levin fund-raiser – This will be on July 14 in the evening, location yet to be announced.

Women's Spa Day – This will be on Nov. 10 at the Best Western Scenic Hill Motel. This event is just two years old, but has proven to be very successful.

In 2008 the anchor events to be held are: Chicken Barbecue, Honoree Dinner and the Women's Spa Day.

The Fund-Raising Committee is looking for more volunteers and workers to help out on each of these events. Please sign up to help call Phyllis Crowell, Chair of the Fund Raising Committee, Tel.: 325-2170 or 651-9105 or call the chair of the event.

Michigan in Fiscal Crisis

The state budget in Michigan is in bad shape. The county will have to make some tough decisions in the near future. The lack of revenue to the state has not been taken seriously enough, as tax cutting measures have created a situation where the state is going to be having a 400 million dollar shortage through late May. The Governor may be forced to put a moratorium on all state grant payments, which will directly effect county services and education, in order to balance the state budget which we must do in Michigan. Some temporary fixes are being worked on, but the same thing will happen in August, with a real possibility of a government shutdown. For more information see http://www.micounties.org/legislative/leg_update.asp

Memorial Weekend Yard Sale

Same Sale, Different Weekend

Have you started thinking about spring cleaning yet? Well, giddy up! Benzie Dems' Annual Yard Sale is moving to Memorial Day Weekend—Friday, May 25 through Sunday, May 27. We will be collecting, sorting, and pricing items during the week.

As always, the sale will be at Jim Sheets' barn on Love Road. Please, please, *please* (as James Brown would say) look for clean, useful items to donate when you're doing that spring cleaning. Please remember, Memorial Day is a big weekend for yard sales, so we'll need lots of items. Please pack breakables in sturdy boxes. There will be drop off days and some pick up services will be available.

And, please, no clothes, no junk, no broken items, and no items too large to be moved easily. If you have questions on the suitability of an item, or would like to volunteer, please call Yard Sale Chair Chloe McGehee at 882-9446. This is one of our major fundraisers. We need your help!

Computer Fundraiser Campaign

Executive Board members voted at the February 3 party meeting to raise \$1,000 by May 3 to purchase a new laptop. So the Campaign is underway! We already have two pledges of \$100 each toward the purchase—so there's still \$800 to go. If you can contribute to the campaign for this vital equipment, please contact Ray at 882-4790.

This computer is necessary so that the Treasurer and Recordkeeper can file timely campaign finance reports to the Secretary of State.

Benzie Democrats' Core Values

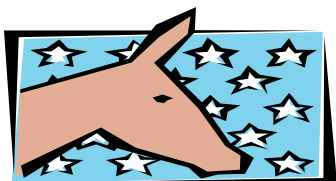
Integrity: *We believe that government, as well as the Benzie Democratic Party, must operate with transparency.*

Stewardship: *We are responsible for caring for and nurturing our human and natural resources.*

Tolerance: *We believe respecting differing points of view and the dignity of others are strengths.*

BENZIE COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE
P O BOX 63
HONOR MI 49640

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID PERMIT #15
HONOR MI 49640



BENZIE DEMS DATEBOOK

April 14, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp. Hall
April 21, Annual MDP Jeff-Jack Dinner, Cobo Hall
April 28, Manistee Dems Annual Don Jennings Dinner
May 5, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp. Hall
***May 25, 26, 27th—Yard Sale Fundraiser**
June 2, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp Hall
***June 30, Noon—?: Chicken Bar-B-Que, Maley Park**
July 14th—Senator Carl Levin fundraiser
August 4, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp Hall
October 6, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp. Hall
November 3, 9 a.m.: Regular Meeting, Benzonia Twp. Hall
November 10, Women's Spa Day, Eden Hill Best Western
Feb 9, 2008—Michigan Presidential Caucus

Note: *Designates fundraiser

All Meetings are on the 1st Saturday, except for April because of Easter, No meetings in July, September, and December.

Everyone is welcome to attend meetings - to be on the agenda, please call Ray Nichols prior to the meeting .

2nd Congressional District Democrats:

The 2nd District has a new Chair Joe Zainea, who is very organized and has a great plan to lead us to be a more organized district organization. Meetings will be held for the next 3 months in Ludington (April-June) at the James Street Brew Pub at **2 p.m.** the next meeting is on **April 29th.**

It was decided at the March meeting that the District will focus on party building in the counties in the District. In the near future, Joe and Mary Robling (Vice Chair) will be meeting with the individual counties to discuss their training needs.

There is also a plan to have speakers on various important subjects at the District meetings. After the 3 months meeting in Ludington (center of the district) a decision will be made on where to hold future meetings depending on the attendance from the counties during that 3 months, so please make an effort to attend.

The Benzie Kicker Newsletter Staff

Jim Dulzo - Jerry Solanics - Carroll Volpe

Please let us know what you think! Send us your comments and suggestions! Call Carroll at 325-6692 or e-mail her at mcvolpe@centurytel.net. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter send a note.