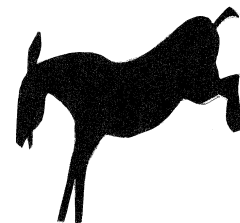


The Benzie Kicker

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

Summer—2008

Visit our Web site: www.BenzieDemocrats.com

Volume 12 Issue 3

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Make a difference in the 2008 election challenge!

By Doreen Fitzgerald

One important issue in our local election is the evident arrogance that has resulted from more than a century of one-party dominance in Benzie County—from refusing to make public information public - to public officials whose common sense fails them when it comes to ethical behavior during working hours. This arrogance has led to a loss of both money and credibility, a situation that mirrors the dismal national performance of the Republican Party.

Here at home we can do better. Our strong field of Democratic candidates is a signal that more people want to participate and are interested in doing the hard work it takes to get elected. There are many ways you can support those who are willing to serve: grass roots organizing in Benzie precincts; talking with friends and neighbors; hosting a meet-the-candidate event in your area; fundraising. We hope that those of you that want to see change will participate during the next few months as we work for more ethical and responsive local governance—*government of the people, not despite the people.*

“Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it,” said Lord Chatham in 1770. It’s a thought to remember in 2008, when we have the opportunity to restore a measure of checks and balances at the local level, as well as in Washington D.C.

Support our Democratic Candidates in the August 5th Primary Election

Brant Downing—Sheriff

Michael L. Smith—Prosecutor

Eric Pyne County Drain Commissioner

Delores Duddles-Berta, District 1, Almira Township

Phillip Kiteley—District 2, Platte, Lake, Crystal Lake Townships

Kristin Hollenbeck, District 3, Frankfort/Elberta, Gilmore Township

Or

Shauna Fite, District 3, Frankfort/Elberta, Gilmore Township

Anne Damm, District 4, Benzonia Township

Kathy Ralston, District 5, Homestead Township

Donald Tanner, District 7, Blaine, Joyfield, Weldon Townships

We also have many Candidates running for Township Offices

There are still opportunities for Write-in positions call Carroll at 325-6692 for information

Campaign and Fundraising Updates:

We had a most successful Honoree Dinner/Silent Auction where we honored 4 great Democrats — Kay Boyne, Dick Haan, Jane Lean and Kathy Ralston.

Thanks to everyone who helped make this a successful event.

Our next event will be the Headquarters Open House at 254 S. Benzie Blvd in Beulah on July 4th from Noon to 4 p.m. Join us in the Frankfort and Beulah 4th of July Parades, we would like a large contingent of walkers and riders – come out and support the candidates. The next day will be our Annual Chicken Bar-B-Que on July 5th at Maley Park in Honor - Noon to ? Come early for great food.

We had 27 canvassers for the last Almira Walk and have had wonderful results. We are ready to start canvassing Inland Township—please join us!
Carroll Volpe Campaign Coordinator

News from the Chair

FROM THE CHAIR **IT IS YOUR TIME TO** **JUMP INTO THE** **CAMPAIGN**



We had a dream a year ago, that we would visit and knock on as many doors in Benzie County to identify voters and let them know we were interested in what they had to say. We have made a dent in that dream, we have been to roughly 2000 doors in the county since July 2007. This effort has taken place through the hard work of about twenty loyal Democrats. We have worked out the kinks with the help of this team of people and now must take this task to the finish line by the end of August in order to change things in this County. “This is our “Moment in Time” to change this country and this county.

We need YOU to join our small team and make it bigger in a hurry. This is the time to get out of each of our comfort zones and become part of breaking the 100 year domination of Republican control of Benzie County.

It truly is a time for change.

Will you help by joining with us to identify voters and talk to voters in Benzie County at this time? Will you be part of our team to visit Inland, Homestead and Benzonia Townships to get out the Democratic vote this fall.

If you want to say you were part of the change that can happen in this county, step forward. Please call, Carroll Volpe at 231-325-6692 and say, “*I want to join the Team*”

WE NEED YOUR COMMITMENT FOR CHANGE!

Ray Nichols
Chair

Michael L. Smith for Prosecutor

Allow me the opportunity to introduce myself and tell you a little bit about who I am.

I am a 1979 graduate of Traverse City Senior High and a native of Northern Michigan. I have been a practicing attorney for nearly twenty years, and have practiced in Northern Michigan since 1991.

I received my undergraduate degree in Public Administration from Central Michigan University in 1985, graduating *magna cum laude*. I received my law degree from Wayne State University in 1988, and have been a licensed attorney in Michigan since November 1988.

My first job out of law school was working as the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Branch County (Coldwater). My law practice is in Lake Ann, concentrating on general practice and criminal defense. I am on the court-appointed criminal defense rosters for both Benzie and Manistee Counties.

I have been married for 24 years. My wife, Gayle, is a 1980 graduate of Traverse City Senior High. We have two children, 14 year old twins- Kareen and Kelvin.

I am running for the prosecuting attorney position because I strongly believe that the present office holder has undermined the respect and integrity of the position, failed to hold County officials accountable, and gravely hurt the image of this county. My goal is to run a fair, impartial, and effective office, which aggressively prosecutes crime.

Benzie County deserves county leadership we can all take pride in. Our county has been a mockery for far too long. We all deserve, and should demand, more from our county government. No position is more important in this change and restoration of pride than that of Benzie County Prosecuting Attorney.

Candidates for Frankfort/Elberta/Gilmore Primary

Kristin Hollenbeck:

Kristin Hollenbeck has strong roots in District III, which is the City of Frankfort, Elberta and Gilmore Township. She often refers to herself as a “breed” as family members on both sides were born in either Frankfort or Elberta as far back as her maternal grandfather Rasmus Vigland in 1875 who was born on a wooden shack built on pilings and piers out over Betsie Bay.

She is a retired English teacher and presently works for the Benzie County Record Patriot.

Deeply touched by the rifts between the two communities over the years she will work hard for deeper understanding of the pride and respect the two communities have as they continue to work together on many common interests.

Her main focus is on bringing renewable energy, affordable housing and jobs that are sustainable and provide living wages so people can pay child care, mortgages, their utilities and taxes and send their children to our exceptional schools. We can and must do this.

She has three children who are college graduates who cannot find jobs in the county they grew up in and I know many other families in this same situation.

Shauna Fite:

My name is Shauna Fite and I am running for County Commissioner, District 3, covering Frankfort, Elberta, and Gilmore Township. I graduated from Frankfort High School and went on to earn a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Michigan State University. Upon graduation, I worked as an Americorps VISTA volunteer with MSU Extension’s Youth Activities program. Following that I worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters in Benzie, Manistee, and Wexford counties. I currently live in Frankfort and work at the Benzie Housing Council.

Benzie County offers so much to its residents and the many visitors we accommodate each season. As we continue to grow, we need to promote smart growth to maintain the beauty of our area, as well as offer economic opportunities for families and individuals to be successful. Having worked with diverse populations throughout our county, I hope to bring together residents, local government, businesses, and community organizations to implement solutions to these issues and create a stronger healthier community for all of us.

Message from Sheriff Candidate Brant Downing

Democrats and Friends,

I want to talk about the choice you have in this election and why your choice matters. Your choice includes picking a Sheriff who not only relies on words and education, but on hard work. For too long we as citizens and as democrats have been left out of the Sheriff’s office, and I will change that.

When making a choice to whom you will support, let me suggest that we need solutions, not more of the same. I offer to you a choice that no one else will offer, the right choice. I have the passion, drive, and determination to exceed your expectations and believe I can represent you as Sheriff in the utmost professional way.

I want people to know that anything is possible and this campaign is your campaign, as I hope you support it. We all know what is happening in Benzie County, and we need to change it. We cannot afford another Sheriff that does not see, or hear your voices.

Furthermore, I need you to stand beside me, so that together we can bring about the changes we have been waiting for and seek. I am privileged to be standing in this position for the county and for this party; as we need to keep fighting for a voice in local government.

Our party must be the party of tomorrow. As your Sheriff, we can be the party of tomorrow, and the party of Benzie County. It’s going to take a democrat to undo the damages from the last eight years within the Sheriff’s office.

With that, I hope you are as motivated to make a difference in the Sheriff’s Office as I am. In short, I ask for your volunteer and financial support, and also ask for you to stand beside me so that together we can make positive differences in Benzie County.

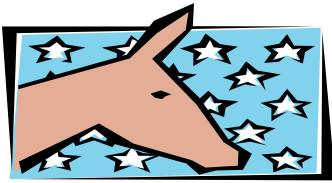
-Brant Downing

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BENZIE DEMS DATEBOOK

June 22, 2-3:30 p.m., Dan Scripps Meet and Greet at Mary Robling's, 8737 Fairway Drive, Beulah, 882-9912 for more information.

July 4, Noon—Grand Opening of Headquarters, 254 Benzie Blvd, Beulah. Join us for the Frankfort and Beulah Parades with the Opening Celebrations between the two parades.

***July 5, Noon—?** Chicken Bar B Que, Maley Park Honor

August 2, 9 a.m.: Regular Monthly Meeting, At Headquarters (HQ)

August 5, Primary Election

September 6, 9 a.m.: Regular Monthly Meeting at HQ

October 4, 9 a.m.: Regular Monthly Meeting at HQ

November 1, 9 a.m.: Regular Monthly Meeting at HQ

November 4, General Election

Note: *Designates fundraiser

All Meetings are on the 1st Saturday, No meetings in July, and December.

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

Help Wanted

Volunteers for campaign activities! Want to get involved? Contact Carroll at **325-6692** or e-mail at mcvolpe@centurytel.net or mail contact info to: **Benzie Democrats, P.O. Box 44, Honor, MI**

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.*

The Benzie Kicker Newsletter Staff

Doreen Fitzgerald - 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.

Benzie Democrats, P.O. Box 44, Honor, MI 49640