

Honoree Dinner set for September 12



Mike Ross



Don Tanner

Photos by Al Bryant

The annual Democratic Honoree Dinner will be held Saturday, September 12, 2015. The Honorees are Don Tanner for his many services to Benzie County and Mike Ross for all his work for the Benzie County Democrats.

The dinner, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., is at Fallen Timbers, 13901 Honor Highway (US-31 across from the GrayStone Mansion). There is plenty of parking. The buffet-style meal will feature three meats and one vegetarian main dish. There will be a cash bar.

The event's main speaker will be Brandon Dillon, the newly elected chair of the Michigan Democratic Party and former state representative (D-Grand Rapids). He takes over for Lon Johnson, who resigned after announcing his run for the First District congressional seat now held by U.S. Rep. Dan Benishek (R-Crystal Falls).

Silent Auction

We are looking for donations of large ticket items for this: art objects, gift certificates, services, and other items of interest for people to bid on. In addition there will be a \$5 cash table of smaller useful items for immediate purchase. We need donations for this table also, items such as place mats, candles, kitchen items, etc. Please call or e-mail Chloe (kcmcgehee@sbcglobal, 882-9446) or Judy (judealou@hotmail.com) if you have questions. Items can be delivered

to our Democratic Party office in Honor or at our next meeting on August 15.

Reservations

The fund-raising committee worked hard to keep the cost at \$40 per person. Reservations & checks should be mailed to Bruce Ogilvie, Treasurer at PO Box 403, Beulah, Mi 49617. The Honoree dinner should be noted on the check.

Four spoke at July Event

Local Democrats gathered July 19 at the Betsie River Centennial Lily Farm to hear two current candidates for 2016: Tom Stobie, who is making a second run for the 101st State Representative seat, and former Michigan Democratic State Party Chair, Lon Johnson, who has announced his candidacy for Congress in the First District. They were joined by two potential candidates who are exploring the possibility of running again: Dan Scripps, former 101st District

State Representative, and Jerry Cannon, who ran for the First Congressional District in 2014. All speakers agreed on the need for new and vigorous leadership and vision, both in the State House and in Congress. If there are any primary election contests in 2016, proceeds from the event will be used to support Democratic candidates after the primary.



Dems listen to candidates. More photos on page 3.

From Vice-chair Mike Ross. . .

Support the 101st Democratic Committee

After the November, 2012 election, Democratic Party officers in Michigan's four-county 101st Congressional District hatched a plan to assist candidates in winning local elections. The 101st Democratic Coordinating Council was formed with the goals of supporting local county political events and collectively strategizing and raising money for candidates for the 101st District Michigan House seat and county commission seats in Benzie, Leelanau, Manistee, and Mason Counties. The council meets quarterly and consists of four to five voluntary representatives from each of the four counties.

In the spring of 2014, the council established a PAC, Northwest Michigan Values. Leelanau and Benzie Counties led the way in contributions during the run-up to the election of November, 2014. This collaboration proved very effective in Leelanau County, with Democrats winning three of seven county commission seats. In Benzie County, Democrat Coury Carland won a very tight race for an open seat in the 4th Precinct. However, incumbent Don Tanner was narrowly defeated for the 7th Precinct seat in a race highlighted by extremely nasty lies about his "liberal agenda" as well as personal attacks on Don. This same well-funded, Republican strategy was used against Tom Stobie in his narrow loss, 321 votes, to two-time incumbent Ray Franz. This small margin indicates that if we had been able to flip an average of 41 votes or get an average of 81 more Democrats to the polls in each of our four counties, Tom Stobie would presently be our state house representative in Lansing. Although unsuccessful, a race this close versus a two-term incumbent bodes well for the future.

Contributing to the fund raising efforts of 101st District Coordinating Council is one way of countering the negative, lying, last-minute campaign tactics of the GOP. At the state level, fund raising is a major endeavor, and candidates for county commission should not have to worry about raising money for printing campaign literature, yard signs, etc. This additional support was very successful in Leelanau County, and there is no reason it can't work in Benzie County as well. Contributions to the PAC are accounted for separately by county, so money given by Benzie County residents will be made available to candidates for office in Benzie County. It will be much easier to find good, qualified candidates

if using personal resources and fund raising are not a concern. Monetarily supporting Northwest Michigan Values allows larger sums to be contributed to our busy, hard-working Democratic candidates. For the betterment of our state and region, we must win back the 101st District House seat in Lansing and increase our influence at both the county and township levels. To contribute to Northwest Michigan Values PAC, contact Rick Robb at (248) 705-5782, or by email at microb17@gmail.com.

At the last meeting, on Thursday, July 23, we learned of candidates who have expressed interest in running for state and national office in the 2016 November election. Both 2014 candidate Tom Stobie and former Representative Dan Scripps have indicated that they intend to seek nomination for the 101st District House seat. This will lead to a Primary election challenge on August 2, 2016.

That also appears to be the case in the 1st US Congressional District, as 2014 candidate Jerry Cannon and former MDP Chair Lon Johnson have both indicated interest in running against incumbent Republican Dan Benishek. Until a candidate is nominated after the August of 2016 primary, the Benzie County Democratic Party must remain neutral. All candidates will be given access to the internet website VAN (Voter Activation Network), but must form their own campaign teams. This will be a presidential election year, so we can expect an increased Democratic voter turnout.

The council also endorsed sharing informative articles, forums, and letters to the editor on topics that should appeal to Michigan citizens, regardless of political affiliation. Among topics on which to challenge Lansing are the lack of progress in funding road and infrastructure maintenance, rescinding the Earned Income Tax Credit, hypocrisy regarding issues of local control, privatizing public education, energy policy, and environmental protection for Michigan's natural resources. Particularly urgent is pressing Lansing to deal with the threat of Enbridge Line 5, carrying natural gas and petroleum under the Great Lakes.

We need volunteers to submit Letters-to-the-Editor to local newspapers. Submit letters independently, or contact Mike Ross at (231) 651-0604 or at mike.ross0919@gmail.com for more information.

PERSONAL OPINION

by Bob McQuilkin

I am one of those who is upset that the media is consumed with who will be president in 2016. That Donald Trump has made center stage, I am concerned for the idiocy of the political system. His popularity is offensive, revealing a mind-set of our population which is troubling.

We have such a long way to go before our party knows what we have to deal with, and I would hope in this “meantime” we will develop a clear understanding of what for us is the “good news” we bring to the nation.

That means being clear and realistic about what Obama and Democrats have made possible during his tenure. I hope we won't run from the achievements. (Go to factcheck.org and read the featured post on “Obama's numbers”)



In the face of a party which has been trying to predict gloom as a result of their President's actions, there has been progress we need to celebrate and articulate. It is not necessary to have all the answers to make efforts to move in the right direction. We have made a difference—on health care, on immigration, on job growth, on lowering the unemployment rate, on wind and solar power, on difficult efforts to work through diplomacy rather than military actions.

Local elections are also important - countywide and statewide. We will be supporting candidates who have better solutions for supporting public education, for getting our highways and bridges repaired, for spending tax money where it helps the most people, for protecting our environment. Our support for their message will help challenge a status quo which favors the privileged.

At left, congressional candidate Lon Johnson. Below left, State House candidate Tom Stobie and former congressional candidate Jerry Cannon, who is considering another run. At right, former State Representative Dan Scripps, who might run again for the State House in 2016.



Photos by Al Bryant

Join the party!

Help us meet our 2015 membership goal for our local party. You can download the form at our website. Fill out and mail with your contribution to Treasurer Bruce Ogilvie at PO Box 403, Beulah, MI 49617.

Thanks for your Participation!

<http://benziedemocrats.com/wp-content/uploads/Benzie-Membership-2014.pdf>

Parade

Coho Festival, August 22, 2015. Parade begins at 2 p.m. Lineup in HONOR Riverside Dr. It's a short parade - contact Marcia Stobie. Please bring candy; if you have a sign or vehicle, bike, etc. also please bring!

Benzie County Democratic Party
PO Box 403
Beulah, MI 49617

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Regular meetings begin at 10 a.m. on the 3rd Saturday of the month at our headquarters on U.S. 31 in Honor unless otherwise announced. No meetings in July and December.

If you use electronic communications, please tell us you want "E-Kicker only" by e-mailing Mary Scholl: mascholl12@icloud.com. Put "Benzie Dems Contact Update" in the subject line of your email. The newsletter is also available at our website, where you can download it and print out if desired.

Benzie Dems Officers

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Calendar

- Aug. 15: Regular meeting.**
- Aug. 22: Coho Fest Parade in Honor**
- Sept. 12: Honoree Dinner**
(See page 1.)
- Sept. 19: Regular meeting**
- Oct. 17: Regular meeting**
- Nov. 21: Regular meeting**
- No meeting in December**
- Dec. Holiday Party TBD**

The Kicker is published and paid for by the Benzie County Democratic Party and is not authorized by any candidate or candidate committee. Editor: Doreen Fitzgerald (231-352-7876)