

West Michigan News Company

- Secretary of State's Bureau of Elections after a month and half fails to answer my request. See letter on page 5.
- New survey is online. Check out "You be the Judge" on page 3.
- Hope to have podcasts up soon on the website blog. It will be audio conversations of the people involved in the issues we report. Hear investigation reports as we discuss them.

Conspiracy Theory? By Pat Foster

On Wednesday of last week, the Lower Scott Lake Board met to determine what they would do with their dredging project. WMNC.biz had published a lab report showing that the arsenic levels in their test well was at 100 ppb, while the safe limit for drinking water is 10 ppb. The people who live around this containment site have had a theory that the county officials are attempting to have this area ruined environmentally so that it can be used as a landfill.

Once you know and understand the theory, then you look at the actions of the people involved. I will list them from my perspective:

- During the 2006 election while I was running for county commissioner in this district, I was offered a contribution to the local Democratic Party of enough money to pay for every campaign we were running. The only limitation was that I back off from my stand against the landfill issue.

- We have two county officials on this Board, Tom Jessup and Becky Rininger. These officials have an obligation under Agency Law to serve and protect all the citizens of their district. To date, they have done nothing about checking the arsenic levels in the drinking water of the residents living contingent to this containment site.
- Bill Hinz from the Allegan County Health Department gave a talk about the inadequacy of their test well and maybe they will drill a new one. He said that it would be alright for the people to have a level of 25 to 50 ppb in their drinking water even though the standard was lowered to 10 ppb, because of the higher health risks.
- The owner of the property, Mr. Haekel, sent a letter to the dredging contractor wanting me arrested for trespassing



Beck Rininger and Tom Jessup

even though numerous people have used the same property for mud racing, duck hunting, and other activities without a peep from him. What threat do I present to him? Has someone offered him lots of money if his land is contaminated?

I really do not want to think that our county officials have worked out a deal with a company like Waste Management to put a super landfill in our back yard. Please do not allow this to happen.

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Saugatuck Township Board Meeting by Pat Foster

I was at the first meeting in December when the talk was all about McClendon not building any more than the 80 allowable units on the north side of the river. I left that meeting with a visual picture in my mind of 80 units, which I found at this meeting was going to be 40 homes and 40 town homes. After listening to the attorneys Fritz Royce and Dayle Harrison, after the

Critical Dunes Act, wetland restrictions, and zoning are taken into account, he will only be able to build around 10 homes. Was someone trying to con us at that first meeting?

Knowing McClendon's tendency to buy politicians and judges to make his environmentally unfriendly deals fly, I was particularly interested in Dayle Harrison's ques-

tioning of Bill Wester, the Board Chair about his meetings and conversations with McClendon's attorney. Bill got angry at this questioning and told Dayle that he did not have to



Bill Wester

March 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Michigan Election Reform Alliance has a St. Patrick's Day fundraiser at the Corner Brewery—720 Norris Street — Ypsilanti, MI 48198 6-10 pm
Come and meet the people who are working to get our votes audited.

Moore wants Michigan to Redo Primary Election by Nick Juliano



Michael Moore

Filmmaker Michael Moore says he and his fellow Michigan voters should have their voices heard as Democrats pick their presidential nominee, but he does not want results of the state's previous "Soviet-style election" to count. Michigan and Florida each were stripped of their delegates after they broke Democratic National Committee rules in scheduling their primaries too early. Hillary Clinton

easily "won" each delegate-free state in which candidates agreed not to campaign, and she is now pushing for those states to have their delegates re-seated at the Democrats' convention this summer.

Moore, who previously lamented the disenfranchisement of his states voters, said he wanted the Democratic party to "fix" the situation, ideally by holding another primary or caucus. Barack Obama and John Edwards, unlike Clinton, removed their names from Michigan ballots before the state's Jan. 15 vote.

"There was no election there," Moore told reporters on a conference call Friday. "That was a Soviet-style election with one candidate on the ballot."

The documentary filmmaker, whose most recent project *Sicko* is up for a Best Documentary Oscar this Sunday, said he hopes his film cata-

lyzes focus on fixing America's broken healthcare system just like Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth* expanded environmental activism. Moore has not endorsed either Democratic presidential candidate, and he accused Obama and Clinton of getting side-tracked with small-bore debates rather than focusing on what he thinks should be the primary goal: securing universal health coverage for all Americans. "They're having silly debates about who's going to mandate how many people. We're not cars," he said, comparing the candidates' proposals to laws requiring drivers to hold auto insurance. "This needs to be treated the same as our Social Security system."

Also on the call were several patients profiled in Moore's film who said their problems battling insurance companies to secure needed care have not abated since *Sicko* was released this summer.

"It's about the men and women who ran into danger and now are having to trade food ... for medication that we need," said Reggie Cervantes, a 9/11 New York rescue worker profiled in Moore's film.

Cervantes and other first responders will appear on Capitol Hill next Tuesday to protest cuts in funding for 9/11 workers' healthcare. Moore said healthcare activists should be more focused about electing members of Congress who would support HR 676 a universal healthcare bill. He said either Obama or Clinton would be more likely than Republican John McCain to sign the bill if Congress could generate the support to pass it. "We have the money to do it," Moore said of establishing a national healthcare plan. "That certainly has been proven with \$12 billion a month spent on this war."

Schedule of Events

- Mar 10th—South County Democratic Club 7-9pm Moose Lodge in Buchanan
- Mar 11th —Ottawa County Democratic Party 7-9pm Fillmore St near 120th Administration Bldg Main Conference Room
- Mar 16th —MERA St. Patrick's Day fundraiser—See below for details
- Mar 25th —Call County Democratic Party 6-8 pm 804 E. State St Cassopolis MI

Saugatuck Township Board Meeting (continued)

answer these questions because they are covered by the attorney/client relationship. While Bill was correct in stating that, Dayle pointed out to him that "public bodies" are subject to be more open with the citizens. If you do not have anything to hide, then why don't you just tell us the basics of what was said and agreed to behind closed doors.

Apparently, McClendon thought he was going to be able to sneak this past the citizens of Saugatuck and Douglas by doing it over the holidays when everyone was busy. This point was brought out by Damien Jarzembowski in very vivid language. The crowds at both the first meeting in December and the

second meeting in January made them realize that the people of Saugatuck and Douglas are not going to sit quietly and allow them to rape our beautiful dunes. Now comes McClendon's second strategy. If he can't just roll over us, he is going to have a huge reception at the Arts Center on May 30th and invite the people who can help him make this deal fly. I don't think a few drinks and hors d'oeuvres are going to persuade people to allow him to do this deal. I think it will get down to his having to give up any interest in the south side to allow him to put his 10 units on the north side. He is subject to the Critical Dunes Act, wetland restrictions, and zoning on both sides. If the people of Sauga-

tuck and Douglas hold their ground, it is possible he will give up on the whole deal and sell it back to us.

Another alternative is an Eminent Domain takeover for a Park. Fritz gives a very good recap on how that may happen if the Township Board is working to preserve this naturally beautiful piece of property. Again, this would be based upon 125% of fair market value. Since McClendon is now trying to have the property valued at \$ 5 million for tax purposes, he is going to have to convince a jury that he was wrong on this estimate if he would like a higher amount. The range would probably be somewhere between \$6 to \$50 million.



Saugatuck Township Board
Video of Meeting is available at WMNC.biz

Wal-Mart Does Something Right Business News

Palm Desert, CA – Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE:WMT) and BP Solar today announced the completion of a 591.6 kilowatt (kW) solar power system at the Sam's Club in Palm Desert and the plans for a 605.88 kW solar system at the Wal-Mart store in Palm Springs. The systems will provide up to 30 percent of the power for each store.

These two stores are part of Wal-Mart's major purchase of solar power from BP Solar and

other solar power providers for approximately 22 Wal-Mart stores, Sam's Clubs and distribution centers in Hawaii and California. The stores included in the project are expected to achieve immediate savings over their current utility rates upon day one of operation.

"We are very pleased with BP Solar's completion of the solar power system at the Palm Desert Sam's Club. This project is

bringing Wal-Mart one step closer towards our goal of being supplied 100 percent by renewable energy," said Kim Saylor-Laster, vice president of energy for Wal-Mart. "This is another example of Wal-Mart's commitment to making decisions that are good for business and the environment."

Editor's note: I don't bash Wal-Mart all the time. When you do something nice, you deserve credit.

"This is another example of Wal-Mart's commitment to making decisions that are good for business and the environment."



Your Real Estate Signs

overturned saying that this man was guilty of "election fraud".

Now comes the time to hear a criminal case on this man. Do you recuse yourself because of your financial connections, or do you hear the case? Go to WMNC.biz to answer this poll.

You Be the Judge by Pat Foster

I want you to put yourself in the shoes of being an impartial judge. You are the president and major shareholder of a large real estate brokerage firm that owns land in a planned development. You have a partner in this business who is a member of the family that controls the largest business in town. Besides that, you own

properties on two sides of a river between two cities that are part of this development.

This entire development hinges on being able to take control of a Park that is owned by the poorer of these two cities. This Park was gifted to these residents through a deed that said it was to be maintained by them as a Park. You

have convinced 6 members of this Park Board to exchange this valuable property for some junk property. Now one of the residents of this town does not like what you are doing, so he starts a recall election against one of these Park Board Members who is recalled possibly killing your development. Another judge has this election



West Michigan News Company

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Without light, there is no Democracy

WMNC.BIZ

Last year's passenger auto sales figures for Europe show that around 60% of all passenger cars sold had diesel engines. Biodiesel is an effective environmentally safe alternative to oil. Since the U.S. is run by the Major Oil Companies, we do not produce one passenger automobile with a diesel engine.

Comcast pays people to stack a FCC Hearing on Net Neutrality. They want to take the freedom we enjoy with the internet away from us.

Former Fed Chairman, Alan Greenspan, is trying to talk the Saudi's into using another currency rather than the dollar to peg the price of a barrel of oil. If they decide to do this, there is a very good chance that China and Japan will sell their dollar reserves, and then watch the value of your investments in banks, treasury bills, and domestic bonds drop like a brick.

Book Review: Broken Government by John Dean

John Dean of Watergate notoriety really slams the Republican Party in this book. He quotes Alan Wolfe: "Political parties expend the time and grueling energy to control government for different reasons," he explained, viewing politics with his wide-angle lens.

Liberals, while enjoying the perquisites of office, also want to be in a position to use government to solve problems. But conservatives have a different motive for wanting power. One is to prevent liberals from doing so; if government cannot be made to disappear, at least it can be prevented from doing any good. The other is to build a political machine in which busi-

ness and the Republican Party can exchange mutual favors; business will lavish cash on politicians (called campaign contributions) while politicians will throw the money back at business (called public policy). Conservatism will always attract its share of young idealists. And young idealists will always be disillusioned by the sheer amount of corruption that people like Gingrich and DeLay generate. If yesterday's conservative was a liberal mugged by reality, today's is a free-marketer fattened by pork.

He outlines five steps the Republicans use to control Congress:

1. "Rule by Cabal"

2. "Work as Little as Possible—and Screw Up What Little You Do."
3. "Let the President Do Whatever He Wants."
4. "Spend, Spend, Spend"
5. "Line Your Own Pockets"

Government is going to continue to do what ever it wants as long as we sit by passively and allow them to steal elections with no opportunity to audit their crimes. As citizens of a country that so many have fought and died to give us a voice in representative government, it becomes our responsibility to make sure that they did not die in vain. You must stand up and voice your objections.



John Dean—May 7, 1972

West Michigan News Company

January 17, 2008

Mike Ryder
Michigan Department of State
Bureau of Elections
PO Box 20126
Lansing, Michigan 48901-0726

Re: Allegan County 2006 General Election

Dear Mr. Ryder:

I would appreciate the Bureau of Elections answers for a final disposition of the following issues that occurred both before and after the 2006 General Election:

- (a) Two criminal complaints were filed with Detective Doan of the Wayland State Police Post regarding the failure of election officials to allow us to see and count the ballots physically at:
 - (i) At the recount for the recall election of all of Lee Township's Board, Joyce Watts, the County Clerk and the Board of Election Canvassers failed to allow us to see each and every ballot and take notes during the recount after the Law giving us that right was read to them.
 - (ii) At Casco Township on the night of the election, a group of Election Challengers requested to see and count the ballots after an attorney read to Mr. Peter Allegrenie of your office the law allowing us to do that. The township clerk and Mr. Allegrenie both failed to comply with that law.
- (b) After the 2006 General Election at a recount for Neva Tice for Trustee of Lee Township, the following irregularities took place:
 - (i) The ballot canister was removed from Lee Township immediately after the election by Joyce Watts, the County Clerk, and after a seal number was requested from the township clerk, we were told that she could not give us one because Joyce Watts had it in her office.
 - (ii) The Poll Book showed 1,200 ballots for this election and apparently that is what the election officials including the township clerk said at this recount. That should have left 189 unused or spoiled ballots after the election. Yet there were no unused ballots in that container, and Ms Watts showed up with a bag having over 500 ballots in it saying that the election workers could not fit them into the container. During this recount, we were talking to these election officials, and they had told us that there were only 1,200 ballots and the 189 unused ballots were placed in that container.
 - (iii) During the recount, there were three vote counters including myself, and we all had observed that at least 50+ ballots had been printed and not completed by hand. Considering that this printer had broken down early on election day, and was placed in a corner so voters could not use it, we are wondering how they were printed and if anyone has even looked in this container to determine if our charges are correct.
- (c) While I was on both Julie Roger's and Neva Tice's recount groups, I was actually counting your boss's election, Terri Lynn Land, in four precincts, because your office would not allow our request for a recount for the Green candidate running against her. I testified before the state senate committee on elections in front of your boss, Chris Thomas that in all four precincts, the machines gave her from 3 to 5.5% more than the actual bal-

lots. Since your office controls elections in this state, what measures have you taken to audit the actual ballots in the coming election?

This letter is an open letter and will be published. The citizens of Allegan County, the State of Michigan, and avid readers from other states are concerned about the answers you are going to give to these questions. Detective Doan told us that he had talked with your office and was told that everything was OK. With the Reverend Pinkney from Benton Harbor in jail for election violations that he was cleared of in a lie detector test for far less than what I have just listed, the world awaits your answers.

Sincerely,

Pat Foster, Editor

You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. Abraham Lincoln