

West Michigan News Company

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- Calendar—Free Environmental Movies in Allegan County
- Register as candidate and/or precinct delegate— Fill in forms are available under "Political"
- Sign Petition for the Saugatuck Dunes
- Jean Klock Park videos
- Coming soon—Build your own government/ economic system

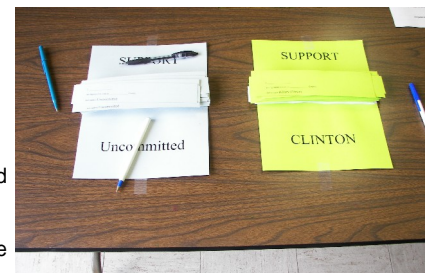
Obama or Hillary by Pat Foster

I just attended the Democratic Caucus of the 6th Congressional District to elect delegates to the Democratic Convention. As I entered, there were sign up sheets. One for "uncommitted" and the other for "Clinton". I asked why Clinton would have a sign up sheet, but Obama would not. It was explained to me that Clinton was on the ballot, even though it was against the rules of the national party, so her name was put out in front. Oh well, this is politics, so I registered as uncommitted", which I was soon to find out meant Obama. OK, I like Obama, even though he is for keeping our troops in Iraq just like Hillary. He at least has the appearance of being maybe his own person, even though we all know that is not true in Washington.

Well, they divide up the two sides into two different rooms so they can vote for a male and female delegates. There are 93 people going into the "uncommitted" room for Obama and 31 going into the Clinton

room. The first thing they did was have a group meeting over in the corner for Obama to tell you who to vote for. It is true I did not know anyone on the ballot except Bill Jones, and I consider him a Blue Dog Democrat to closely connected to Joyce Watts of the Allegan County Republicans, so I had to listen and follow advice. The next order of business was to elect a permanent chair for the district. There were only two candidates, and after the vote was tallied, and a winner announced, someone asked to recount the votes. The chair said he would not do that, and the vote stands as it was tallied by a few people. I guess he didn't hear about Florida in 2000 or Ohio in 2004. Democrats are kind of touchy about getting a correct count, and if you want to be a party chief, you listen to them.

After the voting was completed, Mark Miller, the man they told us to



Uncommitted and Clinton Sign up Forms

vote for got over 50% of the vote. The next closest was Robert Miller from Berrien county and I kind of wished that I had voted for him instead. I really did not know either man, but Bob seemed more down to earth, while Mark reminded me of a professional politician. If we had some time before the convention to meet and talk with these fellows, I guess the voting might have been different.

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How Billionaires Buy Their Toys by Pat Foster

They use your money. That is why they are billionaires.

The Upton family that started Whirlpool Corporation wants to build a private golf course for themselves and their friends. Since a lot of their friends live out of town, they also need a hotel to put them up when they come to play golf.

Since Fred Upton is the Congressional Representative from the 6th District, they pass legislation and with the help of Governor Granholm they put together a taxpayer giveaway of \$120,000,000 to finance the deal.

They decided that they needed a public park owned by the City of Benton Harbor that is right on the

sand dunes so their friends can have a nice lake view. Now this park was given to the City of Benton Harbor with a reverter clause that would take ownership away from them if they convert it from public to private use. No



Continued page 3

May 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Movie	3
4	5	6	7	8	9 Movie	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 Movie	17
18	19	20	21	22	23 Movie	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 Movie	31

Schedule of Events

- May 3rd —ACDP has Cinco de Mayo party in Holland—See Calendar on website for details
- May 7th —Allegan County Democratic Party, 7-9pm, Tech Center Allegan
- May 10th —Berrien County Republican Party 10—11 am North Lincoln Senior Center 3271 Lincoln St. Joe, MI
- May 12th —South County Democratic Club 7-9 pm Moose Lodge 101 S Red Bud Trail Buchanan
- May 18th —Stonewall Democrats Dating Game 7-9 pm at the Douglas Dunes. Win a cruise. Fundraiser \$10 donation.
- May 27th —Cass County Democratic Party 6-8 pm 804 E State St Cassopolis
- **Friday Movies 7-9 pm** at the Lakeshore Interfaith Institute on 122nd St east of Ganges. Details of environmental films are on WMNC.BIZ—Calendar

Movies at the Lakeshore Interfaith Institute should be very informative on the approaching change to our way of life on the downside curve of peak oil. There will be open discussion after the movies.



Mark Brewer
Chair of the Michigan Democratic Party

The Burger King Meeting by Pat Foster and Ira Deemar

Before the 2006 General Election, there was a training class for election challengers at Democratic headquarters in Saugatuck. The guest giving this course was Mark Brewer, Chair of the MDP.

Karen Wellman, Chair of the Democratic Club of West Michigan, had asked Mark to meet with several of us at the Burger King restaurant before this meeting to discuss our problems with Joyce Watts, the Allegan County Clerk. She did not allow us to see the ballots during the recount of Lee Townships' Recall Election after the law stating we had that right was read to her. This whole affair had been video taped and sent to BlackBoxVoting.org and

presented on their front page. It had over 250,000 hits.

There were seven of us meeting with him at the restaurant, myself, Karen Wellman, Ira Deemar, Neva Tice, Ben Reyes, Ken and Kathy Modrak. We had all expected to hear that the Democratic Party was doing something to require local officials to allow audits of our paper ballots. We were in for a crude awakening.

Mark stated in Michigan, you are not allowed to see the ballots. He suggested we just stop trying to see the ballots and get on with the election.

That night, there were seven people walking out of Burger King with very heavy hearts. The

entire concept of what we thought of our government was shattered. Our two party system appeared to be working together to keep the citizens of this country from controlling their government through the ballot box.

Later, Ira Deemar and I had filed criminal complaints with the state police giving them videos of the incident with copies of the Election Recount Law (Page 5) that was read to the Allegan County Clerk and Board of Election Canvassers as shown in the videos.

It is about time party leaders and the people in our government respect and follow the law.



Terri Lynn Land—SOS Republican, Susan McRill, Peter Alagrenie, and Chris Thomas

Obama or Hillary continued

Marletta Seats of Berrien county was elected as the female delegate, with Claudia Haworth of Kalamazoo coming in second. I believe both of these ladies would do the job.

Over on the Clinton side, they elected two delegates and an alternate. Why didn't Obama get an alternate? That means that if an Obama delegate cannot be there to vote at the national convention, a Clinton alternate gets to take their place. Now lets see, we had a 3 to 1 ratio of people in favor of Obama, yet we left that convention with the Clinton forces in a far better position to give Michigan to Hillary rather than to Obama. Maybe I'm wrong, but I think there was more

done behind closed doors between Mark Brewer and Howard Dean than we all realize.

I really do not like choreographed conventions were people are just a necessary nuisance to be dealt with.



Obama Caucus were everyone was told how to vote



Allegan County Delegation

Billionaires Toys continued

problem for them. They just bring judges and whatever they need to get the right kind of decision into the deal through ownership in Ship Street Realty and Law & Title Realty LLC. Both companies have a major interest in the profits of this development. We don't know exactly how many judges, lawyers, and prosecutors may have ownership in these entities, but we do know that Judge Alfred Butzbaugh, the Chief Judge of Berrien County is a major player in Ship Street Realty, besides owning a good deal of property that will directly benefit from this development. He is also Chair of Michigan's Bar Association's Ethics Com-

mittee.

What you have at this point is an inside tap on your tax dollars while you're trying to figure out where your going to get the money to fill your gas tank. If you don't like it, they always tell you that you can take it to court. What court? Why of course, Berrien County's Court-house. You might even get Judge Butzbaugh to hear your complaint. Good luck!

What do the people of Benton Harbor get from this deal. Benton Shores guarantees 22 seasonal maintenance jobs on their golf

course. Forty percent of those jobs go to Benton Harbor, or 9 jobs. Government money is supposed to create one job for each \$35,000. These jobs cost you \$5.45 million each. What does it cost you to fill your gas tank?

Don't forget to vote for Fred Upton in November. It doesn't really matter if you don't like him. If you vote against him, there is a high probability that your vote will be given to him anyway. Do you think that just might be one of the reasons they don't let us count the ballots after an election?

"You might even get Judge Butzbaugh to hear your complaint. Good luck!"

U.S. Presidential Election Can Be Hacked by Robert McMillan

This year, the U.S. will pick a new president using electronic voting machines that can be hacked, security experts said Thursday at the RSA [Security] Conference in San Francisco.

As the November election approaches, the question before officials is not how to fix known bugs in their e-voting systems, but rather, how best to check them for fraud, said David Wagner, an associate professor with the University of Cali-

fornia, Berkeley's computer science department.

Wagner was part of the team that audited California's voting systems during the state's review of electronic voting, and the problems his team found affect counties across the U.S. "The three systems we looked at are three of the most widely used around the nation," he said during an e-voting panel discussion at the show. "They're going to be using them in the 2008 elec-

tions; they're still going to have the same vulnerabilities we found."

..... About a quarter of the votes cast in the upcoming election will be on electronic voting equipment with no paper trail, Wagner said. And even the states that keep paper records are not necessarily checking their results. Only about a third of all states have records that are regularly audited. That's too bad, he said, because the ability to check whether your

voting system has been hacked is of paramount importance. "Security is not the most important thing," he said. "What's more important for elections is audit ability."...

Editor's note: Michigan has a paper trail and the law allows for election challengers to count the ballots, but state officials will not allow them to do it. You are threatened with arrest if you try.



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Without light, there is no Democracy

WMNC.BIZ

Beyond Obama, all of us need to raise our voices and point at the abyss of our country's institutional racism as was painfully and transparently reflected in the Sean Bell verdict. We might want to start by pushing Obama, Clinton and McCain-and the mainstream media- to speak honestly and continually about what the 50 bullets in Sean Bell say about justice in the 50 states of our tattered and bloodied union.

Gordon Matthews

Mask of Anarchy

“Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many, they are few!”

Percy Bysshe Shelley

I would like to know why the word "liberal" is so often used as a put down, when it is actually a compliment. The word means open-minded, broad-minded, moderate, freethinking, and tolerant... while the opposite of that is narrow-minded, unadventurous, conventional, conformist, and old-fashioned. I would much rather be a liberal, especially in this day and age when conventional thinking has gotten our country into so much turmoil... it is time for a change !!

Cincinnati Kid

Shays' Rebellion excerpted from *A People's History of the US* by Howard Zinn

The army for the US Revolution was formed through a draft of tenant white farmers. The slaveholder/property owners made up the Continental Congress and passed a law allowing any person for the cost of 8 pounds to buy their way out of the draft. By the time of the Civil War, this cost had risen to \$600.

The poor white farmers had come to this country as indentured servants/slaves, and when they worked their time off, became farmers paying rent to the wealthy few.

After the Revolutionary War, these farmers were not paid, but given IOU's by the Continental Congress, and when they

returned home, the wealthy, white landowners wanted back rent, and if it was not paid, they had them thrown into debtors prison.

“Daniel Shays entered the scene in western Massachusetts. A poor farm hand when the revolution broke out, he joined the Continental army, fought at Lexington, Bunker Hill, and Saratoga, and was wounded in action. In 1780, not being paid, he resigned from the army, went home, and soon found himself in court for nonpayment of debts. He also saw what was happening to others: a sick woman, unable to pay, had her bed taken from under her.”

“Shays organized seven hundred armed farmers, most of them veterans of the war, and led them to Springfield. There they found a general with nine hundred soldiers and a cannon. Shays asked the general for permission to parade, which the general granted, so Shays and his men moved through the square, drums banging and fifes blowing. As they marched, their ranks grew. Some of the militia joined, and reinforcements began coming in from the countryside. The judges postponed hearings for a day, then adjourned the court.”

The Declaration of Independence promised “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” for



rich white men, the rest of us have had centuries of fighting to try to achieve the same.

MICHIGAN ELECTION LAW (EXCERPT)
Act 116 of 1954

168.874 Recount; return of ballots; manner of counting votes.

Sec. 874.

(1) Pursuant to this chapter, the board of canvassers conducting the recount shall reject all previous returns from the precincts, townships, or wards, except the returns from a precinct that cannot be recounted as to that candidate or ballot question pursuant to section 871. In a public place where the candidates or persons interested in the ballot question and their counsel may be present, if they so desire, the board of canvassers shall proceed in the manner prescribed in section 871. If applicable, the board of canvassers shall open the ballot boxes from the precincts, townships, or wards, and the rolls or packages of ballots in the ballot boxes, and to make a recount of the ballots as to the candidates or ballot question. Upon completion of the recount, the board of canvassers shall make a full, complete, and correct return in writing, showing the full number of votes given to each candidate, or the total number of votes cast for and against any ballot question, written out in words and figures.

(2) **The board of canvassers shall conduct the recount so that the complete procedure may be observed and noted by the candidates or persons interested in the ballot question, their counsel, and not to exceed 1 watcher and 1 tallier at each table to check the work of the recount clerks.** The secretary of state shall develop instructions consistent with this act for conducting a recount pursuant to this subsection. All votes cast, whether for candidates or ballot questions, shall be recounted in the following manner:

(a) The ballots from any given precinct shall first be counted and the total compared with the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list. If the first count of the number of ballots and the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list do not match, the ballots from that precinct shall be counted a second time and the total compared with the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list. If the second count of the number of ballots and the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list do not match, those ballots shall not be recounted as provided in section 871. If the second count of the number of ballots and the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list match, the ballots from that precinct shall be counted a third time and the total compared with the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list. If the third count of the number of ballots and the number of ballots issued on election day as shown on the poll list do not match, those ballots shall not be recounted as provided in section 871.

(b) If the first count described in subdivision (a) or the second and third counts described in subdivision (a) match the number of ballots issued on election day, the ballots shall be placed face up on the table and 1 recount clerk shall call the votes for each candidate or ballot question involved in the recount.

(c) Two tally clerks shall simultaneously record the called votes on forms provided for that purpose.

(3) **The candidates or persons interested in the ballot question, their counsel, watchers, and talliers shall be allowed to observe each ballot as it is called and to take notes as they desire for their own records.**

The board of canvassers shall identify by an exhibit number a ballot counted or rejected under protest, keep a record of the protest, and proceed as required under section 871a.

History: 1954, Act 116, Eff. June 1, 1955 ;-- Am. 1995, Act 261, Eff. Mar. 28, 1996