



www.manisteecountydemocrats.us

2016 Manistee County Election Results

by Rick Schrock

Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton had one of the lowest performances ever seen in Manistee County for a Presidential campaign. She received only 39% of the vote here. Compare that to 57% for Obama in 2008 and 52% for Obama in 2012.

The presidential primary in March was an indicator of things to come. Trump stormed Manistee County with a 15% lead over his closest competitor in the Republican primary. Clinton was soundly defeated when she took only 40% of the vote in Manistee county while Bernie Sanders took 58% of the vote. Little changed for Clinton between the primary and the general election.

“Down ballot” Democratic candidates were overwhelmingly rejected by voters in Manistee County and across the country. As a result we will have single party rule in Michigan and in Washington DC. This is very bad news for the redistricting following the 2020 census.

A preliminary look at voting statistics seems to indicate we had three distinct groups of voters in 2016. We saw a new pattern of voters and that changed everything.

Every election both parties see their “base voters” show up. These are people with definite party preferences and consistently vote for members of their party. The numbers we see show those people showing up this year pretty much the way we expected. It appears that almost all of Clinton's support came from this group.

The second group of voters we saw were new faces. They were the “Trump surge”. These seem to include a lot of people who had given up on voting in the past, but were motivated to come out because of Donald Trump. It appears they voted for change and that meant voting against Democrats up and down the ticket. This created a huge tidal wave of Republican votes. This group was largely overlooked in polling predictions before the election.

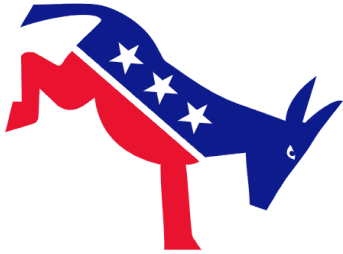
The third group of voters are our old friends. These are Independents and ticket splitters who usually only vote in presidential years. Democrats normally love these people because they tend to reject the more extreme ideas of Republicans these days and lean towards more moderate Democrats. This is where Democrats typically pick up a lot of votes. These Independents create our margin of victory every four years. This year they surprised us. In overwhelming numbers they rejected Clinton and then split their tickets in various ways for other Democrats. As a party we failed to fully appreciate just how significant their anti-Clinton feelings were.

Ticket splitters rejected Clinton and then 9% of them turned around and voted for Dan Scripps. Ticket splitters rejected Clinton and then 11% voted for Meg Batzer. Meg had enough base voters in her Democratic leaning district to add to the ticket splitters to win easily. With such a low county wide base vote for Clinton the 9% ticket splitters voting for Scripps were not enough to counter the Trump surge. Almost every Republican on the ballot won due to the Trump surge.

Almost no Democrats can survive when our presidential candidate performs 16% below the Republican candidate in Manistee County. There are simply not enough Independent ticket splitters. All the voter analysis I see points to the presidential race determining the fate of the rest of the Democratic candidates.

There is good news. Democrats will still hold 3 of the 7 seats on the County Commission. Democrats also will hold the County Treasurer and the County Register of Deeds offices. Our continued power sharing at the county level is an indication of the fairly even split between Democrats and Republicans in Manistee County during normal elections.

CALL TO CONVENTION



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

10:00 A.M.

CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS

342 RIVER STREET

DISCUSSION OF GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS AND
WHAT WE DO NEXT

ELECTION OF 2017 SLATE OF OFFICERS

PROPOSED BY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chair Gary Madden

Co-Chair – Laurel Mason

Secretary – Peggy Raddatz

Treasurer – Judy Cunningham

Following the convention there will be a work session to close down the office and move furniture and items to storage

If you kindly loaned the office a table, a lamp, or a book, we want to warmly thank you for your generosity. To retrieve your item before the County Convention, please call Peggy Raddatz, (510-3726), for instructions to access the office.

Storage is limited. Hence, items if not reclaimed will be raffled off along with the large cardboard likenesses of the Clintons and Barack Obama.



COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Maintaining Hope

Many Manistee Democrats gathered at our headquarters on election night. After working for many months on our local, state and national campaigns, we were optimistic and ready to celebrate our success. Some of our local candidates won their hard earned victories. We congratulate them and pledge our continued support and gratitude for their significant contributions.

Unfortunately the night did not go as expected for many Democratic Candidates. Trump carried many Republicans on his coat tails resulting in stunning losses for Lon Johnson, Dan Scripps and many of our local candidates. We continue to believe they are best qualified but they were unable to overcome the massive negative sentiments unleashed in the Presidential race.

So where do we go from here? How do we deal with the grief caused by this tragic loss? We are still in various stages of the grief process. At first, we tended to deny what was happening. We anxiously awaited results from the next precinct or the next State to show that all would be well. It did not take long for denial to subside and for us to realize that the results were real and irreversible.

Many of us are still justifiably angry. The results are catastrophic. But anger alone is unhealthy and unproductive. We have to move on.

Generally the next stage of grief is bargaining. Can we keep our Supreme Court Justices on the bench until a Democratic President can be elected? Can Democratic members of the House and Senate hold the line on the most draconian proposals of the new administration? Bargaining may help but we realize the losses are real and power truly has shifted.

This leaves many of us in the fourth stage of grief; depression. For me, this is characterized by not wanting to get up in the morning, lack of energy and a feeling of hopelessness. After all this work, what difference does it make? Is all hope lost?

Thankfully, depression can and will be replaced by acceptance. By acceptance, I do not mean giving up. As a Social Worker, I am taught to never accept an unacceptable injustice. But we can accept the reality of our situation and know that we have new challenges to overcome. We can accept that new opportunities must be found to make the world better for everyone.

There are many paths to success. Now, one of our paths is blocked. Rather than banging our head against the obstacle, we can step back and find a new path. We can keep up the fight, try new strategies and find new opportunities. In the end, good will prevail but only if we do not give up.

David Berns, Chair
Manistee County Democratic Party

Thank you, *thank you,* **Thank you!**

Thank you to all you intrepid volunteers who staffed the campaign office on a regular basis for months. We brought in enough in donations to cover our office expenses and freed up funds to give to candidates! Special thanks goes to Paul Glaser our Monday morning janitor and fix-it man. Another special thanks goes to Ellen Somsel who gave her all as Office Manager and Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you to our door knockers and phone bank callers. Over 1100 doors were knocked and 1200 phones were rung-up each day of our four day GOTV campaign. We can't thank you enough for your commitment to the democratic process.

Thank you to our poll challengers who spent long hours on election day checking off voters as they passed the check-in table.

A very special thank you to all our candidates who put themselves out there, committed themselves to countless hours of campaigning; hold your heads high knowing you stood up and fought the good fight!

And finally, to our members – thank you. Thank you for standing with us through this very divisive, contentious election. Your steadfast support and the hard work you put in to help us with events, fundraisers, making calls, knocking doors, and making generous contributions, is what makes us strong as a party and what strengthens our resolve to look ahead

Forget Canada. Stay and Fight for American Democracy.

By Jonathan Chait

Before the election, like many liberals, I made a lot of jokes about moving to Canada. It was a way for people to deal with our anxiety. It's not funny anymore, and people discussing it — reportedly, Canada's immigration website has crashed due to excessive interest — are beginning to disgust me. I love this country. I believe in it. I'm not leaving. I'm sorry to sound hokey, but I'm going to stay and defend truth and democracy. Never in my lifetime has the United States seen a period of darkness like the one that lies ahead of us. But we have seen periods of darkness before — segregation, McCarthyism, the internment of the Japanese, the Civil War, slavery. The American story is fitful progress punctuated by frequent reversals, some of which appeared at the time like they would last forever. None of them did.

The Trump years will be a horror. When I set out to write my long story in the magazine about Trumpism and the future of the Republican Party, I originally intended to focus on the immediate possibilities that lay before the Republican Party if it could capture full control of Washington. As this scenario grew less likely, I gave it less emphasis, but it is there. The Republicans will pass massive regressive tax cuts; they will take access to medical care from the poor and sick; they will deregulate the financial industry and fossil-fuel emitters.

And that is just the beginning, the best-case scenario. Trump is an impulsive, egotistical bully, intolerant of criticism and dissent and drawn to the ruthless application of power. Many liberals have been warning that American democracy is far weaker than we believed, and this was before any of us imagined a monster like Trump commanding the Executive branch. Trump will shake the Republic to its foundations. And the Republicans will shake it with him. If there is a central point I tried to drive home, it is that Trumpism grows out of a decades-long trend toward authoritarianism as the dominant tendency of Republican politics. I don't know what American government will look like after four years of Trump — or if it will only last four years, or even if it will only last eight.

But I do not believe that the people who elected Trump will be helped by his program in any way. Trump avoided policy specifics to a comical degree. His health-care plan is "something terrific" that will take care of everybody at no cost to anybody. His wall paid for by Mexico is not even a punch line — it is a symbol of his supporters' fascistic willingness to subordinate all critical faculties and endorse an obvious absurdity. What he will do is sign a quick succession of donor-driven laws written by Paul Ryan whose authentic support is confined to a trivial proportion of the party outside its big-money wing. To whatever extent people voted for Trump for reasons other than racial and cultural resentment, Trump will do nothing for them. He is a buffoon surrounded by a party apparatus that is unable to govern, as the Republican elite

surrounded by a party apparatus that is unable to govern, as the Republican elite demonstrated during the George W. Bush era, and that has grown worse.

At the end of this month, the president-elect of the United States will **face trial** for committing massive fraud through Trump University. He openly vows to have his children run his family business, which will enrich him through his office in the manner of a post-Soviet kleptocrat. The depths of a Trump presidency defy our imagination. It is safe to assume it will not be popular. Trump and his party will probably respond with vicious anti-democratic measures. But fighting for democracy is part of America's heritage, from abolitionists to suffragettes to the progressive reformers. Maybe you thought that fight was confined to history. It will go on.

And Trump does not represent the future. He only barely represents its present. His party controls all three branches in large part because its voters are overrepresented in the House, the Senate, and the Electoral College. He represents a rage against the direction of America they have no way of stopping. Even a complete halt to all of illegal immigration and a total deportation of every undocumented immigrant will not prevent the growth of nonwhites into an eventual majority. Republicans are increasingly focused on voter suppression and other anti-democratic measures to allow their shrinking cohort to rule. Trump is the perfect champion of their project.

But I do not believe they will win, at least not over the long run. As the shock of a Trump presidency set in, I told my children Tuesday night that I did not want to hear anything about fleeing. We are not going anywhere. And the America I have raised them to believe in will one day prevail

Congratulations to Margaret Batzer

District 7 County Commissioner

