



[www.manisteecountydemocrats.us](http://www.manisteecountydemocrats.us)

**Monthly Meetings**

Next Meeting Date:

**March 19, 2020**

(3rd Thursday of month)

6:30 pm - 8 pm

Dial-a Ride, Manistee

Meeting Agenda includes

Guest Speaker

Ron Stoneman

Superintendent, MAPS

**Officers**

Chair- Gary Madden

[genie42br@gmail.com](mailto:genie42br@gmail.com)

Vice Chair-

Laurel Mason

[laurele52@charter.net](mailto:laurele52@charter.net)

Secretary- Peg Raddatz

[peg.raddatz@gmail.com](mailto:peg.raddatz@gmail.com)

Treasurer-

Judy Cunningham

[jpc4466@gmail.com](mailto:jpc4466@gmail.com)

Membership Chair

Shirley Madden

[gspmadden@gmail.com](mailto:gspmadden@gmail.com)

**VOTE March 10 Presidential Primary**

*AND HELP MAKE A VERY IMPORTANT CHOICE*

Michigan residents will be choosing who they want to run against Trump on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. You may obtain a no-reason absentee ballot and vote now. The Democratic Ballot will list all of the candidates that filed, and many have dropped out. Only the 7 candidates below remain in the race as of today!

Biden, Joe  
Bloomberg, Michael  
Buttigieg, Pete  
Klobuchar, Amy  
Sanders, Bernie  
Steyer, Tom  
Warren, Elizabeth

.....also on the ballot .....

**Support the Dial-A-Ride Renewal/Increase**

*The first increase in 45 years*

The Manistee County Democratic Party supports the Dial-A Ride renewal of 1/3 of a mill renewal and 1/6 of a mill increase to continue providing Monday through Friday service for 163,000 passengers a year. Dial-a-Ride provides a vital service for people with disabilities, low - income residents, and children. They are an important service for people receiving medical treatment in Traverse City. Even with the increase, Dial-a-Ride's millage will still be below those of Benzie and Wexford Counties.



Gary Madden

## COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Lately, I have become very concerned about the issue of firearm safety and more generally, the rule of law in our community, in our state, and in

our country. I was troubled a couple of weeks ago when I read an article in the News Advocate that concluded with the suggestion that it is perfectly acceptable for individual citizens to use firearms to oppose what they perceive as government overreach. Really? Does this mean that it is OK for me to judge the merits of any law passed by any level of government and use my gun to oppose its enforcement? I don't think so. I always thought that my personal responsibility as a citizen of this country was to obey the laws. I know that I am always free to oppose laws that I strongly disagree with by joining with other like-minded citizens to get them changed. I know that I can pursue legal remedies if I care to, or I can write to my representatives in government. I am also free to actively protest laws that I don't support. But I am not and should not be free to use violent means whenever I disagree with my government over an issue.

A few days later I learned that a group of 2nd amendment supporters were planning to ask our county commissioners to adopt a resolution making Manistee a 2nd amendment sanctuary county, meaning that our county would then refuse to obey any state or federal law that infringed upon our 2nd amendment right to bear arms. To my mind, this effort also seeks to circumvent the rule of law in our society. Many people came to the latest county commissioners meeting to speak in support of and against the adoption of this ill-conceived and dangerous resolution. Thankfully, the commissioners declined to act and Manistee did not join the list of counties that have already adopted it.

Finally, we have the spectacle of our President all but directing the US Attorney General William Barr, via twitter, to alter the sentencing recommendations for one of his longtime friends! While this is technically not against the law, it does certainly undermine the independence of the Justice Department and the public's respect for the law. Are we headed to a time when the law is whatever the president says it is? Isn't that the way it is in a dictatorship like Russia? Are we heading in that direction? I wonder!

I think we all need to pay very close attention to events like these and take every opportunity to speak out against the erosion of the rule of law in our society. We must not be afraid to speak up to friends and family about this and other serious issues. Our failure to do so may very well embolden others to continue along the dangerous path to anarchy. This year we have a chance to correct many of the dangerous trends we have recently witnessed. We need to pay very close attention to what is happening during this election year and take our responsibility to vote seriously. Remember these words of Thomas Jefferson: "We do not have a government of the people; we have a government of the people who vote!"

## Stay Positive and Progressive



### *Working for Change one Door at a Time*

After retiring in 2015, I finally had time to do what I really enjoy – read autobiographies. I came across Norman Lear’s book and will never forget how enamored I was with his writing and his story of founding *People for the American Way*. “This guy is saying what I’ve been dying to hear.” And that’s what started it all.

Our country has gone off the rails these past few years and I knew I had to do more to fight for progressive change.

*I’m nervous about speaking in front of large groups, but going door-to-door is my thing. I did it for years in my job as a postal carrier and it gave me the confidence – and the stamina – to knock on doors to get out the vote.*

During our last election in Laguna Beach, I was proud to help flip a red district to blue!

I believe each of us has a role to play in getting our country back on track. For, standing up and getting involved in our democracy is an exercise of the brain, the legs, and the voice. And I know that *People For* is working alongside me and all the other progressives pushing for change in our communities.

It’s not okay to be quiet anymore, we have to go out there and do something. We have to stay positive – and stay progressive!

*Published in Legacy for Liberty by Nancy Wessel, of Laguna Beach, California, in the Winter Issue, 2020*

# **WOMEN RISING 2020:**

**A Celebration of Women on  
International Women's Day**

**Organizing, Mobilizing, Voting**

**Saturday, March 7, 2020, 1-4 pm  
Hardy Hall, Ramsdell Regional Center for the Arts  
101 Maple Street, Manistee MI**



**Join us for an afternoon of song, reflection and celebration**

**Program will include music, speakers, poster & banner-making  
*Bring your own posters and banners or make new ones at the event!!  
Supplies will be provided***

**All women and their friends, partners, allies welcome!!**

**Following the program, we invite you to take posters and banners out to Maple and  
First Streets and have a presence there for 30 minutes!**

*Organized by the tri-county Indivisible network—Manistee, Mason, Oceana*

## Law limiting Michigan ballot drives unconstitutional, court rules

LANSING – A state appeals court on Monday struck down major portions of a law that would have made it more difficult for citizens to launch ballot initiatives in Michigan.

The law, passed by Republicans during the 2018 lame-duck session of the Legislature, imposed a 15 percent limit on the number of signatures ballot petitioners could gather from any one of Michigan's 14 congressional districts. It also required petitioners to sign affidavits indicating whether they're paid or volunteer and display that designation on petitions.

The court struck down all three requirements, ruling they impose unconstitutional burdens on those signing and circulating ballot initiatives. The ruling largely affirmed a lower court's decision from September.

"Setting a 15 percent geographic limitation serves to take power out of the hands of the people," wrote Judge Deborah Servitto in the opinion joined by Michael Gadola. "This places the cart before the horse and unduly burdens the initiative and petition process."

The requirement that circulators sign an affidavit indicating whether they're paid or volunteer impose a "significant burden" on voters' First Amendment right to political speech, Servitto wrote, adding "no real governmental interest has been asserted" about the necessity of the rule.

"The circulators' right to be free of potential 'heat of the moment' harassment and to protect their privacy regarding their status as either a paid circulator or a volunteer, as well as the sponsors' right to have circulators engage in discourse with voters, outweigh the state's generally stated interests in transparency and accountability," Servitto wrote.

"The Legislature has simply not demonstrated that [the law,] PA 608's check-box requirement is necessary to serve its vaguely-asserted interests."

Other elements of the law, such as a requirement that the Board of State Canvassers decide whether a ballot initiative has met its signature requirements at least 100 days before the election, can remain, the court said.

Attorney General Dana Nessel last year determined most elements of the law were unconstitutional, prompting the Republican-led Legislature to sue Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, who like Nessel is a Democrat. The League of Women voters also challenged the law's constitutionality and the two cases were consolidated.

The state House and Senate could appeal to the state Supreme Court. Aides for Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey and Speaker of the House Lee Chatfield told Bridge via email they are “reviewing the ruling and considering options.”

Legislative leaders have maintained that the law is constitutional and should be implemented.

Secretary of State spokesman Jake Rollow said the office will review the ruling with legal counsel “before determining any next steps.”

Rep. James Lower, R-Greenville, sponsored the bill. At the time, he argued it would require petitioners to gather support from rural and suburban areas in addition to Michigan’s urban centers and to bring more transparency to the ballot initiative process.

*Printed by Bridge Magazine, Fall 2019*

## Meet up Scheduled for Candidates Running for Office

Local officials have the power to transform their communities for the better. Best of all, your local party can help you! The Manistee County Democratic Party will be holding an informational meeting at the Ramsdell Inn Lobby on March 25 from 1-3 PM for any one interested in considering an elected office. We have received an email from a nonprofit organization, *Contest Every Race*, who are working toward getting a Democrat to run in every race. We hope to make ourselves available to anyone contacted by this organization in our county by setting up this meet-up.

In our meeting we will discuss the financial and campaign resources that we have available for candidates running on the Democratic ticket. We will also discuss resources available from the Michigan Democratic Party and our State Party Regional Political Organizer, Sarah Rigney. Our local Campaign Committee can provide walk and mailing lists, secretarial support and office space. For more information, go to [manisteecountydemocrats.us](http://manisteecountydemocrats.us) and read the HOW TO RUN Guide.

MEETUP for Potential Democratic Candidates: March 25, 1-3 PM at the Ramsdell Inn Lobby. Let’s sit down and talk about the possibilities!



## DEMOCRATS' PATH TO WIN THE SENATE BEGINS WITH RE-ELECTING GARY PETERS

Gary Peters has served as our Senator for the past 5 years, running for office after Carl Levin retired. Senator Peters was the only non-incumbent Democratic Senator to win in the 2014 election. What has Gary Peters done in the last 5 years for Michigan Residents?

*In his first term as a U.S. Senator, Gary has been a tireless fighter in support of our veterans, to protect the Great Lakes, and lower prescription drug prices.*



- **Supporting Our Veterans:** In December 2019, Peters passed through the Senate a bill to substantially increase access to apprenticeship opportunities for veterans using GI benefits, which will help our vets develop skills needed for in-demand, good paying jobs. In a previous session, Gary passed into law the Fairness for Veterans Act, which has helped veterans suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury receive the benefits they earned during their service to Michigan and our country.
- **Protecting Our Great Lakes:** Peters secured the first increase in funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative since the program was established nearly a decade ago. The program provides vital funding for local projects, pollution cleanup, and combating invasive species. He also led the way to pass into law a bill to prevent the Defense Department from using toxic PFAS firefighting foams. The bill increased coordination between the Pentagon and states on PFAS remediation efforts. PFAS has contaminated drinking water in several areas of Michigan and poses a public health risk.
- **Lowering Prescription Drug Costs:** After meeting with Michiganders across the state, Gary led the way to lower prescription drug costs and hold drug companies accountable. Gary passed into law bipartisan legislation to lower insulin drug costs by speeding up approval of generic insulin medications. Further, Gary passed into law bills to combat monopolies by drug makers who have sought to reduce competition from cheaper, generic drugs.

Washington Republicans have taken notice of Gary's success as an independently minded fighter for Michiganders and have already spent more than \$1 million against him. Gary needs your support to continue his record of putting hard-working families first. Over 86% of Gary's donors have made a contribution of \$50 or less. Whether it's making a financial contribution or volunteering to help the campaign, Gary appreciates the support of all people around Michigan throughout the year to ensure our success this November. Visit [petersformichigan.com](http://petersformichigan.com) to learn more.

2020 Manistee DEMS Membership Year
MDP memberships included for the Huron Club and above

How do you benefit from being a member of the Manistee County DEMS?

- Influence local policy and candidates
• Receive email, phone, and newsletter notifications about upcoming Democratic events
• Attend the monthly business meeting featuring Guest Speakers (Third Thursday of each month at 7 pm, at the Dial A Ride Building.)
• Volunteer opportunities for specific events, i.e. Parades, County Fair and Blue Tigers

Optional: set up payment plan with your bank or with our internet: manisteecountydemocrats.us

Ontario Club (Basic) \$25 per person
Grass Roots - \$0
Young Democrats - (18 - 25) \$5
newsletter / eblasts

Erie Club \$50 per person
newsletter / eblasts

Huron Club \$100 per household
Payments of \$10 for 10 months
Names listed in Don Jennings Dinner Program
One (1) Free Drink at D.J. Dinner

Superior Club \$250 per household
Payments of \$25 for 10 months
Names listed in Don Jennings Dinner Program
One (1) Free Drink at D.J. Dinner
One (1) Ticket to Don Jennings Dinner

Michigan Club \$500 per household
Payments of \$50 for 10 months
Names listed in Don Jennings Dinner Program
One (1) Free Drink at D.J. Dinner
Two (2) Tickets to Don Jennings Dinner with Reserved Seating

Donation to Blue Tigers
Scholarship Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_
(We support students getting their GED, via transportation and emergency funding)

-----Check all that apply, cut and send back bottom portion-----

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Other joining member in same household \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

PH#( ) Cell#( ) Email \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

2020 Membership Level:

Ontario Club Erie Club Huron Club
\$10 / 10 mos

Superior Club
\$25 / 10 mos

Michigan Club
\$50 / 10 mos

Donation for Blue Tigers \$\_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT OF ENCLOSED CHECK \$\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/ 2020
Date

Make checks payable to Manistee County Democratic Party
Mail to : Manistee County Dems, P.O. Box 65, Manistee, MI 49660