

GRATIOT COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

THE NEXT CHAPTER



SEPTEMBER 2024 EDITION

A Democratic Party Newsletter Made for and by Gratiot County Members
Chief Editors, Nancy O'Brien & Lisa Gregory



Chair Chat

By Christie Freestone

"The consequences of anybody here, not turning out and doing everything you can to get your friends, neighbors, family to turn out, the consequences of you staying home would be profoundly dangerous to this country, to our democracy."

Barack Obama, Former U.S. President

In 2016, 100 million people who were eligible to vote didn't do so. In 2020, about 80 million eligible voters didn't vote. We can't let that happen in 2024! Every vote is needed to elect Democrats in the upcoming election.

Here are the important dates to remember for voting in 2024:

- **Sept. 26:** First day that you can vote in person with an absentee ballot at your clerk's office.
- **Oct. 21:** Last day to register to vote online or by mail. Starting Oct. 22, you'll need to register in person at your city or township clerk's office with proof of residency.
- **Oct. 26 - Nov. 3:** Early voting period. (Gratiot County Commission on Aging Building)
- **Nov. 4 at 4:00 PM:** Deadline to request an absent voter ballot in person at your clerk's office. After 4:00 pm you must vote at your polling place on Election Day.
- **Nov. 5** - General election. Polls open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 pm.

If you are going to vote in person:

You can confirm your registration status and find your polling location at the [Michigan Voter Information website](#).

Here's what to expect at the polls on Nov. 5, 2024

- The polls are open from 7:00 am - 8:00 pm so as long as you are in line by 8:00 pm, you may vote. You must provide a valid ID.
- Accepted ID includes:
 - Michigan driver's license or state ID
 - Driver's License or personal ID issued by another state
 - Federal or state government issued photo
 - U.S. passport
 - Military ID with photo
 - Student ID with photo
 - Tribal ID with photo

If you have any questions about voting, visit our office from noon to 6:00 pm on weekdays and 10:00 am to 4:00 pm on Saturdays. We will have handouts of Democrat endorsed candidates available on October 1st.

Candidate's Corner

Michael Lynch

U.S. Congressional Candidate - MI District 2



How Did We Get Here?

I was giving a speech in Manistee and one of the members of the audience asked, "Why do you blame the Republicans?" I said, "Because they did it."

In the early 1970's, Richard Nixon did a favor for one of his wealthy donors, the head of Kaiser Permanente, and he changed medical care from being not-for-profit to for-profit. I remember hearing some of the doctors and dentists I knew complaining about all of the paperwork this created. Since 1984, healthcare costs in America have skyrocketed while outcomes have not improved. We still have very high infant and maternal mortality. This is especially true among marginalized communities.

In the early 1980's, Ronald Reagan (whose administration had more felony convictions than any other administration in history. Of course, we are still counting the Trump administration) eliminated the Fairness Doctrine which required news communication to be unbiased. He also fast-tracked Rupert Murdoch's U.S. citizenship so Murdoch could start the Fox organization. Murdoch had already purchased a number of newspapers around the world and turned them into instruments for the right-wing agenda.

Reagan changed the law to allow corporations to buy back stock. This started the concentration of wealth at the top and stood in the way of proper governance for corporations. Reagan's notion of "Trickle Down" economics empowered many corporations to eliminate middle management jobs. This meant that those who were graduating from college during that time (like me) had to compete for entry-level jobs with people with 10+ years of experience. Reagan told us not to trust government, but to trust corporations. The economist Milton Friedman told corporations that their only responsibility was to their stockholders. We went from trusting an institution that was created to serve and protect to trusting institutions that were created to greedily maximize profits with little consideration to communities or workers.

Newt Gingrich started the habit of treating people who disagreed with him harshly. Then Rush Limbaugh went on the radio and started taking about "Femi-Nazis" and the like. As a note, in an interview, Rush Limbaugh stated that he did not believe what he said on the radio. He did it for ratings.

Democrats are not perfect. Don't get me wrong. NAFTA and other economic decisions made by Clinton and Allen Greenspan did more harm than good.

This is how we got here. Let's fight to work our way out.



Candidate's Corner

TIM ODYKIRK

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
★★★ 92nd District ★★★

FORWARD **TOGETHER**



Hello 92nd District Gratiot Dems! This is Tim Odykirk. I have yard signs for anyone who would like to add one to your yard! The signs are at our Gratiot Dems office 1686 Wright Ave. and can be picked up during office hours Monday thru Friday from 12:00- 6:00 p.m. or Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Or email me at Tim@timodykirk.us. Or text me at 989-621-1820. We would be happy to deliver.

If you are wondering if you live in the 92nd district, you are if you live in one of the townships of Seville, Pine River, Bethany, Arcada, or Emerson, or the communities of Alma, St. Louis, Ithaca, Forest Hill, Beebe, Elwell, or Riverdale.

Vote for Ody! | Tim Odykirk | www.timodykirk.us

Hey! Donations would always be helpful. 😊 Thanks!




Candidate's Corner

VOTE

Sarah Foltz

Gratiot County Commission

District 4

Candidate's Corner



Kevin Taylor

Candidate - Gratiot County Commission District 2

I have been asked for my ideas regarding achieving a balance between free markets and regulation since some believe that unfettered industry and ag have polluted our air and water, which is still a great concern in St. Louis and the surrounding area.

I would love to be the kind of politician that says there is an easy answer, and here is the bumper sticker for this. But I can't. So, what I am going to tell you is the truth.

As a data analyst, I work in facts and numbers. I deal with them for my work. I deal with them in daily life. I read white papers and real research, not the things you'll see on Facebook often posted by someone in Russia pretending to be from Duluth. And frankly, it's dire. Concern about microplastics (aka nano particles) is valid. Now, plastic is designed to be non-reactive or minimal reactive, according to Dow, DuPont, BASF, etc, and currently available research indicates the same.

But I'm also just old enough to remember when they said the same about Teflon, Lead, and Asbestos. The simple fact is that if we don't use something in the form that nature gave it to us, it could have results that we don't expect.

We have to realize that we're not running and voting for our generation anymore, but the generations of our children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews that will come after us. We will most likely NOT manage to fix the problems in our generation, but we can work to lay the groundwork for those that come after us. That is why I am running. I can't fix it myself, alone, within the legal scope of a county commissioner.

But I can start it.

I can work with people like Tim Odykirk and Michael Lynch, should they also be elected into office. They can work with people further up the chain, like our Michigan Senators and the White House. We must hold the White House so that there can be no more appointments to the supreme court that only consider corporate interests. We must work to educate people that the GOP has essentially run these rural counties for 40 years, and they are the ones that set the local regulations. They had their chances to stop this, and they sided with Wall Street. We can slowly work to reverse what has been done so that eventually, 40 years from now, our descendants have a chance at a better future.

PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE WATCH PARTY



On Tuesday, September 10, the Gratiot County Democrats office buzzed with excitement as we gathered to watch the presidential debate. The office was filled with anticipation as attendees prepared to watch Vice President Kamala Harris take the debate stage against former President Donald Trump.

Cheers erupted when Harris, known for her sharp intellect and powerful speaking, delivered her key points with poise, leaving a strong impression on the crowd. Many in attendance agreed that Harris's confident performance signaled a clear triumph in the night's showdown.

Gratiot County Democratic leaders were thrilled by the turnout and agreed that the event wasn't just about the debate itself—it was about fostering unity and motivating voters as the race heats up.

Join us October 1 at 8PM to watch our Vice-Presidential candidate, Tim Walz, square up against JD Vance. We hope to see you there.

Taco Tuesday Trivia



Emcee: Scott Mackenzie



Tuesday, October 8

Pins Event Center
1091 East Center Street, Ithaca

Doors Open at 6:30
Tacos and Trivia at 7:00

\$40/person for dinner and trivia
\$320 per table (seats 8)

Silent Auction Baskets
Photo Op With Mystery Celebrity
Meet the Candidates
Cash Bar



More information:
gratiotdems@gmail.com

FASCISM TODAY

A Reid-Knox Forum

October 9, 2024
Alma College Chapel
7:00 PM

Thank Michigan Senators for Passing the Michigan Voting Rights Act!

Take a moment to show your appreciation by signing this thank-you card to Michigan state senators. Let them know that their leadership in defending our democracy and protecting voting rights has made a difference.



Happy 100th Birthday, Jimmy Carter!

Jimmy Carter turns 100 October 1st. His legacy involves many foreign affairs and human rights accomplishments including the Camp David Accords and The Nobel Peace Prize in 2002.

What you may not be aware of is the impact Jimmy Carter has had on Gratiot County. In 1980 Carter signed into law the Superfund.

Superfund has delivered to Gratiot County hundreds of millions in clean-up money for the Pine River and related sites in St. Louis and beyond, including current work at "the burn pit."

Superfund spending in Gratiot County includes:

- Velsicol and its insurers forced to pay under various legal proceedings - **\$67 million**
- 1999-today site clean-ups after corporate bankruptcy - **\$280 million**
- 2024-25 on-going clean-up, not complete - **\$47million**
- Future follow-up clean-up and maintenance of fenced sites - **\$110 million**

Jimmy Carter's Superfund has delivered to St. Louis and the Pine River **\$504,000,000** (and perhaps more).

Gratiot County thanks Jimmy Carter for his contribution to our county.

The Next Chapter: A Book Club

By Nancy O'Brien

Medgar and Myrlie



By Joy Reid

We met on September 7 to discuss this biographical novel of the lives of Medgar Evers and Myrlie Beasley Evers. Medgar was an amazing force behind many of the civil rights successes in Mississippi, the most entrenched bastion of racism in America in the 1950s and 60s. He and Myrlie hosted many celebrities and civil rights leaders in their home for dinners and overnight stays. Medgar helped train many student leaders in high school and college. He networked with many communities all over Mississippi. He had been in the military service overseas in WWII and longed for the relationships and respect afforded people of color in Europe. Medgar wanted to work towards that sort of life for his family in Mississippi and the U.S. Myrlie was a supporter of his hopes and dreams as they fought for civil rights and raised a family. He has been largely overlooked as a leader in the movement, but his death galvanized the civil rights movement in stepping up its activities.

This was a well written book with much research, and history is re-enacted on each page from that tumultuous time in American life. The author revealed some little reported events and put them into context. We had a great discussion about this novel. We rated it 4.8 out of 5 stars. Our next meeting will be on October 5 to discuss *What the Eyes Don't See* by Mona Hanna-Attisha, the doctor who blew the whistle on the Flint water crisis. It's available at Ballyhoo Books in Alma.

JOIN US FOR OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 5

What the Eyes Don't See

Mona Hannah-Attisha

NOVEMBER 2

The Women

Kristin Hannah

DECEMBER 7

Ghosted

Nancy French

JANUARY 4

Sing for the Lonesome Messenger

David Edward Edwards



HOW YOU CAN HELP



Postcard Writing

We are excited to have postcards in the office that need to be written with a short message and addressed. These cards will be mailed to Michigan voters. This is a great way to share our message, and we expect that this will be an ongoing project until the November election.

If you are willing to help write these cards, stop in during office hours for more information. Thank you!

Office Workers

We are seeking volunteers to staff our office Monday-Friday from 12-6 and Saturdays from 10-4. Even committing to one shift per month will be a great help. With the 2024 election approaching, it is so important to offer the opportunity to stop in to purchase merchandise or pick up signs. Sign up using the link below, or contact us at 989-285-1212.

Training is provided. Feel free to bring a friend!

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER](#)

Stop in at Our Gratiot Dems office!

Monday-Friday 12:00-6:00
Saturdays 10:00-4:00

Harris/Walz Yard Signs Are Available!
\$20 donation includes Harris/Walz Yard sign
and any local candidates' signs



Harris/Walz Banners



Also, hats, t-shirts, buttons, stickers and more.

Stop in to see what's available or just to chat with like-minded Democrats.

*You're
Invited!*

Have coffee with us!



Coffee with the Dems



Join us the first Tuesday of each month

October 1 | November 5 | December 3

9AM

Ballyhoo Books | Alma





GRATIOT COUNTY DEMOCRATS

EVENTS AND INFORMATION

Gratiot County Democratic Office

1686 Wright Ave.

P.O. Box 154

Alma, MI

STOP IN!

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday | 12 p.m.-6 p.m.

Saturdays | 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

CONTACT: 989-285-1212

gratiotdems@gmail.com

gratiotdems.net

EVENTS

- **October 1** - Walz vs. Vance Debate Watch Party
8 p.m. - Gratiot Dems office
- **October 1** - Coffee with the Dems
9 a.m. - Ballyhoo Books and Brew | Alma
- **October 5** - The Next Chapter Book Club
10 a.m. - Gratiot Dems office
What the Eyes Don't See by Mona Hanna
- **October 8** - Taco Tuesday Trivia!
6:30 p.m. - Pins | Ithaca
- **October 21** - GCDP General Membership Meeting
7 p.m. - Gratiot Dems office
- **November 2** - The Next Chapter Book Club
10 a.m. - Gratiot Dems office
The Women by Kristin Hannah
- **November 5** - *Election Day!*
- **November 5** - Coffee with the Dems
9 a.m. - Ballyhoo Books and Brew | Alma
- **November 18** - GCDP General Membership Meeting | 7 p.m. - Gratiot Dems office

We need volunteers to work at the Gratiot Dems office on Monday-Friday and Saturdays. Click here to follow the link to sign up.



CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER

Upcoming Events

Taco Tuesday Trivia!
October 8
Pins in Ithaca

Family Bowling Event
November 23
Pins in Ithaca

More Information to Follow

CLICK OR SCAN TO VISIT OUR CALENDAR!



FOLLOW, SHARE, AND LIKE US ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS



CLICK OR SCAN TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE!



ELECTION **NOVEMBER 5** ***important dates***

September 26 | AV ballots available for voters

Oct. 22 – Nov. 5 | In-person voter registration required

October 26-November 3 | Early voting

Commission on Aging, 515 Pine River Street, Ithaca
October 26-27 12-8PM | October 28-November 3 9AM-5PM

November 5 | General Election

Polls are open 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM

Use the button or QR code below to link to all of your voter information including how to register to vote, requesting an absentee ballot, where to find your clerk's office, and your sample ballot. If you still have questions feel free to stop in to our office during office hours. We are happy to help!



**VOTER
INFORMATION**

