

Supervisor Post Challenged in Clark Township August 5

In Clark Township, the August 5 primary election will determine who could be supervisor, as both incumbent Linda Hudson and challenger Gerald Hill are Republicans.

More than 550 registered township voters will also be asked to cast ballots for clerk, treasurer, and two trustee seats. These candidates are running unopposed. Republican Mike Miller is running unopposed for the clerk seat. Republican Katie Carpenter is running unopposed as treasurer. Running for two trustee seats are incumbent Republican Mike Lofdahl and Democrat Gary Wellnitz.

The following candidate profiles were obtained from questionnaires sent by *The St. Ignace News*; photographs are published if available.

Township Supervisor

Incumbent Linda Hudson, a Republican, is married and has some college education, has taken classes in continuing education in community development and governance, and is a certified Master Citizen Planner. She has 35 years experience in retail, including 25 years as manager of a family hardware store. She has been on the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors for 12 years, Mackinac County Economic Development Corporation for six years, Eastern Upper Peninsula Nature Tourism Alliance for six years, Michigan Small Harbor Coalition – Steering Committee, and is a Michigan Townships Association Governance Academy member. She has been on the Clark Township Board of Trustees for four years as a trustee and four years as township supervisor.



Linda Hudson

"My current position as Clark Township supervisor," she said, "is enjoyable and challenging. I find it enormously satisfying to work with our citizens and organizations to achieve important community goals. The Snows Heritage Park is one such project; we'll see completion of the ball fields this summer. Another example is the collaboration of many groups and private individuals who have come together to find a solution for the devastating weed problem that is clogging navigation of our waterways. I want to continue to be a part of efforts that are underway and to see them through to fruition, as well as to meet new challenges ahead and keep Clark Township forward-planning."

The community, she said, has a struggling economy and Les Cheneaux waters are threatened.

"Fortunately, much momentum and support from many fronts are behind the latter, including local groups and citizens, some state and federal legislators, working in concert to help restore navigation in our bays and channels," said Mrs. Hudson.

"A troubled economy is not unique to Clark Township. I believe that we can take steps to make progress locally. Working with the Chamber of Commerce and other groups, we must focus on creating a viable community economic development strategy, which would look at issues like affordable housing and strengthening our school. We have successfully worked to facilitate improvements to our economic infrastructure with better cell phone reception and access to high-speed Internet. We can improve our competitive advantage to attract growth and new business development with quality of life enhancements like the recreation park and the proposed bike path. Another component in revitalizing our local economy is better defining and presenting our downtown districts. To achieve this, we are researching appropriate vehicles, including the possible development of a Downtown Development Authority that could assist community members and local business owners in achieving as a community what they cannot achieve alone."

Candidate Republican Gerald Hill

Hill, 69, is self-employed in contract trucking, bulldozing, and other work. He and his wife, Venitta (nee Harrison), have three children, Gregory, Gretchen, and Kurtis, and five granddaughters. He is a graduate of Cedarville High School, and served in township government for 20 years as supervisor, treasurer, and trustee. He was on the board when the township took over the operation of a privately owned ambulance service. He was the township sewer manager for 11 years and was on the board when the original sewage system was approved for the Cedarville area. While on the township board, projects he was involved with include the Island Eight Bridge, Hill Island Causeway Bridge, Albert Lindberg Airport expansion, and road projects.



Gerald Hill

"I have always enjoyed politics and helping people," he said, point-

ing out he was asked to run again by some residents. "I feel that I have the experience and am qualified to handle whatever should come before the township board."

The township now faces sewer issues, he said, including a lack of sewage treatment for wastewater after it gets to the lagoons.

"I believe," he said, "the effluent should be sprayed in the township wooded area or filtered through sand on the existing land west of the lagoon area."

Enrollment is declining at Les Cheneaux Community Schools, said Mr. Hill, who wonders if township regulations are impacting the drop in students. He proposes discussing the issue with the school board.

"What a great education system we have," he said. "We need Clark Township to grow, and why shouldn't it?"

Township Clerk

Incumbent Republican Mike Miller is retired from Ford Motor Company after 34 years. He is married to Rose and the couple have six children and 11 grandchildren. His family has been in the area since 1934, he pointed out. He has been a member of the Planning Commission for three years.



Mike Miller

"I believe and care about our community," he said. "I pride myself in have a 'CS' (common sense) degree. Some decisions that are made are cut and dry, others take study and investigation, but primarily they all take common sense."

"I do not have a problem with making decisions that need to be made. We are facing numerous issues in our township, with the economy as bad as it is and inflation rising at a fast pace. I have learned over the years that you cannot spend more than you take in. We live within our budget at home, and in my opinion, government should be the same way."

Mr. Hill said he and his wife are very involved in the community and appreciate all the area has to offer, including the recreation park and area organizations.

"I will do my best to focus on what we have," he said, "and strive to make it better."

Township Treasurer

Incumbent Republican Katie Carpenter, 37, has been a senior loan officer, an office manager, and a general manager for an area hotel. She has been married for three years to her husband, Jonas. The couple has a 22-month-old daughter, Ava. Mrs. Carpenter was graduated from Holland High School and attended Albion College. She has taken seminars and management training classes during her pre-



Katie Carpenter

vious employment and now attends programs sponsored by the Michigan Townships Association to stay informed on current statewide township issues. She has served on the Chamber of Commerce board and was treasurer for the Les Cheneaux Islands Area Tourist Association.

"Through my 17 years of combined experience in fields of business management, accounting, tax preparation, residential mortgages, and now serving as Clark Township treasurer," she said, "I have the necessary tools to continue to provide accountability, competency, communication, fairness, and openness to the Clark Township board. I also have a clear understanding of how important it is to have accurate numbers to work with when managing public funds."

"I believe in the importance of citizens and elected officials working together to identify and achieve community goals and objectives. Communication, openness, and operating from a proactive stance are critical to this process."

The township, she said, needs to be creative to attract year-around employment to the area.

"I believe we need to be creative in finding ways to attract business and industry to our area, which leads me to one of the major issues facing the township board, the updating of our zoning ordinances. I believe the updating of our zoning ordinances will greatly impact the future of our community. For example, if zoning is either too restrictive or too permissive, it could adversely impact our ability to attract new business or industry to our area. I feel it is important for us to protect the natural beauty and resources of our unique area, but I also believe we need to be able to create a sustainable and prosperous local economy."

Township Trustee (two seats)

Incumbent Republican Mike Lofdahl, 57, has been a teacher at Les Cheneaux Schools for 34 years. He and his wife, Carol, have five children. His parents are Lawrence and Pat Lofdahl of Cedarville. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in education from Northern Michigan University. He is a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals and a former member of the Clark Township Planning Commission.



Mike Lofdahl

"Having been selected two years ago by the other members of the township board to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of a trustee," he said, "I feel that I have found my way of contributing. As I have learned the duties and grown into the role of trustee, I have found that one of my main functions has been to explain and interpret to people what exactly the board is doing, and why."

"There are always rumors and false ideas concerning board activ-

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Bridge Commuter Card Hike Hurts Local Families

To the Editor:

Mr. Sweeney, there has to be another way of deterring unlawful usage of the commuter cards. \$80 is a lot, outrageous, not only to myself for getting to work in Mackinaw City and to Cheboygan for shopping, but think about the single parents that work on either side of the bridge. I don't believe that most people can squeak \$80 out of their budgets with the super high fuel costs and the bad economy in Michigan. We need to be finding ways of making this economy flourish, not shut us down altogether. I ask you to please try to find another way of dealing with this problem. We, as Michigan residents, can't take much more in increases.

Ken Feldman
St. Ignace

Michigan Politics

By
George Weeks



Keeping Term-limited Seats in the Family

Family ties abound in the August 5 primaries for the State House of Representatives, a house decimated because 44 of its 110 members are term-limited.

In Macomb County, the son of Representative Jack Brandenburg (R-Harrison) is the sole Republican to compete against eight Democrats. A cousin of Representative Daniel Acciavatti (R-Chesterfield) is among four GOP candidates for his seat, and the eight Democrats include a son of ex-Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh.

(Cavanagh, like Kelly/Kelley, has been a potent political name in Lansing over the decades. Ex-Chief Justice Mike Cavanagh has been on the Michigan Supreme Court since 1983, and two Cavanaghs spanned the 1950s-80s on the high court.)

In Wayne County, the son of term-limited Representative Philip LaJoy (R-Canton) seeks dad's seat.

Detroit's Hood brothers long reigned in the state House before term limits, and now there's the twilight of term-limited Representative Morris Hood III (D-Detroit).

The wife of Representative Glenn Steil Jr. (R-Grand Rapids) seeks his seat, and a woman in White Lake seeks the one once held by her husband.

Michigan's most notable all-in-the-family tie on Capitol Hill is about 75 years of Dingells in the U.S. House. Representative John Dingell (D-Deerborn), 82, is the House dean, having been elected in 1955 to fill the vacant seat of his deceased father.

Up North, before Republican Bill Milliken of Traverse City became Michigan's longest-serving governor (14 years), he was a state senator in essentially the same seat earlier held by his father and grandfather.

Now in the same region comes another member of a prominent Republican family, running in a high-visibility 101st House race that has been proclaimed a "toss-up" by *Inside Michigan Politics* newsletter.

Mike McManus of Lake Leelanau, longtime educator and fourth-generation cherry farmer who is brother of popular ex-Senator George McManus of Traverse City and father of Senator Michelle McManus of Lake Leelanau, is among Republicans seeking to replace term-limited Representative David Palsrok (R-Manistee).

The sole Democrat is environmental lawyer Dan Scripps of Leland, former staffer for the Leelanau Conservancy. He gave Palsrok a scare in 2006 and is touted by Dems as a northern hope to help them expand their 58-52 House majority.

Also running for the House is Midland Republican Jim Stamas, brother of Senator Tony Stamas, same party, same town.

State Representative Tom Casperson (R-Escanaba) knows about fighting family ties. In 2002, he defeated Menominee Mayor Laurie Stupak, wife of U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak, to win the 108th District state House seat. Now he seeks the GOP nomination for what will be an uphill battle against Congressman Stupak.

The 38 state Senate seats are not up this year.

But far too many House members are being ousted by term limits. As noted in the *Detroit News* by Craig Ruff of Lansing-based Public Sector Consultants, a nonpartisan public policy think tank, the ousting of 10 key committee chairs and top leaders of each party amounts to "the toppling of tall timber of the House."

Great Lakes Drilling

In his recent presidential campaign blitz on energy, which included stops in Michigan, Republican John McCain called for offshore drilling for oil and gas.

But he wisely excludes drilling in the Great Lakes, including slant, or directional, drilling from shoreline rigs.

Russ Harding, former director of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality who is now with the conservative Mackinac Center in Midland, has called for removing the federal and state prohibitions on such drilling.

In response to my request for McCain's position, campaign spokesperson Leah Yoon said McCain's call for drilling "does not apply to the Great Lakes." She e-mailed this statement:

"John McCain is against lifting the federal ban because:

"• The Great Lakes are the world's largest system of fresh water; the lakes themselves store nearly one-fifth of the world's surface freshwater.

"• Water from the Great Lakes is used for residential, farming, industrial, and energy production purposes. These uses account for approximately 18% of the total daily U.S. use of fresh water.

"• Canada currently has no restrictions on drilling in the Great Lakes. However, over 100 years of drilling in Ontario [bordering the Great Lakes] has yielded about 85 million barrels.

"• The importance of this fresh water versus the small amounts of oil it likely contains are not worth lifting the ban."

Furthermore, she said, nothing in his proposal for energy exploration "should be construed as proposing to open new areas up to drilling over the expressed objections of the local stakeholders."

Harding faces a tough sell with the Michigan congressional delegation. U.S. Representative Dave Camp (R-Midland), reached Friday by phone as he drove to an appearance in Kalkaska, said Great Lakes drilling presents "very different circumstances. There's a much greater risk" in dealing with fresh water and the land use issues involved.

He said McCain's offshore proposal deals "with huge, vast resources," while the more limited potential in the Great Lakes would not be worth the risk.

He's got that right.

George Weeks retired in 2006 after 22 years as political columnist for *The Detroit News*. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.

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The quotation under the flag of *The St. Ignace News* on Page 1 is from the 10 triads written by Dr. Fred Newton Scott, creator and teacher of the first continuous course in journalism in the United States at the University of Michigan in 1890. The 10 triads are chiseled on the parapet of the Detroit News Building at 615 Lafayette Boulevard, Detroit. They were headed "Ideals of the Press" or "The Newspaper in a Free Society," and serve as a reminder of what a free press means to us.

St. Ignace News Policies

Letters:

All responsible letters will be considered for publication and may be edited. They must be signed and a telephone number must be included for verification. Personal thank-you notes, personal attacks against other people, form letters, and letters promoting political candidates are not accepted, although letters for or against ballot proposals are welcome.

Obituaries:

The St. Ignace News maintains a policy of not charging for obituaries and we do often add information or rewrite them for clarity and reader interest. Obituaries that the family wants published exactly as submitted can be placed in the newspaper for \$75. Photographs are welcome at no charge.

Weddings:

Weddings with photographs are published without charge within 45 days of the ceremony. After 45 days, a photograph can be included for \$35.00.

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