

# GROSSE POINTE DEMOCRATS

June 2018

*Michigan's largest chartered Democratic Club*

Serving the Grosse Pointes, Harper Woods and Detroit's east side

## ★★ Campaign office special edition ★★



**2018 OFFICE FUNDRAISER:** Douglass and Shauna Ryder-Diggs are opening their home again, as they did in 2014 (above), for our fundraiser. This year it will be Sunday, June 24, with guest speaker Barbara McQuade, former U.S. attorney appointed by President Obama. See Page 5 for details.

## GP Dems preparing now for wins in November!

A 2009 report on our first campaign office was glowing: "There is no doubt our first Grosse Pointe Democratic Club office was a huge success!! From its opening in mid August of 2008 until its closure after the November 2008 election, it definitely was the catalyst for a tremendous outpouring of community support and it achieved high visibility."

And there was more: "But most of all we increased our membership beyond our expectations. We elected the first Democratic state representative in District 1 and every candidate listed on the Grosse Pointe Democratic slate was elected!"

Ten years later we're still on a roll as the largest chartered Democratic club in the state and preparing to open our sixth campaign office. This edition of the newsletter looks back at past campaign offices, and forward to the June 24 fundraiser for this year's office. Let these memories inspire us to make 2018 our best year yet!

## — 2008 & 2010: Two very different elections —

**By Tim Bledsoe**

GP Dems member & former state representative

My memories of the campaign office from 2008 are of a very happy time with many smiling faces. Great excitement surrounded the Obama campaign and the resulting energy and enthusiasm permeated the life of the office. The biggest problem we faced, as I recall, was obtaining enough Obama yard signs to meet the local demand. Someone, I believe Tim Killeen, suggested we arrange regular musical performances, and every Friday evening we had a packed crowd in the office for a local performer. My own campaign for the Michigan House of Representatives was joyfully swept along by the Obama surge.

2010 was very different. The political climate was the opposite of 2008. It was a grim time to run as a Democrat with poli-

cies in Washington provoking considerable criticism and an uncommonly weak candidate for governor dragging down the ticket. I lost many friends and colleagues in the Michigan House in that election.

The office resembled a command bunker in a battle zone. Many groups came through on their way to do canvassing, especially in my Detroit precincts. I especially recall the purple shirts of the SEIU members, but a variety of other groups helped out. Targeted by the Lansing Republicans, I vividly recall the 11 glossy attack pieces mailed against me, each accompanied by an attack robo call.

We survived the 2010 campaign when many Democrats in both Lansing and Washington did not, and our ultimate success was entirely attributable to the local effort engineered out of the GP Dems office.



2008: Tim Bledsoe



2008: Getting ready to open

## 2012: Joint office with Obama campaign

By **Kirk Garey**

GP Dems member & former treasurer

In 2012 we partnered with the Obama campaign to run a joint office. Volunteers who worked from this office, on Charlevoix near Alter in Grosse Pointe Park, made calls and canvassed in Detroit, Harper Woods and the Grosse Pointes. The Gary Peters campaign office was around the corner on Mack at Philip, and on Election Day we moved into the Peters space to run our phone bank under the supervision of Joanne McClure.

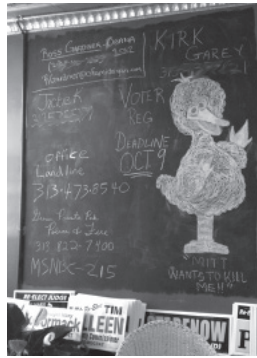
The office opened the day after Labor Day, after Dick Olson decorated the interior walls, and was a beehive of activity. Jackie Kalogerakos, Valerie Kindle and I shared the responsibility of keeping the doors open 9 a.m.-8 p.m. seven days a week — and keeping the bathroom and floors clean. Dave Greenspan brought his impressive collection of audiovisual equipment to the office for our standing-room-only debate watch parties. The office hosted board meetings and fundraisers, and provided a great location for people to drop in and talk politics or meet friends and make phone calls.

Ross Gardner, OFA's eastside organizer, kept us supplied with fresh canvass

and call lists each day.

Emily Everett coordinated our canvassing activities. Lacy Dawson, Ross' supervisor and Detroit OFA regional director, supplied us with moral support and encouragement such that on the four days leading up to Election Day, we ran one of the most efficient and effective GOTV operations in the state.

The office helped enhance the reputation of the GP Dems as one of the largest and best organized Democratic clubs in the state. We knocked on more doors and made more calls than any other local club. OFA contributed 100 volunteers to the joint office activity which resulted in the re-election of President Obama to a second term, as well as helping elect Gary Peters as congressman of the newly created 14th District.



2012: The Big Bird board



2010: Friday night concert



2010: Campaign volunteers



2012: Sen. Gary Peters speaks at open house

## 2014: Top field office in the state

By **Rob Curis**

As the Detroit regional volunteer coordinator for the Michigan Democratic Coordinated Campaign in 2014, working with the Grosse Pointe Dems field office was one of the most rewarding experiences in my early political career. Having grown up in the Grosse Pointe community, I especially enjoyed getting to know all the wonderful volunteers who made it the MDCC's top producing field office in the state, even taking over coordinating GOTV outreach for two additional cities by Election Day. Together the MDCC and Grosse Pointe Dems recruited more than 2,200 volunteers, and mobilized 300 on Election Day alone for door-to-door canvassing and phone-banking to get out the vote.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible Grosse Pointe Democratic Club volunteers who made the office a second home for the campaign's field organizers through organizing potlucks and snacks for us and our volunteers, helping to furnish the office and popping by just to chat and tell us what they were hearing in the community.

There's no doubt in my mind that without the Grosse Pointe Dems office, Gary Peters wouldn't have gone on to be the only Democrat to win a U.S. Senate election in 2014.

And I know that with the same hard work I saw firsthand in 2014, the Michigan Democratic Party is heading toward one of its best election night parties ever!



2014: Brenda Hill and Beverly Brown



2014: Rob Curis



2012: David Greenspan, 98, phone banking



2014: Tim Killeen, Harry Kalogerakos and Kathleen Straus

2016: Michael Brouri and Mara D'Amico



2016: Gary Bresnehan and Sen. Cory Booker

2016: Marsha Goan and other office volunteers



## —2016: GP field office had something special—

**By Mara D'Amico**

Field organizer for the Clinton campaign

The Grosse Pointe field office for the 2016 presidential campaign had something special, and the facts bear that out. We had some of the best numbers in the state for calls made, voters registered and volunteers engaged. And I know why.

- Our office was a beautiful mix of people – longtime party members and first-time phone bankers, young and old, black, white and brown, moms and dads, grandparents, students, teachers, retirees, professionals, veterans and more. Each person brought different experiences, strengths, interests and abilities, and each found meaningful ways to contribute.

- The GP Dems. It's clear how important this work is to all of you. The time, energy and resources you invested are a testament to that. You stepped up. It was a real joy to get to know so many incredible people. I especially loved seeing people

step outside their comfort zones. If I needed our office to make 400 more phone calls before 9 p.m., I knew you would make that happen.

- There was joy in coming together. I can't help but smile when I think about the many wonderful moments this group came together, not only to register voters, make calls and knock on doors, but to watch the debates and engage in conversation.

- The unwavering commitment to Democratic values. Despite our devastating loss on Election Day, the work has not ended. If anything, it has intensified and people are even more engaged. I continue to be inspired by members of this club, and look forward to seeing what you all do in the upcoming elections!

I feel so fortunate to have been part of your lives and your community. Thank you for embracing me and for making this experience so special, and for your tireless efforts to invest in democratic politics and in your community.

## —2016: Make a difference, make friends—

**By Marsha Goan**

GP Dems member

As I reflect on my memories of the 2016 election cycle, I am always guaranteed a smile remembering my time volunteering at the Grosse Pointe Dems campaign office. In spite of the tragic outcome, my experience working hand in hand with so many dedicated and determined individuals was extremely rewarding.

Memories of walking into the campaign office begin with images of a smiling Mara D'Amico and her team of Hillary volunteers. There is nothing to compare to youthful energy (see: March for Our Lives) to pump up the sometimes world-weary troubadours of many past campaigns.

The office was special for

many reasons though, not least of which was the ability to work and process the weekly skirmishes of an unprecedented election with informed, spirited fellow Dems. Like any office the variety of personalities allowed for amusement and inspiration.

Unlike other jobs, this one allowed me to find what best fit my schedule, strengths and comfort level and dig in. Whether it was phone banking, canvassing, data processing, donating supplies and food, or just straightening up the workspace, each contribution was sweeter in the midst of one's determined, committed and always appreciative compatriots.

Volunteering at the Grosse Pointe Dems campaign office is making a commitment to something bigger than yourself; you make a difference and you make friends. What's not to like?



## Bresnehan honored by Michigan Democratic Party

Grosse Pointe Democratic Club President Gary Bresnehan, right, has been recognized as a top volunteer in the 14th Congressional District. Each year the Michigan Democratic Party honors two people from each district. Bresnehan and Joanne Wright, second from left, were among those who received awards at the MDP Legacy dinner in April. Also pictured are 14th Congressional District chair Rick Blocker and U.S. Rep. Brenda Lawrence.

## Sign up now to help fight gerrymandering

We know that politicians and lobbyists draw voting district maps behind closed doors, and those maps directly benefit themselves instead of putting the interests of the citizens first.

There's a way to change that and you can join other volunteers to learn how the mapping is done and how you can help fix it!

Volunteers with the nonpartisan Voters Not Politicians collected enough signatures last year to get a referendum on the November ballot to create an Independent

Citizens Redistricting Commission.

Now it's time to educate voters before the election and get out the vote.

Go online to [vnp.vote](http://vnp.vote), or email eastside team co-captains Janet Burke at [jntburke@yahoo.com](mailto:jntburke@yahoo.com), Ed Keelean at [eckeelean@comcast.net](mailto:eckeelean@comcast.net), Laura Larson at [laura.larson@sbcglobal.net](mailto:laura.larson@sbcglobal.net), Marsha Goan at [marsha.goan@gmail.com](mailto:marsha.goan@gmail.com) or Scott Tily at [scott.tily@gmail.com](mailto:scott.tily@gmail.com)

It's time we draw the lines so that voters choose their politicians, not the other way around!

## Fired up, ready to grill!



It's picnic time!

Our annual get-together is 5:30 Thursday, June 7, at Tompkins Center in Windmill Pointe Park, Grosse Pointe Park. A \$5 donation per adult is requested but not required. Food and nonalcoholic beverages are provided and attendees are encouraged to bring a dish to pass. See you there!

## Grosse Pointe Democratic Club officers and executive board

**President** Gary Bresnehan (GP)  
**Vice President** Jackie Kalogerakos (HW)  
**Vice President** Aaron Tavalire (GPF)  
**Treasurer** Christan Keelean (GPP)  
**Secretary** Larry Macdonald (GPW)

### At-large members

Rachael Backer (GPW)  
 Jennifer Bagwell (DET)  
 Margaret Beck (GPF)  
 Beverly Brown (DET)  
 Sandra Bucciero (GPW)  
 Shannon Byrne (GPF)  
 Richard Canny (GPF)  
 Andrew Casazza (GPF)  
 Francesca Catalfo (GPF)  
 Olivia Coleman (DET)  
 Colton Dale (GPW)  
 Emily Everett (GPW)  
 Mary Jo Johnson (GPF)  
 Ed Keelean (GPP)  
 Peter McGrath (GPP)  
 La Vern Rutledge (HW)  
 Roland Samaroo (GPF)  
 Neil Sroka (GPF)

### Ex-officio members

Tim Killeen (DET)  
 Valerie Kindle (HW)

### Past president

Harry Kalogerakos (HW)

## Committee chair report

### Community services

I am happy to report we continued our partnership with the Harper Woods Public Library Prime Time Reading program. The program allows children, along with their parents, to learn about the library, authors and library services while enjoying dinner provided by different sponsors for the duration of the program.

The program lasts six weeks, and this year it was March 26-April 30. The Grosse Pointe Democratic Club has been a dinner sponsor for the past five years. I am so grateful to be part of an organization that gives back to our community.

Remember the picnic at 5:30 June 7 at Tompkins Center in Windmill Pointe Park.

—Valerie Kindle

# GROSSE POINTE DEMOCRATIC CLUB CAMPAIGN OFFICE FUNDRAISER



*with special guest*

**Barbara McQuade**

*former U.S. Attorney and current MSNBC Legal Analyst*



**Where:**

The Home of  
Douglass Diggs & Dr. Shauna Ryder-Diggs  
465 Washington Road  
Grosse Pointe, MI 48230

**When:**

Sunday, June 24th, 2018  
2:00pm - 4:00pm  
(VIP Meet & Greet at 1:30pm)

**Suggested Contributions:**

Host - \$1,000  
(4 tickets plus VIP Meet & Greet)  
Sponsor - \$500  
(2 tickets plus VIP Meet & Greet)  
Friend - \$100  
Activist - \$50  
Student - \$25

Help us raise funds to open up a local Democratic campaign office!

This year's office will be the 6th of its kind that the Grosse Pointe Democratic Club has opened up. As in years past, the office will be available for all state and local level general election Democratic candidates to use, and will be operated in cooperation with official Michigan Democratic Party efforts.

For more information or to RSVP, please contact:  
Colton Dale at [communications@gpdems.com](mailto:communications@gpdems.com) or (313) 920-4698.

3 Ways To Contribute

☐ Online at [www.tinyurl.com/y9f5uqzs](http://www.tinyurl.com/y9f5uqzs)    ☐ By check (in-person)    ☐ By check (mail-in)

For any checks, please fill out the following information for campaign finance law purposes and include this form:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Employer Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail checks to Grosse Pointe Democratic Club, P.O. Box 36881, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236.





*Don't miss our campaign office fundraiser  
on Sunday, June 24! Details inside.*

**Grosse Pointe Democratic Club • 2018 Membership**

P.O. Box 36881, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236

**Circle a category: Member \$15 • Club \$25 • Sponsor \$50 • Century Club \$100 • Life \$500**

If information below is the same as your previous year, just print your name.

\* Email \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Employer \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* Address \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\* Required for club announcements

\*\* Required by Michigan campaign finance law

Donations not tax-deductible