



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

### Monthly Meetings

Next Meeting Date:

March 15

(3rd Thursday of month)

7 pm – 9 pm

Dial-a Ride, Manistee

Meeting Agenda includes

Guest Speaker -

Debra Greenacre,

Manistee County Library

News from Lansing  
and District 101

### 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)

## The Manistee County Democratic Party needs Precinct Delegates for the 2018 Elections

Manistee County has 16 precincts, or locations (polls) where people go to vote in elections. Two or more Precinct Delegates for each party are elected to represent their party in each precinct every two years.

Would you like to be an elected official in your precinct and have your name placed on the ballot? Would you like to become an official Representative of the Manistee County Democratic Party and the Michigan Democratic Party? Do you want to intimidate the Republicans by how many Precinct Delegates are on the ballot? We do. We want to let the Republicans know that the Democratic Party in Manistee County is stronger than ever this midterm election!

It is easy to be elected. If you vote for yourself you will win – if you get a friend or your significant other to vote for you – you will win by a landslide!

What does a Precinct Delegate do? First, sign up to put your name on the ballot. Second, help us gather Democrats in your precinct for our Get Our the Vote Campaign. A Get out the Vote Training will be held this fall closer to the election.

We would also like you to introduce our candidates (for county commission, State House and Senate) to your neighbors and friends by hosting a meet and greet or help us find someone to do it. We will help set this up.

Precinct Delegates are entitled to attend the Michigan Democratic State Party Conventions as well as the Manistee County Democratic Conventions. Precinct Delegates are the backbone of the Democratic Party. They are the bridge between elected officials, the party, and the neighborhoods.

**We will be holding an informational meeting, March 14<sup>th</sup> at Dial A Ride, 180 Memorial Drive, from 7:00-8:00 p.m.** We will have Filing Forms and a Notary Public on site to complete the forms.

Help mobilize voters to take back our state in 2018!

Contributed by Peggy Raddatz and Judy Cunningham

**MARCH  
FOR OUR  
LIVES**  
MARCH 24, 2018

#PROTECTKIDSNOTGUNS

Downtown Manistee

1-3 pm

## COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR



Gary Madden

The recent mass shootings in Las Vegas, NV, Parkland, FL and, closer to home, at CMU, continue to remind us of how dangerous our country is becoming. In today's America we are increasingly afraid to go to any outdoor or indoor activity where large numbers of people gather while many of our children are afraid to attend school. Today, in addition to children practicing fire drills, they also train for lockdown and active shooter situations. Yet we are told that the solution to all this is to arm everyone. Really! Will we really be safer with more guns on the streets?

Recently, I heard some statistics on TV that got me thinking a lot about gun control and safety. The reporter said that a recent survey found that only about 37% of Americans own a gun. He went on to say the only 3% of the 37% or just over 1% of our entire population, actually own more than 14 guns. This means that nearly two thirds of Americans don't even own a gun let alone possess an arsenal of weapons. Most gun owners own just a few guns that they use for hunting or personal protections in their homes! So why have we adults allowed a very small minority of our citizenry to dictate government policy?

On the bright side of this national disgrace, young people who attend the high school involved in this latest mass shooting, have declared that they have had enough of this tragic failure of our political system to respond to a clear need for reform. They know what it feels like to cower in fear while their classmates and teachers are callously murdered. Many of them have met with local, state and national officials and appeared on TV to demand change. They have held vigils, staged demonstrations and vowed to continue to challenge the adult community in this county to do what most of us know is the right thing. Personally, I have been deeply moved and inspired by these young people. I can only pray that their inspiring behavior moves enough concerned citizens to accomplish real and substantial reform so that we can all live in a safer community and country.

I urge all adults who feel as I do to find ways to support these inspiring young people, not just in Florida, but also right here in Manistee. There has been a call for demonstrations on this critical issue across the country on March 24<sup>th</sup>. If joining our demonstration and waiving a sign is not for you, then write some letters or call your representatives and let them know how you feel. Talk to friends and neighbors, and especially young people, about this issue. Contact local merchants who sell guns and urge them to stop selling assault weapons and the ammunition they use. In other words –“make some waves” – and pay close attention to the positions politicians take this year and hold them accountable when you vote. If enough of us do these things we will be heard.

## **WE GET THE GOVERNMENT WE PAY FOR**

**It's tax time**, that time of year that we gratefully pay our fair share to our government. This is what pays for infrastructure, schools, public transportation, food stamps, health care subsidies and all the things that Democrats traditionally value.

### FREE TAX PREPARATION AVAILABLE

If you are a low or moderate-income senior citizen over 60, the Manistee Senior Center, 457 River St. Manistee, MI 49660, offers free tax preparation and e-filing on Mondays and Thursdays through March. Please call (231) 723-6477 for an appointment. They have a professional, experienced volunteer staff waiting to help you. I'm a volunteer, so come see me!

### THE NEW TAX LAW IS IN EFFECT

Unfortunately, most tax-payers won't know the effect this bill will have on them personally until after the midterm elections - and this is very deliberate. There are some details they aren't bragging about. You've heard the big deal about how they 'doubled' the standard deduction to simplify doing taxes. What isn't being talked about is that they have also "suspended" the personal exemption. The personal exemption is the \$4,050 credit you received for yourself, your spouse, plus each child or dependent that you support. Let's say you file jointly and have 4 children. This year, on top of the \$12,700 standard deduction, you get to deduct \$4,050 *per child plus you and your wife (a total of \$37,000)*. Next year it will be a \$24,000 standard deduction only. Zero for personal exemptions. That is a loss of \$13,000. If you are a single Mom with 4 children you will lose \$11,600. Taxes for these people will go UP. Promoters of the tax bill will tell you the child tax credit increased. It did, from \$1,000 per child to \$2,000 per child. Child tax credits are only on children under 17. That still leaves a big hole in your deductions and an increase in your taxes.

Last week I did a tax preparation for an 80 year-old woman who is still working to support her 46 y/o adult child who has borderline autism and can't hold a job. She's tried but can't get disability. The only deduction this senior citizen could get for supporting her daughter was a \$4,050 personal exemption. Next year she will get a \$500 dependency credit. She will also end up paying more taxes. Why aren't we hearing about these cases, instead of the teacher getting \$1.50 more in her weekly paycheck?

With this tax bill, it pays not to have a family. Also, with lower tax brackets at the upper income end, the more you make, the less you pay.

Contributed by Judy Cunningham

# ActBlue

Act Blue is a non-profit, building, fundraising technology for the left. Their mission is to democratize power and help for small-dollar donors to make their voices heard in a real way. ActBlue develops top-of-the-line fundraising software and helps campaigns and organizations connect with new and existing grassroots donors. AB makes it easy to give, no matter where the donor is or on what device they are using. A majority of Democratic Senate and House campaigns, along with the DCC, DSCC, DGA, over one-third of statewide campaign and advocacy organizations around the country have chosen ActBlue. Over 13 years 2,103,363,594 dollars have been raised for Democrats and progressive causes.

AB does not fundraise on behalf of anyone but acts as a conduit federally and in most states, which means they provide the infrastructure for campaigns and organizations. It is independent of the Democratic Party and does not endorse candidates. AB has become a major fundraising tool for Democratic candidates and progressive organizations. AB is open to all registered Democratic campaigns, candidates and 501(c) (4) organizations. AB officially incurs costs of 3.95% of the gross contribution and those fees are passed on to campaigns. 5,404 groups use AB tools. Grassroot donors can give to groups on ActBlue with a single click, check their giving record, change donations, and read the AB Blog.

<https://secure.actblue.com>

contributed by Laurie Mason



## Northern Michigan Indivisible and Democratic Groups Present NRA-Supported Congressman Bergman with Check from 'The Spineless Foundation'

*Bergman Refuses To Do Anything About Gun Violence Even After 17 People Were Killed in the Parkland, Fla. School Shooting Last Week*

TRAVERSE CITY — On Tuesday, February 27th, five local Indivisible and Democratic groups from Benzie, Leelanau and Manistee Counties gathered at the Traverse City office of Congressman Jack Bergman (R-Watersmeet) and presented him with checks from “The Spineless Foundation” to commemorate his dedication to the National Rifle Association’s (NRA) dangerous agenda and refusal to do anything to solve gun violence. The check was made out to “Thoughts and Prayers” and was slid through the office “speakhole” if Congressman Bergman or his staff refused to meet with constituents.

Bergman, who represents the 1st Congressional District, tweeted condolences after the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Fla. last week that killed 17 people, but the people of northern Michigan deserve action.

“Congressman Bergman has accepted thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from the NRA and other gun lobbyists and continues to do so for the 2018 election cycle. He voted to relax restrictions that help keep guns out of the hands of those with mental illness and to remove registration on silencers. Congressman Bergman consistently opposes gun safety measures that could save children’s lives. Who is that he is really representing?” said **Eric Lampinen**, member of the Manistee County Democrats.

Contributed by Peggy Raddatz





We the People Action Network – Northwestern Michigan, an independent non-partisan organization based in Manistee dedicated to advocacy and action on issues of concern to the local community are excited to announce we are partnering with organizations in Mason and Benzie counties to present *Public Education: We Will Raise It Up*, a community forum focused on how we, as citizens, can enhance community involvement in making the State of Michigan’s educational strategic plan a success.

The keynote speaker will be Sheila Alles, the Chief Deputy Superintendent of the Michigan School Board of Education. An experienced educator and administrator, Ms. Alles is responsible for coordinating the state’s efforts and initiatives to move Michigan from number 42 in the ratings published by U.S News and World Reports to one of the nation’s top 10 education states within the next 10 years.

To explore local perspectives, the forum will include a panel discussion moderated by Ron Stoneman, Superintendent of Manistee Area Public Schools. Educators, business people, and community leaders from Mason, Manistee, and Benzie counties will join Mr. Stoneman to discuss the state’s plans and offer their own insights on it and our state’s and local communities’ needs.

For our region to thrive, parents, educators, and community members must work together to build an accessible and equitable world-class education system that prepares all of our students for success. Please plan to join us at 7 pm on April 17, 2018, at Manistee High School, 525 12th St., so you can be part of the plan to lift up public education in Michigan!

Contributed by Miriam Espkamp

## Blue Tiger Democrats Scholarship award winner announced



MANISTEE — Falechia Barry is the proud recipient of the Manistee Blue Tiger Democrats Scholarship.

*Falechia Barry, of Onekama, was recently awarded the Manistee Blue Tiger Democrats Scholarship. She is pictured with Gary Madden, chairperson of the Manistee County Democrats. (Courtesy photo)*

Barry, of Onekama, is working to complete her General Education Diploma (GED). She works full time as a Home Health Care Specialist and travels all over Manistee County. Her long-term goal is to become certified to operate an animal shelter in the Manistee area.

The scholarship is designed to assist students in completing their high school education by obtaining a GED.

“We support the applicant by providing funds to help with testing fees and with transportation to and from the testing sites,” said Gary Madden, chairperson of the Manistee County Democrats. The recipient must be a registered voter. Anyone who would like additional information regarding the scholarship should send a letter to the Manistee Blue Tiger Democrats.

### Some Interesting Gasoline Facts

Thanks to Kris Buckner from the Saddle Up in Bear Lake for his input

- Gas stations receive an email at 6:00 pm every day giving the cost of a gallon of gas for the next 24 hours
- Profit from a gallon of gas: \$0.25 is great. Sometimes profits are as low as 2-3 cents/gallon
- Lower gas prices in big towns are the result of competition and volume of sales
- The Saddle Up receives one gasoline delivery a week during the winter, two deliveries in the summer. The cost for the delivery last week was \$32,000.00.
- One tank holds 25,000 gallons. The tank has three compartments: one for premium, one for diesel, and one for no lead
- Ethanol is full of “junk” and the pipes are deteriorating. The cost of “re-piping” will be \$50-\$60 thousand dollars
- New gas dispensers installed three years ago. Cost was \$85,000.00!!
- Many oil/ gas refineries in the US. Western Michigan terminals are located in Muskegon and Holland. Brenner Oil Co delivers Marathon products to the Saddle Up.
- The differences in the various brands are a result of the additives each brand adds to their gasoline
- Weather, politics, and gasoline prices are of interest to everyone. Lots of talk about each topic but not much, if anything, can be done about any of these issues, except BE SURE AND VOTE!!
- Candy and groceries including liquor are the backbone of profit for gas stations.

# 2018 Manistee DEMS Membership Year

January – December 2018

How 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 such as Parades, County Fair and Blue Tigers

Share your ideas to make the Democrats a relevant voice in our County  
 Join our discussion group by signing up on our website  
 Go to our WEBSITE at manisteecountydemocrats.us  
 Join us on FACEBOOK facebook.com/groups/21048470915534  
 Or on TWITTER https://twitter.com/manisteedems

-----CUT & SEND BACK BOTTOM PORTION-----  
 Please join today and send in a separate membership form for each member of your household

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Other joining members in same household \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  Send my newsletter by email

**2017 Membership Levels Per Individual**

- 100 Club - \$100.00
- Gold Club - \$50.00
- Silver Club - \$25.00
- Supporter - \$10.00
- Grassroot Supporter – Count me In – No Charge \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Amount of Enclosed Check

Please make checks payable to  
 Manistee County Democratic Party

Send this completed form along  
 with your check to:  
 Manistee County Dems  
 P.O. Box 65  
 Manistee, MI 49660