

Tracy Lorenz La Veda Loca

page 3

Different reasons for football

page 6 and 7

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Non-partisan races merit advance study

by Cynthia Price

People often fail to vote in the non-partisan races, but many of those races are of extreme importance to people's lives. Judges and especially Supreme Court Justices make critical decisions on issues that really matter.

Sometimes that failure to cast a vote, which is called the "drop-off rate," reflects the fact that straight-party-ticket voters do not realize that their single check mark or click does not include the judicial candidates. Sometimes it is because voters do not have enough information to cast an informed vote, so they skip it.

In Michigan, political parties do nominate Supreme Court Justice candidates, but after that (including if elected), candidates are expected to be non-partisan.

One of the Supreme Court Justice candidates, Bridget Mary McCormack (shown below), felt so strongly about the drop-off rate that she asked the cast of *The West Wing* to reunite for a public service video. Of course, the fact that they did so probably has something to do with McCormack's sister being one of the cast members. The very entertaining four-minute YouTube may be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v52FLMOPSig>

However, none of that negates the difficulty of finding out more about the non-partisan candidates.

Below is a reasonable facsimile of what the non-partisan portion of November's ballot will look like:

**NONPARTISAN SECTION
JUDICIAL
JUSTICE OF SUPREME COURT**

8 Year Term
Vote for not more than 2
Doug Dern

Connie Marie Kelley
Stephen Markman
Justice of the Supreme Court
Bridget Mary McCormack
Kerry L. Morgan
Colleen O'Brien
Bob Roddis
JUSTICE OF SUPREME COURT
Incumbent Position
Partial Term Ending 01/01/2015
Vote for not more than 1

Mindy Barry
Shelia Johnson
Brian Zahra
Justice of the Supreme Court
**(THEN COURT OF APPEALS
JUDGES RUNNING UNOP-
POSED)**
JUDGE OF CIRCUIT COURT
14TH CIRCUIT COURT
Non-Incumbent Position
6 Year Term
Vote for not more than 1

Raymond J. Kostrzewa
Annette Smedley
**(FOLLOWED BY PROBATE
COURT AND DISTRICT COURT
JUDGES RUNNING UNOP-
POSED)**

Here is a brief rundown of the Supreme Court candidates, taken mostly from their websites:

Doug Dern is a "drunk driving" defense attorney, whose legal-office website says, "Doug Dern is a well respected attorney known for his hard work and quality legal service."

Connie Marie Kelley is currently a Wayne County Circuit Court Judge, whose website says, "I want to bring my experiences as a mother, wife, lawyer and judge to the Michigan Supreme Court." She and McCormack, plus Shelia Johnson below, are running as a threesome and all were Democratic Party nominees.

Incumbent Justice Stephen Markman was, prior to his appointment in 1999, a U.S. attorney.

See **NON-PARTISAN** page 6



PHOTO ABOVE BY CYNTHIA PRICE

Supreme Court candidate Bridget Mary McCormack, so far the only Michigan court candidate to visit Muskegon

Mummy



PHOTO ABOVE BY JEANNE VOLLMER

Long overdue September/October showers brought October flowers, which often seem more beautiful than the ones in May. Despite summer-bright patches, the colors of mums always seem to bring autumn to mind.

Muskegon County Land Bank takes home the prize

by Cynthia Price

To appreciate how important it is that the Muskegon County Land Bank was chosen as Rural Land Bank of the Year from a nationwide field, you would probably need to first know what a land bank is.

Land banks are organizations, usually associated with a local

governmental unit, that acquire land and hold it for future use.

And then you would need to know why.

Though there are different models out there, the typical land bank exists to address blighted areas or potentially blighted areas by purchasing housing or commercial space in need of work, rehabilitating it, and then reselling

it. It often avoids purchase by "slumlords" and speculators. Land banks use the difference between the purchase price and the selling price to finance future purchases.

As Tim Burgess, the contracted director of the Muskegon County Land Bank, points out, that usual-

See **LAND BANK** page 10



This is what one of the lots in Crestview Mobile Home Park looked like before...



...and after the Land Bank crew cleaned up.

PHOTOS THIS ARTICLE COURTESY OF TIM BURGESS

Letters to the editor

Examiner Letters Policy: Each letter must include a phone number or email address (which will not be published) so that we may verify it is actually from the person who has signed it. We reserve the right to determine which letters to publish based on available space. We will not publish more than one letter per month from the same writer.

Letter to the Editor

I am writing as a lifetime resident of the City of Roosevelt Park. I have enjoyed many amenities due to the vision of our founding citizens. These include: plowed streets and sidewalks (we are actually a year round "walking community"), approximately 7-9 neighborhood parks with 6 tennis courts, play and picnic areas maintained by our Department of Public Works. In addition these areas, and our citizens, are protected day and night by our seasoned police department. Our property values are protected too, with our city inspection system. We are challenged, though because of the changing economic times and our 7 council members who sometimes forget to gather all factual information in order to come to an ideal "business like" consensus decision that will help maintain all of the above services for our citizens.

So, I am asking our citizens to elect Eric Grimm to serve on the Roosevelt Park City Council. I find him to be a good person of integrity,

who will search out the facts to help council members, our city manager and department heads to work together to help all to come to consensus on the serious matters confronting our city that will help to maintain all the services to ensure the quality of life we enjoy here.

Sincerely,
Judith G. VanWesten
Muskegon, MI

TO THE EDITOR:

The barrage of negative campaigning coming from Holly Hughes' GOP begs a larger question for those interested in fair disclosure and fair elections.

Since Collene Lamonte, Hughes' Democrat opponent for the House of Representatives, is a school teacher (i.e. a public employee) her opponent has the right under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for and receive a range of personal information about Collene, including her salary, information in her personnel file, how many sick days she took, what sort of pension she may have invested in, etc, etc.

Since Hughes is a 'private citizen', voters have no access to any of her personal information beyond what she is required to file with the Secretary of State. We know, for example, that Hughes claims to have created jobs via MasterTag, the family business - but how many? And are workers paid a living wage - enough to support a family, buy a home, take a vacation once a year?

We don't know. We do know she pays each of her campaign staff \$750 a week. I wonder how that compares to new MasterTag hirees?

Does Hughes have a retirement savings account? We don't know. I doubt she has ever worked long enough in a full time job to earn a pension. Is that why she feels compelled to tax the pensions of retired public workers who have?

Hughes voted to give corporations a \$1.8 billion tax cut this past year, and slashed education funding by \$1 billion to help pay for it. Did MasterTag benefit from this enormous tax break? We don't know. We don't have the right to find out.

What is Hughes' annual income

from her real estate holdings? \$10,000, \$50,000, \$500,000 a year? We don't know. According to the Secretary of State, we do know she has loaned her campaigns nearly \$400,000 since her first bid for this House seat. How much is Hughes willing to spend on this election? We don't know, but I suspect her deep pockets can outspend her opponent four or five times over.

The choice November 6th is really quite clear. An out-of-touch, entitled member of the one-percent vs. a hard-working member of the disappearing middle class - the 99-percent. If we aspire to preserve the American dream for the middles class, and the dream for Michigan's return to prosperity, if we want to truly be represented in Lansing by someone who understands our concerns and struggles, we must vote for Collene Lamonte.

Daryl K. Johnson
Norton Shores, MI

Proposal 6 could apply to ALL bridges

On November 6th, citizens

will cast their vote on many ballot proposals. I caution all voters to thoroughly review all proposals before voting and please remember that Michigan's constitution is a document that enshrines our values and establishes the basic framework of our government. It should not be a special-interest smorgasbord where amendments are added to protect the comforts of a select few.

Specifically, Proposal 6 is so poorly worded, that it could require any bridge project in Michigan to go through a statewide vote - not just international crossings. Imagine forcing voters in Marquette to vote on whether a local bridge is needed in Monroe. The administrative and cost burdens would be enormous.

When it comes to making decisions on whether to amend the constitution, it's critical that we look at all of the consequences - even those that are unintended.

Brian Calley
Lt. Governor, State of Michigan



ATTENTION: MUSKEGON COUNTY RESIDENTS
Would you benefit from affordable high quality rental housing?

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV), previously termed Section 8, administered by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), may be able to help. The HCV program is a federally funded rental subsidy program that assists persons with paying their rent.

MSHDA's HCV Program is partnering with the West Michigan Therapy (WMT) Nonprofit Housing Corporation and NCCS Center for Non-Profit Housing to make available supportive housing with rental subsidies for 4 - 1 BR Apartments - located in Muskegon Heights, MI.

The Project Based Voucher (PBV) waiting list will be established by MSHDA beginning **Wednesday, October 24, 2012** for all applicants who qualify. The waiting list for the PBV program will remain open indefinitely.

You may qualify for residency at Lazarus Place, if your income falls within the allowable limits (30% AMI), you can prove residency within the State of Michigan (living or working), and meet the following criteria:

- Chronically Homeless

Sarah Amos from Housing Navigation Center will be accepting applications beginning **Wednesday, October 24, 2012**. She will be available to determine eligibility and assist eligible individuals with the application process. Please contact **Ms. Amos at 231.728.2138, Ext 2**. She will be available **Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.** to make an appointment or to discuss your eligibility for rental assistance.

NOTE: Proof of legal identity (birth) and proof of a valid social security number will be required for all members of the household.



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SCRAMBLERS

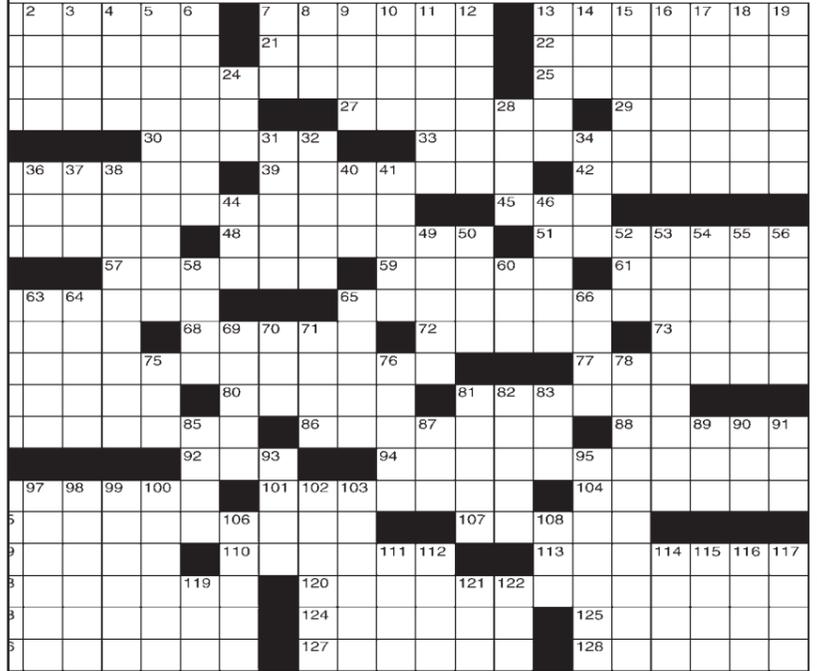
Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

- Faint **GLITHS**
- Align **DORRE**
- Flare **COBANE**
- Path **LITAR**

TODAY'S WORD

Super Crossword REVERSAL

- ROSS**
One - (short shows)
Practice of staying in one's birthday suit
Comes into view
Skier's lodge
Ancient Greek city
A few
Furrier's philanthropic family from Texas?
Height
Music
Muse
Member of the mimosa family
"The Divine Comedy"
poet
Sight-related
How heavy a British Conservative is?
For each
Stray
Matt Dillon
James Crew
creating protective car parts?
45 Dir. opposite
47 Serious (alone)
48 By -
51 Coming into existence
59 Pertumes ceremonially
57 Letters for Old
58 MacDonal
61 Certain boat propeller
62 Leach of labor
65 Dale where beans are grown to
109 Utah's Hatch
110 Most twisted
113 Willa
67 Chief Norse deity
68 Poet Neruda
72 Slow, on a music score
73 Jar tops
74 Decorate an infant's bed with images of celestial bodies?
77 Most polar
79 Fish enticers
80 Juliet's beau
81 Pierre of fashion
84 Wise guy
86 Rich fabric with raised designs
88 Crawls (with)
92 Chinese menu "General"
94 Slight imperfection on an entry
96 Utters
101 Worthy to be given a title
104 Jump
105 Legal wrong committed by a
107 Novelist
Nin
12 Tennis star Williams
36 - up with
37 - Little Teapot
38 Earthquake origination point
40 Corp. execs
41 "Dark Stranger" (1946 film)
44 Corps.
46 Horse sound
49 Fine thread
50 Lavish party
52 Health facility
53 Lying in the same
straight path
54 "Dallas" miss police dogs
55 Requisites
56 Rendezvous
58 Neck area
60 Cyclotron
62 Sheep coats
63 Tight as -
64 Sign before Scorpio
65 Software programmer
66 Nothingness
69 Parcel units
70 Sis sibling
71 Young sheep
75 Marshall
76 Shower sponge
78 Lemon, lime, or orange
81 "Cheers" barmaid
82 Madison Ave. workers
83 Abode: Abbr.
85 -bitsy
87 Corn holder
89 Takeoff stat
90 Livy's 1,150
91 -wolf
93 - about (roughly)
95 Exercises utilizing bars
96 Impassive sorts
97 Go after
98 Typos, e.g.
99 Japanese police dogs
100 Obi-Wan - ("Star Wars" role)
102 Comes up bit
103 Volcano in E. Sicily
106 11- or 12-year-old
108 Jacuzzi
109 user's sigh
111 JVC rival
112 Low card
114 Actor Sharif
115 "Ixnay"
116 Privy to
117 " - pinch of salt"
119 Al Fatah gp.
121 West of film
122 QBs' scores



SOLUTION TO SUPER CROSSWORD AND SCRAMBLERS ON PAGE 2.

LAND BANK from page 1
ly involves an initial loan. In Muskegon County's case, it was a line of credit from a forfeiture fund, and the Land Bank is making progress on paying it back.

The award came from the Center for Community Progress, a nationwide organization that started in Flint in relation to the work of Dan Kildee - the father of the current land bank movement.

Comments Burgess, "I think specifically we got this award just because we've been able to go from 0-55 so quickly. The Land Bank started out like gangbusters but then only sold about 12 properties in their first three years. Since I came on board, we're up to about 116 properties, and we're still chugging

along. Last year we kind of got our feet. This year we're really starting to make an impact."

Burgess says Muskegon County Treasurer Tony Moulatsiotis is heavily involved with the process and adds, "We couldn't do any of this stuff without Tony."

The rural aspect of the recognition is based on the population of the entire county. "We do stuff all over the county," Burgess says, "and I like that aspect of it."

The winner of the Urban Land Bank of the Year is Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The Land Bank partners with Habitat for Humanity and the Muskegon neighborhood project Community EnCompass, as well as with a for-profit land manager.

The Land Bank took own-

ership of Crestview Mobile Home Park in Norton Shores. According to Center for Community Progress, "By cleaning up the site, repairing a large sink hole and ultimately selling the park to a responsible owner, the Land Bank's work allowed two dozen families to remain in their homes."

The photos on page 1 show the cleanup progress. Says Burgess, "We removed two forty yard dumpsters of garbage and debris from the vacant lots, demolished three trailers, cleared brush, fixed a sink-hole, fixed broken streetlights, and made the park viable enough for a private investor to purchase. We also created a job in that a park resident was retained as an on-site manager."

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