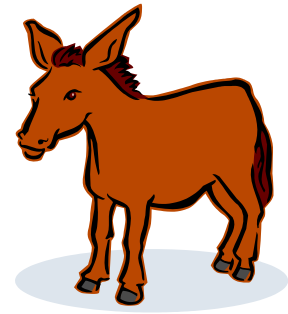


TROY DEMOCRATIC CLUB

TDC NEWSLETTER



May 2010

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Put together by volunteer labor working at home in our "spare" time



Current Events

TDC Executive Board Meeting: Tuesday MAY 11 AT 7:00 PM

The Troy Dems Executive Board will meet from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 11, at Vice-Chair Kathy Martin's house (707 Kimberly, Troy 48098). All Troy Dems members are welcome to attend to help plan the Club's 2010 activities.

TDC Joint General Meeting with Birmingham/Bloomfield Dems: May 19 at 7 pm

We have invited the three Gubernatorial candidates—Representative Alma-Wheeler Smith, Mayor Virg Bernero and Speaker Andy Dillon, to come talk to the members of both Clubs about their vision for Michigan. Because of their schedules, several of the candidates will be represented by surrogates.

We have scheduled time for the candidates to answer questions from the audience.

**Meeting at 7-9 PM
Troy Community Center, Room 304
3179 Livernois Rd, Troy 48083
(north of Big Beaver/16 Mile,
east of I-75)**

In observance of Memorial Day, the Troy Democratic Club is hosting a Blue Tiger community service project to donate personal toiletry items for wounded Veterans in southeast Michigan VA hospitals and clinics.

**PLEASE JOIN IN BY BRINGING ANY OF THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW TO THE
TDC MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 19:**

After shave lotion, Baby powder, Booties (non-skid, large), Boxers (men's, all sizes), Briefs (men's, all sizes), Chap stick, Combs, Crossword puzzle books, Dental floss, Denture adhesive, cleaner, cream, Deodorant, Hair brushes, Lap robes (4' x4'), Lotion (hand and body), Mirrors (hand-held size), Mouth wash, Nail clippers, Phone cards, Pill dispensers (7-day), Playing cards, Postage stamps, Pumice stones, Razors (disposable), Shampoo, Shaving cream, Shower shoes, Soap (liquid only), White socks (men's), Socks (gripper), Toothbrushes, Toothpaste, Tracheotomy bibs, T-shirts (men's, all sizes), Women's toiletries.

Health Care Reform Law presentation – June 7, 10:30 am. Troy Com Ctr Rm 303

“Seniors: How Will the Health Care Reform Law Affect You?”

How will the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act impact you as a senior adult? What will it mean for your Medicare coverage? Learn answers to these questions and more during an educational session especially for seniors from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., Monday, June 7, in Room 303 of the Troy Community Center at 3179 Livernois (just north of Big Beaver/16 Mile Road). The event is free and open to the public.

Panelists who will explain key provisions of the new health care reform law include:

Congressman Gary Peters, U.S. House of Representatives – 9th District, Michigan; Marjorie Mitchell, executive director, Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network; Melissa Bernardi, regional field director, Organizing for America

For more information, please contact (248) 680-0773.

Sen. George McGovern to speak Tuesday June 8 at free event at Temple Beth El

Sen. George McGovern, the Democratic Party's 1972 presidential nominee, will speak about his new book, *Abraham Lincoln*, and do a book signing starting at Temple Beth El, 7400 Telegraph at 14 Mile Road. The talk was originally scheduled for May but had to be postponed until Tuesday, June 8,

Admission is free, but tickets are required. There are FREE tickets for the event. To request tickets from Temple Beth El, call (248) 865-0617, then press 1.

During his distinguished career, McGovern served as the first director of the Food for Peace program and as a professor of history and political science in addition to his service in the U.S. Senate. He was a decorated bomber pilot in World War II.

Troy Democratic Club Picnic, Saturday, July 17

The Troy Democratic Club is hosting their annual "Midsummer Soiree—An Afternoon of Picnic & Politics" Fundraiser at Raintree Park, 3775 John R Road (John R between Big Beaver and Wattles Road)

Join us for a Delicious Potluck Meal – Political Dialogue – and Picnic Fun!! A dish to share would be most appreciated, but not required.

TIME: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

DONATION: \$10.00 Age 11 – Adult / \$5.00 Ages 6 – 10 / Tots are free

CONTACT: Cathy Fucinari at dwgbooks@wideopenwest.com for additional information

RECAP OF PAST EVENTS:

Membership Committee

Three Reasons For Joining:

- 1. If you were disappointed in the election results and want to do something about it, then please join the TDC and help us Save Our City.*
- 2. If you have some favorite candidates of your own for local, county, or state level positions, then please join the TDC and help your candidates.*
- 3. If you believe that moderate or progressive policies are the best hope of insuring the future prosperity of our city, state, and nation.*

Thanks to Renewing Members: **Bob and Lucille Arking**

If you have any questions on membership, please contact Kimberly McFall at membership@troydemocrats.org

Michigan Democratic Party

At MDP Endorsement Convention on April 17 at Cobo Hall, precinct delegates, elected officials, candidates for public office and members of the Michigan Democratic Party endorsed

**Jocelyn Benson for Secretary of State
David Leyton for Attorney General**

We will officially pick our nominees for these two statewide offices at the State Convention on Saturday and Sunday August 28 and 29 at Cobo Hall. We will also be choosing our nominees for Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Supreme Court seats and State Education Boards.

NEWS FROM OTHER DEMOCRATIC AND ALLIED GROUPS

Congressman Gary Peters

Gary's district office is in Troy at 560 Kirts Boulevard, #105. Please contact him via that office if you have issues and concerns that he might help you with. Phone: (248) 273-4227 Fax: (248) 273-4704. Our own Kevin Hrit is on the staff at this office.

"I would love to continue the work to help our nation heal from this economic crisis, and as a member of the Financial Services committee, I am in a unique position to help out. As I continue in my efforts, I need and welcome your thoughts on such challenging issues as the economy, health care, and the war in Afghanistan, among others.

Again, I am deeply appreciative of your financial support. With your help, I know that we will continue to gather the support necessary to make sure that change can stay in Washington"

9th District Democratic Party:

Keep in Touch with the 9th District Democratic Party

Our website is <http://www.9thdistrictdems.org/>. Please feel free to contact them anytime with any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Tim Burns: County Commissioner



Join Tim on Facebook

More than 60 people braved a rainy morning on Saturday, April 24 to join Oakland County Commissioner Tim Burns in picking up litter as part of his annual community clean up event. Check out his website for a photo gallery of the event.

NEW EPISODE OF OAKLAND CONNECTION NOW AIRING

A new episode of County Commissioner Tim Burns' television show "Oakland Connection" is now airing on [Community Media Network](#) (WOW 18 / Comcast 52). The show provides an overview of the 2010 Claws and Paws Dog Job / Pet Care Fair in Clawson, discusses the Cooley Law School family law and estate planning law clinics with program supervisors Ashley Lowe and Dustin Foster, and features Matt Parly from Oakland County Parks who talks about the county's waterparks. You can also watch online by [CLICKING HERE](#) or visiting www.timothyburns.org.

Oakland County Commissioner Tim Burns is now posting on Twitter. Follow him at www.twitter.com/timburnsocc to help stay connected about Oakland County government and other local news and events. **Twitter** is a social networking and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read messages known as *tweets*. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers who are known as *followers*.

OAKLAND COUNTY LOWERS WATERPARK ADMISSION RATES FOR 2010

Oakland County Parks waterparks are offering **lower rates** for the upcoming summer season to make family fun more affordable. Check his website for more information. about Red Oaks and Waterford Oaks County Parks.

MAY SMALL BUSINESS WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Oakland County's Economic Development Department offers a variety of workshops designed to answer the majority of the questions start up, new or even existing business owners often inquire about. Check his website for a schedule of May workshops and classes.



Senior Planning Coalition of Oakland County

By the year 2012, the first of the "Baby Boomers" will reach full retirement age. This has been referred to as the "Silver Tsunami." County officials predict that Oakland County will experience an unprecedented older adult population growth, and that by 2030 the number of seniors in the county will have doubled. Officials also predict that by 2020, almost half of Oakland County's 61 communities will have more seniors over age 65 than school-age children.

To be proactive, Oakland County Commissioner Tim Burns was a co-sponsor of the Board of Commissioners resolution creating the Senior Planning Coalition, which is collaborating with businesses, residents, and senior service agencies to produce a strategic plan to deal with these future situations and their economic and social implications. Check his website for additional information and materials about the Senior Planning Coalition, including how you can get involved.

Check out the 2nd Annual Oakland County Green Summit coming up May 13 from 8am-4pm at the Oakland Schools building in Waterford. Great for local planners, governments and interested citizens to learn more about resources and programs in the community. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about the Green Summit.

County Commissioner Tim Burns was a sponsor of the first Oakland County Green Summit in 2009 at the Troy Community Center and is pleased the forum is being continued this year. [CLICK HERE](#) for an informational video from last year's event in Troy.

This year's event will include a request from Oakland County to homeowners, businesses, and local governments to reduce energy consumption by 10% over the next two years. Stay tuned for more information on the "**OakGreen Challenge**".

Get regular real-time updates from County Commissioner Tim Burns by friending him on Facebook. Visit him at www.facebook.com/TimBurns

For more information regarding my work as County Commissioner, please visit my website: www.timothyburns.org.

What is a County Commissioner? Oakland County Commissioners are the legislature for county government. County Commissioners oversee a budget of nearly \$1 billion dollars and serve as a liaison between Oakland County government and local communities

**TIM BURNS
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
19TH DISTRICT [Clawson and Troy]
www.timothyburns.org**

ED SPILLERS: Candidate for Michigan House District 41 (Troy & Clawson)

I AM RUNNING TO BE YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE BECAUSE WE NEED A NEW BEGINNING HERE IN MICHIGAN. I believe people deep down believe that government has their best interest in mind. It's those who are in Public Service who must take a commitment of governing for the people to heart when elected. With our State so desperate for a new outlook of opportunity and a new breed of Public Servant has been beckoned into service. I present a service with a foundation of service to all, not the select few. My work ethic is centered on bringing opportunity to everyone. My job is not to fix the economy; it's to work with the people of Michigan to search for better investment in our stability.

It will take an enormous on my part and yours. I say to Moderates that your vote has been wooed with charades by the extreme far right agenda in this seat currently. The results are cities strapped for money, families struggling and quality of life threatened. You will find I am closer to your views and share your values of protecting your future.

I say to Independents that I have proven to be an Independent thinker and remove myself from political stalemates and search for solutions for a better Michigan. I will continue to fight for civil rights, constitutional rights and economic fairness.

I say to my fellow Democrats that I have and will continue to show you that I am ready to lead in this District. We have been touted as non-existent in Troy and Clawson and unwilling to stand up. We stand for sensibility in Government and investment in the community and I look for you to stand with me.

Together we can bring Michigan out of the depths of uncertainty and into the prosperity we so want for our now and our future. Please donate today at www.edspillers.org and click the red donate button at the top of the page. Also, sign up to volunteer also at www.edspillers.org and you can also find links to my Facebook Page and Twitter.

Ed Spillers

Candidate for MI State Representative

Troy - Clawson, District 41

P.O. Box 4932

Troy, MI 48099

248-854-7963

edspillers@gmail.com

www.edspillers.org



Michigan Democratic Party News:

DO NOT SIGN THE TEA PARTY PETITION

**INITIATIVE PETITION
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION**

A Proposal to Amend the Constitution of the State of Michigan by adding Article 1, Section 28 as follows:
(new language below is in CAPITAL letters)

ARTICLE I, SECTION 28.

(1) EVERY PERSON HAS A RIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR HIS OR HER OWN HEALTH CARE.

(2) NO GOVERNMENT ACTION SHALL COMPEL, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, ANY PERSON, EMPLOYER, OR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY HEALTH CARE SYSTEM.

(3) NO PERSON OR EMPLOYER SHALL BE REQUIRED TO PAY PENALTIES OR FINES FOR PAYING DIRECTLY FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES. A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER SHALL NOT BE REQUIRED TO PAY PENALTIES OR FINES FOR ACCEPTING DIRECT PAYMENT FROM A PERSON OR EMPLOYER FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES. A HEALTH CARE SYSTEM SHALL NOT BE REQUIRED TO PAY PENALTIES OR FINES FOR PERMITTING A PERSON OR EMPLOYER TO PAY DIRECTLY FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES OR FOR PERMITTING A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TO ACCEPT DIRECT PAYMENT FROM A PERSON OR EMPLOYER FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

(4) NO GOVERNMENT ACTION SHALL DISADVANTAGE A HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FOR PERMITTING A PERSON OR EMPLOYER TO PAY DIRECTLY FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES OR FOR PERMITTING A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER TO ACCEPT DIRECT PAYMENT FROM A PERSON OR EMPLOYER FOR LAWFUL HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

(5) SUBJECT TO REASONABLE AND NECESSARY LAWS AND RULES THAT DO NOT SUBSTANTIALLY LIMIT A PERSON'S OR EMPLOYER'S OPTIONS, THE PURCHASE OR SALE OF HEALTH INSURANCE OR HEALTH COVERAGE IN PRIVATE HEALTH CARE SYSTEMS SHALL NOT BE PROHIBITED BY ANY GOVERNMENT ACTION.

The above is a copy of the first part of a state constitutional amendment being peddled by the Tea Party and its supporters. As you can see from the five main provisions, its purpose is to remove any and all aspects of the state's ability to regulate health care. The Tea Party adherents not only want to repeal the recent health insurance reform bill just passed by Congress and signed by the President, they want to basically repeal all government support or regulation of health care including Medicare etc as I read it. We present this petition here – NOT to urge your support, but to ask you NOT TO SIGN any petition looking like

this and proposing the total deregulation of the health care industry. Why? Well, we know how well the system worked before Obamacare was passed. Why would we want to go back to watching people cry while their spouse died because their health care had been canceled due to “pre-existing conditions”. The backers of this petition want you to vote to reinstate their ‘death panels’. [Read the Health Update on p. 10 for a better view of the situation]

Gilda Jacobs Report:

JACOBS SPONSORS MEASURE TO CHANGE TERM LIMITS

Joint Resolution Would Need Voter Approval

State Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) introduced a Senate Joint Resolution to allow voters to modify term limits for state senators and state representatives.

“The November election will see most state senators leaving because they will have completed their eight years allowed under term limits. And 34 state representatives will also leave. Our current term limit restrictions have had a profound impact on how law and policy is forged in Michigan, and not necessarily for the better,” Senator Jacobs said. “My colleagues and I have a chance to fix this before we leave by allowing voters another opportunity to modify term limits. I hope my colleagues will join me to put this resolution on the 2010 ballot.”

Senator Jacobs’ joint resolution would put before the voters a constitutional amendment to extend term limit to 12 years for both chambers. State Senate terms would change from two to three four-year terms, and State House of Representatives term would change from three two-year terms to six two-year terms. Before the question could come before the voters, Senate Joint Resolution G must first pass both the House and Senate by a two-thirds vote of all members elected and serving.

Term limits for state legislators were adopted by a state constitutional amendment approved by the voters in November 1992. Originally, term limits were promoted as a check and balance measure by the people to ensure that legislators stay in touch with their constituencies, bring in fresh ideas, and break through the power concentrations of only a handful of long-standing senior members of each chamber. Senator Jacobs feels that Michigan’s strict term limits have undermined these original goals, and contributed to the partisan deadlock that has plagued both chambers in recent years. They also have strengthened the influence of lobbyists.

“I am sponsoring this resolution because I believe that this extra time would allow legislators to gain experience and form the strong personal relationships that would help them govern better,” said Senator Jacobs. “No matter what happens with my joint resolution, I will be gone after December of this year. But I feel it is my duty to leave the state in better shape. We can accomplish this if my colleagues will join me in doing what is best for Michigan and let the voters decide how to fix our flawed system of its unintended consequences.”

Health Care People's Lobby Update from Senator Stabenow

Today, President Obama announced the *Stabenow-Kerry Early Retiree Reinsurance Program*, which was part of the Affordable Care Act. Individuals who are 55 and older but not yet eligible for Medicare will see significant savings if they get insurance through their former employer. Under the program, the Federal Government will help those company plans pay for coverage if an early retiree becomes seriously ill. By covering these catastrophic cases, early retirees and Michigan businesses will save money on their insurance premiums.

"Over 190,000 people in Michigan receive health insurance through their former employers and continue to face astronomical health insurance costs," said Stabenow. "I authored this program to help Michigan businesses pay for health coverage when someone becomes very ill, lowering the cost of health insurance for employers and retirees alike. I encourage all eligible businesses to apply this summer to take advantage of this important program."

For more information about the program, you can visit http://stabenow.senate.gov/healthcare/updates/early_retirees.pdf



EDITORIAL 1:



Does Troy Have Any Grassroots?

"Elections have consequences", as Sen. Lindsey Graham (R, SC) has said. And our city election of February 23rd has certainly had consequences. Our city leaders are now dealing with these consequences in very different ways.

Given the 2:1 vote tally in favor of the anti-tax initiative, then certainly the leadership of the Troy Citizens United (TCU) and affiliated groups certainly felt good and celebrated their win in several ways, not the least of which was to participate in City Council meetings and affirm that the victory meant the people had spoken and City Council should listen. However, not every anti-tax leader fully appreciated the consequences of the election. Councilman Howrylak, for example, voted to subsidize the four day long Troy Daze festival to the tune of \$148,000 (last year's city subsidy) even while he voted to close the "permanent" city facilities such as the library and the community center and nature center and museum. He clearly did not understand that a vote to close crucial city facilities in order to save money implies the end of all subsidies to non-crucial programs. And Councilman Fleming was heard to say in a budget meeting that something must be done to save the library. Clearly, he did not think through the consequences of his support for the anti-tax side, and now he is looking for someone to bail him out from his uncomfortable position.

The TCU website predicted that their preferred consequence would be for each city in the northern suburbs to specialize in one function open to all citizens of all the cities. So, for example, we could use the Bloomfield library and they could use our parks. But the website had no cost analysis at all. It turns out that area libraries charge fees for non-residents if their town has no functioning library. The fees involved turn out to be larger than the proposed tax increases. Clearly the TCU leadership never seriously considered the consequences of the vote, except as it gave them political power. If obtaining political power was the only consequence they cared about, then their lack of concern for the consequences of closing down the city must logically be the reason why they felt impelled to tell City Council that the anti-tax vote affirmed the will of the people but that it was unthinkable that the City would close the Library. Contradictory? Of course.

I spoke to one woman outside the Troy Library who told me, “Oh, they will never close it down. That’s just talk.” She appeared surprised to learn that the Library was set to close on Saturdays on July 1, 2010 when 39 more employees will be laid off, and will totally close down in July of 2011. City Council is now in the process of approving this budget option. “Well, I will have to see the numbers”, she replied. Which means that she voted on an emotional basis without being aware of the numbers on all the City spreadsheets and websites and so likely could not envision the consequences? A few days before she said this, the City Council voted to privatize the Planning and Building Departments as of July 1. The layoff notices have been sent. The closures will happen. *No one on the anti-tax side paid any serious thought to the consequences of their position.*

On the opposite side, the leadership of the pro-Save Troy group is saddened that the citizens overwhelmingly voted not to protect their substantial investment in the City’s facilities. The leadership of the Troy Leadership Coalition and affiliated groups are trying to understand the voters’ motives in voting down the tax but protesting the planned closings of the library and other facilities. I believe they will not be able to understand the voters’ motives except as irrational – i.e., done without concern to the consequences. The TLC leadership is also engaged in long term planning on how to effectively prevent such irrational behavior in future elections. They are also trying to think of means by which the planned closings might be ameliorated in some way from the dire consequences brought about by the election. I think none of us on the pro-Save Troy group thought through the consequences as what we should do if the anti-tax groups actually won the election. *Our limited planning for the unthinkable is now apparent.*

City Council is still immersed in ongoing budget hearings, but the Council seems to be resolute on adopting and implementing Option 1 of the City Manager’s plan of 9 September as stated in the election materials. This option envisaged the preservation of most of the public safety (police, fire, and DPW) functions, at the cost of closing the library, community center, nature center, and museum. It also allows the city to maintain its AAA bond rating, which will be essential if Troy is to somehow grow back when the state economy turns around.

The pro-Save Troy Council people seem to have decided that the only consequence of the anti-tax vote is for them to implement the Option 1 closure plan so that the city might survive the next five years. But City Council is in the habit of taking the long term look at things. Given that, then would it not make sense for the Council to ponder the consequences of what the city would become six years from now if no provisions are made now to allow these facilities to resprout in future? Obviously, City Council has studied the election returns, and sees no percentage in bucking the 2:1 margin ostensibly in favor of closing down the city. There is no

point in committing political suicide in a fruitless attempt to defy the people. But what if the election returns overstated the citizens' wishes on this topic? If none of the city's leaders really considered the consequences of this election, then is it not irrational to conclude that the ordinary citizen did do so, and really wants the city to shut down? One impression in favor of this possibility is that there are many ordinary citizens who today recognize the consequences of the election's outcome, and really want to preserve at least some of the City's facilities which attracted them to Troy in the first place. If so, then *perhaps City Council has not fully considered all the consequences which might flow from a too-simplistic misreading of the election returns?*

It may well be that the only way for Troy to be saved is if we Troy citizens save ourselves despite our leaders. Does Troy have such strong grassroots? I don't know. Troy certainly has several civic-oriented, non-partisan, single focus citizen groups. Perhaps the best-known such group is the Friends of the Troy Library. This non-profit citizen's group was formed in 1958, before Troy even existed as a city, and for 52 years has been providing backup support in a variety of ways for the Troy Library. It has hundreds of members and more than 70 active volunteers. [see their website at <http://friendstpl.org>]. [Come to the Annual Meeting of the Friends on Wednesday, 6:30 p.m., Library Meeting Room, May 26, 2010 to hear a presentation on [What is the Future of the Troy Public Library?](#). Please RSVP by May 20 via E-Mail at friendsTPL@gmail.com. This meeting is open to All.

It is not the only group supporting Troy's facilities, for there is also the Troy Historical Society and the Nature Center Volunteers. I am not aware of any group trying to support the Troy Community Center. But what this brief survey suggests is that there are grassroots-based groups of citizens who care about one particular aspect of Troy's facilities and have worked hard over the years donating their time and efforts to translate that care into action.

Why are these facts germane? An obvious counterpart to these existing Troy grassroots groups is the Detroit Zoological Society. This group of Zoo fans was originally conceived as a citizens support group for the Detroit Zoo which had long been owned and operated by the City of Detroit. But when the city ran into financial difficulties, the Detroit Zoological Society took over the responsibilities of owning and operating the Zoo. Today they have ~58,000 paying member households and 1100 active volunteers who contribute a combined total of ~100,000 hours yearly. Between memberships (ranging from \$48 to \$175) and admissions, the Detroit Zoo is doing very nicely today.

We neither need nor want to sell our library and museum and nature center and community center to these private non-profits. The question is whether any or all of these groups could, in partnership with the city, manage to preserve these facilities so that, like the phoenix, they may rise again in six years? For example, the Troy Library budget for the current year (2009-10) is \$3.6 million. The budget for the next and final year will be \$2 million. In order for the Troy Library to qualify for state aid and to be included in the State Library Consortium, the library must operate for 55 hours/week. The question now becomes: can the Troy Library operate for 55 hours/week on some budget significantly less than \$2 million dollars if it is temporarily managed on a membership/user fee basis by the Friends of the Troy Library society? If not, then what would be a realistic estimate of hours/week of library operation could be achieved by such a membership/user fee basis?

In answering this question, it should be recognized that the City will not save \$2 million dollars by closing the library since it will still have to maintain the building and the collection. I have seen no numbers on this topic but I do not think it will be cheap. If I guess that it is ~10%

of the ordinary budget, or ~\$360,000, then the city stands to save only \$1.56 million by closing the library. It would be an appropriate concern for all of the consequences of this election if the City Council challenged the Friends of the Troy Library to come with a feasible plan that would save the city the \$1.56 million while still keeping the library operating 55 hrs/week, or at least as many hours as they could manage. There well might be severe reductions in service that might occur as a result. The library may well lose its accreditation and not be eligible for state aid. Yet we must ask ourselves whether a complete absence of library services is worse than a partial reduction. Especially if the reduced service keeps the library alive, if dormant; and will allow it to revive and return to good health in six years. Don't forget: if the library is closed in 2011 and does not reopen until 2016 at the earliest, then an entire generation of high school students will have graduated without using the Library as a study source. Perhaps they will cope well with its absence, but I would bet that Troy's tradition of academic excellence will have been hurt and lessened by the absence of the library. Traditions fade if they are not practiced. Perhaps Troy's reputation for academic excellence will also fade, with all that implies for Troy's value to prospective residents, to university recruiters, and to the local students who apply for university scholarships.

A Council person with a pro-Save Troy position might well object to the above suggestion by pointing out that s/he is bailing out the anti-tax coalition by persuading ordinary citizens to pitch in their time and money to rescue the city from that coalition's lack of concern for the consequences of their political position. As a citizen, I agree with that objection. But I would continue my argument and point out that if the grassroots succeeds in rescuing one of more of the city facilities, then that would show up the emptiness of the anti-tax coalition's argument that people didn't want the facilities and didn't want to pay for them. It is, after all, undeniable that resident's costs will be higher under this rescue than they would have been under the tax proposal. If people really want the services, then paying the tax would have been the smart and responsible choice to make. This and related counter-arguments might work well in future years. *Troy needs its responsible City Council people to take the long view and try hard to save the city, less there be nothing here worth saving in five years.*

Robert Arking

EDITORIAL 2:

Another Open Letter to State Representative Marty Knollenberg:

Dear Mr. Knollenberg,

It isn't often I feel I got taken, but as the emails (below) indicate – I think you took me for a ride. It shouldn't surprise me as I lent my signature to a form letter – from which organization I can't even recall right now. It could have been the Sierra Club, or one of a dozen environmental groups I support. I am confident the facts are straight in my email to you but I would be less than honest if I didn't admit you called me on them. I am not privy to any chapter and verse on the tax loopholes so many corporations get. But I am confident that the environmental groups know what they are talking about. I don't have to witness every traffic accident in Michigan to know that we have a problem!

But again, your reply opens a window of understanding where your politics lie. Flat tax? Tax based on consumption? Anyone with just a high school education knows that the more you make the higher degree is your disposable income. Virtually everyone who is classified as poor or middle class has almost no 'disposable' income. They need every cent to live on. What use to be a progressive tax has now been watered down over the previous 50

years or so to a point that the cliché – the rich get richer and the poor, poorer – is no longer a cliché, but Fact. A flat tax would only serve to make the rich – richer – and leave the rest of us holding the bag. However, it does explain why despite the desperation our state is in, any suggestion that even a modest tax increase – from those who can best afford to give more – is met with stiff resistance from Republicans. Flat earth – flat tax – hmmm, same mind set.

But all this is an aside to the narrow point that companies have been given tax breaks – tax loopholes, which this state can no longer afford to give. They no longer serve in most cases, the original intent (if there truly ever was one) of helping a business prosper. It has resulted in the singular effect of providing unconscionable wealth to a very few titans of business – at the expense of the State and the working class. With perhaps an exception to some fledgling companies just getting a foot hold in our state, most of these loopholes and tax breaks have long outlived their usefulness. They have become mechanisms by which CEO's and high gain investors are able to garner exorbitant profits. Greed by any other name – is still greed!

Mike Smith
Clawson

(email from State Rep. Marty Knollenberg)
Micheal;

Thanks for writing on tax loopholes.

I would support a completely flat tax with no loopholes or something akin to the "FairTax" which taxes everyone at the same rate based on consumption. Those are larger scale reforms that would make identifying the many holes in the swiss cheese that is our tax code unnecessary. In the meantime, I've forwarded this to my staff to identify the exact nature of the loopholes and determine what can be done on an line-item by line item basis (which is what makes the reform process here so difficult). If you have a source for your estimate that has details of the specifically issued credits, feel free to reply or forward that to me or my staff.

If you have any further issues or questions, don't hesitate to write again.

Marty

State Representative Marty Knollenberg,

41st District, Troy/Clawson, MI

Mike Smith

Clawson

Okay, you have read Marty's letter. Now read Ed Spillers' comments on page 7 again. Ask yourself: "Who would I rather have writing me about my concerns on state government; Marty or Ed? Which one is the straight shooter?"