

# Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



## Biggest PAC in State History

In politics, money talks. For Michigan Democrats of late, there's no voice quite like Stryker-speak.

Last year, the Coalition for Progress political action committee, creation of the founding family of Kalamazoo's Stryker Corporation medical supply company that has annual revenues of about \$3 billion, "became the biggest PAC in Michigan history," according to the bipartisan Michigan Campaign Finance Network (MCFN).

The PAC raised \$5,460,000 for the 2006 election cycle and made more than \$3 million in independent expenditures for Michigan Democratic candidates. Among them: Dan Scripps of Leelanau County, a bright political comer who came close to upsetting term-limited state Representative Dave Palsrok (R-Manistee) in what is viewed by *Inside Michigan Politics* newsletter as a toss-up district in 2008.

The PAC spent \$1.6 million in support of Governor Jennifer Granholm - pitted against the formidable family fortunes of Republican challenger Dick DeVos, who with his wife, Betsy, put \$35.5 million into the losing effort. (MCFN dubbed it "more than any Republican candidate in the nation has ever spent from his personal fortune in pursuit of a governorship.")

Last week, Granholm announced Ronda E. Stryker of Portage, "director of the Stryker Corporation," among six appointees to the Michigan Women's Commission.

(Also among them: Donna L. Budnick of Harbor Springs, legislative services attorney of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and Estelle P. Smyth of Escanaba, owner of Ideas Unlimited.)

Stryker, according to *Forbes* magazine, is one of the richest women in the world and a major contributor to public interest endeavors. Her siblings, also grandchildren of the founder of the Stryker Corporation, were the major

2006 contributors to Coalition for Progress. Brother Jon Stryker of Kalamazoo gave \$4,836,000 and sister Pat Stryker of Colorado Springs (a \$20 million contributor to Colorado State University in 2003) chipped in \$500,000.

There's nothing evil about folks with deep pockets dipping into them for political campaigns. But the watchdog MCFN correctly says that Michigan law should, as does the federal campaign finance law, establish limits on contributions to PACs and political party committees, and establish an aggregate individual contribution limit.

The federal system of limits provides a boundary on the influence a contributor can exercise through campaign contributions, says MCFN Executive Director Rich Robinson, who wisely laments Michigan's "pathetic" disclosure laws.

Robinson revealed Friday that he has been talking with legal, environmental, and League of Women Voters representatives in the Grand Traverse region about convening an October meeting in Traverse City to stoke the burner on campaign finance reform issues.

Senator Michelle McManus (R-Lake Leelanau), chair of the Senate Campaign and Election Oversight Committee, has been holding hearings around the state on election and campaign reforms.

Don't look for quick action. The Legislature's agenda has been dominated by budget issues. An immediate issue for McManus' committee is how to craft Michigan's 2008 presidential primary process.

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

## Mission Point Offers Updated Workout Center

By Sean Ely

Mission Point Resort's upgraded exercise facility now offers fitness training, Pilates, or weight lifting with a monthly membership. The hotel has spent more than \$30,000 updating its health club for guests, employees, residents, and even visitors staying at other hotels.

Activities Director Pat Driscoll arrived at the resort six years ago and knew right away that the health facility needed a new face.

"It was in dire need, with a lot of broken machines, and ones that would break down," she said.

The new workout facility officially opened August 5 with a free trial between August 17 and 23.

Two Cybex Arc Trainers, two Cybex treadmills, wood flooring for an aerobics area, new carpeting and rubber flooring, medicine and exercise balls, and a fresh coat of paint now go hand-in-hand with the stationary bicycles, dumbbells, wall-sized mirrors, weight machines, sauna, and locker rooms that the fitness center already had.

"Unfortunately, since we only had the one treadmill, [patrons] would come in, wouldn't be happy, and leave," she said. "Now, many of our guests use the facilities, and a majority of them are here first thing in the morning. Sometimes they are waiting out front before we are here at 7 a.m."

The hotel is eager to offer memberships to anyone who wants one.

Single memberships have a \$25 initiation fee and cost \$50 a month. Couples can join for \$75. Locker rental is \$8 a month. Members can bring guests for \$6 and can use the outdoor pool and hot tubs from Monday through Thursday.

For those not able to make the trial period, Ms. Driscoll said, they can come in for \$10, which is refunded if they join within three days.

There are special group rates, too, she said.

Ms. Driscoll has been encouraged by the patrons' enthusiasm, she said.

"It's like kids in a toy store," she said. "It's great! New machines,' they say."

The fitness center is open every day until 10 p.m.



Two Cybex Arc Trainers, and treadmills, were added to Mission Point Resort's fitness center as part of a \$30,000 refurbishing project.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### Swimmer's Family 'Can't Wait To Return' to Mackinac Island

To the Editor:

Last Saturday, August 11, our daughter, Kathy Bradshaw, swam around Mackinac Island. So many offered support and encouragement before the swim and congratulations afterwards that we were overwhelmed. No matter where we went someone stopped Kathy to talk about her adventure in Lake Huron. We are sure that Kathy must have felt like a celebrity because we certainly felt like a celebrity's parents.

We cannot say enough good things about the wonderful people on the Island. From tourists in the streets to shop owners to the front desk staff at the Lake View Hotel and the Star Line Ferry folks and the people waiting for the ferry, there was an amazing amount of excitement and interest in her swim.

The swim was unforgettable, not just because of Kathy's outstanding athletic achievement, but because of the kindness and concern of so many strangers. Our weekend on Mackinac Island will always be a fantastic memory for Kathy and her "team" of family and friends. We can't wait to return.

Terry and Bill Bradshaw  
Stow, Ohio



## Town Crier

7529 Market St., P.O. Box 532, Mackinac Island, MI 49757  
Telephone: (906) 847-3788

[www.MackinacIslandTownCrier.com](http://www.MackinacIslandTownCrier.com)

For business and subscription matters, phone (906) 643-9150

Volume 54, Number 17  
August 18, 2007 to August 24, 2007

Published 22 times a year, weekly from May through September, once in October, December, February, and April.

Subscription: 22 issues a year Mail: \$25 Web: \$20

Periodical postage paid at Mackinac Island, Michigan.  
Additional postage paid at St. Ignace, MI and Gaylord, MI  
USPS Periodical Publication Number - 324-060

Postmaster: Send address change notices to  
Mackinac Island Town Crier, P.O. Box 532, Mackinac Island, MI 49757

Publisher Emeritus - Wesley H. Maurer (1897-1995)

Publisher and Editor . . . . . Wesley Maurer, Jr.  
Associate Publisher/Business Manager . . . . . Mary Maurer  
Writing Staff . . . . . Karen Gould, Sean Ely, Eric Fish  
Advertising . . . . . Tammy Matson  
Subscriptions . . . . . Wendy Colegrove

## Porters Win Game 15-7

The Dock Porters of Mackinac Island took on Team Village Inn in a friendly game of softball Sunday, August 12. The porters did not let a tiring day of chasing the luggage from ferry lines stop them from handing Team Village Inn a 15-7 beating at Great Turtle Park.

### For the Record...

In the August 11 issue of the Town Crier, the name of Mary Dufina was incorrectly spelled with two f's.

## Capture Mackinac Island



with a subscription to the



## Town Crier

To receive a one year subscription please enclose a check or money order.

Subscription: 22 issues a year Mail: \$25 Web: \$20

Mail to:

Mackinac Island Town Crier

c/o The St. Ignace News  
P.O. Box 277  
St. Ignace, MI 49781

[www.MackinacIslandTownCrier.com](http://www.MackinacIslandTownCrier.com)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_