Michigan Political History Society
NEWS
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Lobbying event a smash hit

Lobbying event presenters, left to right: J. Coomes, W. Ballenger, R. McLellan, N. Kuhnmuench, T. Cleary

The history of lobbying in Lansing and its impact on public policymaking was the subject of the first 1997-98 special event sponsored by the Michigan Political History Society, and it got the season off-and-running in fine style.

Some 125 persons attended the September 10 event held at the Radisson Hotel in downtown Lansing. They were treated to a rarely matched lesson in the science of politics and modern political history as seen by five experienced regulars of the Lansing scene.

The chief presenter, speaking on "The Era of the Multi-Client Lobbyist," was **Francis J. (Jerry) Coomes**, who helped found Public Affairs Associates, one of the pioneer multi-client firms, in 1971. Serving on a response panel were: **Nell Kuhnmuench**, associated with Governmental Consultants Services after serving as chief of staff to House Speakers **Bobby Crim** and **Gary Ownes**; **Tom Cleary**, who founded Michigan Legislative Consultants in 1964 after being deputy state treasurer in the Williams and Swainson administrations; and **Richard McLellan**, lawyer and advisor to Governors Milliken and Engler. **Bill Ballenger**, Lansing Observor, was the emcee.

"Lobbying is a constitutionally guaranteed right by the first and fifth amendments to the United States Constitution," Coomes noted at the start. "...As long as there is a Legislature, there will be lobbyists. A Legislature without lobbyists would be like a courtroom without lawyers."

Coomes suggested that being a part of the legislative process on a daily basis may be the best lab anywhere to quickly learn ones weaknesses and strengths. "I became a student of the law, politics, public relations, psychology, negotiations, and persuasion," he said. "Being a lobbyist, for me, was like playing in the U.S. Open forty weeks a year."

Coomes led the audience through the major changes from the late 1950s through the present that have brought substantive changes to the way business is done at the State Capitol, which until 1959 was dominated by Republican and outstate rural interests. Then came the election to the Senate in 1960 of **Bill Milliken** and eight other moderate Republicans, followed by the election of **George Romney** in 1962; the adoption of the new state constitution in 1963; one-man, one-vote in 1964; and the **Lyndon Johnson** presidential landslide that same year.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the beginning of four social revolutions that "were to change profoundly the complexities of politics and the government" — the civil rights, environmental, women's, and consumers' movements. Add to these a younger, more issue-oriented and more labor-oriented lawmaker, "and it is easy to under-

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stand how the nature of lobbying had to change." Coomes said that this changing environment posed great difficulties for the majority of corporate employee lobbyists and, thus, became a stimulus for the growth of the multi-client firms.

The next major development was the Campaign Reform Act of 1974. "It would be hard to minimize the ways in which (this single act) increased and politicized the complexities and intrigues of government," Coomes said. "Fund raisers became an everyday occurrence during session, business groups gained leverage at the expense of labor, and multi-client lobbying firms became even more influential."

Coomes pointed out that the shift of federal programs to the states which began in the 1980s "started a stampede among national and international corporations to have state representation," as did the litany of environmental laws and regulations. Then came term limits, reflecting "an angry, distrustful public that has lost confidence in its government."

Coomes suggested that the next step will be the transfer of power from Lansing to local communities. "(The) paradigm shift in the world of business is now about to hit state government. Soon the state will be asking communities, 'What do you need?', instead of reactively responding with laws and regulations," he said.

MacLellan and Cleary covered other evolutionary aspects of lobbying, including the involvement of association executives and public relations firms. MacLellan further made note of the impacts of five individuals over the period covered in the arena of public policymaking — **Doug Ross**, **Bill Ryan**, **Tom Downs**, **Judge Glenn Allen**, and **Bob LaBrandt**.

Nell Kuhnmuench zeroed in on the advent of women into the field of lobbying and added her concerns with regard to term limits.

"We are in the midst of the making of history here," she said; a fitting conclusion to a very special evening.

For more excerpts from Coomes speech, see page 10.

Videotaped interviews available

There are currently seven videotaped interviews with key political figures from the past now available through the State of Michigan Library.

The tapings are the outcome of the MPHS-sponsored project of capturing Michigan's recent political history on videotape.

Available are interviews with **Robert Griffin**, **Elly Peterson**, **Mildred Jeffrey**, **Irving Bluestone**, **Tom Downs**, **Douglas Fraser**, and **Adelaide Hart**. Others are in the planning stages.

Tapes and transcripts can be borrowed for your viewing pleasure by calling 517-336-5742.

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Special Thanks

We give special thanks again to **Jim Epolito**, MPHS board member, and his very talented associates at the Accident Fund Company for insuring the publication of this newsletter.

Betsy Alles is corporate communications manager, **Sharon Bulger** is communications coordinator, and **Bridget Barratt** is graphics design assistant. They have ensured the professional production, printing, and mailing of the newsletter.

We also express appreciation to **Bob LaBrant**, **Tom Farrell**, and **Liz Homer**, members all, for their special contributions to this issue. And we always appreciate the extraordinary help of **Joyce Crum**.

Nine Hall of Fame inductees

Nine women were inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in ceremonies held on November 1 in Lansing.

Five of the latest honorees are contemporary, while the other four are historical.

Cited as contemporary honorees are:

Ellen Burstyn of Detroit, long-time stage, screen, and television actress. In 1982, she was elected the first woman president of the Actors' Equity Association;

Marion Corwell of Flat Rock, a broadcast pioneer thought to be the first person to write, produce, and star in her own syndicated television series (1954-62). She was the highest ranking woman executive at Ford Motor Company in the 1970s;

Maryann Mahaffey, president of the Detroit Common Council since 1990 and a council member since 1974. She has been an advocate for the cities, for senior citizens, and for the poor and disenfranchised;

Della Mae McGraw Goodwin, R.N., of Detroit, founding dean of the associates degree program for registered nurses at Wayne County Community College. She created initiatives that increased the admission and graduation of minorities in nursing;

Sharon E. Sutton, Ph.D., professor of architecture and planning at the University of Michigan. She is the first African-American woman to become a full professor of architecture in the United States.

Historical honorees are:

Alice King Hamilton, M.D., (1869-1970), called "The Mother of Industrial Health," who studied at the University of Michigan and spent summers of her youth on Mackinac Island. She combined her expertise in bacteriology and pathology with experience at Chicago's Hull House to achieve better working conditions and laws;

Nancy Harkness Love (1914-1976) of Houghton, the first woman air ferry pilot in the United States. She was founder of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron and contributed to the World War II air effort despite the sexism that existed;

Matilda Dodge Wilson (1883-1967) was dedicated philanthropist and leader of various organizations, she contributed her Meadow Brook Hall estate and a $2 million building fund to found Oakland University. She was appointed Michigan's first female lieutenant governor in 1940;

Four Sisters of Charity — **Loyola Ritchie**, **Rebecca Delone**, **Felicia Fenwick**, and **Rosaline Brown** —who, beginning in 1844, pioneered in the development of health and welfare institutions in Detroit. In little more than two decades, they founded the first hospital in the Northwest Territory and several other facilities.

Also presented was the Philip A. Hart Award, given this year to **Howard Simon**, who is retiring after 23 years as executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan.

Sister Monica honored

Sister Monica Kostielney, a member of the Michigan Political History Society, was recently presented with the 1997 Saint Thomas More Award by the Catholic Lawyers Guild of the Diocese of Lansing. She is the first woman to receive the award.

Sister Monica is president of the Michigan Catholic Conference and a member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy.

The selection was based on her tireless efforts to influence legislation that promotes sound public policy and respect for the human person and the common good.

MPHS Annual Meeting set

The 5th Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 28, 1998, at 9:00 a.m., at the Michigan State Medical Society, 120 W. Saginaw, East Lansing.

Special progress reports, planning for the coming year, and elections of members of the Board of Directors will highlight the meeting agenda.

Formal notice will be sent to all members prior to the meeting. Please plan now to attend.

Bentley Historical Library a special place

*(**Editor's note:** In our last issue, **Glen L. Bachelder** provided an excellent overview of the Michigan Historical Center. This issue your editor is pleased to be able to offer some information regarding the Bentley Historical Library, located at the University of Michigan, based in part upon his personal use of that facility.)*

If you plan to do any form of Michigan political history research, your path will eventually lead you to a beautiful building on the north campus of the University of Michigan. It's the Bentley Historical Library, home of the Michigan Historical Collections and the official U-M archives.

Founded in 1935 by the U-M Board of Regents as the Michigan Historical Collections, it was located elsewhere on the Ann Arbor campus. Then in 1972, through a major gift from Mrs. Arvella Bentley, as well as other friends of the library, the Collections found a permanent home at the present site. It was named in honor of the late **Alvin M. Bentley**; congressman, U-M regent, Michigan constitutional convention delegate, U.S. Senate candidate — and an acquaintance of this writer. I think of him when I set foot in the library.

Truly devoted to research, it has evolved into one of the state's premier archival repositories with historical materials covering virtually every facet of state history.

Some statistics are always in order. It is comprised of over 4,500 archival collections, 40,000 printed works, and some 500,000 photographs.

Recently the library developed a home page on the World Wide Web to highlight its mission, program, holdings, and services. The Website address is: **http//www.umich.edu/bhl**

Political View

Politics is the library's mother's milk. The records of the major political parties and special interest groups are there, as well as those of many and varied public officials. At the heart of these holdings are the papers of 27 former governors of Michigan — from **Stevens T. Mason** to **James Blanchard**.

It was the political collections that first brought me into contact with Bentley. In the spring of 1995, after I had retired, I decided to write

an article about the Michigan delegations to the 1964 national political conventions (eventually published in the May-June 1996 issue of Michigan History Magazine). I was lacking some information but especially good photographs from that period. I found what I needed at the Bentley, poring through boxed possibilities from the **Soapy Williams**, **George Romney**, **Phil Hart**, and other collections. I've been a regular since then, as well as a contributing Friend.

Among the more extensive gubernatorial collections are those of Williams (the largest), Romney, Blanchard, **John Swainson**, **William Milliken**, **Frank Murphy**, and **Case Osborn**.

Williams was an ongoing supporter and contributor to the Bentley until his death. Romney continued to donate papers to his collection long after his retirement from public service. He would call ahead, drive his van over from his home in Bloomfield Hills, and back it into the loading dock with boxes of documents, including those from his tenure as HUD secretary.

Swainson had an abiding interest in Michigan history, and he served for several years on the Michigan Historical Commission.

New medium for historical info

The library published a booklet in 1994 entitled "The Governors of Michigan 1835-1991." It is a guide to the governors' papers held by the Bentley.

Because some of the holdings are now housed in two annexes, there may be a delay of up to 48 hours to retrieve such materials. We experienced a trial-and-error period at first but then got into the process.

Call ahead for business hours (313-764-3482). The FAX number is 313-936-1333.

Bentley's experienced staff is headed by **Francis X. Blouin, Jr.**, director since 1981 and associated with the library since 1974.

Two other individuals familiar to MPHS members are closely tied to Bentley. **Sidney Fine**, history professor at the U-M and biographer of **Frank Murphy**, is chairman of the library's executive committee. A recent chairman of the library's Friends' organization is **Hank Meijer**, biographer of **Arthur Vandenberg**.

If you're considering research and/or writing about Michigan, we urge you to give Bentley a try. You'll like it and return often.

From the Editor's Desk:

The passing political scene

A summertime respite at Sutton's Bay is always a good time for a good book. This summer, spaced between beaching, bicycling, golf, and whitefish at The Bluebird in nearby Leland, we enjoyed two recent political history offerings of special note to Michigan political history buffs.

The first is "The Colonel: The Life and Legend of Robert R. McCormick, 1980-1955," by **Richard Norton Smith** (Houghton Mifflin Co., 597 pages, $35), the most definitive biography to date of the sometimes visionary, often demagogic editor-publisher of the Chicago Tribune. If you seek a better understanding of Midwest politics, American journalism, and Chicago's turmoils in the first half of this century, this is your book.

The author, director of the Gerald R. Ford Museum and Library in Grand Rapids, was commissioned by the Tribune to write this biography for its 150th anniversary. Smith writes at the onset about the biographer's dual obligations — empathy for his subject and unsparing candor. Considering the complexities of his subject and seemingly unending phobias and dislikes, Smith has met his challenge. In addition to McCormick, he brings to life again the Tribune's "self-proclaimed status as the World's Greatest Newspaper through its circulation, advertising, and political muscle; above all, through its furious Americanism," whose influence included southwest Michigan, once the heart of Michigan conservatism.

McCormick's was an age of political and investigative journalism succeeded today "by the compressed blandness of USA Today or a thousand interchangeable editions of Eyewitness News... ," in Smith's words.

Reporter-playwright **Ben Hecht** once described McCormick's grandfather and Tribune editor **Joseph Medill** as "a cantankerous sonofabitch." When Smith's biography had been finished and the life covered, that seemed an apt obituary for McCormick.

The other beach book was more personal and also more gut-wrenching. It is "The Year The Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America" by **Jules Witcover** (Warner Books, 544 pages, $25).

Now a nationally syndicated political columnist, Witcover covered that period for Newhouse Newspapers, and he re-creates that cataclysmic year month-by-month: The Tet Offensive in Vietnam—the withdrawal from the Republican presidential race by **George Romney** — Senator **Eugene McCarthy's** shock to **Lyndon Johnson** in the New Hampshire primary—President Johnson's decision not to seek reelection—the assassination of **Martin Luther King, Jr.** in Memphis is April—

Robert Kennedy's late-starting presidential campaign and his assassination in Los Angeles in June—riots in the nation's cities, on college campuses, and at the Chicago Democratic National Convention—the entrenchment of the Silent Majority and birth of a new conservatism—the nominations of **Richard Nixon** and **Spiro Agnew** and their defeat of **Hubert Humphrey** and **Edmund Muskie** — etc., etc.

Witcover devotes part of the book to an effort to prove that there was a conspiracy to slow down the Paris peace talks until after the November election so as to assist Nixon. This oft-repeated tale is still up for grabs, despite the author's best efforts.

Nonetheless, "The Year The Dream Died" should be read by and be on the shelves of anyone who lived through the period or has even the remotest interest in 1960s-style politics. It joins other Witcover political books on ours.

Good reading to all of you.

— Chuck Haenon

Dues are due

By the time you read this, notices for payment of 1998 MPHS dues will be in the mail or in your hands.

We hope you like the newsletter and the many events being sponsored by the society. We also hope you'll continue to give your support to MPHS through your membership.

Please pay your dues now and be an active part of this special organization.

Looking back at Michigan political history

20 years ago

It was 1977, and **William Milliken** was in his ninth year as Michigan's governor. He spent the year battling with the Democratic-controlled State Legislature and was to say it was "surely among the toughest" of the years he spent as chief executive. Much of Michigan's political attention was focused on Washington, D.C. U.S. Senator **Robert Griffin**, running for Senate minority leader, was defeated by a single vote by **Howard Baker, Jr.**, of Tennessee. Griffin, serving his second Senate term after 10 years in the U.S. House, then announced in April that he would not seek reelection in 1978. Republicans spent the rest of 1977 trying to get Griffin to change his mind. Even the Detroit News, on December 23, editorially urged Griffin to reconsider. Meanwhile, other candidates began to announce, including Congressman **Phil Ruppe**; Lt. Governor **James Damman**; and Hillsdale College President **George Roche**, as the year ended. (Griffin would change his mind, beat **L. Brooks Patterson** in the primary, then lose to Detroit Council President and Democrat **Carl Levin** by 122,000 votes.) One other political footnote: **Robert Geake** and **Arthur Miller, Jr.**, would both win special elections to fill State Senate vacancies in the spring of 1977.

40 years ago

It was 1957, and **G. Mennen Williams** had begun his record-setting fifth term as governor, defeating Detroit Mayor **Al Cobo** the previous fall by nearly 300,000 votes. The year began and ended on high notes for Soapy. In the spring elections, the Democrats took complete control of the executive branch of state government with the elections of **John C. Mackie** as highway commissioner and **Lynn M. Bartlett** as superintendent of public instruction. The Democrats also controlled the State Supreme Court and had either control or veto power on three major educational boards; only in the Legislature did the GOP dominate by 12 votes in the House and two in the Senate. That was enough to stymie most of the Williams' program, including income tax proposals, effectually stalemating any possibility of fiscal progress for the remainder of the decade. On November 1, the Mackinac Bridge would open, culminating an effort begun by the governor in 1950. One non-political triumph—the Detroit Lions whipped the Cleveland Browns for the National Football League title, 59-14, on December 29, as **Tobin Rote**, filling in for an injured **Bobby Layne**, passed for 280 yards and four touchdowns.

Michigan Political History Society Purpose Statement

"KNOWLEDGE OF MICHIGAN'S POLITICAL HISTORY
AND UNDERSTANDING OF ITS IMPACT THROUGHOUT TIME
PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK FOR ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE"

While our political environment has had and will continue to have a major impact on the quality of life of Michigan's citizens, there is limited understanding of the political history that has brought us to this point in time. The Michigan Political History Society has evolved in recognition of the need to appreciate the past so as to better envision the future of our great State.

The Michigan Political History Society is established to:

- inspire greater knowledge of our political history
- educate the public as to the role politics has historically played in the State and its relevancy to future policymaking
- study and document events, groups, and persons notable in Michigan's political history
- advance research and writing of political history
- share the experience and wisdom of the older generation with the younger generation
- cultivate working relationships with pertinent institutions and organizations
- provide a common foundation for political leaders, educators, public administrators, historians, and interested citizens
- encourage and facilitate the deposit of privately-held political documents with appropriate public institutions
- promote interest in civic affairs and participation in civic duties
- foster bipartisan communication and mutual respect and civility
- communication on a regular basis with members
- plan and coordinate functions

60 years ago It was 1937, and **Frank Murphy** was serving the first of two years that he would be Michigan's governor amidst a lifetime of illustrious public service. Murphy had defeated incumbent Republican Governor **Frank Fitzgerald** in 1936, riding the coattails of President **Franklin Roosevelt's** landslide reelection victory. Murphy was immediately greeted by a sit-down strike of UAW workers at two Fisher Body plants in Flint, which began on December 30, 1936. Murphy was to spend the next several weeks mediating a settlement and would also send in National Guard troops to maintain the peace in Flint. That strike was settled on February 11, but a rash of sit-down strikes ensued — 111 of them in Detroit in February and March — as organized labor flexed its muscles, further monopolizing Murphy's time. By early April he could say, according to biographer **Sidney Fine**, that his desk was cleared and he was ready to "resume my other duties." Among his other 1937 accomplishments was the passage by the legislature of a strong civil service reform bill. Fatigued by his work and by illness, Murphy would suffer a physical breakdown in August and spend three weeks at the University of Michigan Hospital, followed by recuperation at White Sulphur Springs.

80 years ago It was 1917, and **Albert E. Sleeper** had returned the governorship to Republican control after four years under Democrat **Woodbridge Ferris**. Sleeper, a Bad Axe banker and wholesale grocer who had also been a state senator and state treasurer, would soon become Michigan's World War I chief executive. Known as "Uncle Bert" and once described as "slow-moving, easy-going," Sleeper quickly got off on the wrong foot by publicly opposing conscription. The resulting outcry led him to backtrack, and he settled into his wartime responsibilities. The National Guard was sent to active duty and was replaced by the Michigan State Troops, forerunner of the Michigan State Police. A War Preparedness Board was created, to be headed by Sleeper, and $5 million was appropriated for wartime costs. Two military camps were opened in 1917 — Camp (later Fort) Custer near Battle Creek and Selfridge Field in Macomb County. Sleeper was to serve two terms, to be succeeded by his attorney general and political enemy, **Alex Groesbeck**.

— C. Harmon

Whitbeck ceremony a special time

Webster defines "investiture" as "a formal investing with an office, power, authority, etc." In other words, it's a ceremony which one might be inclined to avoid as just one more Capitol rite.

At least that was our opinion — until a recent October day, when we joined at least 150 individuals at the main auditorium of the Michigan Historical Center to witness the investiture of an old friend and confederate, **William C. Whitbeck**, as a judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals. It was a moment in judicial — and political — history not to be missed. It had a combination of pomp, informality, and repartee that epitomize the best of State Capitol events.

As a point of historical reference, Bill is the 58th member of the Appeals Court since its creation 32 years ago by the most recent Michigan Constitution. It now has 28 judges, considerably more than it had when it came into being under the leadership of **T. John Lesinski**, the onetime lieutenant governor who surprised many with his judicial acumen.

On hand as a ceremony participant was retired Chief Judge **Robert J. Danhof**, who went on the court in 1969 after being Governor **George Romney**'s legal advisor and served for 23 years, 16 of them as Lesinski's successor as chief judge. Also participating was retired Judge **Glenn S. Allen, Jr.**, another Romney administration graduate, as is Whitbeck.

Whitbeck first came to Lansing in the mid-1960s, was an aide to Romney, went with him as a Special Assistant in H.U.D., later became a key advisor to Governor **John Engler**, and has practiced law with major Michigan firms.

Governor Engler took part in the ceremony, terming Whitbeck "a man of unmatched integrity." **Richard McLellan**, longtime friend and confederate, and **Scott Romney**, the late Governor's eldest son, also took part. **Lenore Romney** was there, as were many fellow judges.

The new judge was well-versed in his acceptance remarks, reminding many of his writing abilities and his love of Michigan history.

The oath of office was administered by the current chief judge, **Maura D. Corrigan**.

— C. Harmon

Vandenberg legacy remembered

By Robert S. LaBrant

Presenter Hank Meijer (center) with MPHA Prexie Sharman Moore (left) and V.P. Robert LaBrant (right).

On October 30, 1997, the Michigan Political History Society hosted an evening dinner to recognize the life and accomplishments of U.S. Senator **Arthur H. Vandenberg**, who fifty years ago, as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, provided the bipartisan leadership necessary to implement the Marshall Plan for rebuilding a war-devastated Europe.

Hank Meijer, co-chairman of Meijer, Inc., and biographer of his grandfather, the founder of Meijer, was the dinner speaker. Meijer expects to publish a biography on Arthur Vandenberg in 1999. His address on Vandenberg was complimented with slides and blow-up posters of Time Magazine covers that feature Senator Vandenberg.

Jim Haveman, State Community Health Director and MPHS Board member, organized the event.

Vandenberg served 23 years as U.S. Senator from Michigan (1928-1951). Born in Grand Rapids in 1884, Vandenberg dropped out of the University of Michigan after one year to become a reporter for the Grand Rapids Herald. By the time he was 22, Vandenberg was the Herald's editor. He also wrote short stories, poems, a book on **Alexander Hamilton**, and was even a songwriter.

His political career began in 1910 with the election to the Grand Rapids City Charter Commission. A member of the Republican State Central Committee, Vandenberg helped **Fred Green** win the gubernatorial nomination over incumbent **Alexander Groesbeck** in 1926. Two years later, when Democratic U.S. Senator **Woodbridge Ferris** died in office, Governor Green appointed the 44-year-old Grand Rapids newspaper editor to fill the vacancy. Later that same year, Vandenberg was elected to a full Senate term. He was reelected in 1934, 1940, and 1946.

During the late 1930s, Vandenberg was a leading isolationist. An opponent of Lend Lease, Vandenberg advocated strict neutrality in European affairs. In 1940, Vandenberg actively sought the Republican Presidential nomination which was won by dark horse **Wendell Willkie**.

During World War II, Vandenberg converted from isolationism to become a leading internationalist. He was a member of the U.S. delegation to the April 1945 San Francisco Conference, where he signed the United Nation's Charter.

Vandenberg was largely responsible for the bipartisanship of American foreign policy in the postwar period.

Following the 1946 election, which swept in COP control of Congress, Vandenberg became Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and President Pro Temp of the Senate. The 80th Congress (1947-48) was Vandenberg's moment in history. Called "President of the World," Vandenberg's leadership pulled Congress and the nation along to support the Truman Doctrine and later the Marshall Plan in the rebuilding of Europe and the containment of Soviet expansionism.

Vandenberg did not actively seek the 1948 Republican President nomination but wrote an acceptance speech before arriving at the convention just in case.

A man of a large ego, critics called Vandenberg "so vain, he could strut sitting down." He collected honorary degrees like trophies. Although Vandenberg had a civil relationship with Republican "Boss" **Frank McKay**, also of Grand Rapids, Vandenberg remained largely aloof from Michigan politics once he went to Washington. In fact, in 1946 Vandenberg was reelected to the Senate without returning to Michigan to campaign.

Vandenberg's health declined soon after the 1948 election. He had a lung surgery in 1949. His wife died in 1950, and on April 18, 1951, Vandenberg died at his home in Grand Rapids. Governor **G. Mennen Williams** would appoint another newspaperman to fill the Vandenberg seat, **Blair Moody**. In 1952, Moody was defeated by Republican **Charles Potter**, who in turn was defeated for reelection by **Phil Hart**. The "Vandenberg" Senate seat was later held by **Donald Riegle** and is currently held by **Spencer Abraham**.

A glimpse at civility, 1897 By Elizabeth Homer

At age 83, it was natural that **Lucinda Hinsdale Stone** of Kalamazoo would respond to an invitation to attend the first convention of the Congress of Mothers in February of 1897. She was a leading advocate of education reform and for equal educational rights for women and had been throughout the last half of the century.

Most likely it was an indication of the importance of the meeting that "The Mother of the Women's Club Movement" in Michigan would bring a delegation of seven with her to Washington, D.C., to hear the papers on children's educational needs. And it was expected that this would include the issues of women and their view of the world beyond home and school. For these women were reformers.

And what were some of those issues? Civility, the media. Solutions are still elusive but the advice of the Congress, passed on in the form of resolutions, remains with us, if only we would avail ourselves of it. "We desire that the influence of this meeting be as far-reaching as possible," they said.

Dissatisfaction with the press was apparent in this resolution: "Resolved, that we will endeavor to exclude from our homes those papers which do not educate or inspire to noble thought and deed, and that our influence shall be used to so cultivate the public taste that it will exact from the press and artists that which educates and refines. We protest against all pictures and displays which tend to degrade men and women or to corrupt or deprave the minds of the young, and all advertisements which offend decency."

The desire for a more harmonious public life, as well as home life, was expressed in the resolution "Seven Rules of Harmony" endorsing the work of the Universal Peace Union:

1. I hereby promise to make the sacred spirit of peace a living power in my life and to contribute all the time, thought, and money that I can to its diffusion.

2. I promise never to listen without a protest to insinuations, vituperations, or unjust accusations against the members of my family or against my fellow citizens.

3. I promise to seek to understand the spirit of the national laws, to obey those that exist, and to interest myself fervently in the modification of all those which tyrannize any class of fellow citizens.

4. I promise to dedicate my thought and influence to the development of the national and patriotic spirit and not to criticize without purpose the administration of the family or of the nation.

Lucinda Hinsdale Stone

5. I promise to treat all birds and beasts and all existences of the animal and vegetable worlds with justness and gentleness and not to destroy, save for self-preservation and for the protection of the weak. Instead, my object shall be to plant, to nourish, and to propagate all that will lead to the moral and physical amelioration of my family, my home, and my nation.

6. I promise to teach my children and my dependents everything with regard to justice and peace which I shall learn and to seek to develop within them the sentiments to which I am hereby dedicating myself.

7. I promise to seek each day to utter some word or to perform some action which may promote the cause of peace, whether at home or abroad.

The Congress was a huge success. The numbers responding to the call were so great that no single hall or church could contain them all. **Mrs. Grover Cleveland** held a reception for conference leaders at the White House. It was said the wife of the President graciously received the 2,000 people who came in place of the expected 200.

The eighteen women and six men who gave papers were asked to give their addresses twice at different location. Their papers were so in demand that they were published in a hard cover book that included the Congress' resolutions. In 1924, The Mother's Congress became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

The era of the multi-client lobbyist

Jerry Coomes offers comments on "Era of the Multi-client Lobbyist"

Editor's Note: *Following are excerpts from a talk delivered on September 10, 1997, by* ***Francis J. (Jerry) Coomes,*** *retired CEO of Public Affairs Associates, Inc., to a gathering hosted by the Michigan Political History Society. The complete text is available upon request to the editor of this newsletter.*

The role of the lobbyist in the American Legislative arena is not completely understood by the public. Lobbying is a constitutionally guaranteed right by the first and fifth amendments to the United States Constitution. Lobbyists are pollinators of the lawmaking process by virtue of the information and ideas they provide the lawmakers. As long as there is a Legislature, there will be lobbyist. A legislature without lobbyists would be like a courtroom without lawyers.... To understand the Legislature is the main job of a lobbyist. To understand the goals, issues, and personalities of 148 people and then attempt to monitor or assist in the guidance of legislation through the creeks, streams, rivers, and rivulets of that body on behalf of your clients is an experience that equates to watching the most beautiful sunset and the blackest tornado simultaneously.

* * * *

In 1955, the Legislature was essentially part-time. Legislators made $3,500, went home in May, and didn't return until the second week in January. Only committee chairpersons had offices. The rest of the members' offices were at their desk on the floor of the House or Senate.

The entire Democratic Caucus had five secretaries, who made $100 a week, and like the legislators, went home in May and returned in January. The Senate Appropriations Committee had one staff person, a man by the name of **Charlie McNeil**.

The Press, during that period, frequently participated, as much as they observed, the legislative process....Similarly, the lobbyist was quite different from today. In numbers, there were about 50 who showed up every day. That number expanded to about 400 registered lobbyists in 1982. After the Lobbying Registration Act of 1983, the number soared to over 2,200 with 550 groups, associations, and multi-client lobbying firms.

By 1993, the individuals registered were 1,250. But the number of groups went from 550 to 850. Prior to 1983, Chrysler, for instance, had one lobbyist. After the Lobbyist Registration Act of 1983, Chrysler registered 43 lobbyists.

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The original multi-client lobbying firm was operating during this time. It was started by **Wilfred Doyle**, a former Republican Senator from Menominee, in the late '30. **Bill Doyle** founded the Michigan Chain Stores Council, and it represented a number of large retailers such as A&P, Kroger, and Sears. Bill was also known as the king of Mackinac Island. He was the dominant lobbyist of his day until the Senate became more moderate beginning in 1960. **Tom Cleary** was the first of the modern-day, multi-client lobbyists. Tom founded Michigan Legislative Consultants with one client in 1964, and when he retired recently, the firm was representing twenty-five clients.

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Today Michigan has a genuine two-party system. It is hard to imagine the extent to which the State was dominated by the GOP prior to 1959. For example:

- Between 1918 and 1928, no Democrat won a statewide office.
- In 1925, there was not a Democrat in either House or Senate.
- There were only four Democrats elected in the first half of the 20th century; three were elected on the coattails of FDR.
- When Roosevelt was elected in 1932, he was the first Democrat President that carried Michigan since 1852, and when Woodridge Ferris was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1922, he was the first Democrat elected to the Senate since 1854.

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For social revolutions began during this period which were to change profoundly the complexities of policies and the government. They were: the Civil Rights Movement; the Environmental Movement; the Women's Movement; and the

Consumers' Movement. All of these forces at least doubled the complexity and emotional intensity of government in a rather short ten-year period.

Add to this the eighteen-year old vote and you have the added energy and ambition of a much younger Legislature after the '72 election. With all these changes, it is easy to understand how the nature of lobbying had to change to accommodate a radically altered Legislature.

Prior to 1974, the business lobbyist was handicapped. Labor had the only Political Action Committees, and they were wonderfully effective during elections. There was very little fund raising between elections. Very few fund-raising events were held while the Legislature was in session. There were two reasons:

The business groups did not have PACs and the labor PACs gave at election time only. Hence, for the first four or five years after we established PAA, we attended very few fund-raising events during session.

But all that changed in 1974 when Congress passed a Campaign Reform Act that allowed business groups to expend corporate funds for two purposes—ballot campaigns and to bear the administrative expenses of creating and administrating PACs.

Not only did the horse leave the barn, the whole stable left the barn and last seen, the barn was on fire. Here was the mother lode of mothers milk.

This single act made dramatic changes in the legislative process. It would be hard to minimize the ways in which it increased and politicized the complexities and intrigues of government and politics.

1. Fund raisers became an everyday occurrence during session.
2. Business groups gained leverage at the expense of labor.
3. Multi-client lobbying firms became even more influential.

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Several other trends contributed to the growth of multi-client lobbying firms during the `80s.

First was Reagan's concept that Federal programs should be shifted to the States.

That single policy started a stampede among national and international corporations to have State representation. And among that group, multi-client firms with a stable of lobbyists with different skills and backgrounds could all be assembled as a team to work on their issues.... Secondly, the litany of environmental laws and regulations became multi-million dollar problems to large corporations like GM, Dow, Shell, Upjohn, and Detroit Edison. Except for Edison, most of these firms never had contractual lobbyists before. But they could not afford not to have them when the million dollar settlements hit them. The environmental movement caused our firm to grow by 20%.

Finally, the sheer numbers of bills, the politics of a divided legislature, the complexity of understanding the administrative departments, all brought most major Michigan corporations to multi-client firms by the end of the `80s.

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One final shaping influence on the government and lobbying has been the restructuring of our economy beginning with the recession of 1979. That brought about wave after wave of plant closings, layoffs, and budget cuts. Institutions depending on State funds throughout the `80s went through some tough times.

It created a political environment of scarcity that penetrated the electorate and the elected. Being in politics was not so much fun anymore—and lobbying wasn't either.

The voter became downright angry, and the public official became harassed and uncertain.

This period culminated in the passage of term limits.

Term limits reflect a larger reality—an angry, distrustful public that has lost confidence in its government. This public cynicism is not unique to Michigan. It is pervasive nationwide. And it is an eroding acid on the body politic that threatens the core of the concept of self governance. When in some communities less than 25% of the electorate are participants in elections, it is time for all of us to ask, "What can be done to restore the trust our citizenry once had in its governing institutions?"

In my judgment, the solutions are beyond structural tinkering with the three major branches. We need to discover a constitutional method to finance legislative elections that relies much less on those who have the most to gain by government actions. Let information and ideas be the currency that predominantly influences public policy.

Historical commission - history and politics

Our Michigan Political History Society has been described as an organization with an intense curiosity about Michigan's history; that is, political history.

The same might be said for the current Michigan Historical Commission. Never before in the commission's 84 years of existence has it had a membership so richly endowed with personal involvement and interests in our state's political history.

The commission was created in 1913. It's responsibilities include operation of the Michigan Historical Center, maintenance of the state archives, and publication of Michigan History Magazine.

It has had many members in the past with rich political backgrounds who also had a deep commitment to our history. A classic example is **John B. Swainson**, Michigan's governor in 1961-62 and later a Supreme Court justice. Swainson served on the commission from 1985 until his death in 1994.

The current members are the following:

Mark Murray, appointed in recent weeks by Governor Engler, who has been Governor Engler's state budget director since late 1994 and will soon become Michigan State University's Associate Vice President for Business and Finance;

Ann Preston Koeze, the commission's current chair, a longtime Republican activist from Kent County, and daughter-in-law of **Ella Koeze**, who served for many years as the GOP national committeewoman from Michigan;

Keith Molin, currently senior associate director of athletics at the University of Michigan and a key member of the Milliken state administrations, when he headed the Commerce and the Labor departments;

Robert Danhof, retired chief judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals and legal advisor to former Governor **George Romney**;

William Whitbeck, newly named member of the Appeals Court and advisor to Governors Romney and Engler;

And **Samuel Logan, Jr.**, publisher of the Michigan Chronicle, Michigan's oldest and largest African-American-owned newspaper.

Four of the six are MPHS members. Applications are en route to the other two.

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