This document describes how to join and participate in the GP-MI through its website at https://migreenparty.org. The following sections will show how to:

- Join the GP-MI online
- Create a user account on the GP-MI website.
- Update personal profile and contact information
- Access important resources that are reserved for members-only
- Post original articles for others to view
- Participate in online discussions and decision making
- Volunteer to contribute to the GP-MI in selected areas

The traditional ways to join and participate in the GP-MI still exist. To join, someone might fill out a paper form at an event, send U.S. Mail to our PO Box, or scan and attach a form to an email addressed to a GP-MI officer. Participation can occur while attending a State Membership Meeting, (SMM), or via email with individuals or groups. (Please use official email addresses for all GP-MI officers, not personal email addresses!)

Details for joining the GP-MI and/or creating a user account on our website can be found under the “About” tab in the sites nav bar, as shown here:

That information is also presented here, in the following section.

**How to Use the GP-MI Website**

This document is to help people understand the nuances of the GP-MI website. Anyone with questions that aren’t answered here should contact a Web Steward for assistance.

The GP-MI website is actually a web application. Users interact with it in ways that aren’t possible with ordinary websites. You could do online banking or manage your work scheduling after logging into a web application for example. But ordinary websites just present informational content like text and images.
Individuals and small groups maintain websites as blogs or to present news about, say, their Thursday night card club. But a growing state-wide enterprise needs a web application to conduct its organizational business. No single person could adequately maintain data associated with our national and statewide committees, catalog and update all important documents and financial records, present news about caucuses or candidates, and track address information for fifteen hundred members. The GP-MI web application offers a growing set of data driven features that are based upon the user’s assigned “roles”. Like a symphony, we work together.

A visitor to this site who has not created an account or has not logged in has no recognized role. These users have the most limited access to the site. Users who are logged in and recognized as GP-MI members have permission to access videos and documents that are restricted to members only. These users can also submit agenda item requests, publish articles to the site, and engage in a growing list of other things.

**GP-MI Member vs. Website User**

It is important to note the difference between being a **member** of the GP-MI and being an authorized **website user**. The GP-MI membership list has existed for many years. Most of the people on the list are not (yet) site users. Historically, people would join the GP-MI by submitting a written form. The member’s information would subsequently be keyed into a spreadsheet. This process was prone to errors. Today people can join online by clicking the nav bar button on our site, as seen here:

![Join Here](https://www.gpmi.org)

Whether the member has joined via paper or online form, GP-MI membership does not in itself bestow permission on the website. They cannot even login until they create a user account. In order to do that, they must click on a different nav bar button, as shown below:

![Member Login](https://www.gpmi.org)
The registration process is quite standard and includes a step to verify that the user’s email address is unique and genuine. An email is automatically sent to the new user. That email has a link that must be clicked within five minutes in order to confirm its accuracy and authenticity.

Please note that it generally takes a couple minutes for the email to arrive, and that it might land in a spam folder. If the email expires before it is clicked, the user will get the following screen after logging in:

![Error screen](image)

The only way to overcome this problem is to [contact a Web Steward](#).

Creating a different account with the same email address will not be possible. Creating a different account with a different email address is problematic.

The Web Steward is able to verify and set the account property manually, allowing the user to login successfully.

**GP-MI Member AND Website User**

As we noted, most GP-MI members are not (yet) authenticated website users. It is also possible for an authenticated site user to not (yet) be a GP-MI member. Another possibility is that the authenticated user is a legitimate GP-MI member, but that the web application doesn’t recognize this fact.

The only way that the website can recognizes its members is by comparing the authenticated user’s email address with the email address we have for the GP-MI member. For this reason, it is important that the email address that is used for registering as a site user is the same email address as the one we have in the membership list.

If multiple family members shared an email address when joining the GP-MI, problems may occur. Likewise, if no email or an invalid address was submitted to the membership manager, the authenticated user will not be recognized after logging in. In these cases, they will see a welcome screen like the following:
They are recognized only as a site user and not as a GP-MI member. They are encouraged to join. However, if they are already a member, they should contact a Web Steward instead. Joining the GP-MI again with a matching email address may be possible, but that would orphan the old membership record and cause problems for automated processes such as with sending U.S. Mail. The Web Steward can manually alter the email data appropriately so that users are recognized as GP-MI members after logging in. When that occurs, they will see a welcoming screen like the one below:

The welcome screen looks similar but the nav bar has buttons that it didn’t have before. Other differences will be apparent as the member browses the site.

**Home Page vs. Splash Page**

Another change may cause some confusion at first. Until the user logs in, the Home Page is the same as the Splash Page. Now, however, the Home Page is as shown above and can be accessed by clicking the Home button in the nav bar. The splash page can be reached by clicking the nav bar button that says, “Green Party of Michigan”. The button and the splash page are shown below:
One of the most important things a member can do after logging in is to check and update their profile information. That is done after clicking the “Hello” nav bar button as shown below.

This brings up a page that will allow password reset and profile information management:

Clicking the Update Profile Information button presents the following page:
In this way, the member can change their information at any time. The update to the GP-MI Membership record is immediate. The Membership Manager can also make these updates on behalf of the GP-MI member, but members are encouraged to maintain their own data. This enhances efficiency and accuracy. It also relieves the member of reliance upon a central authority. This is a salient point when you consider that only members with a certain vintage can vote.

The Web Steward can assign to users any of a number of roles, depending on their status within the organization. As an example, you can see the current home page for a user that is recognized as the Meeting Manager, as well as being a particular Local Group’s Contact Person. The number of buttons available to any role increases as we add software features. The “Local Group” nav bar button currently provides data management tools for the local group and the GP-MI membership data within the counties served by that local group.
Each of the eleven officers has a custom home page with data management features tailored to their needs. Each officer is also provided with documentation that explains how to use the features. Officers are able and encouraged to update that documentation in order to make it more useful to the next person to fill their role.

This document will not describe the special features available to users with roles beyond that of general membership. This article is intended to describe the GP-MI website as experienced by an authenticated GP-MI member. Anyone with questions that aren’t answered here should contact a Web Steward for assistance. We’ll be glad to hear from you!

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Site users who are recognized as a GP-MI member have a growing number of ways to participate through the website. Everything described here is subject to change as software is further developed and enhanced.

Members have access to important file resources after clicking on the “Documents” tab in the nav bar. We have a list of links to fundamental documents such as our by-laws and a to a general Documents page, seen below.

MI-GP officers will have the same links but their general documents page will include files uploaded for their particular office.

Members can also access a list of video links, as shown below. Videos are generally “Unlisted” on YouTube, making them unavailable through search engines. But rather than asking someone to for links to videos, members can access them directly.
GP-MI members can volunteer for selected items or create their own item and volunteer, as seen below.

GP-MI members can also publish articles to the website.

After logging in and being recognized as a member, a button appears as shown below.
Clicking the button loads the screen you see below. The list is of articles already created by the logged in member.

Instructions on how to create and manage articles are available from the link shown above. Those instructions are also included here.

**Creating and Updating Articles**

*Updated 4/16/2019*

GP-MI members can publish articles to the website and have them appear on our splash page.

There are no official rules over who may be authorized to post articles, how and by whom they would achieve this authority, what content may be permitted, or where the posted articles will be appear on the site.

In light of this, the group working as Web Stewards since mid-2018 decided to form its own rules based on our [Ten Key Values](#), specifically the fifth one which promotes decentralization over bureaucracy. Our
The purpose is to invite member participation which might be stifled at just the thought of an individual or clique with power to suppress.

The GP-MI membership, not a set of bureaucrats, is authorized to post articles and to have them removed. Removal is automatic after a specific number of complaints is received. Members can complain about an article by clicking the button displayed on each article.

After clicking the button, members see an explanation of how the system handles complaints. This screen is shown below.

It says,

In keeping with the GP-MI principle of decentralization, any member can publish articles to this website.

Responsibility for site content is also decentralized. When more than one member reports inappropriate content in a posted article, that article is automatically removed.
Emails are automatically sent to the article author, the GP-MI Communications Manager, the GP-MI Web Steward, and the member who submitted the report.

The author may appeal at the next SMM to have the article republished.

Authors who have multiple articles removed will be automatically prevented from publishing. This action can be appealed at the next SMM.

Members who register multiple unwarranted complaints will be automatically prevented from reporting. This action can be appealed at the next SMM.

X'ing past that popup reveals the page for submitting a complaint. That page is shown below.

Members must select from a list of valid reasons for removing an article and they must leave a comment.

It's worth noting that since September 2018, only five people have authored a total of 21 articles. There have been zero complaints. Participation has not yet reached the level we hope for.

Once logged in and recognized, GP-MI members will have a nav bar for Articles:
Clicking the button will take you to the Articles area of this site, where you will see a list of articles that you have already created. At first the list will be empty:

Click the “Add a new Article” button to begin.

You will be able to enter the header information for your article.

After entering a Title and selecting the Article Type and Sub Type, and then Saving, you will see the controls for composing the body of your article.
Text may be entered or pasted into the content area at the bottom.

A limited number of text formatting features are available with this editor. However, it may be more convenient to compose your article in a different word editor and then paste the formatted text to this window. (keyboard keys: Ctr + C to copy highlighted text to the clipboard; Ctr + V to paste to the window). Best choice for font is Arial, 12 pt.

Images and hyperlinks cannot be pasted to your article in this way. For those, you will need to use the buttons and boxes above the editor.

**Note:**
- Every article will require at least one image.
- Every image will require a caption.
- Every attached file will require link text.

Below, you can see that we’ve added some formatted text and an image caption:
Clicking the “Add Image” button takes us to the file upload screen:

From here, you will Browse for an image that you have saved on your local computer, and then Upload the image to your article.

The image will be placed at the top of your article:
The image can be moved to any other location by clicking and dragging the mouse over the it, thus highlighting it, and then using cut and paste, (Ctrl + X and Ctrl + V).

**Note:** Hyperlinks and file attachments can be added to the article and repositioned in the same way as images, by using the dedicated button and text boxes.

The Preview button will show you how the finished article will look once it is published.

**Note:** Articles are not visible to other users until they are published.

**Note:** Publishing an article is done only from the Preview page.

**Note:** Saving an article unpublishes it. After saving any changes, you must preview and publish again in order to make the article visible to others.
The preview page will show you if your article has been successfully published.

The Article data page will also show that the article has been published, and remind you how to unpublish:

You will also see that the list shows that the article has been published because it will have a published date value:
Articles of Type “GP-MI News” will appear on the site splash page. To check this, click on the left most nav bar button that says “Green Party of Michigan”.

You will see that your article is featured directly under the banner. Articles that were published earlier will appear below your new article.

In order to read the article, users will click on the image.

**Note:** We have just described the new feature that allows users to create and update articles. However, this feature is in its first iteration and will be improved and extended. Future developments will include:

- File upload, so that hyperlinks can point to attached files. *(done)*
- Article search and filter by author, type, date, etc.
- “Pin to top” button to keep an article at the top while new articles are published. *(done)*
- Other features that may be requested by our members.
GP-MI members can also submit proposals for discussion and eventual adoption via the website.

The nav bar called SCC presents a button for instructions, but that document is included here for convenience.

Using the Web Based SCC Feature  
*updated 9/23/2019*

Several of us have worked recently to test and refine the online discussion/debate/decision (DDD) tool that was developed per request at the August 2017 SMM in Monroe and demonstrated at the October 2017 SMM in Marquette.

That request was to provide a replacement for the existing Yahoo! email group processes used by the Statewide Central Committee (SCC). What we have as a result is a "back-end" (database model and code classes) that is sophisticated and flexible enough to support any kind of poling/voting scheme.

We also have a "front-end" (aka User Interface, or UI) that implements the SCC decision making rules as Paul Homeniuk described them. This is based on the submission of proposals that can be either of two types. If supported by two other members, discussion and probably blocking concerns and voting occur during prescribed time frames. A screen shot of the results of one test proposal is shown below.

![Green Party of Michigan | SCC Voting](image)

- **Accept**: 4
- **Reject**: 1
- **Abstain**: 1
- **Total Votes**: 6
- **Percent Approved**: 66.67 %
- **SCC Members**: 48
- **Quorum Required**: 32

Note that the above proposal was ‘Approved’ even though a quorum, as defined in our bylaws, was not reached. This is to allow for testing prior to adoption of the software.
After completing the first iteration of the DDD component, Paul and others expressed the need for a discussion forum that is not based on the submission of proposals and is open to all members. For that purpose, we now have discussion forums for the general membership and for several member groups, including the SCC. This article is about the SCC DDD.

To reach the SCC DDD, click the nav bar button as shown below.

Note that the ‘SCC’ button is only visible after logging in and being recognized as a GP-MI member. When the software is adopted, the button will appear only for SCC members. You will see that the button turns bright green when voting is underway on any proposal.

Clicking on the nav bar button loads the list of existing proposals:

We can click the grid row buttons to view the details of the results of each proposal. Each of these proposals has terminated as 'Accepted', 'Approved', or 'Rejected'. The 'Instructions' button will download this article. To submit a new proposal, we click the 'New Proposal' button. That loads the data page shown below.
We have entered the text for our new proposal. Proposals can be either of two types, ‘Standard’ or ‘Expedited’. ‘Standard’ proposals enter a state of Discussion for one week, followed by a one-week period for Voting. ‘Expedited’ proposals are automatically accepted after two days unless someone submits a ‘blocking concern’. In that case, its type is changed to ‘Standard’ and the discussion period begins.

According to our bylaws, it seems to make sense for every proposal to be submitted as an ‘Expedited’ type - even a proposed change to our bylaws - giving them a chance to pass quickly without debate.

Note that the term, ‘blocking concern’ is defined differently here that it is in our Consensus Model. Here, it signifies any concern that a member states with the intent of forcing debate and voting. (The SCC DDD rules can change with changes to the wording of our bylaws.)

The text for the Proposal Description can be edited in place or copy and pasted, (ctrl + C, ctrl + V) from a word editor. Later upgrades will allow picture, video, hyperlinks.

Clicking the ‘Save’ button takes us to the Preview page:
We see that the ‘Status’ of our proposal is ‘Draft’. These are only visible to the proposal author. It will be available for editing if we logoff and return later, but nobody else can see it. Clicking to Return to List, we see our new proposal at the top. Its color is light grey:

As we said, ‘Draft’ proposals are only visible to the proposal author. We do not see proposals that others have drafted, and they do not see ours. Clicking on the grid row button on the right takes us back to the data page for editing:
Notice that we have new buttons: ‘File Upload’, ‘Delete’ and ‘Preview’. The ‘Delete’ button will remove the proposal from the list. We will discuss ‘Preview’ below.

File upload works like the other upload processes defined in the general documentation. Clicking on the ‘File Upload’ button loads the screen below:

We have added one file and are about to add another. The file might be a pdf version of our proposal or some supporting documents. In this case they are just trivial files used for testing. Clicking to ‘Return’ to the proposal shows hyperlinks to the files we uploaded.
Saving changes will update our proposal and reload the Preview page. The ‘Preview’ page is the path we must take to publish the proposal. Clicking on the ‘Preview’ button loads the details page we saw before:
Clicking the ‘Publish’ button will submit the proposal to the SCC for consideration and start the clock on the discussion period.

We are redirected to the proposal list. Now, with Status = ‘Pending’ everyone can see our new proposal at the top of the list:

![Proposal List](image)

Our new proposal will remain indefinitely until it is supported by two members.

When a different member clicks to view the new proposal, the screen below is loaded:

![Proposal Preview](image)
The member can support the new proposal or click to add a comment. Clicking to support, the member is redirected back to the proposal list and is momentarily shown an alert box with the message that one more supporter is required:

Now say that a different member clicks to view the new proposal and instead of immediately supporting, clicks the ‘Discussion’ button shown earlier. This loads the screen below:

We see an empty grid with a button to submit a ‘New Comment’. Clicking that loads the following page. We added the text for this comment.
The Discussion box accepts multi-line text - not “rich text” that is formatted like the proposal itself was.

Saving the comment reloads the Discussion page and we see the grid has a new record.

The ‘Edit’ button is only available for comments that the logged in member has authored.

In order to see the contents of the comment, we can click on the row. The row will expand as shown below:

We may click to edit the new comment or to ‘Return’ to the Preview page:
From here, we will click to ‘Support’ this proposal. When we do, we are redirected to the proposal list.

We see a vanishing alert box that reports that the required number of supporters has been reached. We also see that the new proposal has changed color and its Status is now ‘Discussion’. We also see that the ‘Start Disc’ cell has a value.
Since this is an ‘Expedited’ proposal, its status will automatically change to ‘Accepted’ in 48 hours, unless some member submits a blocking concern. We can see several ‘Accepted’ proposals in the list. We click on one of them to see the results:

Accepted without a vote!

To Use Best Possible Communication
Proposal Author: whiteogman
I propose that we use the best possible communication for SCC motions, general discussions and business we can make on the official website.

It was accepted without a vote. This will happen with our new proposal unless someone submits a blocking concern.

To submit a blocking concern, we click the grid button to view the proposal and then click the ‘Discussion’ button as seen earlier. The page below loads.

Green Party of Michigan | Proposal Discussion

Time remaining for discussion: 01 days 23:56:49

GP-MI Membership Cannot Be Revoked
Author: n8ppq

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blocking</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>False</td>
<td>n8ppqA</td>
<td>09/22/19</td>
<td>I heartedly endorse the idea of considering the possible benefits and costs of removing the process for removing members from the GP-MI.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We see that the clock is running, and we see how much time remains before the proposal is automatically accepted. To block this proposal, we need to enter a ‘New Comment’.

Green Party of Michigan | Proposal Discussion Detail

GP-MI Membership Cannot Be Revoked
Comment Author: n8ppqA

Without the ability to expel members, we have no control over them.
We entered the comment text, (required), checked the ‘Blocking’ radio button, and then click to ‘Save’. The Discussion page reloads along with our new comment record. The left most cell shows that this was a blocking concern.

We see that the time remaining for discussion has increased to seven days, minus the time spent already in discussion.

Clicking back to the proposal list, we see that the status of our proposal has changed from ‘Expedited’ to ‘Standard’:

We also see the dates when voting will begin and end.

When the prescribed time arrives, Voting begins. Members will be alerted whenever a proposal is being voted on. The nav bar button will turn bright green:
Clicking will load the list and we will see that our proposal status has changed to ‘Voting’ and the grid row has turned orange.

Clicking on the grid row button loads the screen below.
We see that we can ‘Accept’, ‘Deny’, or ‘Abstain’ our vote on this proposal.

Note that ‘Discussion’ will continue while voting proceeds on the proposal.

Also note that members can return and change their vote at any time until the clock runs out on the proposal and the results are tallied.

This ends the description of the SCC DDD component in its current state.

As we said before, this feature was developed to be flexible and easily extended in order to handle any type of voting and poling scheme. These could include surveys, rank-choice-voting, multiple choice selections, etc. We also expect to accommodate rules changes as or bylaws change.

Please feel free to use the SCC DDD and provide feedback. Since it is new, it will probably lack a feature that you would appreciate. You may find a bug or two. Please leave a "feature request" or "bug report" from the splash page sidebar in these cases.

Thanks!

GP-MI WebManatee, in collaboration with the Web Stewards

Footnotes:
1. **Bylaws**, Article VII, Section 4.
2. **Consensus Model** definition of blocking concern.
3. Current bylaws do not state an expiration time for unsupported proposals.