This report is a brief account of our software development progress since the Convention in June. Links to earlier reports are found at the end of this document.

At that Meeting, we used the data collected by the new Rank Choice Voting feature. An online ballot like the screen shot below was used prior to the meeting to collect voter preferences. Selections from a dozen paper mail-in ballots were keyed in during the convention.

Results of the first-round calculations were presented and exported for use by the Presidential Delegates in the upcoming July National Convention. Since no candidate received a majority, (50% of the rank 1 votes) there was no winner according to Rank Choice Voting (RCV) rules. However, further rounds that apply the elimination process were not required in this case, according to the GP-MI Plan.
After the election, I added the mechanisms for calculating further rounds. This was not required for our Presidential Polling, but since we had the data, it was an opportunity to work up the rest of RCV code. The button at the top right takes us to the next round. But before we do that, we have to click the button to ‘Combine Write-In Votes’.

Write-in votes are generally not allowed in RCV schemes, but since our plan called for them, we took on the challenge. Write-in candidates cannot be programmed in before the election, and so are not recognized by the computer as candidates at all. ‘Bernard Sanders’ could be anybody. We need a human to make assumptions. The page above lists distinct write-in names and asks the Elections Officer to correct misspelling and change spelling so that the computer will recognize
‘Bernard’ as being the same candidate as ‘Bernie’, for example. Once this is done, we can continue to the next round.

Working up the code for this revealed the need to clearly define our actual polling rules. I was not able to program anything regarding ‘No Nominee’, None of the Above’, and ‘Uncommitted’, because I could not find clear instructions on how those integer values are to be treated. Other details for RCV are not specified for GP-MI but I was able to chose from rules used by outside organizations and apply those. The way I calculated eliminations at the end of each round, however, was unusual. I did not eliminate candidates, but only the associated rank-1 votes. This code needs to be redone. I expect to have an update by the Spring SMM. I also plan to ask the Handbook Committee to explicitly define our elections rules, in general and for specific cases like presidential polling.

I turned to the upcoming GP-MI Officer Elections, which implements RCV. Where we have multiple winners such as with Web Steward and National Delegates, an Instant Runoff Voting, (IRV) scheme must be used. I rework the code that presents nominees and added the ballot to collect choices for Officers, National Delegates, and National Committees. In an article on the site called Officer Elections and the GP-MI Website, I have asked members to test this new feature in a mock election. Please do! To begin, go to ‘All Meetings’ and click for ‘Details’ on the mock meeting, as shown below.

This work required major reworking of the way we handle meetings, elections, nominees, candidates, ballots, ballot instructions, and candidate questionnaires. The ballot now has a ‘Submit’ button, rather than auto saving every selection as it is made.

As always, there is a list of important improvements needed and prioritization is difficult. I rely on discussions and feedback from officers and members while determining what to work on at
any time. Before completing the work to show election results, I turned away to focus on collecting money for our partisan nominees.

I added a button to let people donate to the candidates. This works the same as taking ordinary donations, except that funds are targeted for use by the candidates. The code was already in place for targeting funds, and for presenting the targeted donations to the Treasurer, but had not been implemented. It was nice to see that we received a donation via this button within days of its appearance.

I turned back to the online store, which has been on hold since March because of urgent needs for the State and National Conventions. I allowed the Merchandise Manager or other authorized officer to assign a single ‘Target Fund’ to each product, which could already be assigned to categories for filtering and sorting. Merchandise Manager data entry page is below.

The view below is of the store where users can select items for the shopping cart.
I worked the code all the way to the finish line, and tested by purchasing items with a credit card. I still haven’t provided the means for our Treasurer to view and export the data based on targeted funds, however I expect that work to take a solid week and hope to have it finished before the October SMM. I made the Online Store button available to certain officers for testing and have asked for feedback.

Next, I added a way for candidates to embed a YouTube video into their candidate profile page. The buttons to Show and Hide the video will appear if a video has been added. The video will play in the sidebar, but can be expanded to fill the screen once it starts playing.
Note that we currently handle only YouTube videos. Facebook videos and mp4 uploads to the site are not an option yet.

I also added a button to share candidate profile to Facebook,

I reworked the banner to show candidate images and to take us to the candidate’s profile when the candidate image is clicked.

The partisan candidates needed a way to find volunteers so I reworked the Volunteer code and added screens for GP-MI officers to view the data. I also added automatic email to the officers when a volunteer adds or updates a volunteer request. Now, a volunteer can add a comment next to any category, and can add a category if the desired one is missing.
The Web Steward and other authorized officers will have a button at the top right to see the ‘Volunteer List’. Clicking loads the screen below.
This lets the officer search by Type, Name, and Date Range. The default is to search one year back. Name search will return every volunteer who has a name that includes the entered charter string, over the selected date range. After expanding a row and clicking the pointer button to the right, the details page loads, as seen below. Web Steward and other authorized officers can edit the details.

Priorities are currently:

- Send/receive SMS (short message service) between the app and mobile phones.
- Going live with the online store,
- Finishing RCV results pages for GP-MI officer elections,
- Working with the Committee Chair to move the SCC to the website.
Let me take this opportunity to ask every GP-MI member who has not already done so, to create an account on our web site. We currently have 533 site users, up from 427 in June and 178 last October. These are members who have created accounts and confirmed the validity of their email address. That is a good start, but our target is 100% participation by GP-MI membership. Our goal is to support and promote cooperation and grass-roots democracy. Instructions for how to take advantage of the application can now be found from the 'About' tab in the nav bar at the top of every page.

Respectfully submitted by,

Daniel Martin-Mills,
WebManatee – Humanity
Servers

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Previous IT Reports:

State Nominating Convention, June 20, 2020

Grand Rapids Report, March 7, 2020

Redford Report, October 12, 2019

Mount Pleasant Report, June 29, 2019

Muskegon Report, March 16, 2019

Pontiac, November 10, 2018

Respectfully submitted by:

Daniel Martin-Mills
GP-MI Web Manatee

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