



Christopher Braunschweig/Newton News

Denny Carpenter, a Republican incumbent running for a seat on the Jasper County Board of Supervisors, stares out the window of his room at Newton Village during the afternoon of Election Day on Nov. 8 in Newton.



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Michael Wood, a Libertarian candidate running for Iowa House District 38, holds the door open for his son after voting in his precinct at the Jasper County Fairgrounds on Nov. 8 in Colfax.

Election Day

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Half a day. Carpenter was taken to MercyOne Newton Medical Center on Oct. 18 where doctors found he was not moving enough nor drinking enough fluids or eating enough food. Eventually, he was moved to Newton Village for rehab.

Carpenter meets with specialists every day to do different exercises and stretches to get him moving, to work his muscles. He likes stretching the long piece of rubber the nurses give him. However, his condition means he cannot attend supervisors meetings in-person. He does join via Zoom.

"I'm there each morning, and Jon Dunwell makes that possible," he says. "He comes over. He hooks me up. And we go from there. I do everything from here."

He even voted absentee for the first time.

While attending rehab, Carpenter says he has not done any campaigning for this election. Which is not unusual, even if he wasn't at Newton Village. With almost 50 years experience serving the county in the engineer's office and as a supervisor, Carpenter has earned a lot of name recognition.

In 2018, Carpenter says he did not do any door-to-door campaigning, yet he still received more than 6,700 votes. He says he has not campaigned this year either. At every stump speech he ever had, Carpenter has stated he is not a politician. He sees himself a servant of the people of Jasper County.

He keeps to his word. If he tells cit-

izens he's going to do something, he does it. Carpenter sees it as his greatest strength that will get him elected.

"My No. 1 priority is serving people and not myself," he says. "It's been like that for a long time. And I'm not changing. I won't change. Nope. No."

Carpenter says it was God's will he run again. Much like the election four years ago, he is leaving this year's results in God's hands. The supervisor has wiped his hands of it at this point, relinquishing all control. Carpenter tells me he has no feelings on the election whatsoever.

"I always put it up to Him," he says. "Whatever He chooses. He's the one who's in charge. Whatever happens happens. God is in control. I control nothing."

I had to ask. "Does being in Newton Village hurt your chances at all?"

Carpenter shook his head. "Nope. Not at all."

7:41 p.m. - Michael Wood rushes to get his vote in on time

Michael Wood looks nothing like the guy we met onstage at the candidate forums last month. Underneath the stage lights of the Newton Community Theatre and Newton High School's Center for Performance, we saw a man with combed back hair and wearing a dress shirt and slacks.

At his polling place, the Libertarian candidate from Mingo is in street clothes, a pair of discolored blue jeans, a black sweatshirt and a black beanie. The boxing decal on the back of his sweatshirt makes him look like he just got done throwing a few hooks and uppercuts into a punching bag.

Wood brought his son along to the precinct. He stood against the wall while his dad filled out a ballot, a little too young to vote just yet. I ask him if he is the boxer in the family or

if it's his dad. He laughs. It's him, not his father. They just got back from his practice in time to vote. Much in the same way Wood entered the race.

According to the Iowa Secretary of State's Office, Wood was able to collect enough signatures to get his name on the ballot for Iowa House District 38. His filing date was Aug. 27, about five months after his Republican and Democratic opponents joined. He was given only two months to campaign.

Collecting signatures as a third party candidate felt like a litmus test for Wood. Those people who signed his petition were enthusiastic about a third party, and they were tired of a two-party system. Wood was even given admittance to the candidate forums in Newton.

Between the forums and word of mouth, that is about all the campaigning Wood would do. When he ran into people he'd tell them he was running for office.

At the forums, Wood was a little nervous being put on the spot. He admits he had a little stage fright, but he was proud of himself for doing it. As the only libertarian on the ballot, Wood knew ahead of time there is not a lot of activity from the third party in Jasper County. He estimates there are about 150 registered libertarians.

Still, he pushed forward with the campaign. Wood says it's nothing against his opponents, but what fueled his efforts were the parties themselves. Wood met both of his opponents: Dunwell and Zehr. He thinks they're good people, which is something he wants to keep in mind.

"Because too often the parties demonize the opponents to get you to vote for them. They demonize about horrible that person is or blah, blah, blah," Wood says. "After meeting

them they were both very nice and courteous to me. That's one thing I will personally keep in mind. To not demonize those guys."

But sooner or later other people are going to have to step up and make a third party, he says. Wood sees his run as a way to reach people disenfranchised by the two major parties.

"I've been voting Libertarian for quite a long time now and I thought you're not going to just start out running for governor or president. You gotta start small. Maybe it could have gone smaller like school board or something like that," he says, noting the Libertarian Party eventually contacted him to help him run for office.

It would take more than the registered Libertarians to get Wood elected. Even knowing that he still feels like he has a good chance. People actively involved in politics, he says, are getting sick and tired of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. But they like his positions on issues.

"It's going to be big step for me to do something I've never done before if I would win," he says. "Of course I would be disappointed if I don't."

Oftentimes a third party is perceived as a detriment to some elections, with the rationale being it will take away votes from one side. Wood was asked about this specifically and which side would get his votes. He thinks he will take away votes from both Republicans and Democrats.

"I'm going to take the Republican voters that are more fiscally conservative but socially liberal, and the opposite on the Democrats that support the women's right to choose and gay marriage but don't want government involved in everything," he says. "I'm going to pull from both. I could surprise people."

Concert

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before tickets go on sale to everyone on Dec. 5.

Randy Edeker, executive director and board chairman of Hy-Vee, said when the company first agreed to hold the event in Newton, they knew they wanted to make it the best and biggest event

on the NTT IndyCar Series schedule. This past race weekend at Iowa Speedway was reportedly sold out.

"We made the weekend quite the spectacle in 2022; however, we knew we could top our efforts when planning for 2023, and I think our lineup of concerts shows just that," Edeker said of the four nationally acclaimed acts. "This is an event you won't want to miss."



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Tim McGraw performs before the first IndyCar Series race on July 23, 2022 at the Iowa Speedway. Thousands of people attended the highly anticipated Hy-Vee IndyCar Race Weekend from July 22 to 24 at the Iowa Speedway.



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