

Baroda Dem announces for house seat

Party activist Crandell wants early start

By **DEBRA HAIGHT**
HP Correspondent

BARODA — A Baroda man is off to an early start in his effort to gain a state House seat.

William Crandell, 45, announced to media Monday his intent to seek the Democratic nomination for the 78th District seat, held by Oronoko Township Republican Dave Pagel. The primaries are almost a year away, and the general election is in November 2014.

He said he plans to knock on a lot of doors over the next several months to talk to district

residents.

“I wanted to start early to get my message out to as many voters as possible,” he said. “I would like to see a real change in the 78th, and I believe that if I get to know the voters they will support me and understand that I believe my job as their representative is to serve as their voice.”

The district covers southern Berrien County and parts of Cass County.

He said he decided to run because he doesn't like the direction the state is going under current Republican leadership.

“I believe that it is time that some new blood take over in Lansing that is not beholden to special interests or under the thumb of the Tea Party and their threat of primary challenges,” he said. “We need politicians in Lansing that are

willing to work together to solve the daunting challenges that this state is currently facing. Forcing schools to go under and struggling to find the funding to fix our roads because of \$1.8 billion dollars in tax breaks is not acceptable to me, and I want to go to Lansing to work to repeal them and ‘right to work.’”

He said Pagel is “a decent man,” but said he is going to have to swing to the far right in order to survive in the Republican Party.

This is Crandell's first run for public office, but he has been active in other campaigns, including Jack Arbanas' unsuccessful run against Pagel last year and Robin Bays' unsuccessful run against Sharon Tyler for Berrien County clerk.

He is a member of the

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South County Democratic Club, where he served as the communications director and is a past chairman of the Blue Tiger Community Action Committee. He has organized town hall events and rallies to discuss education funding. He is an active member of the Michigan Education Association.

He graduated from St. Joseph High School. He attended Lake Michigan College and later Northern Michigan University, where he majored in history. He is a paraprofessional for the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency in Berrien Springs and is a freelance journalist. He and his wife, Janine, have two children.