Preface

Covering a race for governor is a lot like going into one of those carnival fun houses with all the mirrors. Once you get inside, it’s tough to get out. I know. I was in one for 10 months. Everywhere you look, you see distorted images, and trying to decipher the real from the unreal can be a disconcerting if not a confusing challenge. While you are in there, you run into dead ends and bump into all sorts of interesting-looking characters, and when you finally get out of the maze, there’s a tremendous sense of relief as you return to the real world. Such was the 2006 race for governor in Michigan. It goes into the history books as the most expensive campaign ever. One of the contenders spent an unreal amount of money—over $35 million of his own cash to win—yet Dick DeVos lost. The other contender ran against the backdrop of a Michigan economy that was ravaged by the unprecedented upheaval at GM, Ford, and Chrysler. Jennifer Granholm miraculously dodged the bullet, as voters did not take it out on her. You’ll see all the craziness including how the Detroit Tigers figured into the outcome. You’ll feel all the triumphs and failures, meet all the characters, learn what strategies worked, and you’ll return to reality with a clearer picture of how the political game was played in this historic election. Take my hand; the fun house is just beyond that next page.