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The Page

BY MARK HALPERIN

Special Clip-'n'-Save Calendar Edition

Although the nomination battles were marathons, a likely McCain-Obama general election will be a sprint of less than six months. The big moments, when regular voters pay closest attention: running-mate announcements, convention acceptance speeches, debates and Election Day. But other days will be key too. Here is your clip-'n'-save guide.

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

JUNE 1

Puerto Rico primary

JUNE 3

Montana and South Dakota primaries (final contests and the anticipated end of the Democrats' long battle)

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

JULY 4

Independence Day (candidates wear their patriotism on their sleeve at parades, cookouts, etc.)

JULY 15

Veepstakes guessing games go into overdrive

August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

AUG. 4

Obama's birthday (a chance for the McCain campaign to call Obama's age into question)

AUG. 8-24

Summer Olympics in China (for Americans, a chance to cheer U.S. athletes; for candidates, a chance to mix with medal winners—and deal with China's human-rights record)

AUG. 25-28

Democratic Convention in Denver

AUG. 29

McCain's birthday (a chance for the Obama campaign to call McCain's age into question)

AUG. 29

Katrina anniversary (another opportunity for McCain to distance himself from the Bush Administration)

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

SEPT. 1

Labor Day (the media-created traditional kickoff of the fall campaign)

SEPT. 1-4

Republican Convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul

SEPT. 4

Start of the NFL season (the nation's attention is diverted)

SEPT. 11

Terrorist-attack anniversary (a symbolic moment for the country—and the candidates)

SEPT. 26

First presidential debate, in Oxford, Miss.

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

OCT. 1 Concern grows over a last-minute **October surprise** that could swing votes

OCT. 2 Veep debate in St. Louis, Mo.

OCT. 7 Second presidential debate, in Nashville

OCT. 15 Third presidential debate, in Hempstead, N.Y.

OCT. 16

Al Smith Dinner (an annual Catholic charity event in New York City and opportunity for presidential candidates to make charming, funny and inspirational speeches)

OCT. 21

Tentative start of baseball's **World Series** (the nation's attention is diverted)

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

NOV. 4

ELECTION DAY

STATES TO WATCH: Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin

REPUBLICAN WILD CARDS:

California and New Jersey

DEMOCRATIC WILD CARDS:

Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina