



Portage County Democrat

March 2007

Getting Together, Moving Forward

MESSAGE from our CO-CHAIRS



The primary is over, and the spring election will soon be here. In line with the purpose of the Wisconsin Democratic Party, which seeks to leverage viable candidates in every local and state-wide race, we have a former member of our Portage County Democratic Party Executive Board, and current Democratic Party member in the non-partisan Stevens Point mayoral election of April 3 — Andrew Halverson. On March 15 the League of Women Voters is sponsoring a Candidate Forum at Sentry Theater. From 7:30-8:45 p.m. we can hear both candidates address current issues in a Mayoral Debate. This debate will directly follow the 6:30-7:15 p.m. forum where we can hear from the Ward persons with opposition.

The League of Women Voters is also sponsoring a forum on March 29 (6:30-8:00 p.m.) at the Stevens Point Library that will feature the School Board candidates. We congratulate another current Democratic Party member, Mark Marti, on his strong showing for School Board member in the primary election.

We encourage you to attend these opportunities for getting to know the candidates, enabling you to cast an informed ballot.

On the state level, the Supreme Court Judge non-partisan race is an important one. Linda Clifford has provided us with information for distribution. We are looking for volunteers to assist in distributing materials and making phone calls. If you would like to help by visiting or calling voters on your street or block, call either of us — Gary Hawley or Lois Lawler. We will be happy to assist you in getting involved.

On the national level, we are closely watching the Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800 — a bill that allows employees a choice of joining a union), which passed the House of Representatives 241-185. Thirteen Republicans joined the 228 Democrats supporting the bill. Two Democrats and 183 Republicans voted against the bill. It will now face the Senate,

and, if successful, may face a presidential veto. This bill clearly identifies the legislators (and the Party) that supports the U.S. working class. We cannot challenge our readership to support this — we know we are preaching to the choir!

But we do challenge each of you who read this, to challenge, in turn, those friends and acquaintances who pride themselves on not taking sides, on not identifying with any Party. This *is* a time to take sides. This *is* a time for each person to support that Party's legislative agenda that is most closely aligned with his/her own values. Without support and participation, no Party is effective, and each Party is subject to the control of corporate interests. We know that those corporate interests have complete control over our counter-Party. We seek and need broad, comprehensive support and involvement of those who benefit from the Democratic legislative agenda. It is time to stand up and be counted!

See you at our next General Meeting on March 13th!

Gary Hawley Lois Lawler

Gary Hawley Lois Lawler
Co-Chairs, Portage County Democratic Party

Dues Paid Yet?

It's important we receive your dues as a member of the Portage County Democratic Party.

First, check your mailing label. Then, send in your membership dues if they're not paid.

Thanks to all who've done so!

Calendar

2007

- Tues, Mar 6 **Executive Board Meeting** at the Stevens Point Public Library, in the Prairie Room, at 6:30 p.m.
- Tues, Mar 13 **General Meeting** at Little Chubbies (Former Blue Top) at 7:00 p.m.
- Updates from Elected Officials who are present, followed by discussion on Democratic Party Resolutions
 - Program: Learn about the current status of the Hmong in Portage County.
- Tues, Apr 3 **Executive Board Meeting** at the Stevens Point Public Library, in the Prairie Room, at 6:30 p.m.
- Tues, Apr 10 **General Meeting** at Little Chubbies (Former Blue Top) at 7:00 p.m.
- General Meeting/Updates from Officials
 - TOPIC: "Public Policies Gone Wild—Failure of Common Sense" a presentation by Karl Pnazek, President/CEO of CAP Services, Inc

**On account of being a
democracy and run
by the people,
we are the only nation
in the world
that has to keep a
government four
years, no matter what
it does.**

**– Will Rogers
(1879-1935)**



Mark Your Calendar:

Touched Twice Clinic

March 31, 2007
10 AM to 2 PM
Woodlands Church
190 Hoover Ave, Plover, WI

Features: Health, dental, and mental health screening clinics, financial wellness screening, photographs, haircuts and beauty salon services, as well as food and clothing pantries.

Free of charge and open to the public.

Wisc. Supreme Court Candidate meets with Wisconsin County Dem Leaders in Stevens Point

Linda Clifford,
Candidate for Wisconsin
Supreme Court,
addressed the
Wisconsin Democratic
Party County Chairs,
Vice-Chairs, and other
County party leaders at
their quarterly meeting
held in Stevens Point on
Saturday, February 10,
2007.



Linda Clifford

Linda Clifford, one
of two candidates who
won the statewide

primary race February 20th, feels she is the best
candidates for Supreme Court Justice because she
has the broad experience, personal integrity and
commitment to justice that the citizens of Wisconsin
deserve on our state's highest court.

As our justice, Linda Clifford told the group,
she can be counted on to be fair, impartial, and
balanced. See www.lindacliffordforjustice.org.

Experience:

- **Attorney/Director**, LaFollette Godfrey & Kahn law firm
- **Assistant Attorney General**, Wisconsin Department of Justice, 1974-1977
- **32 years experience** litigating environmental, energy, immigration and constitutional law cases before state and federal courts and agencies

Honors:

- **"Best Lawyers" rating**, Madison Magazine
- **Leader in the Law 2005**, Wisconsin Law Journal

From the Editor —

We want to hear from YOU. If you have something you would like included in a future newsletter, contact me at cfigge@charter.net or call 345-1371.

The due date for sending items for our April issue is Mar. 20th.

— Charlene Figge





Message from the Portage County Clerk's Office

The County Clerk's office has been busy preparing for the February 20 Primary and April 3 Spring Elections. With the new Automark handi-cap accessible equipment, this office is involved in preparing ballots for every municipality and all school districts in Portage County. In April every City, Village and Township has municipal elections, as well as the the school board members in all ten school districts; and referendum in the Rosholt School District and Tri-County School District. Be sure to exercise your right to vote!

The Portage County Board of Supervisors has been involved in some important issues including the Ambulance Service Contract, Justice Center, and a Proposed Expansion at the Central Wisconsin Airport.

As always, this office continues to look forward to serving you.

Shirley M. Simonis
PORTAGE COUNTY CLERK

2007 Wisconsin State and 7th CD Conventions

The 2007 Democratic State Convention will be held this year in Milwaukee on Friday, June 29 & Saturday, June 30, 2007 at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center.

Hotel reservations can be made with the Hilton by calling 414-271-7250 or 1-800-445-8667. Convention delegates and guests can reserve hotel rooms under the Democratic Party of Wisconsin's room block.

More details about the convention, including speakers and program, will be announced at a later date.

[And... NEXT year, in 2008, the Wisconsin State Convention will be held here, in Stevens Point!]

The 7th Congressional District Convention will be held in Wood County, Sat., April 28, 2007: Best Western Clearwaters Convention Center, 2700 South Roddis Avenue, Marshfield.

TO ATTEND:

Those interested in attending either Convention should contact Gary Hawley, PCDP Co-Chair, by calling him at 345-9586 or e-mailing him at gary.hawley@softhome.net.

We want your Opinion...

Believe it or not, the PCDP Executive Board members are already beginning to plan for this summer's Portage County Democratic Party Picnic, to be held the last Sunday in August 2007 — that's August 26th. One question we're discussing is the entertainment for this annual event. We're not sure which type of entertainment most folks prefer: live entertainment, such as a Polka Band, or a DJ, who might provide a greater variety of musical styles.

What about YOU? Which type of music would YOU prefer? Could you take a few moments to send your preference to Lois Lawler, our County Party Co-Chair? Contact Lois by e-mailing her at loislawler@charter.net, calling her at 345-1371, or writing to her at 5411 Woodland St., Stevens Point, WI 54481. Please let Lois know your preference(s):

I prefer live entertainment I prefer a DJ I like a Polka Band I like a variety

This is the second in our Interview Series: Meet Portage County Democratic Party Leaders. Each month we'll focus on members of our PCDP Executive Board or other County Dems. Our March issue focuses on Second Vice Chair, Mary Arnold, Chair of the Communications Committee.

PCDP: Mary, what is your background with the Democratic Party?

I've always voted Democrat but it wasn't until Howard Dean came on the scene in 2003 that I really got excited about participating more directly in politics. The message I took from Howard's organization was that the average American is and should be the backbone of the Party and that it's important for us ordinary people to become more involved on both the local and national level. I volunteered at the local headquarters for the 2004 and 2006 elections and I also worked for Fair Wisconsin, a group that tried unsuccessfully to defeat the amendment to the state constitution that bans civil unions and gay marriage.

PCDP: Please share some of your personal background.

I grew up in Columbus, Wisconsin and attended the University in Madison during the 1960s which influenced me to become the liberal I am today. I majored in social work and became a Vista volunteer after graduation and then got my masters degree at California State University in Sacramento. I have lived in 7 different states working at various social work jobs, and moved to Plover in 1990 when my husband Henry St. Maurice was hired by the School of Education at UW-SP. I worked as a school social worker at McKinley School until 2004 when I was laid off due to budget cuts. Since then I have been doing volunteer work at Operation Bootstrap and my daughter's school. Henry and I have 2 children, Andrew (age 22) who will graduate from Reed College in Oregon this spring, and Emma (age 7) whom we adopted from China in 2001 and who is in first grade at McDill school.

PCDP: Other than politics, what are your interests?

My family and I love to travel and are hoping that Andrew is hired to teach English in France next year so we can visit him there. We are also planning to return to China with Emma in 2009, and have Italy and Spain on our list of places to see next. I am an enthusiastic gardener, and I love to read mysteries and watch old movies.

PCDP: What are your hopes for the Portage County Democratic Party?

The results of the 2006 election have reassured me that many Americans want a change in the direction that our country has been going and I'm excited about being part of that change. I'd like to see our local group reach out to Democrats who haven't been that involved in our activities.

PCDP: What else would you like us to know about you, or what else would you like to share?

I watch way too much TV and am hooked on 'Lost,' 'Grey's Anatomy,' 'Heroes,' and 'Boston Legal' which I justify by watching only when I'm on my treadmill. I'm having lots of fun with my daughter who is a big fan of the Disney Princesses, likes to shop, and is just beginning to enjoy board games with her parents. ■



Resolutions

As part of the grassroots process of developing the Wisconsin Democratic Party Platform, we are creating a set of 10 resolutions to be sent on to the 7th Congressional District (7th CD).

At our March 13th General Meeting (at the old Blue Top, now Little Chubbies, 6:30 PM social time, 7:00 business meeting time) we will discuss and prioritize any resolutions that are submitted. During the meeting we will take comments and suggestions under advisement, and an executive board member (or the original composer) will incorporate suggestions as possible into the text before the April meeting. If there are more than 10 resolutions presented at the March meeting, there will be a preliminary prioritization, but no resolution will be eliminated at that point, giving writer(s) an opportunity to address concerns. At the April meeting 10 resolutions will be selected. Any resolutions not selected may be affirmed by our county party, but will not go on to the 7th CD Convention to be held in Wood County in late April.

We have contacted our local state legislators (Senator Julie Lassa and Representatives Louis Molepske and Amy Sue Vruwink) for any input they have on our resolutions.

Below are the resolutions currently under development, followed by the name of the person who is working on the composition. Names that appear in light italics are persons who were not at the meeting, but who were recommended to write up the resolution. Resolutions who had no volunteer composer will be drawn up by Jerry Ugland, who is spear-heading our development of resolutions for 2007.

1. Health Care Affordability and Universal Access (Dr. Jean Montgomery)
2. Loans: Limit Pay Day Lenders (Ray Cal)
3. Developing Alternative Forms of Energy (*Julie Brazeau*)
4. Funding for All Levels of Education: Addressing Formula Change (Jack Allgaier)
5. Peace (Mike O'Meara)
6. Finance Reform
7. Unions: The Right of Workers to Organize
8. Homeland Security: Appropriate Security and Inappropriate Surveillance (Dr. Jean Montgomery)
9. Ethics in Government (*State Representative Louis Molepske*)
10. Women and Reproductive Rights

—Lois Lawler, Co-Chair of PCDP

CONGRATULATIONS to
Andrew Halverson for his
strong showing in the
February 20th Primary Election
for Mayor of Stevens Point

WANTED:

“Ordinary” folks who are interested in helping out our local Democratic Party.

Are you looking for a way to help out, but don't want to make a permanent commitment? We have lots of ways you can help.

PCDP Committee Members

Want to get involved? There are opportunities for membership on four committees:

- Communication (*Chair: Mary Arnold*)
- Events (*Chair: Corey Ladick*)
- Fund Raising (*Chair: To be determined*)
- Membership (*Chair: Lois Lawler*)

For further information, or to volunteer for a committee (or to discuss possibilities) contact **Lois Lawler** at 345-1371 (evenings) or e-mail to loislawler@charter.net.

TRIVIA PHONES

Help PCDP members with Phone Bank during the Trivia Weekend, April 20-22.

Our time slot: 6-10 pm Saturday nite

Contact Corey Ladick

corey@legislator.com

or 344-2724



Portage County Democratic Party
P O Box 515
Stevens Point, WI
54481-0515

**PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE PAID
STEVENS POINT WI
PERMIT NO 7**

Gary Hawley
Co-Chair, PCDP
phone: 715-345-9586
fax: 715-345-9586
gary.hawley@softhome.net

Lois Lawler
Co-Chair, PCDP
phone: 715-345-1371
fax: 715-342-0862
loislawler@charter.net



Mark your Calendar
General Meeting — Mar. 13, 2007
Pay 2007 Dues Now



Democratic Party
MARCH
General Meeting

- Date:** Tuesday, March 13, 2007
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: "Little Chubbies Vintage Blues and Chop House" (formerly known as the Blue Top)
3425 Church Street, Stevens Point
Program: **The Hmong in Portage County**
- Hear about the current status
 - Ask questions
- Speaker:** **Jim Vang, former Refugee**
- Employed by CAP Services, Inc.
 - Coordinator for Hmong Programs

Jim Vang is currently employed by CAP Services, Inc. as the Coordinator for Hmong and Spanish programs. He will speak to us about the present status of the Hmong in Portage County.

A former refugee who came to the United States in 1981, Jim graduated from High School in 1983 and continued his education at NCTC in Wausau working toward a major in electronics. Jim has been working for CAP Services, Inc. for the last 18 years.



**Open to the
Public.**

Join us!