



Portage County DEMOCRAT

Getting Together, Moving Forward

October 2007

PORTAGE COUNTY, WI DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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www.portagecountydems.org

MESSAGE from PARTY CO-CHAIRS

Dear Friends,

What a month for political activity distinguishing our two major political parties! The President opposes health care for ten million U.S. children who are currently not covered by any insurance, and proposes spending more money in the Iraq war, a war that the majority of citizens oppose, which is taking the lives of our young service men and women, and has no hope of a successful outcome.

There is a distinct difference in the parties and their platforms. The Democratic Party and its platform is only as strong as its membership. For the Democratic agenda to become a reality, the strength of all those who believe in it is needed. The count is imperative. The resources are essential.

We need everyone who votes for Democratic candidates and who believes in what our Party advocates, to stand up and be counted. To really get the job done, it is not enough just to vote privately on the ballot and hope the Democratic agenda makes it. We need concrete members and resources. Without these, there is no way to implement the hopes of over half our country.

Please take this plea to heart, and do the following immediately. First, renew your membership for 2008. Second, talk to two friends who are Democrats at heart—who support peace, diversity, gender and racial equality, and health care for all—and invite them to make their voices heard by participating in the Party that supports these goals.



If there are 5000 people in Portage County who want the Democratic agenda to prevail (and we believe that there are *many* more than that!) how can we expect only 300 people to make sure it happens? The participation of every person who shares our common beliefs is essential—that's what a Democracy is. It is not just secret ballot voting, but year-round participation; it is not just reading about current legislation, but listening to our elected officials, and questioning positions in the light of Party Platform; it is not just hoping just laws are passed, but financing the Party that proposes just legislation.

Each of you has eyes and ears in our community and can reach out to those who may never have thought of joining the Party. The time to prepare for next year's election is NOW.

Gary Hawley Lois Lawler

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

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Update from
 College Dems
 President —

Saul Newton



2007 Calendar

OCTOBER

- Tues. Oct 2 **Executive Board Meeting** at the County-City Building, 1515 Strongs Ave., at 6:30 p.m.
- Tues. Oct 9 **General Meeting** at The Blue Top, 3425 Church Street in Stevens Point, at 7:00 p.m. (Socialization begins at 6:30.)
- General Meeting/Updates of Elected Officials
 - Guest Speaker: **Dr. Jack Norman, Ph.D.**, Research Director at the Institute for Wisconsin's Future, speaking on "Challenging the Myth of High Taxes; Which Big Companies Pay No Taxes."

NOVEMBER

- Tues. Nov 6 **Executive Board Meeting** at the County-City Building, 1515 Strongs Ave., at 6:30 p.m.
- Tues. Nov 13 **General Meeting** at The Blue Top, 3425 Church Street in Stevens Point, at 7:00 p.m. (Socialization begins at 6:30.)
- General Meeting/Updates of Elected Officials
 - Guest Speaker: Senator Kathleen Vinehout joins, one of the authors of the "Healthy Wisconsin" legislation being proposed by Wisconsin State Senators. She will be joined by our own Senator Julie Lassa, supporter of the legislation.



Psssst! Have you checked out our Web Site?

www.PortageCountyDems.org

Once upon a time, America had a strong president who reassured the American people, "We have nothing to fear but fear itself."

Now we have a weak president who tells us that we must be fearful of all things, all the time. He even color codes fear for us, most often flame hot.

*The Hightower Lowdown
September 2007 issue*



From the Editor —

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

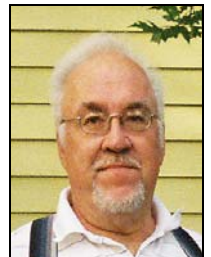
The due date for sending items for our November issue is October 20th.

— Charlene Figge

Volunteer

- **Want to help?** Each Saturday we have a Democratic Party Table at the Farmers' Market on the Square in Stevens Point. Contact Lois Lawler (345-1371) if you can help staff the table.
- **50 State Canvass:** The 50 State Canvass is a nationwide initiative of the Democratic National Committee (DNC) to prepare for the 2008 Elections. Volunteers are needed to canvass neighborhoods throughout Portage County. A meeting of volunteers will be held in October. Contact Lois Lawler (345-1371) if you are interested in working on the 2008 campaigns.
- **Thanks to all volunteers!** You know, we couldn't do what we do, without the many Party members who step forward to help at ongoing events. In a special way, we thank **Jack Allgaier** for his tireless efforts to organize and coordinate our "Democratic presence" at the various summer Fairs and Picnics throughout Portage County. *Thanks, Jack!*

Rosholt Fair by Jack Allgaier



I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped supervise our booth at the fair in Rosholt. The following Democrats worked shifts at the booth: Brian Brooks, Carol and Louie Gawlik, Kathy Genovese, Gary Hawley, Corey Ladick, Tom Mallison, Colleen Ottum, Becky Schroeder with the Dave Obey Re-election Campaign, Shirley Simonis, Gene Tubbs, Jerry Ugland, Janet Way, JoAnn Welling and Carie Winn.

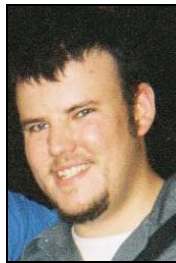
They handed out free pencils and yardsticks from Congressman Dave Obey, Wisconsin highway maps from Representative Louis Molepske and football schedules from Senator Julie Lassa. There was also some free candy plus information on a two-dollar rebate on energy efficient florescent light bulbs. By the last day, we had given away everything – a very positive sign! In addition, there was a sign-up list for people who wanted to help with the 2008 elections. I feel we did a good job of spreading our word. Also, thanks to all the members who stopped by the booth, just to say, "Hi." It really is nice for the volunteers to know their time and effort is appreciated.

COLLEGE DEMOCRATS OF WISCONSIN

COLLEGE DEMOCRATS — STARTING THE SCHOOL YEAR OFF RIGHT

By *Saul Newton*
President

As summer has turned to fall, college students around the country have returned to school. Stevens Point is no different. Over the course of the last month, students at UW-Stevens Point have been getting back in their routine of homework and classes. 8500 young people have descended on the city of Stevens Point, and campus life is exciting and bustling. Organizations ranging from fraternities and sororities to sports teams have been advertising their groups, reaching out to their fellow students.



The College Democrats are no different.

We have spent the better part of the last month reaching out to the student body, finding politically involved progressive students who are committed to bringing real change to their community and their nation. Our first two events have brought more than forty students together in a common desire to get involved and make a difference.

The upcoming year is an absolutely crucial year for us. There is no group of Americans more committed to change than students, and the College Democrats at UW Stevens Point are no exception. We will be tackling issues like the war in Iraq, gay rights, poverty, health care, the genocide in Darfur, and global warming. Our goal is to educate and draw attention to these major issues that confront our country and our world today. We are in the process of planning a trip to New Orleans to help rebuild the 9th Ward this January. We will also be traveling to Washington D.C. next spring and to Denver next summer, in addition to the numerous campaign trainings we will be attending.

People commonly have a view of today's youth as politically apathetic. Spend an afternoon with the College Democrats, and you will see just how involved and committed to the common good today's youth really are.

We are very excited about the upcoming year and our chance to build the groundwork for a Democratic victory one year from now. ■

TWO ELECTED TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

During our September 11, 2007 General Meeting two members were elected unanimously to the Portage County Executive Board.

Elected as at large members were Democrats **Julie Brazeau** and **Tom Mallison**.

Congratulations and welcome, Julie and Tom!

And looking ahead...

CANDIDATES WANTED FOR 2008 EXECUTIVE BOARD

by *Carol Gawlik, Secretary*

The Portage County Democratic Party is looking for interested members who would be willing to run for positions on our Executive Board. The Party needs YOU to step forward to help plan our 2008 activities – and it promises to be a very active year with the Presidential primary and general election, numerous parades and fairs, the state convention held right here in Stevens Point, plus all the work associated with having a headquarters. As you can see, serving on the Executive Board requires a commitment of time and effort. If you are interested in helping your Party in 2008, please contact either co-chair before our November general meeting, Tuesday, Nov. 13th:

Gary Hawley gary.hawley@softhome.com
Lois Lawler loislawler@charter.net

You may also nominate yourself at either the October or November general meetings. The slate will be developed those evenings with election to occur at our Tuesday, December 11th meeting. Please help select our leadership for 2008.

County Clerk Update

County departments have been busy preparing their budgets, new position requests, and capital project requests for 2008. With the adoption of the new fiscal and personnel policies at last month's County Board meeting, procedures have been different this year. The County Executive will present his budget to the entire County Board for the first time on Thursday, October 4. Governing committees will then be given the opportunity to schedule meetings to review the Executive's budget recommendations.

Archery season opened on September 15 so the County Clerk's office has been busy with DNR licensing for the bow hunters as well as the fall turkey hunting season fast approaching.

Have a wonderful fall season!

Shirley M. Simonis
Portage County Clerk

No War, No Warming, Rise Up!

By Ted Glick

For months a movement has been developing that consciously and intentionally links the related issues of the war in Iraq and the heating up of the earth that is disrupting the world's climate. On Monday morning, October 22, in Washington, DC, on Capitol Hill and elsewhere around the country, that movement will become visible as large numbers of people engage in nonviolent direct action to disrupt business as usual. We will be calling for an end to this criminal war and strong action to slow, stop and reverse global warming.

These issues are connected, of course, by oil. Everyone who's got their head screwed on straight knows that the reason for the invasion of Iraq was oil. The US government is occupying Iraq both for its oil and to try to turn it into a US-friendly military base from which it can better control the entire region.

Why? It's not just because Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Wolfowitz and the neocons are motivated by we're-the-rulers-of-the-world ideology. There is actually a perverse logic to what they're doing, particularly given their personal connections to the oil industry.

The US and the world are in a deepening energy crisis. Easily accessible oil and natural gas are getting hard to find, even as the demand for and competition over energy throughout the world accelerate. There is agreement among those who study this issue that we are either right at or very soon will be at "peak oil," a point where as much oil will have been found and used as there is oil still remaining in the ground. And the big problem is that those remaining reserves are getting harder and more expensive to bring out of the ground.

There is a common sense solution to this dilemma. Instead of war in Iraq escalating into war with Iran and who knows where else, the US could lead the world by using its technological know-how and resources to advance a worldwide clean-energy revolution. We could rapidly undercut the appeal of al-Qaeda by withdrawing our troops from the Middle East and promoting, instead, huge solar energy farms in this sun-drenched region of the world. We could help the formerly colonized countries of the Global South who are currently developing their economies by using greenhouse gas emitting coal or dangerous nuclear power. We could help them shift to renewable energy

technology to obtain energy via solar panels, wind turbines, the tides or the earth (geothermal).

What kind of world do we face if we don't stand up, if we don't rise up to demand a serious course correction?

A report was put out this spring by the CNA Corporation, a national security think tank, written by six retired admirals and five retired generals, including the former Army chief of staff and George W. Bush's former chief Middle East peace negotiator. In it, in the words of an Associated Press story, they "called upon the US government to make major cuts in emissions of gases that cause global warming."

The report warned that in the next 30 to 40 years there will be wars over water, increased hunger, instability from worsening disease and rising sea levels and global warming-induced refugees. "The chaos that results can be an incubator of civil strife, genocide and the growth of terrorism," the 35-page report predicted.

"Climate change exacerbates already unstable situations," former US Army Chief of Staff Gordon Sullivan told Associated Press Radio.

In a veiled reference to Bush's refusal to join an international treaty to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the report said the US government "must become a more constructive partner" with other nations to fight global warming and cope with its consequences.

The options before us are crystal clear. Down one road, the one we're now on, lies a cascading series of oil and water wars, climate disasters and ecological devastation. Down the other lies a turn toward peaceful resolution of conflicts, energy conservation, efficiency and a clean energy revolution, and social and economic justice.

Another world is possible, but for it to come about another US is necessary, in the words of the recent US Social Forum. It's a world worth fighting for, a world worth sacrificing for. Our children and their children are counting on us to do the right thing, and to do it now. The clock is ticking, and we need to act as if the future of human society depends upon what we do, because it really does.

The above article was published September 19, 2007 as a "Perspective" in www.truthout.org.

Ted Glick is a primary organizer of the October 22 nonviolent civil disobedience action on Capitol Hill (www.nowarnowarming.org) and is currently on an open-ended Climate Emergency Fast (www.climateemergency.org).

MESSAGE from Senator Russ Feingold

Dear Portage County Democrat,

I'm writing today to give you a brief update on the issue that continues to be on everyone's mind – Iraq. Back in their home states this summer, my colleagues in the Senate heard again and again from their constituents that the American people want to end the misguided mission in Iraq. Thanks to you, that's a message I've brought to Washington for years, and one I heard again, loud and clear, in every Listening Session I held last month.

We all know that it is far past time to begin redeploying U.S. troops out of Iraq. However, the spin from the White House has already begun. President Bush and a handful of Republican stalwarts in Congress are pointing to 'new progress' since the troop surge began in April. They're saying that 'we just need a little more time.'

But what they fail to admit—and what you and countless other Americans have known for some time—is that the time has come for Congress to end what can only be described as the worst foreign policy mistake in our nation's history. President Bush's reckless drive to war, his botched handling of the reconstruction, his mismanagement of the occupation, and his escalation of U.S. troops in Iraq has been a complete disaster. The President's war in Iraq has actually made us less safe as a nation, not safer. And our occupation of Iraq has been a costly distraction from the real war on terror, and it has turned much of the world against us. that 'we just need a little more time.'

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and I have introduced a bill that uses Congress's "power of the purse" to begin safely redeploying our troops out of Iraq in 2008. The Feingold-Reid bill requires the President to begin to safely redeploy troops from Iraq within 120 days from enactment. Our legislation would end funding for the war and establish a set of very specific restrictions upon

which President Bush could spend any money in Iraq.

I am going to continue to push my legislation, and other measures in the Senate, forward to end the war and safely redeploy our brave men and women in uniform. I sincerely appreciate all of your support. *Please continue to write letters to the editor of your local papers and talk to your friends and family to let them know exactly where you stand.* Every voice added to our effort brings us one step closer to our goal.



Senator Russ Feingold

With high hopes,



Russ
Russ Feingold
United States Senator
www.russfeingold.org

Thank you to our 2007 Newsletter Sponsors:

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To add *your* name to our growing list of sponsors, send your donation (payable to PCDP) to Charlene Figge, Newsletter Editor, 5411 Woodland St., Stevens Point, WI, 54481

(Any amount is appreciated.)

Portage County Democratic Party

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www.portagecountydems.org

GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday, October 9th at 7:00 pm
at The Blue Top
3425 Church Street in Stevens Point



Democratic Party
OCTOBER
General Meeting

- Date:** Tuesday, October 9, 2007
- Time:** 7:00 p.m. (socializing begins at 6:30)
- Location:** **The Blue Top** 3425 Church Street, Stevens Point
- Topic:** **Challenging the Myth of High Taxes: Which Big Companies Pay No Taxes?**
- Speaker:** **Dr. Jack Norman, Ph.D.**, is Research Director at the Institute for Wisconsin's Future (www.wisconsinfuture.org), a non-profit research and advocacy organization working on tax reform, school-funding reform, and protecting public services.

Who pays their fair share of taxes? Who doesn't? How can schools and local governments be adequately funded without more property taxes?

Our speaker will give answers and discuss concrete steps to make Wisconsin's tax system more fair.



Dr. Jack Norman, Ph.D.

Dr. Norman also represents the Wisconsin Alliance for Excellent Schools, a coalition of 147 school districts, teachers unions, parent groups, civic and faith-based organizations, professional organizations, and students working on school-finance reform.

Meeting Open to the Public.
Join us!