



Portage County DEMOCRAT

Getting Together, Moving Forward

September 2007

PORTAGE COUNTY, WI DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Executive Board

Gary Hawley, Co-Chair
Lois Lawler, Co-Chair
Corey Ladick, 1st Vice-Chair
Mary Arnold, 2nd Vice-Chair
Wes Halverson, 3rd Vice-Chair
Betty Bruski-Mallek, 4th Vice-Chair
Jack Allgaier, Treasurer
Carol Gawlik, Secretary
Mary Thurmaier, Statutory Chair
Will Stites, 7th CD Representative
Charlene Figge, Newsletter Editor
Michael Baumann, Young Dems
Michael O'Meara
Jerry Ugland

Committees

Communications:

Mary Arnold, Chair
Charlene Figge
Collene Ottum
Henry St. Maurice

Events:

Corey Ladick, Chair
Carol Gawlik

Fundraising:

Brian Brooks, Chair
Tom Mallison, Co-Chair
Lois Lawler, Exec Board Liaison

Membership:

Lois Lawler, Chair
Roberta Bie
Robyn Van Laanen

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

Gary Hawley: 345-9586
gary.hawley@softhome.net

Lois Lawler: 345-1371
loislawler@charter.net

www.portagecountydems.org

MESSAGE from PARTY CO-CHAIRS

Dear Friends,

What a great Democratic Party Picnic we had August 26th! The weather was perfect; the speeches by elected officials and those presenting relevant issues were informative; the food was great (thanks **Betty Mallek**); and best of all, so many of YOU were able to join us. See page 3 for photos and more about the picnic.

We're grateful that State Treasurer **Dawn Marie Sass** was able to join us and that former Attorney General **Peg Lautenschlager** stopped by for a while. Thank you, **Mayor Andrew Halverson**, for being a terrific Master of Ceremonies!

A special word of thanks to all who donated items for the picnic—those who baked all the wonderful items for the Bake Sale; those who brought food for the lunch; and those who brought treasures for the Silent Auction. And thanks to **Jack Allgaier** who did a great job painting the seven wooden picnic signs posted throughout the area and to **JoAnn Welling** for donated massages all day during the picnic!

The speaker for our next general meeting, September 11th, is **Nick Hylla**, a member of Farmshed, the community group working to support local food economies in Central Wisconsin. Buying local benefits both the consumer and the provider. Join



us to learn more about this important issue. Our meeting will be held at **The Blue Top**, 3425 Church St., in Stevens Point.

Also, at this next meeting we'll elect two new members to the Executive Board. We're currently seeking nominations.

September promises to be a busy month (see the calendar on page 2). **John Edwards** will be in the state holding a fundraiser in Milwaukee on September 10th. And, we will be attending the open statewide County Chairs meeting in Wausau on September 22nd.

We hope to see you here at our meeting September 11th!

Gary Hawley Lois Lawler

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

Inside this issue...

page 5 —

Message from

State Rep.

Louis J.

Molepske, Jr.



2007 Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- Tues. Sept 4 **Executive Board Meeting** at the County-City Building, 1515 Strongs Ave., at 6:30 p.m.
- Mon. Sept 10 **John Edwards Fundraiser—Small Change for BIG CHANGE**, 6:30 pm at American Serb Memorial Hall, Milwaukee, WI. Admission \$15
- Tues. Sept 11 **General Meeting at The Blue Top**, 3425 Church Street in Stevens Point, at 7:00 p.m. (Socialization begins at 6:30; beverages provided.)
- General Meeting/Updates of Elected Officials
 - Election of two new Executive Board members
 - Guest Speaker: **Nick Hylla**, member of Farmshed, the community group working to support local food economies in Central WI.
- Sat. Sept 29 **"Grandpa Bob's Barn Dance"** hosted by Waupaca Washara United Democratic Party, 4:00-8:30 p.m. in Wild Rose, South of Waupaca

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.



Update on WI State Budget

Rep. Louis J. Molepske, Jr. has provided a summary of the WI State budgeting process. It can be found on our Web Site: www.portagecountydems.org

Molly Ivins, newspaper columnist, political commentator and best-selling author, passed away January 31, 2007. Occasionally, in her memory, we publish one of her quotes.

"You have to admit: The corporations are getting prompt service from Republicans in return for their donations."

Molly Ivins, from the January 2003 issue of *The Progressive*



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 October issue is September 20th.

— Charlene Figge

Volunteer

- **Thank you** to all who have volunteered for various Dem Party services throughout the summer. Special thanks to those who did all the background work for the PCDP Picnic August 26th.
- **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 and assist with Voter Registration.
- **Candidates Requested:** Volunteer to serve on the PCDP Executive Board. Election will be held at September 11th General Meeting.

SiCKO — Health Care in U.S.

Thursday, August 30th a group of Dems, many wearing Democratic Party T-Shirts, viewed SiCKO, the latest film by Michael Moore, at Rogers Campus Cinema in Stevens Point. After the film, 19 persons gathered at *Elle Rae's Coffee Bar* to discuss SiCKO and the situation of Health Care in the U.S.



Portage County Health Care Reform Forum

Legislators representing our district are debating dramatic changes that will potentially affect business as it relates to health care reform, taxes and other areas where our state government could play a significant role in your business and personal success.

Attend an important session, 7:45 am Monday, September 17 at the Holiday Inn, Rothschild (Exit 185 off I-39).

Share your perspective, ask questions and emphasize your concerns regarding the impact any budget compromise will have on your business. This extended session will feature a main symposium followed by breakout plenary sessions. The day starts at 7:45 am with registration, followed by breakfast. The program will conclude no later than 10:00 am. Your chamber strongly encourages that you attend if you are at all concerned about the tax implications proposed by the governor, Senate, and Assembly.

To request more information contact the Portage County Business Council at (715) 344-1940. Don't miss this opportunity to influence the next biennial budget! Register online at www.wausauchamber.com. Cost: \$15 (includes breakfast).

Portage County Democratic Party Picnic 2007



Mayor Andrew Halverson served as Master of Ceremonies



State Senator Julie Lassa addresses picnic attendees.

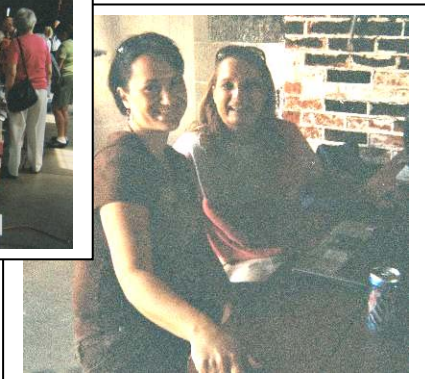
Photo by Roger Trzebiatowski



Mary Arnold with former State Attorney General, Peg Lautenschlager



Picnic attendees view silent auction items



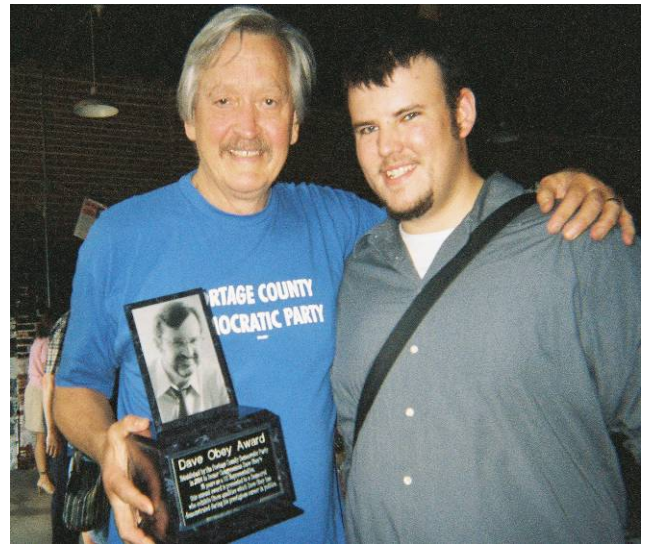
County Treasurer Stephanie Stokes (left) and Wisconsin State Treasurer, Dawn Marie Sass, assisted picnic attendees in checking for missing funds

2007 Picnic Raffle Winners

The winners of the raffle were selected at the picnic at 4 pm. Winners are:

- \$500 Grand Prize: Fidel Silva
- \$ 50 Runner-up Prize: Richard & Janice Doxtator
- \$ 50 Runner-up Prize: Denise Etrheim
- \$ 50 Runner-up Prize: Shirley Simonis
- \$ 50 Runner-up Prize: Cameron Whitmire

Congratulations to all the winners!



Wes Halverson, UW-SP Faculty Advisor to College Dems, with Saul Newton, Vice Chair, UW-SP College Democrats

Wes Halverson recipient of 2007 Dave Obey Award

Established by the Portage County Democratic Party in 2004 to honor Congressman Dave Obey's 35 years as a U.S. Representative, this award is presented annually to one Democrat who exhibits those qualities which Dave Obey has demonstrated during his prestigious career in politics. At our picnic, Wisconsin State Treasurer Dawn Marie Sass presented the 2007 award to Wes Halverson. Through his inspiring work with the College Dems, our party has grown much stronger and involves the younger generation—the future of our party!



Shouting Underwater

by *WALTER MOSLEY*

*from the September 10, 2007 issue of **The Nation**.*

We are coming up on the two-year mark since the Katrina debacle in Louisiana and Mississippi. I hesitate to call this date an anniversary because the word implies, in some way, a celebration, a birth. What we are scratching on the calendar is more like a notch on a raw gravestone, a count of the days and years that have passed without a reckoning for those who died, those who lost loved ones and for a city that is still in critical condition.

Not only did our government fail to answer the call of its most vulnerable citizens during that fateful period; it still fails each and every day to rebuild, redeem and rescue those who are ignored because of their poverty, their race, their passage into old age.

The disaster named after the hurricane is not confined to the areas affected. Every emergency room, empty bank account and outsourced life's work could be named. We live in a country rife with ignored and condemned poverty. The rich, high on their great corporate steeds, ride over us believing that they are out of the reach of global warming and its symptoms, of terrorism and dwindling natural resources. When government officials tell them to evacuate, they drive their cars, board their corporate jets or simply climb to higher ground with ease. At this very moment they are looking down on Baghdad and New Orleans, Pakistan and Sudan, you and me. The feeling of invulnerability that these people have is unfounded, but nonetheless it makes them reckless. They take chances and cut corners believing that everything will come out all right. Their delusions of grandeur and ultimate power put us in ever more dire straits.

If we call ourselves Americans (and mean it), then we are all victims of Katrina. If we breathe the air or eat fresh fruit, if we call on our cell phones, drink water from a plastic bottle or just nibble on a chocolate bar, then we are Katrina; we are the rising waters around the ankles of this world.

When the day comes to mark off the two-year point since the deluge descended on the Gulf of Mexico, we should take care not to make too much noise.

We shouldn't march in that shadow of time or even protest. Rather, we should sit alone in a room with our imaginations open to feel what they experienced on that day: the waters rising, rising and us climbing stairs and ladders, chairs and fire escapes; sitting on rooftops while bodies float by; calling out to passing boats and helicopters that go by in mute witness; being pressed to the roof by the rising tide and being engulfed shouting, shouting out for the ones we love underwater, unheard; the darkness swirling around us as we die with no one coming to save us, or themselves.

Two years have passed and Americans are still displaced, waters are still rising. Wars are raging and we are waiting for a day to vote for a man or a woman who works, not even in secret, for the rich. We wait for this man or woman to lead us out from the disaster like chattel. We feel sorry for the victims as so many felt sorry for Rodney King, not realizing that his defeat was our loss; the blows that rained down on him were also aimed at our freedom, our ability and feeling of responsibility to fight back. Two years have passed and the dead are still dead and the dying are still dying. The clouds gather like angry anthropomorphic gods, and we stumble and fall unable to make a stand or lend a hand or protest all the victims in ghettos, retirement homes, prison wards and dark skins.

Two years have passed and we are still exporting democracy while we continue living under the semi-benevolent oligarchy of international corporations and their candidates. This two-year point measures how far we have sunk under the weight of the rich and their political flunkies—while so many of us still celebrate them as if they were pop stars. We experience the silence of drowning men and women. We call out and are not heard. We believe in systems and people who have no faith in us. We perpetuate the rising temperatures and waters and hatred and feelings of hopelessness. New Orleans's defeat is also our defeat. Its closed schools are a metaphor for our minds and our futures. We see the storm's passage but we don't see it coming. But it is coming. And there are no leaders, no corporations, no benevolent billionaires who are going to save our grandmothers and our babies. We must unite outside of the systems that lie like fast food heaped on golden platters at our feet. We must organize at the ground level, where the water has already begun to rise.

This article can be found on the web at
<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20070910/mosley>

Rep. Louis J. Molepske, Jr.



Our days are getting shorter and soon summer will be a distant memory, but for now, we should enjoy the last days of summer.

While you are relaxing, I thought you would enjoy a quick update

on what is happening in Madison and with me.

I recently returned from Traverse City, Michigan where I attended the Midwest Legislative Conference of the Council of State Governments. I represented the Wisconsin legislature, having been appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, on the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committees. I introduced resolution that was approved by over 300 legislators to clean up and protect the Great Lakes from pollution. The Great Lakes are home to thousands of animal species, contain one-third of the world's freshwater and provide drinking water to 45 million people, but they have historically been a cheap way to get rid of contaminants.

Recently, British Petroleum (BP) applied for and was granted permits by the State of Indiana to increase ammonium discharges from its petroleum refinery into Lake Michigan. As you probably heard, this caused a great outcry from people throughout the Midwest. Due in part to my resolution, BP has given up its request to increase its pollution discharges into Lake Michigan. We can all be proud that the environment finally won a decisive victory for clean water.

My attendance at the conference coincided with our annual picnic, so I was not able to attend, but I will surely see you next year!

Madison has been all about the budget process lately, and we are probably not going to see a budget until the end of September or early October. The budget process can be quite unwieldy. This year's budget is by far one of the most difficult. There are many people waiting for the final report. Until then, we will have to wait and hope for the best. ■

County Clerk Update

Portage County has been in a state of government transition since the creation of the County Executive position. The average constituent would never know it when visiting the County offices as Department Heads and staff have handled the transition professionally and efficiently.

For the past several months the County Board, Department Heads, Elected Officials, and the County Executive have been modifying the Code of Ordinances to reflect the new form of government. All of those meetings paid off as the County Board adopted the amended Code of Ordinances dealing with the Structures and Responsibilities of the County Board, Fiscal Policies and Human Resources Policies. This will allow the new budget process to occur.

The County Clerk's office is busy preparing for the fall hunting season as hunters are stopping by to purchase their archery and small game licenses.

You be sure to stop by, too.

SHIRLEY M. SIMONIS
PORTAGE
COUNTY CLERK



Thank you to our 2007 Newsletter Sponsors:

- Mary Thurmaier
- Geri Furr
- Mary Arnold and Henry St. Maurice
- Charlene Figge
- Jack and Leigh Allgaier
- Lois Lawler
- Mary J. Korbal
- JoAnn Welling

We are grateful for your generosity.

To join the list of sponsors, send donation (payable to PCDDP) to Charlene Figge, Newsletter Editor, 54 11 Woodland St., Stevens Point, WI, 54481

Portage County Democratic Party

P O Box 515
Stevens Point, WI
54481-0515

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

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE PAID
STEVENS POINT WI
PERMIT NO 7



www.portagecountydems.org

GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, September 11th at 7:00 pm
at The Blue Top
3425 Church Street in Stevens Point



Democratic Party SEPTEMBER General Meeting

- Date:** Tuesday, September 11, 2007
Time: 7:00 p.m. (socializing begins at 6:30)
Location: **The Blue Top** 3425 Church Street,
Stevens Point
Speaker: **Nick Hylla**, a member of Farmshed, the
community group working to support local
food economies in Central Wisconsin
Topic: **Local Foods for Healthy Communities**

In the past year, Farmshed organized a local food forum for stakeholders in Central Wisconsin, a networking event for farmers and restaurants/retailers, and the Chef on the Square events in the Stevens Point Farmer's Market.

For more info on Farmshed, see www.farmshed.org.



Nick Hylla with his family at the Farmer's Market

Meeting Open to the Public.
Join us!