



PORTAGE COUNTY DEMOCRAT

Standing up for Democracy

January, 2022

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We made it through year 2 of the pandemic!

Our 2nd Annual ZOOM Holiday Party was a great opportunity to get to know some of our candidates, and to get updates from some of our elected officials. Mandela Barnes, who is running for US Senator, was our featured speaker. Alex Lasry, who is also running for US Senator, was unable to attend but an article about him is included in this newsletter. We as a party do not endorse any candidate before the primary election, but we will publish submitted articles. So far there are 12 declared candidates running for the position.

PCDP Headquarters has a new furnace! Read the story of the furnace, its demise and its replacement, by Jack Allgaier, on the next page.

Spring elections are coming up fast. Lots of offices are up for election and re-election so watch your emails! We especially need to support Trish Baker, running for Circuit Court Branch 3, and Louis Molepski, running for Circuit Court Branch 2.

Your newly elected Executive Board for 2022 is listed on the left.

Sabina Dirienzo is the Regional Organizing Director with DPW for Portage County. She has a lot of campaign experience in local, state, and national elections. Her organizing skills, friendly personality, and enthusiasm really shine through. If you are interested in volunteering to help support our local candidates by working with Sabina, you can email her at sabina.dirienzo@wisdems.org



On Thursday December 9th Alex Lasry was in Stevens Point for a Meet and Greet hosted by Amy & Dave Bakken, and Kass & Dennis Raabe

Alex spoke and took questions for approximately an hour. He highlighted his background as the son of immigrants from Morocco who came to our Country with nothing more than hopes and dreams. His father was educated in Public Schools, was a UPS Driver, attended Law School and worked hard to achieve the American Dream. Alex's father currently owns the Milwaukee Bucks and is active in business ventures throughout the State. Alex would like all Americans to have the opportunities to succeed which were afforded his family. That is but one of the reasons he has chosen to run for the US Senate.

Alex is Senior Vice President of the Milwaukee Bucks and in this capacity had a primary leadership role in the building of the Fiserv Forum Arena. He was an integral member of the Milwaukee 2020 Democratic Party Convention Bid Committee and is proud of the success of this endeavor. In addition to his involvement with businesses, associations, and groups throughout Wisconsin, Alex served the White House for two years during the Obama Administration.

Alex made it clear that leaders, and those who serve in the Senate, should be judged not by what they aspire or support, but by what they accomplish for those they represent. Alex wants to represent Wisconsin in the Senate to make a tangible difference, which will be measured by attaining real and verifiable results for the citizens of Wisconsin.

Alex supports a living minimum wage and labor unions. He is an advocate for those who have been marginalized in society. Alex recognizes that to succeed in Washington it is necessary to reach across the aisle and find common ground. He is adamant that Democrats need to enhance our messaging by celebrating what we have accomplished. Alex also emphasized that we must give constituents, both Democrats and Independents, a reason to vote for the party. We must address those issues which are relevant to our neighbors, the people who are apprehensive about their future, the men and women who face everyday challenges and wonder who will support them and represent their perspectives.

Alex recognizes that people need to be heard. He believes that leaders need to interact on a personal level with those he/she wishes to serve. As such Alex has made personal contact a major focus of his campaign. He has been in the Stevens Point area several times to date and anticipates returning several between now and the primaries in February. If you are interested in learning more about Alex and his campaign, please go to alexlasry.com. For those who would be willing to host a Meet and Greet please contact Dennis Raabe at 715-570-7482. Alex would love the opportunity to meet with you, despite who you may be currently endorsing, for an opportunity to share his message and learn of the interests and perspectives of the people of Portage County.



A Furnace Tale

By Jack Allgaier

The furnace at headquarters failed about a month ago. It was fixed temporarily – with the warning the building would need a replacement *real* soon. But this report needs some more background. Up to recently, there were two furnaces in the basement; one heats the main floor (it also has the AC unit); the other heats only the second floor (with no AC unit attached). Both were around 25 years old. The efficiencies of both were extremely poor by today’s standards. The replacement furnaces come in an 80% efficient unit (cheaper) or a 97% efficient unit (more expensive). Besides saving natural gas, the exhaust from the 97% efficient unit could be vented out the side of the building, making our chimney unneeded. This is a key factor in our consideration in that our chimney is quite old and in need of considerable repair. With a 97% efficient furnace, the chimney could be removed to below roof line with the roof repaired and would not ever need repair again.

A furnace repair committee was appointed; members consisted of co-chair Gary Hawley, co-chair Jan Way, 2nd vice chair Ned Grossnickle, and at large member Joan Garski. The furnace committee got four bids from area suppliers (Chet’s, Badger, Rasmussen and Mechanical Services Inc) for a new high efficiency furnace and an air conditioner. After review, the committee decided unanimously to go with Badger who had the best equipment in their opinion and the lowest bid. The project will remove both furnaces, but only replace the main floor one with a new furnace and a new air conditioner. The second floor will get some electric base heaters to utilize the electricity produced by our solar panels. Badger Heating and AC has installed the new furnace already and will install the AC unit this spring. They will also help our Party apply for Focus on Energy grants where we might be able to recover some of the cost.

The cost of the units purchased was:

A Carrier Performance 96 Series Furnace (2-Stage with ECM) 80,000 BTU up to 96.7% AFUE	\$5,112.00
A Carrier Performance 16 Series Air conditioning - (16 SEER) 3 ton	\$5,868.00
2 Surge Protectors, one for each unit	\$ 576.00

I would like to personally thank the four Executive Board members (Jan, Gary, Joan and Ned) who donated considerable time to research the information and recommend the final choice. Please thank them when you see them next.



I would also like to thank the many members who support the Party through membership donations and our fundraisers. The party was indeed fortunate to have \$11,000 sitting in its checkbook to cover an expense like this. We didn’t need to hit you up with a special fundraiser during the holiday season. We didn’t need to borrow the money. We didn’t need to let the building sit cold while cash was found. Over ten years ago when the building was purchased, the Executive Board knew it would need repairs and started building a reserve to maintain – and improve – our headquarters. Thanks to those people who had the vision of buying – and maintaining – the building. And thanks to you for supporting our headquarters.



Portage County Democratic Party
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Facebook: PortageCountyWIDems

Twitter: PortageCoWIDems@portagecountywidems



PCDP January 11, 2022 General Meeting
6:30 Call to Order
Program: To Be Determined
Elected Officials & Candidates remarks
Short Business Meeting

Watch your email for a ZOOM link

**January 21st Rally in Stevens Point for
FAIR MAPS. Watch for more information.**

Authorized and paid for by Portage County Democratic Party