



Fairness
Opportunity
Community

Portage County Democratic Party

April 2018

Vote in the Spring General Election on April 3

Your vote counts! Your vote matters! A legislative race in Virginia earlier this year was decided by ONE VOTE!

Democrats have been taking seats away from Republicans this year because Democrats are energized and see an opportunity to regain control of government on behalf of the people. We took the 10th Senate District seat in northwest Wisconsin in a special election. And Scott Walker is violating state law by refusing to call two more special elections – because he is afraid Republicans will lose.

The spring election on April 3 provides an opportunity to elect Rebecca Dallet to the state supreme court. While the election is nominally nonpartisan, the lines have been drawn for some time. Her opponent was appointed to his circuit court seat by Scott Walker. He lacks the experience and judicial temperament needed for someone to sit on the state's highest court, and he is supported by right-wing, out-of-state dark money. Judge Dallet has many years of experience as a judge and can take a seat on the court without the obvious pro-corporate bias that is already so prevalent on the court.

Portage County voters are also choosing a new county executive to succeed Patty Dreier, who chose not to seek another term. One of the two candidates, Jami Gebert, is a member of the Portage County Democratic Party. She currently serves as the executive assistant to the county executive, where she

has gained several years' experience in county government.

County board seats are also up for election this April, along with some common council seats in Stevens Point and in other municipalities in the county.

Please refer to the list of candidates later in this newsletter.

Campaign Events

As the campaign season heats up, Democratic candidates will be continuing to visit Portage County. During the primary season, we do not endorse



candidates, except in extreme situations. But we will provide information on upcoming appearances and in some cases host events at the Party headquarters.

Watch for emails and look at our social media sites, especially our Facebook page, for news on upcoming events. We like to show Democratic candidates that Portage County Democrats turn out – for events and on election day!

Let the Sun Shine!

Sunday, April 22 is Earth Day and we will be having a solar panel installation party! Stay tuned for further details!

Spring General Election – Information and Recommendations

Co-chairs Jan and Gary remind you to vote Tuesday, April 3rd. You may vote earlier at your municipal hall through Fri, March 30th. But please vote. It is one of our basic constitutional rights. So few people vote in the spring general election that each vote cast is similar to five votes in a Presidential election.

Our state party is encouraging members to vote for Judge Rebecca Dallet for Wisconsin Supreme Court and to also vote “no” to stop Scott Walker’s power grab on the Treasurer referendum (which would do away with that state office.)

Jan and Gary also encourage you to vote Jami Gebert for County Executive as she has the most experience. In fact, they invite you – if you can – to support all Democrats in this election. They pay dues, buy raffle tickets and help support our party. We should support them in their races. Below is a list of all Democrats with opposition running for an office in Portage County.

WI Supreme Court	Rebecca Dallet
County Executive	Jami Gebert
District 8 City Alder	Cathy Dugan
County Supervisors	
District 19	Melinda Osterberg
District 20	Ron Becker
District 21	Tim Corcoran
District 22	Justin Isherwood
District 25	Anne Abbott

Referendum on State Treasurer:

Vote NO

League of Women Voters Forum

Ned Grossnickle

The League of Women Voters Forum on February 24 focused on four Calls to Action for Portage County: Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Financial Stability, and Affordable Housing.

MENTAL HEALTH: An amazing 44 million Americans suffer from mental health. There was an increase in adult suicides in Portage County during 2010 - 2016.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS: From 2012 to 2016 there was a 77% increase in persons arrested for drug offenses here. Wisconsin ranks #1 in the U.S. in driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

FINANCIAL STABILITY: In Portage County, 39% of households struggle to afford basic necessities, and 12% are food insecure. In Wisconsin, 36% of jobs pay less than the amount needed for two working parents to support their family. Families must make trade-offs between basic needs such as food, housing, health care, childcare, and transportation because their income may not cover all of these.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: The number of households spending more than the recommended 30% of their income on housing costs has increased significantly recently. Rental rates have risen sharply in the past few years. The demand in home sales outpaces the supply, particularly for lower to moderate priced homes.

For more information, google 2017 LIFE Report of Portage County.

PROPOSED PROGRAM CUTS AT UWSP

As you may have heard and read, the administration at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) released a plan to change the mission and direction of the university. The plan would eliminate majors in the liberal arts, social sciences and humanities while adding new majors related to natural resources, technology, business and other fields presumed to offer better job prospects to graduates.

This has set off a debate in the community about the future of central Wisconsin's only four year comprehensive public university.

April Program – Jennifer Collins

UWSP Political Science professor Jennifer Collins will offer her impressions of the proposed cuts and why this has happened.

Professor Collins has a Ph.D. from the University of California, San Diego and a B.A. from Oberlin College.

Her areas of research interest are:

Politics in the Andean region; social and indigenous movements; new political parties and the new left in Latin America; democratization.

Professor Collins has authored several book chapters and articles on Andean politics and indigenous movements and parties.

Currently Professor Collins is working on a comparative analysis of the Morales and Correa administrations in Bolivia and Ecuador respectively that explores the reasons for higher levels of political polarization in Bolivia and the greater obstacles that Morales has faced in carrying out his political program. She is also preparing her

dissertation on the Pachakutik Political Movement in Ecuador for publication.

Action on Campus and in the Community

Response to the UWSP administration proposal has been swift, vocal and mostly in opposition.

Speakers at an on-campus forum sponsored by Representative Katrina Shankland and the Student Government Association (SGA) were all opposed to the changes and spoke in the defense of the programs and the value that the current university brings to the community.

A group rallying around the cry "Save Our Majors" has organized, is raising money and is planning local events, including a march from the university sundial to Old Main, where the group will conduct a 13-minute sit-in – one minute for each major to be eliminated – and present a list of demands and requests to the university. The rally will return to the sundial for speeches and people will be provided with further opportunities to participate and reach out to decisionmakers. This group believes administrators made the decision unilaterally without the shared governance and participation by faculty, staff and students that was once the hallmark of UW governance.

The administration has held a meeting with SGA and a couple of on campus meetings.

The administration says a final decision must be made by August 1st. The community can expect plenty of discussion and action in the meantime.

The advocacy group is also promoting the hashtag **#WeArePoint Humanities**

[Disclosure: This month's guest editor is a UWSP alumnus who majored in political science and philosophy. He finished 3 credits short of a French minor (très triste!). He now works in the software industry where the skills he acquired at UWSP have helped him every day.]

3RD CD DISTRICT CONVENTION SPARTA, MARCH 10

The 3rd Congressional District convention was held at the American Legion in Sparta on March 10. Several candidates for governor attended and spoke to the delegates. They included: Tony Evers, Dana Wachs, Kelda Roys, Matt Flynn, Andy Gronik, Bob Harlow and Mike McCabe. The convention also heard from Lt. Governor candidate Mandela Barnes.

Congressman Ron Kind addressed the gathering during lunch.

The convention tackled resolutions in the afternoon. Portage County submitted ten resolutions and despite the high quality of all of them, only one was approved. So....

Congratulations to new member Marlo Fields whose resolution out of ten submitted from Portage County was the only to pass from the 3rd CD onto to the state convention. If an issue really addresses you, consider writing one for next year.

Resolution: In Support of Protecting Wisconsin Waterways from Mining and Repealing Assembly Bill 499

WHEREAS, lakes, rivers, wetlands, and other waterways are an essential asset to Wisconsin's identity, providing for recreation, agriculture, and economic interests, and vital to numerous ecosystems; and,

WHEREAS, these waterways are interconnected; affecting all Wisconsin communities; and,

WHEREAS, mining, prospecting, exploration, and bulk sampling of various nonferrous metals poses a threat for leaks and spillage to the waterways, which could have irreversible effects; and,

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill 499 repeals most integral regulatory oversights protecting Wisconsin waterways from certain metal mining and related activities;

THEREFORE, RESOLVED, the DPW will work to reinstate necessary oversights on mining and repeal Assembly Bill 499.

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Events

Wisconsin State Democratic Party Convention

June 1 & 2, 2018

The annual state convention is our biggest Democratic event of the year. Join fellow Democrats in Oshkosh to meet and listen to most of the gubernatorial candidates and build toward Democratic victories in the fall.

Information regarding registration and the agenda can be found at:

www.wisdems.org ; click on Events, and then on the 2018 State Convention.

TO BE A DELEGATE, your name must be confirmed at our May general meeting. Please contact **Gary** at 715-321-0111 or garybh2008@yahoo.com for more information or to request to be a delegate. Currently there are around 20 unfilled delegate positions. **Act now!**

Food Sale at Trig's – Brats, Hot Dogs, Hamburgers and Treats!

Saturday, April 28th

Our second food sale (freshly grilled brats, hot dogs and hamburgers – with homemade bars and cookies) at Trig's Grocery Store on the north side of Stevens Point will be held on Sat, April 28th. Mark your calendar to remind yourself to buy lunch for you and your friends or co-workers that day. Also, volunteers are needed to work at the booth as well as bake treats. Contact **Ray Cal** at: Raymond.Cal@hotmail.com or 715-321-0329.

If you missed our first sale in March, get this one! We need Y O U to make our booth a success.

Headquarters Upkeep and Improvement Committee Report

Members of the PCDP Executive Board realize the value of the local party owning our building and the responsibility they assumed with the purchase. The board created a committee recently to identify and prioritize maintenance and cosmetic upgrades to the headquarters to preserve our investment and enhance the physical appearance.

The committee consists of Chair Trudy Pederson, David Pederson, Rick Christofferson and Karyn Tank. The committee met recently and presented its findings to the executive board and at the membership meeting on February 13.

The recommendations are listed below. The party needs volunteers to complete these tasks, some of which are a priority before the 2018 campaign begins.

Immediate (Before 2018 election campaigns begin to use the building)

1. Paint the men's and upstairs bathrooms
2. Purchase/make/find an insulating window covering in the men's bathroom
3. **Establish/schedule monthly maintenance schedule for floors, bathrooms, garbage**
4. Replace/repair/construct lower cabinet doors in kitchen area
5. Research/identify/purchase 40-50 lightweight, stackable, matching chairs for meeting area
6. Move stairway light switch to interior of stairway
7. Fortify/add stair rails
8. Repair/replace/add stair treads
9. Replace upstairs lighting to LED

Mid-Range

1. Move shelving on interior east wall to determine construction.

- a. Based on findings, proceed to insulate, install new energy efficient windows.
 - b. Power wash exterior façade to above concrete surface and exterior entryway.
 - c. Paint exterior siding and entryway
2. Replace/refinish/repaint interior doors on stairway, bathrooms and backroom
 3. Clear basement and upstairs of trash and debris. Sort sign wires/provide pegs for storage in the basement. Improve lighting in basement.

Long Range

1. Redo front façade/insulate
2. Steel interior entry door
3. Insulate back entry
4. Replace fire escape.

Volunteers should contact **Trudy** at graniteridgefarm@gmail.com or leave a message at 715-341-6195. Thank you for support of the party's work to improve and maintain the headquarters.



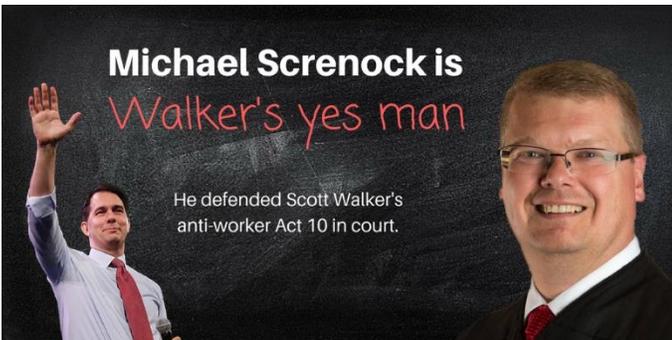
[Ed. Note: The party recently purchased 27 newer chairs to replace some of the oldest chairs. We still need additional chairs, particularly for our general membership meetings.]

PARKING NOTICE!

Now that Belt's is open, parking at the HQ for our Tuesday night general meeting may become more difficult. **You are encouraged to park south of the HQ in the triangle parking by Skip's.** If that lot is filled (rarely), consider parking across from the HQ in the lot used by Aspen Dental). There is plenty of parking available – you may just have to look a bit.

Coffee and Conversation – It's a Weekly Thing!

At the Olympic Restaurant on Wednesdays at 10:30 am. Meet us in the back at “our” table to talk about progressive politics.



FREE

PORTAGE COUNTY PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK

PROTECT
YOUR FAMILY &
THE ENVIRONMENT

TUESDAY, APRIL 24
11:30AM-12:30PM
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH - ROSHOLT

THURSDAY, APRIL 26
11AM-12:30PM
VILLAGE PARK LODGE - JUNCTION CITY

FRIDAY, APRIL 27
11:30AM-1:00PM
JENSEN CENTER - AMHERST

SATURDAY, APRIL 28
8AM-NOON
LINCOLN CENTER - STEVENS POINT

SATURDAY, APRIL 28
12:30 PM-2:00PM
COMMUNITY CENTER - ALMOND-BANCROFT

Prescriptions may also be dropped off at the Portage County Sheriff's Office or the Stevens Point or Plover Police Departments

Bring all your (and anyone else's) unwanted, unneeded or outdated prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines. Please leave the medications in their original containers. Please remove the patient's name, but leave identity of medication intact.

ITEMS ACCEPTED	ITEMS NOT ACCEPTED
Pills	Inhalers
Syrups	Oxygen Tanks
Salves	Nebulizers
Creams	Sharps
Capsules	Radioactive Cancer Medication

*Contact Portage County Solid Waste Department at 715-343-6297 or 715-345-5970 for more information about disposal of these items.

SPONSORED BY:

Portage County Coalition
for Alcohol/Drug Abuse Prevention
Portage County Sheriff's Office
Stevens Point Police Department
Plover Police Department • Jensen Center

#VoteBlueWI



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Portage County Wisconsin Democrats – News of Events and Photos

<https://www.facebook.com/PortageCountyWIDems/>

Portage County Democratic Party – A Discussion Forum

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/66111771697/>

Instagram (Photos):

<https://www.instagram.com/portagecountydems/>

Twitter:

PortageCoWIDems

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Visit Our Website

<http://portagecountydems.org/>

News, events, a membership form you can print and share with a friend!



