



The SCPD PAC Progressive Patriot

The Newsletter for Progressive Activists in NE Ohio

WHAT IS SCPD PAC?

Summit County Progressive Democrats PAC is a grass roots organization of dedicated people committed to social justice on the local, state, national, and international levels. We support efforts that better the lives of all citizens by working to promote human rights, equal economic opportunity, responsive government, a safe, sustainable environment, and a society built on compassion. Our goal is to expand grass roots participation in the political process and to return the federal government to the will of the people. SCPD PAC works to support progressive candidates through grassroots activism, contributions, coaching candidates, forums and events and the production of literature and sample ballots to educate the electorate. If you are interested in SCPD PAC, contact Ingrid Kunstel at ikunstel@neo.rr.com

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"Grassroots Action NOW!"

DECEMBER 2009

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
JANUARY 12 AT 6:30 P.M.
AKRON PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING ROOM 2



SCPD PAC PROGRESSIVE PATRIOT

by Ingrid Kunstel

The saying about "if you want to get a job done, give it to a busy person" is true! In spite of being a physician, a wife and mother, Eileen Goldman always manages to be present and active when SCPD PAC needs her.

Eileen first became involved in politics during the Viet Nam War, going to war protests. She was a member of the original Summit Meet-up. She then worked on the Kerry campaign housing 4 volunteers in her home. She worked on canvassing and phone banking. After taking off a couple of months to recover from the disappointment of that election, she became one of the founding members of SCPD PAC.

Eileen has taken Leadership Development Training, Speakers Training and Precinct Committee Training from SCPD PAC. While this article will attest to her huge contribution to SCPD PAC and the community, she, in her typical style said that she has gotten back more from SCPD PAC than she has given.

Eileen became the Chair of Issues and Education 3 years ago and in that role she has planned and implemented intelligent, thought-provoking public forums. She also

coordinated the team's publishing of Issue Papers, which were the forerunners of our present Issues teams' position papers. Stepping down from the Chair of I&E committee, Eileen became deeply involved in the Obama campaign during the '08 election cycle. Again she housed volunteers in her home, phone-banked, canvassed and hosted a fundraiser. She became a Team Leader for Obama's campaign and coordinated Ward 8 activities. She has since invited people into her home to discuss health care as part of



the President's request for citizen input.

Of all of our busy members, she gave the most time to the Sandra Kurt campaign, volunteering twice a week. Of her various campaign activities Eileen

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states that she liked canvassing with Sandra the best, and found that she had often talked to residents on her own before Sandra knocked on their door. Her reason for being so active in this campaign was that she admired what Sandra stood for and felt she could make a difference in the campaign.

Eileen served 6 years on the Board of Planned Parenthood and was Chair of the Medical Committee. She also served 6 years on the Jewish Family Services Board.

Eileen and her husband George met in 1973 and have been married for 36 years. Both are practicing physicians. Fortunately for us, and in spite of George's never wanting to live in Ohio, City Hospital (now Summa) offered George a position in emergency medicine and so they settled here.

Eileen has a busy Family Medicine Practice with another one of our members, Steve Cochran. Eileen and

George have 3 grown children who give them an excuse to travel to San Francisco and Scottsdale, Arizona, for visits.

Typical of her quiet determination, Eileen made 3 trips to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. She worked with an organization called Common Ground Health Clinics run by a former Black Panther. Watching doctors, nurses, acupuncturists, massage therapists, herbalists, physical therapists, people giving legal council, and people distributing food and clothing was a very inspirational time for Eileen. When asked about what prompted her to go, she said that she was motivated by a deep sadness she felt for the people of New Orleans. Eileen is looking forward to another possible service trip to help in Kenya.

I think if you take the time, getting to know Eileen will be a real pleasure. She is the very embodiment of progressive idealism and activism. Thank you, Eileen, for all you do.

WINNING JUDICIAL RACES

By Frank Kunstel

What's the formula for Democrats to win local judge races in Summit County? We don't have it yet. In the 2009 elections we had 3 incumbent judges running for the Akron Municipal judge seats and only one of them emerged with a win. Judge Jerry Larson retained his seat while Judges Steven Fallis and Orlando Williams lost theirs. In 2008 when Democrats won most of the local races, we only won four of the 10 judge races. So, there is plenty of opportunity for us to do better.

An analysis of the 2009 results yields several interesting facts.

1. In Akron the three Democratic candidates for At-Large City Council races each got about 71% of the Akron vote. But candidates Fallis and Williams only received 45%/48% of the vote.

2. Akron had 10 ward council races and Democrats won all of them. In nearly every ward there was a fall-off of 20 percentage points or more between the votes cast for the Democratic council candidates and the votes cast for the judges. If candidates Fallis and Williams had received 85% of the votes that the ward council candidates received, they both would have won their races.

3. Bottom line is that if we can find a way to get Democratic voters to vote the entire ticket, we can win the judge races.

There are several reasons for progressives to want to win local judge races. One is that it is in the local courts that many violators first encounter justice. And the type of justice they receive can make a difference on whether they get back on a positive path or not. Special courts, such as drug courts or mental health courts, and appropriate sentences can help reduce repeat crimes.

Second, local judges serve as a bench for higher courts, such as courts of appeals and even the Ohio Supreme Court. Getting good people elected locally gives Democrats better chances to provide strong candidates for higher courts. We just need to figure out that formula.



EDUCATION ISSUES TEAM AT WORK

by Denise Woods and Dennis Brinton

When SCPD PAC first created issues teams, members expressed special interest in addressing Ohio's education funding. Dennis Brinton rose to the occasion and formed the Education Issues Team in July of 2009.



Active members have a range of education expertise: Ginger Baylor, newly elected member of Akron's School Board; Kathy Arthur, student teacher instructor; Sandra Laurenson, retired consultant with Ohio's Department of Education; and James Field, Pat Simons, and Dennis Brinton (team director) who are all well acquainted with Ohio education issues. After the General Membership approved their Legislative Position Statement in September, the new Education Issues Team focused their attentions on education funding.

The Education Issues Team was exceptionally active supporting Governor Strickland's proposal to plug the hole in the state budget by delaying the last stage of income tax reductions (HB 318). First, they prepared a Lobby Alert for our membership. Then, Dennis worked with the lobbying staff of education groups as well as our General Assembly members from Summit County to coordinate creative methods to sway the nine Republicans on the Senate Finance Committee debating HB 318. He prepared Special Action Alerts calling for letters to be sent to those Republicans in support of HB 318, and he distributed those alerts to the superintendents of schools and Educational Service Centers in the districts of those nine Republican senators.

Dennis received good feedback, including an appreciative note from one superintendent who distributed his own action alert modeled on Dennis's.

At the December SCPD PAC general membership meeting, the Education IT presented a resolution asking the Ohio General Assembly to resist the Senate Republicans' complications and delays of this crucial bill. Time was of the essence. If the bill was not passed by December 31, 2009, Ohio stood to lose between \$2.3 and \$5 Billion in federal stimulus funds. The resolution was approved and forwarded to Summit County's General Assembly delegation.

SCPD PAC received an appreciative note from one Representative who stated he would take that resolution to his committee the next day and use it to help him get the budget finalized. On December 18th, HB 318 was passed with minimal complications from Senate Republicans. Many thanks to our Education Issues Team, for leading our activism, and for energizing others who support our goals.

The Education Issues Team plans for next year include: complete analysis of House Bill 1 in January; analyze ideas drawn from think tanks, lobby groups, and team members for additional education funding sources in February; team up with other groups advocating increased school funding (overtures to the Wayne County Progressive Network have already been made); present information on charter schools and vouchers for SCPD PAC members, who hold widely ranging opinions on the subjects.



The Education Issues Team works hard for its SCPD PAC members and the future of Ohio's education. They welcome new members and could use your help. If you would like to be part of this dynamic Education Issues Team, contact Dennis Brinton at dennisbrinton@sbcglobal.net

SCPD PAC YEAR IN REVIEW

by Denise Woods

As SCPD PAC completes its fifth year, we can look back on many proud moments.



This year our members focused on issues like never before. After the calamity of the past eight years, much serious and urgent work was needed in the areas of health insurance reform, Ohio's education funding, the protection of our civil liberties, environmental concerns, and many more.

Frank Kunstel presented a challenge to SCPD PAC members to live their values and earn issues points by responding to lobby alerts, writing letters to the editor, and engaging in SCPD PAC sponsored efforts intended to push for legislation that supports a liberal agenda, and the members met it with flying colors.

LOBBY ALERT

In the push for health insurance reform, our members lobbied in Washington, D. C. with Senator Sherrod Brown, lobbied in Akron with Representative Betty Sutton, attended town hall meetings and rallies, collected signatures on petitions, created and distributed informative bookmark flyers, and issued many lobby alerts supporting Congressional legislation.

In the struggle to fully and fairly fund Ohio's education system, the education issues team guided our lobby efforts and expanded them outside Summit County to pressure Republican State Senators from all over Ohio.



Members of our emerging Military Intervention Issues Team hosted a movie night with "Rethink Afghanistan." Caesar Bednar helped members recycle their electronic equipment safely. Members lobbied in Columbus

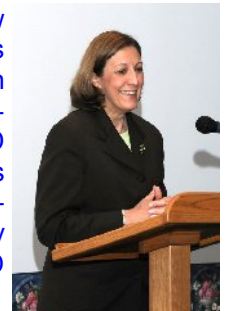
for LGTB equal rights and environmental protections. And at least 17 letters written by SCPD PAC members were published in local newspapers.

We formed two new issues teams, one for women's reproductive rights, and one to cover items not championed by a devoted issues team.



Though we focused on issues in 2009, we were also exceptionally active in helping our former Vice President, Sandra Kurt, in her campaign to become the City Council Member from Akron Ward 8, turning in 107 Volunteer Units. Many members also helped to defeat a misguided effort to recall the Akron mayor, and volunteers turned out for our three judicial candidates. Councilwoman Sandra Kurt and Judge Jerry Larson were successful in their races, and Mayor Plusquellic is still the Mayor of Akron.

SCPD PAC members also know how to have fun. The Third Annual Awards Party in April was a major success with guest speaker, Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, serenaded by the SCPD PAC Quartet. Between the ticket sales and the silent auction and our donations table, we collected approximately \$14,000 to be used for future SCPD PAC activities.



Ingrid Kunstel organized a night at the Akron Aeros ball park, in coordination with the Stonewall Democrats and the Young Democrats, hosting inner-city children. Eileen Goldman hosted a summer picnic at her home, and Ingrid and Frank threw a rousing holiday party at their home with a performance by the SCPD PAC Quintet. (see photo spread)

Congratulations to SCPD PAC members who give their labor and love to progressive causes. We are truly living our values and look forward to similar success in 2010.

GET READY FOR ANOTHER CRITICAL ELECTION SEASON

by John Cross

The 2010 election promises to be of significant importance to the future of the citizens of Summit County, the State of Ohio and the United States. Local elections include three seats in the 9th District Court of Appeals, three Summit County Council At-large seats, and two County Common Pleas Court judgeships. Ohio House and Ohio Senate members will also be elected in districts located within Summit County.

Statewide offices to be contested include Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, State Auditor, an Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice and an Associate Justice. Federal offices include a U.S. Senator and all U.S. House of Representative members representing Ohio.



The 2010 elections, therefore, provide clear opportunities for us to maintain and, ideally, to build further upon recent Progressive/Democratic electoral successes. *And we have made significant*

gains. As recent as December, 2006, conservative Republicans controlled the White House, both Houses of the U.S. Congress, the Ohio Statehouse and both Houses of the Ohio General Assembly! Except for the Ohio Senate, that landscape has completely changed.

There are many key races in the 2010 election. The outcomes of several of these races are critical to the advancement of a progressive agenda. Here are some of the important issues that will be resolved by the outcome of elections in 2010;

- *Maintaining a Democratic hold on the Ohio Governor's office.*

Governor Ted Strickland faces a serious challenge by conservative Republican John Kasich, a former U.S. House of Representative member, host of *Heartland with John Kasich* and occasional guest host for *The O'Reilly Factor*, both aired on the Fox News Channel.

- *Maintaining a Democratic majority in the Ohio House.*

Democrats gained the majority in 2008. Now, it must be maintained!

- *Gaining a Democratic seat in the Ohio Senate.*

Kevin Coughlin has been term-limited out of his Ohio Senate seat, creating an opportunity for Summit County Democrats to pick up an important seat in this chamber.

- *Establishing a Democratic majority on the Ohio Reapportionment Board for the redrawing of Ohio's legislative districts in 2011.*

The Ohio Reapportionment Board is composed of five members: the Governor, the Secretary of State, the Auditor of State, one legislative Democrat, and one legislative Republican. The board redraws boundaries for each of the 99 Ohio House and 33 Ohio Senate districts to reflect population changes. The Ohio Legislature then draws up the US Congressional districts.

Thus, whichever party wins two of the three statewide offices controls the redistricting process for state legislative seats, and ultimately, for U.S. Congressional seats as well. It is essential that Democrats have the majority.

- *Gaining an additional Democratic seat in the US Senate - creating a possible 61-seat Democratic majority by replacing George Voinovich with either Jennifer Brunner or Lee Fisher, both of whom are announced candidates.*

In 2010, we must work hard to hold or improve on the gains we have made, or see our future slip back into the kind of morass that was the Bush and the Taft administrations.

It's time once again for SCPD PAC members to get "Feet on the Street" in a big way.

SCPD PAC Holiday Celebration



2009



HOW DO OUR LEGISLATORS SCORE ON PROGRESSIVISM?

How progressive are our legislators? SCPD PAC has been tracking key votes in Congress and in the Ohio General Assembly. The Legislative Scorecard for each is posted on the [SCPD PAC](#) website (click on "Issues" near the top of the page). You can see how Sherrod Brown, Betty Sutton, Tim Ryan and others have voted on progressive issues. At the bottom of the scorecard is a score based on the percentage of agreement each legislator reaches with the progressive position on each bill. The scorecard gets updated several times a year, depending on how much activity has occurred.

CONGRESSIONAL VOTING RECORDS 2009-2010	House or Senate	Outcome	Progressive Position	Sutton	Ryan	LaTourrette	Brown	Voinovich
Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Paycheck Fairness Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
SCHIP Children's Health Insurance	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
American Recovery/Reinvestment Act	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Volunteerism & Education Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Impose tax on bonuses received from TARP recipients	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Edward Kennedy Serve America Act	S	Y	Y				Y	Y
Curb bonuses on executives at TARP financial institutions	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Local Hate Crimes Prevention Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Helping Families Save Their Homes Act	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Amendment to Helping Families Save Their Homes Act	S	N	Y				Y	N
Water Quality Investment Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Serve America Act	S	Y	Y				Y	Y
Amendment to curb executive bonuses at TARP institutions	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Family Smoking Prevention & Tobacco Control Act	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
American Clean Energy and Security Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Food Safety Enhancement Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Anti-torture amendment requiring videotaping of all interrogations	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to Supreme Court	S	Y	Y				Y	Y
Defense Dept Authorization Bill	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Affordable Healthcare for America Act	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	N		
Stupak amendment to healthcare reform bill	H	Y	N	N	Y	Y		
Senate vote on cloture to begin debating healthcare bill	S	Y	Y				Y	No vote
SCORE (% AGREEMENT)				100	94	28	100	56

OHIO LEGISLATURE VOTING RECORDS 2009-10	House or Senate	Outcome	Progressive Position	House Williams	House Moran	House Dyer	House Sykes	House Otterman	Senate Sawyer	Senate Coughlin
HB 1 - Education funding reform	H/S	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
HB 176 - Prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
HB 318 - Postpones final phase of state income tax reduction in order to address budget shortfall	H	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		

SCPD PAC Executive Committee

President:	Denise Woods	Recording Secretary:	Janet Dando
Vice President:	Mary Lohman	Treasurer:	Bobbie Carper
Executive Secretary:	Guy Marentette	Assistant Treasurer:	Jim Laurenson
At Large:	Nancy Clem Todd Schneider Sherrie Weitzenhof		

The *SCPD PAC Progressive Patriot* is edited by the SCPD PAC Communications Committee. To submit an article or a comment contact Tom Liston at maxepr@mac.com or Ingrid Kunstel at ikunstel@neo.rr.com