



The SCPD Progressive Patriot

The Newsletter for Progressive Activists in NE Ohio

"A Grass Roots Coalition for Change"

WHAT IS SCPD?

SCPD is a 501(c)4 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.

If you are interested in SCPD, contact Ingrid Kunstel at ikunstel@neo.rr.com

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OCTOBER, 2005

SCPD SPEAKS OUT AGAINST THE WAR

Tom Liston

On September 24 the SCPD made a double-pronged statement against the illegal war in Iraq. Many members journeyed to Washington to join an estimated 300,000 other peace activists to protest the Bush war. At a designated location near the Mall they made contact with hundreds of other members of the Progressive Democrats of America.

Here in Summit County, members successfully organized a Northeast



Marchers in downtown Akron protest the war

Ohio peace rally in downtown Akron.

Although the event failed to attract as many people as we had hoped, it nevertheless put flesh on the fact that a growing majority of the American people oppose the war.

Amman provided a mixture of 60s style anti-war songs and contemporary compositions of his own.

The focus on the ground was on the terrible waste of lives and resources, on the incompetence of the administration, and on their unwillingness to heed the growing discontent of the American people.

The Akron rally featured addresses by two peace-activist members of the clergy, Presbyterian ministers Lynn Bryant and Anne Hagler, as well as the moving observations of Gold Star Families for Peace representative Camille Pavlicek-Fauser of Kent. Musician Ed

After speeches in Grace Park, the crowd marched into downtown Akron, soliciting a tremendous show of support from passing motorists. Carrie Davis of the ACLU spoke of the danger posed to the Bill of Rights by the Bush Administration, when the group stopped briefly at



Rally in Grace Park

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REFORM OHIO NOW — HOW YOU CAN HELP

Michael Carano

Four initiatives, Issues 2, 3, 4, and 5, developed by Reform Ohio Now (RON) will be voted on in the General Election November 8th. The three Progressive Democrats of America chapters in Ohio (including SCPD) support and are working to get the word out to voters that reform will put the voter back into elections and end the “pay for play” politics that have hijacked the democratic process in the state.

In brief, these amendments will do the following:

- **Issue 2:** Permit votes to cast ballots by mail or in person at the Board of Election up to 35 days before an election without exception.
- **Issue 3:** Say “NO” to special interest money in Ohio politics
- **Issue 4:** Stop the politicians from drawing their own legislative districts and put an Independent Commission in charge of the redistricting process
- **Issue 5:** Place a bipartisan Board of Supervisors in charge of Ohio’s elections instead of partisan politicians.

The **Summit County Progressive Democrats** have taken strong leadership to see that these amendments to the state constitution get passed. Besides being instrumental in the petition drive to get the amendments on the ballot, SCPD is working full force to get the word out to the electorate on the good these amendments will do for Ohioans.

Working closely with Kathy Berta, the five county RON Field Director, SCPD has developed strategies to educate the public in the months before the election and to get out the vote in the last weeks before Nov. 8th.

We need your help! Contact the people listed below and do your part by working to make positive change in Ohio

SCPD has implemented a multi-pronged strategy to get the work done. The Leadership Development Committee’s Speaker’s Bureau has trained a dozen people, some from other progressive groups, not only on the finer points of the amendments but also on giving effective presentations and handling question and answer sessions after the speaking engagements. The Issues Committee has secured at least 22 groups to talk to about the amendments, and it is expected that more will be added.

SCPD’s Communication’s Committee held an editorial letter writing workshop and produced eight editorials to be sent to area papers. Another workshop is planned to counter what will surely be an negative misinformation campaign by *Ohio First*, a right wing group working against passage of the initiatives they being bent on keeping business as usual in the state.

The Outreach Committee is holding weekly canvassing and lit drops to targeted voters and precincts to take the message to the streets. Along with passing out literature at area weekend foot-

ball games and churches, a dozen SCPD members have stepped up to take ownership of the precincts in which they live.

A Yard-Sign Ad Hoc committee is handling the distribution of yard signs, and the phone-banking wing of SCPD is adding volunteers, finding sign locations, and gearing up for the all important GOTV activities.

We need your help to make change, so contact the people listed below and do your part by working to make positive change in Ohio and end the bleeding that Ohio has experienced in the last twenty years.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

To arrange for a **speaker** to make a presentation contact Eileen Goldman at (330)-836-7532.

To volunteer to **phone bank**, contact Nancy Macy at (330)-869-8619

For a **yard sign (or to help deliver them)**, contact Todd Schneider at (330)-928-0862

To “**paper**” cars with flyers at public events, contact Bobbie Carper at (330)-689-2701

To **canvass** during the week or on the weekends, contact Michael Carano at (330)-715-2066 or Michael_carano@hotmail.com

To help with the final GOTV push contact Ingrid Kunstel at (330)-923-0732

SCPD IS REPRESENTED AT NATIONAL PDA CONFERENCE

Michael Carano

After participating with nine other members of the SCPD Sept 24th at the march in our nation's capital, members Patrick and Michael Carano represented SCPD at a daylong conference held on the 25th by the Progressive Democrats of America (PDA).

PDA assembled a notable list of activists for the event. The day began with an Interfaith Prayer Service that not only honored our serviceman in harm's way, but

**PATRICK SPOKE OF THE
STRONG PERSONAL
COMMITMENT HE AND
MEMBERS OF SCPD FEEL
ABOUT THEIR WORK AND THE
SUPPORT NEEDED TO MAKE
CHANGE.**

also called for our government to support the spiritual call for peace. Afterwards, PDA members from the nation gathered to call for an exit strategy to end the unjust war and bring our troops home. Speakers included Cindy Sheehan, fellow PDA member William Rivers Pitt of www.Truth-Out.org, Medea Benjamin of



SCPD Members in front of the White House

Code Pink, and Congresswomen Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Lynn Woolsey (D-CA).

Along with other activists, Patrick represented SCPD on a panel centering on the united effort to build and grow PDA chapters throughout the country. Patrick spoke of the strong personal commitment he and members of SCPD feel about their work and the support needed to make change. Afternoon breakout sessions dealt with building chapters and alliances.

On the 26th Patrick and Michael with other PDA activists met with the offices of over 300 senators and representatives in the largest-ever pro-peace lobbying day. 800 people (possibly as many as

1000 from the United Peace and Justice Coalition) participated, representing more than 40 states. Though Congressman Ryan and Brown were not in D.C., Patrick and Michael articulated to appropriate aides the many concerns progressives share.

They expressed the desire for an Iraq exit strategy, the need to support troops with fitting benefits upon their return, the demand for the Democratic Party leadership to stand up against the deceptions and policies of the Bush Administration, and for support of Bill # H.CON.RES.197 (calling for no permanent bases in Iraq). Last, they called for an "opt-in" rather than "opt-out" option for high school students, to curtail the recruiting methods of the military.

Overall, the enthusiasm and fellowship of the three days will be taken back home where the groundwork of building the machine begins—in each and every congressional district throughout our nation with the ongoing, committed work of those like the proud members of SCPD. For more info visit www.pdamerica.org.

A FLOWER, A UNIFORM, A LIFE

Michael Carano

In Washington for the Sept. 24th weekend of peace demonstrations, I had some memorable experiences: the march on Saturday, the Sunday conferences where I heard activists including

Cindy Sheehan, William Rivers Pitt, Steve Cobble, Medea Benjamin, Congresswomen Barbara Lee and Lynn Woolsey (who received a backbone award), Rev. Yearwood, and many other patriotic Americans who speak truth. It was quite a whirlwind, but in all of

it one incident, one person stood out.

While lobbying on Monday at the Washington offices of our representatives, Patrick and I were looking for Rep. Sherrod Brown's office in the Cannon Building. I

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COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Palmer J. Peterson

The latest meeting of the Communications Committee, held at Kathy Arthur's house on Tuesday, September 27, signified yet another step as the committee gets closer to becoming the important part of SCPD it was expected to be upon its inception.

The main focus for the meeting was finding ways in which the Communications Committee can help the efforts of Reform Ohio Now, and Issues 2, 3, 4, and 5. It was agreed that all active members of the committee should write a letter to the editor focusing on the positive aspects of the election reform amendments.

We also discussed ways of publicizing the efforts of the "Speakers' Bureau", a group of women and men who have been trained in public speaking, and specifically trained in discussing Issues 2, 3, 4, and 5. Already, members of the Bureau have spoken at Democratic Party meetings and at a church. Many more speaking engagements have been scheduled for the rest of the month, in the lead-up to the November election.

The subject of press releases was also mentioned as a way the Communications Committee is getting involved with bridging the gap between SCPD and the public. Press releases by Tom Liston helped to publicize the Peace Rally in Akron on September 24th. Press releases by Palmer J. Peterson helped to make people aware of the Katrina Benefit at the Northside.

Other new ideas were discussed, in order to help with informing SCPD members about upcoming events, rallies, speeches, and activities. Each member present at the meeting was given a task to complete, which will help build the foundation of the Communications Committee as a cornerstone of the Summit County Progressive Democrats.

The Communications Committee must convey the message and the activities of the SCPD to the outside world. Tuesday's meeting helped ensure that the Communications Committee is rapidly becoming equal to the task.

For information on joining this committee, contact PJ Peterson at:
normantimberwolf@hotmail.com.

SCPD SPEAKS OUT—CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Cascade Plaza.

In Washington, SCPD members reported seeing a variety of graphic and moving reminders of the cost of the war: coffins being carried to signify the dead, crosses on the lawn leading up to the Washington Monument, and boots for the fallen. Pictures of the American casualties were attached to a rope which was carried through the parade and which, unfortunately, seemed to go on forever. The crowd was made up of a broad cross-section of our society, from babies in strollers to seniors in wheelchairs, from veterans in uniform to mothers with signs bearing photos of their sacrificed sons above the words, "You

killed my son." All ages, races, and religious persuasions were represented.

Helicopters were constantly overhead, but the focus on the ground was on the terrible waste of lives and resources, on the incompetence of the administration, and on their unwillingness to heed the growing discontent of the American people. True to form neither the President nor Vice President were around to witness this massive rejection of their policy.

Press coverage was predictably inadequate as the major media focused on the hurricane disasters.

Nonetheless a statement was made on September 24th that cannot much longer be ignored. And the Summit County Progressive Democrats were there to make it.



SCPD Members at the DC Rally

A FLOWER, A UNIFORM, A LIFE Continued from page 2

saw a woman come slowly around the corner looking up at the office numbers for a room. She seemed a bit lost, her civilian dress contrasted by an army cap she wore on her head. She clutched a fatigue jacket to her breast. In her hand she held a white lily.

I asked if the woman needed help in finding the room she sought. My brother and I began to walk her to the office she wanted. We asked her if she participated in the Saturday March, and she nodded. She said her son was killed in Iraq in 2003 and she was here to see her Congressman.

Upon speaking, her eyes became teary. I put an arm around her shoulder to soothe and support her. She said she hoped her Congressman would see her since she didn't have an appointment. I mumbled to her that no one had a better reason to speak to him than she. Walking down the hallway we found the room she wanted, opened the door, and in she went.

It was an unforgettably sad encounter, a woman carrying her dead son's clothing, clothes he no longer fills out with his shoulders and a hat never to cover his head again. I know that the only truthful answer her Congressman could give her is the one he will not give. Why is truth so hard to speak these days? So much life lost for false reasons, for an unjust, immoral war. Our brief meeting had an ethereal quality to it.

Meeting her raised our confidence. Upon meeting the Congressman's aides Patrick and I succinctly spoke to them, saying all the things we wanted to say about this war as well as many other points we made on behalf of our group back home and the nation.

That one woman, walking in the halls of our wayward and deaf leaders, seeking answers, seeking the truth amidst the unending lies--this will be an inspiration for me for a long, long time. May the ghost of her son send the chilling truth to the members of Congress.

I am thankful for the opportunity to march with so many reasonable lovers of truth and to have met that one brave woman, alone but backed by a growing throng of those who want peace. May we all work for the change needed to get our nation back.

SCPD HOLDS BENEFIT FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

Ingrid Kunstel

On Wednesday, October 11, SCPD held a benefit for the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Mike Owens of Northside generously donated his bar for the venue.

The Wanda Hunt Band, The Colin John Band and The Mike Lenz Band were gracious in donating their considerable talent to entertain the attendees. Everyone there appeared to be having a wonderful time listening and dancing to great blues music.

The benefit raised nearly \$2000.00 to be given to the NAACP and Veterans for Peace camps that are giving aid directly to the victims down in the Gulf Coast area. Our thanks to all who opened their hearts and their wallets to make this such a success.



Eileen Goldman and Tom Liston



Tamela Lee selling "Benefit Beads"



*Jody Smith selling
raffle tickets*

SCPD Executive Committee

President: Ingrid Kunstel
Vice President: Tom Liston
Executive Secretary: Guy Marentette
Recording Secretary: Janet Dando
Finance: Tamela Lee
Scott Piepho
At Large: John Cross
At Large: Todd Schneider
At Large: Dennis Brinton

Newsletter To Be Called "The Progressive Patriot"

We had a number of good suggestions in our "Name the Newsletter" contest. After an email vote, Mary Nichols-Rhodes' suggestion won out.

Mary wins an SCPD t-shirt. Congratulations Mary!

The *Progressive Patriot* is edited by the SCPD Communications Committee. To submit an article or a comment, email SBAUMAN@NEO.RR.COM

BRAVO!

With so much going on in SCPD, it is easy to lose sight of all the incredible members and their contributions that make our successes possible. I have hesitated to do this in writing before because I am certain that I will miss thanking someone. However, here we go:

Thanks to the **Outreach Committee** for all their hard work to organize and implement Phase II of the RON campaign. Thanks too to all members who are canvassing, phone banking, calling volunteers, writing letters, speaking, and training speakers.

Thanks to the committee that organized and held a very successful **Akron Peace Rally**. All reports indicate it went smoothly, the speakers were great and the crowd was wonderful. Thanks to the **members who made the long trip to D.C.** for the big march and for those who stayed to lobby the following Monday.

Thanks to all the members passing out flyers and bringing friends to the **Hurricane Katrina Benefit**. A big thanks to **Northside** and the bands of **Wanda Hunt, Colin John, and Mike Lenz** for their selflessness in giving of their

talents to make the benefit possible.

Thanks for the on-going work of the **Rapid Response** team, our awesome **letter writers** and our **alliance-building people**. Finally, thanks to our **web master** for keeping us current.

BRAVO! to all of you!

Ingrid

**Summit County
Progressive Democrats,
an Ohio chapter of**

