



The SCPD Progressive Patriot

The Newsletter for Progressive Activists in NE Ohio

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

"GRASSROOTS ACTION NOW!"

SEPTEMBER 2007

**VOTE ON
NOVEMBER 6!**

SCPD PICNIC RAISES SPIRITS AND FUNDS

By Tom Liston

On Sunday, September 9, seventy-five stalwart grassroots activists gathered at Lake Kim Tam Park for a picnic. The bad news was that the weather appeared to have been designed by Karl Rove: overcast skies, intermittent rain, and temperatures barely reaching the 70s. The good news was that it even Karl Rove was no match for SCPD.

A spacious pavilion provided shelter during the periods of rain, where folks gathered at the many picnic tables to enjoy a selection of great food, good conversation, and camaraderie. Master of ceremonies, John Cross, introduced several visiting elected officials and Democratic

candidates as they arrived, including State Senator Tom Sawyer, and State Representatives Brian Williams and Steve Dyer. Also present were

Summit County judge John Quinn, County Councilman John Schmidt, Hudson City Councilman Mike Moran, and a good friend and member of SCPD, Bob Gippin, who is running for a seat on the Court of Common Pleas.

The entertainment highlight of the day had to have been the "dunk tank." For a small donation the assembled picnickers tried their pitching skills in an attempt to dunk George Bush, Karl Rove, Dick Cheney and Condaleeza Rice in a very cold tank of water. President Kunstel, donning her "W" mask, bravely represented the "Decider" as well as Cheney and



Inside this issue:

- Patriot of the Month 2
- SCPD Lobbying 2
- Governor's Mansion 3
- Legislator Breakfast 4
- Fundraising 5
- Discussion Group 5

(Patriot 2—continued from page 1)

was dropped into the frigid water several times. Todd Schneider and Sandra Kurt played the roles of Karl Rove and “Condi” respectively and suffered the same fate, to the gratification of the cheering crowd. A few of the children present were entertained by “pinning the nose on the elephant and the Duck Pond.

A 50/50 raffle was conducted to the embarrassment of our master of ceremonies. When the drawing was

finally conducted, John deftly extracted the winning ticket and read the name of the winner: John Cross! True to his status as an honorable man, (and to dispel any suspicion that the ‘fix was in’) John generously donated his winnings to SCPD.

The weather failed to dampen the spirits of those who attended and a great time was had by all. After all expenses were paid SCPD ended up making slightly over \$500.

PATRIOT OF THE MONTH

Mary Starbuck—A Renaissance Woman
By Ingrid Kunstel

You can’t help but notice her with her beautiful silver hair. Mary is active, upbeat, involved and innovative. Mary is a political activist in SCPD and a vital part of the latest Leadership Training Group who has taken on the responsibility of heading up a project to increase membership and membership involvement. She was one of 7 SCPD members who early on started the Akron 5-E Precinct Project which has focused on registering residents, getting to know them, getting out the vote and attempting to find residents to take on this on-going organizing project. This same group did an audit at the Board of Elections last fall to check the accuracy of the voting machines in 5-E. When there is work to be done for a candidate or for an issue, Mary is always there to help with a smile on her face.

As if that were not enough, Mary has volunteered for four years at Seiberling Elementary School as a reading tutor. Her workplace, Summa Health System underwrites this effort. She enjoys the children’s

energy, curiosity and imagination. Mary is a lover of the arts which is expressed in her organizing of movie nights for friends, helping plant and weed the community garden in her neighborhood at Highland Square and participating in the Art in the Square yearly festival. She is involved in Highland Square citizen’s efforts to keep the quality of life by helping to maintain the integrity of the Square architecturally and socially. Mary reflects, “I’ve always loved the group process and group projects, so living in Highland Square where the locals are so actively involved in the quality of life is a perfect place for me. It’s a neighborhood where individuals really can make a difference.”



Mary Starbuck

Mary also works full time in the Medical/Dental Education and Research Department at Summa Health System as the Manager of Accreditation and Compliance.

Mary is a rising star in SCPD. Don’t be surprised to see her in leadership roles more often.

SCPD LOBBYING EFFORT

SCPD Lobbying Effort With Sherrod Brown a Success
By John Cross

The first SCPD lobbying session with U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown was conducted at his local office in Cleveland on Friday, September 14th. The Senator met with me one-on-one for nearly a half-hour.

The time was used to present an overview of SCPD’s

2007-2008 Legislative Program and to discuss our organization’s positions on key issues, particularly the Iraq War and the need to reinstate judicial control over federal wiretapping activities.



I mentioned to Sherrod that, while his votes on most issues were compatible with our

(Continued on page 3)

(Lobbying—continued from page 2)

positions, we planned to make him fully aware when they weren't. I reminded him of the surprise and anger created in the progressive community by his vote for the Military Commissions Act in late 2006. He said that he later realized that his vote was a mistake and that he planned to work hard to rescind the Act or at least to reinstate the right to habeas corpus to those individuals being held without charges.

We also reviewed ways in which SCPD can work with his office on issues and projects of mutual interest, including the provision of phone calls, letters and emails of support to his office, and publicizing issues at the local level through letters-to-the-editor and organizing public forums.



We then discussed the public perception of this Democratic Congress as being completely ineffective in bringing about much-needed change to the Bush Administrations' agenda. Sherrod spoke of his frustration with the number of cloture votes invoked by the minority Republicans in the Senate.

I gave him a copy of a recent McClatchy Newspaper (formerly the Knight-Ridder news organization) study that documented the record-breaking pace of calls for cloture votes and threats of filibuster that require a super majority of 60 votes to move legislation through the Senate. The Senator agreed that it was extremely important to Democratic prospects that the public be made aware of the effects of this Republican obstruction on the ability of

Democratic Senators to bring about much needed change.

Finally, Sherrod agreed to two requests. He provided a quotation on his assessment of our organization that will be used in a new brochure being developed for SCPD, and he agreed to speak at the 2008 SCPD Awards Ceremony.

After our longer-than-expected conversation, Sherrod took me on a brief tour of his office to introduce me to some of the staff members, including Matt Kaplan, community liaison for Summit County. I was able to convince Matt to meet with me for an additional 15 or 20 minutes. I briefed him on the history and current activities of SCPD and exchanged contact information.

Matt will be another great ally within Sherrod's office. He would like to attend a future SCPD meeting and also receive copies of our newsletter. He also made himself available for any Saturday breakfasts we would like to have with him to discuss any pertinent issues.

This was a very productive meeting. Despite the limited time available, I was able to convey a great deal of information, establish some credibility for SCPD lobbying activities, and develop additional staff contacts that will expedite our future efforts.

MEMBERS INVITED TO THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

By Janet Dando



On Saturday, July 15th, Governor Ted and First Lady Frances Strickland invited guests from northeastern Ohio counties to a garden party at the Governor's mansion in Columbus.

Several members of SCPD were included in the invitation. Pat Simons, Denise Woods, Mary Louise McMahon, and I made the trip to the capital to represent SCPD.



We arrived at the Tudor-style mansion at one o'clock. After pictures at the impressive entry, we were taken on a tour of the house and then to the garden



reception, where other representatives of northeast Ohio Democratic organizations (from Stark, Medina, and Cuyahoga Counties) were gathered to meet the

(Continued on page 4)

(Governor's Mansion—continued from page 3)



Governor and First Lady prior to the garden luncheon.

The SCPD presence was impressive. Tamela Lee was there to represent the Summit County Democratic Party. SCPD vice president, Sandra Kurt, and Tina Jarosch were there for the Summit County Stonewall Democrats, and another member, Jerry Wittingham was also present. SCPD member and Hudson Democrat, Mike Moran and his wife, joined us for part of the afternoon.

Both Ted and Frances Strickland shook hands and spoke with each of the guests. They were very warm and gracious hosts. After lunch, Governor Strickland welcomed

everyone and thanked us for the work we had all done to help elect Ohio's first Democratic governor in twelve years. He noted that the mansion belongs to all the people of Ohio, and that he and Frances felt privileged to live there for a time. He said that we have already begun to "Turnaround Ohio" and that he and his administration are working every day to improve our state. Even as he spoke, Lieutenant Governor, Lee Fisher, state Director of Planning, was in Russia negotiating with a Russian company to bring part of its production to Ohio, an arrangement with the potential of bringing approximately \$2 billion to the state.

We had a wonderful time and were proud to represent SCPD. Please stop by the SCPD website to see Pat Simons' pictures of the event.

BREAKFAST WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

By Pat Simons

On July 7, 2007, Ohio Senator Tom Sawyer and Ohio Representatives Vernon Sykes, Steve Dyer and Bob Otterman met at the Akron Family Restaurant for the first SCPD lobbying meeting. They were each introduced to their Lobbying Representative from SCPD.



The Lobbying Representatives (Janet Dando, Pat Simons, Mary Lohman and Mary Starbuck) talked about how they got involved in

politics and with SCPD. An overview of SCPD with a focus on our mission, progressive values and a sample of our accomplishments were given. We then described how we envision lobbying *with* them, since we are all working toward similar ends, and we suggested ways we can help them accomplish their goals. Each legislator was given a packet with our issues, our organization and contact information.

During our dialogue the legislators talked about important upcoming races and emphasized the importance of taking back the Ohio House. This can be accomplished by winning only four seats in 2008. They indicated that they would prefer to see us work to get those seats back before devoting energy to their own campaigns.



We agreed to discuss with them how this might be accomplished.

These four men offered a lot of praise for SCPD and what we are doing. Vernon Sykes described SCPD as being like the Marines in that we are a small group that goes in and does what it takes to get the job done. He said he thought our organization and the way in which it is set up and works is unique in Ohio.

SCPD FUNDRAISING EFFORTS

By Dick King

In what way can SCPD help local and statewide political candidates get elected? One of the ways is by providing modest financial assistance through our PAC. The Fundraising Committee was established in March of 2007 in order to accomplish that goal.

The Committee has established an objective of raising \$15,000 in 2007 and \$25,000 in 2008. Funds will be raised by two primary methods: fundraising events and direct contributions from individuals. Personal contributions will be sought from SCPD members, political office holders, foundations, and other progressive organizations. Our first fundraising event will be held in the spring of 2008 in conjunction with our Awards Banquet. Sherrod Brown will be the featured guest. We have already begun the process of soliciting personal contributions to



the PAC.

the PAC.

One of the key tools in seeking contributions (aside from the charm of committee members John Cross, Gail Frangos, Dick King, Ingrid Kunstel, Nicole Mike, and Mary Lohman), is a new SCPD PAC brochure. The brochure has been created in coordination with the Communications Committee with the two ideas of seeking funds for our PAC and also increasing our membership. This colorful brochure will very succinctly provide a brief history of SCPD, describe "Who is a Progressive", list numerous accomplishments of SCPD, and show photos along with quotes of various office holders, such as Sherrod Brown, Betty Sutton, and Eileen Shapiro. Look for it in October. Also, look for your booklet copy of the U.S. Constitution that is being made available to all dues paying SCPD members and to those contributing \$50.00 or more to our PAC.



"Summit County Progressive Democrats have been instrumental in organizing and energizing the democratic grassroots movement in Northeast Ohio. Their hard work and enthusiasm has benefited both progressive issues and Democratic candidates." Sherrod Brown, U.S. Senator



"The events that SCPD arranged for me are models for other grass roots organizations. Their outreach helped me to communicate my message to local groups." Jennifer Brunner, Ohio Secretary of State



"I admire the way SCPD is active at all levels of politics. They understand that getting good people elected at every level is the only way to effect change." Congresswoman Betty Sutton, Ohio 13th District



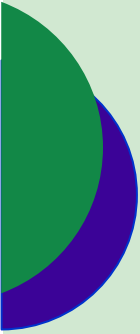
"As a candidate it was very important to me that when SCPD said they would be there to provide campaign support, that their word was golden." Ilene Shapiro, Summit County Councilwoman At-Large

DISCUSSION GROUP

By Mary Lohman

In July, about 15 SCPD members gathered at Frank and Ingrid Kunstel's house for the first gathering of an SCPD discussion group. The discussion group idea stemmed from our membership's desire to have an opportunity outside of formal meetings to converse and debate with fellow SCPD members on relevant political issues. Frank, serving as the discussion facilitator, presented each participant with a list of potential discus-

sion topics. The topic we selected to explore that evening dealt with the political viability of impeaching President George Bush. It was a rousing conversation, as you might expect, and all involved enjoyed the evening tremendously. We are planning another discussion group meeting soon and hope to get even more members involved, so please join us for our next conversation.



Join us at our next General Membership Meeting October 9 at 6:30 p.m. Akron Public Library, Meeting Room 2

A man in a hot air balloon realizes he is lost. He lowers his altitude and spots a man fishing from a boat below. He shouts to him, "Excuse me, can you help me? I promised a friend I would meet him an hour ago, but I don't know where I am."

The man consults his portable GPS and replies, "You're in a hot air balloon, approximately 30 feet above a ground elevation of 2346 feet above sea level. You are at 31 degrees, 14.97 minutes north latitude and 100 degrees, 49.09 minutes west longitude.

He rolls his eyes and says, "You must be a Democrat!"

"I am," replies the man. "How did you know?"

"Well," answers the balloonist, "everything you tell me is technically correct, but I have no idea what to do with your information, and I'm still lost. Frankly, you're not much help to me."

The man smiles and responds, "You must be a Republican."

"I am," replies the balloonist. "How did you know?"

"Well," says the man, "You don't know where you are or where you're going. You've risen to where you are, due to a large quantity of hot air. You made a promise that you have no idea how to keep, and now you expect me to solve your problem. You're in exactly the same position you were in before we met, but, somehow, now it's my fault."

The **Progressive Patriot** is edited by the SCPD Communications Committee. To submit an article or a comment contact Tom Liston.

maxepr@mac.com
email ikunstel@neo.rr.com

SCPD Executive Committee	
President:	Ingrid Kunstel
Vice President:	Sandra Kurt
Executive Secretary:	Guy Marentette
Recording Secretary:	Janet Dando
Treasurer:	Tamela Lee
Assistant Treasurer:	Jim Laurenson
At Large:	John Cross; Mary Nichols-Rhodes; Jodi Smith

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

