

State Committee Report June 9-11, 2017
Sheraton Hotel Harrisburg, PA
Peggy Lingwall, State Committeewoman, Clarion County

Four webinars were attended:

- 1) Defeating Gerrymandering, Presenter Dwayne Heisler
- 2) VAN, Presenter Katie Blume Regional Political Director PA Dems
- 3) Rural Organizing in PA- It's Time
Presenters:
Katie Blume, Regional Political Director Pa Dems
Gillian Kratzer, Blair County
Mickey Sgro, AFSCME
- 4) Democrats United!
Presenters:
Mitch Kates, PA Dems
Nathan Davidson, HDCC
David Marshall, SDCC

Defeating Gerrymandering

- City of Redding is without any representation
- District 6 has the worst gerrymandering in PA
- District 7 has undergone a huge evolution

Why has it changed: mapping technology, data mining, huge undisclosed outside money. Karl Rove approached the map people and Project Red Map 2010 was created. This was done right before the Dems eyes and was not hidden. Dem counter-offensive was to start Advantage 2020 This site provides more information <http://www.dlcc.org/advantage-2020> PA has the worst campaign laws in the U.S. Here are some other sites to gather information: <https://www.publicintegrity.org/> and <http://www.fairdistrictspa.com/> (excellent overview and latest info about bills being introduced) Please contact Dwayne Heisler at DwayneHeisler@gmail.com 570-317-6214 to arrange a guest lecture. He is very informative.

VAN

Votebuilder.com is the official site for counties, candidates to get out the vote. Please contact: Megan Winters, Data & Western Region Director megan@padems.com to get trained to use vote builder and get log-in privileges. This tool can manage and target all information for counties to run a successful campaign. You will need training to effectively use this. There is a wealth of information. katie@padems.com is also a contact for VAN.

Rural Organizing in PA- It's Time (Rural Organizing for Action and Respect)

-ROAR is a partnership between the counties of PA, labor unions, Dems and other action-oriented groups such as Indivisible. They hope to provide unifying messaging, host community forums and lobby.

-Suggested topics to get voters interested in causes for all Americans are: infrastructure, health care, public education, opioid crisis, connectivity / internet.
-This group plans to develop into a non-profit 501c (4) non-profit with a political twist.
* They especially want to help rural counties work on messaging.

Contacts for this new group: Gillian Kratzer Chairperson, Blair County Democratic Committee roarofpa@gmail.com Mickey Sgro, Executive Director, AFSCME Council 83 d.sgro@afscme13.org Katie Blume Political Director Pa Dems katie@padems.org

Democrats United

-This group provides candidate training "Campaign 101." They are a dynamic team that will work directly with any candidate at their level to provide tools for a successful campaign. Financing is not available through them but they can offer resources to achieve funding for a candidate's campaign. Nathan Davidson's contact information: office 717-238-1998 cell 717-599-1693 ndavidson@pahdcc.com

Rural Caucus

-The main topic of discussion was ways to keep donations to the Democratic Party local and not have contributions just support federal races. We need to fill all the vacant seats in our counties first to build unity for state and federal races.
-Counties thought the most effective tool in getting people to vote was to provide information to the voter through a direct mailing and through the newspaper for the elderly who still like to read print media. Information is not getting out to the voters!
-Some counties handed out a piece of literature at the voting precincts that briefly outlined the democratic candidates. This was successful.
-A subcommittee is working a video to reach union workers who have been lost to the Trump vote. 8/10 union workers voted for Trump.
-There will be a monthly phone conference to help communication between state committee meetings. First one is set for July 13 at 7:00 pm.

Northwest Caucus

-Main focus and topic of this meeting is to have the counties work on getting precinct chairs filled and then forward that list to Mitch Kates at PA Dems. Again, we want to work from the ground level up to establish a base of support.

Progressive Caucus

Notes from Lani Frank, Chair of Progressive Caucus:

Our Party is at a crossroads. Our country is reeling from the 2016 election and still in shock as to how we got here. The Republican Party has abandoned any resemblance of country before party. The Democratic Party is not perfect but we do offer a much better alternative. The trends of voters moving away from both parties is clear. Voters were clear that they are not happy with the direction our country is heading, and opted to elect a disrupter as President. Many voters in PA abandoned our party because they see us as a party which claims to be of the people but are really indebted to big investment if not big business as a whole.

The Democrats have an opportunity to step into the void being left by the Republican's lack of values, and clear promotion of benefits to the wealthy and big corporations over small businesses and individuals. We need a message that goes beyond platitudes. In 2016 voters said they didn't know what we stood for. We need to all ask ourselves what it means to be a Democrat, and then lead with our values. These resolutions ask us to do just that.

Issues such as Net Neutrality need to be embraced as they cut across party lines, have no debt burden/cost, and are only opposed by big businesses (if Comcast and Verizon are the prime beneficiaries of ending Net Neutrality you know that cause is just). As millions see their Chip, Medical Assistance or ACA plans threatened, a Medicare for All, such as a single payer healthcare proposal (currently passed in the California State Senate), that fills the gaps of the ACA (particularly high deductibles), is something we need to stand for. The Red State program which has successfully led to Pennsylvania having a legislature that will not let Democratic legislation be heard shows why we need to take a lead on gerrymandering. We have to say at some point, “reasonable regulation and some taxes are necessary.” GOP moderates support a carbon tax as a way to generate needed funds to move us to renewables. Other states have found Legalizing marijuana has an economic as well as political benefit and many others are already moving towards legalization. Why not PA?

These are opportunities for our Party, to go bold and give disgruntled voters something to embrace. Our concern is that our Party will lay low, will bury our heads, and not recognize the opportunities we have at this moment. We need to seize the day!!

We believe, as do many in our Party, that we need to read the signs, we need to respond to the will of our electorate, and show our courage as a Party to lead, rather than follow. This is not as difficult as you might think. Polls show that the electorate would support the legalization of marijuana, has concerns about gerrymandering, would support a carbon tax if properly framed, and opposes ending net neutrality.

There are economic benefits to legalizing and taxing pot. It would end the incarceration of so many, and would provide an economic boost in taxes collected and jobs. Farmers could grow a new crop. People with chronic pain could find an alternative to addictive opioids. And millennials would see our Party as one they could be excited about supporting. Some of our Democratic elected leaders have already come out publicly in support. Our Governor supported the legalization of Medical marijuana but was not sure about recreational options, but said he'd keep an open mind.

Regardless of our individual leanings on these and other issues, we should decide, amongst ourselves, whether we want to support these or other issues, and most importantly should have the opportunity to discuss them.

Do we want to attend SC meetings where we gather merely to nod in assent to a series of topics? Consider the meeting agenda—is there anything there that looks exciting? That would even mildly interest the Democratic non-committeeperson? If it's viewed by the television, does it look like a big yawn? Our meetings should represent the culmination of our educational, caucus, and regional meetings, which is the makeup of our State Committee. Why should we be afraid to discuss these issues?

I therefore ask you to consider the proposed resolutions I have attached. We will be reviewing the merits of these resolutions at our Progressive Caucus meeting on Saturday at 4PM. I invite anyone interested in these topics, and the others mentioned above, to attend our meeting and let us know how you feel.

Let's discuss making this a more open, transparent organization, where we stand for specifics as well as overarching generalities. As our nation is threatened by a massive transfer of wealth and power to the very wealthy and large corporations, by politics that

inflame racist tendencies in an effort to divide and gain more power, by gerrymandering that seeks to play keep-away with the public, we should stand up as a group and be able to say what's wrong, and articulate what we stand for.

We are dedicated Democrats for a reason! Let's demonstrate that we are a party which embraces our values and fights for the everyman.

Keynote speaker: DNC Vice Chair Michael Blake

Please see this link for his inspirational story:

<https://www.michaelblakefordnc.com/meet-michael>

General Meeting

Justice Debra Todd:

Spoke about her campaign and how we are the oldest Supreme Court in the nation.

-Vote "Yes" for her retention on the ballot in November. This is a separate area on the ballot they will need to check. Please educate your voters about this.

*If you vote straight Democratic Party, you won't include her.

Todd's issues as a current judge:

1) Works for Elder Justice. She started an Elder Justice Office and advisory council.

2) She developed the first sex offender court to begin in Allegheny County.

3) She is the Supreme Court liaison to veteran's court. This helps vets to avoid prison time for minor offenses.

Justice candidate for Superior Court Carolyn Nichols:

Spoke mainly about protecting working families.

Justice candidate for Superior Court Geoff Moulton:

Spoke about his view about backstop for overreaching by President and Congress. He stated that 90 percent of cases end at Superior Court level and that is why this court is so relevant.

Next Meeting:

September 8-9, 2017 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey Hotel