





**FORWARD!**

VOLUME 16 • NUMBER 6  
June 2008

Forward is the local chapter newsletter of the New Progressive Party in Dane County, Wisconsin. Progressive Dane is affiliated with the Independent Progressive Politics Network.

Progressive Dane is a democratic, membership-run organization. The following committees and task forces meet at the PD office, 1202 Williamson, in the Social Justice Center, unless otherwise noted.

**Steering Committee:** coordinates major activities, oversees the progress of other committees, and sets the agenda for the general membership meetings. Meetings are open to all PD members.

**Co-chair:** Jacque Pokorney, 843-9616  
**Co-chair:** Lukas Diaz, 262-443-3136 (cell)  
**Next meeting:** Monday, July 7, 7:00 pm, Main Conference Room, Social Justice Center (SJC)

**Elections Committee**

**Chair:** Lukas Diaz, diaz\_luke@yahoo.com  
**Next meeting:** Wednesday, July 2, 8:00 pm, SJC

**Newsletter Consortium**

**Contact:** Jim Kellerman, 354-7385

**Outreach and Fundraising Committee**

**Contact:** Norm Littlejohn, normlittlejohn@hotmail.com  
**Next meeting:** Monday, July 28, 7:30 pm, SJC

**Policy Committee**

**Chair:** Brenda Konkel, brendakonkel@gmail.com  
**Next meeting:** Sunday, July 13, 4:00 pm, SJC

**Transportation/Environmental Task Force**

**Contact:** Aaron Crandall, aaron.crandall@yahoo.com  
**Next Meeting:** Thursday, July 10, 5:30 pm, Escape Java Joint

**Public Safety Task Force**

**Contact:** Jessa Lutz, jessa.lutz@gmail.com  
**Next Meeting:** TBA, check www.prodane.org

**Economic Issues Task Force**

**Contact:** Rick Richards, syzygy1@charter.net  
**Next meeting:** Thursday, July 10, 5:00 pm, SJC

**Education Task Force**

**Contact:** TJ Mertz, tjmertz@sbcglobal.net  
**Next meeting:** TBA, check www.prodane.org

**Housing Task Force**

**Contact:** Jacque Pokorney, juju\_jacque@yahoo.com  
**Next meeting:** Sunday, July 20, 7:00 pm, SJC

**PRODUCTION AND CIRCULATION CONSORTIUM:**

Lynn Alten, Mary Anglim, Jamie Annear, Chris Babiarz, Erik Breilid, Lukas Diaz, John Dupuis, Sheila Guilfoyle, Jim Kellerman, Tom Kozlovsky, Norm Littlejohn, Jacque Pokorney, Richard Russell, Ralph Shively

**THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS:** Lukas Diaz, AndrewKell, Ashok Kumar, Norm Littlejohn

Submit articles, meeting times and announcements for the July newsletter to Dace Zeps, 257-4985, or office@prodane.org  
*Noon, Tuesday, July 8*

Send all correspondence to:  
Progressive Dane



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Visit Progressive Dane on the web at www.prodane.org

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# Volunteer & Tabling Corner

by Andrew Kell

WHILE OUR MEMBERSHIP base continues to grow at a slow but steady rate, the volunteer base which Progressive Dane has as a valuable resource, seems to be populated with the same die hard souls who make it out to general membership, task force, and committee meetings. Without this group of 20 or so individuals, Progressive Dane would come to a screeching halt. If we were to start losing some of these individuals for whatever reason, the future of our organization would be in big trouble.

Since we are a member/volunteer-run organization, volunteer participation is the very lifeblood by which we survive and thrive. For reasons of sheer sustainability and effectiveness, we really need you, our membership, to start getting involved with Progressive Dane in whatever capacity you can, if you have not done so already.

I would like to note the volunteer efforts of PD member Floyd Hummel at this point. Floyd became a member a little while back and a couple months ago he decided he needed to start getting more involved. Since then he has helped with tabling and making a few phone calls. He has helped inform the public of our organization, get a few new members, and get a bunch of existing members to renew their membership simply by volunteering a few hours of his time. I salute you Floyd.

I'm going to initiate a member engagement phone bank later this month or at the start of July, to start talking to you, or members, and see if you can lend a hand like Floyd has done. There are many activities you could do to help out, but I'm going to focus on two right now.

The first is letting all your progressive friends know about us and encourage them to become members like you. People are more likely to join an organization if their friends bring them in. There are multiple ways to do this in an effective, yet informal

way that will motivate them to do so and I'd like to talk with you about how this can be done.

The second thing you can do is table for us this summer. We have multiple opportunities coming up, the first of which is Saturday, June 28 at the Farmers' Market. The other tabling opportunities are listed below. Please contact me to volunteer some of your time and help build the progressive movement in Madison and Dane County--call me at 467-1679 or email organizer@prodane.org.

- July 12: Farmers' Market
- July 26: Atwood Festival
- August 9: Farmers' Market
- August 17: Triangle Ethnic Fest
- August 23: Orton Park Festival
- September 1: Labor Fest
- September 6: Fighting Bob Fest
- September 13: Farmers' Market
- September 20: Willy St. Fest
- October 11: Farmers' Market

# County Votes to Establish Ties with Venezuela

by Ashok Kumar

ON JUNE 5, THE DANE COUNTY Board voted overwhelmingly to establish a sister-county relationship with Andres Eloy Blanco Municipality in Venezuela, a resolution unanimously supported by the Progressive Dane membership. And County Executive Kathleen Falk signed the resolution that establishes this new sister-county relationship.

The "Resolution to Accept the Invitation to Establish a Sister Relationship with the People of Andres Eloy Blanco Municipality, Venezuela" was a response to a visit by Venezuela's ambassador Bernardo Alvarez to Dane County. Alvarez met with Supervisors in an effort to establish a sister relationship between Dane County and a municipality in Venezuela.

Martin Sanchez, the Venezuelan Consulate General from Chicago, emphasized the groundbreaking nature of the agreement, "This agreement is the first between a US city, county, or state in the last decade since Hugo Chavez was elected. It will surely contribute to improved relations between the American and Venezuelan people. Venezuela will now get to see aspects of American culture, traditions, and everyday life that they haven't seen outside the trivial portrayal of the US by Hollywood. Also, Dane county residents will get to see positive aspects of Venezuelan society that are not covered by corporate media."

County Supervisors, community organizers, and officials in Andres Eloy Blanco worked together to formulate the resolution and relationship. Matt Earley, co-owner of Madison-based cooperative Just Coffee who recently returned from visiting Sanare, the capital of Andres Eloy Blanco, said, "This agreement will help us develop people-to-people relationships as well as the trading of goods and services. We are very excited at the prospect of supplying coffee from Sanare to residents in the US, which will be made infinitely easier with the passage of the sister-county relationship."

Sanare is an urban area surrounded by

small rural towns located in the midwest region of Venezuela. The main engine of the municipality's economy is agriculture and coffee production. According to Mayor Alfredo Orozco, during many decades this area has been the epicenter of many struggles for social justice and is also considered to be the birthplace of the Venezuelan peasant cooperative movement; as well as home of poets, musicians, and revolutionary leaders. All these characteristics make Andres Eloy Blanco a place with a unique social and progressive environment, as well as a place whose inhabitants have great adherence to participatory democracy and to community life. "After receiving the visit of several Wisconsin residents in our state, we are very excited at officially establishing a sister-county relationship with Dane County," said the Mayor.

Beyond official recognition of the sister-county relationship, the resolution also establishes a revenue and expense account for donations, and forms a task force to foster trade, enhance intercultural understanding, and encourage communication, friendship, and good-

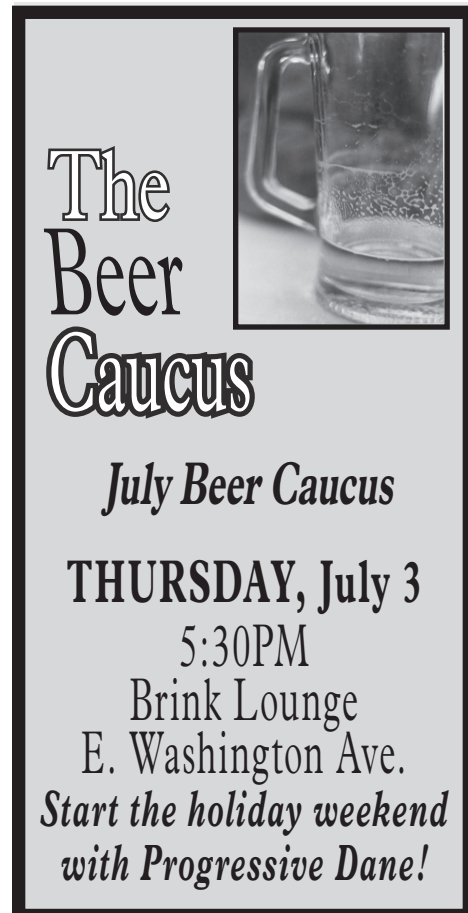
will between communities in Venezuela and the United States.

Former County Supervisor and lead sponsor of the resolution, Ashok Kumar, thanked the County Board and the County Executive for their support, stating, "The sister-county resolution passed unanimously in both the Personnel & Finance Committee and the Executive Committee and on the floor last Thursday. This is a testament to the open-minded nature of Dane County residents and elected officials and it will undoubtedly assist social movements of both Dane County and Andres Eloy Blanco."

Members of DASA (Dane-Andres Eloy Blanco Sister Alliance) are invited to speak at our GMM on June 25. For further information or to get more involved contact: Charity Schmidt, Community Action on Latin America, (608) 334-6370; Ashok Kumar, former District 5 Dane County Supervisor, (608) 843-0615; Martin Sanchez, Venezuelan Consulate General, Chicago, (312) 236-9655; Juscha Robinson, Liberty Tree Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, (608) 239-4269.

## Highlights of Last Month at the GMM

- Kyle Richmond gave the Supervisor report and spoke out strongly in favor of the Equal Benefits and Domestic Partnership Registry--General Membership voted unanimously to support this resolution at the County Board. He also suggested PD host a certification process for members to register new voters and upcoming land-use issues near waterways at the county level.
- Marsha Rummel gave the Alder report and answered a wide variety of questions on a myriad of issues facing the city including CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) approval process, TIF districts, the Urban Design Commission, Central Library re-design, several parks issues including Central Park and Yahara Parkway, upcoming zoning re-write including the issue of housing co-ops, Truman-Olson property and Porchlight proposal, and last but definitely not least, the issue of becoming more friendly to chickens in Madison.
- The membership then discussed the current homelessness issue in preparation for the two forums that happened June 5 and June 8 (see this newsletter for details of both events). Led by Tenant Resource Center director and Alder Brenda Konkel, the discussion started with a list of myths and misperceptions and ended with an emphasis on statistics and solutions (as opposed to right-wing fear-mongering) with discussion to continue at this month's GMM.



The Beer Caucus

July Beer Caucus

THURSDAY, July 3

5:30PM

Brink Lounge  
E. Washington Ave.

Start the holiday weekend  
with Progressive Dane!

# Coalition and PD Fight Homelessness...continued

from front page

Three nights after the Coalition's forum, on June 8 at the Wil-Mar Center, Vicky Selkove facilitated Progressive Dane's follow-up to the forum of June 5. Joseph Lindstrom and Kristen Petroschius, along with several Operation Welcome Home participants, helped PD focus on city and county policies and legislation.

Two Madison Alders were present, Brenda Konkel and Marsha Rummel, along with six County Board members: Carousel Bayrd, Chuck Erickson, John Hendrick, Wyndham Manning, Kyle Richmond, and Barbara Vedder

Lindstrom and Petroschius both pointed out that, though there are many volunteers at any moment at every homeless service agency—which is a great thing—there's generally been a failure to work on the issue through politics. Lindstrom's Homeless Services Consortium has only recently established a Legislative Committee.

Different organizations working on homelessness have taken different approaches: wages, housing, preventing evictions. In 2005, a community plan was developed to take a more comprehensive approach.

Lindstrom advocated for the city to provide more outreach workers, eviction prevention, transit to get to jobs, and expansion of the city's affordable housing trust fund. For the county, he advocated more funding for addiction treatment and making homeless status a priority criterion for alcohol and/or drug addiction treatment; more mental health prescriptions and diagnosis; and expediting Social Security and disability applications to avoid expensive interim assistance.

Petroschius described what Operation Welcome Home has done with minimal resources and what could be done with support from the city and county.

A non-profit day labor program would help homeless people earn some money to move toward self-reliance, along with training them for more

permanent work. Increased counseling would help OWH residents avoid slipping back into self-destructive patterns.

More housing would be the foundation for keeping people from ending up back on the streets. While people are without permanent homes, OWH would like to see sleeping in parks legalized. Most shelters have a limit of how many days per year an individual can use the shelter, so people save those days for cold weather.

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## MONEY TALKS

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Much of what these two gatherings talked about requires funding from the city or the county, or both. This is one way that PD activists—you!—can have a lasting effect on how Madison and Dane County approach homelessness.

Progressive Dane is not yet officially a member of the Dane County Coalition to Fight Homelessness and End Poverty, which staged the June 5 forum. The Steering Committee has voted to recommend to the membership that PD join the Coalition, and that will be up for a vote at the General Membership Meeting on June 25.

If PD joins the Coalition, we can help other Coalition member organizations interact with elected officials to turn these ideas into reality.

Progressive Dane can help educate the media and the public about homelessness and possible solutions, as well as help with research to refine those solutions, looking at what's worked in communities around the nation.

We can help the public and elected officials make the connections between homelessness and housing policy, transit policy, health care, schools—all the interlocked aspects of this complex issue.

Finally, we can hold our own PD elections, and others, accountable for showing up and giving this issue the attention it needs. The real priorities of a legislative body show up in the budget,

and that's where our membership can make the most impact. That will be our work, putting pressure on our city and county elected officials.

Madison's Mayor starts budget hearings in August and proposes a budget to the Common Council. From September into early November, the Council considers the budget through committees and as the whole Council.

The best tactic is to try to get the Mayor to include funding wanted in the budget he submits; it's much harder to take something out once he puts it in, and by the same token, much harder to get something in that the Mayor didn't include.

The County Executive submits her budget to the County Board early in October, and the process of writing that budget is already starting. So at city and county level both, the time to press for funding is near, if not here.

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## NEXT STEPS

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PD's Housing Task Force will be "action central" on this issue for members who want to get involved—we can make a difference; we need your help to do it. Contact Jacque Pokorney, PD Housing Task Force chair, at [juju\\_jacque@yahoo.com](mailto:juju_jacque@yahoo.com) or 843-9616 if you want to get more involved. Or attend the next Housing Task Force meeting Sunday, July 20, at 7PM at the Social Justice Center.

Contact any of these groups for more information and volunteer opportunities. Dane County Coalition to Fight Homelessness and End Poverty ([ccfhdp.blogspot.com](http://ccfhdp.blogspot.com) or [dcfhdp@gmail.com](mailto:dcfhdp@gmail.com)). Porchlight ([www.porchlight.org](http://www.porchlight.org)). IHN ([www.ihnmadison.org](http://www.ihnmadison.org); [interfaith@tds.net](mailto:interfaith@tds.net)). YWCA ([www.ywcamadison.org](http://www.ywcamadison.org)). United Way ([www.unitedway-danecounty.org](http://www.unitedway-danecounty.org)). Operation Welcome Home ([www.operationwelcomehome.info](http://www.operationwelcomehome.info) or [petroschius@riseup.net](mailto:petroschius@riseup.net)). Homeless Services Consortium ([joseph.lindstrom@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.lindstrom@gmail.com)). Tenant Resource Center ([brendakonkel@gmail.com](mailto:brendakonkel@gmail.com)).

# PD-Sponsored Homelessness Event with OWH

by Andrew Kell

DESPITE THE TERRENTIAL downpours and flash food warnings, we had a good turnout at Wil-Mar Center on June 8, with eight local, elected officials participating from the city and county in our PD Homelessness event.

Joe Lindstrom talked about the Homeless Services Consortium (a coalition of over 40 organizations in Dane County) and their Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. Here is a link to the Homeless Services Consortium plan: [www.cityofmadison.com/cdbg/docs/community\\_plan\\_to\\_end\\_homelessness\\_final.pdf](http://www.cityofmadison.com/cdbg/docs/community_plan_to_end_homelessness_final.pdf). To find out more about the plan in general, email [joseph.lindstrom@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.lindstrom@gmail.com).

Kristen Petroschius and several members of Operation Welcome Home talked about their group's successes as well as their plan regarding Brittingham Park and providing more direct services in terms of housing first, employment (day labor), and peer-led activities and accountability.

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## PROPOSAL FOR FIGHTING HOMELESSNESS / BRITTINGHAM PARK PROGRAMS

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### GOALS:

To provide positive opportunities for building community, accessing services, and making self-improvement while respecting the right of people to use public spaces. And create systems of accountability for people's behavior in public spaces.

Our basic proposal is to provide people who have been part of the community, who use and stay at Brittingham Park, with a community organization to get involved in. Everyone involved in Operation Welcome Home participates in our Leadership Development Program. Through the LDP, people can work on building interpersonal relationship skills, moving toward sobriety, obtaining housing and employment, and developing their leadership skills. People become involved in



Wesley, Wesley, and Kristen of Operation Welcome Home

the organization through accessing any of our programs.

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## HOUSING FIRST INITIATIVE

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- Provide housing with wrap-around services for people ready to make a commitment to participating in an AODA program, attending weekly organizational meetings, and participating in a weekly interpersonal relationship skills/group therapy program.
- Expand existing program to include 2 sides of a duplex.
- Hire case manager to work one-on-one with residents more intensively.

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## DAY LABOR PROGRAM

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- Non-profit day labor program to provide people with short one-time jobs--based on model of the San Francisco Day Labor Program.
- Program would need to be housed at a site easy for the homeless to access.
- To participate in job program, people must participate in weekly organizational meetings to develop their interpersonal relationship and leadership skills (thus increasing accountability).
- Program would receive calls for job requests in the morning, jobs would be equally distributed among workers, and workers would be sent out to job sites.
- Such a program would be a positive influence on public spaces and this

community in general, providing people with an opportunity for self-improvement by meeting them where they are at, and hopefully curbing activities such as drug dealing or heavy drinking.

- Such a program would also boost people's self confidence and, by putting a little money in their pockets, make resorting to petty theft less likely. For information on a similar program that works, see <http://www.lrcl.org/daylabor/daylabor.asp>.

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## PEER-LED AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES & ACCOUNTABILITY CIRCLE

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- Over time as we develop a more structured presence in the park, we would like to provide positive activities such as meals, basketball and volleyball games, a dance group, and an exercise group.
- These activities would be led by members of the community who often use the Brittingham Park pavilion, thus making other people more likely to engage in them.
- We would also like to create an accountability circle at Brittingham Park. This would provide a structure and space for people to make community agreements and hold each other accountable to these agreements.

For more information about Operation Welcome Home, contact Kristen Petroschius, (608) 335-6171 or [www.operationwelcomehome.info](http://www.operationwelcomehome.info).