



## From an organizer's desk

The current crisis places Progressive Dane's work into sharp perspective. The crisis is undeniably global, yet PD is a political party based locally in Dane County. Although we are affiliated with two national organizations, the New Party and the Independent Progressive Politics Network, PD's work has always been primarily local and focused on local issues.

### WHAT IS PROGRESSIVE DANE'S ROLE IN A MOMENT SUCH AS THIS?

First, while much of the American political establishment has rushed to be seen standing behind the flag and President Bush, many of our local elected officials have been outspoken in their support for a more genuine patriotism. In defending the Constitutional separation of church and state, calling for a police response to terrorism based in international law, and introducing legislation to re-establish public control over airport security, all 17 PD-elected officials on the Dane County Board, Madison Common Council, and Madison Metropolitan School Board have consistently promoted a progressive response to the current crisis.

Were they with us today, Fighting Bob, Belle, Philip, and Robert LaFollette Jr. would be proud of our PD officeholders, though they would certainly wish that elected officials at higher offices were as honest and courageous.

Second, the economic and social fallout from the Sept. 11th attacks are already being felt in Dane County. Layoffs and talk of layoffs have increased dramatically in local industries, particularly transportation, service and hospitality. A Sept. 28th meeting with Tony Mazzochi, the Labor Party Chair, made clear just how much working people are already hurting across the country. He told me that 50% of the members of the Hotel Employees Restaurant Employees union (HERE) were laid-off in the weeks

following Sept. 11th, 150,000 workers in all. The human and ecological costs of the current crisis make it much more important that PD members succeed in our work for affordable housing, drug policy reform, smart growth, clean government, clean lakes, and social equality.

So, what is Progressive Dane's role in a moment like this? Our role is to build an independent and democratic base of political power for social progress. The institutions of the political establishment - the dominant political parties, the corporations and their lobbies, the mass media and PR industry, the military and criminal justice system - are functioning quite effectively according to their design. We too have a design, and if we carry it out effectively there will be ample reason to hope. We are building our own political institution, a political party dedicated to democracy, and we are well on our way.

So I end with an appeal for members, please, to take part in building the party. Let's grow our membership, build our organization, achieve our policy goals and win next year's elections. Please take a look at the directory of PD task forces and committees, and find the role(s) where you can make your best contribution. Please help to grow the membership of PD by taking part in our Autumn Canvass Week, Oct. 30th-Nov. 4th. Please publicly and vocally support our elected officials as they take progressive stands that make you proud. Please contact me, your staff organizer, if

you are willing to step forward in any of these areas (608-257-4985 or prodane@igc.org). We have an essential role to play; let's play it.

- BEN MANSKI

## The Drug Policy Task Force: An update

STEPHANIE REARICK

PD's Drug Policy Task Force has been meeting with various public officials regarding the implementation of more progressive drug policies in Madison and Dane County. We have received a great deal of helpful information and are ready to move forward in effecting harm reduction policies.

First, Ald. Brenda Konkel helped us to develop city-wide proposals to reiterate our city's already-existing ordinance (23.20) that states that possession of marijuana on private property "is not a crime and is not subject to forfeiture," and that patients with a recommendation from a medical practitioner may possess marijuana anywhere. She also committed to having the city attorney's office begin work on a resolution to amend the ordinance to make it legal for medical marijuana patients to grow their own marijuana or to designate a caregiver to grow it for them, in order to avoid the pitfall of needing to obtain their legal (at the city level) medicine through illegal means.

Second, Mayor Sue Bauman attended our September Task Force meeting. This

(See 'Drug policy,' page 3)

## The Madison Area Peace Coalition

The Progressive Dane membership passed the following resolution at its general meeting on September 26, 2001:

"Progressive Dane affirms its support of the Madison Area Peace Coalition in light of the steps taken by our government in the recent weeks.

Furthermore, while condemning the attacks in Washington D.C. and New York we also condemn any steps taken by our government that would result in the loss of more innocent lives, whatever their nationality."

Note: you can find out more about the Madison Area Peace Coalition by visiting their website: <http://www.madpeace.org>

**Progressive Dane Notes**

October 2001 • Volume IX, No. 10

*Progressive Dane Notes* is the local chapter newsletter of the New Progressive Party of Wisconsin.

*Progressive Dane* is a democratic, membership-run organization with the following committee structure: (all meetings are held at the PD office, 200 N. Blount St., 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:** Tom Running (241-5575)

**Co-chair:** Brenda Konkel (251-2412)

**Next meeting:** Wed., Nov. 14, 7-9 p.m.

**Diversity Committee**

**Contacts:** Carrie Bormann or Ginny Bormann

**Elections Committee**

**Chair:** David Austin (250-0424)

**Next meeting:** Mon., Oct. 22, 7-8:30 p.m.

**Fundraising Committee**

**Chair:** Richard-Marie Commander (251-7424)

**Leadership Development Committee**

**Chair:** Kathy Schroeder (242-8368)

**Newsletter Consortium**

**Contact:** Chris Babiarz (257-3288)

**Outreach Committee**

**Chair:** Nick Berigan (257-0187)

**Policy Committee**

**Chair:** Ron Richardson (256-7144)

**Next meeting:** Tues., Oct. 23, 6-8 p.m.

**Citizen Initiative Task Force**

**Contact:** Morgan Sharpe (218-1381)

**Clean Government Task Force**

**Chair:** Michael Jacob (245-0894)

**Next meeting:** Mon., Oct. 22, 5:30-7 p.m.

**Drug Policy Task Force**

**Chair:** Stephanie Rearick (255-1092)

**Next meeting:** Thurs., Nov. 15, 7-9 p.m., Mother Fool's Coffeeshouse, 1101 Williamson St..

**Environmental Task Force**

**Chair:** Phyllis Hasbrouck (223-9571)

**Housing Task Force**

**Chair:** Dean Loumos (332-2095)

**Smart Growth Task Force**

**Co-chairs:** Sheila Guilfoyle (244-7534)

**Become part of the PD Steering Committee**

In the initial round of nominations at the Sept. general membership meeting (GMM), the following people were nominated to the Steering Committee (SC): Dean Loumos, David Austin, Kathy Schroeder, Sheila Guilfoyle, Brenda Konkel, Megin Hicks, Phyllis Hasbrouck, Richard-Marie Commander, Stephanie Rearick, Tom Running

The election will take place at the GMM on Oct. 24. Additional nominations will be taken, but only for people who are present to accept the nomination. Call Jim Schwall (245-1881) with the phone number of the person being nominated, so that he can confirm that

person's willingness to serve. You can nominate yourself or another PD member. Nominees will be asked to give a one- to two-minute speech before the election. The SC has a membership of ten (at least five must be women), and meets the second Wed. of each month. Members serve one-year terms. Each SC member chairs one month of SC/GMM and, if possible, acts as liaison to a standing committee or task force. SC duties amount to at least ten hours a month. Training, including training in facilitating meetings, is provided. Two co-chairs will be selected by the new SC to act as day-to-day PD spokespersons.

**Bulletin Board ~**

**Elections Committee to Update the County Platform:** Every two years we review and update

the county platform. Please join the Elections Committee on Mon., Nov. 5 at 7 p.m. at the PD office to add your voice to the process. We will discuss in detail a series of changes to the platform and will forward our recommendations to the general membership to be voted on Nov. 28. The Nov. newsletter will contain the current platform and the recommended changes.

**Discussion of PD bylaw changes at the Nov. General Membership Meeting:** Notify prodane@igc.org (257-4985) by Nov. 14 if you have any suggestions for changes.

**Two Campaign School Sessions Scheduled:** We're taking over the County Board next spring, but not without your help! Our candidates will need skilled volunteers to put them into office. The Elections Committee is sponsoring two hands-on, in-depth workshops on the critical elements necessary to elect progressives to local office. Please join us at the PD office on Sat., Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., and Thurs., Nov. 29, 6-9 p.m. Contact Michael Jacob (245-0894 or michaeljacobdc@hotmail.com) to sign up or for more information.

**Announcing the Nick Berigan Honorary Autumn Canvass Week:** Tues., Oct. 30 to Sun., Nov. 4. Tues.-Fri. 5-9 p.m. & Sat.-Sun. 2-6 p.m. Meet at the PD Office. Contact: 257-4985 or prodane@igc.org.

**Support the Green Progressive Alliance:** We are bringing together PD supporters and Greens to create a new group on the UW campus. Come to a kick-off celebration and informational meeting on Tues., Oct. 23 at 7 p.m. (campus location to be announced). Contact Brian Lutenneger (251-6584 or blutenegger@yahoo.com) for details.

**Do you know any "Unsung Heroes" in PD?** You know, the people who do the work we don't always see but will notice if it doesn't get done. We'll be honoring these "heroes" at our third annual Snowball in December. If you'd like to nominate someone, contact Tom Running (tomrunn@execpc.com or 241-5575) or Brenda Konkel (brendakonkel@yahoo.com or 251-2412).



**Congratulations** to PD members **Laura Dresser and David Austin** on the birth of their son, **Nelson Austin Dresser**, on **Sept. 16** (one day ahead of schedule!)

**PD's Strategic Planning Session** BY JASON HAAS

The annual PD Strategic Planning Session, at which members reviewed PD's recent history and recommended the party's future directions, was held on Aug. 18. Members discussed PD's election strategy, media coverage, and PD's housing and drug policy work. The group recommended making PD's signature issue a combination of smart growth and affordable housing.

**Progressive Dane Hotline: 257-4985 | Web Site: <http://www.newparty.org/pd>**

*Progressive Dane Notes* is published nine days before the General Membership Meeting. The deadline for the next issue is Noon, Tuesday, Nov. 13. Submissions should be directed to Chris Babiarz at 257-3288 (babiarz@cae.wisc.edu).

**Production and Circulation Consortium**  
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# Taking the fear out of canvassing

ADAM BENEDETTO

In nurturing our democracy on its most basic level, we are faced with the necessary and sometimes complicated task of communication - and not communication in the vague sense of mass e-mail messages or one-sided articles. True democracy revolves around the basic principle of people discussing something to reach a common understanding, if not a consensus. In this respect, canvassing is a profound way for activists to gain trust because it is one of the few ways we can reach out to the public without an intermediary altering the message. It is also a forum that makes it easy for the public to ask questions and for us to address them.

Canvassing encourages open channels of communication, those moments when two people are actually looking each other in the eye. When disengagement with one another is the norm, something as simple as eye contact can immediately make abstract politics tangible. It is a very intimate experience to discuss something as personal as politics (especially local politics) with someone whom you have never met before. This can be intimidating for both the canvasser and the person being canvassed. But the point to remember is that we can always appeal to our common humanity.

When you are canvassing, there are three main types of responses that you will encounter - positive, negative and neutral. All of these can be used to your advantage. Let's take the easiest first. If someone reacts positively to everything you are telling them, they may already have an idea of what PD is about and what you are going to say. If this is the case, your only job is to figure out what they know and then further their knowledge with details. These are the fun and easy encounters.

The negative response, surprisingly, should not be the most difficult. When a person reacts in a disagreeable way they are at least interested in what's being said. If someone is listening then it should not be hard for them to hear the reasons why you are talking to people. Once people see *you* as a person it is more difficult for them to be

rude or even disagreeable. The struggle is quickly to find the ideas inherent to their argument that do not match yours, and to respond to them. The more you canvass, the easier this becomes.



The worst person to talk with, and every canvasser knows this situation, is someone who is not interested in any of the political issues that you have raised. It takes a lot of time to convince someone that the democratic process does not work without them, and usually your voice will sound like it's coming from a 'high horse.' Sometimes it is best to relate to them by saying that you never thought you would vote either until a particular issue caught your attention. Again, this makes things personal. A more comical

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## Drug policy (from page 1)

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was enlightening as well as productive. Mayor Bauman showed a strong grasp of harm-reduction issues and offered good ideas of ways to focus our energies. She suggested lobbying at a county level for increased treatment availability (a recurring theme among almost everyone we've met with), age-appropriate drug abuse prevention programs, community-building efforts, etc. She agreed to direct the Madison Police Dept. to enforce Ord. 23.20, once we pass our resolution in the Common Council. She also stated support for our efforts to make it safe to call 911 in case of overdose.

Third, we have been meeting with law enforcement officials regarding our 911 overdose call campaign. In August we met with Assistant Police Chief Noble Wray, and on early in Oct. we met with Lt. Bill Housley of the Dane County Narcotics Task Force. Both of them believe that it is essential that we do what we can to facilitate people calling for help in case of overdose. They also both claim that it is very rare for overdose victims or callers to be prosecuted based on a 911 call, but both admit that the data is nearly impossible to obtain. There currently is no category for overdose cases in 911 call files, so they may be scattered throughout any number of categorizations (i.e. attempted

situation is when the person whom you're talking to is entirely wrapped up in an unrelated topic. For instance, someone canvassing for a school board candidate may be asked about how that person feels about gun control or the death penalty. This is a difficult moment. If you honestly don't know, admit it. But make sure they understand that you share their concern but you have been concentrating in these other areas for good reasons.

If this attempt to de-mystify canvassing suggests a common thread with selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door, it's mainly because good sales people can relate easily and quickly to others and establish a basis of trust. In that light, it is probably best to think of canvassing as a modest way to bring the noble ideas of democracy to the masses for the low, low price of a vote. What a deal!

suicide or EMS assist). Information on follow-up to these calls is at least as scattered. Lt. Housley has been pushing for an overdose categorization in order to deal more effectively with these calls, to understand the problems that the City and County face, and to devise potential solutions.

Our next step is to meet with Housley, Wray, and other interested parties to draft language for a harm-reduction overdose call policy. An example might be, "Individuals who call for help will not be pursued for criminal prosecution based on that call." Our goal in working with police on the drafting of the policy is to develop something that they feel they can abide by and still do the jobs they are required to do. We have a meeting scheduled for Oct. 22 and will invite other public officials.

We are also actively seeking a meeting with County Executive Kathleen Falk, who has made some excellent proposals regarding funding for a drug abuse treatment center as a partial alternative to jail expansion.

If you are interested in attending the drafting meeting or in obtaining more detailed information about any past meetings or other drug policy-related matters, please feel free to contact me at [steph@uvulittle.com](mailto:steph@uvulittle.com).

The Drug Policy Task Force meets on the third Thurs. of each month at 7 p.m. at the Social Justice Center, 1202 Williamson.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Next Meeting

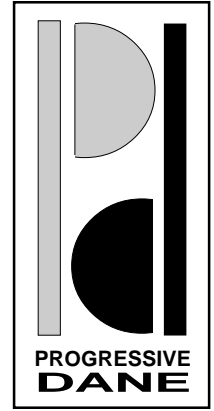
7 o'clock p.m.
October 24, 2001

Madison Public Library
201 W. Mifflin St.

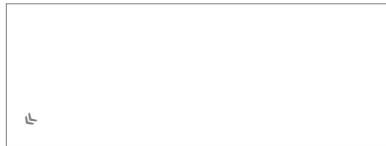
If you need an interpreter, materials in alternative formats, or other accommodations, please contact the PD office, 257-4985, one week in advance of the meeting.

The Agenda

- Steering Committee election
Madison anti-loitering ordinance: Discussion
By-laws change in November: Discussion
Halloween-week canvass: Information
Recognition of affiliation with the UW Green-Progressive Alliance: Discussion and vote
Newsletter name change: Discussion
Educational: Housing issues
Chair: Jim Schwall, jschwall@madtown.net or 245-1881



If your renewal date is 10/01/01 or earlier, this is your last newsletter. Please renew.



Volunteer Night
Help with vital yet easy tasks (labeling newsletters, writing thank-you cards, etc.)
Chat with Progressive Dane members.
Refreshments provided.
Tuesday, November 20, 2001, 5:30-7 p.m., 200 N. Blount St.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

New Progressive Party
P.O. Box 1222
Madison, WI 53701

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Form with fields for Name, Date, Address, City, State/Zip, Phone, Email, membership options (Annual, Sustaining), and payment method (Bank Draft, Credit Card).

Mail to: Progressive Dane, P.O. Box 1222, Madison, WI 53701 For more info: (608) 257-4985