



Creating a strategy for the people

PD's Citizen Initiative Task Force

By ANN FLEISCHLI

This spring Progressive Dane approved the formation of the Citizen Initiative Task Force. The task force's main purpose is to help PD utilize the Citizen Initiative process, through which citizens can propose and enact laws in their city or village (in this case, the city of Madison). Once a law is proposed, citizens must gather a certain number of signatures (currently in Madison, that number is 12,636) within a sixty-day period. Once the required signatures are obtained, the proposed law is submitted to the City Council for its approval. If the Council does not approve the proposed law, the proposal must then go on the ballot in a spring or fall general election.

The process was last used successfully by Madison citizens in 1992. In that year citizens wrote, obtained signatures, and got on the ballot a law that protects our shoreline parks from development. That effort is still used as an example by the Legislative Reference Bureau of the
(see Citizen Initiative, page 3)

Meet PD's new organizer

By ADAM BENEDETTO

Over the last thirteen years it has become impossible for anyone involved in Madison's progressive politics to avoid an encounter with Ben Manski. As one person put it, "He's practically a political institution here." It's only fitting then that PD has brought him on as the new staff organizer.

Ben brings a long history of activism, ranging from his 1996 run for County Board (which he lost by six votes), to his most recent position as State Coordinator for the Nader/LaDuke Campaign (which also lost by a few votes).

But not all of Ben's undertakings have had disappointing outcomes. His involvement with PD started with a membership in the New Party in 1993/94, and has continued with his involvement in numerous local PD election campaigns. More than that, he's been a dedicated focal point for numerous local and national organizing efforts. "We've swept in the last two local elections," he comments.

Manski wants to continue the efforts his predecessor, Jim Powell, has already begun. "We have a two year time horizon
(see Organizer, page 3)

Census Count means new district lines for Alders and Supervisors

By MICHAEL JACOB

Every ten years the US Census takes a count of people living in the United States. Among the many policy and political effects of this count is the redrawing of the lines dividing our city, county and state into political jurisdictions.

As a local political party with seven City Council members and six County Board supervisors, we

know this issue can have a tremendous impact on our ability to affect local progressive policy for the next ten years and beyond.

The County Board had decided to reduce its size from 39 to 37 by eliminating two Madison districts.

In Madison there was initial momentum behind Mayor Bauman's desire to reduce the City Council to 18 seats. But when PD

members and our Alders pointed out that a smaller City Council meant more expensive campaigns funded by special interests, alders spread even thinner among more constituents, and a more professionalized City Council, it was an easy call to keep the 20 seats.

Most of Dane County's growth has been in the suburbs and on Madison's southwest and far northeast sides. The most dramatic

changes to City Council and County Board districts, therefore, will happen in those areas, especially in the near and far west sides of Madison.

In some cases the new lines will mean little change; in others it means we will have a better chance of defeating conservative incumbents. We may end up with elected officials pitted against other

(see Redistricting, page 3)

Progressive Dane Notes

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Lynn Alten, Mary Anglim, Chris Babiarz, Richard-Marie Commander, Sheila Guilfoyle, Beth Harper, Brenda Konkel, Ben Manski, Peter Rathbun, Tona Williams, Matt Zebell.

This month's contributors

David Austin, Adam Benedetto, Ann Fleischli, Beth Harper, Brenda Konkel, Ben Manski, Stephanie Rearick, Cynthia White

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., June 13, 7-9 p.m.

Policy Committee

Chair: Ron Richardson (256-7144)

Next meeting: Tues., June 26, 6 p.m.

Leadership Development Committee

Chair: Kathy Schroeder (242-8368)

Next meeting: Wed., June 20, 7 p.m.

Clean Government Task Force

Chair: Michael Jacob (245-0894)

Next meeting: Mon., June 4, 6:30 p.m., State St. Bar & Grill, 118 State St.

Housing Task Force

Chair: Dean Loumos (332-2095)

Next meeting: Mon., June 11, 7 p.m.

Smart Growth Task Force

Co-chairs: Sheila Guilfoyle (244-7534)

Next meeting: Wed., June 6, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Drug Policy Task Force

Chair: Stephanie Rearick (255-1092)

Next meeting: Sun., May 20, 1:30 p.m., Social Justice Center, 1202 Williamson St.

Environmental Task Force

Chair: Phyllis Hasbrouck (223-9571)

Next meeting: Tues., June 19, 7 p.m., 306 N. Brooks St., TAA office

Citizen Initiative Task Force

Contact: Ann Fleischli (274-4150)

Next meeting: Tues., May 29, 5:30 p.m., Pres House, 731 State St.

Diversity Committee

Next meeting: Thurs., June 14, 7 p.m., Social Justice Center, 1202 Williamson St.

Elections Committee

Chair: David Austin (250-0424)

Newsletter Consortium

Contact: Chris Babiarz (257-3288)

Fundraising Committee

Chair: Cynthia White (286-1924)

Progressive Dane Hotline: 257-4985

Progressive Dane Notes is published nine days before the General Membership Meeting. The deadline for the next issue is Noon, Tuesday, June 12. Submissions should be directed to Tona Williams at 259-9136 (twilliam@ssc.wisc.edu). Send all correspondence to:



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Strategic Planning

What is the current status of Progressive Dane?

Where do we want to be in five years?

How do we get from here to there?

ü Help answer these questions and put your mark on the future of Progressive Dane
 ü Saturday, June 9, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Social Sciences Building, UW campus, Room 8417 (Note: to get to room 8417 you need to use the stairs or elevator in the back of the building. If you use the stairs or elevator in the front of the building you will not be able to reach this room.)

ü For more information contact David Austin at 250-0424

Calendar

events organized by the Leadership Development Committee

New Member Orientation: Thursday June 14, 7-8 p.m., at the PD office. Tour the office and learn about:

- PD's task forces and committees, and their functions
- How the General Membership and Steering Committee meetings work
- Our Constitution and By-laws, party platforms, policies and procedures

Tabling Workshop: Thursday, May 24 7 - 8 p.m., at the PD office. Hone your tabling skills for the Farmers' Market and Festival season!

Summer Social: Come to a potluck on Thursday June 21, 6-8 p.m., location to be determined

- Bring a dish to pass, and we will provide the beverages
- Enjoy live music - Socialize - Help write letters for PD
- We will also have fun activities for children

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• We came, we saw, we bowled...
 • and raised a few hundred dollars in the process.
 • Thanks to everyone who helped make the 2001 PD Bowlathon a
 • smashing success! A big thank-you to our bowlers...
 •

• Kent Palmer in action. • Photo by Cynthia White • 	• Crouching Bowlers, • Hidden Pins • Dean Loumos • Nick Loumos • Eysteinn Sigurdarson • Michael Simons	• Diversity • Yogesh Chawla • Michelle Godwin • Richard-Marie Commander • Jodi Vander Molen • Kim Moye
	• District 6 • Judy Olson • Jon Hain • Sheila Guilfoyle • Matt Sloan • Jane Cooper	• District 2 • Brenda Konkel • Rob Bloch • Mary Anglim • Sheila Crowley

• Rob Bloch led all bowlers with an average score of 170! But it was the
 • District 6 team that had the highest average score over two games.
 • Special thanks to our hosts, All-Star Lanes, to Lisa Lomasney, who
 • volunteered to help with child care, and to Sheila Guilfoyle, who helped
 • with set-up and refreshments.
 • And remember, it's never too early to start practicing for next year's event!
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ORGANIZER FROM PAGE 1

in which Progressive Dane can move from being an effective force for positive change to a position of government” Ben says, considering the upcoming mayoral and city council elections. “Once we’re government we can MAKE the changes happen and then the limits are really only our own imaginations.”

To make this important shift Manski is looking for two fundamental additions to the grassroots base of the organization. First, he sees doubling the membership of PD as crucial. His previous experience as a canvass director showed him that this could best be done with an outreach committee that focuses on going door to door. The second shift will be one towards greater diversity. “We need to have everyone in Dane County involved. It’s important we build strong coalitions.” As the grandson of a Holocaust survivor Ben recognizes that it’s minorities, who are often marginalized and silenced, that can become the greatest assets to any grassroots movement.

What’s truly remarkable is that Ben’s energy and idealism seem inexhaustible. “I hope I work my way out of a job—that’s the goal of all grassroots organizers.” He continues, “it’s possible for us to transform this city into a democratic paradise the rest of the world will be able to look to as a working example.”

REDISTRICTING**FROM PAGE 1**

incumbents; and we will have new districts with no incumbent at all.

Regardless of those electoral outcomes, our members and elected officials have argued that the final maps should worry less about politics and more about respecting neighborhoods and communities.

The City and County redistricting committees continue to meet on Wednesday evenings until they present their recommendations to the City Council and the County Board in June. If the City Council and County Board cannot come to agreement on their respective plans, it all heads to the courts.

In the meantime, for more information:

- Michael Jacob chairs the Clean Government Task Force:
hammy@mailbag.com
- Ald. Matt Sloan serves on both committees:
district13@council.ci.madison.wi.us
- Sup. John Hendrick is leading the progressives at the county:
J7Hendrick@aol.com
- View the maps being considered by the city at:
<http://www.ci.madison.wi.us/council/pdfFiles/redistrictingcommittee.htm>

CITIZEN INITIATIVE FROM PAGE 1

exercise of this citizen right. The right of citizen initiatives has existed since 1911, when the Progressives decided that citizens of cities and villages should have a way to write their own laws.

The PD Citizen Initiative Task Force will help PD committees and members achieve their goals by researching issues and serving as an in-house legal resource. It will help write the laws and get signatures on petitions to get the laws on the ballot.

The task force voted on May 8 to endorse two specific issues for citizen initiative action. We researched and considered several issues, but narrowed down the issues to two: public financing of city elections and banning chlorine processes in manufacturing.

The public financing law is the first priority and

provides public financing of city council races and the mayoral race for an estimated cost of 45 cents per Madisonian per year. The proposed law is a combination of a Boulder, CO, public financing law, passed by citizen initiative in 1999, and the Impartial Justice bill. The latter is a project of Wisconsin Citizen Action and is the fifth version that they have tried to get through the state legislature.

The banning of chlorine processing is aimed at the Madison-Kipp Corporation and their production of dioxin at their east-side plant. Since the company has promised to stop using that process and substitute another that does not adversely affect the city, the law proposed requires that substitution to happen now.

The PD Steering Committee has put these issues on the May 23rd

general meeting agenda for educational purposes. In the meantime, the task force will be making presentations to the Clean Government Task Force, the City Caucus, and the Policy Committee.

Come to the Wednesday, May 23 general meeting to hear presentations on the initiative issues. Each committee and task force of PD should be aware that its goals might be achieved using the citizen initiative tool. And each person considering running for election on the Progressive Dane ticket should let us know what issues he or she would like to run with to entice the voters to the polls.

This process is intended to be a strategic tool to achieve good public policy, get out the vote and create support around the city for Progressive Dane. It should startle Madison, to say the least.

Want more info? Read up on PD at: <http://www.newparty.org/pd>

